CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION
2013

A PROPOSAL TO
THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT
OF EDUCATION

National Charter Partners of Pennsylvania
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**CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION FACT SHEET**

This application fact sheet is intended to be a “finger-tip” summary of your application. The information furnished below must be an accurate representation of the application and must correspond to the information provided in the body of the application.

Proposed Cyber Charter School Name (Must Include "Charter School" in the Title)

iSEEK Academy Cyber Charter School

Proposed Cyber Charter School Administrative Location (Address, City/Town and Zip Code)

800 Township Line Road, Suite 300, Yardley, PA 19067

- County: Bucks
- Intermediate Unit: 22
- Proposed Start Date: September 2014
- Federal Employer Identification Number: 36-4663695

Contact Person:

- First: Robert
- Middle: 
- Last: Patrylak
- Organization: Chief Operations Officer, Vantage Laboratories
- City: Yardley
- State: PA
- Zip Code: 19067
- Telephone: 267-756-1158
- Fax Number: 267-756-1211
- E-mail: bpatrylak@vantage.com

**Founding Coalition: Indicate Number of Representatives per Group | Grade and Age Ranges | Projected Student Enrollment Year 1-5**

| Parents | 6 | Elementary | 3-5 | 1st Year | 50 |  |
| Teachers | 12 | Secondary | 6-8 | 2nd Year | 100 |  |
| Business Partners | 5 | Age of Kindergarten | N/A | 3rd Year | 200 |  |
| Community Based Orgs. | 1 | Age of Beginners | 8 | 4th Year | 250 |  |
| Museums | | Circle Appropriate Grade(s) | 1 | 5th Year | 250 |  |
| Higher Education | | Kindergarten: Full Day or Half Day? | | | Teachers | 20 |

Does the cyber charter applicant have an existing retirement system? 
Yes _X_ No __

Does the applicant group presently have access to a facility suitable for the cyber charter school’s administrative offices? 
Yes _X_ No __

School Focus: Describe, in brief terms and on an additional page, the proposed cyber charter school’s mission, educational focus, and other essential characteristics.
School Focus

Our focus is a straightforward, yet an important one - to arm students with the learning assets, technologies, curricula and individual support needed for our students to thrive, blossom, and leave us equipped for higher learning.

Mission

ISEEK Academy Charter Cyber School shall endeavor to challenge and nurture each student’s Mind, Body, and Sense of Self, to inspire boys and girls to lead lives of purpose, integrity, commitment, who aspire to life-long learning and understanding.
Innovation | we build creative thinkers with the capacity to not only learn today’s skills, but the passion and drive to build skills for tomorrow, and to pioneer new fields not yet imagined. We expect this of our students, and of our school. iSEEK Academy shall always provide our students, teachers and staff with the most innovative technologies and resources to benefit the educational process. Moreover, we will expect our staff, teachers, parents, and students to take the same approach, finding new and creative ways of doing more.

Agency | this is your life; live it well. We believe in the individual’s responsibility for his or her own success. We can only provide tools, not the drive to use them. As we foster passion for learning, we build personal accountability through a focus on each student, teacher, parent, and staff member’s responsibility for their actions as a member of our community.

Differentiators

We understand that the educational landscape currently offers a wide range of options for students, but many of these options are not successful. We offer a proven methodology. Vantage Learning was the first to build an Adaptive Learning Platform and subsequently use the platform to build a subject specific and college readiness specific Common Core compliant Adaptive Learning Environment™. An Adaptive Learning Environment (AdaptLE) is the world’s most powerful education tool for guiding educators and students along an optimum pathway towards subject and Common Core mastery. Our AdaptLE customizes curriculum and pedagogy objects simultaneously.

What is it that distinguishes the iSEEK Cyber Charter Academy School from other institutions and why is it that a charter should be granted? The genesis of the iSEEK Academy Cyber Charter School is the result and legacy of many years of research, development, integration, and use of revolutionary education technologies within schools across America. It is the story of how Vantage Laboratories and Vantage Learning (Vantage) changed the pedagogical landscape through application of scientific technological research to human learning and development, first through computer based understanding of natural language, word content, and linguistics; and, culminating today with educational teaching and learning tools relied upon by many of the best education institutions in the United States.

The iSEEK Cyber Charter Academy will look to Vantage as an example of our thematic approach to education and technological tools. From a vendor prospective, Vantage offers high quality services to educational institutions. iSEEK Cyber Charter Academy will leverage Vantage’s history of success and will apply these techniques directly to student education.

Vantage:

- developed the first completely online computer based assessment system for testing in Reading, English, and Mathematics for the state of Oregon and many other states.
- was also the first company, through research and analysis, to develop an automatic essay scoring system that could score more accurately than any human graders.
- was the first to develop a completely online diagnostic writing application for teaching and learning, writing across the curriculum using English, Math, Science, and Social Studies.
- was the first to develop an Adaptive Learning Platform where assessments and diagnostic materials are delivered to students based on individual skill levels and understanding.
- was the first company in the education space to develop a platform that complexly unifies and integrates Big Data and student data for reporting purposes.
- was the first to take background questions and census data to extrapolate an understanding of the individual student, in partnership with the College Board.

Vantage technologies have been used by 19 hundred colleges for testing and placing individuals according to their abilities. All high schools and colleges in the states of Florida and Virginia rely on Vantage’s assessment platforms to measure career and academic readiness. The states of
Kentucky, Alabama, and Georgia rely on Vantage powered platforms in tandem with the American College of Testing for high school exit examinations and for adaptive learning environments. Six of the top ten medical schools in the United States rely on Vantage’s natural language and context understanding to structure, deliver, and teach the medical curriculum.

**Learning Pathway Advisory Engine** | the Adaptive Learning Platform and associated custom programming services were conceived by Vantage Learning to revolutionize the creation, deployment, and management of custom elearning software. Using the Adaptive Learning Platform’s toolkit and Vantage supplied professional software development services, school; districts, states, content publishers, software publishers, and businesses can structure their education management and learning environment software systems precisely to their detailed specifications creating a highly stable Adaptive Learning Environment that is, at its core, adaptive, custom efficient, scalable, research based, accurate, generative, and automated.

Clients are now able to dispense with the seemingly inescapable option of adjusting their dreams, plans, or education process, simply to meet the limitations of off the shelf software. Through the Adaptive Learning Platform, Professional Software Development Services, and associated toolkit, educators can meet their objectives quickly, easily, and within their budget. The toolset contains everything needed to help foster success, including access to:

- Subject specific Intelligent Agents™
- Pedagogy Intelligent Agents
- Item Resources Theory Adaptive Algorithms
- Big Data Archive
- Big Data Template(s)
- Big Data API’s (application programming interface)
- Reporting Templates
- Reporting API’s
- Statistical Modelers
- Predictive Analytics Modeler
- Personalized Adaptive Learning Pathway™ Generator
- Vantage Professional Software Development Services

Custom Web-based implementation of the Adaptive Learning Platform toolkit power revolutionary offerings from software publishers such as College Success®. In addition, state-level customizations exist and are in use for all colleges in the states of Florida and Virginia¹.

**Adaptive Learning Environments** | Vantage’s AdaptLE respond in real time to each individual’s strengths and deficiencies, taking action by providing a dynamically generated Adaptive Learning Plan™ in real time, which is specified to the individual leaner. The Adaptive Learning Plan is holistic in nature, looking at concept level strengths and weaknesses, skill level strengths and weaknesses, and the profile of the overall student. This student data is coupled with educational data regarding the advantages and disadvantages of learning object methods of delivery, whether that be audio, visual, multi-media, or simulation based deliver. The effectively advise students, AdaptLE rely heavily on advanced Artificial Intelligence technologies called Intelligent Agents. Domain specific Intelligent Agents provide access to concept level details contained with the curriculum learning object independent of the delivery method.

¹ See more at http://www.vantagelearning.com/products/alp/#sthash.KYcTvHZc.dpuf
To provide generative or continuously adaptive learning plans, Vantage utilized iSEEK powered Intelligent agents, which learn materials based on a multitude of data points including concepts, structure, and difficulty level. The AdaptLE uses subject specific Intelligent Agents to continuously advise and provide guidance to each student gene generating the daily Adaptive Learning Pathway or daily plan. iSEEK Powered Intelligent Agents have the ability to archive the data generated by the student interaction with the system. In this way, Intelligent Agents learn from the cumulative data collected and allows for better decisions or better pathways for that student and all future students.

AdaptLE are publisher agnostic, allowing teachers to select resources for the particular student or small group. The AdaptLE dynamically optimizes resources and creates a best-in-class learning experience for the students.

**Intelligent Agents** | AdaptLE incorporate and utilize Intelligent Agents and Intelligent Agent Networks™ for a full range of subjects. AdaptLE leverage the connected concept model(s) provide by the Intelligent Agents along with a skill model defined by the Key/Core Curriculum into a context specific model for learning. This allows educators and learners to personalized education, utilizing only best-in-class content. This content is distilled and delivered to the individual student’s specifications based on that student’s need and it is delivered automatically. Student specific and Context specific Intelligent Agents make recommendations and power the next generation elearning tools called AdaptLE.

Because of their generative semantic mapping and context domain specific mapping abilities, Intelligent Agents are at the core of the most advanced generations of dynamically customizable elearning systems called AdaptLE. In addition to domain-specific Intelligent Agents for K-12 education, broad, general purpose Intelligent Agent are being developed for graduate education including Medical Curriculum Intelligent Agents, Intelligent Agents for Music, Sports, Economics, and Finance, among many others.

Intelligent Agent Networks for education consist of three interrelated Intelligent Agents, namely, (1) the Key/Core Curriculum Intelligent Agent, (2) the context specific Subject Domain (subject semantics) Intelligent Agent, and (3) the Pedagogy Intelligent Agent, which understands which teaching concept methodology apply and are most beneficial to an individual student. This network of Intelligent Agents work in concert allowing the Adaptive Learning Environment to construct instantaneous Personalized Adaptive Learning Plans and ultimately a full Adaptive Learning Pathway for each individual learner/student.

**Big Data** | Through an AdaptLE we gather more data about the individual learning than is typically possible. This allows for analysis of current skills, cross-disciplinary skills, and learning objectives that the student comprehends. The AdaptLE tracks:

- the student's mastery level,
- the pedagogies used to teach the concept,
- the objectives not mastered,
- the pedagogies that have not been successful,
- the time spent on each question, item, or activity,
- the time spent on learning objects,
- the interactions with subject specific Intelligent Agents.
There are literally thousands of characteristics that, when analyzed in combination, create billions of possible pathways to academic mastery.
I. School Design

1. Mission Statement:

   A. Briefly describe the core philosophy or underlying purpose of the proposed school.

   iSEEK Academy believes that each student can meet her potential if given the opportunity to achieve through personalized educational resources that unite and promote that individual student’s learning style and skill abilities. Our purpose is to provide students with a comprehensive educational experience – one that is personalized, innovative, pedagogically sound, and properly supervised, nurtured and fostered through personal and individual attention in concert with experienced teaching professionals.

   B. What is your overarching vision of the school?

   Our vision, our goal is to be best in class. We shall approach everything from the Mission Statement, to the technology we use, to the teachers selected with that in mind. Our philosophy is simple – each student shall prepare for College-level work upon graduation. We will provide each student with opportunities to work to their abilities and interests by providing all the tools, support and specialization that each student needs to find a balance between achievement, curriculum and interests. At the same time, our expectations for basic student preparedness will be very high – College-level competency in Mathematics, English, History, Science, Ethics, Civics and Government is our minimum level of measurement for school success. That is how we will comparatively measure ourselves with any other school.

   Explanation: Define a concise plan for an innovative public school that will lead to improved educational performance. Consistency between the mission and the educational programs should be articulated to achieve improved performance.

2. Measurable Goals and Objectives:

   A. What are the school’s measurable academic goals and objectives to promote student learning?

   Establishing a baseline for individual student knowledge, understanding and behavior through professional and readily accepted testing principles, psychological evaluation, and social interaction is paramount. iSEEK Academy shall then personalize an educational pathway for each student, providing learning opportunities and formatting instruction, while also tracking progress, measuring expectations and ensuring intervention where necessary to guide each child’s productivity. iSEEK Academy will meet the needs of each student by providing a personalized and rigorous curriculum, which pulls from a wide range of academic styles and materials to form an experienced best suited to the individual student.

   Figure 2: Personalized Adaptive Learning

   Personalized Adaptive Learning Pathway
We intend to use curricula, technologies, and services from a wide variety of sources, some of our own development, others freely available, and some from vendors. We will select the most rigorous and best-studied materials, which fit each student’s specific needs.

Students will not be limited by their “grade level” but will instead work through materials at their own pace, beginning with their current skill level, which may be grade agnostic, and progressing through as they meet and exceed the standards of their given grade. We will offer a holistic learning experience, which is based on proven methods of instruction, rich and challenging content, as well as assessment which is integrated at every step. Underlying all materials will be a focus on STEM and project based learning.

Powerful Intelligent Agents apply domain specific statistical analysis of curriculum and domain specific skill requirements in order to infer and generate conceptual relationships and subsequently build a Comprehensive Learning Model. The Intelligent Agent Network builds a connected model of multi-occurrences of domain dependent concepts, skills, and pedagogy and area gathered in Intelligent Views (iViews). The Intelligent Agents use this Comprehensive Learning Model to disambiguate the repeated skills and concepts within each domain necessary for Long Term Learning. For example, does the word “operation” in a document refer to a medical operation, mathematical operation, or a military operation?

All educational materials are aligned to Common Core State Standards, as are benchmark assessments. This ensures that while each student receives a personalized education, no student receives an unbalanced education.

1. Students will meet or exceed proficiency as defined by Common Core State Standards
2. Students will demonstrate foundational achievement skills in English Language Arts
3. Students will demonstrate foundational achievement skills in Science
4. Students will demonstrate foundational achievement skills in Technology
5. Students will demonstrate foundational achievement skills in Engineering
6. Students will demonstrate foundational achievement skills in Mathematics
7. Students will be prepared for success in high school, higher education, and career pathways

Table 1: Measurable Academic Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Goal</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Performance Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will master a set of learning objectives in the core subject areas outlined for each grade level as required by Pennsylvania Academic Standards</td>
<td>Mastery will be determined by regular online and offline assessments covering a subset of the learning objectives as well as an evaluation of work products in each student’s portfolio.</td>
<td>Learners will be expected to achieve the “proficiency” level for all objectives and students will be expected to make adequate yearly progress as defined by Pennsylvania’s No Child Left Behind plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Based on a value added model of academic growth, each student will demonstrate academic growth appropriate for a year in school. While not every child will start or end the year at the same place on the ladder, they should all climb the same number of rungs. No less than 90% of eligible gains will be measured using iSEEK Academy students</td>
<td>iSEEK Academy will use a technology based standardized pre- and post-test, data driven instruction, and personalized Adaptive Learning Pathways™ to gauge yearly progress in Math and Reading.</td>
<td>A minimum of 90% of students across each demographic subcategory will demonstrate a year of academic growth on an annual basis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
students will take the PSSA and demonstrate above average gains.

All learners will demonstrate proficiency in the use of technology.

Learners will demonstrate leadership, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration skills.

B. What are the schools measurable non-academic goals and objectives to promote student performance?

At iSEEK Academy, we provide students with the opportunity to gain a personalized, adaptive education, which includes not only rigorous academic skills, but also the development of thoughtful character. The balance between 21st Century STEM skills and personal growth is the difference between building success which will result in high test scores and building success which will result in lifelong achievement. While the first pillar of our school drives the shape of the school and the shape of our core curriculum, the second through fourth pillars drive our student’s non-academic goals and shape iSEEK Academy’s community.

Community Leadership

- Students will consciously take part in and give back to their communities’ at large
- Students will build character
- Students will develop a sense of self and purpose

Innovation

- Students will become creative thinkers
- Students will develop the capacity to build skills for tomorrow,
- Students will pioneer new fields and technologies
- Students will find new and creative ways of doing more

Agency

- Students will live their lives well
- Students will take individual responsibility for their own success
- Students will develop a passion for learning
- Students will develop personal accountability
- Students will be responsibility for their actions as a member of our community

Table 2: Measurable Non-Academic Goals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Measurement</th>
<th>Performance Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students will engage with their community using leadership skills.</td>
<td>Weekly, monthly, and yearly community and project based assignments that require the use of leadership participation skills</td>
<td>Assignments will demonstrate mastery of skills and meet a level of satisfactory completion that shows proof of community engagement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Personalized Adaptive Plan driven student instruction.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Each individual will have a profile of academic strengths and weaknesses at the beginning of the school year. Continuing assessments will track progress on addressing those individual areas of weakness.</th>
<th>Students will average one grade level improvement across all identified areas.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**iSEEK Academy will maintain high attendance.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>iSEEK Academy will use multiple methods for tracking attendance.</th>
<th>Students will be held accountable for completing assignments and demonstrating mastery before being permitted to proceed to the next block of assignments. At iSEEK Academy, attendance is integrally combined with educational performance.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**iSEEK Academy will create a sense of community within the virtual school environment.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The degree of participation in collaborative projects and the use of other iSEEK Academy community-building tools such as chats and bulletin boards will be regularly reviewed.</th>
<th>Students will report an equal or better attitude toward school than their peers in traditional schools. Each student will have the opportunity to participate in regular group activities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**iSEEK Academy will provide our learners with the highest quality teaching.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher recruitment, retention, and performance on staff evaluations.</th>
<th>Teacher attrition will be less than 6% and the average teacher rating will be 3 or better on a 5-point scale.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Students will engage with their coursework and other activities, showing a sense of agency.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly, monthly, and yearly project based assignments and notes from teacher and parent observation that require responsibility and personal ownership will be evaluated.</th>
<th>Projects and observational notes will demonstrate mastery of skills and meet a level of satisfactory completion that shows proof of sense of agency.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Explanation:** Develop clear, **measurable** goals with objectives for building the educational program that reflects a commitment to academic excellence for all students.

**3. Educational Program:**

A. Describe the educational program of the school, providing a detailed description of the curriculum and the content in all subject areas.

iSEEK Academy is fully committed to meeting the individual needs of each student as we build their community leadership, innovation, and agency. Our standards-aligned curriculum, coupled with a project-based and community-focused approach, will prepare our students both morally and intellectually for their future.

**Personalized Learning through Best in Class Technologies** Today, computer technology coupled with experienced teacher oversight is the basic organizational device for assessing, managing, and tracking any student’s learning. Drawing upon its relationship with Vantage Laboratories and Vantage Learning and many years of successful development and use of computer-based assessment and reporting facilities, iSEEK Academy will rely on its ability to access best in class computer and network technologies to manage each student's lesson plans, track assessments, handle communications, make assignments, and provide additional curriculum materials and activities. The use of the computer is central to iSEEK Academy’s program of personalization. Every student, parent or caregiver will have access to each of the...
assessment, measurement, reporting, advisory, and development technologies produced by Vantage Laboratories and Vantage Learning.

Each student, parent and teacher will have a unique ID/password for access to specific tools and services through a personalized resource page. On a regular basis, students will retrieve and complete assignments and readily communicate with teachers and administrators. Detailed daily lesson plans shall be provided, including assignments and diagnostic assessments together with a host of similar tests of comprehension and preparedness tailored, of course, to follow individually prescribed learning plans. Staff shall be afforded with up-to-minute feedback to track the progress of each individual student, allowing teachers, administrators and caregivers to easily and actively participate in reviewing, correcting, assigning and further tracking each lesson and associated objectives.

Computer technology will be used as a tool to facilitate communication among teachers, parents, and students; to track attendance and assessment; to assist in managing each student’s Personalized Adaptive Learning Plan™; and to provide enriching curriculum materials and activities. All iSEEK Academy students will utilize technology in developmentally appropriate ways and shall receive all that necessary training or remediation necessary to ensure that technology can be a useful and effective tool for individualized learning.

A Flexible Learning Day to Meet Student and Family Needs | iSEEK Academy allows students and their parents to structure the school day flexibly to best meet individual students’ learning needs. iSEEK Academy curriculum and instructional tools are available to students every day, around the clock, to facilitate learning anytime and anywhere. The program combines both asynchronous instruction, in which students and teachers each work in their own time, and synchronous instruction, in which students and teachers engage in real time. After the regular school day, virtual tutors will be available via Webmail, chat, and phone to answer student questions. iSEEK Academy students are required to complete the equivalent of at least 990 hours or 180 days of instruction within each academic year, as required of all Pennsylvania students. While iSEEK Academy will offer extraordinary flexibility in scheduling, each student shall be expected and required to master the skills and knowledge covered by iSEEK Academy’s rigorous curriculum, which meets or exceeds the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. The when, where, and how of learning will be variable, but student achievement shall be mandatory. We shall endeavor to spend as much time and energy as necessary with each student to ensure individual measurable competency and achievement.

A Standards-Based, Achievement-Focused Curriculum | Owing to its working relationship with Vantage Laboratories and Vantage Learning, iSEEK Academy curriculum is built around a core set of thousands of tested learning objectives developed from national standards and correlated to state standards. Learning objectives are then organized into units, strands and areas, each categorized with a level of Bloom’s Taxonomy. The objectives are correlated with Pennsylvania Academic Standards and supplemented to ensure that all of the requirements are covered. The program includes substantial teacher-directed instruction through synchronous and asynchronous e-learning tools. iSEEK Academy courses incorporate graded asynchronous online discussions, which are required for all iSEEK Academy students. This tool creates important opportunities for collaboration and interaction among students.

Guiding Principles | the curriculum and instructional program in iSEEK Academy are guided by the following principles, which reflect national standards of quality for online courses and program design as recommended by the International Association for K-12 Online Learning:

- Curriculum fosters breadth and depth of understanding in each subject area
- Content is aligned to PA state standards and Common Core
- Curriculum is driven and supported by quality, reputable, recently published textbooks and/or proven instructional resources and materials
- Content and assessments are accurate and unbiased
- Content is current, relevant and provides real-world applications
• Content is appropriate for the learner (age, ability, background, reading level, learning style)
• Instructional design is adaptable and flexible to meet individual needs
• Instructional design provides students with opportunities to improve learning skills using technological tools (e.g., virtual labs and instruments, online tutorials, software, online calculator, etc.)
• Navigation is intuitive and age-appropriate
• Scope of course is appropriate with regard to amount of content, length of course and lessons, and course requirements
• Lesson introduction is effective and presents lesson objectives, accesses prior knowledge (constructivism and effective scaffolding), sets expectations and motivates students
• Background information effectively prepares students to access new content, skills and strategies (constructivism and effective scaffolding)
• Curriculum includes opportunities for developing problem-solving and critical thinking skills
• Curriculum includes opportunities for collaboration and independent study
• Curriculum includes opportunities to develop oral and written communication skills
• Curriculum incorporates timely and appropriate feedback to students

At iSEEK Academy, students will have access to the online curriculum and instructional program seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Students’ learning is self-paced, using both online and published materials. The students will progress at a pace appropriate to their instructional level, maximizing their learning. Through this self-paced differentiated instruction, the students eventually meet individual mastery.

