

## Charter School Sponsorship: Full Application

### Introduction

The first stage of SLU's charter application process requires all applicants to submit a brief Prospectus to SLU's Director of Charter School Sponsorship. Upon completion of the review by SLU, applicants will be informed in writing of SLU's decision to either reject the Prospectus or invite the applicant to submit a full Application. The requirements of the Application are provided here. As appropriate, elements of the Prospectus can be used in this Application, as well.

It is understood that there is a vast universe of federal, state and local laws that govern the provision of public education and its surrounding programs. In most sections, major sections of law are identified for reference, but it is expected that applicants will know, or seek appropriate guidance in creating an application that meets all relevant laws, and the application will be judged on that basis, even if the laws are not cited herein.

***Note: Applicants seeking to operate "virtual programs" (as defined by DESE and RSMo 162.1250(3)), "career and technical education programs" (as defined under the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006), or a school serving "high risk and alternative populations" (as defined by RSMo 160.405.2(5)), must complete additional, program-specific application materials not contained in the application below. Contact SLU in advance for guidance and the additional application requirements. SLU prioritizes applications for schools oriented to high-risk and alternative populations.***

If any instructions are not clear, or there any special situations that seem not to fit law or the sections described below, or additional guidance is needed, please contact SLU's Office of Charter School Sponsorship.

## Application Timing & Related Decision-Making

The schedule for all stages of charter application submission and review is as follows:

***Important: This schedule offers deadlines for the submission of application materials; applicants are strongly encouraged to submit materials to SLU well in advance of these deadlines.***

Action	Timing/Deadline
Prospectus Submitted to SLU	No later than May 15 in the year prior to anticipated opening.
Response to Prospectus to Applicant	30 days following submission
Application Submitted	No later than July 15 in the year prior to anticipated opening
Response to Application to Applicant	60 days following submission
Contract Signed ( <i>if application accepted</i> )	No later than October 15 <sup>th</sup> in the year prior to anticipated opening
Fully agreed-upon Charter Submitted to DESE	No later than November 10 <sup>th</sup> in the year prior to anticipated opening
SBOE Decides on charter	No later than January 31 <sup>st</sup> in the year of anticipated school opening
School opens	August 20XX



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## Charter School Sponsorship Application

### A. Overview

**Name of Proposed School:** Frontier STEM Academy - Elementary (LEA name Frontier Schools - Columbia)

**Proposed Location (Generally) of the School:** Columbia, MO

**Name of 501(c)3 serving as the School's Corporate Entity:** Frontier Schools, Inc.

**Intended Year of School Opening:** Frontier STEM Academy – Columbia is targeting a Fall 2026 opening; however, the final launch date may adjust to 2027–2028 based on facility readiness and alignment with key opening criteria. Frontier will work closely with Saint Louis University, as sponsor, and the Columbia community to ensure the timing and conditions for opening best support a successful, sustainable school that meets local needs.

**A.1** In no more than 500 words, summarize the school's mission/vision and governing educational philosophy/model.

Frontier Schools' mission is to **empower students to discover and develop their gifts and talents** in pursuit of college readiness, productive citizenship, and lifelong learning within an atmosphere of academic excellence. The school emphasizes a **STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math)** focus to prepare students for jobs projected in the American workforce, while remaining flexible to expand into STEAM by incorporating the arts. The vision is to be a **vibrant, innovative educational leader**—recognized within five years for academic excellence, closing achievement gaps, and cultivating a culture of belonging, and within ten years for producing college- and career-ready graduates, pioneering STEM education, and fostering strong family-community partnerships.

Since its founding in 2007, Frontier has grown into Kansas City's largest PreK–12 charter network, serving over 1,550 students—more than 90% students of color. Its innovative features include a STEM-focused curriculum with hands-on, real-world problem-solving, interdisciplinary instruction, personalized learning for English Learners and students with disabilities, robust home visit programs, multicultural engagement, and a STEM Innovation Lab open to all grades.

The governing educational philosophy is anchored in four priorities:

1. **Equity and Access** – Tailoring instruction to meet all students' needs, using targeted interventions for those below grade level and enrichment for high achievers.
2. **Inquiry-Based and Student-Centered Learning** – Emphasizing exploration, problem-solving, and collaboration, especially in STEM, through hands-on projects.

3. Data-Driven and Differentiated Instruction – Using frequent assessments to inform instruction and personalize learning pathways.
4. College and Career Readiness – Offering early exposure to coding, robotics, and other STEM fields to prepare students for postsecondary success.

The instructional model blends research-backed practices and rigorous content standards. In ELA, Frontier uses *Pathways to Reading* for foundational literacy, *Writing Workshop* for structured writing development, and *Reading Workshop* for comprehension and fluency. In math, *Eureka Math*<sup>2</sup> ensures conceptual depth and coherence, supplemented with small-group interventions and tools like Zearn. Science instruction is delivered through *STEMScopes* for inquiry-based learning and *Project Lead The Way* for applied engineering, coding, and problem-solving, aligned with NGSS standards. Arts and physical education are integrated weekly to support well-rounded development.

Social studies is taught through literacy integration, primary source analysis, and thematic inquiry. The school also offers rich extracurriculars—from robotics, Science Olympiad, and solar car design to debate, sports, arts, and student leadership programs—reinforcing academic skills, creativity, and teamwork.

This philosophy directly aligns with the mission and vision by combining academic rigor, personalized support, and inclusive practices in a culturally responsive environment. Frontier’s approach is designed to close achievement gaps, prepare students for a rapidly changing workforce, and cultivate responsible, community-minded citizens. Through its structured, innovative, and student-centered model, the school seeks to provide equitable, high-quality learning opportunities that prepare every student for long-term success.

- A.2** Charter schools may seek sponsorship from a wide range of institutions/organizations – each with distinct sponsorship philosophies and motivations. What informs this application for sponsorship from Saint Louis University, specifically? What – *specifically* – about [SLU](#), and our [approach to charter sponsorship](#), drives your interest in our sponsorship?

Charter schools may seek sponsorship from a wide range of institutions and organizations, each with distinct philosophies and motivations. This application seeks continued sponsorship from Saint Louis University (SLU) as Frontier Schools expands to Columbia, Missouri, because SLU’s philosophy of charter sponsorship aligns closely with Frontier’s mission, vision, and commitment to academic excellence, equity, and innovation. SLU is recognized for its rigorous accountability standards, mission-driven oversight, and collaborative approach to ensuring charter schools deliver on their promises to students and communities.

SLU’s sponsorship emphasizes student achievement, organizational stability, and strong governance—principles that are central to Frontier’s operational and academic model. Frontier’s proven record in Kansas City—including consistently ranking in the top third or higher among charter schools on Missouri Assessment Program results, maintaining a 100% college acceptance rate, and implementing research-based STEM instruction—demonstrates the kind of measurable, sustained success that mirrors SLU’s expectations for its sponsored schools.

Equally important, SLU’s values—focusing on the holistic development of each student, fostering ethical leadership, and promoting service to others—are in harmony with Frontier’s emphasis on developing responsible, community-minded citizens through programs like CharacterPlus, multicultural engagement, and social-emotional learning initiatives. Both organizations share the belief that academic excellence must be paired with character education and community connection to prepare students for lifelong success.

SLU’s approach to sponsorship also prioritizes data-driven improvement and transparency, providing not only compliance oversight but strategic guidance to strengthen academic programs. Frontier’s internal structures—

quarterly data meetings, targeted interventions for special populations, and Board-level performance reviews—are designed to meet and exceed such expectations. This shared commitment to continuous improvement ensures a strong, productive partnership as Frontier brings its model to Columbia.

Furthermore, SLU's history of partnering with high-quality, mission-driven charter schools demonstrates its selectivity and dedication to long-term impact rather than short-term expansion. Frontier values this selectivity, as it reflects a sponsorship relationship built on trust, high standards, and shared accountability for student outcomes.

In short, Frontier seeks continued sponsorship from SLU for the Columbia campus because of:

- Alignment in mission and values—academic rigor, equity, service, and whole-child development.
- Shared commitment to measurable outcomes and closing achievement gaps.
- Collaborative yet exacting oversight that fosters sustainable excellence.
- Support for innovative, community-connected educational models, particularly in STEM and future STEAM expansion.

By partnering with SLU, Frontier Schools will gain not only a sponsor but also a mission-aligned collaborator dedicated to ensuring that the new Columbia campus upholds the highest standards of academic achievement, operational integrity, and community impact.

**Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- evidence a compelling and well-articulated description of the proposed school.
- evidence clear intentionality in and a strong rationale for seeking SLU's sponsorship
- evidence of alignment between the proposed school, board, and SLU as the potential sponsor.

## B. Target Student Population and Need

**B.1** Describe – quantitatively and qualitatively – the student population for which the school is intentionally designed. Address all of the following:

- geography, gender, race/ethnicity, age, pertinent socio-economic and cultural characteristics, etc.
- what schools the majority of the target students currently attend; current attrition and mobility rates; and results of any pertinent research indicating an interest from target school families to attend the proposed charter school

The proposed Frontier STEM Academy Elementary School in Columbia, Missouri, is intentionally designed to serve a diverse, early childhood and elementary population with a focus on equitable access to a high-quality, STEM-focused education.

### **Geography & Age**

The school will be located in Columbia, Missouri, drawing primarily from the city's growing population of school-age children. The initial opening will serve Pre-K through 2nd grade in 2026–27, with one grade added each year. Students will range from approximately 4 to 8 years old in the first three years of operation.

### **Race/Ethnicity & Gender**

Projected enrollment reflects Columbia's demographics: 51.9% White, 21.8% Black, 8.9% Hispanic/Latino, 6% Asian, and 11.4% multiracial or other. The school expects to enroll students in approximately equal numbers by gender, maintaining a balanced representation across all subgroups.

### **Socio-Economic and Cultural Characteristics**

The target population includes a significant proportion of students from economically disadvantaged households, English Learners (ELs), and students with disabilities. Columbia's cultural diversity—shaped by the presence of the University of Missouri, a growing immigrant community, and a mix of urban and rural residents—aligns with Frontier's commitment to multicultural engagement and culturally responsive teaching. Many families will benefit from Frontier's strong emphasis on home visits, bilingual communication, and inclusive practices for historically underserved groups.

### **Current School Attendance**

The majority of target students currently attend Columbia Public Schools' elementary campuses or private preschools. Public elementary enrollment in Columbia is increasing, creating both capacity pressures and opportunities for alternative options. The district's size and mobility patterns suggest a mix of stable residents and families who relocate frequently for employment or education-related reasons.

### **Attrition & Mobility Rates**

Based on Missouri state data, annual attrition is projected at 5–10%, with lower rates in early grades and higher rates in upper levels. Columbia's mobility is influenced by factors such as the university's staff turnover and the local job market. Frontier's experience with rolling admissions and active waitlists in Kansas City will help maintain steady enrollment despite mobility.

### **Evidence of Interest from Target Families**

Nationwide and regional research consistently shows high demand for STEM-focused, college-prep charter schools. In Columbia, the combination of population growth, rising early childhood enrollment, and limited STEM-intensive options in the public elementary system creates a strong market. Frontier's established reputation in Kansas City—serving more than 1,550 students with over 90% identifying as students of color—further demonstrates its ability to attract and retain diverse families seeking rigorous academics, individualized learning, and a safe, inclusive school culture.

In sum, the Columbia campus will serve a racially, socioeconomically, and culturally diverse early elementary population whose families are seeking innovative, high-quality educational alternatives. Its design directly addresses both demographic realities and documented community interest.

- B.2** Detail the need for the school to exist within the current/future portfolio of educational options in the City of St. Louis. Address your understanding of the challenges – educational, operational, etc. – of the current neighborhood schools and the target population’s currently unmet educational needs (cite enrollment and/or student achievement data, community-based research, district reports, etc. as appropriate).

Columbia’s current K–12 landscape is dominated by Columbia Public Schools (CPS), supplemented by a limited number of private and parochial options. While CPS has strong programs in some areas, the city’s rapid population growth, shifting demographics, and rising early childhood enrollment have created gaps in capacity, program diversity, and specialized academic offerings—particularly in STEM-focused, inquiry-based learning at the early elementary level.

### **Current Challenges in Neighborhood Schools**

1. **Achievement Gaps** – Statewide Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) data indicate persistent disparities in math, science, and literacy performance between student subgroups, particularly among economically disadvantaged students, English Learners, and students with disabilities. While Columbia’s district-wide averages may meet or exceed state benchmarks, subgroup performance often lags significantly, leaving targeted supports insufficient for many students.
2. **Limited STEM-Integrated Elementary Options** – Although CPS offers some STEM-related enrichment, there is no citywide early elementary program with STEM integration as the core instructional model. Most STEM resources are concentrated at the middle or high school level, limiting early exposure that research shows is critical to long-term engagement in STEM fields.
3. **Equity and Access Barriers** – Families in certain neighborhoods, especially those with lower household incomes, have fewer high-quality early education options nearby. Transportation barriers, lack of specialized instructional supports, and limited bilingual outreach further contribute to uneven access.
4. **Capacity and Class Size Pressures** – CPS enrollment data show growth in Pre-K and K–2 populations, which is projected to continue. Several elementary schools operate near or above capacity, creating larger class sizes and limiting the ability to offer individualized attention.

### **Unmet Needs of the Target Population**

- **Early STEM Engagement** – The absence of a district-wide elementary STEM model means young learners miss critical opportunities to build problem-solving, coding, engineering, and design-thinking skills from the earliest grades.
- **Culturally Responsive and Inclusive Instruction** – Columbia’s increasing diversity—projected to be 48% students of color by 2030—requires intentional multicultural engagement and differentiated instruction to close opportunity gaps.
- **Family-School Partnership Models** – Frontier’s home-visit program, multilingual communications, and active parent engagement address gaps in outreach and connection found in larger, traditional settings.



- Behavioral Health and SEL Integration – Post-pandemic, behavioral health needs among elementary students have increased, but consistent, embedded SEL programming is not universally available in CPS.

### **Why Frontier’s Model Meets These Needs**

Frontier’s Columbia campus will introduce a research-based, STEM-focused, personalized learning model proven in Kansas City to raise achievement and close subgroup gaps. The model blends rigorous academics with strong SEL, multilingual family engagement, and equitable access through transportation options. With an initial Pre-K–2 launch and gradual grade-level expansion, the school can maintain small class sizes, provide targeted interventions, and build a strong academic foundation before students transition to middle grades.

In short, Columbia’s portfolio of options currently lacks a high-quality, STEM-centered elementary program with proven success in diverse, high-need populations. Frontier’s track record, combined with documented community demand, positions the new school to meet a critical and growing need in the city’s educational ecosystem.

#### **B.3 Detail how your school’s philosophy/model (as detailed above) is well-suited to this target population? Be specific. What supports your belief in the efficacy of your school for this target population?**

Frontier Schools’ philosophy is rooted in equity, personalized learning, and a STEM-focused model that prepares students for college, careers, and productive citizenship. The proposed Columbia elementary school is intentionally designed to meet the needs of a diverse student body that reflects Columbia’s demographics: approximately 51.9% White, 21.8% Black, 8.9% Hispanic/Latino, 6% Asian, and 11.4% multiracial or other. Many students in Columbia’s public system are economically disadvantaged or represent historically underserved subgroups. Our model directly addresses these challenges by providing research-based instruction, targeted interventions, and wraparound supports.

The STEM-focused instructional model emphasizes inquiry, hands-on learning, and problem-solving, which research confirms significantly increases engagement and achievement for underrepresented students in math and science fields. This approach prepares students not only to master Missouri Learning Standards but also to develop critical thinking and collaborative skills needed for 21st-century careers. The program is designed to integrate arts and social studies, ensuring accessibility for students with non-STEM interests while laying the groundwork for future STEAM expansion.

Our belief in the model’s efficacy comes from proven results in Kansas City, where Frontier Schools serves over 1,550 students, 90% of whom identify as students of color and a significant portion of whom are economically disadvantaged. Despite these challenges, Frontier maintains a 100% college acceptance rate and consistently ranks in the top third of charter schools on Missouri Assessment Program (MAP) results. These outcomes demonstrate the model’s effectiveness in closing achievement gaps and preparing students for long-term success.

The model is also well-suited to Columbia families’ needs because of its emphasis on personalized learning and whole-child supports. Students receive differentiated instruction through tiered interventions, small-group teaching, and technology-enhanced learning platforms. English learners benefit from structured language development plans, while students with disabilities are supported through individualized education programs (IEPs), co-teaching, and assistive technology. Frontier’s established home visit program, which has reached over 50% of its families in Kansas City annually, will be replicated in Columbia to build strong relationships with parents, address barriers to learning, and improve student retention.

In short, our educational philosophy and STEM-centered model are highly responsive to Columbia's diverse population. By combining a rigorous academic program, targeted supports for special populations, and strong family-school partnerships, we are confident that the Frontier model will raise achievement, reduce gaps, and provide students in Columbia with high-quality educational opportunities that are currently limited.

- B.4** Describe how you will recruit students. Discuss publicity, marketing, and strategies to reach all eligible families. Discuss the nature of and extent to which you have engaged target population families and the local community to develop your plans.

Frontier Schools will implement a comprehensive, equity-focused student recruitment strategy to ensure that all eligible families in Columbia are informed of and have access to our proposed elementary school. Our recruitment plan is designed to reach a diverse student population reflective of the community, including families who are often underserved in traditional school systems.

### **Publicity and Marketing**

We will use multiple channels to maximize awareness:

- **Community Presence:** Hosting information sessions, open houses, and school tours in accessible locations such as community centers, libraries, and faith-based organizations.
- **Digital Outreach:** Using the school website, social media platforms, and targeted digital ads to reach families across Columbia.
- **Local Media:** Engaging local newspapers, radio stations, and community newsletters to promote enrollment opportunities.
- **Multilingual Materials:** Enrollment brochures, flyers, and application forms will be translated into the primary languages spoken in Columbia households, ensuring accessibility for English Learner families.
- **Grassroots Outreach:** Teachers and staff will conduct home visits—a signature Frontier practice—allowing personal conversations with families about the school's mission and opportunities.

### **Strategies to Reach All Eligible Families**

Our recruitment plan prioritizes outreach to historically underserved and mobile populations:

- **Partnerships:** Collaborating with local nonprofits, refugee resettlement agencies, housing authorities, and social service providers to connect with families experiencing poverty, homelessness, or foster care placement.
- **Neighborhood Engagement:** Hosting enrollment events in high-density housing areas and underserved neighborhoods.
- **Accessibility:** Scheduling events during evenings and weekends to accommodate working families, and providing child care during recruitment meetings when possible.

