

## SECTION I SCHOOL DESIGN

### Mission and Vision Statement

The purpose of the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School is to establish a challenging educational system that educates students toward maturity of intellect and character in preparation for lives of leadership through service. Establishing high standards for scholarship, integrity, and responsible citizenship, we seek to develop intellectually capable young people who embody creativity, health consciousness, and the ethical application needed to contribute to a burgeoning global society.

Our ambition is to foster a culture of responsibly integrative participation by establishing conscientiously engaging partnerships between the school, family, and the larger business and civic community.

Vision, through a panoramic lens, utilizes a longitudinal design with ethnographic implications and considerations. The overarching vision of the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School requires a dynamic process of establishing a culture of self-assessment and continuous improvement to effectively fulfill its mission and commitment to all stakeholders and interests. The vision of the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School encompasses the urgency to develop a transformational organization that functions under the goals, objectives, and strategies toward measurable success. The overarching vision of the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School is comprised of four key elements:

1. Enhance the learning experience at the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School as measured by student retention and promotion rates, student and family satisfaction indicators, assessment data, academic and non-academic outcomes.
2. Grow student enrollment and faculty complement to full site capacity.
3. Achieve ranking and recognition in select academic areas.
4. Secure the necessary resources to fully implement and support the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School's overarching vision.

*Enhance the APACS Learning Experience*

Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School's teaching and learning mission is centered on the academic and non-academic development of the student. The growth of teacher to student relationships is central to all the activities at the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School. Our fundamental goal is to provide a supportive learning environment for individuals to advance in their academic careers and be engaged in their communities through project-based service assignments.

Today's students must be prepared for more than a career, as proficiency in problem-solving, communication, collaboration, and technology will be required in all professional disciplines. These competencies allow for more than job entry or career advancement. They are tantamount to a fully-realized life experience. The goals, content, instruction, expectations and evaluation methods use by the Archie Preparatory Charter School are tailored to meet the needs and starting point of each individual child and increase in sophistication and complexity each year.

To address these challenges, five-year goals will include the following:

- APACS will rank at or above the state average in PSSA participation.
- APACS will rank at or above the state average in attendance.
- APACS will rank at or above the state average in Mathematics and Reading performance on state assessments.

Strategies for strengthening learning and teaching at APACS include:

- creating a Resource Center for Teaching and Learning to support faculty in developing pedagogy; assessing student learning; using progressive instructional technology applications; and mentoring new and veteran colleagues.
- establishing a cooperative 4-year looping cycle that includes multi-grade curriculum mapping at the middle level
- assure teacher retention through adequate administrative support and professional development.
- developing and implementing a 4-year faculty hiring plan.
- continuous review of existing programs to assure relevance to APACS mission and goals.
- developing and launching new programs in areas that contribute to student engagement and precipitate increased parent involvement and commitment.
- ongoing observation of programs through scholarly quantitative and qualitative research methods.

*Grow Student Enrollment and Faculty Complement to Full Site Capacity*

The successful development and launch of the First and Second Year programs at the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School will establish a vigorous educational initiative for the student. This initiative will challenge the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School community to develop an engagingly robust multi-disciplinary K-12 curriculum, fulfill general education requirements, and further investigate learning and teaching styles for a new generation of students. These efforts will result in an invigorated Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School campus climate, ongoing evaluation of current practices, and a renewed commitment to Harrisburg's educational mission.

With full implementation of the 4-year looping cycle, coupled with its supplemental enrichment and mandatory community service programs, Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School will be positioned as a growth and preparatory institution at a time when a hefty middle level program is essential to success through the high school program.

In Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as well as regionally and nationally, success in the knowledge-based 21<sup>st</sup> century economy depends on the existence of an educated and resourceful workforce. Although rarely juxtaposed with a high school education, equally important is the value that a significantly competitive middle level education brings to an individual throughout their high school career: eligibility for higher level course offerings, higher school rank, access to competitive colleges, enhanced social networks, greater community engagement and personal fulfillment.