Curriculum Overview | curriculum that iSEEK Academy intends to use is a Pennsylvania State aligned, comprehensive program that includes:
A. Science and Technology: in iSEEK Academy’s program, students will go through an exciting experience of digital, hands on and print curriculum. Using digital lessons, simulations, videos, animations, virtual lab, and support print or kit-based materials, iSEEK Academy will make science concepts come alive for our students through problem based, experiential or thematic based science inquiry. Our curriculum encompasses the development of knowledge of the natural world and facts, principles, theories and laws in the areas of biology, chemistry, physics and earth sciences; the knowledge and understanding of technology as the application of science to enable societal development, including food and fiber production, manufacturing, building, transportation and communication; and important skill and competencies like the use of the senses, science processes, inquiry, investigation, analysis and problem solving strategies.
B. Environment and Ecology: the study of Environment and Ecology is fully integrated within the curriculum of Science and Technology. Students will gain an understanding of the complexity of the world through the learning of the ecological systems and their interrelationships with social systems and technologies. These components incorporate the disciplines of resource management, agricultural diversity, government and the impact of human actions on natural systems, which lead to the study of watersheds, threatened and endangered species, pest management and the development of laws and regulations. Through our curriculum, students will be aware of his/her dependence on a healthy environment, and be capable of making sound decisions that will affect our natural systems. At the same time, they will learn to become active participants and problem solvers in real issues that affect them, their homes, schools and communities.
C. Social Studies: The study of social studies is incorporates the study of History, Geography, Civics and Government, and Economics. There will be a chronological study of History, complemented by integrated lessons in Geography, Civics and Government, and Economics; and in selected themes, Science and Math.
A. **History:** our curriculum comprises the study of the record of human experiences including important events; interactions of culture, race and ideas; the nature of prejudice; change and continuity in political systems; effects of technology; importance of global-international perspectives; and the integration of geography, economics and civics studies on major developments in the history of the Commonwealth, the United States and the world.

B. **Geography:** in Geography, students will be studying the relationships and interdependence between people, places and environments. They will also get to learn the different geographic tools and methods; and characteristics of places, concept of region and physical processes.

C. **Civics and Government:** in Civics and Government, students will learn about the United States constitutional democracy, its values and principles; they will also study the Constitution of the Commonwealth and government including the study of principles, operations and documents of government, the rights and responsibilities of citizenship, how governments work and international relations.

D. **Economics:** students will learn about how individuals and societies choose to use resources to produce, distribute goods and services, and consumption of goods and services. They will gain the knowledge of how economies work, economic reasoning and basic economic concepts, economic decision-making, economic systems, the Commonwealth and the United States economy and international trade.

D. **Arts and Humanities:** The curriculum includes the study of dance, theatre, music, visual arts, language and literature including forms of expression, historical and cultural context, critical and aesthetic judgment and production, performance or exhibition of work.

A. **Career Education and Work:** mentoring, enrichments, workshops, and opportunities will be worked into the students’ learning calendar to help them explore, gain awareness, and at the same time, understanding of career options in relationship to their individual interests, aptitudes and skills, including the relationship between changes in society, technology, government and economy and their effect on individuals and careers. Opportunities will also be provided to help develop knowledge and skill in job seeking and to succeed in the occupation for which they are prepared.

B. **Health, Safety and Physical Education:** a versatile, grade appropriate Health, Safety and Physical Education program will be offered to the students. A variety of lesson plans, together with instructions, will be loaded on the school’s website. Under the supervision of their parent or guardian, using the appropriate and suitable lesson plans, students will be able to involve themselves in physical and health education at the comfort of their home. Under the oversight of guardians or parents and teachers, Health and Safety classes will be offered online. iSEEK Academy’s Health, Safety and Physical Education program focuses on the learning and development of concepts and skills, which affect personal, family and community health and safety, nutrition, physical fitness, movement concepts and strategies, safety in physical activity settings, and leadership and cooperation in physical activities.

E. **Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening:** Students are still developing the foundations for future communication skills, so an interactive learning environment that catches and holds their attention while introducing new skills and concepts verbally and visually are being used. Emphasis will be placed on the skills, and the joys of reading and writing. Students will be provided with systematic and explicit instruction in phonics, meaningful instruction in context, and direct instruction in decoding and comprehension. Students will also begin synthesizing ideas into coherent essays and papers using online-writer and will learn the building blocks of the English language through the study of roots, prefixes, and suffixes, etc.

A. **Reading:** in Reading, students will learn the application of phonemic awareness, phonics and word study, vocabulary, fluency and text comprehension in reading critically across subject areas; the interpretation and analysis of literary
expression with analysis of the origins and structures of the English language and learning how to search a variety of texts to conduct research.

B. Writing: in Writing, students will learn and develop the skills for narrative, informational and persuasive formal writing for an audience, including spelling and editing skills, and informal writing to capture and organize information for individual use.

C. Speaking and Listening: throughout the language arts program, students will be given opportunities to participate in online conversation and online formal speaking presentations.

F. Mathematics: Through our program of daily practice, review and application, a solid early foundation in Mathematical concepts and understanding will be built. Mathematics learning incorporates exploratory, hands-on activities, and real-world simulations. The learning of Math is also intertwined with the learning of other subjects in the form of integrated units, and cross-curriculum projects and activities. Students will develop the understanding of fundamental ideas and the development of proficient mathematical skills. Using this content knowledge, students will learn to think, communicate and reason mathematically. Students will also learn to model real-world situations by creating appropriate representations of numerical quantities and plan and implement problem-solving strategies to answer the question in the context of the situation.

A Solid Foundation in Education Research | education research has shown that the touchstones of iSEEK Academy’s personalized instructional model—parental involvement, individualized instruction, and high-quality teaching—have been directly correlated to top student achievement.

Parent Involvement: decades of research show that parent participation in education is very closely related to student achievement. In A New Generation of Evidence: The Family Is Critical to Student Achievement, Anne T. Henderson and Nancy Berla document concrete benefits of parent involvement for students, including higher grades and test scores, higher graduation rates, and greater enrollment in postsecondary education. A Stanford study found that using parents as tutors brought significant and immediate changes in children’s I.Q. scores.

Individualized Instruction: students clearly benefit from instruction that is individualized in terms of pace, content, sequence and style. Among the many studies on this topic, Margaret Haertel and her colleagues show in “What Helps Students Learn?” that “curriculum and assessment tailored to student ability and academic background” to assure “an appropriate level of task difficulty for students and an appropriate instructional pace” is a proven tool for helping students achieve. At iSEEK Academy, instruction is individualized for every student, every day.

High-Quality Teaching: students will benefit from their contact with iSEEK Academy’s highly qualified teachers. Each teacher will be equipped with the skills and technology they need to bring out the best in every student. In his study correlating test data with teacher quality, Harold Wenglinsky of the Educational Testing Service showed a direct link between good teaching and higher test scores.

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Approach to Personalized Adaptive Learning | iSEEK Academy school year begins with the development of a Personalized Adaptive Learning Plan for each student. The Personalized Adaptive Learning Plan is built from a combination of baseline assessments of academic skills/knowledge and learning modalities, consultation with the parents, and input directly from the student. The Personalized Adaptive Learning Plan will then guide the student’s course through the Pennsylvania standards-correlated curriculum.

Personalized Content and Lessons | key curriculum design principles are reflected in a consistent course design allowing for both general ease of use and flexible implementation to meet specific student needs. A student may generally spend as much time as she or he needs on each element to master the concept and may repeatedly return to an element for reinforcement. The syllabus for each course is always available for students and teachers to review in its entirety while they are working on any given lesson, which helps students plan ahead and develop meta-cognitive skills – learning how to learn – that are critical to future success. Each course has clear goals and objectives. The course objectives are available for review by the student, teacher, or parent at any time.

Continuous Monitoring and Quick Feedback | student work will be graded based on the assignment and format with some work receiving instantaneous feedback and scoring, with other assignments taking up to one week for turnaround times. On average, students should expect feedback in less than 24 hours on most assignments. In addition to formally graded assignments, teachers continually monitor student work and progress, noting performance on machine graded works and practice materials. By tracking response time, teacher/parent/student communications, and all course work, school administrators are presented with a snapshot of rich data that is actionable and allows for the building of student, teacher, and school portfolios.

Approach to STEM | the theory of constructivism suggests that learners construct knowledge by accommodating new experiences and reframing their perceptions and models of the way the world works. A student’s world is full of simulation that spurs him or her to question. A student becomes more and more sophisticated at problem solving as he/she grows up. Knowledge and understanding are socially constructed through talk, activity and interaction around meaningful problems and tools. Tinkering, experimenting and questioning become a student’s means of learning, and developing knowledge and understanding.

According to Vygotsky’s “Zone of proximal development,” there is a difference between what a learner can do without help and what he or she can do with help. Similar to Burner’s theory of scaffolding, Vygotsky suggests that a student’s cognitive skills can be further developed when instructional scaffolding is provided.

iSEEK Academy’s program is modeling on the theory of constructivism and uses scaffolding as a tool of teaching. Adopting concepts, central to constructivist design, teaching and learning, from Wilson and Cole cognitive teaching models, iSEEK Academy will implement the following in its education programs:
1. Rich authentic problem-solving environment;
2. Authentic and academic contexts for learning;

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3. Student centered learning opportunities;
4. Use of errors as a mechanism to provide feedback to students’ understanding;

Table 3: STEM Education Defined

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEM Education is</th>
<th>STEM Education is not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. An interdisciplinary approach to learning that is rigorous and links student learning with real world challenges.</td>
<td>1. A name for the traditional approaches to teach Math and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. An approach that emphasizes process and design with a goal to develop problem solvers and critical thinkers.</td>
<td>2. Grafting to traditional Engineering and Technology onto Math and Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. A teaching method used to create an environment that promotes discovery, exploration and problem solving skills.</td>
<td>3. An emphasis on solutions and replication of factual information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. A move to drive STEM literacy into the classroom for all students</td>
<td>4. Movement to educate the best and brightest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Simply more Math and Science classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STEM Education at iSEEK Academy is not just only about teaching Math and Science, but an interdisciplinary approach to drive STEM literacy into the classroom for all students by providing an environment that promotes discovery, exploration and problem solving skills, and linking students’ learning with real world challenges, with the goal of developing problem solvers and critical thinkers.

The foundation for a successful STEM education will be laid out in the elementary and middle school years. During the elementary and middle school years, students will be given a rigorous exposure to Math and Science through an integrated approach that is different to traditional teacher centered approach to teaching Math and Science. iSEEK Academy’s integrated approach links student learning with real world challenges, emphasizing on process and design with a goal to develop problem solvers and critical thinkers.

At different grade levels, students will be exposed to problem based or thematic based integrated cross-curricular units, activities or projects, which are linked to real world authentic context or problems. Approaches, concepts and strategies, central to constructivist design and scaffolding, will be used when designing these integrated cross-curricular units, activities or projects. Such units, activities and projects are designed for students to enjoy challenges and investigating the world around them. Teachers and parents will act as a facilitator, guiding their children through assigned problem based or thematic-based, activities or projects. The big idea is to create a sense of wonder and sense of query by involving the child in exploration, asking questions, and finding answers to real world issues- promoting discovery, exploration and problem solving skills along the way. These integrated units, projects or activities will allow students to put into practice their math, science, reading, and communication skills, and, at the same time, help students in finding a common thread of understanding between Math, Science and other subjects.

**Assembling an Integrated Unit to Promote STEM Education** | to make STEM Education meaningful for students, teachers at iSEEK Academy will be putting together integrated units that are both engaging and meaningful. Teachers will be using curriculum materials from a variety of resources. Assembled Units will incorporate Science, Mathematics, Language Arts and Technology skills.

Take for example a teacher who is doing grade 4 Ecology with her students. The teacher will first assign the reading “Invisible Alligators” (http://www.magickeys.com/books/invis-

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allig/index.html) to the students. Students will then be assigned a digital lesson on Ecology. After which they will be assigned the student’s project “Alligators Up close”. The student will be given access to an activity sheet and a video.

The teachers (through web sessions) and parents will facilitate the student’s activity. Students will be asked to reflect on questions posed in the project, and they will practice note-taking skills. The teacher may also use online games to further engage her student.

Another example is the teaching of the topic of bacteria and viruses. Using the thematic approach to put together an integrated unit, as part of their science lesson, the students will be given the opportunity to culture bacteria at an off-site lab; they will then compare and identify what was found. Then as part of their History or Social Study lesson, students will be assigned readings on the effects of plagues and pandemics on populations and civilizations from around the world and through time. In Language Arts, students will be assigned an article on the Black Death and be asked to relate the article to what was being done in the other classes. During their math lesson, using provided data together with online excel sheets and online graphing tools, students will be assigned a project that will require them to produce graphs, and using mathematical modeling, predict possible outcomes of possible pandemics outbreaks in cities. Using an online learning community platform, students can come together and discuss their projects and progress.

B. Describe how your school will meet the educational needs of students with disabilities in accordance with Chapter 711. Provide a projection of the number and type of special education programs that will be operated directly by your charter school or through contracts. Provide a projection of the number and type of related services that will be provided directly by the charter school or through contracts.

In accordance with Chapter 711, iSEEK Academy is committed to serving students with disabilities, whether such students are currently or newly identified as students with disabilities. Through a combination of appropriate certifications among our core teaching staff and contracts with local service providers, iSEEK Academy will be able to meet the needs of special learners. In addition, iSEEK Academy will consult with outside resources in planning for and acquiring necessary technology to serve students with disabilities.

**Comprehensive Services for Disabled Students** | Primarily a virtual program, iSEEK Academy is focused on individualization, flexibility, and personalization and, therefore, may be a very good fit for students with special needs. In addition to regular placement testing, iSEEK Academy staff will review each Individualized Education Program (IEP) analyzing the level of functioning, educational needs, and suggested accommodations/modifications to determine how iSEEK Academy can meet the student’s needs in the least restrictive environment.

Thus, iSEEK Academy can be an appropriate setting for students with special needs by providing:
- 1:1 individualized instruction
- A team of adults focused on student success
- Ongoing consultation with special educators, certified teachers, and curriculum specialists to assist with adapting and modifying assignments to meet specific student needs
- Personalized Adaptive Learning Plan
- A safe and directed environment
- Reduced environmental distractions
- Frequent progress checks, evaluations, and reports
- Technology to facilitate communication, organization, and skill development
- Technology to address special needs (e.g., keyboarding or speech recognition software can address fine motor skills issues)
Flexible schedule that allows for students to move at their own pace
Opportunities to work and collaborate with diverse groups of peers.

These factors, along with caring and committed teachers, administrators, caregivers and students alike, will enable iSEEK Academy to address the large majority of special needs students (approximately 70%) through the implementation of specific instructional approaches and learning strategies via a consultative service model. Included in this group would be mild to moderate disabilities in the following categories:
- Vision acuity difficulties
- Auditory deficiencies
- Health concerns
- Developmental articulation
- Developmental expressive language
- Developmental receptive language
- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills
- Developmental reading (dyslexia)
- Developmental writing
- Oral expression
- Written language
- Spelling
- Memory
- Handwriting
- Developmental arithmetic
- Reasoning
- Emotional/Behavior
- Social communication
- Attention disorder

More serious and profound cases of the above, as well as specific physical and pervasive developmental disorders (e.g., autism, Asperger's, Rett's Disorder, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder), neurological disorders (e.g., Multiple Sclerosis), and physical disabilities will require direct services. These services will be provided through contracts with local service providers, hospitals, and non-profits.

As a public school, iSEEK Academy through its policies and procedures shall comply with all of the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. seq. (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504). iSEEK Academy will provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) to children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, identifying, evaluating, planning educational programs, and implementing placements in accordance with those Acts.

C. Describe the teaching methods that will be used to deliver instruction and assess academic performance. How will this pedagogy enhance student learning?

iSEEK Academy begins with a fundamental commitment to involve certified teachers in the learning process. In relationship with its corporate sponsors and supporters Vantage Laboratories and Vantage Learning, the Academy has identified dozens of fully prepared professional educators and administrators, some former school principals and superintendents, who have committed to the Academy’s Mission and to its success, and who stand at the ready to devote themselves to achieving the Academy’s goals and objectives. This commitment is in stark contrast to many distance learning programs that rely solely on computer interaction or broadcast lectures to deliver learning with teachers included, if at all, purely to answer questions. Some of
these “help-line” teachers are expected to serve as many as 1,000 students across multiple grades and even different curriculums. Instead, the iSEEK Academy approach:

- Assigns a certified teacher or highly qualified teacher – we shall strive for a student-teacher ratio of less than 10 to 1
- Uses assessment data and teacher feedback to develop a Personalized Adaptive Learning Pathway for each student
- Uses technological monitoring and teacher notes to measure each student’s progress

**To Personalize Student Learning, Teachers Will Be Required to Spend More Time in Analyzing Individual Student Performance** | iSEEK Academy will have a variety of analytical tools available to make the process of analyzing student performance efficient. In addition, since students in a virtual program do not meet regularly in a traditional classroom environment, certain aspects of classroom management are not required, including many administrative duties and discipline matters. Furthermore, teachers will be using a standardized curriculum as the foundation for their instruction so that intensive daily lesson plan preparation is not required. Since the increased time for personalization and communication parent and student is offset by the elimination of many management and administrative tasks, the iSEEK Academy teacher will be able to work the same hours as a regular classroom teacher while providing a higher level of services to each individual student.

**Our Virtual Program Can Accommodate Varying Student Needs** | since students in a virtual program expect to create their own educational schedule, iSEEK Academy recognizes that professional educators must be available beyond a normal school day to accommodate students working at night, during weekends, or even during holiday breaks. Because the learning program is defined and revised at periodic intervals during the year by the teacher, students are able to proceed through assignments during times when their teacher is not immediately available. However, during those times, it is important that a resource can answer questions concerning assignment specifics (e.g. how to perform a science experiment, the location of a reference source, the answer to a difficult mathematical problem). iSEEK Academy will use virtual tutors for this purpose, with a rotation of virtual tutors on call.

The iSEEK Academy program repositions the teacher’s role in virtual learning to its appropriate importance in ensuring quality education. The teacher’s traditional responsibilities for creating lesson plans, delivering instruction, monitoring student performance, and classroom management have been recalibrated in this setting to focus on student performance through increased personalization and individual communications. The proposed instructional model has been based on this realignment of teacher responsibilities and the addition of other certified teaching resources combined with high levels of parental involvement.

**Bricks and Mortar Drop-By Learning Centers** | iSEEK Academy shall enhance its virtual program through a series of physical drop-by learning centers. Currently, iSEEK Academy has identified and made provision for use of three physical locations within Bucks County, Pennsylvania, wherein students, parents, teachers and administrators may congregate, meet, and spend time together learning and developing a sense of school community. These facilities have been provisionally leased and shall be fitted with all requisite technologies to be utilized in furtherance of the Academy’s mission and objectives.

**Interventions and Study Groups will be Used to Provide Targeted Support to Students** | iSEEK Academy will employ a multi-tied intervention model so that every student has access to the resources they need to be successful:

- Tier 1 – Core Instructional Program
- Tier 2 – Supplemental Programs and Supports
- Tier 3 – Alternative Programs

For students struggling academically, teachers and students will meet on a weekly basis to discuss issues and develop and intervention plan and strategies for improvement. As part of the
student interventions and remediation, study groups with teacher and virtual tutors will be conducted for students struggling to master similar content. The study groups and tutoring sessions will provide students with the opportunity to delve deeper into an objective or skill in a supportive environment.

Figure 3: Three Tiers of Intervention

Tier 1 - Core Instructional Program
- Differentiated Instruction
- Skill Instruction
- Live, synchronous instruction
- Ongoing teacher professional development

Tier 2 - Supplemental Programs and Support
- Live synchronous remedial intervention
- Targeted skills instruction
- Online reading intervention
- Personalized Adaptive Learning Pathways

Tier 3 - Alternative Programs
- Alternative course program
- Special education support

iSEEK Academy recognizes that many students enter a grade level well below standards for reading and math. Students requiring extra support will be identified in the enrollment progress based upon preliminary assessments. To address all potential remediation challenges, the Academy will employ a variety of acceleration strategies and interventions, tailored to the content of classes to create relevance to each student’s instructional program. iSEEK Academy will use an acceleration model that acts as a scaffolding for new learning. Acceleration provides learners with intervention that helps students organize thinking, activate prior knowledge, and provide the vocabulary that students will need to understand new concepts or skills. By building the capacity of the teacher to develop high-quality, engaging instruction, by providing targeted strategies for building student skills, and by promoting a school culture that focuses on individual needs and aspirations, we aim to improve student outcomes in achievement.

D. Attach the school calendar and identify hours of the school operation, as per Section 1715-A(9).

The September 2014 opening of iSEEK Academy will be timed to coincide with the beginning of the regular academic year for schools in Pennsylvania, and the regular academic program will be fundamentally coordinated with the traditional public schools, even while iSEEK Academy students enjoy more flexible use of their learning time. iSEEK Academy students must complete the equivalent of at least 180 school days (equaling 990 hours) within each academic year, regardless of how that time is scheduled. A sample calendar for the 2014-2015 academic year is provided as an Attachment.

To grasp the unique approach to learning at iSEEK Academy it is useful to visualize a typical day for teachers and for students.
Teachers | will work the same number of minutes and hours per day as they would work in a typical brick-and-mortar school. What happens during those minute and hours, however, is very different. Rather than working with students in large groupings, iSEEK Academy teachers will work with students one-on-one or in small groups.

Table 4: Sample Teacher Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Teacher Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Prepare for daily lessons, review emails and message boards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m.– 8:40 a.m.</td>
<td>Advise small groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:40 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Score assessments, update comments in student files, update learning pathway, plan interventions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Teach small groups, meet with individual students (30 min. lunch break)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Conduct phone conferences with individual students and their parents, provide intervention and remediation, address individual issues, respond to individual student/parent queries, resolve issues via Webmail and phone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students and Parents | students and parents will follow a daily schedule that best meets the individual student’s learning needs. An example follows, although specific times may be adjusted significantly.