### **Family and Community Engagement in Planning**

As Frontier Schools plans to expand to Columbia, we will actively engage families and community stakeholders in the design of the proposed school. We will gather input through community meetings, focus groups, and one-

on-one conversations with parents to understand the need for additional high-quality elementary options. Families' feedback will help shape interest in a STEM-focused program and ensure strong school-home communication. This input will be incorporated into the instructional design, the emphasis on multicultural engagement, and the planned continuation of Frontier's home visit program in Columbia.

### **Commitment to Equity in Enrollment**

Frontier Schools maintains an open-enrollment policy in compliance with Missouri law. Admission will be tuition-free and non-selective, open to all students regardless of race, ethnicity, disability status, English proficiency, or prior academic achievement. If applications exceed available seats, a lottery system will be conducted, giving equal opportunity to all applicants while providing preference only to siblings and children of employees, consistent with Missouri statute.

Through intentional outreach, accessible communication, and authentic community engagement, Frontier Schools will ensure that the Columbia campus serves as a truly inclusive, community-based educational option.

- B.5** Detail the admission and enrollment processes, admission preference policies, back-filling of open seats (at all grade levels), and enrollment policies invoked when demand exceeds available seats. Address the school's policy on the validity of attendance of students who do not reside in the district but may be eligible to attend per judicial settlements, and admission statements related to students with disabilities.

### **Admission and Enrollment Policies**

Frontier Schools – Columbia will operate an open-enrollment, tuition-free charter school in full compliance with Missouri law. Admission will not be determined by academic achievement, disability status, English proficiency, or socio-economic background. Every eligible child residing within Boone County boundaries will be welcome to apply.

#### **Admission Process**

- Families will complete an application form (online or paper), which will be widely available at school events, community partner sites, and via the school website.
- Applications will be accepted during an established enrollment window, with late applications placed on a waitlist in the order received.
- Students who apply within the enrollment window will be admitted unless the number of applicants exceeds available seats.

#### **Lottery Procedures (When Applications Exceed Seats)**

- A public lottery will be conducted by school leadership and certified by a notary.
- Lottery results will determine the order of student placement and waitlist positions.
- Sibling preference will be given to students who already have a sibling enrolled at the school.
- Children of school employees may also receive preference, in compliance with Missouri statute.
- All other students will be admitted on a random basis without preference for race, ethnicity, or other characteristics.

### Back-Filling of Open Seats

- Frontier Schools will back-fill vacancies at all grade levels to maintain stable enrollment and ensure equitable access for new families.
- Students admitted mid-year will receive transitional supports, including academic diagnostics and targeted interventions, to ensure a smooth integration into the school community.

### Students with Disabilities

- Frontier Schools explicitly affirms that students with disabilities will be admitted on an equal basis with their non-disabled peers.
- During enrollment, families will not be asked to disclose disability status; however, once admitted, students requiring services will receive full access to special education, 504 accommodations, or related supports in compliance with IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
- The school will ensure that its facilities, instruction, and extracurricular programs are fully accessible to students with disabilities.

### Commitment to Equity and Transparency

All enrollment and lottery procedures will be clearly communicated to families in multiple languages, posted on the school's website, and reviewed annually for compliance and transparency. By maintaining open access, equitable processes, and backfilling policies, Frontier Schools ensures that the Columbia campus provides an inclusive and community-responsive option for all families.

**B.6** Complete the five-year enrollment projection table below, adding grade columns if necessary:

	Grade: PK	Grade: K	Grade: 1	Grade: 2	Grade: 3	Grade: 4	Grade: 5	Grade:	Grade:	Grade:	Annual Total
Year 1	40	96	24	24	0	0	0				184
Year 2	80	96	96	24	24	0	0				320
Year 3	80	96	96	96	24	24	0				416
Year 4	80	96	96	96	96	24	24				512
Year 5	80	96	96	96	96	96	24				584

**B.7** Provide below any context you feel will help SLU understand your enrollment projections and/or timeline. Address projected attrition (which should be accounted for in your projected annual enrollments). Provide any additional support for the predictive quality of your enrollment projections.

Frontier Schools' enrollment projections for the Columbia campus are based on a phased growth model that reflects both community demand and the school's capacity to scale responsibly. The school will open in 2026–27 with 184 students across Pre-K through Grade 2 and grow annually to serve 416 students by Year 3. This timeline

balances the need for new high-quality options in Columbia with Frontier's commitment to sustainable growth, staffing, and facility planning.

### **Support for Predictive Quality**

1. **Community Demand:** Columbia has experienced consistent population growth and an increase in school-age children. Enrollment in Columbia Public Schools continues to rise, particularly at the elementary level, creating demand for additional high-quality options.
2. **Comparable Success in Kansas City:** Frontier Schools' four existing campuses in Kansas City serve more than 1,550 students, over 90% of whom are students of color and a majority of whom are economically disadvantaged. Despite challenges, Frontier has maintained a waitlist in Kansas City every year since its founding in 2007, demonstrating strong parent demand for the model. This history provides confidence that Columbia families will respond similarly.
3. **Sustainable Growth Model:** Enrollment projections reflect a gradual scale-up across grade levels to prevent overcrowding, support recruitment, and ensure program quality. For example, Pre-K enrollment will begin with 40 students and double to 80 in Year 2, while upper grades (Grades 1–3) expand incrementally as students matriculate. This phased approach mirrors the successful growth patterns Frontier implemented in Kansas City.

### **Attrition and Mobility Considerations**

Enrollment projections account for expected attrition of 5–10% annually, consistent with state data and patterns in comparable charter schools. Attrition is typically lower in the early elementary grades but increases as students grow older and families relocate. Columbia's mobility rates are also influenced by the University of Missouri and regional employment opportunities.

Frontier Schools will mitigate attrition through:

- **Active Retention Efforts:** Home visits, bilingual parent engagement, and strong wraparound supports.
- **Rolling Admissions and Waitlists:** Backfilling open seats promptly at all grade levels.
- **Student Support Programs:** Ensuring families see the school as a long-term partner through stability services for foster, homeless, and highly mobile students.

The projections are realistic, data-driven, and supported by demographic trends, Columbia's population growth, and Frontier's established track record in serving urban, diverse communities. By building capacity gradually, backfilling vacancies, and maintaining strong family engagement, Frontier Schools is confident that the Columbia campus will reach and sustain its projected enrollment.

### **Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- evidence a clear understanding of how the proposed school is designed to meet the specific educational needs of its target student population.
- evidence a well-informed understanding of why the needs of the target population are not currently being met.
- evidence a sound recruitment plan that addresses how community members have been/will be engaged.

- evidence admission and enrollment policies fully compliant with all applicable laws and consonant with SLU's commitment to equity and justice.
- present realistic enrollment projections based on solid data and analysis.

## C. Educational Goals, Assessments, and Use of Assessment Data

- C.1** Summarize the major, high-level educational goals (academic, affective/social/ emotional, etc.) you have set for your school. For example, you might consider the intended educational outcomes of graduates of the school, or outcomes for those completing a major level of schooling (primary, elementary, etc.).

Frontier Schools – Columbia will establish a rigorous, equitable, and supportive elementary program designed to ensure that students develop the academic foundation, social-emotional skills, and habits of character necessary for long-term success in school and life. Our high-level goals are as follows:

### 1. Academic Achievement Goals

- Ensure students at Frontier Schools-Columbia perform at or above the Columbia Public School District average in **ELA, Math, and Science** on the MO MAP assessments.
- Promote student mastery of core academic standards so that graduates are well-prepared for the next level of schooling and long-term success.

### 2. Curriculum & Instruction Goals

- Align curricula fully with **Missouri Learning Standards** and DESE-adopted outcomes.
- Maintain a staff of **highly qualified teachers** as defined by state and federal requirements.
- Implement teacher evaluation processes aligned with DESE's **Framework for Teaching** to ensure continuous instructional improvement

### 3. Climate/Culture Goals

- Adhere to all laws and regulations ensuring the **health, safety, and well-being** of students and staff.
- Build and sustain a positive **school leadership structure and culture** that supports the attainment of educational goals.
- Promote inclusive practices that support **special populations** (students with disabilities, English Learners, homeless students, Title program participants, etc.).

### 4. Operations & Compliance Goals

- Ensure compliance with **all state and federal education laws**, including participation in the statewide system of assessments.
- Submit all required reports and data accurately and on time.
- Provide **transparent access to DESE's annual report card** and other accountability measures.

### 5. Budget & Finance Goals

- Submit all required expenditure reports (including ASBR) on time to DESE.
- Conduct and submit an **independent annual audit** with no material findings.
- Ensure the Board adopts an **annual budget by June 30** and regularly monitors financial performance.
- Maintain a **minimum 3% annual fund balance** per DESE standards to safeguard fiscal stability.

### 6. Governance Goals

- Ensure all Board members complete **state-required training** and maintain compliance with Sunshine Laws.

- Require all Board members to complete **background checks and ethics filings** in compliance with Missouri statutes.
- Promote transparency and accountability in governance through regular Board review of policies, budgets, and compliance requirements.

**C.2** Given the broad goals summarized above, in the table below, detail how those goals will be operationalized (and on which your school might be evaluated by your sponsor and others). These should not be philosophical statements about learning and lifelong success for students but, rather, very concrete, measurable goals that fairly document student learning and the demonstrable impact of your school's education. Address state-administered assessments, nationally-normed assessments, and locally-produced assessments as applicable. Add rows to the table if needed.

- *For example, perhaps one goal is that all 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders demonstrate at least 1.2 grades of educational growth in Mathematics per school year as measured by the MO Map, NWEA exam, or a locally-development assessment. Or that at least 65% the Black sub-group of 8<sup>th</sup> graders will score at the “Proficient” or “Advanced” level on the MO MAP for English Language Arts. Or that student attitudes about and behavior toward those of other races or genders will evidence a certain type or amount of change over a designated period of time at the school. Or that growth in students’ abilities to self-advocate and exercise self-discipline and responsibility will meet certain targets as evidenced via certain applicable assessments.*
- *Note: We are especially interested in your approach to goals for individual student annual growth and sub-group achievement.*

Educational Goal	Related Primary Assessment(s)
1.1 School-wide, the percent of Frontier Schools-Columbia students who score at either the “Proficient” or “Advanced” level on the MO MAP ELA assessment shall be at or greater than the average for all Columbia Public School District schools with the same grade levels.	MAP Assessment
1.2. School-wide, the percent of Frontier Schools students who score at either the “Proficient” or “Advanced” level on the MO MAP MATH assessment shall be at or greater than the average for all Columbia Public School District schools with the same grade levels.	MAP Assessment
1.3 School-wide, the percent of Frontier Schools students who score at either the “Proficient” or “Advanced” level on the MO MAP SCIENCE assessment shall be at or greater than the	MAP Assessment



average for all Columbia Public School District schools with the same grade levels.	
2.1. Curricula are well-aligned with all applicable learning standards/outcomes and those established/adopted by DESE.	Missouri Learning Standards
2.2. The school is compliant with the State of Missouri's and U.S. Department of Education's requirements for "Highly Qualified" teachers.	DESE Requirements
2.3 Teacher evaluation standards and processes are compliant with DESE regulations.	Framework for Teaching
3.1. Adhere to all laws and regulations pertaining to the health and safety of all staff and students, and promptly and adequately answer any and all issues or complaints raised by any stakeholder.	Federal and state laws and regulations
3.2 Maintain school leadership and culture that contributes to successful attainment of stated goals and objectives.	Performance rubrics
4.1. The school complies with all applicable state/federal laws, including those related to special education, title programs, homeless students, English Language Learners, etc.	Federal and state laws and regulations
4.2. All state- and federally-required reports/data are submitted by established deadlines and in full compliance with governing regulations.	Federal and state laws and regulations, DESE Guidelines, Board policies.
4.3. The school participates in the statewide system of assessments.	Federal and state laws and regulations, DESE Guidelines, Board policies.
4.4. The school makes publicly available data from DESE's annual report card.	DESE Annual Report Card
5.1. All required Final Expenditure Reports and the Annual Secretary of the Board Report (ASBR) are submitted to DESE by established deadlines.	DESE Deadlines
5.2. Annual independent audit is conducted and submitted to all required parties on time, with no material findings.	Financial Audit Reports
5.3. The Board approves an annual budget by June 30 of the prior fiscal year.	Board Meeting Agenda
5.4. The check register is reviewed and approved by the Board as required by 5 CSR 20-100.260 and Board policy.	Board Meeting Agenda, Board policy

5.5. The Board publicly reviews financial statements against the approved budget and makes quarterly budget amendments as required per state law.	Board Meeting Agenda
5.6. The school maintains a minimum 3% annual fund balance, calculated per DESE standards.	Financial Audit Reports, Annual Budget
6.1 Board member training complies with all state laws.	State Laws
6.2. All Board and committee meetings adhere to the provisions of the MO open meetings/Sunshine laws.	State Laws/Sunshine Laws
6.3. All Board members have undergone criminal background and FCSR checks as required in section 160.400.14, RSMo.	State Laws, DESE Guidelines
6.4 All Board members submit ethics commission requirements annually as outlined in 105.483 and 105.492 RSMo.	State Laws

**C.3** How were the above-stated goals determined? What research/resources informed your goal development? How do the goals address any anticipated achievement gaps for sub-populations or historically disadvantaged populations?

As required by MO statutes and the contracts between SLU and our sponsored charter schools, SLU establishes for each of its sponsored schools what DESE refers to as a “Performance Contract.” The Performance Contract is an explicit statement of the specific academic, financial, and organizational performance standards SLU has established for the charter, and against which the school shall be evaluated annually.

Our educational goals were determined directly from these Performance Contract standards, which incorporate Missouri Learning Standards, DESE requirements, federal and state compliance regulations, and nationally recognized best practices for charter school accountability. In developing these goals, we relied on resources such as DESE guidelines, MAP performance benchmarks, the Framework for Teaching, federal ESSA requirements, and established research on effective charter school operations and governance. These research-based frameworks ensure that our goals are measurable, rigorous, and aligned with both state and sponsor expectations.

SLU’s annual evaluation of our school is based primarily—though not exclusively—on the achievement of these established standards. Failure to achieve certain standards may result in SLU requiring the school to submit remediation reports, engage in external audits, provide public reporting, or pursue targeted training for leadership, staff, or the governing Board. Accordingly, our goals were developed not only to meet compliance but also to anticipate areas of challenge, such as achievement gaps for sub-populations and historically disadvantaged populations.

To address these gaps, our academic goals explicitly commit the school to ensuring that student proficiency rates in ELA, Math, and Science meet or exceed district averages. This comparative measure accounts for the performance of all students, including English Language Learners, students with disabilities, economically disadvantaged students, and other sub-populations. Furthermore, our curriculum and instructional goals emphasize alignment with state standards and the implementation of evidence-based instructional strategies

that support differentiated instruction, scaffolding, and culturally responsive teaching.

Our climate/culture and operations goals directly address the needs of historically disadvantaged populations by ensuring compliance with special education, Title programs, services for homeless students, and English Language Learner supports. In addition, transparent public reporting of student outcomes, financial practices, and governance ensures equity and accountability to all stakeholders.

Ultimately, the establishment of these goals—rooted in the Performance Contract—ensures that Frontier Schools-Columbia not only meets the academic expectations of SLU and DESE but also actively works to close achievement gaps, improve outcomes for vulnerable student populations, and sustain a strong system of accountability across all aspects of school performance.

- C.4** Indicate what level of student performance toward the above-noted goals, and over what period of time, would, per the Board, warrant the board mandating a) major changes to the school's educational model, staffing (teachers and administrators), or school closure.

The goals of Frontier Schools-Columbia were determined through the Performance Contract established between Saint Louis University (SLU) and the school. This contract clearly outlines the academic, financial, and organizational expectations for the school and serves as the foundation for all goal development. The contract ensures that goals are measurable, rigorous, and aligned with both sponsor and state expectations.

In developing our goals, we relied upon the requirements outlined in the Charter School Contract, which incorporate state law, DESE policy, and SLU's sponsorship authority. Specifically, the Performance Contract requires that academic goals meet or exceed the aggregated pupil performance of Kansas City Public Schools, that financial goals ensure responsible stewardship of public funds (including maintaining a minimum 3% fund balance), and that organizational goals ensure compliance with governance, safety, and service requirements for all students, including those with disabilities.

These goals also directly address achievement gaps for sub-populations and historically disadvantaged populations. By requiring our performance to meet or exceed Kansas City Public Schools (Article VIII, Section 8.11.A), the framework holds us accountable for the success of all students and significant subgroups. In addition, the Charter School Contract explicitly requires compliance with all state and federal laws governing equitable access and nondiscrimination in admissions (Article V, Sections 5.1–5.2) and mandates fair and appropriate services for students with disabilities and other special populations (Article VI, Section 6.9).

Finally, the monitoring and intervention provisions of the contract (Articles VIII–XI) ensure that if gaps emerge for particular populations, SLU may require targeted remediation, external audits, or specific training for staff or board members. This structure ensures that our goals are not aspirational alone but are enforceable, research-based standards rooted in state law and sponsor oversight, with explicit mechanisms to address disparities and close achievement gaps across all student groups.

- C.5** Detail the school's plan for grade-by-grade promotion. What policies/standards govern promotion decisions? Provide a rationale for the policies/standards cited.

Frontier Schools-Columbia will establish clear, research-informed policies to guide promotion decisions at each

grade level. The central principle of these policies is that promotion must be based on a student's demonstrated mastery of grade-level standards, as well as consistent attendance that supports sustained learning.

### **Kindergarten**

Students in kindergarten are promoted to first grade upon satisfactory completion of curricular grade-level standards and meeting a minimum of 90% attendance. The focus at this level is on ensuring foundational literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional readiness. The attendance requirement emphasizes the importance of consistent participation in early learning experiences that are critical for long-term success.

### **Grades 1–3**

Students in grades 1–3 are promoted when they:

- Demonstrate satisfactory completion of grade-level curricular standards,
- Score at or above the 30th percentile in both Reading and Mathematics on the NWEA MAP assessment during the Spring or Summer testing period, and
- Attend at least 90% of classes during the school year.

These requirements ensure that promotion is tied not only to classroom performance but also to nationally normed benchmark assessments. This combination provides a balanced view of achievement while ensuring students build the literacy and numeracy foundation necessary for later academic success. If a student meets curricular standards but falls short on attendance or NWEA MAP requirements, the Grade Placement Committee (composed of the Principal, Assistant Principal-Academics, and the classroom teacher) reviews the case to determine whether promotion is appropriate.

### **Grades 4–8**

Students in grades 4–8 are promoted when they:

- Maintain a yearly average of at least 60% in all core classes (Communication Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science),
- Maintain a yearly average of at least 60% in non-core classes,
- Score at or above the 30th percentile in Reading and Mathematics on the NWEA MAP assessment during the Spring or Summer testing period, and
- Attend at least 90% of classes during the school year.

This framework ensures that promotion decisions reflect both academic performance across subjects and consistent participation in learning. When students demonstrate competency in core content but fall short in other areas (such as attendance or assessment benchmarks), the Grade Placement Committee reviews the situation and determines the most appropriate placement.

