

# INNOVATION SCHOOL APPLICATION



**Swigert International School**

**February 2017**

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See attached Appendices for the Following:

Appendix A: Request Waivers in Curricular Materials & Instructional Design

Appendix C: Request Alternative Graduation and Promotion Policies

Appendix E: Waiver Request Template

### INCLUDED ATTACHMENTS

Teacher / Student Schedule & Calendar

Parent Handbook

Enrollment Documents

Organizational Chart

School Accountability Committee By Laws

Swigert International School  
3480 Syracuse St.  
Denver, CO 80238  
720-424-4800

January 6, 2017

Dear Denver Public School Board Members,

It is my pleasure to submit this letter as a reflection of innovation status for Swigert International School located in the Stapleton neighborhood. This letter serves as a brief reflection on both our successes and our evolution as an educational institution. Swigert International School was conceived by members of the community and designed to focus on building an International Baccalaureate Program in the Stapleton neighborhood. There are currently no other elementary IB programs in this area of the city. This particular program was chosen because the values and practices embraced by the IB Organization are similar to the values of the community the school serves: namely stewardship of our natural world, a belief in the importance of an international mindset and an open mind to new ideas, cultures, belief systems and ways of living in our world, as well as a deep belief in the importance of individual and collective social responsibility and social action to bring about change.

We set out to design and build this program utilizing specific opportunities in our innovation plan to maximize results for students, faculty and our community as a whole. The waivers requested in the initial plan encompassed three major areas: human resources, flexibilities in curriculum and professional development, and the school calendar. As Swigert grew in size, our district shifted its views on innovation and flexibilities making some of the curricular waivers obsolete. Below you will find a brief reflection on the three major areas that Swigert has utilized to achieve success in both student performance and whole child data.

*Human Resources:* Perhaps the most important waiver for us is the waiver to ensure that we have the best teachers working with our students as well as teachers who are committed to our school's vision, mission, instructional and cultural expectations. The ability to end unsuccessful relationships with teachers for whom our school may not be a good fit has allowed our students to receive a continuously high quality instructional environment. Teaching IB is not for everyone – it not only requires teachers to possess a high level of instructional expertise but the ability to integrate multiple content areas in relevant ways as well as develop and design curricular units that make intentional global connections. With annual contracts there is a high level of professionalism on the part of all staff and a commitment to doing the very best for our students every day. This high level of accountability, much like school leaders who serve the district as at-will employees, keeps the professional tone and performance high in all situations at our school.

*Curriculum and Professional Learning:* As you know, the flexibilities for curriculum are no longer an issue for schools. The initial flexibility allowed us, from day one, to choose a variety of resources and curricular tools to best serve our students and our school's mission and vision. However, the professional learning (professional development) waiver is a very important one for our school as well. One of our highest school values is on continuous growth and improvement in our craft as educators. We seek out opportunities around the country to send our staff to highly vetted or reviewed professional learning opportunities. We are able to waive

most district professional learning. This allows all of us to utilize teachers' professional growth time differently. We have found that we are better able to meet and differentiate for our teachers' needs utilizing groups and universities that specialize in specific areas. We have sent our teachers to several conferences hosted by Harvard's Project Zero, Columbia University, The Museum of Natural History in New York City, the Public Education and Business Coalition, Lindamood Bell, Orton-Gillingham, The International Baccalaureate Organization, and The Rocky Mountain branch of the International Dyslexia Association to name a few. This flexibility allows us to utilize teacher's learning time in ways that meet their own individual needs and/or that address areas they are focused on with their students to help deepen and support their professional growth and learning as educators.

*Calendar:* The ability to manage our own calendar has allowed us flexibility in how we schedule district non-student contact days. This has allowed us to minimize impact on families, to determine a school day and calendar that is longer than the traditional day/year in DPS. This waiver also allows us the opportunity to bring our staff back one week earlier to work on the design and development of their International Baccalaureate units in teams.

These three major flexibilities have allowed Swigert to have more autonomy over how it selects, retains and releases staff, develops high-leverage structures to provide powerful learning experiences for adults and children and how we utilize time in a way that maximizes and takes into consideration internal data cycles, our community's child-care needs and our core instructional time.

Our school has been successful in meeting its goals as evidenced by its "meets" rating on the SPF as well as being the #1 choiced elementary school in the Denver Public Schools. Highlights from our SPF include exceeding in the mgp for math and exceeding in catch up growth for literacy, and meeting in catch up growth for math. We also met expectations on the new equity indicator. We are meeting or exceeding in all CMAS median growth percentiles and all CMAS catch up and keep up growth. Swigert is also meeting in all CMAS % Meets/exceeds in literacy, math, and science. We have also maintained our goal of 85% or higher for parent satisfaction across multiple years. Student attendance rate is close to or exceeds 95% monthly. Our Growth report, generated by the Colorado Department of Education, shows that our students who are considered "below benchmark" are growing at an accelerated rate in ELA 71.5% mgp and 72.5% mgp in math.

Our biggest challenge is to continue working to close the opportunity gap. We have made great strides in growing all of our students but we still have a large gap, within the school, of student performance based on FRL or minority status. The urgency of our work to ensure that all students grow at an exceptional rate, while developing a deep intellectual curiosity and a love for learning continues to be the driving force behind all of our school initiatives.

Respectfully,  
Liz TenCate  
Principal  
Swigert International School

## Innovation Renewal Goals:

Type of Assessment	2016-2017 Goal	2017-2018 Goal	2018-2019 Goal	Innovation Plan and Status Alignment: Why the Innovation Plan and Status can be expected to support progress towards this goal
CMAS, CoAlt, K-3 literacy measure (READ Act), local measures	80%	82%	85%	<p>Continuing to develop consistent best instructional practices across the school to support literacy development including a shared definition and implementation of a strong writer's and reader's workshop model. We are also working on a clear vertical skills trajectory for students utilizing Orton Gillingham strategies including Words Their Way and an OG scope and sequence document.</p> <p>Identifying multiple tools and research based interventions that support students with a variety of learning needs and gaps to ensure that we are aligning appropriate interventions to specific needs.</p>
Academic Achievement (Status) – Disaggregated Groups – ELA, Math, Science	80%	80%	80%	<p>Use of ANET and istation, the instructional IB, PYP curriculum that aligns with Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) will prepare students for academic success. Teachers plan reteach of lessons to increase students meeting mastery, and design units of inquiry that engage students in learning to meet CAS and CCSS across the curriculum.</p>
Academic Growth (MGP) – ELA, Math and ACCESS	60%	60%	60%	<p>Teachers meet in data teams weekly to examine student data, plan and execute lessons, interventions and extensions to meet the needs of all students, and support all levels of student learning.</p>

SIS academic performance will be in the high status and high growth quadrant of the DPS SPF and will strive to be “Distinguished” on DPS and state accreditation measures.

- Reading 80% proficient or advanced
- Math 80% proficient or advanced
- Writing 80% proficient or advanced
- Median Growth Percentile of at least 60 in all academic content areas for all students

- ELA students will advance one level of proficiency each year until exited from the program using the state ACCESS assessment.

## INTRODUCTION

I. **Provide your school's name, contact information, the date this application was submitted, and a brief overview of how the plan was developed.**

A. Provide your school's name.

Swigert International School

B. Provide the name of the school leader under innovation status. If different, provide the name of the main contact for this application.

C. Liz TenCate Date application submitted.

June 2011

D. Provide an overview of the innovation school plan development process.

Swigert- International School (SIS) is the third elementary school to be built in the new urban development of Stapleton. In 2009, neighborhood parents and Denver Public Schools held several meetings to determine how to handle the overcrowding occurring at the two existing schools of Westerly Creek Elementary and William Roberts K-8. After countless hours spent by everyone from volunteers to city councilmen, Denver Public Schools announced that it would open a third school in August 2011. It was decided that students interested in attending the new school would be identified and placed in Westerly Creek classrooms for the 2010-2011 school year.

This should include the process for development of the current innovation plan. Describe how the development of the plan was completed.

A steering committee, including community members and Stapleton 3 at Westerly Creek Elementary staff members identified to move to SMIS in the following year, was created to provide guidance and direction to the principal in the development of the new school and innovation plans.

1. Detail who participated on the renewal design team.

Charles Raisch, SMIS Principal  
Stapleton 3 Steering Committee

Community Members  
Traci Gillespie  
Brandon Auster  
Leslie Axvig  
Chris Wellens  
Mike Webb  
Katie Green  
Liz Mooney  
Michelle Boley  
Sonia Anders

Westerly Creek Staff Members Identified for SIS  
Krystie Warlum  
LaVonne Price  
Laura Krenz

Atlanta Waldren  
Leah Vogt  
Andrea Lauder  
Anne Draper  
Nicole West  
Ariana Oppegard  
Emily Selman  
Shannon Evans

Jeanette Cornier, Innovation Consultant

2. Explain specific roles and responsibilities of current design team members.

Charles Raisch, SIS Principal at the time, led the development of the innovation plan. Stapleton 3 Steering Committee members reviewed the plan for consistency with community input. Jeanette Cornier, Innovation Consultant, facilitated the completion of the innovation application based on the specifications of the SIS administration and steering committee.

3. Provide a summary of how teachers, staff, administrators, the SAC and any parent bodies participated in the development and approval of the current plan.

This is applicable – how was staff input gathered in developing the new plan?. The school principal conducted extensive outreach, as outlined above, and included teachers, parents, and community members in the steering committee that has advised on the new school and innovation plan.

## INNOVATION: VISION & MISSION

### II. Describe the vision and mission statement of the school and how innovation status will help the school achieve its mission.

- A. State the vision of the school.

Swigert International School strives to create innovative, intellectually curious students who share a sense of stewardship for creating a better and more peaceful world.

- B. State the mission of the school.

1. Identify the school's target student population and community to be served.
2. Articulate clear guiding purposes and priorities which are meaningful, measurable and attainable.
3. Provide the entire school community as well as external stakeholders a clear, memorable picture of what the school aims to achieve.

In order to achieve this vision, SIS will develop knowledgeable, inquisitive, and compassionate students.

**Knowledgeable** – Swigert International School provides a challenging and engaging intellectual program to ensure that each child reaches his or her full potential.

**Inquisitive** – Through highly effective instructional practices, and including the use of technology, the environment and community resources, Swigert inspires creativity, curiosity and critical thinking.