Table 5: Sample Student Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Teacher Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 a.m.– 8:40 a.m.</td>
<td>Small group (meet synchronously online)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:40 a.m.– 11:40 a.m.</td>
<td>Core academics: English, Mathematics, History, Science (40 minutes per topic)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:40 a.m. – 12:00 noon</td>
<td>Contact teachers for instructional support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Lunch and physical activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m.– 3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Additional core academics: foreign language plus review and study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00 p.m.– 4:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Special projects; check email and prepare for tomorrow, contact virtual tutor for homework assistance as needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation: Describe effective teaching methods, curriculum, and a specific plan to meet the needs of ALL students that are consistent with the mission of your school.

4. School Accountability:

A. What methods of self-assessment or evaluation will be used to ensure that the school is meeting its stated mission and objectives?

Stage 1: Target Setting | Before each school year begins, the principal and the Board members using the rubrics, will meet to discuss the school’s mission and objectives and establish targets for key areas of achievement expected for regularly scheduled class and curriculum cycles. The administration Board shall clarify and understand their expected roles, their duties and required competencies to effectively carry out their work. Progress on the targets will be intermittently revisited throughout the year. The school will be evaluated on key areas, among those: attendance, parent surveys, standardized testing, student grades, high school graduation rates, employment rates after high school, college admission after high school, and professionalism.

Stage 2: Mid-Year Review | Mid-year reviews will be conducted by the Board members. The purpose of the mid-year review is to discuss the school’s progress. Evaluators will use data (e.g. attendance, grades, parent surveys, graduation rates, entrance into workforce or college, logs, etc.) and from other secondary sources (e.g. hardcopy work), to discuss and review the progress
of the school using the targets set from Stage 1. Possible adjustment to the targets from Stage 1 may be made.

**Stage 3: End of Year Review** | End of the year review will be conducted at the end of the school year. The same evaluation rubric will be used. Evaluators will again use data (e.g. attendance, grades, parent surveys, graduation rates, entrance into workforce or college, logs, etc.) and from other secondary sources (e.g. hardcopy work), to discuss and review the progress of the school using the targets set from Stage 2. The evaluator will give the school an overall rating.

**B. How will teachers and administrators be evaluated? Describe your standards for teacher and staff performance.**

**Teaching Staff** | Helping teachers to become effective educators is perhaps the most important step any school can take to raise student achievement\(^9\), because of two assailable reasons: (1) teaching is one of the most important factors in student achievement\(^{10}\) and (2) that improving teacher effectiveness can raise overall student achievement levels\(^{11}\).

For these reasons, iSEEK Academy strongly believes that it is important to focus on teacher effectiveness and will be designing an evaluation system that is linked to improving the effectiveness of our teachers. Using the published set of performance standards designed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) (426) as a guide, iSEEK Academy will design a detailed set of rubrics reflecting qualities in key areas that iSEEK Academy believes an effective teacher should encompass. These rubrics will be used as the basis for the evaluation of teachers and for the teachers’ own self-evaluation. When new teachers are hired, they will be given a copy of this set of rubrics, so that they will be able to familiarize themselves with iSEEK Academy’s focuses and its expectation of the qualities an effective teacher should possess. The principal or her specially assigned designate will be designated to evaluate the teachers. The Board shall ensure that all evaluations have been carried out carefully and objectively. The most diligent due process in decision-making based upon such evaluations shall be assured.

**Stage 1: Target Setting** | At the beginning of the school year, or when newly hired, the principal, using the rubrics, will meet with the teachers to explain the school policy and focus, and then discuss and set targets in key areas for mid-year, end of the year, and other relevant and important timelines of the school year. The principal shall help teachers to clarify and understand their expected roles, their duties and required competencies to effectively carry out their work. Progress on key targets will be revisited throughout the year. Teachers will be evaluated on key areas of subject/content mastery, teaching and learning methods, interpersonal communication, student care and progress, parent interaction, and professionalism. Expectations will be qualified according to the teacher’s position and portfolio. Both teacher and the evaluator shall work diligently to find agreement on and document recommendations for improvement. A copy of the evaluation rubric will be made and given to the teacher while the original copy will be kept by iSEEK Academy.

**Stage 2: Mid-Year Review** | Mid-year reviews will be conducted by the principal. The purpose of the midyear review is to discuss the teacher’s progress. Evaluators will use data (e.g. attendance, grades, logs, etc.) and from other secondary sources (e.g. hardcopy work), to discuss and review the progress of the teacher using the targets set from Stage 1.

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from Stage 1. Possible adjustment to the targets from Stage 1 may be made. The purpose of this evaluation system is to seek improvement in the effectiveness of our teachers; therefore, appropriate support (e.g. professional development courses, new materials, etc.), in key areas where the teacher needs assistance or intervention, or has perceived low performance standards, will be provided. Similarly, both teacher and evaluator will write their comments and sign-off the document (the evaluation rubric). A copy of the evaluation rubric will be made and given to the teacher while the original copy will be kept by iSEEK Academy.

**Stage 3: End of Year Review** | An end of the year review shall also be conducted at the end of the school year. The same evaluation rubric will be used. Evaluators will again use data (e.g. attendance, grades, logs, etc.) and from other secondary sources (e.g. hardcopy work), to discuss and review the progress of the teacher using the targets set from Stage 2. The evaluator will give the teacher an overall rating for his or her individual key areas and an overall rating for the teacher’s performance.

If a teacher receives a low rating in a particular key area, that teacher will be expected to remediate his or her relative weaknesses with an approved professional development course within six months of the evaluation. Failure to do so will result in the teacher being placed on probation.

Any teacher receiving an overall “does not meet expectation” rating will be required to remediate his or her areas of weakness through approved professional development. The teacher will create a remediation plan for him or herself, specifying the professional development that he or she will pursue, and will submit the plan to the Academy. Principal and teacher will sign the agreed upon course of action. This signed agreement will serve as a commitment by the teacher to address weaknesses. Failure to complete the agreement will constitute grounds for teacher termination, as determined by iSEEK Academy.

**Non-Teaching Staff** | Non-teaching staff will be evaluated by a manager together with the principal. The evaluation will be accomplished in a manner similar to the teaching staff using rubrics designed according to job function. When newly hire, non-teaching staffs will be given a description of their job function. The description may be updated as needed by iSEEK Academy approval and by providing proper notice to all. Similarly, individual professional development will be considered in the evaluation process of non-teaching staff, including workshops, seminars, software and technology training.

Based upon the performance review, each non-teaching employee will be given a rating of “frequently exceeds expectations,” “sometimes exceeds expectations,” “meets expectations,” or “does not meet expectations”. A course for improvement shall be developed and explained for lower performing employees. Remediation will include a timeline for completion and periodic review.

**Principal** | according to his or her role and responsibility as an educational leader, the principal will be evaluated in the following five key areas:

- **Key Area 1: School Vision** | she or he will promote the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation and stewardship of iSEEK Academy’s vision that is shared and supported by the community.

- **Key Area 2: Instructional Leadership** | she or he will promote the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development.
Key Area 3: Management of Learning | she or he will promote the success of all students by ensuring the management of iSEEK Academy’s technology and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Key Area 4: Family and Community Collaboration | she or he will promote the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, and responding to diverse community interests and needs.

Key Area 5: Professional Ethics | she or he will promote the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner. Multiple forms of data and mediums will be used to obtain a holistic view of the principal’s performance (e.g. portfolio, surveys, interviews and feedbacks from stakeholders, etc.). However for a further degree of accountability, the principal will be subject to an annual performance review conducted by the Board and will be judged based upon attainment or progress toward the school’s stated quantitative annual school goals (e.g. AYP, PSSA score, parents’ satisfaction survey, etc.).

Performance Management of Teaching and Non-teaching Staff | the ratings for the principal, teaching staff and non-teaching staff will be considered by the Board in determining retention, assignment, and salary increases. Depending on the setting and quantitative annual school goals (e.g. AYP, PSSA score, parents’ satisfaction survey, etc.) set by the Board, additional bonus may be made out to teachers and administrator.

Professional development opportunities that Teaching and Non-teaching Staffs experience will be noted in each individual’s professional portfolio and considered in their annual performance review.

In addition to budgeting for professional development opportunities, iSEEK Academy will establish protocols and opportunities for the sharing and dissemination of learning within the school community, as to learn in isolation without the benefit of discussion and sharing would limit the purpose of professional development

C. How will your school be accountable to the parents of the children attending your school?

Grade Books and Data Tools | parents and teachers will be able to log on and view directly the attendance as well as grades and other performance indicators of their students. Parents will also be able to communicate directly with teachers. Teachers will have immediate access to a grade book that will track all results and serve as the basis of changes in the student’s learning plan. A key aspect of iSEEK Academy’s assessments is the detailed feedback that is provided by the teachers beyond the simple right/wrong grading of many traditional assessment vehicles. iSEEK Academy will also use a variety of advanced data visualization tools that will provide students, parents, teachers, school administrators, institutional education partners, regulators, and researchers with views of how our students are performing.

Scheduled Conversations and Open Contact | parents have the opportunity to contact teachers at all times via Webmail. Teachers will also send regular updates on student progress. Phone conversations can be scheduled as needed, with periodic conversations occurring each year to discuss student progress. These conversations will include the student, teacher, and parent.

Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), Town Hall Meetings, and Parent Surveys | a PTO will be formed to manage parent-school events, evaluation, and town hall meetings. Through the outlet of PTO town hall meetings, parents can gather as a virtual community to share concerns about the school, discuss procedures and policies, and plan events. The PTO will also manage the collection of monthly survey data that measure parent satisfaction.
Semi-Annual Community Reports | two times per year—in January as an interim report and in June as part of the annual report described below—the school will account for its progress against these measures to all stakeholders, including parents/guardians, the community, and the PDE. In addition, iSEEK Academy may contract periodically with an outside evaluator to assess the school's overall performance against its mission on a longer-term basis.

Regular Review of School Budgets and Financial Records | iSEEK Academy will submit to all financial audits and comply with all required audit procedures, including an annual audit by the PDE Comptroller's Office.

Annual Independent Audit | iSEEK Academy will be audited annually by an independent certified public accounting firm according to the same guidelines applicable to public school systems in Pennsylvania. The cost of the independent audit shall be borne by iSEEK Academy and is planned for within the proposed budget. Copies of the audit will be submitted to the PDE within 180 days of the end of the fiscal year.

Annual Report/Program Audit | at an agreed number of days after the end of each school year, iSEEK Academy will submit a report prepared by an external agency which attests to: (a) the accuracy, validity and reasonableness of academic achievement and programmatic results reported by iSEEK Academy to the PDE; and (b) iSEEK Academy compliance with the provisions of the charter. This performance information will be used in assessing renewal options for the charter.

D. Discuss your plan for regular review of school budgets and financial records.

The treasurer of the charter shall deposit the funds belonging to the charter school in a depository approved by the Board and shall at the end of each month make a report to the charter Board of the amount of funds received and disbursed by him or her during the month. All deposits of charter school funds by the charter treasurer shall be made in the name of iSEEK Academy. The Board shall invest charter school funds consistent with sound business practice only in the following instruments:
- United States Treasury bills.
- Short-term obligations of the United States Government or its agencies or instrumentalities.
- Deposits in savings accounts or time deposits or share account of institutions insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund to the extent that such accounts are so insured, and for any amounts above the insured maximum, provided that approved collateral as provided by law therefore shall be pledged by the depository.
- Obligations of the United States of America or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the United States of America, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith of the Commonwealth, or of any political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania of any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the political subdivision.

All Investments shall be subject to the standards set forth in PA 24 PS 4-440.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code. The school treasurer shall settle his or her accounts annually with the Board for each school year.
E. Describe your system for maintaining school records and disseminating information as required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

iSEEK Academy will protect, secure, and maintain the security and privacy of all student records. Student educational records that are kept in hard copy will be maintained in a locked file room in locked file cabinets. Student information kept electronically will be restricted. Everyone entering a student record will sign in using a protected password that will record anyone having accessed a particular student’s records. Parents will have the right to access, seek to amend, or consent to disclosure of their children’s educational records except when the school either has in its possession or has been provided information by appropriate authorities that a court order exists denying same.

Access to Education Records | Parents and students of iSEEK Academy will have access to view their child’s/their own educational records upon written request (forms will be provided) as required by FERPA. Records request shall be written.

Parents’ requests for corrected understanding or perspective on a record perceived to be inaccurate would be scheduled for consideration. If the result is deemed less than acceptable by the parents, they will be offered the choice of a hearing to amend the records. If the hearing does not result in the desired amendment of the records, the parents will be offered the opportunity to place a written statement that will be both kept in the record and disclosed with the educational records except in the following situations:

- When a parent or student is seeking to change a grade or disciplinary decision.
- When the parent or student is seeking to change the opinions or reflections of a school official or other person reflected in an education record.
- When a parent or student is seeking to change a determination with respect to a student’s status in special education programs.

Required IEPs will be maintained, revised, and re-evaluated in accordance with federal and state law. iSEEK Academy will follow IDEA and FERPA guidelines for protecting and keeping confidential information relating to the special needs of students and, in compliance with Federal Laws 93-308 and 93-568, will present the following for the information of parent(s) and/or guardian(s) and students.

- Student records are open for review and inspection by parents/guardians or students 18 years of age or older. Students 16 years of age or older or who are emancipated have the right to give informed consent regarding their records, with some exceptions. Information regarding students 14 years of age or older with HIV/AIDS or an STD may be released by the student only.
- Appointments may be made with the principal’s office for viewing cumulative records of grades and achievement test scores.
- iSEEK Academy, in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) permits parents and/or guardians or students to do the following:
  - Inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days of the day iSEEK Academy receives a request for access. Under state public disclosure law, iSEEK Academy must acknowledge the request in writing within five (5) working days and, unless the documents are presented at that time, an estimate will be provided as to when they will be available within the 45-day response period. Parent(s) and/or guardian(s) or eligible students should submit to the principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected;
  - Request amendment of the student’s education records that the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) or eligible students believe to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s rights to privacy. They should write the school principal, clearly identify the part
of the record to be amended as well as specify why the information in question is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s rights to privacy. If iSEEK Academy decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student, iSEEK Academy will notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) or eligible student of the decision and advise them of the right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent(s) and/or guardian(s) or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing;

- Consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by iSEEK Academy as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the Board; a person or company with whom the iSEEK Academy has contracted to perform a special task (such as attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility;
- File a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education under Section 99.64 concerning alleged failures by iSEEK Academy to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA follows:
  Family Policy Compliance Office
  U.S. Department of Education
  600 Independence Avenue, SW
  Washington, DC 20202-4605
- Students of majority age (over 18) will have parental rights regarding issues related to their educational program.

Disclosure of Education Records | In compliance with FERPA, iSEEK Academy will require written, dated, and signed parental consent before disclosure of student education records.

Disclosure of Education Records Without Parental Consent | iSEEK Academy will disclose student records without parental consent only when such disclosure is necessary for public or school safety or as commanded by a Court of competent jurisdiction and only when such disclosure is allowed under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act or its implementing regulations, as amended.

Annual Notification | iSEEK Academy will prominently post on its website or otherwise properly notify parents annually of their ability to:
- Access and review their children’s educational records.
- Request correction of inaccurate or misleading information.
- Consent to appropriate disclosures of personally identifiable information.

The above Annual Notification will also be included in the Student and Parent Handbook.

F. Describe your system for maintaining accurate student enrollment and withdrawal information as required under Section 1748-A, Enrollment and Notification.

iSEEK Academy recognizes and acknowledges the significance of child accounting. iSEEK Academy will access and use the required forms mandated by the PDE and the school district of residence. As a charter school, iSEEK Academy understands that funding is enrollment based. Attendance and accounting personnel will communicate student enrollments and withdrawals. iSEEK Academy will make the notification to school districts of origin of students within the period mandated by Charter School Law its top priority. iSEEK Academy staff will be responsible to
provide all information, which will be included in the enrollment and withdrawal packets and will, within 3 days of receipt, notify the iSEEK Academy staff. iSEEK Academy staff will submit all the necessary information to the district of origin on the next district school day or day of school office operation, whichever comes first. In an effort to secure enrollment and withdrawal data, iSEEK Academy will use a data storage program to maintain current student data, including (but not limited to) enrollments and withdrawals for the purpose of accounting for PIMS and the PDE and school district child accounting forms.

G. Describe plans to evaluate student performance.

iSEEK Academy will adhere to the same accountability measures, administer the same assessments, and follow the same proficiency measures as all public schools in Pennsylvania. iSEEK Academy will use a variety of internal assessment tools, including a standards-based technology-facilitated pre- and post-test. iSEEK Academy various assessments combined with top-quality curriculum and instruction to improve student achievement and maintain a high level of accountability, as described below and show in the accompanying visual representation.

Figure 4: Student Evaluation Process

iSEEK Academy's assessment efforts will begin with a thorough placement process and progress assessment, offered online, which will help to customize the student's academic program and formulate the Personalized Adaptive Learning Pathway. iSEEK Academy will also utilize ongoing online assessment to measure student progress on the curriculum and a commercially available standardized assessment tool to measure student gains over the school year.
Placement Process | as part of the application process, iSEEK Academy will work with parents/guardians of incoming students to determine the appropriate grade level placement for each student. This process will be used to identify appropriate supports for students who are working significantly above or below grade level.

Baseline Achievement Data | to the extent that state standardized test results are available for an incoming student, these results will be integrated into that student’s basic informational profile; likewise, results for state standardized tests that students take while enrolled at iSEEK Academy will also be included in the student’s longitudinal data profile, along with data from personalized adaptive learning exercises and benchmark assessments. These data will be used to identify students in need of intervention and to track progress within the year and year-over-year.

Yearly Progress | iSEEK Academy’s model is based upon the foundational idea that though each student has an individual learning style, all students have a capacity for learning and growth which will allow them to meet and ultimately exceed standards. Utilizing standards-based, best of class technologies including longitudinal evaluations and adaptive learning technologies, including pre- and post-tests, iSEEK Academy will be able to predict student performance on the PSSA and gauge each student’s academic growth over the course of the year.

Ongoing Informal Assessments | during each phase of their curriculum mastery, students will engage in assessments that tap into all levels of student thinking. Such assessment activities include: scored daily assignments, daily “checks for understanding” requiring students to apply and integrate new skills in a thoughtful manner, and regular online quizzes to measure understanding of newly presented material. Other more subjective assessment activities will include written journal responses and group discussions. The student’s teacher will generally monitor student performance on these assessments.

Unit Assessments and Portfolios | each subject in the iSEEK Academy curriculum is broken into logical units of study. Throughout each unit, students are required to complete a series of assessments, which may include written compositions, science lab reports, short answers and essays, book responses, and a variety of work samples, which will make up a student’s portfolio. Students will also complete quizzes and unit tests. While the quizzes are brief and frequent (occurring after every third or fourth lesson) and are designed to reinforce what students are learning, the unit tests are more comprehensive and occur at the end of an entire unit. Online assessments provide families with immediate objective feedback, while offline assessments provide valuable reflection and expertise from certified teachers. Student report cards and grades will ultimately include a balanced combination of quizzes, tests, work samples (portfolio items), and teacher feedback.

State Standardized Testing | at in-person, proctored locations, iSEEK Academy students will participate in the PSSAs. Results of these annual assessments will be analyzed carefully and integrated into the overall plan for improving each student’s performance.

In addition to the assessment methods described above, iSEEK Academy’s selected assessment platform, student information system, and longitudinal data unification platform will gather highly granular data on every student’s performance every day. During each phase of their curriculum mastery, students engage in many different types of evaluations, both formal and informal. Formal assessments include quizzes, unit tests, skills checks, portfolio items, and graded discussions. Informal assessments include the variety of methods teachers use to gather ongoing feedback about student progress, such as email, phone conversations, and review of student work samples.

H. How will student development toward the school’s overall learning goals and objectives be measured?

Please see response to G.
I. Describe how student evaluation will be used to improve student achievement and attain the stated learning objectives.

Please see response to G.

Explanation: Describe your commitment to high academic standards for all students; well-developed evaluation program for either school-developed or standardized testing; use of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) or the PA Alternate School Assessment (PASA); and an analysis of assessment results to improve student performance.

5. School Community:

A. Describe the relationship of your school with the surrounding community.

Although the iSEEK Academy will be a virtual school, the Academy has secured access to physical locations within Bucks County, Pennsylvania and may add physical locations elsewhere as needed. iSEEK Academy shall enhance its virtual program through a series of physical drop-by learning centers. Currently, iSEEK Academy has identified and made provision for use of three physical locations within Bucks County, Pennsylvania, wherein students, parents, teachers and administrators may congregate, meet, spend time together learning and developing a sense of school community. These facilities have been provisionally leased and shall be fitted with all requisite technologies to be utilized in furtherance of the Academy’s mission and objectives. A Parent Advisory Council will be established with members from across the state to support parents and to guide the iSEEK Academy staff and the Board.

B. Describe the nature and extent of parent involvement in the school’s mission.

The basic educational model calls for parents to serve as advocates and supporters for their children. Parents have access to the school database so they may monitor performance on an ongoing basis. They are expected to validate student attendance and can communicate directly with students’ teachers and advisors through the integrated school data system. The school offers ongoing training and support to help parents carry out their important role. In addition, teachers will employ progress reports to communicate students’ academic achievement to students and their parents.

C. Describe procedures established to review complaints of parents regarding operation of the charter school.

Parents will be encouraged from the time their children enroll in the iSEEK Academy to let school staff members know immediately if they become aware of a problem or if they have a complaint about the school. They will be in contact regularly with the teachers, who will be alert for any issues or dissatisfaction. Parents will also be informed in the Student and Parent Handbook that they will receive each year of a formal complaint/grievance procedure that will include the name and contact information for the principal, timeframes in which grievances will be handled, and steps in the process.
Explaination: Describe expectations of family members (or guardians) to be active participants in their children’s education and the integration plan of the school to collaborate with other community organizations.

6. Extracurricular activities (athletics, publications and organizations):

   A. Describe the program of extracurricular activities planned for the charter school.

   iSEEK Academy encourages students to partake in extracurricular activities. Using our virtual platform, interested students can connect to others via online clubs such as book club, debate club, environment club, art club, science club, Quizbowl, student council, chess club, yearbook club, poetry club, and cooking club. Additionally, Community Coordinators will organize events, trips, study sessions, and other activities that may have educational and/or socialization benefits for club members. iSEEK Academy students will have the opportunity to participate in sports leagues at their local public school and iSEEK Academy will support students who want to participate in other leagues, classes, and clubs. Community Coordinators will be charged with the task of developing relationships with local schools, districts, and other providers of activities (e.g., YMCA) in order to arrange participation and access for iSEEK Academy students. In some cases, this may include special privileges or pricing. iSEEK Academy shall enhance its virtual program through a series of physical drop-by learning centers. Currently, iSEEK Academy has identified and made provision for use of three physical locations within Bucks County, Pennsylvania, wherein students, parents, teachers and administrators may congregate, meet, spend time together learning and developing a sense of school community. These facilities have been provisionally leased and shall be fitted with all requisite technologies to be utilized in furtherance of the Academy’s mission and objectives.