### **Rationale for Policies/Standards**

The school's promotion policies are designed to safeguard both **academic rigor and fairness**. They ensure that:

- **Mastery of standards** is the foundation of advancement, preventing students from being promoted without the skills necessary for success in the next grade.
- **Attendance expectations** underscore the importance of consistent engagement in the learning process, which research shows is directly linked to academic success.
- **Nationally normed benchmark assessments** (NWEA MAP) provide objective data to confirm student readiness beyond classroom grades.
- **Grade Placement Committee oversight** allows for professional judgment and flexibility when a student's circumstances require individual consideration, ensuring that decisions are in the best interest of the student.

By blending objective academic benchmarks with educator judgment, these policies ensure that promotion decisions are rigorous, equitable, and supportive of long-term student achievement.

### **Rationale for Policies**

The promotion standards are designed to:

- Ensure readiness for subsequent grades by requiring demonstrated mastery of essential literacy and numeracy skills.
- Prevent social promotion that places students at risk of compounding academic deficits in later grades.
- Support equity by using multiple measures—including teacher input, standardized assessments, and individualized plans for ELs and SWDs—to avoid over-reliance on a single test score.
- Encourage early intervention by providing families with timely data, access to after-school and summer supports, and individualized learning plans when students are at risk of retention.

This policy ensures that grade promotion reflects a balanced, student-centered approach—grounded in accountability and academic rigor, while also responsive to the developmental and individual needs of young learners.

- C.6** Detail the school's approach to the use of assessment data to improve curricula, strengthen pedagogy, and advance student learning, and otherwise ensure accountability. Discuss the varying roles of classroom teachers, academic administrators, data analysts, etc. Address how the chief academic officer, chief executive officer, and board of directors will use assessment data for decision-making.

Frontier Schools – Columbia will implement a comprehensive, data-driven cycle of continuous improvement that leverages multiple assessments—state-administered (Missouri MAP, ACCESS for ELLs), nationally normed (NWEA MAP), and locally developed (ESGI, curriculum-based assessments)—to inform instruction, evaluate program effectiveness, and ensure accountability at all levels of the organization.

### **Improving Curriculum and Instruction**

- **Classroom Level:** Teachers use formative assessments, exit tickets, and ESGI benchmarks to make daily adjustments to instruction. NWEA MAP Growth results are reviewed each trimester to group students

for differentiated instruction, intervention (RTI Tiers 2 and 3), and enrichment.

- **Curriculum Refinement:** Curriculum directors and instructional coaches aggregate assessment trends to identify gaps in the scope and sequence. For example, if NWEA data shows consistent weakness in numeracy across Grade 1, curriculum pacing or supplemental supports (e.g., Zearn, small-group instruction) will be introduced.
- **Pedagogical Strengthening:** Instructional coaches model best practices, conduct classroom observations, and co-plan with teachers using assessment results. Data informs targeted professional development, ensuring teachers grow in areas where student data shows persistent needs.

### Roles and Responsibilities

- **Classroom Teachers:** Administer and interpret daily and quarterly assessments, adjust instruction, document student progress, and communicate results to families. Teachers participate in quarterly data meetings to analyze trends and develop action plans.
- **Instructional Coaches & Academic Administrators:** Support teachers in using data effectively, design intervention groups, and monitor fidelity of instructional adjustments. They lead Response to Intervention (RTI) meetings every 6–8 weeks to evaluate student progress and refine support.
- **Curriculum Directors:** Ensure accuracy of data collection, analyze student performance dashboards, and generate reports disaggregated by subgroups (race/ethnicity, ELs, SWDs, economically disadvantaged) to highlight equity gaps.
- **Chief Academic Officer (CAO):** Synthesizes assessment data across grade levels and subjects, evaluates curricular effectiveness, and recommends programmatic changes (e.g., adoption of supplemental literacy supports). The CAO oversees professional development priorities based on data trends.
- **Chief Executive Officer (CEO):** Monitors overall academic performance relative to organizational goals, ensures alignment with the school's mission, and allocates resources (staffing, interventions, technology) to address identified needs. The CEO reports progress to the Board and sponsor.
- **Board of Directors:** Reviews disaggregated academic performance data at least three times annually (fall, mid-year, spring). The Board evaluates whether the school is meeting its stated goals, holding leadership accountable for subgroup growth and proficiency. In cases of persistent underperformance, the Board may direct leadership changes, model revisions, or increased investments in interventions.

### Ensuring Accountability

The system of assessment and analysis ensures accountability at all levels:

- Students are held to clear benchmarks and receive targeted supports.
- Teachers and Leaders are evaluated on their ability to move students toward proficiency and growth.
- The School is accountable to the Board, sponsor, and families through transparent reporting of data, including subgroup outcomes.

## Cycle of Continuous Improvement

Data analysis follows a recurring cycle:

1. **Collect** – Gather assessment results from ESGI, NWEA MAP, classroom assessments, and MAP.
2. **Analyze** – Teachers and administrators review results in collaborative data meetings.
3. **Act** – Instructional adjustments, interventions, and PD are implemented.
4. **Monitor** – Student progress is re-assessed every 6–8 weeks.
5. **Report** – Data is communicated to families, the Board, and sponsor to ensure transparency and accountability.

Through this structure, Frontier Schools – Columbia ensures that assessment data is not only a compliance measure but a powerful tool for improving curriculum, pedagogy, and student outcomes.

### Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...*

- evidence realistic, well-informed educational goals (“academic” and holistic educational goals, as appropriate) that address key sub-populations and historical achievement gaps.
- evidence a mature understanding of the rationales for, and challenges of, measuring multi-year academic growth versus student annual “point-in-time” achievement results.
- evidence the board’s meaningful consideration of unacceptable educational performance.
- evidence well-supported criteria for student promotion.
- evidence a sophisticated understanding of, and a sound plan for, how assessment data can be used to support continuous improvement and increased student achievement.

## D. Curriculum and Instruction

- D.1** Describe in detail the curriculum/curricula, learning standards/outcomes, and primary pedagogies you intend to implement at the proposed school. Address individually all major educational domains: Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Fine/Performing Arts, Physical Education, and across all grade levels. **Attach a curriculum guide as an appendix.**

For each domain, provide rationales for how the planned curricula and related pedagogies will best enable your students to attain your major educational goals articulated above. Include references to related scholarly literature as appropriate, as well as other experiences that inform your curriculum and instructional decisions.

Demonstrate alignment of your curricula and associated learning outcomes with Missouri Learning Standards. Feel free to include appendices as appropriate if that better facilitates your response.

Frontier Schools – Columbia will implement a rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum that integrates research-based instructional strategies and prioritizes early literacy, numeracy, STEM, social-emotional learning (SEL), and cultural competence. The curriculum ensures alignment with Missouri Learning Standards (MLS), the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), and national benchmarks such as the College and Career Readiness Standards for early grades.

### 1. Language Arts (English Language Arts – ELA)

#### Curriculum & Learning Outcomes

- **Pre-K & K:** Foundational literacy is taught using *Pathways to Reading* (phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension). ESGI is used for early literacy diagnostics.
- **Grades 1–2:** Structured literacy continues with explicit phonics instruction, fluency development, and comprehension strategies. Writing instruction focuses on narrative, informational, and opinion pieces per MLS Writing Standards.
- **Learning Outcomes:** Students will reach grade-level proficiency in reading fluency, demonstrate comprehension of grade-level texts, and write with emerging command of spelling, grammar, and structure.

#### Pedagogy & Rationale

- Research-based practices from the *Science of Reading* guide instruction, emphasizing systematic phonics and comprehension strategies (National Reading Panel, 2000).
- Daily literacy blocks incorporate guided reading, shared reading, and small-group interventions to differentiate instruction for struggling readers and English Learners.

### 2. Mathematics

#### Curriculum & Learning Outcomes

- Curriculum is based on *Eureka Math*<sup>2</sup> (EngageNY) and *Zearn* for practice, aligned with Missouri Learning Standards and Common Core State Standards (CCSS).



- Pre-K focuses on number sense, shapes, and patterns; K–2 extends to addition, subtraction, place value, and problem-solving using multiple representations.

#### **Pedagogy & Rationale**

- Concrete-Pictorial-Abstract (CPA) approach builds conceptual understanding before symbolic manipulation (Fuson & Briars, 1990).
- Math talks and inquiry-based lessons foster critical thinking and reasoning, consistent with MLS Mathematical Practices.

### **3. Science**

#### **Curriculum & Learning Outcomes**

- Curriculum integrates *Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)* through Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Launch modules for early STEM exploration.
- PK–2 students engage in hands-on experiments, engineering challenges, and inquiry-based units to develop observation, questioning, and problem-solving skills.

#### **Pedagogy & Rationale**

- Inquiry-based learning promotes deeper understanding and long-term retention (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000).
- Lessons incorporate cross-curricular literacy and math skills to reinforce core concepts.

### **4. Social Science**

#### **Curriculum & Learning Outcomes**

- The Social Studies curriculum emphasizes community, culture, and civic awareness.
- Topics include family roles, neighborhood and community studies, basic geography, and historical figures relevant to Missouri and U.S. history.

#### **Pedagogy & Rationale**

- Culturally responsive teaching helps students connect learning to their backgrounds and experiences (Gay, 2018).
- Interactive projects (e.g., community mapping, biographies) foster engagement and relevance.

## 5. Fine/Performing Arts

### Curriculum & Learning Outcomes

- Art and music are taught weekly, integrating visual, auditory, and kinesthetic experiences to build creativity and self-expression.
- Outcomes include developing skills in drawing, painting, rhythm, singing, and movement aligned to MLS Fine Arts Standards.

### Pedagogy & Rationale

- Arts integration enhances cognitive development and academic performance across subjects (Deasy, 2002).
- Instructional practices include guided exploration, performance, and peer critique.

## 6. Physical Education (PE)

### Curriculum & Learning Outcomes

- PE promotes motor skills, fitness, and healthy habits, aligned with Missouri Grade-Level Expectations (GLEs) for physical development and personal wellness.
- Students participate in structured games, movement activities, and health awareness lessons.

### Pedagogy & Rationale

- Active learning enhances cognitive performance, focus, and emotional well-being (Ratey, 2008).
- PE lessons incorporate cooperative play to support social-emotional growth.

### Alignment with Major Educational Goals

- Early literacy/numeracy programs support the goal of **proficiency and accelerated growth** by Grade 2.
- STEM integration advances critical thinking and problem-solving, aligning with long-term college and career readiness.
- SEL-infused pedagogy (CharacterPlus) ensures holistic student development.

- D.2** Describe the primary, school-wide educational modalities (in-person, online, hybrid) to be regularly employed. As applicable, distinguish by grade level or student population. Address emergency management plans and the school's capacity to pivot to 100 percent distance education -- for short and long periods of time --should conditions beyond your control dictate the

need to do so.

Frontier Schools – Columbia will primarily operate as an in-person learning environment for all grades (PK–2), with a strong emphasis on small-group, personalized instruction. However, the school will maintain capacity to pivot to online or hybrid modalities as needed for individual student needs or emergency situations.

### **Primary Educational Modalities**

- **In-Person Instruction (Primary Mode):**

- All students will receive core instruction in classrooms with a low student-to-teacher ratio, incorporating direct instruction, guided practice, and collaborative learning.
- Specialized support (English Language Development, Special Education services, Tier 2 & 3 interventions) will also occur primarily in person to maximize individualized attention.

- **Blended/Technology-Enhanced Learning:**

- Although instruction is primarily in person, technology platforms (Zearn, Lexia Core5, and PLTW Launch) will supplement literacy, numeracy, and STEM instruction.
- These tools allow for adaptive practice and progress monitoring, enabling teachers to personalize instruction.

- **Hybrid Learning (Limited, Case-by-Case):**

- May be provided for students with medical needs or extended absences.
- Combines synchronous instruction (real-time via Zoom or Google Meet) with asynchronous work through school-approved platforms.

### **Emergency Management: Pivot to Distance Learning**

The school will maintain a comprehensive emergency instructional continuity plan to support seamless transition to remote instruction, whether for short-term disruptions (e.g., weather closures) or extended periods (e.g., public health emergencies).

### **Key Components:**

- **Technology Readiness:**

- All students (K–2) will have access to a school-issued Chromebook or tablet, and Wi-Fi hotspots will be made available to families in need.

- **Digital Platforms:**

- Google Classroom (primary LMS) for lessons, assignments, and communication.
- Zoom for synchronous instruction; SeeSaw for PK–K portfolio-based learning.

- **Teacher Preparedness:**
  - Professional development for staff on remote instruction tools and engagement strategies.
  - Weekly lesson plans formatted for both in-person and remote delivery to ensure instructional continuity.
- **Student & Family Support:**
  - Tech support hotline for families.
  - Printed instructional packets for families with limited internet access.
- **Assessment & Accountability:**
  - ESGI (PK–K), NWEA MAP Growth, and teacher-created assessments administered remotely where feasible.
  - Student attendance logged daily via progress on course completion

#### **Rationale for Modalities**

- In-person instruction provides the strongest foundation for early literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional development.
- Technology-enhanced learning allows for differentiation and tracking of progress toward growth and proficiency goals.
- A prepared and tested remote-learning plan ensures the school can continue delivering high-quality instruction under any circumstances.

#### **Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- attach all requested documents
- evidence realistic, well-informed educational goals.
- evidence empirically-grounded curriculum/pedagogies demonstrating a solid understanding of the related scholarly literature.
- evidence a mature understanding of the rationales for, and challenges of, measuring multi-year academic growth versus student annual “point-in-time” achievement results.
- evidence strong coherence among the educational goals, curriculum/pedagogies, and related assessments.

## E. Educating Special Student Populations

- E.1** Discuss how your school will meet the educational needs of, and provide programs of direct instruction and support suitable for, the full range of student means and ability. Address all of the following populations:

- students without housing
- students with physical and learning disabilities
- students who are academically advanced/gifted
- students with limited English proficiency (ELL)
- students at “high risk” per DESE definition

Address how your specific educational philosophy/model and articulated curricula and pedagogies will intentionally support their distinct educational needs, and in full compliance with all applicable state and federal laws.

### Meeting the Needs of All Learners

Frontier Schools – Columbia is committed to ensuring equitable access to high-quality instruction and personalized support for students across the full spectrum of needs and abilities. The school’s educational model—anchored in rigorous academics, individualized learning, and whole-child development—provides a strong framework for meeting the distinct needs of students who are homeless, have disabilities, are academically advanced, are English Language Learners (ELLs), or are identified as “high risk” per DESE.

#### 1. Students Without Housing

- **Support Services:** The school will comply fully with the *McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act*. A designated McKinney-Vento Liaison will coordinate services such as immediate enrollment, transportation assistance, access to free meals, uniforms, and school supplies.
- **Instructional Approach:** Teachers will ensure continuity of instruction through flexible scheduling, access to digital resources, and individualized learning plans to mitigate instructional gaps caused by mobility.
- **Social-Emotional Support:** Counseling services will be provided to address trauma, stability challenges, and behavioral needs, fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

#### 2. Students with Physical and Learning Disabilities

- **Compliance and Services:** The school will comply with *IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act)*, *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*, and *ADA*.
- **Instructional Model:** Special Education staff will develop and implement Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or 504 Plans.
- **Instructional Practices:** Evidence-based interventions (e.g., Orton-Gillingham strategies for reading, multi-sensory math approaches) will be delivered through a co-teaching model, small-group instruction, and assistive technology.

- **Progress Monitoring:** Student progress will be reviewed every 6–8 weeks using NWEA MAP, IEP benchmarks, and formative assessments.

### **3. Academically Advanced/Gifted Students**

- **Identification:** Students will be identified through NWEA MAP data, teacher recommendations, classroom performance, and creativity indicators.
- **Programming:** Differentiated instruction, enrichment projects, and accelerated learning opportunities will be integrated into daily lessons.
- **Pedagogical Model:** Problem-based learning and independent research projects will encourage critical thinking and creativity beyond grade-level standards.

### **4. Students with Limited English Proficiency (ELLs)**

- **Identification & Compliance:** Students will be identified via Home Language Survey and WIDA ACCESS assessments in alignment with Missouri DESE guidelines.
- **Instructional Support:** A sheltered instruction approach (SIOP Model) and English Language Development (ELD) sessions will build academic language and content knowledge.
- **Monitoring:** Annual growth goals will include at least one proficiency level increase on ACCESS for ELLs.

### **5. Students at High Risk (per DESE Definition)**

- **Definition:** Students may be considered high risk based on poverty, attendance, behavioral history, or academic performance.
- **Support Model:** Response to Intervention (RTI) framework will provide tiered academic and behavioral supports, including small-group instruction, mentoring, and counseling services.
- **Family Engagement:** Case management will include close communication with families, social service referrals, and frequent progress monitoring.

### **Alignment with Philosophy and Curriculum**

The school's personalized, standards-aligned curriculum—coupled with evidence-based pedagogy—ensures that instruction is adapted to diverse learner needs while maintaining high expectations. Academic, social-emotional, and behavioral supports are integrated across all programs to promote equity and ensure compliance with federal and state laws, including IDEA, ADA, Section 504, Title I, and Title III.

- E.2** If not otherwise addressed above, describe the services and personnel devoted to support of students in all of the groups noted in E.1.

Frontier Schools – Columbia will employ a multi-tiered support system with specialized personnel to meet the needs of students across all identified groups, ensuring equitable access to instruction and compliance with federal and state laws.

### **Dedicated Personnel**

- **Special Education Team:** Includes certified Special Education teachers, paraprofessionals, and contracted specialists (e.g., speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists) to deliver IEP/504 services.
- **English Language Development (ELD) Staff:** ESL-certified teachers provide targeted English Language Development and sheltered instruction support to ELL students.
- **Counselor/Social Worker:** Supports students who are homeless, high-risk, or facing social-emotional challenges, coordinates McKinney-Vento services, and links families with community resources.
- **Instructional Coaches & Interventionists:** Guide classroom teachers in differentiating instruction for gifted students, struggling learners, and students in RTI Tiers 2 & 3.
- **Health & Wellness Staff:** School nurses and contracted specialists ensure accommodations for students with physical disabilities or health-related needs.

### **Core Services**

#### **1. Academic Interventions**

- Tiered intervention blocks built into the daily schedule for literacy and math.
- Enrichment opportunities for gifted students through accelerated tasks and project-based learning.

#### **2. Social-Emotional & Behavioral Support**

- Implementation of CharacterPlus and CASEL-aligned SEL programming.
- Individual and small-group counseling to address trauma, attendance issues, or behavior concerns.

#### **3. Family & Community Engagement**

- Case management for high-risk students, coordinated by the counselor/social worker.
- Regular communication through multilingual resources and culturally responsive outreach.