**Compassionate** – Swigert develops respectful students who care for themselves, their communities and the world around them.



SIS will serve the broader Stapleton community including students in high-income, low-minority areas and students in high-poverty, high-minority areas. The anticipated composition of the school is as follows: 20% African American, 8% Hispanic, 12% Asian, 2% Native American, 58% White, 30% eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch, and 10% English language learners.

C. Explain how the vision and mission support the mission of Denver Public Schools.

The Denver Public Schools mission is to provide all students the opportunity to achieve the knowledge and skills necessary to become contributing citizens in our society.

By providing the Stapleton neighborhood and the greater DPS community a high-performing, school program that develops knowledgeable, inquisitive, and compassionate students, SIS will significantly expand the number of DPS students' who will become contributing citizens in our society.

Innovation status will help SIS achieve its vision of developing knowledgeable, inquisitive and compassionate students.

Knowledgeable students - Innovation status allows us some freedom to develop a unique curriculum, guided by the Common Core State Standards as well as Colorado Academic Standards, under the umbrella of the International Baccalaureate's philosophy and design principles. Additionally, waivers are required to hire, develop, and assign IB knowledgeable teachers committed to the inquiry-based learning approach and to raise and allocate funds in a manner that is aligned to the school's instructional priorities.

Inquisitive students- Innovation status will enable us to explore and adopt curriculum that helps develop our student's critical thinking skills, ignite their curiosity about the world around them and provide hands-on opportunities to problem solve issues that have relevance in the world today.

Compassionate students – Innovation status will enable us to hire and develop staff devoted to the social action component of IB as well as provide freedom in how we develop a positive school culture where students and staff model expectations and positive behaviors. The IB learner profile grounds the school's culture in a common language allowing emphasis on character development and student contributions to the well-being of classmates, communities and the environment. Waivers are required to reallocate teacher and student time so that opportunities for collaboration and deeper inquiry are provided. Teachers have 15 additional minutes of planning daily, extending our school day by 15 minutes. We also require our classroom teachers to return to work earlier than DPS teachers, working half days for the week (8-12) prior to the DPS return date. During this time teachers are evaluating and working on their IB unit planners. The daily schedule will support instructional requirements of the program and respond to the needs of the community.

Parental involvement – Innovation status will allow us to better respond to the needs of our community. As a result, we will be better positioned to attract a more involved parent base, which is critical to achieving our mission. In addition, the school calendar must be flexible to provide the time that is required for ongoing assessments, teacher collaboration and student assessment as well as communication with parents, all of which is critical to maximizing student performance.

International Mindedness– Innovation status will enable us to purchase materials and train and support teachers in order to implement the International Baccalaureate program with fidelity, thereby allowing us to develop a school that is culturally responsive and embraces diversity. Our innovation status will enable us to actively recruit a diverse student population from Stapleton and surrounding areas, while promoting global-mindedness in the classroom

Responsive School-Based Decision Making – To ensure the school is responsive to and supports staff, students and their families, a greater level of decision-making flexibility is required. Innovation status

will allow for greater school-based decision making and will facilitate a culture of high expectations and accountability.

- D. Identify specific barriers and/or school needs that impact student achievement. Explain how innovation status will help the school overcome the barriers and/or address the needs in order to achieve the mission.

Our school has faced several challenges due to the rapid growth in the neighborhood. At one point we were asked to expand our kindergarten classrooms from three to six to accommodate an enormous bubble class in the neighborhood of students needing Kindergarten seats. This huge bubble has needed to be carried through the school. The instructional implications of tremendous growth and then the process of shrinking back has had an impact on our school. In the current school year (2016-2017) we have 5 rounds of 5<sup>th</sup> grade, 5 rounds of 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 4 rounds of third grade, four rounds of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, and have stabilized to 3 rounds K-2. Our current demographics show the percentage of FRL students is 6.5% our ELL population is 3.2% our special education population is 5.7% our students of color are 22.9%.

We have also had to cut two full ECE classrooms to accommodate the growing middle school we share space with. Unfortunately, no innovation status can help with this situation. In an IB model, there is a tremendous amount of work that goes into developing IB curriculum. Teachers receive extensive training and come to the work with the mindset of curriculum developers. Adding teachers each year and then having to reduce the numbers of teachers has had an impact in the consistency of instruction and methodology of IB. Sharing a campus is also a challenge, where space is incredibly limited for an elementary school that was expanded, exponentially, to meet the neighborhood demand for seats.

- E. Explain how you will leverage innovation status to improve school culture and achieve the vision and mission.

We strongly believe that Innovation Status has enabled us to establish a learning community that best addresses the community's need for programmatic options. Our flexibility to choose curriculum to support an International Baccalaureate Program in the best possible way, has allowed us to serve our students well and become one of the most in-demand programs in the city. Our program offers an inquiry based instructional program that not only develops students' academic potential but also cultivates a sense of social responsibility and action to make the world a better place. SIS will maximize full autonomy over budget, staffing, schedule, program and curriculum to remove the barriers and restrictions that inhibit a school's ability to operate under more flexible guidelines in order to create a culture of lifelong learning and responsible action.

The culture of high expectations, compassion, inquiry, and innovation will extend to staff as well as students. Staff will participate in on-going professional development in the IB philosophy and instructional approach, will work collaboratively, and participate in ongoing observation, coaching and feedback cycles. Teachers will facilitate parent-student-teacher conferences with every student three times a year to discuss student academic progress and other developmental areas. Annual contacts allow for a high level of expectation as well as accountability to our school mission and vision.

Our flexibility with our calendar also allow us to align our professional learning days to weekends or holidays to help families in our community coordinate a childcare situation or a family experience together more easily than the traditional DPS calendar.

The ability to opt out of the (some) district training has allowed us to choose trainings that best align to our school's mission and vision and instructional model. It has also allowed us to differentiate for staff learning experiences that continue to cultivate the faculty's skills in multiple areas including brain research, Jr. Great Books, Inquiry learning, Developing International Mindedness, Reader's and Writer's workshop, Use of museums and artifacts in learning, The role of the arts in learning, etc. etc.

SIS will incorporate opportunities for character development with a focus on the following IB attitudes and attributes: Attitudes: Appreciation, Commitment, Confidence, Cooperation, Creativity, Curiosity, Empathy, Enthusiasm, Independence, Integrity, Respect and Tolerance. Attributes: Thinker, Reflective, Risk-Taker, Knowledgeable, Inquirer, Caring, Open-Minded, Principled, Communicators, and Balanced. Character education will be directly taught by all staff, highlighted and celebrated at monthly grade meetings.

## INNOVATION: EDUCATION PROGRAM

### III. Describe the research-based educational program the school will implement and how the program will produce gains in academic achievement.

A. Provide an overview of the school's research-based education program.

#### **International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program**

The IB program is research-based and proven effective in schools across the nation and the globe. In an international study, IB PYP students outperformed their non-IB peers on the International Schools' Assessment in the majority of grade levels<sup>1</sup>. The PYP model is dependent on the commitment to a constructivist, inquiry-based approach to learning. Generally speaking, constructivists, including Vygotsky, Piaget, and Dewey define learning as the creation of meaning that occurs when an individual links new knowledge existing knowledge. Theorists Bruner and Gardner state the focus of teaching curricular content needs to enable teachers to make connections between learners' existing knowledge and their individual learning styles in the context of new experiences. This is addressed in the PYP by providing opportunities for students to build meaning and refine understanding, principally through structured inquiry. An external evaluation of IB programs in Texas found that in addition to students making similar achievement gains, increases were found in teacher collaboration, authentic assessment, student motivation, critical thinking skills, and student global and cultural awareness<sup>2</sup>. The educational program is updated and supported by the International Baccalaureate Organization and aligns well with the SIS mission of developing students who are knowledgeable, inquisitive, and compassionate. The Primary Years Program (PYP) recognizes that it is important for students to develop content specific knowledge by making connections to big ideas and concepts that are relevant throughout the disciplines. Students will be taught using a Program of Inquiry which includes concepts, knowledge, skills, attitudes, and action. PYP includes the themes: *Who We Are*, *Where we are in Place and Time*, *How we Express Ourselves*, *How the World Works*, *How we Organize Ourselves*, and *Sharing the Planet* each year. Each grade level addresses these themes through reading, writing, science, math, art, social studies, and world language instruction. Case studies of PYP in Georgia identified the following successful strategies that will be implemented at SIS: whole-school immersion, collaborative planning, continuous training, resources allocated to the program, and community and leadership involvement<sup>3</sup>. All SIS staff, including the principal, consistently participate in ongoing professional development in the IB PYP to gain new skills that allow successful implementation of our IB program. All staff have completed, at the minimum, the category 1 PYP training, over half have completed category 2 trainings and several have also engaged in category 3 trainings. Teachers in grades K-2 also complete a week long, intensive Orton Gillingham training as well as multiple other trainings in Reader's and Writer's Workshop, Brain Research, Reading etc. hosted by Project Zero, Columbia University, the PEBC among others. In addition, teachers will participate in 6 additional days of professional development in the IB PYP over the course of the school year and weekly data team (60 min) and unit development meetings (60 min).

<sup>1</sup> Australian Council for Educational Research. (2010). PYP and MYP Student Performance on the International Schools' Assessment (ISA).

<sup>2</sup> State of Texas Education Research Center. (2010). Evaluation of IB Programmes in Texas Schools. Texas A&M University.

<sup>3</sup> Education Policy and Evaluation Center. (2009). The Primary Years Programme Field Study. University of Georgia, IB Research Dept.

The design of six comprehensive, standards-based inquiry units is part of the curriculum development for the PYP. Teachers, with the support and facilitation from the IB Coordinator, develop their own six inquiry based units of study at each grade level. For this reason, we are using DPS curriculum as a resource, but not as the only curriculum option.