   B. Describe whether any agreements have been entered into or plans developed with the local school district regarding participation of the charter school students in extracurricular activities within the school district.

   When arranging for local activities, the Community Coordinator (with support from the principal) will approach school district officials in the local communities where iSEEK Academy students reside regarding participation in district extracurricular activities. Given state directives to local school districts to include charter school students in such activities unless otherwise prohibited, iSEEK Academy anticipates developing multiple such arrangements around the state.

   Explanation: Identify organized activities that complement the mission of the cyber charter school and the programs in the students’ school districts of residence.

7. Technology Support:

   A. Describe how your cyber charter school uses technology to provide a significant portion of its curriculum and to deliver a significant portion of instruction using the Internet or other electronic means.

   iSEEK Academy shall secure license agreements with Vantage Laboratories and Vantage Learning to procure, use and secure support for a host of well developed, industry accepted online teaching and learning tools, including summative and diagnostic online delivery platforms,
rostering, reporting and attendance databases, online communications and administrative facilities, as well as state-of-the-art network capabilities. iSEEK Academy shall make good use of this technology as the primary medium of instructional delivery, supported and enhanced by print and hands-on curriculum materials, and frequent consultation with program teachers. Students will use the school’s system to log in and view/complete assignments as well as to conduct instruction. The students will also be guided by the teacher in accessing the Internet and various online tools for additional resources.

Assessment | benchmark and interim assessments of both a computer adaptive and linear nature will be created, assigned, and delivered online through a secure portal. Students, teachers, and parents can easily view reports and the student’s portfolio as the student moves through assignments and achieves mastery of materials.

Personalized Learning | based upon student proficiencies as determined through assessment and the teacher’s evaluation, iSEEK Academy will create a Personalized Adaptive Learning Plan for each student which will include lessons, activities, and a full plan for mastery of materials. This plan will take the form of a technology enhanced Personalized Adaptive Learning Pathway through which the student will work through videos, activities, lessons, and materials. As the student masters skills, he or she can take additional mini assessments to show progress and build a portfolio and sense of achievement.

Web-Based and Customized Resources | outside of Personalized Adaptive Learning Plans, the teacher can assign available materials or create new materials for the student. Teachers will utilize a pool of high quality instructional materials curated by top institutions and offering best of breed instruction.

Student Information System | iSEEK Academy will use a modular and highly customized student information system in order to track key indicators for success/intervention and in order to round out the student profile which will be used for data analysis.

Data Usage | iSEEK Academy will utilize an internet cloud based data unification tool to provide longitudinal data at a student, class, and school level. This system will provide instantaneous information regarding student progress or student indicators of need for intervention. Such technologically advanced data use and storage will not only ensure student success, but will ensure teachers are refining their skill set and school resources are being efficiently and transparently utilized.

B. Describe how you will improve student achievement through effective uses of technology.

Personalizing education to meet the needs of each individual student and to increase the likelihood of a successful outcome requires data to appropriately assess learning, monitor progress, and efficiently act on the information to guide the student towards a successful outcome. Each student has his/her own story, and that story – to be acted on through technology in an efficient, cost-effective way to improve student outcomes – can be told through data. Data collection will include: A unique student identifier that follows them through all iSEEK Academy systems to tie all student data together; Information (for both students and parent/guardians) regarding student level enrollment, demographics, early assessment, placement exams, contact information, and student interests and desires; Student level test data and school history; Course level completion, assignment, and assessment data; and data on time spent, logon times, etc.

iSEEK Academy’s support team will be made up of technology facilitators, teachers, and parents/guardians and will ensure that no student falls through the cracks. Too often in online learning, keeping abreast of how the student is faring in the program and how events or situations in their learning environment impact that performance does not receive the attention that the student deserves. Where many online programs orient their program by course, iSEEK Academy
program will be oriented by individual and course, so that there are reinforcing, intersecting points of contact to ensure that the student/family receives support as needed. At the course level, the teacher supports the student. At the individual level, the teacher will work directly with the student (and his/her family) to provide support. The parent/guardian will play a critical role in interfacing with the teacher relative to his/her child.

**Teacher** | ISEEK Academy instructors will be carefully selected to be excellent teachers, who are deeply committed to helping each student achieve success as online learners. They will be well trained in the implementation of the curriculum and the management of online classes. The teacher will be the primary point of contact for student questions regarding the course content and will answer questions, evaluate assignments, and provide timely feedback to students.

**Parents/Guardians** | parents and guardians are considered valuable members of the support team supporting each student and as such are apprised of student progress and problems on a regular basis. Each student's parent or guardian receives at minimum a monthly grade update for each course. If the student's progress or performance in any class is unsatisfactory, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian to notify him/her of the problem and, where possible, to enlist support in the implementation of the interventions recommended by the support team.

**Student Support Programs** | the likelihood of success of an online learner is significantly higher when that student's initial experience is positive and when she/he feels a clear sense of personal direction. A positive experience is marked by student confidence, excitement, connection, support, and a feeling of momentum. iSEEK Academy believes that the crucial time period for student engagement and retention begins weeks before the student officially starts his/her studies and lasts at least for the first semester. By the very nature of technology and taking online courses, rich data that indicates activity (login, assignment submission, time of study, assessment completion) can be readily reported on and monitored. To ensure a strong beginning, iSEEK Academy will ensure the following actions:

- Initial Learning Assessment to determine learning style,
- Personal Interview to determine personal interests,
- Collection of Personal Data,
- Assignment of an iSEEK Academy Student Mentor (fellow student),
- Assignment of an iSEEK Academy Mentor as part of Support Team,
- iSEEK Academy online Orientation module (for students and parents),
- Readiness check prior to school start,
- Initial Day 3 Check In (for technical issues and startup),
- Day 14 Check In (further follow-up), and
- First quarter review w/parents.

**Continuous Monitoring/Support** | Continual monitoring of student progress to improve student outcomes and completion is essential. As noted above, to ensure continuing progress, iSEEK Academy will ensure continuous progress monitoring, parent reviews at least monthly and a summer development plan every year.

C. Describe the technical support that will be provided to students and parents.

Extensive technical support will be provided to students and parents of iSEEK Academy, teachers, and other staff members. Every effort will be made to ensure that both students and parents have access to the technical support required to maximize achievement and student productivity while online.

Training sessions will be conducted by iSEEK Academy’s teachers and vendor trainers for students and parents during each enrolment period. Students and parents will be taught how to set up their home network and access the online school. When necessary, a contractor contracted by the school will be sent to the home to help with training or setting up network.
Throughout the school year, technical assistance will be available by toll-free number, by Webmail, or web chat from 8 am to 6 pm each school day, and from 9 am to 1 pm on Saturday and on Sunday. The toll free number also acts as a chat line for further technical support for those needing to be walked through a procedure.

Every student’s computer will be configured exactly the same way, and the configuration will be set by iSEEK Academy. Each school computer will have recovery software installed. This will allow the technical support to remotely determine if a particular problem is a hardware or software issue. When it is not feasible for iSEEK Academy to provide appropriate technical support, additional technical support will be provided to parents and students by hardware and software providers. For example, if the hardware or software problems are related to a particular piece of hardware or software, they will be directed to that particular company’s technical support for assistance.

The hours of available support and types of support will be adjusted based on the demand for such support, and feedback obtained through regular surveys.

D. Describe the policy for ensuring the privacy and security measures that will guarantee the confidentiality of data gathered online.

iSEEK Academy will abide by all Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) regulations. A registration ID, username, and password will be given to each student admitted to iSEEK Academy. The online curriculum will also be password protected. iSEEK Academy will utilize passwords, and secure data transmission to reasonably ensure that school records are confidentially maintained.

In terms of Internet safety, iSEEK Academy includes an Internet filter—usable at the parents’ discretion—as part of its technology package for families. In addition, while the parent and teacher are ultimately responsible for acceptable and safe computer use, iSEEK Academy does require that each parent and student agree to follow a set of acceptable use guidelines. Before using the iSEEK Academy provided computer, all students under the age of 18 must obtain parental permission and must sign the “Internet and Electronic Mail Acceptable Use Policy and Permission Form.”

In addition, the school server that houses student data will be protected by a firewall, which will only allow for needed and specified connections. This additional security measure will protect against outside attacks and close possible security holes.

The teachers and school administrators are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of the student records. Permission to access student’s information will only be granted on a need to know basis.

E. Describe the methods to ensure authenticity of student work and the proctoring of exams.

Integrity of student work is an important orientation topic for students and parents, and is featured in the contract each family signs to be part of the program. iSEEK Academy teachers will be specially trained in questioning techniques focused on probing for understanding. The student/parent handbook will include a code of ethics that addresses authenticity and integrity. For all required state tests, iSEEK Academy students will report to a proctored location (usually a public school in their area), where they will be subject to the same test security as other students participating in these exams.

Verifying the authenticity of student work is problematic in both traditional and online school environments. The school will implement a number of policies and procedures in order to ensure students are doing their own work, including use of online tools to identify the amount of borrowed
or plagiarized material in written assignments and the use of password-protected mid-term (semester) and final exams. iSEEK Academy will continually monitor, implement, and create best practices in ensuring the authenticity of student work in an online environment.

**Academic Dishonesty** | iSEEK Academy will have a zero tolerance policy for academic dishonesty. Cheating (giving or receiving information) and plagiarism on class work will result in a zero grade for the assignment. Students will not have the opportunity to complete additional assignments to make up lost points. The following procedure will be used for identification and discipline for instances of academic dishonesty: The teacher will notify the student in writing that an instance has been identified in which the work’s authorship is in question and request that the student respond in writing within three school days. The instructor will copy the principal on the email. The teacher will send the principal an email identifying the alleged infraction and providing evidence to support the allegation. Evidence may include links to websites that have been plagiarized, references to —collaboration catchers— embedded in quizzes/exams, time and date stamps on assignments, inconsistency in quality of work, comprehension of concepts, verbal print, etc. The principal will contact student and parent/guardian for comment. The principal will make a decision based on the evidence presented and inform the instructor and student via Webmail of the decision. The student will be placed on internal academic watch. The incident will be reported to the student’s other instructors and the student’s work will be routinely run through plagiarism-identification software. Additional disciplinary action may be taken.

**F. Describe equipment such as hardware, software and Internet connections to be provided to students.**

Families will receive a stipend equal to the cost of the monthly Internet access provider(s) recommended by iSEEK Academy, which will be used to purchase new Internet access or to pay towards an existing service. Families from economically disadvantaged households without a phone line will receive a stipend to purchase telephone service. The initial software provided for the family computers will include the Microsoft Office Suite® and an Internet filter. The hardware configuration and software provided will be updated from time to time based on the instructional program. Complete information regarding the proper usage of this hardware and software, including the process for returning it, will be provided to the parent and student at the beginning of the school year and reinforced through the student/parent handbook. A parent or guardian shall acknowledge either in writing or electronically, the receipt of this information.
II. Needs Assessment

1. Statement of Need:

   A. Why is there a need for this type of school?

   Pennsylvania families have expressed a strong need for a school like iSEEK Academy. An independent survey conducted with families in Pennsylvania found a very high level of interest in a high quality virtual school that provides a print curriculum supplemented by computer-based activities where every child is assigned a certified teacher. The high level of interest is a result of many varying concerns for parents. For urban parents, the greatest concerns are poor test scores, a lack of options, and increasing violence in public schools. Additionally, virtual schools can provide the flexibility, career focus, student tracking, and relationships that at-risk students need to stay in school or reengage in the education system. For these reasons and more, recent studies show that the number of K-12 students involved in some kind of online learning is growing faster than expected, with more than 4 million students taking courses and nearly 300,000 in full-time virtual schools and increasing by 46% every year.

   In Pennsylvania, America and across the globe, a basic understanding of STEM concepts and skills is vital to being a productive member of our workforce and society. Nationally, jobs in STEM-related fields are among the fastest growing careers. On an international scale, the ability of the US to compete in a global economy depends on our ability to produce a highly qualified generation of researchers, workers, and teachers in the widespread fields of science, engineering, and technology. iSEEK Academy intends to educate students so that they are prepared to take advantage of these careers by preparing them in STEM education. Beyond STEM-specific careers, employers in every field are looking for employees who can work effectively with others to creatively solve problems. These skills are particularly highlighted in a STEM education.

   The issues facing our nation and the world today also have explicit connections to STEM fields. As citizens, confronting and solving issues like the energy crisis, the threat of terrorism, and the national healthcare debate will require knowledge of STEM fields and the skills that a STEM education builds. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, professional information technology (IT) jobs will increase 24% between 2006 and 2016. However, as jobs requiring a solid background in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are growing – more students are choosing not to major in these areas. If students continue to pursue degrees and careers in fields other than STEM related areas, the U.S. will find it difficult to compete in the global economy. Further, the U.S. will not be able to meet its future workforce needs. Without a solid foundation in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, students will not be qualified for many jobs in the workplace – including many jobs beyond traditional engineering or science-related jobs.

   The initial force behind STEM education initiatives was to develop future engineers and scientists through the implementation of specialty or magnet high schools focusing on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. There are only 100 schools specializing in mathematics.

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science, and technology serving 37,000 students nationwide. While this approach works for students enrolled in these schools, the majority of children in most school districts in the country do not have STEM school options. Instead, in most school districts, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics are included as part of the entire curriculum – not as a specific focus. Many of these STEM subject areas are not integrated into the curriculum or taught on an everyday basis. For example, 29% of K-5 teachers report teaching science two or fewer days per week. It is vitally important that students from various backgrounds be provided with access to STEM education.

B. Explain why the cyber charter school model is an appropriate vehicle to address this need.

District Schools Report Poor Test Scores | In general, many at-risk students residing in the State of Pennsylvania are underserved by their local school district. For example, according to the 2011 PSSA results from the School District of Philadelphia, which is in Corrective Action II for the ninth year, 59% of students were proficient or advanced in math and 53% in reading. This compares with statewide numbers of 77.1% proficient or advanced in math and 73.5% proficient or advanced in reading. Among 11th graders, the statewide numbers are 66.4% proficient or advanced in math and 69.1% in reading, compared with only 41.5% proficient or advanced in math and 51% in reading for economically disadvantaged students.

While there have been slight improvements in 2011 test results overall (results in 2010 indicated 76.3% of students scored proficient or advanced in math; 72% in reading), last year 249 fewer schools made AYP—a result of higher performance targets in NCLB. Furthermore, the data show a persistence of significant achievement gaps between White and Asian compared to Black and Latino students across the state and in Philadelphia. For instance, in Philadelphia district schools 75% of White students and 85% of Asian students were proficient or advanced in math, compared to 53% of Black students and 55% of Hispanics. In reading, 70% of Whites and 72% of Asians were proficient or advanced compared to 47% of Blacks and 46% of Latinos. The academic challenges they face in school, combined with a lack of understanding of their post-graduation options and the educational pathways they must pursue to achieve their goals, have resulted in only 45% of minority students in the School District of Philadelphia graduating on time and only 18% obtaining a bachelor’s degree.

Virtual schooling can be a solution to poor test scores as struggling students are given the flexibility to move at their own pace and teachers are able to target areas of growth needs. iSEEK Academy students will have the time to focus on the objectives that they are struggling with and move on from the ones they have mastered. Unlike a traditional classroom, virtual students have access to their teachers or a tutor throughout the day. Virtual teachers can be incredibly responsive to student needs and have the opportunity to work with students one-on-one and in small groups well beyond what exists in the bricks and mortar environment. Additionally, because of versatile hiring practices that result from working remotely, virtual students will have access to teachers who are extremely knowledgeable in their subject areas.

Lack of Curricular Options Leave Rural and Low-Income Students with Fewer Post-Secondary Options | Low-income, urban schools are less likely to offer their students upper level and college preparatory courses. These students are also less likely to graduate from high school

\[17\] Ibid.
\[18\] Ibid.
\[19\] http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/school_assessments/7442
\[20\] http://www.thenotebook.org/blog/114116/pssa-scores-released-officially
and begin post-secondary education or enter the workforce.\(^{22}\) Although nearly all students aspire to attend college, many students’ school experiences do not prepare them for postsecondary options. Just 32% of high school students nationally graduate from high school ready for a four-year college.\(^ {23}\) Many times rural schools have too few students enrolled in a specific AP course, which causes the school to cut the class from course offerings. More than 40% of high schools—particularly those serving rural, low-income, and minority youth—do not offer any AP courses.\(^ {24}\) Districts are turning to online learning to meet the needs of many students. In fact, more than 75% of schools and districts say they need online learning to offer courses not otherwise available and to meet the needs of specific groups of students; 70% are looking to online learning to offer AP or college-level courses and 60% need online learning for credit recovery.\(^ {25}\)

Virtual schooling allows iSEEK Academy students to take practically every class in existence and prepare for the rigor of college academics. Through a virtual setting, we will be able to bring together students from the rural areas to participate virtually in hard to find and recovery classes. iSEEK Academy will have literally at their fingertips every class they need to accomplish their post-secondary goals.

**Incidents of Violence and Misbehavior Occur Daily, Which Distract Students and Put Their Safety at Risk** | parents across the state are concerned about the frequent incidents of violence that are occurring in Pennsylvania’s urban school districts. Enrollment in the Pittsburgh Public Schools has declined by 4,000 students in the past six years and parents cite violence as a primary reason for enrolling their students elsewhere.\(^ {26}\) Violence in Eastern Pennsylvania’s schools is also at an all-time high. In the past five years, 30,333 serious incidents of violence were reported in the School District of Philadelphia, which is an increase of 17% over five years. These incidents range from drug use and assaults, to shootings and abductions.\(^ {27}\) Reading, PA, is also struggling with violence and reports that school fights occur daily.\(^ {28}\)

Misbehavior can also be a great detractor from student achievement. As many as 42% of students who drop out of school report that it was a result of spending time with other individuals who were not interested in learning.\(^ {29}\) Virtual schooling allows students to work in the comfortable environment of their own home or in an alternate safe setting. iSEEK Academy will not be distracted by the violence or misbehavior that occurs in district schools.

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The virtual environment also allows teachers to focus on teaching and learning instead of behavior management, which is a common distractor from teaching. iSEEK Academy teachers will instead spend their time tracking student progress, assessing data, teaching live lessons, and determining best strategies and interventions for each individual learner. Outside of serious incidences, we recognize that misbehavior can still take place virtually and thus, we will have a strict student code of conduct that outlines the expectations of iSEEK Academy students.

Many Students are Disengaged or at Risk of Disengagement | students who come from low-income families, have low academic skills, have parents who are not high school graduates, have disabilities, speak English as a second language, are children of single parents, are pregnant or parenting, have a pattern of disciplinary problems or poor socio-emotional development, have been held back, or who have a history of inconsistent school attendance are all particularly at risk of dropping out. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, one in three high school students fail to graduate from high school. These students face a lifetime of economic challenge, earning 29% less than high school graduates and half as much as college graduates.

Pennsylvania’s dropout problem can be directly linked to societal problems, including crime, health concerns, unemployment and a loss in tax revenues—issues that touch everyone and cost Pennsylvanians billions every year. In fact, three out of every four Pennsylvanians in our state prisons failed to complete their education. In addition, dropouts are four times more likely to be unemployed than high school graduates. The chance of dropping out increases the longer it takes someone to complete school and, unfortunately, 33 school districts in Pennsylvania have preliminary four-year graduation rates of less than 60%. Among these are our largest urban districts, including Allentown, Harrisburg, Lancaster, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Reading.

The Silent Epidemic reports that 43% of students drop out of school because they missed too many days to catch up. Many times, this is a direct result of needing to work, having young children, taking care of a parent or grandparent, or having a health issue that causes a student to miss school frequently. The flexibility of virtual education can allow students the opportunity to be successful no matter the circumstances they face.

Virtual schools, including iSEEK Academy, are well suited to use the best practices identified by the Pennsylvania State Education Association in their recent report, The Power of a Great Education. These practices include using individualized curriculum with a career-learning component, building an information system that can pinpoint at-risk students, and ensuring that students have meaningful relationships with the adults at the school. iSEEK Academy manages data that allow teachers to track the progress of every student in terms of academic achievement, attendance, and participation and easily customize learning based on student needs. Virtual schools can track and analyze data easily since much of the work and all of the assessments are

completed online, automatically recording the outcomes and immediately tipping off teachers to students in need.

The report by PSEA also notes “some of the most successful dropout prevention programs focus on providing high-level academic curricula that are connected to the real world through out-of-school experiences such as service learning and hands-on learning in business and industry settings.” A virtual education allows students the opportunity to connect the curriculum to their own interests via internship experiences, service learning, and capstone projects. iSEEK Academy will encourage students to take initiative in finding real-world opportunities that are of interest to them and provide time for students to participate in those initiatives.

**Schools Need to Prepare Students for a Technology Driven Workforce** | students need access to the latest technology to prepare for the work force. In fact, “on average, each tech job supports three jobs in other sectors of the economy. Information technology has a proven record of accomplishment of economic success, having recently accounted for more than a third of U.S. gross domestic product growth and nearly two-thirds of corporate capital investment. By 2018, information technology jobs are projected to grow by 22%, the fastest of all professional occupations.”

Clearly, all virtual school students will have a technological advantage over their district school counterparts. Students will interact with technology every day to complete lessons and assignments using best of breed technologies. iSEEK Academy students will be required to collaborate remotely on projects, preparing them for a work force where working remotely is a normal part of operations. iSEEK Academy students will also use virtual research and library tools to complete research, which is a critical skill for college success.

**Explanation:** Provide recognition of potential opportunities to improve service and expand choices for students and parents.

**2. School Demographics:**

A. What are the school’s enrollment projections for each of the first five years? What is the school’s ultimate enrollment goal? What grades will be served? What is the entry age for kindergarten students and the entry age for beginners? How many students are expected to be in each grade or grouping?

iSEEK Academy expects to enroll 50 students for the first year (2014 - 2015), averaging 17 per grade in third through fifth grade. In year two, the school will add an additional grade and an additional cohort equaling 25 students per grade. In year three, the school will add an additional grade and an additional cohort equaling 29 students per grade. In year four, the school will add an additional grade and additional cohort equaling 42 students per grade and reaching the total enrollment goal.