This structure ensures dedicated personnel and specialized services are embedded into the school model, advancing student learning while maintaining compliance with IDEA, ADA, Section 504, Title I, Title III, and McKinney-Vento requirements.

**Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- attach all requested documents
- evidence realistic, well-informed educational goals
- demonstrate capacity to meet state and federal requirements regarding the identification and education of students with disabilities, students who are homeless and children who are gifted.
- describe the school's plan for the implementation of special education services.
- evidence plans for providing identified all such students with instructional objectives, educational strategies, and assessments that are appropriate to their identified needs and on a continuing basis.
- evidence plans to hire qualified and adequate numbers of personnel to provide all necessary services for students in special populations.
- evidence plans for services for students in special populations that will foster their success equitably and in full compliance with all applicable laws.



## F. Instructional Staff

- F.1** As an appendix, include a detailed five-year staffing schedule for instructional and instructional-support personnel (typically including, but not limited to, librarians, reading or math specialists, special subject teachers, etc.). In the space below, describe that plan and how it supports the curricula, pedagogies, and student learning outcomes noted above. Address how the plan reflects the school's educational philosophy/model. Address class sizes at all levels. Address areas of likely staffing challenges in the first years of operation due to insufficient resources, lack of qualified candidates in the market, etc.

Frontier Schools – Columbia has developed a phased staffing plan aligned with projected enrollment growth, ensuring that instructional and support personnel are added systematically to meet student needs while maintaining fidelity to our educational philosophy. The detailed five-year staffing schedule is provided in the appendix.

### Support for Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Student Learning

- **Core Instruction:** Each grade level will have qualified classroom teachers, supported by instructional aides in early grades (Pre-K–2) to ensure small-group and individualized learning. Class sizes will average **24 students**, consistent with Missouri norms, with additional adult support in classrooms where intervention needs are higher.
- **STEM Integration:** A dedicated science/STEM specialist will be hired by Year 2 to ensure robust implementation of Project Lead the Way (PLTW) and STEMScopes.
- **Literacy & Numeracy:** Literacy and math specialists will be phased in by Year 3 to provide targeted interventions, coaching, and small-group instruction aligned to our RTI framework.
- **Special Subjects:** Art, music, and physical education teachers will be included from Year 1 to support whole-child development and provide a balanced curriculum.
- **Student Supports:** An EL coordinator and Special Education (SPED) head teacher will be part of the leadership structure in Year 1, ensuring compliance with state and federal law and equitable access to high-quality instruction. Counselors and social workers will be phased in as enrollment grows to strengthen wraparound supports.

### Reflection of Educational Philosophy/Model

The staffing plan reflects Frontier's philosophy of **equity, STEM innovation, and personalized learning**:

- **Low Student-to-Teacher Ratios** in early grades support mastery of literacy and numeracy, the foundation of long-term academic success.
- **Specialized Staff** (SPED, EL, specialists) ensure differentiated instruction for diverse learners, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students.
- **Instructional Coaching and PLC Leads** ensure data-driven pedagogy and fidelity to research-based instructional practices, directly supporting student learning outcomes.

### Class Sizes

- **Pre-K:** 20 students per class with an aide, ensuring a 1:10 adult-student ratio.
- **K–2:** 24-26 students per class with access to interventionists and aides for small-group instruction.
- **Upper Elementary (Grades 3–5, phased in):** 24-26 students per class, with additional support through specialists and push-in interventions.

### Staffing Challenges and Mitigation

We anticipate potential challenges in recruiting **certified STEM, SPED, and bilingual teachers**, particularly in the first two years of operation. Frontier has established strategies to address these challenges:

- **Competitive Compensation:** Offering the highest certified teacher base salary in Missouri (\$61,750 in 2025–26).
- **Talent Pipeline Development:** Partnering with local universities, teacher residency programs, and local and national recruitment platforms.
- **Frontier Employee Education Program (FEED):** Providing financial assistance for certifications, graduate coursework, and SPED/ELL endorsements to grow talent internally.
- **Mentorship and Retention:** Pairing new teachers with experienced staff and providing extensive professional development, including LETRS (literacy), CharacterStrong (SEL), and STEM training.

### Conclusion

This staffing plan ensures that the Columbia school will be adequately staffed with instructional and support personnel who align with Frontier’s educational philosophy. The combination of low class sizes, specialized instructional support, and robust teacher development structures will foster strong student outcomes and sustain long-term organizational growth.

- F.2** Detail the minimum qualifications required for teachers and related instructional staff to be hired across all major educational domains. Highlight where higher levels of specialized training and/or professional experience is required. Outline recruitment plans and anticipated challenges to successful hiring.

### Minimum Qualifications for Teachers and Instructional Staff

Frontier Schools – Columbia will hire only highly qualified instructional staff who demonstrate strong content knowledge, pedagogical skill, and commitment to the school’s mission. Minimum qualifications include:

- **Core Classroom Teachers (K–5):**
  - Bachelor’s degree in education or related field.
  - Valid Missouri teaching certification (elementary education or equivalent).
  - Demonstrated expertise in literacy and numeracy instruction; preference for training in structured literacy and evidence-based math pedagogy.

- **STEM/Science Specialists:**
  - Bachelor's degree in science, engineering, or education with STEM concentration.
  - Missouri certification in science (elementary or middle school, depending on grade level served).
  - Prior experience with inquiry-based instruction and/or Project Lead the Way (preferred).
- **Literacy/Math Interventionists:**
  - Bachelor's degree in education, with reading or math specialist certification preferred.
  - Training in evidence-based interventions (e.g., LETRS for literacy).
  - Demonstrated success in small-group and differentiated instruction.
- **Special Education (SPED) Teachers:**
  - Bachelor's degree and Missouri SPED certification.
  - Experience with IEP development, implementation, and co-teaching models.
  - Knowledge of assistive technology, behavioral supports, and inclusive instructional practices.
- **English Learner (EL) Teachers/Coordinators:**
  - Bachelor's degree and TESOL/ELL endorsement or certification.
  - Experience delivering sheltered instruction and language acquisition supports.
  - Familiarity with WIDA standards and state language proficiency assessments.
- **Special Subject Teachers (Art, Music, PE):**
  - Bachelor's degree and certification in relevant subject areas.
  - Experience integrating SEL and cross-disciplinary learning preferred.
- **Support Staff (Instructional Aides, Paraprofessionals):**
  - Associate's degree or equivalent experience; bachelor's preferred.
  - Prior experience in student support roles.

### **Higher Levels of Training and Experience Required**

- **SPED and EL staff** require specialized certifications and advanced training to ensure compliance with IDEA and support for English Learners.

- **STEM specialists** are expected to have significant training or professional experience in hands-on, inquiry-based learning.
- **Interventionists** must have demonstrated expertise in targeted literacy and numeracy instruction to close achievement gaps.

### Recruitment Plans

Frontier Schools has developed a multi-faceted recruitment plan to attract and retain high-quality educators:

- **University Partnerships:** Establishing pipelines with the University of Missouri, Columbia College, and regional teacher preparation programs.
- **National Platforms:** Posting positions on Indeed, Glassdoor, ZipRecruiter, and Teach Missouri.
- **Local Outreach:** Leveraging Columbia community networks and education associations.
- **Residency and Certification Pathways:** Providing support for alternative certification and internal advancement through the Frontier Employee Education Program (FEED).
- **Competitive Compensation:** Frontier offers the highest certified teacher base salary in Missouri (\$61,750 in 2025–26), along with robust benefits and professional development.

### Anticipated Hiring Challenges and Mitigation Strategies

- **SPED, EL, and STEM Teacher Shortages:** These are high-demand roles with limited candidate pools. Frontier will address this through:
  - Financial incentives for specialized certifications.
  - Tuition assistance and coursework support for current staff seeking endorsements.
  - Targeted recruitment campaigns focused on STEM and SPED programs nationally.
- **Retention in Early Years:** To mitigate turnover, Frontier will provide strong mentorship programs, embedded coaching, and wellness support for new teachers.

### Conclusion

By establishing rigorous minimum qualifications, offering competitive compensation, and investing in teacher pipelines and professional growth, Frontier Schools – Columbia will recruit and retain instructional staff capable of delivering a high-quality, equitable education for all students.

- F.3** Describe mentoring/coaching plans for instructional staff. Outline pre-opening and post-opening/long-term professional development plans for instructional staff. Attach as appendices any staff handbook or employee manuals that have been developed (either fully or partially).

Frontier Schools – Columbia will establish a structured mentoring and coaching framework to ensure teachers receive ongoing support:

- **New Teacher Mentorship:** Each first-year teacher will be paired with an experienced mentor teacher who provides classroom observations, co-planning sessions, and weekly check-ins.
- **Instructional Coaching:** A full-time Instructional Coach will lead Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), provide model lessons, and conduct data-driven coaching cycles.
- **Administrator Support:** Principals and assistant principals will provide formal classroom observations and feedback aligned to the Missouri Educator Evaluation System, ensuring consistency in expectations and professional growth.

### **Pre-Opening Professional Development**

Prior to the school's first day of instruction, all staff will participate in three weeks of summer pre-service training focused on:

- Frontier's mission, culture, and expectations.
- Curriculum implementation (Eureka Math<sup>2</sup>, Pathways to Reading, STEMScopes, Project Lead the Way).
- Classroom management and trauma-informed practices.
- Compliance training on FERPA, IDEA, Section 504, EL services, and McKinney-Vento.
- Introduction to assessment systems (NWEA MAP, ESGI, District Assessments).

### **Post-Opening / Ongoing Professional Development**

- **Weekly PD Sessions:** Scheduled early release days or embedded planning times for collaborative learning.
- **Quarterly Data Days:** Teachers meet with administrators and specialists to review student progress, adjust instruction, and plan interventions.
- **Targeted Workshops:** Focused sessions on high-leverage instructional practices, SEL integration, and culturally responsive teaching.
- **Instructional Rounds:** Cross-classroom observations to share best practices and foster peer learning.
- **Leadership Development:** Training for aspiring teacher leaders, PLC leads, and future administrators.

### **Long-Term Professional Development Plans**

- **Specialized Programs:** Ongoing training in LETRS (literacy), CharacterStrong (SEL), and STEM pedagogy.
- **Advanced Certifications:** Frontier Employee Education Program (FEED) provides tuition assistance for teachers seeking graduate degrees, SPED or EL endorsements, and leadership certification.
- **Continuous Improvement:** PD will evolve annually, informed by student achievement data, staff surveys, and retention analyses.

### **Sustainability and Staff Retention**

This professional development structure not only strengthens instructional quality but also builds a supportive culture that reduces turnover. By investing in teachers' professional growth and well-being, Frontier ensures high retention rates and long-term instructional excellence.

#### **Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- attach all requested documents
- demonstrate a sound understanding of staffing needs aligned with the budget and enrollment projections, and across multiple years of organizational development.
- demonstrate a feasible staffing plan aligned with the school's educational philosophy/model, curriculum, pedagogies, instructional modalities, and target student learning outcomes.
- demonstrate rigorous expectations for qualifications of all instructional staff, reflective of the schools educational philosophy/model, curriculum, pedagogies, instructional modalities, and target student learning outcomes.
- evidence recruitment strategies likely to be effective.
- describe professional development plans likely to advance staff knowledge and skills and contribute to retention of qualified employees.

## G. School Calendar & Daily Schedule

- G.1** Attach as an appendix the detailed school calendar for the first year of operation (including the total number of full days of instruction).

In the space below, describe the rationale for the calendar in the context of the school's target population, educational philosophy/model, and articulated educational goals and assessments.

The Year 1 school calendar provides a balance of rigorous academic time, enrichment opportunities, and family-friendly structures that reflect both the needs of Columbia's target student population and Frontier's educational philosophy. The calendar includes **171 full instructional days**, which exceeds Missouri's minimum requirements, ensuring students have the time necessary to master core content and meet ambitious learning goals.

### Alignment to Target Population Needs

Many students in Columbia come from diverse backgrounds, including economically disadvantaged families, English Learners, and students with disabilities. Research confirms that consistent, structured instructional time is particularly critical for these populations. Our calendar provides:

- **Extended learning blocks** in literacy and math to accelerate foundational skill acquisition.
- **Daily specials (art, music, PE, computers)** to support whole-child development and provide equitable access to enrichment.
- **Embedded intervention time** (e.g., small-group UFLI literacy, math small groups, Character Education) to close gaps and provide differentiated support.

### Connection to Educational Philosophy and Model

Frontier's STEM-focused, inquiry-based model requires uninterrupted blocks of time for hands-on learning and collaborative projects. The calendar reflects this with consistent science/STEM periods and integration of Savvas and Project Lead the Way resources. Additionally, the schedule ensures balance between **academic rigor and SEL supports** through morning meetings, recess, and Character Education lessons, consistent with Frontier's whole-child approach.

### Support for Educational Goals and Assessments

The calendar supports our articulated educational goals by:

- Allowing sufficient instructional hours for students to meet Missouri Learning Standards and achieve high performance on the MAP and NWEA assessments.
- Embedding quarterly data days (aligned with the school calendar) to review assessment data, adjust instruction, and inform RTI supports.
- Providing professional development time for teachers to strengthen instruction and ensure fidelity of implementation.

### Conclusion

The school calendar reflects a thoughtful balance of academic time, SEL supports, enrichment, and family considerations. It is designed to provide the consistent, extended instructional time necessary for students to make accelerated academic gains while also building character, creativity, and resilience.

- G.2** Attach as an appendix a detailed school-wide daily class schedule that shows daily hours of operation as well as allocation of time to instruction in core educational domains, supplemental instruction, extra-curricular activity, and after-school activity, as applicable. Additionally, attach a sample daily schedule for one grade at each of the following levels, as applicable: elementary, middle, high school.

In the space below, describe the rationale for the schedule in the context of the school's target population, educational philosophy/model, and articulated educational goals and assessments. Address scheduled time for pull-out or push-in activity, teacher development, special subjects, etc.

The Frontier Schools – Columbia daily schedule has been designed to maximize instructional time in core subjects, provide targeted interventions for diverse learners, and ensure balanced opportunities for enrichment and social-emotional development. The school day runs from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (tentative) for elementary grades, providing approximately 7 hours of structured instructional time daily, which exceeds Missouri's minimum instructional time requirements.

#### **Alignment with Target Population Needs**

The target population in Columbia includes many English Learners, students with disabilities, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. These students benefit from predictable routines, extended literacy and numeracy instruction, and built-in supports. The schedule reflects these priorities by:

- **Literacy and Numeracy Blocks:** Daily 90–120 minutes dedicated to reading and math (whole group + small group) to ensure mastery of foundational skills.
- **Push-In/Pull-Out Supports:** Scheduled blocks for RTI, English Language Development, and special education services, delivered through both push-in co-teaching and targeted pull-out instruction as appropriate.
- **Social-Emotional Learning:** Morning Meetings and Character Education classes foster community, build self-regulation, and support emotional well-being.

#### **Reflection of Educational Philosophy/Model**

The schedule embodies Frontier's STEM-focused, inquiry-driven model by:

- Embedding science/STEM blocks daily, with extended time for hands-on inquiry aligned to Project Lead the Way and STEMScopes.
- Including special subject classes (art, music, PE, computers, and library) to promote whole-child development, creativity, and cross-disciplinary learning.
- Protecting recess and unstructured play, supporting cognitive and social-emotional growth alongside academic rigor.

#### **Support for Educational Goals and Assessments**

- Extended literacy and math blocks ensure alignment with educational goals of proficiency on MAP and NWEA assessments.



- Scheduled “Savvas” and writing time build cross-curricular literacy and critical thinking skills.
- Quarterly data review and embedded PLCs support continuous instructional improvement.
- The schedule allows for teacher professional development through early-release days, common planning periods, and embedded coaching cycles.

### **After-School Enrichment and Support**

In later years, Frontier Columbia will expand to offer optional after-school enrichment, including tutoring, clubs, and STEM activities, providing additional learning opportunities for students who need academic support or seek enrichment beyond the regular day.

### **Conclusion**

This daily schedule reflects a careful balance of academic rigor, personalized supports, enrichment, and SEL programming. It ensures that the unique needs of Columbia’s diverse student population are met while advancing Frontier’s mission to provide equitable, high-quality, STEM-focused education.

- G.3** Address transportation issues (to and from school, to and from school activities, etc.) in the context of the school’s target population, local geography, public transportation resources, etc. Highlight strategies for overcoming any extant transportation barriers, if applicable.

Frontier Schools – Columbia recognizes that reliable transportation is critical to ensuring equitable access to high-quality education. Our transportation plan is designed to eliminate barriers for students and families, particularly those from economically disadvantaged households or historically underserved populations.

### **Daily Transportation to and from School**

- The school will contract with a licensed student transportation provider to operate bus routes serving the neighborhoods where enrolled students reside.
- Routes will be designed to maximize efficiency while minimizing ride times, with priority given to areas with high concentrations of enrolled families.
- Bus stops will be located in safe, accessible areas within reasonable walking distance of students’ homes.
- Families will not be charged transportation fees.

### **Transportation for School Activities**

- Transportation will be provided for all students participating in field trips, extracurricular programs, and extended learning opportunities.
- For after-school activities, late bus routes will be arranged on designated days to support student participation in tutoring, clubs, and enrichment programs.

### **Local Geography and Public Transportation Resources**

- Columbia's public transportation system (GoCOMO Transit) has limited routes and does not sufficiently serve all neighborhoods where target population families live. Therefore, Frontier Columbia cannot rely on city transit alone and will ensure bus service covers these areas.
- Special consideration will be given to students in underserved neighborhoods, ensuring equitable access regardless of family car ownership or geographic barriers.

### Addressing Barriers

- **Students Experiencing Homelessness or Foster Care:** Transportation will be coordinated in compliance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to ensure uninterrupted access to education.
- **Students with Disabilities:** Transportation services outlined in a student's IEP will be fully provided, including wheelchair-accessible buses when necessary.
- **Family Communication:** The school will use a GPS-enabled app for families to track bus locations and receive notifications, improving safety and reducing missed rides.

### Conclusion

By contracting with a professional transportation provider, designing equitable bus routes, and addressing the specific needs of Columbia's diverse student population, Frontier Columbia will ensure that transportation is not a barrier to enrollment, attendance, or participation in educational opportunities.

### Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...*

- Include all requested appendices.
- evidence an annual calendar that supports the school's target population, educational philosophy/model, and articulated educational goals and assessments.
- evidence a daily schedule that supports the school's target population, educational philosophy/model, and articulated educational goals and assessments.
- attend to differentiated student needs (educational and otherwise).
- account for necessary teacher preparation/planning, mentoring/coaching.
- comply with minimum requirements for the number of school hours pursuant to 160.041.
- provide for the makeup of a minimum of 36 instructional hours due to closure for inclement weather closure pursuant 171.033.2.

## H. Third Party Educational Service Providers

**H.1** Will the proposed school contract with an “educational service provider” (ESP, as defined by DESE) for substantial educational or school management services?