Targeted growth can provide the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School with:

- efficiencies and economies of scale in the delivery of academic and administrative services.
- opportunities for more diverse offerings in programmatic areas consistent with the service learning focus of the middle level and high school.
- the enrichment and continuing invigoration of the academic and non-academic environment that results from the addition of a significant number of new students and faculty members.
- increased revenues to support the educational mission, primarily in supporting faculty and staff and hiring new faculty and staff in areas of need based upon the community.

Growth strategies include:

- attracting and retaining first-year students
- developing new programs that broaden the 4-year looping curriculum in middle school
- developing new programs in response to state and regional needs and trends
- providing new methods of program delivery for the middle level and high school learner including enhanced online tutoring programs, business sector internships, and multi-year project based initiatives.
- assuming a leadership role in bridging the Achievement Gap among low income and minority students.

*Achieve Ranking and Recognition in Select Academic Areas.*

During the next five years, the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School will commit to achieving statewide ranking and recognition in areas of academic excellence and service while maintaining its core educational mission.

This commitment includes:

- achieve and maintain recognition as measured by state and national achievement rankings.
- establish partnerships and obtain recognition as an institution of service within circles of regional service related organizations.

*Secure the Necessary Resources to Implement and Support the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School's Overarching Vision*

In order to realize the overarching goals, the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School must receive adequate funding to support academic and non-academic programs, as well as the resources necessary to implement the aforementioned enrollment growth initiatives.

The Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School is committed to working collaboratively with the Harrisburg School District to establish a peer model that results in funding appropriate to the organization's structure and mission (Phillips, 2011). Finally, the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School is committed to successfully meeting its campaign targets and public/private initiatives. The additional support for scholarships; research; and infrastructure enhancement will contribute significantly to the Archie Preparatory Charter School's continued growth and development.

## Measurable Goals and Objectives

The next section identifies goals, objectives, strategies and success measures that will help the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School realize its vision for the future. The list of strategies and success measures will guide actions and can be used to assess progress in each area, but they are not comprehensive: Strategic planning is a dynamic process, and should be informed by ongoing observation, documented evaluation, feedback sessions, and, if necessary, a realignment of protocol or recalibration of strategies.

Specific strategies and success measure targets should be set periodically after collaborative discussions among all responsible units. Progress towards these institutional goals should be monitored on a regular basis and be reported annually to the campus community. Strategic school plans should be reviewed for consistency with the current organization plan and schedule. Standing governance committees, as well as campus-wide work groups in specific areas, will participate in monitoring plan implementation.

## Strategic Goals

1. The Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School will enhance the quality of learning, teaching and research.

*Objective 1.1:* Increase support for faculty to develop pedagogy; assess student learning; employ cutting-edge instructional technology; and mentor new and veteran faculty.

*Objective 1.2:* Add faculty lines in areas of programmatic growth and need to assure quality of instruction, maintain appropriate teaching loads, and meet academic standards where applicable.

*Objective 1.3:* Enhance research and scholarship that contribute to the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School's academic mission.

*Objective 1.4:* Support the ongoing assessment of programmatic and student course learning outcomes.

*Objective 1.5:* Strengthen academic support services and integrative co-curricular programming to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

*Objective 1.6:* Achieve ranking and recognition in select areas of academic excellence.

*Strategies include:*

- Creating a Center for Teaching and Learning
- Developing and implementing a 4-year faculty hiring plan to parallel the 4-year looping cycle
- Expanding school and community collaborations to enhance existing offerings and create innovative new programs
- Attracting and retaining a prominent and diverse faculty; supporting and retaining faculty who exhibit potential to attain national prominence
- Strengthening support for faculty research
- Fully implementing assessment plans in all programs
- Assessing student outcomes using a variety of tools and measurements

*Success measures include:*

- Hiring of highly qualified K-12 faculty
- Annual benchmark achievement rate
- Student satisfaction and engagement indices

- Student retention and promotion rates
  - Faculty satisfaction indices
  - Percentage of programs utilizing advanced instructional technology
  - Growth in grant-funded research and programs
  - Number of collaborative programs and academic options
  - Regional and state rankings in select academic and program areas
2. The Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School will increase student enrollment in response to local and regional demand.