**Figure 5: Student Enrollment Projections**

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B. Describe the community or region where the school, particularly the administrative office, will be located.

iSEEK Academy will attract students throughout the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania because it is a virtual charter school. Our offices will be based in Bucks County, PA.

C. Why was this location selected? Are there other locations suitable to the needs and focus of the school?

This location was selected for iSEEK Academy because of our ability to be housed in high-tech facilities suitable for administrative work and for educators to teach virtually. The building is equipped with much of the technology that will be needed for a virtual school and is big enough to house the teachers, administrators, and support staff. There is also space where small group classes and workshops can be run and projects can be completed as needed.

D. Describe any unique demographic characteristics of the student population to be served including primary languages spoken.

iSEEK Academy provides a personalized educational experience for each student based on that student’s individual learning style and mastery levels. iSEEK Academy will personalize our students’ educational programming according to the needs of the student.

iSEEK Academy will likely attract students who are currently being home-schooled or enrolled in other cyber charter schools due to the nature of the instruction and the need for home support. All students will be accepted regardless of race and ethnicity and both males and females will be accepted into the program. Students will be in grades 3-8 and as such will be aged 8-14. It is expected that the primary language of the students will be English, but accommodations will be made if and when an ESL student enters the school.

Explanation: Provide a description of the students to be served and the community in which the school will be located.

3. District Relations/Evidence of Support:

A. Provide evidence that your cyber charter school has the sustainable support to operate.

iSEEK Academy has substantial support to operate. iSEEK Academy has assembled a highly qualified team and has begun the process of recruiting additional personnel and partnerships. The Board members will be chosen because of the skills they bring, e.g., educational expertise, business, legal, and financial knowledge, and will contribute to strong operations of the school, both academically and administratively. They will also be selected because of a willingness to make a real commitment to iSEEK Academy and its mission and programs. This will include providing time, wisdom, and assistance in securing financial resources.

B. What efforts have you made to notify the district(s) from which your charter school would draw students?

iSEEK Academy will, within the month of October 2013, send out a letter to all 501 school districts with our intent to open in for the school year 2014 - 2015.

C. What efforts will be implemented to maintain a collaborative relationship with school districts?

In order to maintain a collaborative relationship with school districts, the principal will work closely with the school districts and foster a relationship of open communication and exchange of ideas. Ensuring open communication with the school districts will be one of the principal’s main
responsibilities. We will ensure timely response to districts requests for information and timely notify them of enrollments and withdrawals.

**Note:** Please attach letters of intent that were sent to all school districts from which the cyber charter school could reasonably expect to draw students.

D. Convey the scope of community backing for the proposed charter school and its founding coalition. Document community support among teachers, parents, students, community members, institutional leaders and others through the use of letters of support, surveys, or other tangible means.

iSEEK Academy is currently soliciting letters of support from local community organizers and politicians. We will begin hosting community outreach meetings for parents and have them complete surveys and pre-application forms.

**Explanation:** Document efforts to foster open communications with local school districts; evidence that the founders inspire the confidence of their targeted community; evidence that the program provides an attractive educational alternative to students and parents; and evidence that the breadth of community support extends beyond the core group of founders.
III. Governance

1. Profile of Founding Coalition:

A. Describe the makeup of the group or partnership that is working together to apply for a charter, including the names of the founders, their background and experiences, and references for each.

The Coalition of iSEEK Academy includes Mr. Peter J. Murphy, Dr. Sydelle Mason, Mr. Robert Patrylak, Mrs. Lorna Maguire, Prof. Stephen Patrylak, Paul Edelblut, and Dr. Larry Bosley. The founders have diverse and extensive experience in education, business, and legal arenas. They are committed to establishing and providing an innovative and novel alternative to both standard and cyber charter educational forums. Their biographies are included below.

Mr. Peter J. Murphy resides in New Hope, Bucks County, Pennsylvania. He is a very familiar face in New Hope and prominent member of the community in and around Bucks County. Mr. Murphy is an Engineering graduate of the University of Connecticut, who as a young man started many successful technology companies, including Vantage Laboratories and Vantage Learning. Those business now employee hundreds of people in Bucks County, and internationally. The Vantage family of companies has delivered educational assessment and diagnostic technologies statewide and in many school districts in the United States and abroad. Vantage counts as its clients: the State of Florida Department of Education, the American College of testing (ACT), the Graduate Management Admissions Council, the Medical College Admissions Council, as well as hundreds of school districts around the country. Prominent corporate clients include Apple, Microsoft, and Oracle. Each day, billions of users of iPhones and related technologies actively use Vantage technologies for spellcheck and grammar check and other linguistic facilities. During the past 18 years, Vantage assessment platforms have delivered over 200 million diagnostic or summative assessments to schoolchildren across the United States. In 2000, Vantage was the first company to conceive of and develop a completely online assessment delivery, scoring and reporting platform for use by States and school districts.

Dr. Sydelle Mason has an accomplished background directing both profit and non-profit organizations with a successful record of accomplishment of growth and expansion. Sydelle leads all aspects of teacher training and professional development for McCann Associates and Vantage Learning. She is a leader with outstanding communication skills who takes the initiative, implements effective operational procedures and achieves profitable results. Dr. Mason holds a Doctorate degree in Education from Rutgers University.

Mrs. Lorna Maguire resides in New Hope, Bucks County, Pennsylvania with her husband and two young children. Lorna has over 20 years of experience in education as a teacher and administrator and also co-created the award-winning, research-based, online writing instruction and assessment program My Access!®. She is also a parent, with two school-aged children. In her work leading development efforts for all Vantage programs, Lorna has used her technical and educational expertise to create and refine products such as SPMS that serve to use technology to support district wide student achievement.

Prof. Stephen Patrylak resides in Gladwyne, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania with his wife and two children. As one of the nation’s first Enrolled Actuaries, Prof. Patrylak founded and led one of the most successful Actuarial and Investment consulting firms in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for 15 years before retiring from business to pursue his calling as an Educator. He is currently a faculty member at the Haverford School in Haverford, Pennsylvania, where he has taught Mathematics for the past 12 years. As an Adjunct Professor at Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Prof. Patrylak specializes in teaching Education candidates, specifically, Graduate-level Technology in Education and Senior-level Decision Analysis. Mr.
Patrylak holds undergraduate degrees from both Central High School and Temple University, both in Philadelphia, PA. He also earned his Master’s Degrees in Comparative Literature from LaSalle University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Paul A. Edelblut is a member of various nonprofit boards. Paul has over 20 years of experience in education and business. He is also a parent of school-aged children. In his work leading efforts for Vantage programs, Paul used his technical experience to create and refuel products. He currently works for Learning Ally as their Vice President of Programs and Services.

Dr. Larry Bosley has been an integral member of the Pennsylvania educational community for over 50 years. Working through every level of public education, from teacher to superintendent, to educational vendor, Larry is now a business owner of a property company. He brings a strong understanding of business and education to our team.

B. Discuss how the group came together, as well as any partnership arrangements with existing schools, educational programs, businesses, non-profits, or any other entities or groups. Provide information on the manner in which community groups are involved in the charter school planning process.

The Founders have an extensive history of collaboration on a wide range of educational and business projects. Most are also parents of Pennsylvania students and have taken an active part in the educational community as business leaders, educators, and parents. Coming together in 2013, this team realized a vision of providing best of class personalized adaptive learning and data driven instruction to students through a cyber-charter format. The Founders committed to the common goals of quality and higher educational achievement and an enhance quality of life for our children by seeking to create a new and innovative school of choice as an alternative for children who stand ready to be challenged and meet the growing global demand for advanced education in the areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

C. Include any plans for further recruitment of founders or organizers of the school.

The iSEEK Academy is committed to including additional founding members as circumstances warrant, and as talented experienced individuals express interest in the Mission and objectives of the Academy.

Explanation: Describe a group that is composed of people with a range of professional skills capable of the organizational, financial, pedagogical, legal and other skills required to operate a functioning public school.

2. Governance:

A. Describe the proposed management organization of the school, including the following requirement:

An affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board of Trustees of the cyber charter school, duly recorded, showing how each member voted, shall be used in order to take action on the following subjects:

- School calendar (must include 990 hours or 180 days of instruction for secondary students [grades 7-12] and 900 hours or 180 days for elementary students [grades 1-6]. School cannot be kept open for students or staff on Sundays, Fourth of July, Memorial Day,
Thanksgiving, the first of January, Christmas, or Saturdays unless Monday is the weekly holiday for the entire school year)

- Adopting textbooks
- Appointing or dismissing charter school administrators
- Adopting the annual budget
- Purchasing or selling of land
- Locating new buildings or changing the locations of old ones
- Creating or increasing any indebtedness
- Adopting courses of study
- Designating depositories for school funds
- Entering into contracts of any kind where the amount involved exceeds $200
- Fixing salaries or compensation of administrators, teachers or other employees of the charter school.
- Entering into contracts with and making appropriations to an intermediate unit, school district or Area Vocational/Technical School for the charter’s proportionate share of the cost of services provided or to be provided by the foregoing entities.

The Board of iSEEK Academy will be comprised of individuals representing groups with a stake in providing students with personalized adaptive learning opportunities and using data to drive education. These groups include parents, special education experts, educators, industry leaders, and business leaders. The Board will govern pursuant to and in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation, the bylaws of iSEEK Academy, and Charter School Law and the Public School Code. As required, an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Board of iSEEK Academy, duly recorded, showing how each member voted, will be used in order to take action on the following subjects:

- Setting the school calendar;
- Adopting textbooks;
- Appointing or dismissing charter school administrators, and other employees on the recommendation of the principal;
- Adopting the annual budget;
- Purchasing or selling of land;
- Locating new buildings or changing the locations of old ones;
- Creating or increasing any indebtedness;
- Adopting courses of study;
- Designating depositories for school funds;
- Entering into contracts of any kind where the amount involved exceeds $200;
- Entering into contracts with and making appropriations to an intermediate unit, school district or area vocational/technical school for the charter’s proportionate share of the cost of services provided or to be provided by the foregoing entities;
- Authorizing major resource expenditures, substantial program changes; addition or development of new programs, and facility and inventory issues; and
- Electing the officers of the Corporation and determine their terms.

As a public school, iSEEK Academy will strictly adhere to the governance rules and procedures dictated by the PDE. iSEEK Academy will have a Board, appointed by the Founding Coalition, which will govern all operations of the iSEEK Academy. The Board will be responsible for working with the principal to oversee the day-to-day management functions of the school and facilitate the reporting relationship between the Board and the administrative staff. The Board will be responsible for ensuring that the school operates in compliance with the charter and with all applicable laws and for ensuring the school’s sustained financial viability. An affirmative vote of a
majority of the members of the iSEEK Academy Board will be required to take action on the above-listed items, as is noted in the by-laws.

As public officials, the members of the iSEEK Academy Board will be subject to the provisions of the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act, 65 P.S. §1101-1113 (―Ethics Act‖) and are required to file Statements of Financial Interest & Code of Conduct by May 1 each year. In addition, as members of the Board, they will have legal obligations under the Charter School Law and the Public School Code. A Board has the responsibility to be a good and effective steward of public money, and needs to provide independent oversight of the charter school’s administrators.

B. How will the Board of Trustees be selected?
The iSEEK Academy Board will have a minimum of five and a maximum of seven members. The original membership will be determined by the founders. The Board will ensure that at least one board seat is filled by a parent of a student of the iSEEK Academy. Further, the initial Board will consist of those individuals actively recruited for content expertise and organizational competencies.

C. What steps will be taken to maintain continuity between the founding coalition’s vision and the Board of Trustees?
Sustaining the continuity of the vision of the founders will result from careful scrutiny of prospective Board members’ commitment to iSEEK Academy’s mission, as well as continual education of Board members as to the scope of its legal responsibilities, including the Board’s duty of loyalty, obedience and faithfulness to the school’s mission. To that end, the Board will plan to have annual retreats where progress and outcomes are analyzed and plans for continuity are considered.

D. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the board.
The Board will be responsible for ensuring the mission of the school is followed and that the financial affairs of the school are conducted in an appropriate manner. The Board is responsible for the complete operations and budget of iSEEK Academy, including:

- The subjects noted in section A,
- Development of school policies and will oversee compliance with said policies,
- Long-term planning,
- Monitoring the performance of the school via student performance and student, parent, and staff satisfaction,
- Evaluating and monitoring the activities of the principal and the other members of the school team, and
- Evaluating the functioning of the Board.

The Board will be responsible to provide direction to the principal and in adoption of the annual performance goals in accordance with NCLB and applicable PDE requirements. The Board will also provide advice and counsel as appropriate concerning issues of substance.

The Board will exercise all powers that may be necessary and proper to further the mission and operation of the school. In addition to the items noted above required to have a recorded voted, the Board will have the power by an affirmative majority vote to perform and take action to:

- Authorize or establish a Committee of the Board or appoint a qualified hearing officer to hold hearings regarding recommendations of suspensions or expulsion of students; and Authorize or establish a Committee of the Board or appoint a qualified hearing officer to hold hearings regarding recommendations of suspension or dismissal of employees with or without cause;
  - Consistent with the previously mentioned, pursuant to the approved school policies, assembling to hear the recommendations of the principal regarding any employee issue. Specifically, following the principal or the principal’s designee’s recommendation, the Board will 1) make a determination based on the information
produced at the meeting; or 2) establish a fact-finding committee to gather additional evidence for the Board’s examination of the issue. Upon the submission of all evidence, the Board will render a decision pursuant to the employee’s contract of employment.

- Discharging the duties of a Board of Appeals regarding complaints and disputes arising out of the operation of the school that cannot be resolved by the staff, administrators, or the principal.

The Board will have and exercise the corporate powers prescribed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and more particularly described in the Charter School Law. The principal will manage the school. The essential function of the Board will be policy-making, the assurance of sound management, and active participation in the provision of necessary funds. The Board has the ultimate responsibility to determine general, academic, financial, personnel, and related policies deemed necessary for the administration, development, and ongoing operation of the charter school in accordance with its stated purposes and goals.

**Board Reporting** | the principal will regularly report to the Board on the performance of iSEEK Academy against its goals including; student outcomes, program quality, financial performance, operational efficiency, and compliance with Charter School Law and the Public School Code. Specific reporting topics and schedule will be agreed upon between the principal and the Board. At a minimum, the principal will report four times a year on the following topics (quarters below are fiscal) to coincide with the normal progression of the school year:

- **1st Quarter (Spring):** Financial performance for preceding fiscal year; program changes and updates for upcoming school year; operations plan for upcoming school year; marketing plan for upcoming school year
- **2nd Quarter (Summer):** Student results from the preceding school year; preparedness report for the upcoming school year; marketing results to date vs. plan; satisfaction results for students and parents
- **3rd Quarter (Fall):** Debriefing on fall enrollment and school start; enrollment numbers for FTE reporting; budget update vs. new enrollment numbers
- **4th Quarter (Winter):** Fall semester performance results; budget presentation; statewide exam results

**Financial (and Programmatic) Audit** | iSEEK Academy will form an audit committee each fiscal year to oversee selection of an independent auditor, who will have experience with public school audits, and the completion of an annual audit of the school’s financial affairs. The audit will verify the accuracy of the school's financial statements, attendance and enrollment, and accounting practices, and review the school’s internal controls. The audit will be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles applicable to the school. It is anticipated that the annual audit will be completed within six months of the close of the fiscal year.

**E. What steps will be taken to facilitate a productive relationship between administrators and teachers?**

Building positive relationships between administrators and teachers is paramount to the overall learning objectives of the school. Research by the National Center for Education Statistics through the Schools and Staffing Survey has indicated that teachers who are supported by their administrators are more likely to be satisfied with their employment. There is not enough that can be said about the importance of teacher job satisfaction. To this end, the iSEEK Academy administration will provide monthly professional development opportunities during which teachers and administrators can interact outside of the classroom around issues of school concern, e.g., student achievement, increasing parental support, etc. In addition, teachers and administrators will be encouraged to participate in social activities that will be conducted throughout the Commonwealth on a regular basis. This too, will provide opportunities for teachers and administrators to interact with each other; and this type of visibility will afford opportunities for students and parents to see positive interactions among all of the staff at iSEEK Academy. The
F. Discuss the nature of parental and student involvement in decision-making matters where appropriate.

There will be a Parental Support Program established that will consist of parents from across the Commonwealth. Each region of the state will have a Parent Ambassador who will serve as the parent leader for that region. Each Parent Advisory Council member (potentially five in total) will be volunteers who make up a Parent Advisory Council, which will convene regular meetings and provide recommendations to the administration and the Board. A Student Government also will be impaneled. The Student Government will operate online, will have a President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary, and will be guided by staff to follow all usual parliamentary procedures per Roberts Rules of Order. The Student Government will make recommendations to the principal about student concerns.

G. Submit copies of the school’s Articles of Incorporation, by-laws and contracts, and other documents required by applicable law. Requirements for the bylaws are as follows:

- The bylaws must contain a provision for “failure to organize or neglect of duty”. Specifically, the bylaws must outline a removal procedure for the failure of a board member to perform his or her duties as outlined in the Charter School Law.
- No board member shall, as a private citizen, engage in any business transaction with the charter school of which he or she is a trustee, be employed in any capacity by the charter school of which he or she is a trustee, or receive from such charter school any pay for services rendered to the charter school.
- A charter school Board of Trustees shall have a designated treasurer who shall receive all funds including local, state and federal funds and privately donated funds. The treasurer shall also make payments out of the same on proper orders approved by the Board of Trustees, signed by the president or vice president of the Board. The treasurer may pay out such funds on orders that have been properly signed without the approval of the Board first having been secured for the payment of amounts owing under any contracts, which shall previously have been approved by the Board, and by which prompt payment the charter will receive a discount or other advantage.
- Procedures for dismissal of an employee must be contained in the by-laws.

iSEEK Academy’s Articles of Incorporation and draft by-laws are attached with this application as required. Please see “Draft Laws” in the Attachment section.

H. Submit board members’ names, addresses, phone numbers and resumes.

The founding coalition has not officially appointed Board members, but has selected Peter J. Murphy as the incorporator. The initial Board members who are being included (bios listed above) include:
I. Submit copies of the school’s management contracts, if any.
None.

Explanation: Describe the effective governance model; consistency with the mission; clearly defined roles of the Board of Trustees; teacher, student and parent input in school decision-making; and the well-developed, viable management structure.
IV. Finance and Facility

1. Financing:

   A. Develop a preliminary startup and operating budget. Use the Pennsylvania Department of Education budget templates available at http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/general_fund_budget/12777/pde-2028/606285; draft a preliminary operating budget covering all projected sources of revenue, both public and private, and planned expenditures.

   iSEEK Academy has developed preliminary startup and operating budgets, using the required templates. These cover all projected sources of revenue, both public and private, and projected expenditures. We have also created a monthly cash-flow statement for the first year to allow the school to meet monthly expenses when revenues are slow to materialize.

   B. Develop a purchasing procedure that addresses a competitive way to purchase goods and services.

   The iSEEK Academy by-laws will indicate that expenditures in excess of $10,000 will require prior approval of the Board after the submission of a minimum of three bids (the first time a contractor or vendor is used) to ensure competition and advertising where appropriate. Purchasing procedures used by the Board will be modeled after the requirements of the Public School Code.

   The Board will establish a revolving checking account with a $2,500 limit for the principal. From that account, the principal will be authorized to spend up to $200 on any single transaction for the purchase of supplies, materials, instructional aids, educational software, books, transportation, and/or tickets for special events. This checking account will be established with the signatures of the principal and/or the Business Manager. The principal's signature will indicate that the expenditure is consistent with the instructional needs of the school and consistent with the guidelines established by the Board. Upon receipt of adequate documentation, iSEEK Academy will be authorized to reimburse the checking account at appropriate times to reestablish a $2,500 limit out of the general school account.

   Trustees will develop additional procedures regarding purchasing and expenditures as the need arises.

   Note: For additional financing procedures see Section 1725-A of the Charter School Law.

   C. What fund raising efforts have occurred and/or are planned to generate capital or to supplement the per pupil allocations?

   To date, no fundraising has occurred, nor is it anticipated to be necessary. Founders have identified and agreed in principle upon very reasonably negotiated rates for office space, materials, computer network and facilities, student computers and the like. iSEEK Academy also anticipates operating with the help of public funds. Funds will also be solicited from foundations, corporations and interested parties for extra- and co-curricular programs and new academic tools that facilitate a vibrant learning community. Administrators and staff may confer, develop, write, and submit to various agencies grant proposals seeking additional funds as needed.
D. Describe the implementation of the following required financial procedures:

The treasurer of the charter school shall deposit the funds belonging to the charter school in a depository approved by the board and shall at the end of each month make a report to the charter Board of the amount of funds received and disbursed by him or her during the month. All deposits of charter school funds by the charter treasurer shall be made in the name of the charter school. The Board of Trustees of a charter school shall invest charter school funds consistent with sound business practice. Authorized types of investments for charter schools shall be:

- United States Treasury bills.
- Short-term obligations of the United States Government or its agencies or instrumentalities.
- Deposits in savings accounts or time deposits or share account of institutions insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation or the Federal Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund to the extent that such accounts are so insured, and for any amounts above the insured maximum, provided that approved collateral as provided by law therefore shall be pledged by the depository.
- Obligations of the United States of America or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the United States of America, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith of the Commonwealth, or of any political subdivision of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania of any of its agencies or instrumentalities backed by the full faith and credit of the political subdivision.

The treasurer of iSEEK Academy will deposit the funds belonging to the school in a depository approved by the Board and will at the end of each month make a report to the Board of the amount of funds received and disbursed by him or her during the month. All deposits of charter school funds by the charter treasurer will be made in the name of the charter school. The Board will invest charter school funds consistent with sound business practice and only in authorized types of investments for charter schools as defined by the Pennsylvania School Code. The school treasurer will settle his or her accounts annually with the Board for each school year and these accounts will be audited annually.

Financial procedures will be followed that entail a system of internal controls and checks and balances. All funds received will be deposited in a Board approved bank account and monthly reports of funds received and disbursed will be completed. The investment of school funds will be limited to short term certificates of deposit.

**Plans for Regular Review of School Budgets and Financial Records**

Internal audit reviews are planned for annual review of budgets and financial records and annual external audits will be scheduled in accordance with requirements for charter schools. On a monthly basis, a statement of income and expense will be prepared with comparisons to budget and, when applicable, to
prior year results. These statements will be reviewed by the school’s Executive Committee and will be presented at all Board meetings. In addition, a trial balance will be produced each month for review by the treasurer. The bank accounts will be reconciled each month and various internal control measures will be implemented. Included in the internal control measures will be the separation of duties for critical financial functions.