Yes: ☐ If Yes, Name of Provider:

No: X

**H.2** If “Yes,” describe in detail the educational and/or school management services that the school plans to outsource to the contractor/provider. Address the board’s rationale for the decision to contract with an ESP. Discuss the board’s vetting of ESP candidates and the rationale for the decision to contract with the particular ESP identified above. - N/A

**H.3** If “Yes,” provide via an appendix a copy of the executed or draft contract that codifies the relationship and responsibilities of the parties. That contract must identify in detail all of the following:

- the distinctions in roles of the charter school board, charter school staff, and the ESP
- the scope and limitations of the services to be provided by the ESP
- the goals against and measures by which the board will evaluate the performance of the ESP
- the compensation structure for the ESP, including all fees for which the ESP is eligible to be paid
- financial controls of the ESP and the board/school
- methods of contract oversight and enforcement
- conditions for contract renewal and termination
- disclosure of any existing or potential conflicts of interest between the charter school governing board and the ESP or any affiliated business entities, including how those existing or potential conflicts of interest have been addressed (if applicable) or will be addressed should they arise- N/A

### Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...*

- evidence a compelling rationale for the decision to contract with an ESP.
- evidence a compelling rationale for the decision to contract with the specific ESP identified.
- fully document all requested elements in the board-ESP contract provided.
- evidence that the board shall be fully independent from the ESP, financially and organizationally.
- evidence board capacity to fully exercise its independence from and contractual authority over the ESP.
- evidence that any extant or potential ESP financial interest in the school’s building/property/facilities is fully documented in advance and in no way compromises the board’s stewardship of public funds for the maximum educational benefit to students.

## I. Existing School Operators (ONLY IF APPLICABLE)

**I.1** Does the applicant currently operate any other charter school, in Missouri or elsewhere?

Yes: ☒

**If Yes, Name and Location of School(s):**  
Frontier Schools, Kansas City

No: ☐

**I.2** If “Yes,” provide the following as appendices:

- the annual report card (or equivalent) issued by the governing state board of education for each school for the past five years.
- independently-audited annual financial statements for the past five years.

**I.3** I “Yes,” summarize the achievements at your current school(s) that serve as the foundation of your rationale for anticipated success via the school proposed herein.

Frontier Schools’ existing campuses in Kansas City have consistently demonstrated strong student outcomes and continuous improvement under Missouri’s MSIP 6 accountability system. These achievements serve as the foundation for replicating success in Columbia.

### Sustained Performance and Growth

- In 2025, Frontier Schools earned 92.7%, the highest APR score in Kansas City and also achieved the top ranking for the three-year composite APR (2023–2025) — a reflection of our sustained commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. In addition, Frontier Schools ranked 30th out of 553 school districts across Missouri, placing our district among the top six percent of all districts statewide.
- In 2024, Frontier earned 84.7% of possible APR points, with particularly strong results in continuous improvement (96.6%). Growth indicators were at or near the “Target” level in mathematics and social studies, and college- and career-readiness benchmarks (CCR, advanced credit, graduate follow-up) all achieved 100% “Target” status.
- In 2023, the network achieved 86.3% of APR points, with “Target” ratings in math, ELA subgroup performance, CCR assessments, graduation rate, and graduate follow-up. Notably, Frontier posted above-average growth in both ELA and math, demonstrating the effectiveness of instructional supports for diverse learners.
- In 2022, the first year under MSIP 6, Frontier earned 75% of APR points, establishing a strong baseline. Despite lower performance in some academic achievement measures, the schools posted exceptionally high growth rates—with nearly 99% of possible growth points in both ELA and math—indicating that students were making accelerated gains under Frontier’s instructional model.

### Key Indicators of Success

- High Participation Rates: Frontier consistently exceeds 96% participation across all state assessments,

ensuring accountability and reliable data.

- Graduation and College Readiness: Four-year graduation rates and CCR indicators have steadily improved, reaching 100% in 2023 and near-maximum levels in 2024 and 2025.
- Continuous Improvement Culture: Frontier has earned full points on improvement planning, compliance, and climate surveys for three consecutive years, reflecting strong organizational health and responsiveness.

### **Implications for Columbia**

These achievements demonstrate that Frontier’s model effectively supports diverse learners, including English Learners, students with disabilities, and economically disadvantaged students. The Columbia campus will replicate the same structures—extended literacy and math blocks, data-driven instruction, targeted interventions, and STEM integration—that produced high growth and CCR outcomes in Kansas City.

Frontier’s record of **academic growth, continuous improvement, and college/career readiness success** establishes a strong foundation for anticipated success in Columbia. The network’s demonstrated ability to accelerate learning for diverse populations provides confidence that the new campus will deliver equitable, high-quality outcomes.

### **Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- evidence demonstrable academic, operational, and financial success at all existing charter schools
- evidence a strong rationale for success at the proposed school based on documented successes at all existing charter schools with similar populations, educational philosophies/models, curricular, etc.

## J. Governing Board and Corporate Organization

**J.1** Attached as appendices all of the following for the independent, 501(c)3 corporation (the “board of directors”/the “board”) that will govern the school, and on behalf of which this application is being submitted to SLU for consideration of charter sponsorship:

- Articles of Incorporation, signed and dated
- Corporate Bylaws, signed and dated
- official documentation confirming that the applicant is a Missouri non-profit corporation and has applied for and/or been granted not-for-profit corporation status from the Internal Revenue Service
- Any existing board policies
- Resumes of all current board members
- Documentation confirming a) the completion of criminal background checks and family care safety registry checks for all current board members and b) evidence of the board’s deliberations on and resolutions regarding any findings from those checks.

**J.2** To the extent that the board exists and has functions independent of the operation of the proposed school, provide a brief description of those functions and the relationship between those existing functions/operations and those of the proposed school. *Skip if not applicable.*

The Frontier Schools Board of Directors is an independent governing body with legal authority as a nonprofit corporation organized under the laws of Missouri. The Board’s functions extend beyond the day-to-day operations of any single proposed school. Its primary responsibilities include adopting policies for the entire school system, overseeing fiscal and organizational management, delegating executive authority to the Superintendent, and evaluating the effectiveness of policy implementation based on student outcomes.

In its legislative role, the Board establishes district-wide policies that guide educational and administrative practices. In its executive role, it delegates operational responsibility to the Superintendent, ensuring that professional leadership is empowered to carry out the Board’s directives. In its appraisal role, the Board evaluates programs, practices, and student achievement data to ensure accountability and continuous improvement. The Board also upholds ethical standards through a formal Code of Ethics, reinforcing transparency, fiscal responsibility, and equitable governance across the organization.

These functions operate independently of the proposed Frontier STEM Academy – Columbia campus but are directly related, as the same governance structure will provide oversight, accountability, and strategic direction for the new school. The Board will ensure alignment between the Columbia campus and the existing Frontier Schools network in Kansas City, holding leadership accountable for meeting student achievement goals, maintaining fiscal integrity, and adhering to all applicable laws and policies.

In short, while the Columbia school will have its own administrative leadership to manage daily operations, the Board’s broader functions—policy adoption, fiduciary oversight, evaluation, and ethical governance—will provide the framework within which the school operates. This relationship ensures consistency in mission, vision, and accountability across all campuses of Frontier Schools.

**J.3** Describe the relationship(s) between the chief executive officer (or equivalent) of the school and a) the board collectively and b) board members individually. If the CEO is formally designated as a

member of the board (either with or without voting rights, ex-officio, or otherwise), provide a rationale and address how the board will govern independently of all school employees, including the CEO.

The Chief Executive Officer (Superintendent) maintains a structured, professional relationship with the Board of Directors.

#### **a) Relationship with the Board Collectively**

The Board holds full authority to adopt policies, oversee finances, and evaluate organizational outcomes, while the CEO is responsible for implementing those policies and managing day-to-day operations. The CEO provides the Board with regular reports on student achievement, finances, compliance, and operations, ensuring that Board decisions are well informed. The Board evaluates the CEO's performance against established goals, thereby holding the CEO accountable while focusing its own role on governance rather than administration.

#### **b) Relationship with Individual Board Members**

Board members act collectively in legal session, not as individuals directing staff. Policies explicitly require members to work through the Superintendent and not bypass or undermine the CEO's authority. Individual communications with the CEO are limited to requests for information, clarification, or agenda preparation, preserving a clear chain of command. Ethical rules—including conflict of interest, confidentiality, and conduct standards—further safeguard independence.

#### **CEO's Role on the Board**

The CEO serves as an ex-officio, non-voting participant in Board meetings, providing essential professional expertise and recommendations without exercising governance authority. The Board retains sole responsibility for adopting policies, approving budgets, and making final decisions. Independent governance is also reinforced by requirements for open meetings, public minutes, and executive session rules.

#### **Conclusion**

This structure ensures a healthy balance: the Board governs through policy, oversight, and accountability, while the CEO executes those policies and manages daily operations. The CEO's advisory role at meetings keeps the Board well informed, but the Board's independence is preserved through its exclusive authority, ethical standards, and transparent governance practices.

- J.4** As a narrative complement to the board resumes provided (per J.1 above), in the box below provide for each current board member a rationale for the member's inclusion on the board and a summary of the related expertise for which the member's service was sought.

## **Board Member Rationale & Expertise Summaries**

### **A. Dennis L. Davis – President**

Rationale: Selected for his extensive legal expertise, governance leadership, and deep knowledge of healthcare and regulatory compliance.

Expertise: Mr. Davis is the Chief Legal Officer for Rural Community Hospitals of America, where he provides oversight in healthcare law, regulatory compliance, and contract management. He previously

spent over three decades in private practice as a partner at Stinson Morrison Hecker LLP, where he served as outside general counsel for multiple companies in the Kansas City area. His legal work encompassed healthcare administration, managed-care contracting, casualty insurance, intellectual property, real estate development, and complex litigation and arbitration.

Mr. Davis earned his Juris Doctor with distinction from the University of Missouri–Columbia, a Master of Arts in American History from the University of Missouri–Kansas City, and a Bachelor of Science in Education from Southeast Missouri State University. At Frontier, he chairs the School Performance Committee. His leadership provides the Board with proven expertise in legal strategy, risk management, and organizational accountability.

**B. Dr. Sam Aydin – Vice President**

*Rationale:* Selected for his entrepreneurial leadership, academic expertise, and commitment to community development.

*Expertise:* Dr. Aydin is the Owner of Loyal Housing, LLC, where he brings experience in real estate, housing, and business operations. He previously earned a Ph.D. in Plant Genetics from Texas A&M University (2004), where his research and training built a foundation in scientific analysis, problem-solving, and data-driven decision-making. This academic background complements his entrepreneurial work, giving him the ability to bridge scientific knowledge with practical community and business applications.

As Vice President of the Board, Dr. Aydin serves on the Governance Committee, where he contributes to board recruitment, compliance, and long-term organizational planning. His blend of scientific expertise, business leadership, and commitment to equity in community development provides a unique perspective on board decision-making.

**C. Mehmet Barut, Ph.D. – Treasurer**

*Rationale:* Selected for his deep expertise in finance, operations, and academic leadership, Dr. Barut strengthens the Board's capacity for informed financial oversight and strategic planning.

*Expertise:* Dr. Barut serves as the Chair of the Department of Finance, Real Estate, and Decision Sciences at Wichita State University and is the Director of the Supply Chain Graduate Program within the Barton School of Business, reflecting his leadership in higher education administration and curriculum development. He teaches and researches across a range of disciplines including Operations Management, Supply Chain Management, Risk Management, Management Science, and Project Management Wichita State University. His research interests span Yield Management, Information Sharing, Blockchain Technology, Optimization, Empirical Studies, and Problem-Based Learning Google Scholar. Dr. Barut earned his Ph.D. in Industrial Management from Clemson University (1999) and holds both an M.S. and B.S. in Management Engineering from Istanbul Technical University (1991, 1988).

At Frontier Schools, he currently chairs the Finance Committee, where his extensive knowledge in budgeting, supply chain logistics, risk management, and data-driven strategy directly supports the district's fiscal health and long-term sustainability.

**D. Beth A. Murano – Secretary**

*Rationale:* Selected for her extensive legal expertise, commitment to public service, and leadership in governance and policy oversight.



**Expertise:**

Ms. Murano currently serves as Chief Counsel of Public Safety for the City of Lee's Summit, where she advises on criminal, labor, and government law and supports city operations in legal compliance and policy development. A graduate of Drake University Law School, she discovered her passion for law early, inspired by her love of history, government, and advocacy. Over her career, she has prosecuted complex criminal cases, advanced municipal governance, and provided legal counsel on labor relations and government policy.

Beyond her professional achievements, Ms. Murano has been recognized as Employee of the Year by the City of Lee's Summit, underscoring her commitment to excellence in public service. She has also contributed to mentoring and advocacy, often sharing advice with young lawyers to pursue work that aligns with passion and purpose.

At Frontier Schools, Ms. Murano serves as Secretary of the Board and chairs the Governance Committee. In this role, she oversees board compliance, policy review, recruitment, and training, ensuring the Board functions with transparency, integrity, and strong adherence to ethical and legal standards.

**E. Dr. Nebi Demez – Board Member**

**Rationale:**

Selected for his advanced STEM and medical expertise, and his ability to strengthen the Board's oversight in areas of science, health, and technology.

**Expertise:**

Dr. Demez is a Senior Medical Physicist at the Lynn Cancer Institute, Boca Raton Regional Hospital (Baptist Health), where he specializes in therapeutic radiation treatment planning, quality assurance, and clinical technology for cancer care. He previously served as a Medical Physicist at The University of Kansas Hospital (2016–2023) and at the Hampton University Proton Therapy Institute (2012–2016).

He is board-certified in Therapeutic Medical Physics by the American Board of Radiology, underscoring his professional authority in advanced cancer treatment and radiation safety. With a Ph.D. in Medical Physics, his career reflects a strong blend of academic research and clinical application, including experience in proton beam therapy and radiation oncology innovations.

At Frontier Schools, Dr. Demez serves on the Governance Committee. He contributes his scientific background, analytical problem-solving skills, and evidence-based approach to governance, helping ensure that board decision-making reflects rigor, accountability, and support for Frontier's STEM-focused mission.

**F. Cesar Cea, P.E. – Board Member**

**Rationale:** Selected for his engineering expertise, entrepreneurial leadership, and commitment to community representation.

**Expertise:** Mr. Cea is the founder of Nueva LLC, a design and consulting company focused on addressing challenges related to climate change and housing. He previously spent over 20 years in the energy sector with a local consulting firm. A licensed Professional Engineer (P.E.) and graduate of Missouri S&T with a degree in Mechanical Engineering, he brings technical expertise in infrastructure, facilities planning, and sustainable development. Growing up in Kansas City's West Side neighborhood after immigrating from El Salvador, Mr. Cea provides a vital community perspective, advocating for equity and opportunities for underrepresented students. As Chair of the Facilities Committee, he applies both his

professional knowledge and community insight to guide facility development, ensure fiscal and legal responsibility, and maintain accessibility to the families and students Frontier serves.

**G. Carmen Vasquez-Rangel – Board Member**

Rationale: Selected for her financial services expertise and commitment to representing Kansas City's Hispanic community.

Expertise: Ms. Vasquez-Rangel has served for more than 20 years with Commerce Bank, where she is currently a Vice President and Senior Branch Manager. She oversees retail banking operations, branch development, staffing, and business development, while ensuring compliance and strong customer service standards. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) from Rockhurst University and a Master's in Business Management from Baker University.

As a Hispanic leader with a demonstrated history of advancing bilingual banking and community engagement initiatives, Ms. Vasquez-Rangel has played a key role in coordinating Hispanic Banking Programs and building partnerships with local organizations. Her expertise in budgeting, banking operations, coaching, and customer retention supports Frontier Schools' fiscal stewardship. She currently serves on the Finance Committee, where her professional insight and community perspective strengthen oversight of financial policies and long-term sustainability.

**H. Dr. Karen P. Boyd – Board Member**

Rationale: Selected for her leadership in nonprofit management, education, and community development, as well as her commitment to advancing equity and representation.

Expertise: Dr. Boyd is the Owner and CEO of Patrice's Culinary Collective and formerly served as Vice President of Organizational Performance and Engagement at United Way of Greater Kansas City, where she led strategic planning, fundraising, and organizational development initiatives. She holds an MBA from Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management and a Ph.D. in Human Services from Capella University, with additional studies in public policy, finance, and social care.

As an African American leader with decades of experience in Kansas City's civic and nonprofit sectors, Dr. Boyd has championed efforts to strengthen educational access, support underserved populations, and promote economic development. She has worked with charter schools, community organizations, and higher education partners to improve outcomes for students, particularly in STEM education and equity-focused initiatives. In her role on Frontier's School Performance Committee, she contributes both her professional expertise and her lived experience to help ensure that board decisions reflect and serve the diverse communities the schools represent.

**I. Dr. Ilbey T. Budak – Board Member**

Rationale: Selected for his academic expertise in accounting, auditing, and financial management, as well as his commitment to education and community engagement in Columbia, Missouri. As a university faculty member and local resident, Dr. Budak brings valuable insight into higher education partnerships, fiscal accountability, and community representation for the new Columbia campus.

Expertise: Dr. Budak earned his Ph.D. in Accounting from the University of Missouri's Trulaske School of Business, where his research focused on the effects of class action lawsuits on corporate financial

disclosures and managerial behavior.

A Certified Public Accountant (CPA) licensed in Texas, Dr. Budak previously served as Director of Finance for Harmony Public Schools and as Senior Financial Analyst at the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point. His professional background includes over a decade of experience in financial operations, compliance, and nonprofit fiscal management. Through his teaching, research, and community service—including mentorship and financial literacy training—Dr. Budak strengthens the Board’s capacity in financial oversight, academic accountability, and local community collaboration.

- J.5** Complete the *Board Responsibilities Matrix* on the following page. This matrix highlights major board responsibilities per SLU sponsorship expectations; feel free to add additional rows for any additional responsibilities you deem appropriate, or leave blank those you have determined are not warranted. Insert the name of each current board member in the top row; add more columns if needed. Then place an “X” in each cell for which a particular board member currently evidences what the applicant deems to be an appropriate amount of necessary expertise and/or professional experience (from either compensated or volunteer/pro bono roles).

In the box directly below, describe the strengths and weaknesses/limitations of the board as currently constituted. Address responsibilities/board expertise not yet fulfilled and current plans for meeting them. Address any responsibilities from the *Matrix* that the applicant feels does not warrant board expertise.