*Process:* IB units of study are developed and refined using the CCSS and the Colorado Academic Standards. In the past six years, the foundational IB units have been developed. At this point, we are refining, evolving and reflecting on each unit as it is taught to ensure that units meet or exceed all standards, make global connections for students, and are engaging and relevant for students. Grade level teams meet for one hour every week with the IB Coordinator. This process is ongoing for the life of the school. The IB coordinator will have extensive experience in curriculum design and development, preferably with a MA in Curriculum and Instruction. The coordinator guides the grade level teams through the IB themes, the CCSS, the assessments, the learning experiences and the reflection component to develop each of the six units. The Process is led by the coordinator who serves as a pedagogical leader in the school and all teachers actively participate. The standards guide the process which is very similar to a Backwards Design model. Every unit includes summative as well as formative assessments that are designed to evaluate student progress towards mastery of the standards taught in the unit. *Tools:* The tools the school uses are the CCSS, the CAS, multiple online resources, the OCC (the online Curriculum Center for the International Baccalaureate) and the IB program standards. We utilize a backwards design template that the IB requires to design all of our units. This template has a heading that requires us to name the specific standards we will be teaching in each unit as well as the Colorado Academic Standards in Science or Social Studies that will be taught in the unit. Teachers design a yearlong scope and sequence document that aligns the units to CCSS, CAS across the year. This scope also includes the required components of the IB program (learner profile, transdisciplinary skills, key concepts, provocation, essential questions) *Criteria:* To evaluate the quality of curriculum developed and its alignment to CCSS/CAS we will closely monitor teacher created assessments, district benchmark assessments- A Net, PARCC, student writing samples, istation data, reading records, as well as any other relevant data points to evaluate the effectiveness of our curriculum in increasing student achievement.

*Professional Development:* Teachers will have ongoing professional development related to both curriculum development as well as instructional practices including book studies, lab classroom experiences and IB conferences. We are also part of the TLC model for the district and have received funding to implement an observation, coaching feedback model that ensures teachers receive ongoing feedback on their instructional practice as well as guidance and support in lesson planning and implementation.

*Progress monitoring (see above Criteria section). We will adjust the process based on student data from multiple measures as described above.*

*See attached scope and sequence document.*

- B. Provide an overview of the instructional philosophy and approach. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

### **IB Program of Inquiry**

The goal of the IB Primary Years Program is to have students taught in a way that develops content knowledge and skills (e.g. reading, math, science, technology) as well as trans-disciplinary skills (e.g. thinking skills, communication skills, research skills, self-management skills, and social skills).

Through the IB PYP, SIS students will reach high levels of achievement and growth in academic areas as well as demonstrate appreciation, commitment, confidence, cooperation, creativity, curiosity, empathy, enthusiasm, independence, integrity, respect, and tolerance.

Within the PYP, students are taught through an inquiry and concept based approach that helps them develop both content specific skills and attitudes to enable them to be successful with people from all backgrounds. The program encourages students to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who can understand and appreciate people from different backgrounds, with different experiences, from different parts of the community or the world.

As a part of the IB Primary Years Program, the school intentionally deepens the scope of the Denver Public Schools curriculum through the development of a comprehensive, site based Program of Inquiry. The Program of Inquiry becomes the curriculum framework of the PYP School.

### **Education Program Innovations**

SIS will implement a unique Program of Inquiry scope and sequence based on the Common Core State Standards as well as the Colorado P-12 Academic Standards for Science and Social Studies and the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program. Implementing the IB instructional approach requires waivers related to hiring, developing, and assigning well-trained and qualified teachers as well as waivers related to teacher and student scheduling to maximize collaboration and inquiry time.

- C. Summarize the school's culture and learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study, etc.). What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

SIS will provide an inquiry-based collaborative learning environment for students and staff. The culture at SIS will focus on challenging academics, thoughtful questioning, and character development. Students will engage in interdisciplinary studies and will be active participants in developing their educational path.

Implementing this collaborative culture and learning environment will require innovations in teacher and student scheduling to maximize collaboration and inquiry time.

- D. Describe class size and structure. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

SIS teachers will teach all core subjects to their students allowing them to integrate concepts and to infuse trans-disciplinary skills and attitudes across all areas of the curriculum. The classroom will be organized to encourage a thematic approach that blends concepts from all disciplines. Thematic units will be developed collaboratively by teacher teams and delivered by the classroom teacher. Students will have opportunities to learn about concepts in depth, to engage in collaborative learning teams, and to develop creative representation of knowledge and skill. Through these thematic units, SIS will also develop social action projects, tied to their studies, which help develop students' understanding of their own power to make the world a better place.

The optimal class size for SIS teachers to deliver the IB Program of Inquiry is no more than 25 students in a class. SIS leadership will work with the District and the other Stapleton elementary schools to distribute neighborhood students and keep class sizes small to the greatest extent possible. Due to the growth in the neighborhood, the Office of Choice and Enrollment manages Stapleton schools' enrollment. This office ultimately determining our class size in relation to the other Stapleton schools' class size to keep these numbers equitably distributed across the schools in the Stapleton boundary.

Innovation status will allow us to define a schedule that will allow teachers time to plan and conduct interdisciplinary units

- E. Describe how the program will serve English language learners. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

All teachers at SIS will be ELA-E qualified per the District standards. Teachers will have access to materials and resources that will be necessary to provide differentiated instruction to support the

learning and achievement of English language learners. If direct ELA instruction is required, SIS will work with the district to allocate funding for a part time ELA resource teacher.

- F. Describe how the program will serve special education students. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

All teachers at SIS will differentiate instruction and provide appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure access to and progress in the curriculum. Special education teachers will provide interventions to students with disabilities based on individualized education plans.

SIS will hire, train, supervise, evaluate, and assign all staff, excluding our Speech Language Pathologist and our nurse who are assigned by the district.

- G. Explain any academic services or programs that are supplemental to that which is included in DPS's core curriculum. What innovations, if any, will the school implement?

SIS will train all K-2 teachers in a comprehensive phonics approach using the Orton Gillingham scope and sequence to provide a strong foundation in our early year's program of phonics and phonemic awareness.

SIS was authorized in September of 2015. As an authorized International Baccalaureate school, we have met the standards and practices outlined in the IBO. These include developing six inquiry based units at grades ECE-5 that support concept based learning. The planning and development for these units follows the Backwards Design model, and is a rigorous process grade level teams engage in throughout the year.

- H. Explain how the school will use innovation status to improve the education program to produce gains in academic achievement.

SIS will use innovation status to implement a research-proven educational approach that appeals to the new and growing student population in the Stapleton and greater DPS choice communities and has been shown to produce gains in academic achievement. As a part of the IB Primary Years Program, SIS will intentionally deepen the scope of the Denver Public Schools curriculum through the development of a comprehensive, site based Program of Inquiry. The Program of Inquiry becomes the curriculum. Innovation status will allow SIS to hire and train teachers who are skilled IB teachers and are committed to the mission, vision, and culture of the school.

- I. **If you are requesting waivers to DPS core curriculum materials please complete Appendix A. (See attached)**

## INNOVATION: ASSESSMENTS

- IV. **Describe the school's assessment plan and how it is critical for the school to produce gains in academic achievement.**

SIS will implement all DPS required assessments. We are utilizing the district's A-Net assessments, iStation assessments and Bridges math beginning and end of unit assessments.

In the beginning of the year, all students will be assessed in reading and math and data will be used to plan for instruction. These assessments will be administered again at the end of the year to measure student growth in the curriculum. In addition, SIS will systematically implement formative assessments within lessons that are aligned to the IB Program of Inquiry. Students will be monitored weekly for progress toward learning objectives and teachers will make adjustments to instruction based on student

data. Each student will have an individual plan for instruction to ensure that they are progressing within the curriculum and mastering essential knowledge and skills.

Teachers will meet weekly to review their own class data, as well as to discuss and define grade level expectations, discuss appropriate interventions, goals, strategies and enrichments to continue to grow our students' academic achievement.

In subsequent years, the Leadership team will review our assessment plan to determine if additional assessments are required or if modifications are required.

- A. Provide an overview of the school's proposed assessment plan. Describe any assessments that will supplement assessments required by DPS and the state.

SIS is committed to using data to drive instruction. In measuring student progress toward meeting goals, SIS will implement all DPS required academic assessments such as A Net tests, istation, DRA scores, math assessments, and writing rubrics. Additional assessments will include observation, conferencing, formative assessments developed by teachers, student developed rubrics, self-assessment, and student led conferences. The core values will be assessed using class discussions, conversations, character building activities, school assemblies, and celebrations of students.

- B. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole throughout the school year and at the end of each academic year.

SIS will use a continuous assessment model. In addition to annual state assessments and interim district assessments, students will be monitored weekly for progress and adjustments will be made based on data. Each student will be in essence individually guided through their instruction, moving forward to mastery of the skills identified within the instruction.

The staff will be organized in grade level collaborative groups to examine and monitor the students' progress related to the planned instruction. Teachers will meet in data teams to identify needs, propose solutions, and to design lessons to maximize the learning of each student in the class. Remediation activities and specific intervention needs will be identified and a plan of action will be implemented to ensure that every student demonstrates growth of at least one year for students at or above grade level and more than one year for students below grade level. Our current performance shows growth percentiles well over 50% (one year's growth) for all students. SIS is committed to using assessment to drive instruction to enable all students to succeed. Currently our growth percentiles for all students exceed the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile.

## INNOVATION: GRADUATION AND PROMOTION

**v. Describe the school's proposed graduation and promotion policies.**

- A. Explain policies and standards for promoting students from one grade to the next.

SIS is requesting a waiver from the District's Graduation and Promotion policies, as described in Appendix C.

Discussions about retention should begin in January with consistent progress monitoring throughout the rest of the year. Before a student can be retained, he/she must go through the MTSS process to ensure that appropriate interventions have been used to support the student either academically,

social/emotionally or both. Final decisions for retention will be made in early May based on a body of evidence including istation, reading records, DRA scores, end of unit math assessments, student writing samples, standards based report card as well as Light’s Retention Scale and a full body of evidence. Parents will be advised in early January if there are concerns about a student’s academic/social emotional concerns. Parents will meet with the interventionist, the school psychologist and the principal to discuss the retention, examining the body of evidence every 8 weeks after the initial suggestion of retention. Ultimately the decision to retain or accelerate will remain with the school principal and his/her academic team.

The timeline for accelerations is very dependent on individual cases and is only recommended in cases where there is evidence that student need is so advanced that an acceleration is the only way to accommodate the intellectual growth of the child.

The SIS promotion, retention, and acceleration policies will ensure that students are prepared academically and emotionally to be successful in subsequent years of school and graduate ready for college and the workforce.

See attached SMIS promotion, retention and acceleration policies.

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT GOALS AND GAINS

### VI. Describe the goals and specific gains in academic achievement the school will commit to as a result of securing innovation status.