*Objective 2.1:* Increase total student headcount to 720.

*Objective 2.2:* Review existing academic programs based on current enrollments; market indicators of future enrollments; cost; faculty retention; and contribution to general education requirements; and enhance initiatives that ensure programmatic relevancy.

*Objective 2.3:* Strengthen and coordinate retention efforts in all program areas.

*Objective 2.4:* Develop and launch programs in areas of documented need based on thorough market analysis; comprehensive business plans; and dedicated resources.

*Objective 2.5:* Expand co-curricular offerings to enrich students' educational, cultural and social experiences.

*Strategies include:*

- Developing and implementing strategic enrollment and retention plans
- Setting annual enrollment goals based on data and collaborative decision-making
- Targeting first-year students

- Implementing strategies to lower the Achievement Gap
- Leveraging vouchers to maximize yield
- Strengthening fully-online and 'hybrid' tutorial offerings
- Increasing flexibility in the delivery of teaching, learning and student services
- Developing recruitment materials tied to market research, enrollment projections and strategies
- Utilizing partnerships with neighboring cultural and educational institutions to broaden available activities outside the classroom
- Expanding student services, including wellness programs and enhanced food options

*Success measures include:*

- Annual enrollment growth
- Student retention
- Resources reallocated for existing and new program growth
- Number of new programs developed in response to mid-Atlantic region, state and workforce need
- Number of co-curricular offerings tied to learning outcomes

3. The Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School will further develop its role in community engagement and regional stewardship.

*Objective 3.1:* Increase support for and promotion of community-focused initiatives.

*Objective 3.2:* Increase collaborative programs and community-focused education that utilize Harrisburg's potential as an educational incubator.

*Objective 3.3:* Strengthen Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School culture of students as community stewards through enhanced developmental practices, service-learning and internship opportunities.

*Objective 3.4:* Increase opportunities for local residents and businesses in hiring, purchasing and other on-going business functions.

*Objective 3.5:* Continue to develop and implement public/private development partnerships that meet school and community needs and contribute to the economic and social vitality of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

*Strategies include:*

- Forming multi-disciplinary partnerships that address the needs of the surrounding neighborhood and the city of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
- Participating in local, regional and national discussions among charter schools, public schools, education organizations, non-profits, and civic and business leaders focused on innovative solutions to urban challenges
- Coordinating campus internship and service learning initiatives
- Ensuring that the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School's engagement initiatives are communicated to internal and external constituencies
- Reviewing current practices related to faculty, staff, and student recruitment and retention with respect to community leadership
- Advancing the campus as a community resource and destination
- Collaborating with the Harrisburg arts community to present cultural offerings of interest to the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School and surrounding communities

*Success measures include:*

- Growth in service learning and internship opportunities
- Grants applied for and awarded related to community service-based initiatives and/or urban issues
- Faculty, staff and student time dedicated to public service initiatives
- Growth in local contracting
- Number of local, regional and annual events hosted on urban issues
- Meeting state requirements for minority business contracting
- Private investment in joint development projects
- Participation in community-focused initiatives

4. The Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School will support its educational mission through efficient structures, best practices in customer service, sound fiscal management, and the retention and recruitment of a professional workforce.

*Objective 4.1:* Provide a supportive environment for the ongoing professional development and engagement of all staff.

*Objective 4.2:* Enhance customer service in all public-facing and internal operations.

*Objective 4.3:* Increase the participation of staff, faculty, students, external stakeholders and the business community in the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School fundraising initiatives.

*Objective 4.4:* Increase alternative revenue streams to support the academic mission through public/private partnerships, expanded auxiliary enterprises, foundation, state and federal grants.