#### Strengths:

- The Board demonstrates **comprehensive coverage** across governance, legal, financial, nonprofit management, and STEM/technical expertise.
- **Legal and Compliance:** Davis and Murano anchor legal, policy, and compliance oversight.
- **Financial Stewardship:** Barut and Vasquez-Rangel provide strong expertise in budgeting, accounting, and financial management.
- **STEM/Facilities:** Demez (medical physics), Barut (analytics), and Cea (engineering/PE) bring technical depth that aligns with Frontier’s STEM focus and capital project needs.
- **Equity & Community:** Boyd, Vasquez-Rangel, and Cea ensure diverse representation and community voice, strengthening alignment with SLU’s values.

#### Weaknesses/Limitations

- **Geographic Representation:** The current Board only includes one member from the City of Columbia, where the proposed new school will be located. Frontier Schools continues to prioritize expanding Columbia-based representation to strengthen local engagement, community partnerships, and stakeholder voice in governance.

### Board Responsibilities Matrix

Board Responsibilities	Dennis Davis	Sam Aydin	Beth Murano	Mehmet Barut	Nebi Demez	Cesar Cea	Karen Boyd	Carmen Vasquez	Ilbey Budak
Fidelity to Educational Model (Curriculum/Instruction Oversight)	X						X		X
Educational Accountability (Student Achievement Outcomes)	X						X		
Educational and Administrative Policy Development	X	X	X	X	X		X		X
School Leader Development/Evaluation	X		X				X		
Regulatory Compliance (DESE, State of MO, U.S. Dept. of Ed)	X		X						X
Non-Profit Management	X		X			X	X	X	

Public School Accounting				X				X	X
School Budgeting/Financial Management	X			X				X	X
Real Estate (Acquisition, Financing, Law)	X	X				X			
Development/Fundraising/Corporate Relations							X	X	
Marketing/PR							X		
Organizational Communication	X		X			X	X	X	X
Other (School-Defined): STEM / Technical Expertise				X	X	X			X
Other (School-Defined): Diversity / Equity / Parent Representation		X				X	X	X	

**J.6** Identify which, if any, current board members have been appointed/elected as officers, and for which officer positions.

<b>Member Name</b>	<b>Position</b>
Mr. Dennis Davis	Board President
Dr. Sam Aydin	Vice President
Ms. Beth Murano	Secretary
Dr. Mehmet Barut	Treasurer
Dr. Neb Demz	Board Member
Mr. Cesar Cea	Board Member
Dr. Karen Boyd	Board Member
Ms. Carmen Vasquez-Rangel	Board Member
Dr. Ilbey Budak	Board Member

**J.7** If the board has/will have committees within it that conduct board activity, identify and describe those committees, their charges, etc. below. Attach as appendices any committee bylaws or policies.

The Board organizes itself into standing committees that provide focused attention on key areas of governance. These committees operate under the Board's bylaws and formal resolutions, and each reports directly to the full Board.

#### **1. Finance Committee**

The Finance Committee oversees the financial health and sustainability of all campuses, including Columbia. Responsibilities include:

- Collaborating with the Superintendent and CFO to prepare and recommend the annual budget;
- Monitoring monthly financial statements and audits to ensure compliance and fiscal accountability;
- Identifying financial challenges and recommending strategies to safeguard resources;

- Recommending the selection of independent auditors and reviewing audit results.

## **2. Governance Committee**

The Governance Committee supports the ongoing development and effectiveness of the Board. Responsibilities include:

- Recruiting, onboarding, and training new board members to ensure a diverse and skilled governing body;
- Reviewing bylaws and board policies on a scheduled basis and recommending updates;
- Conducting board self-assessments and monitoring adherence to governance best practices;
- Supporting officer succession planning to maintain stable leadership.

## **3. School Performance Committee**

The School Performance Committee ensures that the academic program across campuses, including Columbia, remains rigorous and aligned with the school's mission. Responsibilities include:

- Reviewing student achievement data and monitoring progress toward annual academic goals;
- Supporting the Superintendent in identifying strategies to improve instruction and student outcomes;
- Ensuring curriculum fidelity and adequate supports for diverse learners;
- Verifying that student performance is benchmarked against state and national standards.

## **4. Facilities Committee**

The Facilities Committee oversees planning, acquisition, and safety of facilities across all campuses, including Columbia. Responsibilities include:

- Reviewing maintenance and construction projects requiring board action;
- Ensuring facilities support projected enrollment growth and program needs;
- Monitoring compliance with legal safety standards;
- Advising on financing, budgeting, and oversight of new construction or renovation projects.

**J.8** What is the relationship of the board collectively, and/or of individual board members, to the communities of the target student population?

The Frontier Schools Board of Directors maintains strong collective and individual connections to the communities served by the district, including those of the target student population for Frontier Schools – Columbia. Collectively, the Board prioritizes equity, access, and community representation, ensuring that decisions reflect the needs and aspirations of families from diverse cultural, socioeconomic, and linguistic backgrounds.

Individually, several board members bring **direct lived experience and community ties** that mirror the student population:

- **Dr. Sam Aydin** is a **Frontier parent**, ensuring that family voice and student experience are represented at the governance level.
- **Ms. Carmen Vasquez-Rangel** is a **Hispanic community leader** and banking professional with extensive experience coordinating bilingual programs and building civic partnerships in diverse communities.
- **Dr. Karen Boyd**, an **African American nonprofit and community leader**, has championed equity and educational access throughout Kansas City, strengthening representation for historically underserved populations.
- **Mr. Cesar Cea**, a **first-generation immigrant from El Salvador**, grew up in Kansas City's West Side neighborhood and advocates for immigrant families and equitable access to STEM opportunities.

Other board members contribute through **professional expertise that directly supports community needs**—for example, Mr. Davis and Ms. Murano bring legal and governance expertise that safeguard families' trust, while Dr. Barut and Dr. Demez strengthen the Board's ability to deliver on a STEM-focused mission aligned with workforce opportunities for underserved students.

Together, the Board ensures that governance is informed by **family perspectives, cultural diversity, professional expertise, and a strong commitment to equity**, positioning the Columbia campus to respond to the needs of its target student population.

- J.9** Describe how the board will evaluate its own performance annually. If evaluation tools or standards have already been identified, note them below and attach them as appendices.

The Frontier Schools Board of Directors will conduct a **formal self-evaluation on an annual basis** to assess its performance and effectiveness. The evaluation process will be facilitated through the **Governance Committee**, which is responsible for board development and compliance.

The evaluation will include:

- **Board Self-Assessment Survey:** Each member will complete a structured survey rating the Board's performance in key areas such as governance oversight, fiscal stewardship, academic accountability, compliance, community engagement, and adherence to bylaws.
- **Committee Effectiveness Review:** Each standing committee (Finance, Governance, School Performance, and Facilities) will review its own work against its stated responsibilities and report outcomes to the full Board.



- **Board Member Participation Review:** Attendance, preparation, and contributions of individual board members will be reviewed to ensure active and responsible participation.
- **Goal-Setting:** Results of the self-evaluation will be used to establish specific improvement goals for the coming year (e.g., strengthening fundraising capacity, expanding community representation, or enhancing training).

The Board plans to use the **Missouri Charter Public School Association’s Board Self-Assessment Tool** as its baseline instrument, supplemented by additional survey questions tailored to SLU sponsorship expectations. A copy of the assessment tool and related policies will be attached as an appendix.

This process ensures that the Board remains accountable, reflective, and continuously improving in its governance of Frontier Schools – Columbia.

**Evaluation Criteria:** *Satisfactory responses will...*

- include submission of all requested documents
- document the board’s legal incorporation and compliance with all applicable laws
- clearly describe the relationship (if any) between the proposed school and any other board activities/responsibilities
- substantiate the independence of the board from both external entities/actors and internal employees (including the CEO)
- demonstrate neither internal nor external conflicts of interest among board members
- evidence sufficient qualifications of board members across the major areas of board responsibility
- evidence board-community relationships that are likely to foster the success of the board and school
- Demonstrate policies or procedures ensuring full compliance with Missouri’s “Sunshine Laws”

## K. Organizational Leadership

**K.1** Include as an appendix a leadership organizational chart including all of the following roles as applicable; note when one person will perform more than one of the roles:

- the sponsor
- the board
- the school's chief executive officer (or similarly-titled leader)
- the school's chief academic officer (or similarly-titled leader)
- the school's chief operational officer (or similarly-titled leader)
- the school's chief financial officer (or similarly-titled leader)
- the school's chief student development/"dean of students" officer (or similarly-titled leader)
- other key school leadership positions

Organizational Chart is included as an appendix in the folder saved as K1. CO Organizational Chart.

**K.2** Provide a detailed description of the role of the chief executive officer/*CEO (or similarly-titled leader)*. Address all major position responsibilities. Detail the educational and professional qualifications required for service as the CEO. If a CEO has already been identified, provide their resume/CV as an appendix and detail below the process by which the CEO was selected (and by whom), as well as a summary of their most critical qualifications.

### Role of the Chief Executive Officer (Superintendent)

The **Superintendent** serves as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Frontier Schools, reporting directly to the Board of Directors. This position provides overall leadership for all district functions, ensuring alignment with the Board's mission, policies, and performance expectations.

#### Major Responsibilities:

- Serve as the **instructional leader**, promoting student achievement as the district's primary focus.
- Facilitate and attend Board meetings, prepare agendas in consultation with the Board President, and provide necessary information for Board decision-making.
- Supervise and evaluate principals, directors, and district staff; oversee personnel administration, recruitment, training, and staff development.
- Monitor student achievement data, support principals in instructional improvement, and ensure fidelity to curriculum and academic goals.
- Administer and manage the district's budget in cooperation with the Finance Department; provide regular financial reports to the Board; and ensure fiscal responsibility.
- Oversee district facilities, ensuring they are safe, adequate, and supportive of enrollment growth and student learning needs.

- Ensure compliance with state, federal, and local laws, including DESE and U.S. Department of Education mandates.
- Maintain effective communication with parents, community members, and state officials; advocate for the district with external partners.
- Serve as the district's primary resource person in dealing with legal, compliance, and policy issues.

#### Qualifications Required:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution (advanced degree preferred).
- Minimum of 5 years' experience as a school administrator or central office director.
- Missouri Superintendent Certification preferred.
- Strong skills in leadership, communication, fiscal management, data analysis, and conflict resolution.

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#### Current CEO – Ugur Demircan, M.Ed.

The Board of Directors has appointed **Mr. Ugur Demircan** as Superintendent and CEO of Frontier Schools. Mr. Demircan was selected by the Board in 2014 after a national search and has since successfully led the Kansas City district through expansion, compliance reviews, and academic growth. His resume is included in the appendices.

#### Summary of Qualifications:

- Over **two decades of K–12 leadership experience** in charter school systems.
- Superintendent of Frontier Schools since **2014**, responsible for multi-campus oversight, academic performance, financial planning, compliance, and community partnerships.
- Former **Area Superintendent** for Harmony Public Schools in Texas, managing four campuses simultaneously.
- Extensive **principal experience** at Harmony campuses in Dallas and Houston, with proven success in student achievement and national school recognition.
- **Certified Superintendent and Principal** in both Missouri and Texas.
- Holds a **Master of Education in Educational Leadership** (University of Texas at Tyler) and a **Bachelor's in Electronics & Computer Education** (Marmara University).
- Recognized for academic leadership, including guiding schools to be named among *Newsweek's Top 25 Transformative High Schools* and *Washington Post's Top 200 High Schools*.

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## Conclusion

The Superintendent/CEO role at Frontier Schools is clearly defined by board policy and professional standards. The Board has selected and retained a **highly qualified and experienced educational leader** in Mr. Ugur Demircan, who meets and exceeds the expectations outlined in the position description. His leadership ensures that Frontier Schools – Columbia will benefit from the same strategic vision, academic oversight, and operational excellence currently guiding Frontier’s Kansas City campuses.

- K.3** Provide summaries of each position on the leadership organizational chart *except the CEO (or similarly-titled leader)*. Address instructional leadership, curriculum development and implementation, instructional support, assessment of student learning, financial management, budgeting, data/records management, personnel/HR, operations (facilities, food service, transportation, grants management, etc.). Provide a hiring timeline that clarifies the staging of your leadership planning.

## Leadership Positions and Responsibilities (Excluding CEO)

The Frontier Schools Central Office provides shared leadership and operational support for all campuses, including the proposed Columbia school. The organizational chart in the budget appendix identifies the following positions, which are already filled. These leaders will extend their oversight and services to Columbia, ensuring consistency across the network.

### Chief Academic Officer (CAO)

Serves as the lead for instructional leadership, curriculum development, and assessment. Oversees academic programs, professional development, and data-driven strategies for improving student achievement. Ensures fidelity to Missouri Learning Standards and guides instructional best practices across schools.

### Chief Operating Officer (COO)

Oversees non-instructional operations, including facilities, food service, transportation, enrollment, and grants management. Ensures resources are aligned with instructional priorities and compliance with state and federal requirements.

### Director of Curriculum

Manages curriculum development and implementation for assigned grade levels/subjects. Provides instructional coaching, professional development, and assessment design. Monitors data to ensure continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

### Assistant Directors of Curriculum

Support Directors of Curriculum with curriculum development, assessments, professional development, and fidelity checks at the classroom level.

### Director of Special Education & Process Coordinator

Oversee special education programming, compliance with IDEA/Section 504, IEP development, and support services. Ensure that student learning needs are met equitably and in compliance with federal/state law.

**Director of STEM Education**

Coordinates STEM programming, curriculum innovation, and external partnerships such as Project Lead the Way and Real World Learning. Expands hands-on learning opportunities and promotes STEM equity.

**Director of ELL Programs**

Leads English Language Learner services, including student identification, placement, compliance, and program evaluation. Provides professional development for staff and ensures family engagement for multilingual learners.

**Director of College and Career Success & Assistant**

Oversee postsecondary readiness initiatives, alumni tracking, and employer/college partnerships. Provide mentorship and programming to support students' transition to higher education or careers.

**Real World Learning Coordinator**

Builds community and employer partnerships for experiential learning, internships, and authentic career pathways.

**Director of Finance, Finance Manager, Assistant Finance Manager**

Provide fiscal oversight, budget development, grant management, and compliance with DESE regulations. Ensure financial accountability and transparent reporting to the Board.

**Director of Human Resources & HR Manager**

Manage personnel functions including recruitment, onboarding, certification, payroll, benefits, and employee relations. Ensure compliance with labor law and promote positive staff culture.

**Director of Communications and Outreach & Assistant**

Lead internal/external communications, branding, community relations, and crisis communication. Provide translation and outreach services to families and stakeholders.

**Director of Information Technology, IT Managers, Assistant Directors**

Maintain IT infrastructure, cybersecurity, and instructional software across campuses. Ensure secure, efficient, and accessible technology for staff and students.

**Director of Health, Safety, and Conduct**

Coordinates student discipline, health and safety training, compliance with bullying/suicide prevention mandates, and partnerships with school nurses and social workers.

**Social Work Services Coordinator & McKinney-Vento/Foster Liaison**

Provide social-emotional supports, case management, and ensure access to education for homeless/foster youth. Coordinate services with families and external agencies.

**Transportation Manager**

Directs bus services, scheduling, driver supervision, safety compliance, and liaison with families.

**Maintenance Technicians**

Provide building maintenance, repairs, and safety compliance to ensure facilities are safe and functional.

**Secretary (Central Office)**

Provides administrative and clerical support, including communications, translations, and records management.

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## Hiring Timeline

All Central Office positions listed above are **already filled** and currently provide support to Frontier Schools' Kansas City campuses. These same leaders will extend their oversight to the Columbia campus upon its opening, ensuring consistency in academic programs, compliance, operations, and student services.

**Campus-level leadership and staff for Columbia will be hired in stages as follows:**

- **January 2026:** Recruitment of school principal.
- **February 2026:** Hire school secretary and teachers.
- **Spring–Summer 2026:** Finalize remaining instructional staff, social worker, and support staff no later than two weeks prior to school opening.

This approach ensures that Columbia benefits immediately from the **experience and infrastructure of the existing Frontier Central Office team**, while simultaneously building a **dedicated campus-level leadership team** before opening.

- K.4** Per *Section H* of this application, if the school intends to contract with an Educational Services Provider (ESP), describe below the relationship between the ESP and its employees and school leaders in the context of the above-offered descriptions of the organization.

N/A

**Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- include submission of all requested documents
- demonstrate understanding of all school management needs and priorities.
- provide coherent delineation of the roles and responsibilities for administering all school operations.
- Provide coherent delineation of the roles and responsibilities between the school's governing board, management and any partner entities.
- document a staffing plan that appears viable and adequate for effective implementation of the proposed educational program
- evidence congruence between the staffing plans and the submitted school budget.

## L. Financial Management & Budgeting

- L.1** Build on your description in Section K of the chief financial officer (or equivalent) role to describe more broadly how the school's finances will be managed, how financial data/records will be maintained, and the capacity for internally- and externally-required financial reporting. Address financial management systems and procedures, internal controls, financial policies, and management of state and federal grant funding. If applicable, describe or provide examples of financial performance dashboards to inform decision-making by senior leaders and the board. Address the roles of external accountants and independent auditors. Briefly identify what related responsibilities, if any, will be outsourced (these will be addressed in greater detail below).

### Financial Oversight and Leadership

The financial operations of Frontier Schools – Columbia will be overseen by the **Chief Operating Officer (COO)** and the **Director of Finance**, supported by the Finance Manager and Assistant Finance Manager. The COO ensures that financial operations align with broader organizational strategy and compliance, while the Director of Finance manages day-to-day accounting, budgeting, reporting, and grants management. Both positions operate under the authority of the Superintendent/CEO and the oversight of the Board's Finance Committee.

### Systems and Procedures

All financial transactions are recorded and managed through a secure, board-approved financial management system with multi-user access controls, audit trails, and grant-specific account codes. The system allows for accurate, real-time reporting of revenues, expenditures, and encumbrances. Monthly reconciliations, purchase orders, dual-approval workflows, and written policies (P3100–P3166) ensure strong internal controls and compliance with state and federal requirements.

### Budget Development and Implementation

Budget preparation follows **P3110 (Preparation of Budget)** and **P3112 (Budget Implementation and Transfer)**, beginning with input from school leaders and central office staff and culminating in Board review and approval. The COO and Finance Office collaborate closely in preparing the annual budget and monitoring implementation. The Finance Committee tracks financial performance throughout the year, comparing actual revenues and expenditures against projections and recommending corrective actions as needed.

### Financial Data and Reporting

Financial records are maintained in compliance with Missouri state law, DESE regulations, and federal Uniform Grant Guidance (2 CFR Part 200). Internally, the COO and Director of Finance provide monthly reports to school leaders and the Board, including budget-to-actual comparisons, cash flow updates, and grant status reports. Externally, the Finance Office files all required reports with DESE, the U.S. Department of Education, and other funding agencies.

### Dashboards and Decision-Making

Frontier maintains an **Accountability Portal (P3425)** and internal financial dashboards that track expenditures by campus, department, and funding source. These tools provide senior leadership and the Board with clear, real-time visibility into financial performance and key indicators, supporting informed and timely decision-making.