- A. Outline the clear and measurable annual achievement goals the school commits to through innovation status in order to meet or exceed District expectations for the School Performance Framework indicators.
1. Complete the Academic Goals Worksheet in **Appendix D**.

SIS academic performance will be in the high status and high growth quadrant of the DPS SPF and will strive to be “Distinguished” on DPS and state accreditation measures.

- Reading 90% proficient or advanced
- Math 90% proficient or advanced
- Writing 80% proficient or advanced
- Median Growth Percentile of at least 60 in all academic content areas for all students
- ELA students will advance one level of proficiency each year until exited from the program using the state ACCESS assessment.

SEE APPENDIX D Academic Goals Worksheet

- B. Describe how the school will engage in continuous quality improvement in order to meet or exceed these achievement goals. What innovations, if any, in continuous quality improvement will the school implement?

SIS will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the education program and engage in continuous quality improvement in order to meet achievement goals. As part of the IB program requirements, SIS will develop policies, procedures and assessments to gauge the progress of each individual student and to monitor the implementation of the curriculum. Additionally, SIS will use rubrics in writing to monitor the progress students make related to the state standards. Math pre and post-tests along with benchmark assessments in grades 2 and up, and reading records in grades K-3 to provide real time feedback to the teacher.



The istation program will also be used to monitor student progress in reading. SIS will use a continuous assessment model to continuously gauge and measure students on the objectives of the units of study. The staff will meet in data teams weekly to analyze student progress, identify problems, and establish remediation actions or adjustments to instruction to ensure that all students are making necessary achievement gains.

- C. Attach the school's Uniform School Improvement Plan (UIP) and briefly explain how the proposed innovation plan aligns with UIP goals.

Our innovation goals align with the UIP as outlined in our description of professional development of staff, data team work to examine student progress and modify instruction, intervention and GT support, as well as the IB unit development process to challenge and engage our students to meet the high standards and expectations in academic performance.

## INNOVATION: TIME

### VII. Describe how the school will use time strategically to support the vision, mission and education program so as to produce gains in academic achievement.

- A. Describe any innovations to the school's calendar and schedule under innovation status and how such changes will lead to increased student achievement.

The SIS school calendar and schedule will meet or exceed the DPS student and teacher contact time.

#### **Student Schedule and Calendar**

The SIS student schedule will include 7 hours per day of student contact, 15 minutes more per day than other neighborhood schools, allowing for additional time for student collaboration and the addition of program content such as Spanish instruction as well as providing a longer planning period for teachers than other DPS schools.

Due to the DPS transportation schedule, the SIS student day will begin at 8:30am and end at 3:30pm. The SIS student calendar has been modified based on the need for teachers to have more time to continue to deepen their IB curriculum as well as align it with CCSS and CAS. Working together with the School Accountability Committee (SAC) and the community, we have added for three additional non-student contact days in the year. These days are devoted to continuous IB learning, data analysis and instructional strategy work. The SAC will establish the calendar each April to submit to the district. The longer school day is equivalent to six extra days each year. The addition of the non-contact days means that our school year is three days longer than other traditional DPS schools.

#### **Teacher Schedule and Calendar**

SIS teachers return for five half days (8:00-12:00) one week before other DPS teachers report back to their schools. Teachers are compensated through a \$500 stipend for this half week. This allows us additional time to work on our IB units and look at a vertical trajectory of CCSS and IB standards. In addition, SIS teachers are required to participate in three parent-teacher-student conferences with each family, outside of the student contact day during our two evening conference window. This is compensated through one vacation day that is built into the calendar. The SIS teacher calendar may be changed based on school and community needs. The calendar will be developed yearly, by April 20<sup>th</sup>, by the School Accountability Committee with recommendations from the staff, to meet the professional development needs of the school.

Use of student time within the day will be redesigned to increase inquiry based learning and collaboration. Teacher planning time will be structured for student data analysis, collaborative planning, and professional development. Teachers will participate in weekly data team (60 min) and IB unit development (60 min) meetings each week.

1. Attach the school's proposed calendar and daily schedule of classes under innovation status. Include both a teacher and student schedule.

(See attachment)

2. Summarize the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times.

The SIS student day will be 7 hours (420 minutes), beginning at 8:30am and ending at 3:30pm. Teachers' student contact time is 15 minutes longer than other traditional schools. Teachers work hours are from 8-4.

3. Summarize the total number of hours and days of instruction for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Explain how the calendar will support the success of the innovation program.

Daily Minutes of Instruction in Core Subjects as well as lunch and specials:

140 minutes for language arts  
85 minutes for mathematics  
60 minutes for science/social studies  
30 minutes for skills  
60 minutes for specials  
45 minutes for lunch

4. Summarize the total number of hours and days allocated for tiered interventions, enrichment, tutoring and other non-academic activities.

30 minutes daily reading intervention  
60 minutes of specials / enrichment (art, music, Spanish, technology)  
20 minutes of recess / physical activity  
25 minutes of lunch  
60 minutes of Explorations on Fridays (students choose an elective for a four-week period)

## INNOVATION: STUDENT ENROLLMENT

### VIII. Describe the enrollment procedures and practices of the school with innovation status.

- A. Describe how enrollment practices will provide equal access to any student in your attendance boundary who is interested in attending the school, including students in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure.

As a neighborhood school, students in the attendance area will have equal access to enroll in the school, including students in poverty, academically low-achieving students, students with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure.

SIS will follow board policy on enrollment priorities with the exception that priority number two (teacher's children) is not limited to staff who live in the Stapleton boundary, we include all of our staff in this priority.

## CHOICE AND ENROLLMENT PRIORITIES

### **ECE Priorities**

1. Students who reside in the enrollment zone with a currently-attending sibling who will return to the school next year
2. Students who reside in the enrollment zone and are currently attending the school's ECE program
3. Students who reside in the school's proximity zone (25% of open seats)
4. Students who reside in the enrollment zone (including proximity zone)
5. Children of full-time employees at the school
6. District resident students with a currently-attending sibling who will return to the school next year
7. District resident students who are currently attending the school's ECE program
8. All other District resident students
9. Non-District resident students who are currently attending the school's ECE program **or** have a currently-attending sibling who will return to the school next year
10. All other non-District resident students

### **Applicants for Kindergarten are prioritized in the following way:**

1. Children of the school's founding or board members, if applicable, or full-time employees of the school
2. Students who reside in the enrollment zone with a currently-attending sibling who will return to the school next year
3. Students who reside in the enrollment zone and are currently attending the school's ECE-4 program
4. Students who reside in the school's proximity zone (25% of open seats)
5. Students who reside in the enrollment zone (including proximity zone)
6. District resident students with a currently-attending sibling who will return to the school next year

- B. Please attach any written enrollment documents, including the Student Handbook, and/or forms that will be provided to or required of students and families.

See attached

## INNOVATION: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**IX. Describe the proposed plan for staffing, recruiting, selecting, and developing employees, the school's personnel policies, and the school's leadership structure. Explain how they will be changed by innovation status, and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.**

- A. Describe any innovations in the school's personnel policies under innovation status and how these changes will produce gains in academic achievement.
1. Attached a copy of the school's personnel policies under innovation status.

To meet the needs of all students and to achieve the academic performance goals outlined in Section XI and in **Appendix D**, the school requires maximum flexibility to design and implement human resource policies and procedures that align with the vision, mission and education plan of the school.

The school is committed to hiring outstanding individuals who understand and are prepared to meet the demands of creating a school that produces significant gains in academic achievement for all students.

### Employment Status

Annual contracts will be provided to teachers employed at SIS. SIS and DPS will have the right to end the work relationship at any time for cause and at the expiration of an annual contract for any lawful reason (with or without cause). Teacher employment will not be subject to the Teacher Employment Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990, § 22-63-101, *et seq.*

Annual contracts will be renewed for teachers based on the following criteria by May 1 of each year:

Demonstrated investment and active participation in:

- Collaborative IB planning
- Utilizing student data weekly to plan for instruction
- Data teams
- Professional learning time
- Coaching model
- Implementation of school initiatives and expected shared practices
- Developing a positive school culture with students, colleagues, school leadership and the community
- Problem solving

As well as an instructional philosophy and approach with children and colleagues that:

- Aligns to the school's vision and mission
- Demonstrates professionalism with colleagues, parents and students

Teachers who obtained non-probationary status in the Denver Public Schools prior to their employment at the Innovation School will be subject to the terms and conditions of employment as described in the Innovation Plan. The teachers' prior non-probationary status is not associated with any additional rights while they are employed at the Innovation School. If the teacher is dismissed, reduced, or displaced from Swigert, he/she will not be entitled to a limited term assignment or any further employment with the District. However, the teacher can participate in the DPS staffing cycles and seek a position at any other DPS school. If the teacher accepts a mutual consent position at a non-innovation DPS school, the teacher's probationary or non-probationary status will be governed by the District's guidelines at that time. The District's guidelines are described in an FAQ on Probationary and Non-Probationary Status on the DPS Employee Associations website (under DCTA). Teachers employed by DPS who obtain non-probationary status in DPS prior to their employment at Swigert will work under the terms reflected in the annual contract.