Note: All investments shall be subject to the standards set forth in 24 PS 4-440.1 of the Pennsylvania School Code.

The school treasurer shall settle his or her accounts annually with the Board of Trustees for each school year. Pursuant to 24 P.S. §4-437, the accounts of the cyber charter school treasurer shall be audited annually.

2. Facility:

    A. Provide descriptions of and addresses for the physical facilities, including the administrative office, and the ownership of the facilities and any lease arrangements.

ISEEK Academy is an online school, thus there is no requirement for a facility the size of a traditional brick and mortar school. Administrative facilities have been secured according to the address provided on the Application Fact Sheet.

    B. Explain how this site(s) would be a suitable facility for the proposed cyber charter school. Consider the necessity of renovation to the facility and compliance with applicable building codes and accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Describe the services of the facility including heating, ventilating, lighting, sanitary conditions and water supply.

This site is currently zoned, in good repair and currently in use as a business office, and therefore will meet the administrative needs of iSEEK Academy. The iSEEK Academy has also in recent days participated in negotiations to procure a new school building to be used as a drop-by-learning and community center in New Hope, PA. This building is only 12 years old, in absolutely perfect condition, and originally proposed as and built to house a school together with all requisite facilities.

    C. Discuss the plan for maintaining the facility on a daily basis (custodial) and extended basis (facility maintenance).

This is included within the agreement provided by the property owner and is included in the lease.

    D. Discuss any progress, partnership developments or other future steps towards acquisition of a facility/land.

While a current administrative office has been selected, iSEEK Academy is researching the possibility of acquiring suitable locations within Bucks County, PA to house a larger staff and possible sites for student/parent teacher meetings as well as recreational activities.

    E. Describe facility financing plans.

The holder of these facilities has entered into a tentative agreement to provide use of these facilities free of charge until the school has been approved.
3. Liability and Insurance

A. Describe the proposed cyber charter school’s insurance coverage plans, including health, general liability (including school operation, extracurricular activities and parent volunteer activities), property, and director and officer’s liability coverage (see Section 1727-A of the charter school legislation).

Insurance will be obtained based upon best practices of other schools and will provide sufficient coverage regarding health, general liability, extracurricular activities and parent volunteer activities, property, and directors’ and officers’ liability.

Explanation: Provide evidence of insurability in all areas identified above.

4. Child Accounting

A. Describe the proposed cyber charter school’s enrollment and attendance procedures.

Note: State child accounting procedures must be followed. (24 PS 13-1332)

iSEEK Academy will abide by the compulsory attendance guidelines as set forth by the PDE. Truancy will be handled as set forth by PDE procedures. Attendance will be taken each day and linked to the time and duration the student logs onto the school e-portal. The school will follow Commonwealth child accounting procedures (24 PS 13-1332). Students will follow the school calendar, which will include a minimum of 180 days of instruction. Students will be recorded into the schools e-portal each day. Additionally, teachers will contact the responsible adult regarding unexcused absences.

iSEEK Academy will collect all necessary enrollment data as required under Section 1748-A of Commonwealth Charter School Law (Act 22) and will report enrollment data to the PDE via forms 4059CS Instructional Time Summaries, 40262C Annual Attendance Membership Reports, and 4002CS Summary Reports of Aggregate Days membership. The school will utilize the e-portal student information software system to track enrollment data to ensure that its enrollment figures are up to-date and continuously monitored.

The procedure for withdrawal from the school will include the following steps: Notification of intent to withdrawal through request for a Withdrawal Form; Filing by parent or guardian of a completed and signed Withdrawal Form; Filing of a request by a parent or guardian to send the student’s records to the school to which the student is transferring; Notification the sending district of the student’s withdrawal.

Explanation: Cyber charter school funding is based on enrollment; therefore, a totally accurate child count is necessary to meet audit standards.
V. Administration

1. Recruiting and Marketing Plan:

   A. Demonstrate how you will publicize the cyber charter school to attract a sufficient pool of eligible applicants.

   iSEEK Academy will utilize proven methods to publicize the school in an effort to inform the community and solicit families and students interested in online learning. The school will leverage the relationship with the existing cyber charter schools and with small school districts that have limited capacity and/or expertise to serve learning disabled students. In addition, iSEEK Academy will utilize a combination of traditional media methods, such as direct mail, radio, and newspaper to further increase awareness within the target audience. The purpose of this publicity will be to direct interested parties to participate in numerous local community information sessions, or contact the school directly via phone or Internet. Brochures, letters, electronic mail, and other methods will be employed to market the educational programs and services to school districts across the State of Pennsylvania.

   B. What type of outreach will be made to potential students and their families?

   iSEEK Academy will use a variety of traditional media methods to reach families and students interested in online learning, but will also reach out in particular to community groups for, (a) home schooling, (b) personalized learning, (c) data driven instruction. In addition, iSEEK Academy will work with school districts to identify students who are struggling in school due to a personal learning style that conflicts with traditional school setting but may be better served through the wide range of online learning options available through iSEEK Academy.

   iSEEK Academy’s goal is to have the opportunity to meet face-to-face with interested families and students during one of the numerous locally held community information sessions. During these sessions, representatives of iSEEK Academy will present the educational philosophy, mission, goals, and describe in detail the educational methods used to ensure success. The school understands that online learning is not for everyone, therefore, time will be taken to clearly articulate the expectations that each family and student should have as it relates to the school, as well as the expectations iSEEK Academy has related to a student's course work and class participation. It our goal to use these community information sessions as a means to assist families and students in determining whether this alternative learning approach is a good fit for them.

   During these community information sessions, iSEEK Academy will provide information packages that will include general iSEEK Academy marketing collateral, a course catalog, course description, Pennsylvania testing requirements, and an enrollment form. For those families and students who are interested but unable to attend, the school will have staff available to conduct phone calls. Additionally, the same material provided could be requested via iSEEK Academy website.
Explaination: Develop a solid plan to attract sufficient students to operate a cyber charter school; publicize the cyber charter school; and ensure a match between the cyber charter school program and applicants’ educational and personal needs.

2. Admissions Policy:

A. Describe the admission methods and eligibility criteria you will use to select students.

iSEEK Academy will be a full-time, online, third through eighth grade public and will comply with §17-1723-A of the Charter School Law. Specifically, the school will be open to all resident children in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. iSEEK Academy will have an open admissions policy, based on the desire and motivation of those served, and will offer equitable services and opportunities to all students without regard to their demographic, cultural, racial, gender, or any other characteristics.

If more students apply to attend iSEEK Academy than the number of attendance slots available, students will be selected on a random basis (a lottery) from a pool of qualified applicants meeting the established eligibility criteria and submitting an application by the iSEEK Academy enrollment deadline. If the student is admitted, iSEEK Academy will record the students on the waiting list based upon when they applied. Anyone who applies after the lottery has been conducted will be added at the end of the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis. Enrollment preference will be given to a child of a parent who has actively participated in the development of the iSEEK Academy and to siblings of students presently enrolled in iSEEK Academy.

Non-Discrimination Policy | iSEEK Academy will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or veteran status.

Out-of-State Transfer | iSEEK Academy is a publicly funded school. Currently, students who are or will be residing in Pennsylvania for the 2014-2015 school years are eligible to attend.

Age Restrictions | the school admits students between the ages of 6 and 14. The iSEEK Academy recognizes that a child’s age may not be necessarily reflective of her development academically. Psychological and academic evaluation should not preclude younger children, ready for third grade to be excluded from participation at the Academy. Therefore, we propose to include and consider academically prepared children as young as six years of age for admission.

Non-English Native Language Speakers | iSEEK Academy will work with Non-English Native Language Speakers and will budget for the appropriate specialized language instructors based upon projections.

Special Education | students who qualify for a special education IEP or are currently receiving special education services outside the school’s capabilities must complete an enrollment counseling process during which the student’s current IEP and services will be discussed with the iSEEK Academy team.

504 Plan | students who qualify for a 504 Plan or are currently receiving accommodations or other services must complete an enrollment counseling process during which the student’s current 504 Plan and services will be reviewed with the iSEEK Academy team.

Expelled/Suspended Students | iSEEK Academy reserves the right to deny enrollment to students who are currently under suspension or expulsion. Enrollment of students under expulsion or suspension must be approved by the principal or designee.
Criminal Background | iSEEK Academy complies with state regulations regarding student privacy. However, for the safety of all students, the school will as a matter of course ask students to disclose whether they have been convicted of a crime and the nature of the offense. If the iSEEK Academy principal or designee deems that admitting the student would pose a significant risk to the health and safety of the other students, the principal may deny the student admission to the school.

Enrollment Windows | students may enroll in iSEEK Academy at any time provided space is available.

B. Explain administrative procedures to ensure compliance with laws pertaining to special education.

Identification | the iSEEK Academy will assume that all students enrolled may be in need of special education services and programs.

Evaluation | iSEEK Academy will conduct multi-disciplinary evaluations (―MDE‖) for students who attend the school and who are in need of special education services and programs or are thought to be in need of such services. The school will also be responsible for conducting re-evaluations for children with disabilities who have already been identified. Parents of iSEEK Academy students will have the right to an independent educational evaluation.

IEP Development | iSEEK Academy will develop an IEP for each student with disabilities who attends iSEEK Academy and/or will revise and existing IEP. The IEP will recommend placement of the student with disabilities in the charter school unless the IEP team determines that the IEP cannot be implemented in that placement, needs outside of the schools expertise and capacity, even with supplemental aides and services.

IEP Provision | iSEEK Academy may at its option provide the special education services determined necessary by the student’s IEP or it may contract with the Intermediate Unit or another party, including the local school district, to provide services. Such services will be paid by the school.

Due Process | parents may request an impartial due process hearing concerning the identification, evaluation or educational placement of, or the provision of a free appropriate public education to a student who is exceptional or who is thought to be exceptional, if the parents disagree with the charter school’s identification, evaluation or placement of, or the provision of a free appropriate public education to the student.

When disputes arise regarding the identification, evaluation, placement or provision of a free appropriate public education, a mediation process shall be available to resolve the dispute. iSEEK Academy shall provide all of the procedural safeguards to the students with disabilities who attend iSEEK Academy.

Authority | iSEEK Academy has the obligation and the authority to supervise and manage the provision of services to special education students who attend the charter school. The school will schedule all meetings, conferences, evaluations, hearings, etc. regarding the identification, evaluation and development of special education services and programs. iSEEK Academy will have the appropriate staff attend and participate in such meetings, conferences, evaluation, hearings, etc.

Confidentiality | iSEEK Academy will maintain the confidentiality of personally identifiable information regarding children with disabilities.

Special Education Staffing | as iSEEK Academy is a school designed for students with learning disabilities, it is projected that all professional staff will have special education certification as
required by PA Charter School legislation. The school will meet the needs of students with disabilities, as stipulated by the State of Pennsylvania’s Plan for meeting NCLB requirements.

C. Describe the timetable to be used for admitting students, including a plan for the admission lottery for students from both within and outside the district.

iSEEK Academy anticipates a student admittance timetable as follows:

Figure 6: Student Admittance Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November 2013 to April 2014</th>
<th>Late April 2014</th>
<th>Mid May 2014</th>
<th>Late May 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Application forms available at school administrative office or online at ISEEK Academy website</td>
<td>Admission lottery conducted (if necessary)</td>
<td>Admission notification and enrollment packets distributed to parent and children who have been accepted</td>
<td>Completed enrollment packets due back to ISEEK Academy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

D. Explain how these policies further the mission of the school in a non-discriminatory fashion.

In accordance with §17-1723-A of the Charter School Law, iSEEK Academy will not discriminate in its admissions policies or practices on the basis of intellectual ability, athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English language, or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a school district. In addition, the school will not discriminate in its admissions policies based on race, sex, color, national origin, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, or political affiliation.

**Academic Freedom/Student Rights** in addition to other rights established by law, each iSEEK Academy student served by or on behalf of a common school district will possess the following substantive rights, and will not limit these rights except for good and sufficient cause:

- No student will be unlawfully denied an equal educational opportunity or be unlawfully discriminated against because of national origin, race, religion, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, pregnancy, marital status, previous arrest, previous incarceration, or a physical, mental, or sensory handicap.
- All students possess the constitutional right to freedom of speech and press, the constitutional right to peaceably assemble (see Freedom of Assembly) and to petition the government and its representatives for a redress of grievances, the constitutional right to the free exercise of religion and to have their schools free from sectarian control or influence, subject to reasonable limitations upon the time, place, and manner of exercising such right.
- All students possess the constitutional right to be secure in their persons, papers, and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures.
- All students will have the right to be free from unlawful interference in their pursuit of an education while in the custody of a common school district.
• No student will be deprived of the right to an equal educational opportunity in whole or in part by a school district without due process of law.

The foregoing enumeration of rights will not be construed to deny or disparage other rights set forth in the constitution and the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania or the rights retained by the people.

_Explanation:_ Establish consistency with the mission of the school and the non-discriminatory policies for timely and realistic procedures for admitting students in accordance with charter school law (Section 1723-A).

### 3. Human Resource Information:

#### A. Describe the standards to be used in the hiring process of teachers, administrators and other school staff.

Online learning requires a new breed of instructor. While many face-to-face instructors have successfully made the transition to the online classroom, others have found that online teaching is not a good fit for them. Candidates for online instructor positions will be encouraged to take an online orientation course and self-assessment to become familiar at a detailed level with the expectations and roles of an online instructor. This orientation program will help prospective online instructors identify well in advance, whether online teaching is a viable teaching environment for them. Successful candidates will be thoroughly trained before assuming responsibilities in the online classroom (see —Instructor Training— below). Successful online instructors possess the following qualifications and personality traits:

- Passion for teaching
- Expertise in the subject matter
- High-level written communication skills
- Comfort with technology and technology-mediated communication
- Ability to work independently within a virtual community
- Flexibility in schedule and a willingness to adapt to students’ work schedules
- Ability to work with an inbox that will never be empty
- Comfort working in an — "open" classroom where details of communication are visible to parents, mentors, and administrators
- Deep personal motivation for exploring this alternative route of education.

Just as motivation is one of the most important factors in determining student success in an online environment, instructors who have a driving personal motivation for transitioning to the online classroom are often the most successful online instructors.

**Recruitment of Teachers** | instructors at iSEEK Academy must meet the following minimum qualifications, (a) hold at least a Bachelor’s Degree, (b) hold a current Pennsylvania state special education teaching certificate (or be in process of obtaining a reciprocal certificate). iSEEK Academy has already identified potential principal and teacher candidates via its and founders who have indicated they would have an interest in working for this school.

#### B. What is the targeted staff size and teacher/student ratio?

iSEEK Academy is targeting a student teacher ratio of ten students for every teacher. This is a low ratio, especially for a virtual setting. However, iSEEK Academy believes that even in a technologically advanced classroom, the highest value educational resource is the teacher. Therefore, we have budgeted for a student to teacher ratio of 10:1 in year one. As our projected enrollment grows in subsequent years, we will hire additional teachers in order to maintain a 10:1 ratio.
C. What professional development opportunities will be available to teachers and other staff?

The iSEEK Academy instructors will not only be highly qualified, they will also be highly trained to perform in their new role as online instructors. Most online instructors are emigrants in a land of digital natives; from the first day of class, they must convey a sense of comfort with and deep knowledge of not only the content, but also the technology used to deliver the content, organizational goals, their responsibilities within the organization, and how best to provide support for online students. To this end, an intensive face-to-face initial training session for new online teachers will take place over four days.

Best Practices In Online Communication And Classroom Management | including how and when to effectively use communication tools, including the discussion board, the chat room, and Webmail; how to identify and reduce opportunities for academic dishonesties; how to establish and maintain individual relationships with students; and how to accommodate the needs of iSEEK Academy students.

Course Content, Assessment, And Evaluation | face-to-face instructors use a textbook, formally present/expand upon content in the textbook, and develop/share supplemental assignments and activities to test student comprehension and ability to apply concepts. Online instructors also use a textbook (whether online, offline, or integrated into the course content), but the online course itself contains the formal presentation of content and assignments, activities, and assessments. The time an instructor would use to prep presentation and supplementary assignments in the face-to-face classroom is reallocated to one on one communication and feedback in the online world. Instructors are trained well in advance of course deployment in what content is available to the students, the modes in which it is delivered, and the specific requirements for assignments and assessments.

iSEEK Academy Operations, Policies And Strategies For Policy Implementation | to be an effective member of the educational team, online instructors must have a deep understanding of the mission and organization of iSEEK Academy and the needs and characteristics of the students and community of the school they are operating within. Instructors are educated about the policies that have been created to ensure students achieve the intended educational outcomes and are trained in strategies for implementing those policies in their online classrooms.

Effective use of Educational Software | educators will become well versed in not only use of educational tools and software, but also their relationship towards providing Personalized Adaptive Learning Pathways and data driven instruction.

The ultimate goal of iSEEK Academy personalized, customized education for each student requires a new model of student support. Online instructors will be trained in the roles and responsibilities of various members of the educational team, as well as in their own roles and responsibilities as a critical participant in these learning teams. When possible, these training sessions will be held at a central location that enables local students to meet their instructors face-to-face in a formal meet-and-greet reception.

D. Describe your human resource polices governing salaries, contracts, hiring and dismissal, and benefits.

At least 75% of the professional staff will hold appropriate state certification. Special education instructors will hold appropriate PA state certification. All instructional staff members will meet current requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers under the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act. Instructors will be hired based on demonstrated competency in their subject matter, their ability to effectively teach students of the age to which they will be assigned, and their understanding of and ability to implement effective online pedagogy.
First Quarter Reviews | just data driven instruction and personalized adaptive learning are important for student growth, pre assessment, professional development opportunities, and data heavy portfolios are important for teacher growth. New staff members in all positions need feedback in the first quarter of their work in order to reinforce superior performance and to strengthen performance in weaker areas. New instructors will be reviewed within the first six weeks, and at the first quarter as well if necessary.

The support and office staff will also be reviewed by the principal within the first quarter of their employment. For all staff, reviews will include a written self-evaluation, a formal written evaluation by the reviewer, and a synchronous discussion between the staff member and reviewer. Written reviews and recommendations for improvement will be made available to the staff member within two weeks of their discussion.

Annual Performance Evaluations | annual performance evaluations will be performed for all staff by May 1 of each year. The principal will perform evaluations of the teachers and parents, which will include an analysis of student performance, a written self-evaluation, a written evaluation by the reviewer, and a discussion between the staff member and reviewer of strengths and areas that need improvement. Instructors will be evaluated against a number of criteria:
- Instructional skill;
- Virtual Classroom management;
- Professional preparation and scholarship;
- Effort toward improvement when needed;
- Appropriate handling of student discipline and participation issues;
- Interest in teaching pupils; and student mastery and growth via formal tests.

Written evaluations and recommendations for improvement will be made provided to the staff member after the discussion, and kept on file. Similar evaluations will be conducted for support and office staff. Written evaluations will be kept on file by the local office for the duration of the staff member's employment.

As noted above, the performance of all new instructors will be reviewed initially within the first six weeks of their start date. All instructors will be evaluated at least annually, although an evaluation may be held prior to the instructor's annual evaluation date if necessary. If an instructor's performance is considered unsatisfactory and, after appropriate support is given for remediation, the instructor's performance does not improve within the allotted timeframe, the instructor's employment will be terminated.

E. Identify the proposed faculty.
Once the cyber charter authorization is received, iSEEK Academy will recruit and hire instructor, administrative, and office staff to launch and operate the school. The following are the personnel that will be hired, the main functions that they will perform, and their general accountabilities.

CEO/Principal | Functions: Interface with the Executive Committee and the Board, execute school policy, monitor and continually improve curricula and school processes, administration of the school. Accountability: Student outcomes, student, parent, and staff satisfaction, program quality, financial/operational performance, implementation and management of Support Team, academic and student/parent disputes, administration of school.

Teachers/Instructors | Functions: Instruction/presentation, answer student questions, evaluation of student work, facilitation of student understanding of content, participate in student plan process. Accountability: Student outcomes, student comprehension, student and parent satisfaction, program improvement.

Special Education Coordinators | Functions: Coordinate assessments and development and monitoring of individual learning plans (including IEPs), input on program improvement relative to
Special Education, work with school/community coordinators to develop and implement in-person activities and educational learning opportunities for students. **Accountability:** Student outcomes (for assigned students and student body), student and parent satisfaction, program improvement.

**School/Community Coordinator | Functions:** Work with special education coordinators to organize family socialization events and student clubs, work with students to ID/coordinate community service projects, build/train/ manage community coordinator organization, grassroots outreach to local organizations. **Accountability:** High level of student/family interaction, relationships w/local community organizations, student and parent satisfaction.

**Administrative Assistant | Functions:** As directed, administrative tasks, including student enrollment and attendance, day-to-day financial tasks, reporting, coordination of staff and Board meeting, minutes, correspondence, etc. **Accountability:** Operational/financial performance, student and parent satisfaction.

In addition to faculty and staff, iSEEK Academy will develop strategic partnerships with organizations providing professional development trainings as well as educational tools and software.

F. Attach a report of criminal history record, pursuant to Section 111 of the Public School Code for all individuals seeking the charter who shall have direct contact with students. Direct contact includes contact through any electronic means.

No employee will be hired nor will students be enrolled until the PDE approves the charter application and issues a contract for service. Therefore, no employee child abuse clearance or criminal history forms are included in this proposal. See statement below detailing requirements.

G. Attach an official clearance statement regarding child injury or abuse from the Department of Public Welfare as required by 23 Pa. C.S. Chapter 63 subchapter C. 2 (relating to background checks for employment in schools) for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students. Direct contact includes contact through any electronic means.

Prior to reporting for duty, all employees will be required to submit to the iSEEK Academy a Background Check for Employment in Schools or an official document from the Department of Public Welfare as required by 23 Pa. C.S. Chapter 63 subchapter C. 2. The administration will require each applicant to submit an official clearance statement obtained from the Department within the immediately preceding year as to whether the applicant is named as the perpetrator of an indicated or a founded report or is named as the individual responsible for injury or abuse in an indicated report for school employee or a founded report for a school employee.

The official clearance statement noted above will not be required for an applicant who transfers from one position as a school employee to another position as a school employee of the same school district or of the same organization; and has, prior to the transfer, already obtained the official clearance statement.