### Grant Management

The COO and Finance Office jointly manage all **state and federal grants** under **P3130–P3166**, including Title programs, IDEA, and competitive federal/state grants. Procedures ensure that all expenditures are allowable, documented, and reported in compliance with federal Uniform Grant Guidance. Expenditures are tracked



separately within the accounting system to guarantee transparency and accountability.

**Internal Controls and Policies**

Frontier’s internal controls include dual signatures for disbursements, segregation of duties among finance staff, monthly reconciliations, and Board-level review of financial reports. Policies governing procurement (**P3165–R3165**) and federal awards (**P3166–R3166**) are strictly followed to prevent conflicts of interest and ensure responsible stewardship of funds. The COO provides an additional layer of review to verify compliance and alignment with organizational priorities.

**Independent Audit and External Support**

An **independent certified public accounting firm** conducts the annual audit in compliance with **P3510 (Annual Audit)**, providing assurance on financial statements, internal controls, and federal program compliance (Single Audit). The Board reviews and accepts the audit, which is submitted to state and federal authorities as required. While core financial management is handled internally, specialized functions such as annual audit preparation and, when needed, technical support for new reporting systems may be outsourced to external professionals.

**Summary**

Through a combination of strong financial leadership by the COO and Director of Finance, robust systems and internal controls, transparent reporting dashboards, and independent audits, Frontier Schools ensures financial stability, integrity, and compliance. This established framework—already in place for Kansas City campuses—will seamlessly extend to Frontier Schools – Columbia, providing the Board and senior leadership with the tools and information needed to sustain operational and academic success.

- L.2** Attach as an appendix a completed Missouri Charter School 5-Year Budget Template, accessed at <http://dese.mo.gov/sites/default/files/qs-charter-app-budget-DESE.xls>. Also attach a supplementary budget for the pre-operational start-up year. For both, make clear all major underlying budget assumptions; ensure both budgets address facilities expenses and all debt repayment as applicable. Additionally, discuss the necessity and likelihood of budgeted sources of revenue beyond state and federal funds tied to enrollment and Title programs (such as philanthropy, grants, etc.). Use the space below to provide any additional details/clarification as needed.

- L.3** Attach as an appendix a detailed staffing chart with budgeted salary and benefit amounts; this should clearly align with the 5-Year Budget also submitted. The staffing plan should include all administration, instructional staff (including aides and instructional support positions), and all other school personnel. Use the space below to provide any additional details/clarification as needed.

**Detailed Staffing and Compensation Plan**

The submitted 5-Year Budget provides a comprehensive overview of projected staffing levels, salaries, and benefit costs for Columbia Elementary over the five-year budget period (FY 2026–27 through FY 2030–31). This

staffing plan is designed to align precisely with the 5-Year Budget submitted and reflects the anticipated growth in enrollment and program expansion.

### **Administrative and Instructional Staff**

The staffing projections in the **“Staffing”** tab detail all administrative and instructional personnel, including:

- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- Secretary
- Teacher Aides / Instructional Support Staff
- IT Assistant

Each position includes budgeted salary amounts for each fiscal year from 2026–27 through 2030–31. Benefits are included where applicable within the total estimated costs, ensuring consistency with the assumptions used in the 5-Year Budget. The staffing model reflects a phased increase in instructional support positions aligned with enrollment growth, ensuring adequate student–teacher ratios and support for instructional quality.

### **Transportation Staff**

The **“Transportation”** tab includes all transportation-related personnel and expenses. Salaries and benefits for transportation staff—including **Drivers, Bus Aides, and the Dispatcher**—are already calculated together and presented as total annual costs. These totals also incorporate associated operational and maintenance expenses (e.g., fuel, bus rentals, and maintenance) to provide a complete financial picture of transportation services.

Because transportation personnel costs are already aggregated with benefits, no additional benefit calculations were applied in this appendix.

### **Alignment with 5-Year Budget**

This staffing plan directly aligns with the 5-Year Budget projections for personnel costs and benefits. Each year’s total compensation figures (from both the Staffing and Transportation sheets) correspond with the personnel expense categories in the submitted budget. The inclusion of transportation staff ensures a complete accounting of all school personnel across administrative, instructional, and operational functions.

### **Clarifications**

**Transportation staff benefits:** Already integrated into total salary figures; no further benefit adjustments made.

**Instructional growth:** Teacher aides and instructional support positions expand in correlation with projected enrollment increases.

**Administrative stability:** Core leadership (Principal and Assistant Principal) remains consistent throughout the projection, supporting continuity in school management.

- L.4** Describe how the 5-year budget aligns with and supports implementation of the educational, programming, and staffing plans addressed elsewhere in this application. Address *anticipated* financial challenges and potential means for addressing them.

## **Alignment of the 5-Year Budget with Educational, Programming, and Staffing Plans**

The Columbia Elementary 5-Year Budget has been strategically developed to ensure full alignment with the school's educational model, programming priorities, and staffing plan. Each component of the budget—revenues, instructional expenditures, staffing allocations, and operational supports—has been designed to sustain high-quality instruction while accommodating steady enrollment growth from 184 students in Year 1 (FY 2026–27) to 584 students in Year 5 (FY 2030–31).

### **Educational and Programming Alignment**

The budget directly supports the implementation of the school's academic and enrichment programs by providing sufficient resources for:

- **Classroom instruction and support:** Salaries for certified teachers, instructional aides, and technology staff grow proportionally with student enrollment to maintain appropriate class sizes and provide individualized support.
- **Curriculum and technology integration:** Allocations for instructional materials, IT support, and digital tools ensure that core academic programming is reinforced with strong technological infrastructure, aligning with the school's focus on digital literacy and STEM enrichment.
- **Student services:** Budgeted expenditures accommodate student support programs, including tutoring, enrichment, and intervention services, to meet diverse learner needs and promote equitable academic outcomes.

The structured increase in personnel and operating costs across the five years demonstrates intentional planning for scaling programs as enrollment expands—ensuring that resources, staffing, and facilities grow cohesively.

### **Staffing Plan Integration**

The **Staffing** and **Transportation** projections provide a clear framework for personnel expansion over the 5-year horizon. The staffing plan covers:

- **Administrative leadership (Principal, Assistant Principal, Secretary)** to ensure stable governance and operational oversight.
- **Instructional and support staff (Teacher Aides, IT Assistant)** to uphold instructional quality and operational efficiency.
- **Transportation staff (Drivers, Bus Aides, Dispatcher)** whose salaries and benefits are fully integrated into transportation costs.

These positions align directly with the budget's personnel expenditure lines and reflect both salary progression

and benefit adjustments over time. This alignment guarantees that all staffing and compensation assumptions are embedded within the financial framework of the school's operations.

### **Financial Sustainability and Anticipated Challenges**

The 5-Year Budget projects a responsible growth trajectory supported primarily by state and federal per-pupil revenues, which increase alongside enrollment. This growth ensures that fixed and variable costs are absorbed efficiently. However, several financial challenges are anticipated:

1. **Rising personnel costs:** As staffing expands and salary adjustments occur, personnel expenses will represent a larger portion of total expenditures.
  - *Mitigation:* Careful annual review of staffing ratios, coupled with maintaining conservative hiring practices tied to verified enrollment counts.
2. **Transportation and facility expenses:** With additional routes and facility needs expected in later years, costs will rise in maintenance, fuel, and equipment.
  - *Mitigation:* The school will explore cost-sharing agreements, fuel efficiency contracts, and phased facility improvements to reduce financial strain.
3. **Revenue variability:** Changes in state or federal funding formulas could affect per-pupil revenues.
  - *Mitigation:* Building a modest reserve fund during early operational years and diversifying grant and fundraising sources to cushion potential revenue fluctuations.

### **Long-Term Stability and Strategic Use of Funds**

The 5-Year Budget emphasizes **sustainability** through steady growth and balanced expenditures. By projecting conservative revenue estimates and scaling staff incrementally with enrollment, the plan safeguards financial health while prioritizing academic excellence. The inclusion of transportation, facilities, and support services ensures comprehensive coverage of all operational aspects required for long-term success.

Overall, the budget is both **mission-aligned and fiscally sound**, supporting the school's educational goals while maintaining prudent financial management practices. It positions Columbia Elementary for sustainable growth, operational stability, and continuous improvement over its first five years of operation.

- L.5** Discuss the school’s contingency plans should the school experience major *unanticipated* enrollment or other financial challenges in these early years of operation. Address alternate budget scenarios, facility plans, and staffing plans – and how they would likely manifest in implementation of the educational program.

## Contingency Planning for Enrollment and Financial Challenges

Frontier Schools – Columbia will enter its early years of operation with the benefit of a strong **Central Office infrastructure** and proven systems from Frontier’s existing Kansas City campuses. Nonetheless, the Board recognizes that unanticipated enrollment fluctuations or financial challenges may arise. The following contingency measures are in place:

### 1. Alternate Budget Scenarios

- The Central Office, under the oversight of the **COO and Director of Finance**, prepares conservative baseline budgets and develops “low-enrollment” scenarios reflecting revenue shortfalls of 10–20%.
- In these scenarios, discretionary expenditures such as nonessential professional development, technology upgrades, or equipment purchases are delayed or reduced.
- Budget reserves and the district’s fund balance provide an additional safety net, ensuring that core instructional and compliance obligations are prioritized.

### 2. Facility Plans

- The Columbia campus facility plan includes staged build-out to accommodate growth. If enrollment falls short, sections of the facility can be scaled for smaller cohorts without compromising safety or program quality.
- Leasing and service contracts are negotiated with flexibility, allowing adjustments to space usage and operating costs.

### 3. Staffing Plans

- Staffing is based on projected student-teacher ratios, but initial hiring emphasizes **core instructional staff** (teachers, special education, ELL, and student services).
- If enrollment is lower than anticipated, elective courses and non-core enrichment programs may be delayed until sustainable student demand is present.
- Administrative and support positions are scalable; responsibilities may be temporarily consolidated or shared across campuses until enrollment stabilizes.

### 4. Educational Program Implementation

- Even under reduced enrollment or lean budgets, the **core academic program (ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, ELL, and Special Education)** will remain intact.
- Frontier’s curriculum, assessment systems, and professional development infrastructure—already developed and managed at the Central Office level—allow the Columbia school to maintain instructional quality at lower cost per pupil.
- Partnerships with community organizations and Frontier’s College & Career Success and Real World Learning initiatives provide additional support for student enrichment, even when internal resources are constrained.

## 5. Governance and Oversight

- The Board’s **Finance Committee** regularly reviews enrollment and financial reports, enabling early identification of risks and activation of contingency measures.
- The Board retains authority to enact mid-year budget adjustments, delay capital projects, or modify hiring plans as necessary.

### **Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- evidence sound planning and expertise necessary for financial management and reporting (including, but not limited to annual and periodic state and federally-required reports such as the Annual Secretary of the Board Report/ASBR)
- ensure that federal grant and program funding will be managed in full compliance with the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG), and the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).
- evidence accounting procedures consistent with the Missouri Financial Accounting Manual
- make clear all key budget assumptions
- present sound rationales and realistic revenue expectations for non-public funding
- present realistic, well-informed expenditure projections
- project an end-of-year fund balance that exceeds DESE minimums and protects the financial viability of the school
- evidence alignment between budget expenditures and the school’s educational, programming, and staffing plans
- demonstrate an understanding of likely budget challenges and plans for addressing them
- evidence realistic, adequate contingency planning

## **M. Operations Management**

- M.1** Build on your description in Section K of the chief administrative/operations officers (or equivalent) role to describe more broadly how the school's operations (outside of the financial operations addressed above) will be managed. Address procurement, data management, recruitment/marketing, development/fundraising, DESE reporting, administrative support, health/school nurse, social services, etc. Regarding personnel, address a) if and why you will contract with an external personnel service; b) any minimum personnel qualifications; and c) your professional development plans for personnel other than teachers.

Frontier Schools – Columbia will benefit from the established operational infrastructure of Frontier Schools in Kansas City, with oversight from the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and central office directors. The COO will ensure that all non-financial operational functions are aligned with instructional priorities, compliant with state and federal regulations, and supportive of student success.

### **Procurement**

Procurement will be coordinated centrally through the COO and Finance Department to ensure transparent, competitive purchasing and alignment with DESE requirements. Bulk purchasing agreements used in Kansas City will extend to Columbia, reducing costs for instructional materials, technology, food service, and facilities. All procurement follows board-approved policies and requires multiple bids for large purchases to ensure fiscal responsibility.

### **Data Management**

The Director of IT and the Registrar will maintain a secure student information system (SIS) that supports enrollment, attendance, academic records, and state reporting. Data governance protocols include regular audits, FERPA compliance, and cybersecurity safeguards. Instructional data management will be overseen by the Chief Academic Officer and curriculum directors, ensuring assessment data flows into quarterly data meetings that inform instructional adjustments.

### **Recruitment and Marketing**

The Director of Communications and Outreach will lead marketing, public relations, and community engagement efforts. Recruitment strategies include open houses, school tours, informational sessions in underserved communities, and multilingual enrollment materials. Outreach will leverage social media, partnerships with local organizations, and home visits to strengthen trust with families.

### **Development and Fundraising**

Frontier Schools has a strong record of philanthropy, raising more than \$4 million since 2019. The Superintendent/CEO, COO, and Director of Communications will work together to pursue grants, foundation partnerships, and corporate sponsorships to support STEM initiatives, extracurricular programming, and student well-being. The Columbia campus will participate in this development strategy, ensuring additional resources beyond per-pupil revenue.

### **DESE Reporting**

The COO and Registrar will oversee compliance reporting to DESE, including enrollment, attendance, staffing, safety, and program accountability submissions. Reports will be generated from the SIS, reviewed by the COO, and approved by the Superintendent before submission. The Finance Department will separately manage fiscal reporting.

### **Administrative Support**

A school secretary and registrar will provide frontline support to families, staff, and administrators, including

scheduling, records management, communications, and translation services. Central office staff, including HR, IT, and communications, will provide additional shared services to Columbia.

### **Health and School Nurse**

Student health services will be coordinated by the campus nurse under the supervision of the Director of Health, Safety, and Conduct. Protocols will align with Missouri health regulations, including immunizations, medication administration, screenings, and emergency care. The nurse will also participate in wellness initiatives and serve on the campus safety committee.

### **Social Services**

The Social Worker, reporting to the Assistant Principal for Safety and Conduct, will coordinate social-emotional support, counseling, crisis intervention, and family engagement. The Social Work Services Coordinator and McKinney-Vento/Foster Liaison at central office will provide compliance oversight and access to external partnerships for homeless and foster students. Frontier's existing partnerships with mental health providers and community agencies in Kansas City will be extended to Columbia.

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## **Personnel**

### **a) External Personnel Services**

The school does not intend to contract with an external personnel service. All recruitment, hiring, onboarding, payroll, and certification verification will be managed internally through the Director of Human Resources and HR Manager. This ensures consistent alignment with Frontier's mission and values.

### **b) Minimum Personnel Qualifications**

- **Administrators:** Advanced degree preferred; demonstrated leadership experience in education.
- **Teachers:** Bachelor's degree and Missouri teacher certification required; preference for candidates with STEM specialization, EL/SpEd certification, or experience in urban/diverse schools.
- **Support Staff:** Relevant experience and training; for example, registered nurses must hold Missouri licensure.
- **Social Worker:** Master's in social work (MSW) with state licensure.

### **c) Professional Development for Non-Teaching Personnel**

Frontier Schools extends professional development to all staff, not only teachers.

- **Administrators** receive leadership development, compliance training, and coaching on data-driven decision-making.
- **Nurses and social workers** participate in specialized training on trauma-informed practices, child health, suicide prevention, and crisis response.
- **Support staff** (secretaries, IT, HR, registrars) receive annual training in FERPA, HIPAA, customer service, technology systems, and cultural competence.



- **Transportation and maintenance staff** receive regular training on safety compliance, student supervision, and emergency protocols.

This professional learning ensures that all personnel contribute effectively to the school's mission and that operations support a safe, inclusive, and high-performing learning environment.

**M.2** Will the proposed school provide daily transportation for students?

**Yes:** ✓

**No:**

If "No," describe your rationale for not providing transportation. If "Yes," describe your transportation plan, addressing geographic boundaries/limitations, etc. Address budgeted revenue and expenses, including those related to anticipated state aid per RSMo 163.161.

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**M.3** Provide evidence of ability and preparation to obtain adequate property insurance, as well liability insurance to indemnify the school, its board, staff, and teachers against tort claims. Address any other anticipated insurance needs and plans for procurement (including budgeting for premiums, which should be reflected in the submitted budget).

The school has the capacity and preparation to secure comprehensive insurance coverage to protect its students, staff, leadership, and governing board. Property insurance will be obtained to cover the facility, equipment, and instructional materials against risks such as fire, theft, or natural disasters. Liability insurance will be secured to indemnify the school, its board, administrators, teachers, and staff against tort claims, ensuring protection from potential legal actions related to accidents or injuries.

Additional coverage needs are anticipated and will be addressed, including workers' compensation, errors and omissions insurance for board members, directors, and officers, and vehicle insurance for school-owned buses. The school will work with reputable carriers experienced in serving charter schools to procure appropriate coverage.

Premiums for these policies are included in the operational budget, ensuring that the school maintains adequate and continuous coverage. Insurance needs will be reviewed annually by the school's leadership in consultation with the board to confirm that coverage levels remain aligned with growth, enrollment, and facility changes. This proactive approach ensures compliance with state requirements and long-term risk management.

**M.4** Describe your food service plans, addressing compliance with state and federal guidelines. Address related budgetary impacts (revenues and expenses) and facilities needs. Demonstrate

that the plans are well-grounded in an understanding of the target student population(s).

The school will provide a full food service program that complies with all state and federal requirements, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program. Menus will be designed to meet USDA nutritional standards, with accommodations for students with medical or religious dietary needs. Compliance will be ensured through regular staff training, documentation, and monitoring.

Food service will be operated on-site in a facility designed with an appropriately equipped kitchen and serving area. During the planning and buildout process, the school will ensure the facility meets all state health and safety codes, including refrigeration, storage, and preparation requirements.

Budget planning reflects both expenses and revenues related to food service. Costs for food, staffing, equipment, and compliance will be offset in part by federal reimbursements through the NSLP, as well as state and local support. Additional philanthropic contributions may be pursued to help subsidize meal programs if needed, ensuring no student goes without access to healthy meals.

Given the diverse student population anticipated in Columbia, the program will emphasize culturally responsive menu options, provide outreach to families in multiple languages regarding meal benefits, and ensure equitable access through free and reduced-price meal eligibility. These measures ensure that food service both meets regulatory standards and supports the nutritional and cultural needs of the school community.

**Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- evidence sound administrative and operations planning addressing major operations management domains and challenges
- evidence a strong rationale for the decision to either provide or not provide transportation, including a realistic understanding of the financial implications of either.
- evidence a transportation plan (if required) that accounts well for student, family, and institutional needs
- evidence an understanding of the multiple forms of insurance needed, as well as the related costs.
- evidence a food service plan that complies with all state and federal guidelines
- evidence a food service plan that addresses the nutritional needs of the distinct target student population(s), and the role of the school food plan in students' holistic development

## N. Facilities

- N.1** Describe the school's facility needs based on the educational program and anticipated enrollment for the next ten years. Provide, at a minimum, the number and size of the needed buildings, classrooms, common areas, dining/kitchen areas, administrative areas, recreational spaces, any community facilities, and any residential facilities. Describe how and when additional facilities will need to be acquired to meet growth plans.

Attach as an appendix a facility budget that addresses costs for acquisition, operation, maintenance, repairs/improvements, and insurance. These costs should be reflected in the 5-Year Budget submitted as part of Section L of this application.

The school's facility plan is designed to support a rigorous STEM-focused educational program while accommodating phased enrollment growth over the next ten years.

### Initial Facility (Years 1–3)

The opening facility will house grades Pre-K through 2, with capacity for approximately 200–400 students. The building will include:

- **Classrooms:** 12–15 standard classrooms (approximately 600–900 sq. ft. each) designed for flexible seating, technology integration, and small-group instruction.
- **Common Areas:** A multipurpose room for assemblies and enrichment activities.
- **Dining/Kitchen:** A full-service kitchen and cafeteria sized to serve all students in staggered meal shifts, meeting federal food service requirements.
- **Administrative Areas:** Offices for the principal, assistant principals, registrar, social worker, nurse, and support staff, along with a secure main entry and reception area.
- **Recreational Space:** Age-appropriate indoor play space and an outdoor playground with secure fencing.

### Expansion Facility Needs (Years 4–10)

As enrollment grows with the addition of one grade per year through elementary and middle school levels, the facility plan will expand accordingly:

- **Classrooms:** An additional 20–25 classrooms to support grades 3–8, ensuring class sizes remain within state guidelines.
- **STEM and Specialty Labs:** Dedicated science labs, makerspaces, and technology labs to deepen alignment with the STEM instructional model.
- **Library/Media Center:** A centralized learning hub to support literacy, research, and digital learning.
- **Fine Arts and Electives:** Spaces for art, music, and extracurricular activities.
- **Expanded Cafeteria and Kitchen:** Increased dining capacity to accommodate a larger student body.
- **Recreational and Athletic Facilities:** A gymnasium for physical education, athletics, and community use;

outdoor fields and courts for recess and sports.

### **Community and Support Facilities**

Meeting rooms and multipurpose spaces will be available for parent workshops, family engagement events, and community partnerships. Dedicated areas for counseling and small-group interventions will ensure student support services are accessible.

### **Residential Facilities**

No residential facilities are planned.

### **Acquisition Timeline**

- **Years 1–3:** Secure an initial facility that meets the needs of early grade levels with space for immediate growth.
- **Years 4–6:** Acquire or expand into an additional building or wing to support upper elementary grades and specialty classrooms.
- **Years 7–10:** Secure further expansion or a second site to accommodate middle school grades, full gymnasium, and expanded STEM facilities.

This phased approach ensures that facilities remain aligned with enrollment growth, financial capacity, and the academic program, while providing safe, functional, and future-ready learning environments.

**N.2** If the applicants have identified a facility the school will occupy in the first years of operation, attach in an appendix the floor plans of the potential facility, the lease agreement, and any purchase options. In the space below identify/describe the facility and indicate to what extent it facility currently meets all requirements and/or the extent that the facility will require renovation or ‘build out’ (and at what projected cost).

If a facility has not been selected, specify below potential locations under consideration and discuss the process and timeline for selecting, acquiring, renovating (if applicable), and taking occupation of a suitable facility.

In either case, also explain how the school’s facility will meet the needs of students and how it will be accessible to students, faculty, staff, and visitors with disabilities.

### **Facility Identification and Planning**

At this time, Frontier Schools has not yet secured a facility for the proposed Columbia, Missouri charter school. The facility selection process is a priority milestone in the project plan, with the goal of identifying and finalizing a suitable building by spring 2026. If the facility cannot be completed or certified in time for the 2026–2027 school year, Frontier Schools will defer opening to 2027–2028 to ensure all safety, accessibility, and programmatic standards are fully met before students occupy the building. Frontier Schools will coordinate with Columbia community partners throughout 2025–2026 to ensure that the facility, staffing, and program readiness fully support a successful opening.

Frontier Schools will undertake a comprehensive feasibility study in partnership with third-party facility experts to evaluate multiple potential sites. These include available commercial properties, repurposed educational facilities, and newly constructed spaces within Columbia’s growing residential areas. The criteria guiding selection include safety and security, accessibility, alignment with the school’s STEM-focused instructional model, and capacity for phased enrollment growth.

## Process and Timeline

- **January – February 2026:** Conduct feasibility study and site assessments of potential locations.
- **By March 31, 2026:** Identify and secure a facility that meets projected enrollment needs for the opening year (Pre-K–2).
- **April – June 2026:** If renovations or build-outs are required, finalize architectural plans and begin improvements to ensure compliance with safety codes, ADA accessibility, and the STEM program’s specialized space needs (e.g., science labs, makerspaces).
- **July 2026:** Prepare the building, install equipment and furnishings, and complete inspections and certifications.
- **August 26, 2026:** Occupy facility and welcome students for the first school year.

Projected costs for renovations or build-out will depend on the selected site and scope of upgrades, but Frontier anticipates expenses will be incorporated into the **CSP grant budget, philanthropic support, and local fundraising efforts**.

## Meeting the Needs of Students

The facility will be designed and/or renovated to ensure:

- **STEM-Ready Learning Spaces:** Classrooms will be configured for collaborative, hands-on learning, with flexible spaces to support Project Lead the Way (PLTW), STEMScopes, and makerspace activities.
- **Safety and Security:** Secure entrances, surveillance systems, and safe drop-off/pick-up procedures will be integrated.
- **Accessibility:** In compliance with the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**, all facilities will include accessible entrances, restrooms, classrooms, and common spaces for students, staff, faculty, and visitors with disabilities.
- **Future Scalability:** The facility will accommodate initial enrollment (Pre-K–2) with sufficient capacity and flexibility to expand one grade level per year in alignment with enrollment projections.

Through this structured selection process and planned improvements, Frontier Schools will ensure that the Columbia facility meets the academic, social, and developmental needs of students while providing a safe, inclusive, and accessible environment for all.

**N.3** Detail how the school plans to fund its facilities. If the school is budgeting debt as part of its facilities acquisition plan, describe the repayment plan and ensure it is reflected in the 5-Year Budget submitted as part of Section L of this application.

The school does not plan to incur any debt for the acquisition, construction, or renovation of its facilities. All facility-related expenses will be funded through a combination of existing reserves, operational revenue, and philanthropic contributions. Specifically, the school anticipates covering facility costs through its annual budget allocations and capital fundraising efforts, ensuring all expenditures are sustainable within projected revenues.

Because no debt financing is anticipated, there is no repayment plan included, and this is accurately reflected in the 5-Year Budget submitted as part of Section L of this application.

**Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...***

- include all requested documents/appendices
- reflect a sound understanding of facility needs

- demonstrate adequate knowledge of facilities costs, including purchasing, leasing, building, renovating, and maintenance
- demonstrate knowledge of requirements of occupancy (health, safety, etc.)
- evidence that any proposed facilities adequately meet school needs (location, building type, accessibility, etc.)
- evidence that the funding plan and repayment budgets for any facilities are feasible in the context of the overall school budget
- evidence a feasible plan for purchasing/leasing facilities



## O. Stakeholder Engagement

- O.1** Describe the roles that parents and other family/guardian stakeholders will play in school governance, operations, and in supporting the school's programming and policies. Share your rationale for the planned involvement. Address parent organizations or other ways you will encourage or require school parents/families/guardians to be engaged. Discuss your grievance procedure for parents/guardians. Attach as appendices any completed or draft Parent Handbook or related policies.

Frontier Schools believes that families are vital partners in ensuring student success. Parents and guardians will play both formal and informal roles in governance, operations, and programming at the new Columbia charter school.

- **Governance:** Parents will be represented through structured feedback opportunities such as surveys, focus groups, and community forums. Input gathered will be reported to school leadership and incorporated into decision-making. The Board of Directors also maintains open sessions to ensure transparency and accountability.
- **Operations:** Parents and guardians will be encouraged to serve as volunteers in classrooms, extracurricular activities, and special events such as cultural celebrations, family engagement nights, and STEM-focused activities. The district's established home visit program, which has successfully engaged families in other campuses, will also be replicated in Columbia to strengthen the parent-school connection.

### Support for Programming and Policies

Parents will support school programming in multiple ways:

- **Academic Support:** Families will be invited to participate in parent workshops focused on literacy, STEM, and social-emotional learning to reinforce instructional strategies at home.
- **Cultural and Community Engagement:** The school will host multicultural festivals, career fairs, and family nights that provide opportunities for families to celebrate diversity and strengthen community bonds.
- **Feedback Loops:** Surveys, forums, and direct communication with school leaders will provide structured input on curriculum, student services, and extracurricular offerings.

### Ongoing Engagement

Parents and guardians will stay connected through district newsletters, social media platforms, and community events that ensure timely communication and consistent opportunities for families to connect with school staff and leadership. These channels ensure that parents remain informed, empowered, and connected to school priorities.

### Grievance Procedure

Frontier Schools has a clear, multi-step grievance procedure designed to resolve concerns promptly and equitably:

1. **Teacher/Staff Level:** Parents first discuss concerns with the teacher or staff member most directly involved.
2. **School Administration:** If unresolved, concerns are brought to the Assistant Principal or Principal.
3. **District Leadership:** If still unresolved, parents may appeal to the Superintendent.
4. **Board of Directors:** As the final step, parents may present concerns in writing to the Board, which will review and respond in accordance with school policies and Missouri charter school law.

At each stage, families receive clear timelines for responses, ensuring accountability and transparency.

## **Rationale**

Family engagement increases student achievement, attendance, and satisfaction. Frontier Schools' rationale for robust family involvement is grounded in both research and practice: consistent home visits, cultural programming, and ongoing communication have fostered high family satisfaction rates across existing campuses. These practices will be replicated in Columbia to ensure strong partnerships from the first year of operation.

- O.2** Describe the roles that the school's faculty and staff will play in school governance and decision-making. Address organizations and/or structures via which faculty and staff will have a voice in decisions that directly impact their work (and clarify the nature of that "voice": advisory/input, binding votes, etc.). Explain how grievances from faculty and staff will be solicited, addressed, and adjudicated. Attach as appendices any completed or draft Faculty/Staff Handbook or related policies.

## **Faculty and Staff Roles in Governance and Decision-Making**

Frontier Schools recognizes faculty and staff as essential stakeholders in creating a thriving learning environment. Teachers, instructional support staff, and operations personnel all contribute to governance and decision-making through formal structures and consistent communication with school leadership.

- **Governance Participation:** Faculty and staff will provide input into policies, curriculum design, and school operations through structured committees and regular meetings with administration. These structures ensure that staff perspectives are considered in shaping both academic and non-academic initiatives. While decision-making authority rests with school leadership and the Board of Directors, staff input is advisory and serves as a critical factor in guiding decisions.
- **Instructional Leadership:** Lead teachers and instructional coaches will collaborate with administrators to evaluate curriculum, monitor student performance data, and recommend adjustments to instructional practices. This role ensures that staff expertise directly informs the academic program.

- **Operational Input:** Non-instructional staff, such as counselors, nurses, and support personnel, will have opportunities to provide feedback on policies and procedures that impact student well-being, school safety, and day-to-day operations.

## Structures for Faculty and Staff Voice

Faculty and staff will be engaged through:

- **Professional Learning Communities (PLCs):** Teachers and instructional staff will meet regularly to review student data, refine instructional strategies, and share best practices. Findings and recommendations from PLCs will be shared with administrators for consideration in decision-making.
- **Faculty and Staff Meetings:** Regularly scheduled meetings will provide a forum for staff to raise concerns, propose initiatives, and receive updates on school-wide policies.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Staff input will also be gathered through surveys, focus groups, and open forums, ensuring that all team members have a consistent voice in shaping the school's direction.

## Faculty and Staff Grievance Procedure

Frontier Schools will maintain a clear grievance procedure to ensure staff concerns are addressed promptly and fairly.

1. **Supervisor/Direct Administrator:** Staff members will first raise concerns with their direct supervisor (e.g., Assistant Principal, Principal).
2. **District Administration:** If the issue remains unresolved, concerns may be elevated to district-level leadership, including the Superintendent.
3. **Board of Directors:** As the final step, grievances may be presented in writing to the Board, which will review the matter in accordance with established policies and employment law.

Grievances will be reviewed in a timely and confidential manner. Responses will include both an acknowledgment of the concern and, where applicable, a plan of action or resolution.

## Rationale

By integrating faculty and staff voices into decision-making processes, Frontier Schools ensures that those closest to the students and daily operations have meaningful input in shaping the school's success. Clear grievance procedures, combined with opportunities for advisory input, foster a culture of trust, collaboration, and shared accountability.

- 0.3 Address your plans for community involvement in the school (during the pre-opening period and after opening). What roles are you planning for community partners, and why? If there are

specific partners you are already working with or plan to, identify them and the nature of the partnerships.

Frontier Schools is committed to building deep, authentic relationships with the Columbia community during both the **pre-opening phase** and throughout ongoing operations. Community involvement is central to our mission of fostering academic excellence, equity, and belonging, and we recognize that strong partnerships enhance student opportunities, family support, and overall school success.

## Pre-Opening Engagement

Before opening, Frontier Schools will:

- **Conduct Community Meetings and Forums:** Inform residents about the new charter school, listen to feedback, and incorporate local priorities into planning.
- **Engage with Local Media and Outreach Campaigns:** Utilize social media, newsletters, brochures, and local press to keep the community informed about school progress and enrollment opportunities.
- **Partner with Civic Leaders and Local Organizations:** Collaborate with community leaders, nonprofits, and service providers to assess needs and identify opportunities for student enrichment and family support.
- **Organize Enrollment and Information Sessions:** Provide families with clear details about the admissions process, the school's STEM focus, and resources for early childhood and elementary education.

## Post-Opening Engagement

Once operational, the school will sustain and expand community involvement through:

- **Family and Community Events:** Hosting multicultural festivals, career fairs, and family nights to strengthen school-community connections.
- **Volunteer Opportunities:** Inviting community members to serve as mentors, guest speakers, and volunteers in both academic and extracurricular programs.
- **Student Enrichment and Career Exposure:** Partnering with local universities, businesses, and organizations to provide internships, STEM experiences, and career exploration opportunities.
- **Ongoing Communication:** Maintaining transparency and engagement through newsletters, social media platforms, and consistent updates about school activities and achievements.

## Community Partners and Roles

Frontier Schools already has a strong track record of partnering with businesses, universities, and nonprofits to enrich student experiences, and these practices will be extended to Columbia. Examples include:

- **Corporate Partners:** Organizations such as Bayer have previously engaged with Frontier's STEM

Innovation Lab, providing students with hands-on exposure to real-world applications of science and technology. Similar partnerships will be pursued in Columbia to strengthen the STEM focus.

- **Higher Education Institutions:** Partnerships with universities will provide opportunities for tutoring, teacher pipeline development, and dual-enrollment or enrichment programs. In Columbia, the University of Missouri will be a key potential partner to expand access to college-readiness opportunities.
- **Community and Civic Organizations:** Frontier will collaborate with nonprofits, cultural organizations, and local agencies to support student well-being, family engagement, and wraparound services.
- **Local Government and Leaders:** Engagement with city and community leaders will ensure alignment with local needs and create opportunities for students to connect with civic life.

## Rationale

Community involvement is not only beneficial but essential to achieving the school's mission. Partnerships expand resources available to students, strengthen family-school connections, and ground the school in the broader social and economic fabric of Columbia. By involving community stakeholders in meaningful ways, Frontier Schools will create a collaborative ecosystem where students thrive academically and socially, families feel supported, and the school becomes a trusted community partner.

### Evaluation Criteria: *Satisfactory responses will...*

- demonstrate a rationale for parent/family/guardian involvement well-aligned with school plans for involvement.
- demonstrate an approach to faculty and staff involvement in governance and decision-making that appropriately balances employee agency and job responsibilities across populations/org levels.
- demonstrate the founders' understanding of key community engagement issues
- demonstrate sound plans for community engagement that will strengthen the school in both the pre-opening and operational periods.

## P. Pre-Opening Requirements

**P.1** Indicate below your assurance that, if your application is approved, you will comply with all of the following pre-opening requirements prior to the school's opening and per a schedule determined by SLU:

Yes: ✓

### Pre-Opening Requirements:

- a. Provide proof of liability insurance for Board of Directors. **Note: Added**
- b. Provide evidence (i.e. signed lease agreement) that a suitable facility has been secured. **Note: NA**
- c. Submit approved Board Policy Manual, including Financial Accounting Practices. **Note: Link provided in document titled Policies.**
- d. Submit a copy of personnel policies. **Note: Link provided in document titled Policies.**
- e. Submit a copy of student policies. **Note: Link provided in document titled Policies.**
- f. Provide information concerning your Student Information System. **Note: Added**
- g. Provide proof of registration with the Public School Retirement System of St. Louis. **Note: Added**
- h. Assure that the school has gained access to DESE's web portal. **Note: Added**
- i. Assure that the school is registered for access to the Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS). **Note: Added**
- j. Submit a Certificate of Occupancy for the school facility. **Note: NA**
- k. Submit evidence of facility fire/safety inspections. **Note: NA**
- l. Submit a copy of the Safety and Emergency Plan. **Note: Added**
- m. Submit a copy of the Student/Family Handbook, including the Code of Conduct/Discipline Policies. **Note: Added**
- n. Submit a copy of the Staff Handbook, including personnel policies, benefits, and evaluation process. **Note: Added**
- o. Submit a copy of the Lau Plan (for the education of ELL students). **Note: Added**
- p. Provide information concerning contracts for bus transportation, foodservice, custodial, and all other contracted services. Include assurances for personnel compliance, qualifications, and fingerprint/background checks. **N/A**
- q. Provide proof of adequate surety bond/insurance. **Note: Added**
- r. Submit a copy of the Special Education Compliance Plan. **Note: Added**
- s. Provide evidence that the Electronic Fund Transfer (EFT) Enrollment Forms have been submitted to DESE. **N/A**
- t. Provide evidence that the necessary state documents to generate payment have been submitted. (Vendor Input Form) **N/A**
- u. Submit a copy of the Title I Plan. **Note: Added**

[CLICK HERE TO ACCESS ALL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS.](#)