For staff expectations see attached:

Swigert International School Teacher Profile			
Who are we?		What does this look like in a classroom? What does this look like off stage?	Support available
MINDSET	➤ I strive to be a collaborative, self-reflective and responsive practitioner	Inquirer: actively engage in learning; self-motivated to pursue professional learning Risk-taker: willing to take risks and learn from failure and success Open-minded: listen to all ideas respectfully; flexible and responsive	Differentiated coaching (PDUs, Book study, Learning labs)  Instructional feedback and coaching  Funding for professional learning opportunities

		<p>to IB planning, data, and students' needs.</p> <p>Communicator: honestly engage in respectful dialogue; committing to difficult conversations; listening</p> <p>Knowledgeable: understands student learning trajectories when planning units; constructivist, inquiry approach; understands the big picture concepts behind a unit</p>	aligned to school goals/mission/vision
PLANNING, INSTRUCTION and IMPLEMENTATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ I can develop and create highly engaging units, lessons, and assessments grounded in data that aligns to the six IB transdisciplinary themes.</li> <li>➤ I can use instructional tools, practices, resources, and our community to support students to inspire creativity, curiosity and critical thinking.</li> <li>➤ I can reflect on and analyze multiple data points and information sources to respond to the needs of individual learners.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Actively engage in data driven planning</li> <li>- Create units that are multi-disciplinary</li> <li>- Utilize inquiry based teaching strategies</li> <li>- Authentically embed math and literacy into learning experiences</li> <li>- Develop formative and summative assessments that build towards a culminating project with reflection</li> <li>- Showcase one learning per year per grade level</li> <li>- Incorporate relevant field work</li> <li>- Implement core instructional practice</li> <li>- Facilitate one student generated social action project reflective of a unit</li> <li>- Utilize resources in the building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Utilize feedback from colleagues and coaches to ultimately improve student achievement</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Facilitated weekly IB meetings</p> <p>Professional Development</p> <p>Support from GT coordinator</p> <p>Support from intervention/Special Education</p> <p>Resources</p> <p>Learning Labs</p> <p>Coaching</p>
<p>*Understands that part of the work of planning for a unit includes planning for high levels of engagement, ongoing use of student data to plan, an inquiry-based approach, making connections with community members and organizations to create authentic learning experiences outside of the classroom, creating relevant field work experiences, incorporating social action, meeting the needs of all learners, reflecting on all learning experiences and using that reflection to shape future plans.</p>			

## Remediation Plans

If a teacher is not meeting performance expectations, the school leader may choose to place the teacher on a Plan of Improvement. The Plan of Improvement will be written and will follow the processes outlined in the employee handbook.

1. Teacher will meet with an administrator to hear concerns (performance, professionalism, other)
  2. Administrator will outline expectations going forward and provide a document with these expectations in writing.
  3. Teacher will have 30 days to remediate the issue
  4. Teacher and administrator will meet after the 30 days to discuss progress. At this time the administrator may choose the end the annual contract or to extend the plan of improvement beyond 30 days.
- B. Describe any innovations in the school's staffing plan under innovation status and how these changes will produce gains in academic achievement.
1. Attach a copy of the school's organizational chart with innovation status.
    - a. Highlight any changes in the organizational structure with innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

The SIS principal will have the autonomy and accountability outlined in the Innovation Plan and will report to an Instructional Superintendent. SIS will have a School Accountability Committee that will provide input into leadership decisions. The school will not have a Collaborative School Committee. The IB Facilitator will conduct observations and provide feedback on instruction to the teaching staff.

(See attached organizational chart)

2. Describe all non-teaching staff positions and how they will contribute to achieving the school's goals.

The principal at SIS, in consultation with the School Leadership Team, will prepare job descriptions for all staff assignments at the school. The principal may use standard DPS job descriptions, but is in no way limited to them.

### **Director of Operations**

In order to assure that administrators, focus their time on instructional leadership, Swigert will create a Director of Operations position that oversees the logistics and day to day management of some staff including Para professionals as well as management of the facility including the cafeteria, transportation, technology etc. In order to allow the administration maximum time in classrooms providing feedback to teachers, the Director of Operations will handle operational issues that occur as well as anticipate potential system breakdowns and proactively design more efficient, effective ways to handle school wide systems.

### **Para Professionals**

The primary role of paraprofessionals in the ECE and kindergarten classrooms is to support the education of our students. Paraprofessionals, under the guidance of the teacher, will support student instruction through delivery of the PYP program. The individualized nature of the instructional program requires additional support to address the variances in each learner's needs. The paraprofessionals also provide needed supervision of students during lunch, before school, after school, and during recess. Preparation of materials, copying, distribution of materials and management of the various needs of the teachers and students are other responsibilities of paraprofessionals. This support enables students to receive on target instruction to increase learning.

**The library paraprofessional** prepares and organizes media materials to promote independent reading and building the habit of reading. Efficient and effective materials in a media center advance the utility of the materials and increase the use by the students in pursuit of acquiring knowledge. This work supplies students with not only reading materials, but fosters the search for answers to questions pursued by the students as they implement the attributes of the program of inquiry.

**The secretary and nurse** office paraprofessional are responsible for recordkeeping, attendance monitoring, and communication with the public, among other tasks assigned by the principal. Additionally, the secretary supports the principal directly and prepares and monitors the funds, ordering and receiving of materials, personnel tracking, leaves, absences, reception, and direct student support as necessary. The secretary manages the data base system for all records of the school.

### **IB Coordinator:**

The IB Coordinator acts as a pedagogical leader of the program in the school. The facilitator has a pivotal role to ensure that the standards for implementation are understood, and that the program is planned, taught and assessed collaboratively. Together with the leadership team the facilitator is responsible for the development of the program. The facilitator works directly with the teaching team and is involved in the planning and training of the staff.

- C. Describe any innovations in the school's process for identifying, recruiting, and selecting new staff under innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.
  1. Explain the strategies and processes to identify and recruit faculty, support staff and administrative staff.

Due to the challenging enrollment situation for the next several years at SIS, we will utilize process, where we identify the consideration group affected by the enrollment bubbles. The staff in the consideration group will re-interview for their positions and will be evaluated on their performance, alignment to the vision and mission, professionalism, attitude and service to children.

To recruit and train staff, we will:

- Develop job descriptions aligned to the IB program implementation standards and practice.
  - For existing employees, assess prior year's performance against their job descriptions and goals.
  - Secure support of staff to the requirements established by the Innovation Plan.
  - Use the IB website to recruit staff from a broader pool.
  - Use all DPS website, job announcement, and job fair opportunities.
  - Create an induction program for staff new to the building.
  - Clearly communicate in job postings that teachers will be held accountable for implementation of the PYP with fidelity; that the use of technology and embracing the curriculum design process collaboratively, are job expectations; and that all staff will be on annual contracts and continuing employment depends on performance established in the job description.
2. Describe selection criteria and other qualifications for faculty, support staff, and administrative staff that will ensure fit with the vision, mission and academic plan of the school.

### **Selection Criteria**

The principal, after consulting with the interview committee, shall select the best-qualified applicant for each position, without regard to age, race, color, creed, sex, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry or place of residence, pregnancy status, veteran status, or disability.

### **Teacher Qualifications**

- Highly effective as defined by student results
- Committed to becoming trained and certified in the IB Primary Years Program

- Committed to developing an inquiry based classroom
- Positive attitude
- Collaborative, team players
- Demonstrated communication and customer service skills
- Highly qualified and appropriately licensed
- Knowledgeable about research on child development, learning and motivation
- Knowledgeable about differentiating instruction for diverse learning styles and abilities
- Knowledgeable about inquiry based learning approaches Knowledgeable about Common Core State Standards as well as specific content standards
- Committed to becoming trained and certified in the IB Primary Years Program
- Positive attitude
- Collaborative, team players
- Demonstrated communication and customer service skills
- Self-motivated and mission-driven

D. Describe any innovations in the school's compensation system under innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

1. Describe any incentive or reward programs and how they align with the vision and mission of the school.

Teacher compensation will meet and may exceed the minimum requirements of the DPS salary schedule/Procomp. Base teacher compensation may be supplemented with periodic stipends or bonuses based on performance (these are based on district bonuses and not determined by the school) and extra time worked. For example, teachers who do special projects for the school outside the work week, that require over 5 hours of work, are compensated with the district teacher hourly pay rate. These projects are defined as projects that benefit teachers and students as well as the school overall. These are determined by school leadership and available funding.

E. Describe any innovations in the school's professional development plan under innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

As described below, SIS will develop certain components of its professional development program, but may continue to participate in the programs offered by DPS.

Consistent with the school's mission of developing knowledgeable, inquisitive, and compassionate young people, SIS teachers will participate in collaborative professional development that includes learning labs inside the school and feedback and collaborative data analysis and planning. All teachers will receive training in IB at the beginning of the year with ongoing professional development and support from and on-site IB facilitator via weekly meetings. Our teacher leaders meet weekly with the Principal and Assistant Principal to work together to discuss and learn about coaching strategies, refine data team practices, work on book studies aligned to leadership roles, to plan professional development and to problem solve challenges that arise with coaching, instruction or professional learning.

SIS will increase student achievement by ensuring that SIS teachers are knowledgeable about the content and skilled at implementing the programs that they teach.

1. Explain career growth and development opportunities for staff to maximize the contribution and retention of highly effective employees.



Teachers will participate in DPS's leadership options: including participation in the TIFF grant and taking on leadership opportunities as presented. Teachers will also be asked to participate regularly in IB conference opportunities as well as other professional development as identified by the School Leadership Team.

2. Describe how the school's culture and leadership team will support the professional growth of all teachers.

Using a collaborative inquiry approach, SIS teachers will have opportunities to learn from each other and observe each other regularly. In addition, all classroom teachers will attend IB category-one training with follow-up training in subsequent years. An IB Facilitator will be hired that will provide continuous training related to implementation and alignment of the IB program. Teachers will receive training in the Bridges curriculum with two of those days delivered on site with modeling and feedback.

Describe the schools plan to cultivate future leadership capacity.

All staff will have opportunities to take on leadership responsibilities on their professional learning teams and with the larger school community. The SIS principal will encourage teacher leaders and the IB facilitator to learn about the unique leadership responsibilities of the Innovation School leader and to participate in leadership training and development.

3. Explain how the school will demonstrate a spirit of collaboration so as to share innovative practices across the entire district.

The SIS school leader will share innovative practices and results with school and district leaders via the leadership academy roundtable forums. In addition, the SIS school leader will participate in regular meetings with other Innovation School leaders in the district with the express purpose of sharing practices and learning from the successes and challenges of others. SIS will also open our classrooms to other schools interested in visiting as well as encouraging teacher leaders to share our best practices at the teacher leader professional development and training sessions.

- F. Describe any innovations in the school's performance management system under innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

1. Describe policies and procedures for establishing individual employee goals.

Swigert will use the LEAP evaluation system framework and observation tools to set individual performance goals. The School will administer LEAP with the exception of peer observers. The School will not utilize District peer observers, however teachers may request a district peer observer if they choose, in addition to their school observer.

Should the school determine that it wishes to propose a teacher evaluation system different than LEAP for any reason, including if LEAP processes and procedures infringe on the annual contract, the school will demonstrate that its plan is appropriate and superior to LEAP, meets the requirements of SENATE BILL 10-191, and will seek approval from the District.