*Strategies include:*

- Strengthening institutional research to support evidence-based decision making
- Maintaining a transparent, participatory budget process in which resource allocations are clearly linked to strategic priorities
- Enhancing staff training, professional advancement and acknowledgment initiatives
- Initiating a Performance Management Process (PMP) to create clearly-defined job descriptions and performance goals
- Utilizing feedback mechanisms to reinforce a culture of continuous quality improvement in all service areas
- Adding academic advising positions to reduce faculty/administrative responsibilities
- Eliminating inefficiencies in business processes and administrative structures
- Maintaining the annual campus report card of key performance indicators
- Strengthening the relationship between the Harrisburg Public School Foundation and the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School's academic and administrative units
- Managing available fiscal resources while maintaining academic quality and service levels

*Success measures include:*

- Growth in annual operating budget
- Constituent satisfaction indices
- Annual giving totals
- Percentage of capital campaign target met
- Participation in open campus budget processes
- Ranking relative to comparable institutions' funding and staffing

5. The Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School will create a welcoming, environmentally sustainable 21<sup>st</sup>-century urban campus.

*Objective 5.1:* Construct new and renovated classrooms, labs, study areas, offices, academic support facilities, and common spaces necessary to maintain and enhance the learning and teaching environment.

*Objective 5.2:* Enhance the information technology infrastructure to support learning, teaching, student services, and core business functions.

*Objective 5.3:* Increase environmentally-conscious practices in energy consumption, recycling, procurement, transportation and building renovation.

*Objective 5.4:* Enhance campus green space, signage, lighting and other streetscape elements to create a safe, welcoming and defined urban campus.

*Objective 5.5:* Provide parking facilities that meet the needs of families, faculty and staff.

*Strategies include:*

- Developing and implementing a Facilities Use Plan with the input of all stakeholders that supports the core academic mission
- Upgrading faculty and staff office space
- Creating an inventory of adaptable, flexible academic space that can accommodate new learning and teaching styles
- Increasing community and student use of public transportation
- Creating a one-stop shop for student transactional services
- Implementing an energy performance contract to upgrade campus energy efficiency

- Strengthening the campus recycling program
- Managing facility usage to reduce unnecessary energy consumption

*Success measures include:*

- Square footage of new and renovated classroom and instructional-related space
  - Number of students, faculty and staff using public transportation
  - Reduction of energy consumption; progress towards campus climate-neutrality
  - Campus safety indices
  - Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification obtained for new construction and major renovation projects
6. The Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School will foster a diverse, informed and participatory community of students, faculty, and staff as a core institutional strength and value.

*Objective 6.1:* Increase diversity in faculty and professional staff hiring.

*Objective 6.2:* Support the awareness and inclusion of diversity in academic and non-academic programming.

*Objective 6.3:* In collaboration with the Harrisburg School District and the Pennsylvania Department of Education, enhance efforts to close the achievement gap among student populations.

*Objective 6.4:* Enhance campus communication, feedback and assessment mechanisms that contribute to the fulfillment of the Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School mission.

*Strategies include:*

- Broadening the definition of diversity to include a full range of personal and experiential characteristics
- Implementing effective strategies for recruiting a diverse faculty and professional staff
- Supporting diversity education initiatives and partnerships
- Increasing awareness and support of disability services
- Participating in initiatives related to increasing the recruitment, retention and academic success of minority students
- Developing a communication plan that defines the roles and responsibilities of all campus constituents and results in effective, timely campus communication
- Distributing existing survey data and establishing effective new instruments that enhance the campus environment
- Establishing policies and procedures that promote information-sharing and encourage meaningful input among all stakeholders

*Success measures include:*

- Programmatic and recruitment initiatives related to closing the Achievement Gap
- Employee satisfaction indices
- Campus satisfaction indices related to communication

## Educational Program

Archie Redevelopment Strategies, acting as the governing body of the Archie Preparatory Charter School, intends to work in a collaborative capacity through partnerships with the state university system, the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, the Pennsylvania Coalition of Public Charter Schools, the Dropout and Truancy Prevention Network, the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network as well as within its membership with the National Middle School Association, Students First, and national education agencies such as:

## Governance

- National School Boards Association (NSBA)
- Education Commission of the States (ECS)

## Curriculum

- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD)
- American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE)
- National Council for the Social Studies
- National Council of Teachers of English
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics

## Professional Development/Research/Data

- American Education Research Association (AERA)
- National Staff Development Council (NSDC)

Additional partnerships have been explored with Dauphin County Case Management Unit, Dauphin County Children and Youth, the Pennsylvania Association for the Education of Young Children, Keystone Health, the Capital Area Intermediate Unit, and Capital Area Head Start.

### Social and Emotional Learning Communities

The Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School intends to create a Caring School Community which is a well researched program to promote fairness, personal responsibility, kindness, and helpfulness throughout the school community. Daily class meetings will be held in all grades for the purposes of team building, collective decision making, and as a “check-in” with students about their feelings as well as an opportunity to provide feedback on the status of the caring community. The meetings offer a great opportunity to involve students in the thought process of self respect and the treatment of others.

As an aspect of social and emotional learning, the Caring School Community will enhance students’ connection to school, classroom behavior, and academic achievement through effective communication processes as well as cultivate habits around high academic goals, organization, self-discipline, motivation, and management of stress and anxiety.

#### A. Curriculum

Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School recognizes students arrive with a variety of academic talents and abilities; ones that might far exceed the expectation set forth in the grade level guidelines. The system will create opportunities for students to demonstrate their competency of knowledge and skills through partial curriculum integration for third grade and

fourth grade. The system will move to full integration of the curriculum in fifth grade through eighth grade.

Elementary Creative [Integrated] Curriculum (K-4)  
Middle Level Integrated Curriculum (5-8)

An integrated curriculum is a platform of organized learning which draws the core disciplines together, cuts across subject matter lines, and prepares children for life-long learning (Kaskey-Roush, 2008; Benson, 2004). An integrated education exchanges the acquisition of distinct, compartmentalized and differentiated subject matter with an approach to learning that incorporates all core disciplines with an interwoven theme of service learning and creates a process for developing skills and abilities required for academic and vocational success. An integrated curriculum is a holistic means by which the acquisition of knowledge and information reflects the real world in an interactive and participatory manner. Further, Glenn (2001) found that over 80 percent of schools that integrate a service learning component into the school environment report an improvement in grades and standardized exam results (Burns, 1994), significantly reduced the dropout rate (Rumberger, 1995), and fostered a lifelong commitment to civic participation.

Elementary creative and integrated curriculum hybrid (1)  
Integrated curriculum (2-4)

Grounded in the developmental theories of Maslow, Erikson, and Brazelton, certain developmental needs must be met in order to facilitate a robust learning experience.

The Creative Curriculum was developed using research based practice and current brain research (Hirsch, 2010). It is a developmentally appropriate practice that creates purposeful and productive experiences that help children grow in all areas of development. The curriculum is

The major benefit of a creative curriculum is that it excites, invigorates, and inspires early elementary students in regard to learning through the creation of memorable experiences and recognizable societal associations and connections. When presented with learning *choices*, children have the option of studying areas of learning in accordance with their personal interests and abilities within the context of state approval and standards.

#### Middle level curriculum (5-8)

Middle level education faces distinct challenges in today's educational domains due to global competition and the rapid pace of change and innovation coupled with the development of student identity. The Archie Preparatory Academy Charter School intends to extend the school day by one hour and the school year by fifteen days thus resulting in a full year of additional classroom instruction during the middle level years.

Like the developmental focus of the elementary grade integrated curriculum, the middle level integrated curriculum is designed to support students academically, socially and personally during the transition into adolescence where identity development is in its most critical period of flux, transformation, consideration and commitment (French, 2006; Crockett, 2000; Ratcliff, 2002). Research has indicated that effective academic programs for adolescents engages them in