**Grounds for Denying Employment |** except as provided in section 6356 (relating to exceptions), iSEEK Academy will not hire an applicant if the Department verifies that the applicant is named as the perpetrator of a founded report or is named as the individual responsible for injury or abuse in a founded report for school employee.
H. What procedures have been developed, through research of NCLB guidelines, that ensure the hiring of certified, highly qualified teachers and other professional staff?

At least 75% of the professional staff will hold appropriate state certification. Special education instructors will hold appropriate PA state certification. All instructional staff members will meet current requirements for Highly Qualified Teachers under the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act. Instructors will be hired based on demonstrated competency in their subject matter, their ability to effectively teach students of the age to which they will be assigned, and their understanding of and ability to implement effective online pedagogy. Upon hire, all instructors will be required to provide copies of their certifications as well as supporting documentation to demonstrate that they meet the state and federal definition of Highly Qualified. This documentation will be maintained and tracked by iSEEK Academy staff.

Explanation: Establish high professional standards for teachers and other staff; commitment to professional development of staff; and working conditions and compensation packages that will attract and retain quality staff as per compliance with labor laws.

4. Code of Conduct:

A. Discuss any rules or guidelines governing student behavior.

The founders of the iSEEK Academy are committed to providing exceptional educational opportunities for children. The parents of the school’s students will be an integral part of the success of the students, so it will be essential for the school to keep parents’ trust. One way that this will be done is to ensure that all students and parents are fully aware of the student Code of Conduct and to ensure that it is followed so that all students are comfortable and able to focus on their education. Students will be monitored on an ongoing basis and infractions, particularly those that affect other students, will be acted upon promptly and consistently. A proposed Code of Conduct will be formulated with the participation and consideration of parents and experienced educators before operations commence. It is with the participation and acceptance of parents of schoolchildren that we can expect and demand a Code of Conduct that is meaningful and with which we can expect full compliance and understanding.

**Student Code of Conduct** | iSEEK Academy recognizes and strives to meet the individual needs of each student through programs which promote the development of community leadership, innovation, and agency. This expanded view of school will result in well-educated, productive, and socially responsible citizens. To this end, iSEEK Academy should reflect the desires and expectations held by the community for children, and that iSEEK Academy must provide an environment that ensures the safety and well-being of students. For this reason, it is important iSEEK Academy have clear expectations and guidelines for students.

**Virtual Classroom Conduct** | in order for a virtual classroom session to be educationally effective for students, all students should abide by a standard set of rules. The following rules govern student conduct in the virtual classroom: (a) students’ written and oral communications must be free of vulgar, belittling, or offensive language, (b) students must abide by rules established by the course instructor; (c) students must comply with usage instructions communicated orally or in writing by the instructor.

Students who violate the virtual classroom rules of conduct will be warned by the instructor to correct their behavior. If the student does not comply with the instructor’s instructions, he/she will be removed from the virtual classroom for the rest of the session. If a student has been removed from a virtual classroom three times within a month, the student will receive read-only privileges in the virtual classroom for the rest of the semester or until the instructor deems it appropriate to restore write privileges to the student.
Use of Language and Images | students must not use vulgar, obscene, abusive, or demeaning language, writing, pictures, signs, or acts in written or oral communications, including Webmail, discussion board, listserv, virtual classroom, student websites, or in photographs. Students are prohibited from posting content from or links to suggestive, lewd, or otherwise inappropriate websites.

Dress Code | the dress code establishes a standard for acceptable attire that provides room for personal expression. It sets a minimum standard for attire at school functions. The iSEEK Academy values inclusivity, yet clothing and accessories sometimes send subtle messages of exclusion; students should take care in these choices. Sheer, revealing, and tightfitting clothing may also send an inappropriate message.

“Class Dress” must be worn by students in the following contexts:
- Class Gatherings
- Traveling as a member of a team or group (unless in uniform)
- Academy events or functions
- Occasions designated by the Principal
- In academic buildings, including drop-by centers, during the academic day—regardless of whether students have finished their academic obligations.

Everyone is expected to exercise good habits of personal grooming.

Girls Class Dress | girls’ class dress code requires two visible layers at the neckline; one of these two layers must be a blazer or cardigan. Both layers must be worn, not carried. The only exceptions to the two-layer rule are for dresses with sleeves and for crew neck sweaters. Other considerations include:
- Dresses, skirts, and shorts must be of an appropriate length. (Skirts should be no higher above the knee than the width of the wearer's hand, held flat.)
- Revealing necklines are not permitted, nor are exposed midriffs, shoulders, or backs.
- Denim and jean material (no matter the color) are not allowed.
- Hooded tops, athletic, and work clothing (including cargo-pants) are not permitted.
- Fleece jackets may not substitute blazers or cardigans.

Boys Class Dress | boys’ class dress requires a sport coat, collared shirt, and tie OR a sport coat and turtleneck. Shorts may not be worn with a turtleneck. Shirts are to be tucked in. Facial hair is not permitted. Other considerations include:
- In the winter term only, a sweater may replace a sport coat when worn with a collared dress shirt and a tie; sweaters may not replace a sport coat when wearing a turtleneck.
- Denim and jean material (no matter the color) are not allowed.
- Hooded tops, athletic, and work clothing (including cargo-pants) are not permitted.
- Fleece jackets may not substitute blazers or sweaters.

Personal Respect | iSEEK Academy instructors, administrators, and students will know that personal respect is the foundation of learning. Language, comments, or images that show a lack of respect for individuals or groups will lead directly to disciplinary action.

Defiance | students should follow the requests of iSEEK Academy staff; failure to do so is defiance toward iSEEK Academy personnel and rules. Defiance is defined as defying instructions of school personnel, the bold resistance of school authority, and/or contemptuous behavior or attitude that is manifested by breaking of school rules. Acts of defiance may result in disciplinary action.

Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying | iSEEK Academy will have a zero tolerance policy towards intimidation, harassment, bullying, and/or fighting. Intimidation, harassment, bullying,
fighting and racial and/or sexual harassment are violent acts against others. These behaviors cannot be tolerated, and the natural consequence is to be barred from interactions with others. A warning letter will be sent for the first harassment, bullying, or intimidation offense. Subsequent offenses will lead to suspensions in accordance with iSEEK Academy discipline policy.

iSEEK Academy will promptly and thoroughly investigate reports of harassment and bullying, whether of a physical or of a nonphysical form. If it is determined that either has occurred, iSEEK Academy will act appropriately within discipline codes and will take reasonable action to end the bullying.

**Harassment** | no one should be subjected to harassment at school for any reason. Therefore, it will be the policy of iSEEK Academy that all students will deal with all persons in ways that convey respect and dignity. Harassment in the form of name-calling, taunting, gestures, intimidation, conduct, jokes, pictures, slurs, or ridicules are prohibited. Such conduct referencing or directed at an individual or group that demeans that person/group based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, creed, age, disability or other extraneous factors is prohibited and will be grounds for disciplinary action.

**Sexual Harassment** | sexual harassment includes all unwanted, uninvited, and non-reciprocal sexual attention as well as the creation of an intimidating, hostile, or offensive school or work environment, whether online or in person. This can include: Sexually suggestive looks or gestures Sexual jokes, pictures, or teasing Pressure for dates or sex Sexually demeaning comments Deliberate touching, cornering, or pinching Attempts to kiss or fondle Threats, demands or suggestions that favors will be granted in exchange for sex or tolerance of sexual advances.

B. Describe your school’s policies regarding student expulsion and suspension, including students with disabilities.

iSEEK Academy will make available, both through our web portal and in hard copy, a Student and Parent Handbook. This handbook will include a Discipline Philosophy that aligns with our mission and vision, making discipline a learning experience with the ultimate goal of behavior modification. In any school setting, but especially in a cyber-charter environment, it is critical that the school and parents work together as a team to modify unwanted behaviors. Our disciplinary structure focuses on consequences that are supported at home, imposed immediately, firm, fair, consistent, and progressive. The Handbook will include a full explanation of the various levels of offenses.

**Level 1 Offenses** | behavior that disrupts or disturbs the educational or school-related programs, and the possible consequences include teacher conference with student, teacher directed consequence, parent contacted by teacher, administrative referral.

**Level 2 Offenses** | behavior of greater frequency or seriousness that disrupts the learning climate of the school, and the possible consequences include teacher conference with student, teacher directed consequence, parent contacted by teacher, administrative referral that may result in detention or suspension.

**Level 3 Offenses** | behavior that may threaten the health, safety, or welfare of a member of the school community, and the possible consequences include teacher conference with student, teacher directed consequence, parent contacted by teacher, administrative referral that may result in detention, suspension, or expulsion.

Students will be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. Depending on the nature of the offense, an informal hearing (suspension) or a formal hearing (all expulsion actions) will take place. In these settings, the student will have the right to be represented by counsel. The student will also have the right to hear the charges against him or her, and to present evidence on his or her behalf, including the presentation of witnesses.
Students with disabilities (except those in MR categories 1*) may be suspended and cease educational services for up to 10 consecutive days, or 15 cumulative school days in one school year without providing special education procedural safeguards. In cases where there is a referral for expulsion from the school, or when suspension may exceed 15 cumulative school days, written notice will be provided to the parent/guardian or surrogate parent with regard to the disciplinary action being considered and the date of an IEP meeting, which will be held within 24 hours of the date of misconduct. At the IEP meeting a Manifestation Determination will be made as to whether misconduct is related to the student’s disability and/or placement. Based on that determination, further action will be decided upon, according to law and regulation.

C. Describe your school’s mandatory student attendance plan and its fit with the code of conduct.

Agency forms one of the four pillars of our educational philosophy. Agency is an individual’s understanding of his or her role as an active participant in their world and community, being responsible for his or her own actions and motivations. One important measure of a student’s agency is their attendance. In our cyber setting, attendance is defined as days since last login and time tracking of student activities and assignments. Parents, teachers, and staff will track student attendance, considering it not only a measure of nonacademic success, but also an early warning indicator for academic intervention needs.

Deviation from the attendance plan, or truancy, is defined as being of less than 16 years of age or having not completed the 9th grade and:

- Having not logged into any course for 10 consecutive school days
- Not notifying the school of the absence and not having a valid and documented medical or family reason for non-participation

Instances of truancy will be reported to the student’s local school district by iSEEK Academy.

Instances of absence not amounting to truancy are defined as a student not attending one or more courses for a period of three consecutive days or more.

- After three days: teacher(s) will email the student, cc-ing parents
- After five days: teacher(s) will email the parents, cc-ing the student
- After seven days: school will contact the parents and students via conference call or virtual meeting

Explanation: Provide evidence that the founders inspire the confidence of their targeted community; program provides an attractive educational alternative to students and parents; and community support extends beyond the core group of founders. Expectation for student behavior is clear and specific processes for disciplinary actions are established.

5. Timetable:

A. Provide a detailed timetable of projected steps and dates leading to the opening of a charter school.

Table 6: Timetable for Charter School Opening

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
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<tr>
<td>Community outreach (continues through January)</td>
<td>Submit charter application</td>
<td>Community group outreach (continues through November)</td>
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<td>Community outreach (continues through January)</td>
<td>Complete recruitment of Board, principal, and teachers (continues through November)</td>
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<td>Month</td>
<td>Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>• Elect Officers and Executive Committee&lt;br&gt;• Select Board&lt;br&gt;• Finalize Student and Parent Handbook&lt;br&gt;• Set up website</td>
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<td>• Arrange partnerships with vendors (continues through February)&lt;br&gt;• Finalize admissions forms and procedures (continues through February)</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>• Principal starts&lt;br&gt;• Financial structure and policies finalized&lt;br&gt;• Payroll established&lt;br&gt;• Teachers interviewed</td>
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<td>March</td>
<td>• Conduct admissions including sending admissions letters, and, if needed, conducting a lottery and establishing a waiting list (continues through May)</td>
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<td>April</td>
<td>• Set up administrative office facilities (continues through July)</td>
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<td>July</td>
<td>• Satisfy reporting requirements&lt;br&gt;• Contracts for teacher hiring (continues through August)&lt;br&gt;• Set up of Special Education services and procedures (continues through August)</td>
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<td>August</td>
<td>• Teacher training (continues through August)&lt;br&gt;• Finalize course schedule (continues through August)</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>• Send enrollment reports to Department of Education&lt;br&gt;• Complete final approval of charter requirements&lt;br&gt;• Orientation and professional development for teachers&lt;br&gt;• Begin special education evaluations and IEP accommodation services&lt;br&gt;• Receive student records&lt;br&gt;• Shipment of materials to students&lt;br&gt;• Virtual orientation for parents and students</td>
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<td>• School session begins</td>
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**Explanation:** Establish a well-developed, realistic plan of action for opening a charter school.

**6. Safety:**

A. Submit written documentation of intent to comply with all applicable safety requirements, including the following to demonstrate the safety and structural soundness of the school:
   - Inspection by a local building inspector.
   - Inspection by a local fire department.
   - Approval from the municipal licensing authority for use of any explosives and flammable compounds or liquids in connection with courses taught at the school.
   - Compliance with all other federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations.
   - Application for certificates, licenses, etc. are part of the planning process.
iSEEK Academy intends to comply with all of the safety requirements as specified above as they apply to the functioning of our cyber charter school and administrative facilities.

Note: All necessary certificates and occupancy permits must be issued and in effect prior to the opening of the charter school. Preliminary clearances on all these requirements should be obtained prior to a lease being executed.

7. School Health Services

A. Describe your plan for providing school health services as required under Article XIV of the Public School Code.

iSEEK Academy will adopt a plan for providing school health services, which complies with Article XIV of the Public School Code. Through partnerships with the students’ local school districts, iSEEK Academy will ensure each student has timely and accessible nursing services as needed.

B. Describe how school nursing services, including administration of medication, will be delivered.

School nursing services will be delivered through the student’s local school district during health and immunization drives. Local school nurses will ensure that all students have access to needed health related services, including dental and vision services. iSEEK Academy administrative staff will work with students’ local school district to ensure all student health service needs are served.
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
CHARTER

to operate a cyber charter school known as
The iSEEK Academy Cyber Charter School

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Pennsylvania Department of Education under the Public School Code of 1949, as amended, and specifically under 24 P.S. §17-1745-A, the Board of Trustees of The iSEEK Academy Cyber Charter School is hereby granted a Charter to operate a cyber charter school located at 800 Township Line Road, Suite 300, Yardley, PA 19067, for the period commencing on __________ and ending on __________. The grant of this charter was approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education on __________.

It is specifically understood and agreed between the signatories hereto that:

1) the Board of Trustees shall operate the cyber charter school in accordance with the provisions of 24 P.S. §§17-1741-A through 17-1751-A, any amendments thereto enacted during the term of this charter and any regulations or standards applicable to cyber charter schools;

2) the granting of this charter is specifically contingent upon operation of the cyber charter school in strict adherence to the terms of the Application submitted by the Board of Trustees and approved by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the State Charter School Appeal Board. Said Application is attached hereto as Appendix A and is incorporated herein by reference as if fully set forth;

3) this Charter and the Appendix hereto constitute a legally binding agreement for the term set forth above and the terms of said agreement cannot be changed absent a written amendment to this Charter;

4) this Charter may be renewed for additional periods of five (5) years duration and upon any such renewal, a new Charter shall be executed by the parties; and

5) this Charter can only be terminated in accordance with the provisions of applicable law.

WHEREFORE, the undersigned, intending to be legally bound hereby set their hands this _______ of 20__.
ATTEST:  

______________________________

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ATTEST:  

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES:  

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PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
## School Calendar

### July 2014

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July
1 to 4  Administrative Offices are Closed

### August 2014

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August
13  Teacher in Service Day – No School
14  School
15  Teacher in Service Day - No School
18  No School
19  Teacher in Service Day – No School

First Day of Classes

### September 2014

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September
1  Labor Day – No School
25  Rosh Hashanah – No School
26  Rosh Hashanah – No School
### October 2014

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- **October 22**: End of 1st Marking Period
- **October 24**: Teacher in Service Day – No School
- **October 27-28**: Parent Teacher Conferences – No School
- **October 29-31**: Fall Intersession/Break – No School

### November 2014

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- **November 3**: Fall Intersession/Break – No School
- **November 11**: School
- **November 26**: Veterans Day – No School
- **November 27-28**: Start Thanksgiving Break – Half Day
- **November 29**: Thanksgiving Break – No School

### December 2014

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- **December 22-31**: Winter Break – No School

### January 2014

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- **January 1-2**: Winter Break Continued
- **January 19**: Martin Luther King Jr. Day – Teacher in Service Day – No School
- **January 21**: School
- **End of 2nd Marking period**
FEBRUARY 2014

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February

16 President’s Day – No School
17 Teacher in Service Day – No School

MARCH 2014

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March

16-25 PSSA Math
26-27 AMS Conference – No School
31 End of 3rd Marking Period/Being PSSA Writing

APRIL 2014

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April

1-6 PSSA Writing Continued
10 Teacher in Service Day – No School
13-14 School
15-20 Student Led Conferences – No Classes
21-24 Spring Break – School Closed
27-30 Spring Intersession – School Closed
PSSA Science

MAY 2014

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May

1 PSSA Science Continued
22 Half Day
25 Memorial Day Break – No School
### June

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- **19** June 2014: Last Student Day of School
- **22** June 2014: Last Staff Day of School
September 2, 2013

Charter Schools Office
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 10th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Dear Members of the Selection Committee:

I write to ask for your support of The ISEEK Academy Charter School cyber application. I have personally known and admired Peter Murphy and his work in education for many years. The educational software and services produced by Vantage Learning and Vantage Laboratories have proven to be transformational for students throughout the United States. This application will enable Vantage to more fully engage and positively direct student outcomes within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

As President and Chief Operating Officer of one of the largest commercial lending institutions in the United States, I am an advocate of high quality schools – I have to be. Many of the jobs I need to fill require successful high school and college graduates, equipped with the skills necessary to work for an institution such as my own. Personally, I find my most successful employees have a background in Mathematics and Science, and I feel very strongly that adding additional qualified educational institutions focusing on mathematics and sciences is an absolute must for the future of our students and economy.

Many of my business colleagues and my own Human Resource department tell me that Pennsylvania students are on waiting lists for acceptance into charter schools. I believe that the ISEEK Academy Cyber Charter School would be a tremendous addition and valuable path for students in Pennsylvania. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Steve A. Grosso
President
Chief Operating Officer
Element Financial Corp. (USA)
Tel: 267-960-4003
Mayor of New Hope

September 23, 2013

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 10th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

To the Charter Schools Office:

I am writing in strong support of the ISEEK Academy Charter School application for a 3-8 Cyber Charter in Pennsylvania. Based on my personal knowledge of Mr. Peter Murphy, his education business, Vantage Learning, and Mr. Murphy’s devotion to seeing children develop the skills necessary to compete in today’s world, I strongly recommend that the Charter Office look favorably upon the ISEEK Academy Charter School.

As the Mayor of New Hope, one of my chief objectives is to support the growth of programs and businesses that have proven successful and to bring new and innovative practices to the New Hope area. As a resident and member of my community, Mr. Murphy has brought jobs and innovation to New Hope. More importantly, I am proud to support Vantage Learning, which I know, enjoys a remarkably good and well-deserved reputation within the education community here in Pennsylvania and across the country. Many of Vantage Learning’s software technologies and teaching tools have been used throughout public schools to teach children how to write with confidence and authority, to learn mathematics, science and social studies. I am certain given Vantage Learning’s experience and success, that any new endeavor will likely be best in class.

I ask you to give your full consideration to the ISEEK Academy Charter School application. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Best Regards,
September 23, 2013

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
CHARTER SCHOOLS OFFICE
Pennsylvania Department of Education
333 Market Street, 10th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-033

To the Charter Schools Office:

I am writing in strong support of the ISEEK Academy Charter School application for a 3-8 Cyber Charter in Pennsylvania. Based on my personal knowledge of Mr. Peter Murphy, his education business, Vantage Learning, and Mr. Murphy’s devotion to seeing children develop the skills necessary to compete in today’s world. I strongly recommend that the Charter Office look favorably upon the ISEEK Academy Charter School.

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I ask you to give your full consideration to the ISEEK Academy Charter School application. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter, and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Best Regards,

[Signature]
Laurence D. Keller
Mayor of New Hope Borough
BY-LAWS OF
ISEEK ACADEMY CYBER CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.

ARTICLE I
OFFICES
The principal office of the Corporation in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania shall be located at 800 Township Line Road, Suite 300, Yardley, PA 19067.

The Corporation shall have and continuously maintain in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania registered office, and a registered agent whose office is identical with such registered office, as required by the relevant state Corporation Act.

ARTICLE I
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. General Powers.
The affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by its Board of Directors. The Board shall be charged with the management of the affairs of the Corporation, and shall pursue such policies and principles as shall be in accordance with law, the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, these By-Laws, and any written charter entered into by the Board. The Board shall be considered as having the powers of a Board of Directors and shall be deemed to be acting as the Board of Directors for all purposes of the Nonprofit Corporation Law. By way of elucidation, and not in limitation, the Board shall be responsible to carry out the following duties and obligations:

a. The Board shall uphold the school’s mission and vision and ensure effective organizational planning on the part of the school through an annual strategic planning and review process that will review and update the school’s short-term, mid-term, and long-range goals, and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the school’s mission and plans;

b. The Board shall either directly or through a personnel committee provide for the annual appraisal of the performance of the school’s management company;

c. The Board shall ensure the financial stability of the Corporation through regular monthly review of financial statements and reports, an annual independent audit, and direct oversight of major financial commitments and decisions;

d. The Board shall take an active role, either directly or through a Board committee, in resolving grievances and conflicts which may arise within the school community involving, students, parents, staff, administration, and Board members.

e. No Board Member shall, as a private citizen, engage in any business transaction with the school of which he or she is a trustee, be employed in any capacity by the school of which he or she is a trustee, or receive from such school any pay for services rendered to the school.

f. Board Members shall face Removal for failure to organize the school or neglect of duty as a board member in accordance with the Pennsylvania Charter School Law.

To the extent permitted by law, the Board may, by general resolution, delegate to officers of the Corporation or to committees of the Board such powers as it deems necessary or appropriate to carry out its duties and obligations.