2. Describe policies and procedures for evaluating staff, providing feedback and celebrating excellence.

Teachers will be evaluated using the DPS LEAP evaluation frameworks, which include student growth data as measured on standardized assessments, principal observations and student feedback.

Any LEAP processes and procedures that infringe upon the annual contract will not be included in the SMIS performance management system.

Excellence in staff will be recognized and celebrated through monthly staff meetings as well as through a Teacher of the Month celebration. Standardized test results will be published by grade level and linked to the building website and recognition will be given to effective teams. Effective teachers will model best practices and will work with collaborative teams to analyze instruction that results in exceptional student achievement.

3. Describe who is involved in the evaluation process, how feedback will be provided, and how often.

The Principal, the Assistant Principal, and our teacher leaders (TLC's) will be involved in the evaluation process. Teachers will be formally observed with the LEAP framework a minimum of three times per year and will receive feedback on progress toward individual growth goals and student achievement gains.

4. Explain how the school will handle unsatisfactory leadership and teacher performance.
  - a. Describe employee remediation policies and procedures.

When teacher performance is not consistent with the SIS education program or is not in the best interest of students, the principal will share concerns with the teacher, engage in an open discussion and provide direction on areas of improvement as appropriate. The school leader may choose to place the teacher on a plan for improvement. The Teacher will have 30 days to improve performance in the areas identified on the performance improvement plan. If necessary, the performance improvement plan can be extended beyond the 30 days. The administration will monitor progress on the teacher's growth in accordance with the plan and determine whether to extend the improvement plan or terminate the annual contract at the end of the school year.

If there is not adequate progress, school leadership will collaborate with DPS Human Resources to resolve the situation, which may involve notifying the teacher in writing that they may be let go with cause prior to the end of contract or that their contract may not be renewed for the following year.

Depending on performance, an annual contract may not be renewed the following year.

5. Describe how the performance management system will be used to drive improvements in teacher effectiveness and student achievement.

SIS will implement the DPS LEAP performance management. The School will administer LEAP full with the exception of peer observers. The School will not utilize District peer observers, instead utilizing teacher leaders to ensure all staff receive at least three observations annually. Teacher performance data and student achievement data will be used to provide specific feedback to improve instruction and subsequently increase student engagement and achievement. In subsequent years, any modifications on the performance management system will be subject to district approval.

- G. Describe any innovations to the school's leadership structure as a result of innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

The school will utilize a distributed instructional leadership model. The instructional leadership model creates a shared responsibility for creating a common understanding of the standards and practices of the PYP.

With a distributed leadership model, individuals on the team benefit from increased empowerment. The greater the shared focus on the PYP the greater the impact and effectiveness of the instruction for students. The distributed model strengthens the school community particularly in the time of change and transition. The program is owned by the staff not just an individual. Continuity and consistency of the PYP is maintained when ownership and responsibility rests with groups rather than a few individuals.

Oversight and accountability for the effective implementation of the innovation plan remains the school principal's responsibility.

- H. Describe the qualifications and capacity of school leadership (i.e., skills, experience, and available time) to identify and respond to the needs of the school and to ensure the innovation plan is successfully implemented.

In order to lead SIS, the school principal should have the following characteristics:

- Ability to lead teachers to realize a vision and mission
- Align professional development to the vision and mission
- Proven ability recruiting and hiring strong instructional leaders
- Ability to build consensus among groups
- Understanding of IB fundamentals and inquiry based learning
- Proven Staff developer related to curriculum and instructional issues
- Experience with budgetary issues related to schools and school development
- Understanding of Central Office issues, perspectives, and support systems
- Cares deeply about students and their success

- I. Provide a detailed leadership succession plan which engages the school's parents and teachers to ensure consistency and stability in implementing the mission and vision of the innovation plan.

1. If there is a change in leadership, describe the process the community will engage in to identify and recommend qualified candidates.

The SIS Leadership Succession Plan is as follows:

In the event that the current school principal vacates the position, the School Accountability Committee will be responsible for implementing the principal selection process in consultation with DPS. The SAC will identify an interview team including school staff and community members and create selection criteria that align with the Innovation Plan. The SAC will select the two best candidates and make recommendations to the DPS Superintendent. Potential applicants who currently work at the school will not be able to participate in or attend any selection related meetings.

A neutral person will be invited to facilitate all faculty and parent/community meetings.

The selection process will include:

- A work group to identify characteristics and criteria of desired new leader that are consistent with the innovation plan
- A parent/community meeting to identify characteristics and criteria of desired new leader that are consistent with the innovation plan
- Development of a job description based on faculty and parent/community input;
- Posting of position on DPS's website and other external outlets;

- Development of interview questions and selection criteria rubric based on job description and key leader attributes;
- Application screening and scoring;
- Conduct interviews including performance tasks such as classroom observations and feedback sessions;
- Reference checks on top candidates;
- Host a public symposium for finalists;
- Conduct site visits to finalist's current schools;
- SAC selects final candidates;
- Submits recommendation of two finalists to Superintendent for final selection;
- Announce position acceptance to staff, students, parents, and community.

## INNOVATION: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE & PARENT ENGAGEMENT

**X. Describe proposed changes to the school's governance structure and parent engagement strategy. How will these changes produce gains in academic achievement?**

- A. Describe your plan to ensure a robust and participatory governance structure that will provide accountability and support to the school.

SIS will be governed by the school principal in accordance with the autonomy and accountability outlined in the approved Innovation Plan. The school principal will report to the DPS network Instructional Superintendent assigned to Swigert.

The School Accountability Committee will be formed to advise the principal and communicate with the public on the school's UIP, educational program, budget and staffing allocations as outlined in the SAC bylaws. Whenever possible, decisions will be made by full consensus of the SAC, which will include the school principal. In the event that the SAC does not reach consensus, the principal will make decisions that take into consideration the input of SAC members and the school's mission, vision, and student achievement goals.

SAC members will include staff, parents, and community members elected by their peers. The SAC will actively recruit minority members and representation from all constituents. The SAC will provide public accountability for meeting school performance goals, support for the school leader in implementing the Innovation Plan, and will advocate for the school within the community.

Every two years, SIS will hold an annual election to determine who the school community will nominate for the SAC. The SIS school leader will share the results of the election with the public and will announce the elected SAC members. The SAC will meet every other month between September 1<sup>st</sup> and May 31<sup>st</sup>.

1. If applicable, attach a copy of the school's committee descriptions.

- B. Describe the parent and community engagement plan that will be implemented to support the school's mission.

The school responsibility to support parents is critical to overall success. Orientation and visitation sessions are scheduled to support all incoming kindergarten and ECE students. There is time scheduled meet teachers and visit the school prior to the first day. Parent conferences are scheduled in the first trimester of the year to begin building the learning plans for the

students. A back to school night will be conducted in the first few weeks of the year addressing PYP, classroom procedure, curriculum, communication processes, and to answer questions.

Parents will be asked to sign a parent compact outlining expectations and how they will support their child to be successful in school.

Parents will know that:

- PYP promotes learning for all students
- PYP determines the framework for the Program of Inquiry
- The PYP framework requires the development of particular concepts, knowledge, skills, and attitudes and that opportunities for students to take action are considered and planned
- Teachers plan the program together, providing a coherent education with expectations similar from one teacher to another
- Assessment, world languages are offered and special needs policies are available
- They are partners in achieving the mission and vision of the school

Parental involvement with the education and assessment of students will include: Student led conferences, participation on the School Accountability Committee, signing off on homework, attendance at school assemblies, classroom studies of inquiry, and volunteering.

C. Describe how innovation status will be used to leverage parental involvement. All parents will be asked to sign and commit to a “Parent Compact” outlining expectations for SIS parents. Topics covered may include:

1. Parent/teacher/student conference attendance required three times per year including an end of the year plan for parent led summer education.
2. Parent volunteer requirement of 5 hours per school year. This is communicated at school open houses, Back to School Night as well as through our weekly school newsletter.
3. Expectation for at-home assistance of students
4. Expectation of parent fundraising participation

In addition, the following strategies will be used to increase parent involvement:

- SAC actively recruits minorities.
- Open SAC meetings actively recruit representation from all constituents to come to consensus on autonomy issues.
- Parent-led “explorations” are mini-units designed to draw on the skills of the parent community and enhance the SIS curriculum

D. Describe any community partnerships needed to implement the school’s innovation plan.

International Baccalaureate Organization

1. Describe any other community partnership or services you anticipate developing as a result of innovation status.

The school garden will create a partnership with the Growe Foundation in Denver to further the understanding of raising food, developing a palate for fresh food, and soil maintenance activities.

We have also begun a relationship with Aurora Warms the Nights as part of a first grade service learning project. We anticipate continuing to develop partnerships with local non-profits as we expand our social action component of the PYP.

E. If applicable, attach a copy of the school's bylaws.

SEE ATTACHED SAC BYLAWS

## INNOVATION: BUDGET

**XI. Provide a budget and an estimate of potential cost savings and increased efficiencies as a result of innovation status. Explain how the school's allocation of resources, as reflected in the budget, supports the vision, mission and education plan.**

A. Using the financial model provided, create a detailed five-year budget reflecting major revenue and expense items and key assumptions. The budget should balance each year and reflect financial stability in three to five years.

Budget have been balanced the previous three years and will continue to be balanced.

B. Provide a budget narrative describing the financial plan that includes an explanation of the school's path to financial stability.

1. Provide an overview of how the allocation of resources, as reflected in the financial plan, supports the vision, mission and education plan of the school.

In order to support the mission and vision of the school, SIS utilizes technology, curricular resources, a grant from Lockheed Martin for STEM implementation, PTA support for ongoing staff training and development to support the IB program and the school's instructional design.

2. Explain major revenue sources, including any funds originated from private sources.

Parents in the attendance area who have provided input into the new school design have made a commitment to fundraising to support the successful implementation of the innovative education program. SIS expects to raise \$200,000 per year through parent and community fundraising efforts to support the additional expenses incurred through IB (IB coordinator, training and development, resources, foreign language). The school has been able to meet or exceed this goal each year.

SIS received a grant from Lockheed Martin to fund and pay for all STEM materials aligned to the Project Lead the Way Curriculum.

a. If revenue is generated from private sources, disclose contributor names, amounts of the contributions, duration of the contributions, and funding commitments already secured by the school.

No funding commitments have yet been secured.

3. Highlight additional operating costs resulting from the unique attributes of the innovation proposal.

- a. Explain specific resources, material, equipment, staff, programs and policies that create additional operating costs (e.g., longer school year and school day).

The district in the past has granted schools implementing the IB program a supplemental budget to address expenses. SIS has been told that the District will no longer provide a supplemental budget for IB programs. Additional costs associated with the IB program include: hiring an IB facilitator and a foreign language teacher; purchasing program materials; training teachers and providing them with time to map assessments to the IB Program of Inquiry. This additional funding is also a critical part of the financial support provided by the Swigert PTA.

Costs associated with providing global access and advanced technological programming include internet access, promethean boards, and other educational technologies in every classroom and ongoing training for teachers in the use of these technologies. Additional costs will be incurred for instructional software.

- b. Highlight one-time implementation costs that will be incurred during the planning year and/or year one of operating with innovation status.

Currently, we are in year six of our plan implementation. The costs we now incur require updating or replacing the school's technology and software in classrooms including Promethean Boards, chrome books, ipads and teacher laptops.

- c. Explain how the school will fund such additional operating costs.

The school will continue to utilize district funds as well as PTA support to support operational and updating costs associated with technology and hardware. Highlight cost savings or increased efficiencies due to the unique attributes of your innovation proposal (e.g. analysis of budgeting using average vs. actual salaries or estimates of centrally budgeted services for which the school intends to access funding directly).

SIS is requesting waivers to retain the right to analyze the costs and benefits of centrally budgeted operational services currently provided by the district (see below) and choose to fund those services directly in future years in order to ensure that the school receives the highest quality service for the lowest cost, maximizing the impact of resources.

Contracting back with the district or another provider of management services allows the school the flexibility to select services that will best match their individual needs and to hold providers accountable for the quality of the service provided.

- c. Explain the policies and processes that will be implemented to ensure that sound financial management practices are implemented and that the financial plan is executed with fidelity.

SIS leadership will work closely with the DPS budget office to develop sound financial management practices. The SIS School Accountability Committee will oversee and approve the use of funds consistent with the school's innovation plan.

The school will ask for waivers from the state and district to enable banking and accounting systems to be separate when the principal and SAC agree that it is in the best interest of the school economically to move to an in house system.

1. Identify the person(s) who will directly manage and oversee the school's budget.

The school principal will directly manage and oversee the school's budget.

## INNOVATION: OTHER PROGRAMS, POLICES, OPERATIONAL DOCUMENTS

- XII. Describe any other innovations not yet explained in the application and how such innovations will lead to increased student achievement.**
- A. Describe any other programs, policies, and/or operational documents at the school that would be affected by the proposed innovations, how these programs, policies and/or operational documents would be affected, and how the changes will lead to increased student achievement.

## WAIVERS

- XIII. Describe the waivers you are requesting from DPS policies, collective bargaining provisions and state statutes. Clearly describe the replacement policies and practices that the school is proposing.**
- A. Please complete **Appendix E**.

SEE APPENDIX E



Swigert-McAuliffe  
International School  
ECE-5<sup>th</sup>  
School Accountability Committee  
Bylaws and Procedures

Approved by Steering Committee:  
03/23/2011

## International School Mission Statement

### **Vision:**

Swigert International School strives to create innovative, intellectually curious students who share a sense of stewardship for creating a better and more peaceful world.

### **Mission:**

In order to achieve this mission, Swigert International School aims to develop knowledgeable, inquisitive, and compassionate young people through the collaboration of students, teachers, parents and community.

**Knowledgeable:** SIS provides a challenging and engaging instructional program to ensure that each child reaches his or her full potential.

**Inquisitive:** Through highly effective instructional practices SIS inspires creativity, curiosity and critical thinking.

**Compassionate:** SIS develops respectful students who care for themselves, their communities and the world around them.

## **PURPOSE**

To provide the SAC committee with an established set of rules and procedures under which to most effectively function. In addition to these bylaws, the SAC will function within Board Policy BDFH-R4 which in many instances specifies SAC committee requirements and functions, and the Agreement between the Denver Classroom Teacher's Association (DCTA) and the Denver Public School District, hereafter referred to as the Agreement. Board of Education, State of Colorado, and DCTA waivers approved will supersede all policies, agreements and laws. Those requirements and agreements will be consistent with the SMIS Innovation Plan.

The purpose and scope of SAC is now found in [Board Policy BDFH- R4](#) .

## **SCOPE**

The purpose and scope of the School Accountability Committee (SAC) shall be:

To focus on the Unified Improvement Plan as its primary responsibility at the school based on the “**Multiple Measures**”. These are district-established indicators of individual school performance and data in the following areas: Attendance, graduation-rate, school leadership, instructional quality, student respect, school safety, and other measures such as the School Accountability Rating. In particular the SAC will work to:

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- To provide guidance, evaluation, and approval for the UIP, use of staffing allocations, school budget and school program design including consultation regarding adjustments that might be due to pupil-count issues.
- to enhance student achievement and school climate by engaging the school community in collaborative efforts supporting the school and district's goals;
- to provide strategic direction in support of the school's mission and vision as stated in the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP). The UIP with the school's program design, should serve as the strategic plan for the school;
- to be in compliance with state and federal law, regulations of the Colorado Department of Education, applicable U.S. District Court orders, the District Affirmative Action plan, the DPS/DCTA Agreement, other contracts and District mandates as amended through waivers of the School Innovation Plan.

## COMPOSITION

### Membership

Selection for membership should be through volunteers. Elections should be held as needed every year. The composition of the SAC committee should be, at a minimum, as follows:

- Four (4) parent representatives, may be nominated by anyone, including self, and are chosen by the vote of their peers
- Four (4) teacher representatives may be nominated by anyone, including self, and are chosen by the vote of their peers. One representative shall be a member of the School Leadership Committee.
- One (1) classified employee representative, may be nominated by anyone, including self, and are chosen by the vote of their peers
- At least one representative from a minority population.
- One (1) business/employer or community representative from the local community; is nominated by a member of the SAC and approved by the other members of the SAC committee
- The school principal

There shall be no more than two parents or teachers representing any one grade or program after the 2012-2013 school year.

There must be an equal number of certified staff and parents on the committee.

### Member Diversity

The diversity of the school population should be represented in the SAC committee membership.

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## **Terms**

SAC committee members are elected to staggered two-year terms. Members may be elected to no more than three (3) successive terms. Staggered terms may be used to promote continuity. The first year 2011-12, two staff and two parent terms will be designated as, onetime, one year terms.

## **ELECTIONS**

### **Date**

Election of SAC committee members should be held during the month of May for the following school year. The Election of SAC teacher representatives and classified employee representatives will occur during the month of August of the current school year.

### **Nominations**

Persons nominated for the SAC committee must adhere to and sign a nomination form. Nomination forms will clearly state due-dates and must be in the office by the date and time specified. The SAC committee will be notified; the ballots will be prepared and sent to the appropriate constituents.

### **Election**

- The reason a candidate wishes to serve on the SAC should appear on the ballot
- Parent ballots are sent home with the students
- Certified-Staff ballots are distributed through inter-school mail
- All ballots must be returned to the school by the due date and time, and placed in the ballot box located in the office
- The SAC Elections and Recruitment sub-committee will count the ballots
- All ballots will be kept on file for a period of two months following the election

### **Transition of New Members**

- Orientation for new members should include the following:
- Copy of the SAC Handbook after the 2011-2012 school year
- Copy of the bylaws and procedures
- The current Unified Improvement Plan after the 2011-2012 school year
- Participation in SAC training

The first meeting of the year will include all members of the proceeding year and newly elected members to reflect on where we have been and where we are going in the future.

### **Vacancies**

If a vacancy occurs during the school year, the constituent group should elect a new member who will fill the vacancy for the duration of the vacancy term. Upon completion of his/her vacancy term, he/she

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may be reelected for a full term. The vacancy term served will not be counted as a successive term. In case of vacancy of the Business Representative position, a SAC committee member will recommend a business representative to the remaining SAC committee members for approval.

### **Attendance**

If a SAC committee member accumulated three consecutive unexcused meeting absences during the school year, this should be grounds for dismissal from the committee. However, under extenuating circumstances each situation should be addressed on a case-by-case basis as determined by the committee.

### **Removal**

If a SAC committee member fails to comply with these bylaws, procedures or rules and regulations of the SAC Committee, or the district, this should be grounds for dismissal.

### **Recall**

If a SAC committee member was elected or chosen by a constituency group (teachers, parents, classified member, students or community representative) that member may be recalled using the following process:

**Step 1.** The constituent contacts the SAC to inform them of their intent

**Step 2.** The constituent circulates a petition to call for a recall election. The required number of names for a petition to be valid will be 50% of the eligible voters for the teachers and classified member, and 50% of the actual number of votes cast by the parents in the elections.

**Step 3.** The constituent presents the petition for recall, with the required number of signatures, to the SAC.

**Step 4.** The SAC will ensure that a recall election takes place.

**Step 5.** The SAC member will be recalled by a majority vote.

**Step 6.** The standard process for election will be followed for replacing the SAC member for the remainder of the individual's term.

## **MEETINGS**

### **Date**

SAC meetings should be scheduled by the SAC and held a minimum of 6 times a year.

### **Officers**

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Duties should be assigned at the beginning of the school year by consensus of the committee. Leadership positions should consist of a SAC committee chairperson and a secretary.

### **Chairperson**

The chairperson is responsible for maintaining order of each meeting. This is achieved through effective facilitation of discussions, recognizing the individual who has the floor and conducting the collaborative resolution for issues under consideration by the SAC committee.

### **Secretary**

The secretary is responsible for compiling the meeting minutes along with a list of decisions made for all meetings. The SAC Secretary should compile minutes of each meeting in a notebook for each school year. Approved minutes and agendas for meetings will be posted electronically on a website accessible by the community.

### **Agendas**

Agendas should be made available to staff and the community at least one working day before the SAC meeting.

A partial agenda for the next meeting should be discussed at the conclusion of each meeting. A final agenda will be prepared through consultation with the principal and chairperson with input from the committee members. Agendas will be posted on the SAC communication board and/or other agreed-upon location. Topics for consideration must be submitted to the SAC committee. These may be submitted in writing or to a SAC committee member. It is the responsibility of each SAC member to present issues conveyed to them with the intent that the information be shared with the SAC committee.