Section 2. Number, Election, Tenure and Qualifications.

a. The number of Directors shall be between five (5) and seven (7) members. They shall be elected in accordance with the provisions of paragraph b.

b. The initial Directors of the Corporation shall be appointed by the Incorporator(s) of the Corporation. Upon formation of the Board, the Directors shall be divided as equally as possible into three (3) classes follows: i) Class A - whose terms shall expire at the first annual meeting thereafter, but no sooner than six (6) months after the division shall first occur; ii) Class B - whose terms shall expire at the second annual meeting thereafter, but no sooner than eighteen (18) months after the division shall first occur; and iii) Class C - whose terms
shall expire at the third annual meeting thereafter, but no sooner than thirty (30) months after the division shall first occur. Upon any expansion or reconfiguration of the Board, the director positions shall be re-allocated among the Classes so as to create as equal a division as possible, provided that no director’s term shall thereby by cut short without his or her written consent, and no director’s term shall be extended without such director first standing for re-election in accordance with the term schedule in existence at the time of his or her immediately preceding election to the Board. After the initial term of each Class of directors, directors shall be elected to three year terms. Each director shall hold office until the annual meeting of the Board at which his or her term expires or until his or her successor shall have been elected and qualified.

c. Directors need not be residents of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
d. No Director shall as a private person engage in any business transaction with the Corporation or the school, be employed in any capacity by the Corporation or the school or receive from Corporation or the school any pay for services rendered to the Corporation or the school. No Director shall be a relative of a paid employee of the Corporation or the school.

Section 3. Annual Meeting. An annual meeting of the Board of Directors shall be held on the first Wednesday of July in each year, beginning with the year of the incorporation of the Corporation, at the hour of 6:30 pm, for the purpose of electing Directors and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting. If the day fixed for the annual meeting shall be a legal holiday in the State of Pennsylvania, such meeting shall be held on the next succeeding business day. If the election of Directors shall not be held on the day designated herein for any annual meeting, or at any adjournment thereof, the Board of Directors shall cause the election to be held at a special meeting of the Board as soon thereafter as conveniently may be arranged.

Section 3. Regular Meetings. The Board of Directors may provide by resolution the time and place, within the State of Pennsylvania, for the holding of additional regular meetings of the Board. There shall be a notice posted in a public place, at least a 24-hour prior to the meeting.

Section 4. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by or at the request of the President or any two Directors. The person or persons authorized to call special meetings of the Board may fix any place, within the State of Pennsylvania, as the place for holding any special meeting of the Board called by them.

Section 5. Notice. Notice of any special meeting of the Board of Directors shall be given at least twenty four hours previously thereto by written notice delivered personally or sent by mail, email or telegram to each Director at his or her address as shown by the records of the Corporation, and by posting a public notice twenty four hours prior to the meeting. If mailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when deposited in the United States mail in a sealed envelope so addressed, with postage thereon prepaid. If emailed, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when sent. If notice be given by telegram, such notice shall be deemed to be delivered when the telegram is delivered to the telegraph company. Any Director may waive notice of any meeting. The attendance of a Director at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a Director attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened. Neither the business to be transacted at, nor the purpose of, any regular or special meeting of the Board need be specified in the notice or waiver of notice of such meeting, unless specifically required by law or by these by-laws.

Section 6. Quorum. A majority of the Board of Directors either attending or participating in the meeting telephonically shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board; but if less than a majority of the Directors are present at said meeting, a majority of the Directors present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

Section 7. Manner of Acting. The act of a majority of the Directors present at a meeting or
Section 8. Vacancies. Any vacancy occurring in the Board of Directors and any directorship to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of directors may be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining directors, even though less than a quorum of the Board of Directors. A Director elected to fill a vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of his or her predecessor in office.

Section 9. Compensation. Directors shall not receive any compensation for their services.

Section 10. Informal Action by Directors. Any action required by law to be taken at a meeting of directors, or any action which may be taken at a meeting of directors, may be taken without a meeting if a consent in writing, setting forth the action so taken, shall be signed by all of the Directors.

Section 11. Removal of a Director. Any Director may be removed as a Director of the Corporation by the vote of two-thirds of the other Directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present for violating these By-Laws, neglect of duty of office, or behavior injurious to the Corporation. No such action shall be taken until the Director has been advised of specific charges, given a reasonable time to prepare a response, and afforded a full hearing before the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE II
OFFICERS

Section 1. Officers. The officers of the Corporation shall be a President, one or more Vice Presidents (the number thereof to be determined by the Board of Directors), a Secretary, a Treasurer and such other officers as may be elected in accordance with the provisions of this Article. The Board of Director may elect or appoint such other officers, including one or more Assistant Secretaries and one or more Assistant Treasurers, as it shall deem desirable, such officers to have the authority and perform the duties prescribed, from time to time, by the Board of directors. Any two or more offices may be held by the same person, except the offices of President and Secretary.

Section 2. Election and Term of Office. The officers of the Corporation shall be elected annually by the Board of Directors at the regular annual meeting of the Board of Directors. If the election of officers shall not be held at such meeting, such election shall be held as soon thereafter as conveniently may be. New offices may be created and filled at any meeting of the Board of Directors. Each officer shall hold office until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and shall have qualified.

Section 3. Removal. Any officer elected or employee appointed by the Board of Directors may be removed by the Board of Directors whenever in its judgment the best interests of the Corporation would be served thereby, but such removal shall be without prejudice to the contract rights, if any, of the officer or employee so removed. Any board member who misses two consecutive meetings with no prior written notice will also be removed.

Section 4. Vacancies. A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification or otherwise, may be filled by the Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term.

Section 5. President. The President shall be the principal executive officer of the Corporation and shall in general supervise and control all of the business and affairs of the Corporation. He or she shall preside at all meetings of the members and of the Board of Directors. He or she may sign, with the Secretary or any other proper officer of the Corporation authorized by the
Board of Directors, any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the
Board of Directors has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and
execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the Board of Directors or by these by-laws or
by statute to some other officer or agent of the Corporation; and in general he or she shall
perform all duties incident to the office of President and such other duties as may be prescribed
by the Board of Directors from time to time.

Section 6. Vice President. In the absence of the President or in event of his or her inability or
refusal to act, the Vice President (or in the event there be more than one Vice President, the
Vice Presidents in the order of their election) shall perform the duties of the President, and when
so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President.
Any Vice President shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him
or her by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 7. Treasurer. If required by the Board of Directors, the Treasurer shall give a bond for
the faithful discharge of his or her duties in such sum and with such surety or sureties as the
Board of Directors shall determine. He or she shall have charge and custody of and be
responsible for all funds and securities of the Corporation; receive and give receipts for moneys
due and payable to the Corporation from any source whatsoever, and deposit all such moneys
in the name of the Corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositaries as shall be
selected in accordance with the provisions in Article VII of these by-laws; and in general perform
all duties incident to the office of Treasurer and such other duties as from time to time may be
assigned to him or her by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 8. Secretary. The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the meetings of the members and
of the Board of Directors in one or more books provided for that purpose; see that all notices are
duly given in accordance with the provisions of these by-laws or as required by law; be custodian
of the corporate records and of the seal of the Corporation and see that the seal of the
Corporation is affixed to all documents, the execution of which on behalf of the Corporation
under its seal is duly authorized in accordance with the provisions of these by-laws; keep a
register of the post-office address of each member which shall be furnished to the Secretary by
such member; and in general perform all duties incident to the office of Secretary and such other
duties as from time to time may be assigned to him or her by the President or by the Board of
Directors.

Section 9. Assistant Treasurers and Assistant Secretaries. If required by the Board of
Directors, the Assistant Treasurers shall give bonds for the faithful discharge of their duties in
such sums and with such sureties as the Board of Directors shall determine. The Assistant
Treasurers and Assistant Secretaries, in general, shall perform such duties as shall be assigned
to them by the Treasurer or the Secretary or by the President or by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE III

COMMITTEES

Section 1. Committees of Directors. The Board of Directors, by resolution adopted by a
majority of the Directors in office, may designate and appoint one or more committees, each of
which shall consist of two or more Directors, which committees, to the extent provided in said
resolution, shall have and exercise the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of
the Corporation, except that no such committee shall have the authority of the Board of
Directors in reference to amending, altering or repealing the by-laws; electing, appointing or
removing any member of any such committee or any Director or office of the Corporation;
amending the articles of incorporation, restating articles of incorporation; adopting a plan of
merger or adopting a plan of consolidation with another corporation; authorizing the sale, lease,
exchange or mortgage of all or substantially all of the property and assets of the Corporation;
am authorizing the voluntary dissolution of the Corporation or revoking proceedings therefor;
adopting a plan for the distribution of the assets of the Corporation; or amending, altering or
repealing any resolution of the Board of Directors which by its terms provides that it shall not be
amended, altered or repealed by such committee. The designation and appointment of any such committee and the delegation thereto of authority shall not operate to relieve the Board of Directors, or any individual Director, of any responsibility imposed upon it or him or her by law.

**Section 2. Nominating Committee.** There shall be a Nominating Committee which shall be appointed and operate as follows:

a. **Chair.** The President of the Board of Directors shall appoint a Chair of the Nominating Committee to serve a five year term. Upon the expiration of the Chair’s term or upon a vacancy in the position, the President shall appoint a successor to a new five year term.

b. **Members.** The Chair shall appoint two additional members to the Committee. In order to stagger the terms of the committee members, one of the appointed members shall serve an initial three year term, and the other shall serve an initial four year term. Upon the expiration of the initial terms and of any succeeding terms, subsequent members shall be appointed to five year terms. Upon any vacancy in either of the members’ positions, the Chair shall appoint a new member to fill the unexpired term.

c. **Duties.** The Nominating Committee shall be charged with reviewing all applications and interviewing all applicants for member on the Board of Directors. Any person nominated or wishing to be considered for a position on the Board shall submit an application together with all supplemental information which shall be prescribed by the Nominating Committee from time to time. Applications and supplemental information shall be submitted no less than 30 days nor more than 90 days prior to the date on which the vacancy is to be filled except in cases where through death, resignation or otherwise a vacancy on the Board must be filled more quickly, in which case the Nominating Committee, acting unanimously, may prescribe a different submission schedule. No person may be placed in nomination for a position on the Board without having first been screened by the Nominating Committee in accordance with the procedures set forth in this paragraph c.

**Section 3. Other Committees.** Other committees not having and exercising the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the Corporation may be appointed in such manner as may be designated by a resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present. Except as otherwise provided in such resolution, all such committees shall include at least one Board member and the President of the Corporation shall appoint the members thereof. Any member thereof may be removed by the person or persons authorized to appoint such member whenever in their judgment the best interests of the Corporation shall be served by such removal.

**Section 4. Term of Office.** Each member of a committee shall continue as such until the next annual meeting of the Board of the Corporation and until his or her successor is appointed, unless the committee shall be sooner terminated, or unless such member be removed from such committee, or unless such member shall cease to qualify as a member thereof.

**Section 5. Chair.** One member of each committee shall be appointed Chair by the person or persons authorized to appoint the members thereof.

**Section 6. Vacancies.** Vacancies in the membership of any committee may be filled by appointments made in the same manner as provided in the case of the original appointments.

**Section 7. Quorum.** Unless otherwise provided in the resolution of the Board of Directors designating a committee, a majority of the whole committee shall constitute a quorum and the act of a majority of the members present at a meeting or participating in the meeting telephonically at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee.

**Section 8. Rules.** Each committee may adopt rules for its own government not inconsistent with these by-laws or with rules adopted by the Board of Directors.
ARTICLE IV
CONTRACTS, CHECKS, DEPOSITS AND FUNDS

Section 1. Contracts. The Board of Directors may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents of the Corporation, in addition to the officers so authorized by these by-laws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the Corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section 2. Checks, Drafts, etc. All checks, drafts or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Corporation, shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents of the Corporation and in such manner as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors. In the absence of such determination by the Board of Directors, such instruments shall be signed by the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, the President or a Vice President of the Corporation. Any amounts in excess of $50,000 shall first require an affirmative vote of a majority of the Directors present at a meeting at which a quorum is present.

Section 3. Deposits. All funds of the Corporation shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositaries as the Board of Directors may select.

Section 4. Gifts. The Board of Directors may accept on behalf of the Corporation any contribution, gift, bequest or devise for the general purposes or for any special purpose of the Corporation.

ARTICLE V
BOOKS AND RECORDS
The Corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its Board of Directors and committees having any of the authority of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI
FISCAL YEAR
The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on the first day of July and end on the last day of June in each year.

ARTICLE VII
SEAL
The Board of Directors shall provide a corporate seal, which shall be in the form of a circle and inscribed thereon shall be the name of the Corporation and the words "Corporation Seal of THE ISEEK Academy Cyber Charter School."

ARTICLE VIII
WAIVER OF NOTICE
Whenever any notice is required to be given under the provisions of the state’s Corporation Act or under the provisions of the articles of incorporation or the by-laws of the Corporation, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

ARTICLE IX
AMENDMENTS TO BY-LAWS
These by-laws may be altered, amended or repealed and new by-laws may be adopted by a majority of the Directors present at any regular meeting or at any special meeting, if at least two days' written notice is given of intention to alter, amend or repeal or to adopt new by-laws at such meeting.

Adopted this ________th day of ____________, 20__. 

ISEEK Academy Cyber Charter School
Resumes

Sydelle H. Mason, Ed.D
Vice President, Professional Services
smason@vantage.com

Summary of Qualifications
- Administration and Supervision of Professional Services Department for Educational Programs K-12
- Fiscal oversight and management
- Directed development of curriculum of training workshops/services
- Business development
- Oversight of implementation services

Education
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ
Ed.D Educational Administration
New York University, New York City
M.A. Education
Upsala College, East Orange, NJ
B.A. Sociology

Employment
McCann Associates, Yardley, PA (2005-Present)
Vice President, Professional Services
TechKNOW Associates
Director of Operations
Kaplan University
Adjunct Professor-Online Education
FUTUREKIDS, New York
Vice President, Operations
Education Express
Director of Grant Development
Lorna Maguire

Director, Product Marketing
lmaguire@vantage.com

Summary of Qualifications

- Agile product management - release planning, personas, user stories, agile requirements
- Design and development of web-based curricular, instruction and assessment solutions.
- Delivery of job-embedded, ongoing professional services training including coach/mentoring.

Education

State University of New York, New Paltz
NYS Permanent Teacher Certification 6-12 Science, Biology.
M.S. Biology
M.ED. Curriculum and Instruction

State University of New York, Oswego
B.S. Biology

Employment

Vantage, Yardley, PA (2000-Present)
Director, Product Marketing.
- Chief Designer/Architect of the MY Access! ™ Product Line
- Product Owner for Vantage Adaptive Learning Environment® (ALE) including Student Progress Monitoring System™

Producer
District Supervisor, Professional Development
M.S.-H.S Biology

Professional Certification

- NYS Permanent Teacher Certification 6-12 Science, Biology
- Agile project management - Certified Scrum Professional (CSP) and Certified Scrum Master (CSM)

Recognitions and Professional Activities

- 2000 National Staff Development Council: Member of the NSDC’s Standard’s Revision Committee.
- 1998 Winstar Wireless Corporate Sponsorship. Tidal Passages (www.tidalpassages.com) selected as an exemplary International curriculum based online K-12 project for demonstrating the power of telecommunications in teaching and learning.
- 1998 ChildNet International Award. Recipient of International award for producing and directing one of the top three educational Internet projects for children.
- 1998 IBM Grant Recipient. The Global Village: Expanding the Walls of the Traditional Classroom.
- 1998 Community School Network selected Tidal Passages as an exemplary model of a curriculum based online project. CSNET/ Winstar provided technology platform to deliver and support distance education initiatives.
- 1996 NYS Ed Department Grant Recipient-Wappingers Creek Stream Monitoring Project: Incorporating Computer Technology into Data Collection and Analysis.
- 1995 Smithsonian Institute- NST Grant Recipient. Washington, DC.
- 1994 University of Quito, Ecuador: Science mentor program: Biodiversity- Nature’s Medicine Chest: Six week research expedition under the expertise of research scientists from the University of Quito and National Wildlife Foundation.
- 1993 Cold Spring Harbor, LI: Internship: Genetic Research
Paul A. Edelblut

Vice President, Programs and Services

Education
The George Washington University
Bachelor of Arts, Journalism, 1993
Presidential Honor Scholar

Employment
Learning Ally (January 2012 – Present)
Vice President, Programs and Services

Vantage (2000 – 2012)
Vice President,

- Built commercial relationships with, and managed portfolio of for-profit and government clients domestically and abroad
- Developed and priced advanced artificial intelligence and Natural Language Processing technology products for prospects and clients
- Acting project director for business processes and technical implementation on multi-million dollar projects
- Closed deals with annual 8-figure revenue stream and managed channels with comparable revenue
- Presented executive briefings on advanced artificial intelligence technology to corporate leaders in field
- Created and expanded corporate relationships leading to technology product use in Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan, China, Korea, Philippines, Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, and Mexico
- Developed two of top-five educational technology products for writing instruction in K-16 market
- Oversee team of Regional Vice Presidents and sales support staff

Assistant Vice President, Course Operations Support

- Established commercial relationship with Pennsylvania’s largest school district, resulting in contract for outsourcing school services
- Managed full-time staff of 14 and part-time staff of 350 in 4 offices in PA, NY, NJ and DE
- Supervised the hiring and training of approximately 150 new instructors annually
- Trained and mentored Program Directors for promotion to Executive Director level
- Oversaw marketing, tele-sales and course operations in region
- Assisted Vice President for Company Owned Sites with the management of 12 additional offices
- Created model for K-12 instructional program, leading to creation of new company around product
- Developed corporate relationship with a top-five medical school for on-line distance learning program

Manager (Acting), International Medical Licensure Programs,

- Established corporate alliances leading to first course presence in non-franchised foreign countries including Ireland, Poland, Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, and Czech Republic
- Developed and managed product marketing and sales strategies, leading to first year sales in excess of $400,000
- Assisted in management of faculty authors and provided business guidance for product development team
Served as liaison in franchisee relations between The Princeton Review and private franchises and trained over 30 franchises.

Wrote and presented lectures on medical licensure at 20 U.S. and foreign medical schools.

Negotiated and managed endorsement of programs by American Medical Student Association.


Executive Director

Instituted team approach for planning and execution of all facets of The Princeton Review operations in PA, NJ and DE region, including sales, partnership development, marketing, cost control, budgeting, hiring, customer support, quality control, instructor training, and telemarketing.

Increased revenues 66% and profitability 50% in two-year period.

Successfully launched new product, taking sales from $0 to $150,000 in launch phase.

Sustained highest growth and lowest staff turnover among 62 mature offices.

Located new 5,000-square-foot office space, negotiated lease, managed build-out and move.

Negotiated and purchased advertising on both radio and television.


Director, Graduate Programs


Assistant Director, Graduate Programs.

Professional Certifications

Letter of Recognition from Senate of Pennsylvania for service to the community.

Letter of Recognition from Governor Tom Ridge for outstanding service to the community.


2002-Present, Education Dynamics, Board Member.


1999-Advisory Board, University of Pennsylvania’s Department of Academic Support Programs.

1998-Finalist Candidate for Philadelphia School Board—Mayoral Appointed.

Recognitions and Professional Activities

Experienced ocean and inland sailor.

Active Runner (30 miles/week).

Active fundraiser for Alzheimer’s and AIDS research.

Invited Lecturer, Bryn Mawr College Summer Scholars Program.

Presentations on Medical Licensure at more than 15 medical schools in US and abroad.

Paper presentations at educational technology conferences in US, Taiwan, China, Malaysia, Brazil, Singapore and Thailand.


2007-Guest Lecturer, University Putra Malaysia, Faculty of Modern Languages and Communication, *An Introduction to Automated Essay Scoring*, Paul Edelblut.


Writing Instruction and Assessment: Lessons Learned and Future Directions, Paul Edelblut, Cathy Mikulas

- 2006-3rd PacCALL Conference, Nanjing, China, *The Evolution of Automated Text Scoring: An Evaluation of the Advances from Human to Automated Scoring in English and Other Languages*, Paul Edelblut, Cathy Mikulas, Kenneth Chang
- 2006-International Association For Educational Assessment, Singapore, *The Effects of Inclusion of Non-Native English Speakers Writing Samples on Automated Scoring Models*, Paul Edelblut, Cathy Mikulas, Kenneth Chang
- 2004-13th International Conference on Teaching and Learning, Orlando, Florida, USA, *Online Analytical Scoring and Feedback of a Direct Writing Assessment*, Paul Edelblut
Larry C. Bosley

Owner

Summary of Qualifications
- Administration and Supervision of Educational Programs K-12
- Educational Curriculum and Program Management
- Implementation of Web-based Assessment Technology
- Assessment Operations Management

Education
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey
Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey
M.Ed. (1969) Educational Administration and Supervision
Edinboro State University, Edinboro, Pennsylvania
B.S. (1965) Science and Special Education Teacher Certification

Employment
LGB Properties, Inc., Kennett Square, PA (2001 – Present)
Owner
Vantage Learning, Yardley, PA (1999 – 2001)
K-12 Sales and Project Management
District Superintendent
Principal
Bristol Township School District Delhaas Senior High School, Levittown, PA (1970-1972)
Assistant Principal
Bristol Township School District Roosevelt Middle School, Levittown, PA (1968 – 1970)
Assistant Principal
Bristol Township School District Woodrow Wilson High School, Roosevelt Middle School, Levittown, PA (1965 – 1968)
Science and Special Education Teacher
Sharpsville Area School District Sharpsville Area Jr./Sr. High School, Sharpsville, PA (1965)
Science and Special Education Teacher

Recognitions and Professional Activities
## Operating Budget & Projected Expenditures

### Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances

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<td>Other Student Activity Income</td>
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<td>Revenues from Intermediary Sources - Federal Funds</td>
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<td>Receipts from Out-of state LEAS</td>
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<td>All Other Services Provided Other Governments and LEAs Not Specified Above</td>
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<td>Services Provided Other Funds</td>
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<td>Dual Enrollment Grants</td>
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<td>Project 720/High School Reform</td>
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<td>State Share of Social Security and Medicare Taxes</td>
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<td>Trust and agency intrafund transfers</td>
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**TOTAL REVENUES:** 1085100

**Expenditures & Fund Balances**

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**SUPPORT SERVICES - INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF**

**SUPPORT SERVICES - ADMINISTRATION**

**SUPPORT SERVICES - PUPIL HEALTH**

**SUPPORT SERVICES - BUSINESS**

**OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF PLANT SERVICES**

**STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

**SUPPORT SERVICES - CENTRAL**

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**TOTAL EXPENDITURES:** 1047300
**CURRENT FUND - Revenue Minus Expenditures:** 37800
**FUND BALANCE:** 37800
Cyber Charter School Application 2013

A Proposal to
The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Department of Education
National Charter Partners of Pennsylvania

800 Township Line Road
Suite 300
Yardley, PA 19067-4237