### **Minutes**

Minutes from the most recent meeting should be made available to staff and to the community and put in SAC file for the school's records.

### **Quorum**

A quorum must be present at the SAC committee meeting in order to enact, or take action upon issues.

A majority of SAC members, of whom the principal is one, should constitute a quorum. A quorum must be present at the SAC committee meeting in order to enact or take action upon issues.

Quick turnaround decisions that must be resolved prior to the next scheduled meeting may be addressed by an emergency meeting called by the principal. A quorum must be present to make a decision. The entire SAC committee will abide by the decision derived from this emergency meeting. These discussions will be communicated to all SAC members at the next scheduled meeting.

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## **Decision-Making**

Decisions should be made by consensus. A consensus decision is either unanimous or a majority decision that the entire committee (including dissenter(s)) will implement and support. The SAC committee will seek to operate in an environment marked by mutual support and respect. Collaborative decision-making is based upon trust and on the belief in the strength of shared responsibility in decision-making. All participants must be able to state their cases, be listened to, and have their points of view considered.

Members cannot be instructed by their representative groups on how to vote. Members vote for the good of the students.

Members will see proposals before decisions are made on the proposals.

The SAC committee will follow norms established at the first meeting. The ground rules/norms for conducting the SAC committee meetings are as follows:

- Everyone Participates.
- Different opinions are welcome.
- Come to meetings ready to engage.
- Silence is agreement
- Limit side conversations
- Follow the agenda, stay on track
- Be open to new ideas by respecting opinions of others
- Start on time; end on time.

Facilitation may be requested whenever any three representatives of the SAC committee want to improve the collaborative decision-making process.

## **Open Meetings**

Meetings should be open to the public.

Notice of meetings should be posted in a timely fashion in appropriate public places as well as published in the school calendar, newsletter or other appropriate medium.

## **Public Input**

10 minutes of open regularly scheduled meetings should include time for public input.

## **COMMUNICATION**

### **Constituency Meetings**

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To the extent possible, the SAC committee should communicate with the constituency groups they represent to inform them about the activities of the SAC committee. Voluntary yearly constituent meetings are recommended and should be scheduled in advance with the principal to avoid conflict with other activities.

## **COMMITTEES**

To understand what is distinctive about SAC from SAC, we begin with the recognition that SAC is defined in Board Policy BDFH-R4. The Innovation Plan will establish and guide the staffing process as related to SAC decision making.

There are three committees that promote implementation of the Unified Improvement Plan. All three committees work to create the best possible conditions to address the school missions.

### **Personnel Committee**

The Personnel Subcommittee stands apart from the SAC and staffs the UIP. (Please note that there are two parents on the Personnel Subcommittee, chosen by the SAC. The SAC committee should communicate with the Personnel Committee that is authorized to make decisions regarding the transfer of certificated staff pursuant to the provisions of the Innovation Plan.

### **School Leadership Committee**

The SAC committee should work with the School Leadership Committee. This committee is staff members who address staff who address staff development plans and make recommendations related to the process and procedures to implement the UIP.

### **Other Committees**

At any time, the SAC committee may create task forces, or standing subcommittees to facilitate the completion of the SAC committee's work. The SAC committee has final decision-making authority over all SAC-created subcommittees and task forces. These subcommittees or task forces should consist of anyone within the school community including staff, parents, students and/or community members.

### **Decision Process**

All subcommittee and task forces created by the SAC committee should follow the same collaborative decision-making guidelines for the decision-making process as the SAC committee within the boundaries of decision-making delegated to them by the SAC committee.

### **AMENDMENTS: Amendments to Bylaws**

Amendments to the bylaws should be made by consensus of the SAC committee.

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### Recording Amendments to Bylaws

- SAC committee action resulting in amendment(s) to these bylaws must be recorded in the minutes
- Current bylaws, prior to SAC committee action resulting in amendment(s) to these bylaws, should be kept on permanent record.

Amendment(s) to these bylaws should be incorporated into the body of the bylaws resulting in a new set of bylaws. The date of the amendment to these bylaws should appear on each page of the bylaws. It is recommended that the bylaws be revised every three (3) years.

## **Operating Procedures for School Accountability Committees**

### **Purpose and Scope:**

The purpose and scope of the School Accountability Committee (SAC) shall be:

- to provide guidance, evaluation, and approval for the UIP, use of staffing allocations, school budget and school program design including consultation regarding adjustments that might be due to pupil-count issues.
- to enhance student achievement and school climate by engaging the school community in collaborative efforts supporting the school and district's goals;
- to provide strategic direction in support of the school's mission and vision as stated in the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP). The UIP with the school's program design should serve as the strategic plan for the school. A Unified Improvement Plan that is truly a living plan and;
- in compliance with state and federal law, regulations of the Colorado Department of Education, applicable U.S. District Court orders, the District Affirmative Action plan, and the Innovation Plan of the school, other contracts and District mandates.

Meetings of the School Accountability Committee will be open to the public. Notice of these meetings will be posted in appropriate public places. A copy of the agenda will be publicly posted and made available one working day before the meeting and the minutes from the meeting will also be publicly posted and made available.

Procedures for the School Accountability Committee not defined in the policy.

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**Composition:**

The SAC should represent the diversity of the school population. Each school is required to accomplish this objective through extensive outreach particularly to persons of color with concerted efforts of inclusion. Each SAC shall report to the Instructional Superintendent and the Office of Community Engagement in its annual self-evaluation on how its representation reflects the diversity of the school population and on what efforts it is making to meet this objective. It is strongly recommended that the composition of the SAC should meet the state requirements for cultural diversity on School Improvement Accountability Committees (SIAC).

A. Schools will establish a fair system for selecting representatives from each constituency. The composition of the committee shall be as follows:

- ❖ The principal of the school;
- ❖ Four (4) teachers, elected by majority vote of the faculty in the school (elected by secret ballot);
- ❖ Four (4) parents or guardians of a student enrolled in the school, elected by majority of voting parents with children in the school;
- ❖ One (1) classified employee, elected by majority vote of the classified employees in the school (Each of the above groups shall conduct its own election by secret ballot);
- ❖ One (1) business/employer or community representative from the local community nominated by a member of the SAC and approved by the other members of the SAC;

**B. Changes to the composition of the SAC**

The SAC may expand its membership as long as the expansion includes an equal number of parents and teachers at the elementary and middle school level and an equal number of parents, teachers, and students at the high school level. The SAC at any school may request permission from the Instructional Superintendent to reduce its composition due to small school enrollment, or due to the fact that extensive documented efforts to recruit members have been unsuccessful.

**C. Changes to procedures of the SAC**

Changes in these procedures based on the needs of the school may be recommended to the Superintendent through the Instructional Superintendent by the SAC.

**I. Administrative Functions:**

Staff who perform administrative functions on behalf of the SAC including typing minutes and agendas, contacting SAC members for meetings, or preparing materials for SAC meetings may have these functions considered as part of their normal working day.

School Committees may set their own administrative procedures consistent with the Board Policy for determining various other issues, including, but not limited to: what number of members will constitute

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a quorum; when and how often they will meet; when and how they will hold elections; whether they will have term limits. The Office of Community Relations is available to assist the committee in setting these procedures.

## **II. Constituency Meetings:**

All SACs shall communicate with the constituency groups they represent to inform them about the activities of the SAC. In addition, regular SAC meetings shall include time for public input at least once a scheduled meeting.

- A. Constituency meetings are defined as: “A scheduled gathering of parents, teachers and students for the purpose of discussing issues relevant to the SAC”.
- B. Each SAC shall hold a minimum of two constituency meetings per year for parents, teachers and students. The constituency meeting shall be called and facilitated by its constituent SAC representatives (parents for parent meetings, teachers for teacher meetings, etc.). Principals will provide support to the representatives who are responsible for organizing these meetings.

## **III. Waivers:**

- A. A request for from a School Accountability Committee for a waiver from Board Policy shall be made to the Office of Community Engagement and Instructional Superintendent.
- B. There shall be a presumption in favor of granting the waiver unless the waiver is deemed to be contrary to the students in the school requesting the waiver, and does not support the school improvement plan.

## **IV. Decision Making Process:**

- A. Consensus is a process through which a group makes a decision (without voting) that all members can support. Consensus decisions represent a group decision, supported (or at least accepted) by all group members, that is based on:
  - A thorough understanding of relevant information
  - Participation by all group members
  - An understanding of different perspectives, concerns, needs and recommendations
  - Creative effort to accommodate different needs
  - A willingness to raise and understand disagreement and address the underlying needs manifested in disagreement
- B. If a SAC is not able to reach a decision by consensus and if the timing of the decision permits, the SAC shall seek facilitation assistance from Instructional Superintendent and

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the Office of Community Engagement to resolve the impasse. If the timing of the decision does not permit further delay, the principal shall make an impasse decision. The fact of an impasse decision having been made by the principal will be reported in writing to the Instructional Superintendent and the Office of Community Engagement by the SAC chairperson. Where a pattern of impasse decisions emerges, the Instructional Superintendent and the Office of Community Engagement will provide assistance to the principal and the SAC.

- C. The principal and the SAC chairperson and one member of each constituency group shall be required to receive training in the area of consensus decision-making on an annual basis by the Office of Community Engagement.

#### **V. District Support of Collaborative Decision Making:**

- Technical assistance and training to SAC on the work of the committee through the offices of the Instructional Superintendents and the Office of Community Engagement. This assistance and training will include information on:

The scope of responsibilities for the School Accountability Committee is defined in Board of Education Policy BDFH-R4

- The School Accountability Committee will be informed about the DPS/DCTA agreement and the School Innovation Plan.
- The School Accountability Committee will be informed and understand the work of the personnel committee, both their interconnection as well as their separation in responsibilities.
- The School Accountability Committee will be informed and understand the work of the School Leadership Team, both their interconnection as well as their separation in responsibilities.

#### **VI. Evaluation of School Improvement Plan:**

This report shall be based on evaluation of the multiple measures and the level of parental involvement as identified in the Unified Improvement Plan, and submitted to the Instructional Superintendents.

#### **VII. Input Into the Evaluation of the Principal:**

- The SAC input into the evaluation of the principal shall focus on the ability of the principal to collaborate with the SAC on the implementation of the Unified Improvement Plan.
- The SAC input is submitted to the Instructional Superintendents and considered one component in the principal's evaluation.

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