



# INNOVATION SCHOOL APPLICATION



December 2017



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Dear Denver Public Schools Board of Education:

Creativity Challenge Community (C3) opened in August 2012 as an innovation school and has leveraged that innovation status for our continued success. We opened with 90 first and second grade students. This year we reached capacity with 304 students in grades kindergarten through fifth grade. As summarized below and noted throughout this renewal plan, the unique aspects of C3's education plan, time and schedules, personnel program, and budget and operations are all supported by our innovation status. We have leveraged our time and schedule waivers from the beginning to forge partnerships throughout the city. Our core education plan and curricular choices were tied to our innovation waivers. Our stellar staff who dedicates themselves to our mission and vision is supported by the flexibility we have in job descriptions and roles at C3. As a small school our ability to select the most relevant services to our school has been crucial to our budget.

Our mission and vision, which we rededicate to each year as a staff, has driven all of our work and grounds us in our innovative approach to bringing Creativity, Challenge and Community to all that we do. Our focus on creative thinking, challenging all students, interacting with community partners at each grade and building a strong student and adult community of kind, courageous thinkers is our standard for success.

In 2016 we worked with 3 other DPS innovation schools to create the first Innovation Zone in DPS, the Luminary Learning Network (LLN). Along the way we have also added new systems to support a full build school with a very diverse set of learners on a shared campus with Merrill Middle School.

When we opened we worked with each grade weekly, focusing on the creative thinking skills of elaboration, originality, fluency and flexibility. Last year we began a professional learning focus on creative thinking with the support of Jim Stephens of 2 Revolutions, part of our Innovation work, and our creativity specialist. We wrote a school definition of creative thinking which is posted in every classroom and each teacher has the support of our team to integrate creative thinking in all that they do. On Fridays we have multi age Curiosity Crews when students can investigate a variety of offerings that they choose from to leverage their own creative interests. This emphasis on creative thinking is strengthened by the innovations for time, schedule and curriculum.

We have met the challenge in our name with our success in our curriculum offerings. We added an intervention staff in math and literacy with support of the LLN SBB+ funding. This increased staffing and funding has helped with identification of many new students for special education services, and a full health staff to meet the special health needs in our school. In the fall of 2016 we received our first SPF rating with growth scores and were rated distinguished/"Blue" with some of the highest growth scores in the state. In October 2017 we were rated distinguished/"Blue" for our second year in a row with the third highest growth scores in math in the state. These ratings are just one indicator of the successes we have achieved with our innovation plan and waivers around curriculum and staffing.

Our focus on Community is displayed in a relationship with over 12 community partners in the city which support and enrich our curriculum and creative thinking. Students interact with art, science and history museums, dance studios, environmental education specialists, the Zoo, the Denver Botanic Gardens, and the Denver Center for Performing arts. The flexibility in scheduling from our original innovation plans has allowed our community partner program to thrive. Our Community Partner Handbook was written in 2015 with guidelines for a successful partnership whether it happens out in the city of Denver or at C3. This focus is a part of our education plan and is supported by our innovation status.

As an all choice school we have created a community of families from all over the Denver area which did not exist before. Our families support our work through over 4000 community hours in our classrooms, supporting students and running an



active PTSA, and sitting on our Innovation Accountability team (IAT). This November we held our first Grandparents and Special Persons day to engage this generation in their students' learning and had over 200 people attend.

We wrote our school motto as a community - "Creativity Challenge Community is a safe and caring community of kind, courageous thinkers." This motto and focus on Kind Courageous, Thinkers (KCT) has secured our school culture which remains healthy with the support of a staff and family School Culture committee which guides our learning. We have enhanced our PBIS systems with the guidance of Dr. Bill Porter and his Bully Proofing Your School curriculum. This year we added a KCT staff member, a non-traditional position supported by our innovation plan. This teacher who spends time in each classroom aligning a SEL curriculum with our kind, courageous thinkers and initiating restorative justice practices with students and staff. We have a School Culture Handbook to support staff in their classrooms with this work. Each month we honor students and staff with kind, courage and thinker hand painted rocks at a community ceremony.

We have high demand on enrollment and over the last 5 years have set priorities for our all choice school with 1) the children of our staff, 2) the siblings of current students, 3) our neighborhood enrollment zone schools, 4) FRL students through the FRL pilot, 5) other Denver students and 6) outside of Denver students. Our staff has a high retention and we have added positions to support our learners. Some staff have grown into teacher leader roles. Our administrative team has been non traditional from the beginning and currently consists of a principal partner and assistant principal partner who work with two senior team leads and 5 specialists to support our success. We have an online C3 staff website where all of the information can be stored and accessed from protocols for staff business meetings to our handbooks on culture, community partners, personnel and families.

We have achieved our goals from the original Goal Setting Worksheet on Student Growth over time, School Demand, Leadership and Governance, Parent Satisfaction, School Specific Education and organizational Objectives and Fundraising. We will continue to focus on achievement gaps, status on state test scores (no matter CMAS or what comes later), student attendance rate and an increased parent response on Satisfaction Surveys while maintaining the other goals we have achieved. (Reference new Appendix D, C3 goals)

Being an Innovation School, in the LLN at the Denver Public Schools, has supported our mission and vision and allowed us to grow in all of our areas. As we continue to grow, innovate and embrace our innovation plan we hope to add the opportunity to support principal leadership through a training program for new innovation Principals. So as we write our second renewal application we reflect on our achievements and plan for continued success with the systems and structures available to us which we leverage with innovation status to continue to enhance the work we do with a dedicated staff and a diverse group of families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Julia Miller Shepherd, principal partner  
c3.dpsk12.org

*Creativity Challenge Community is a safe and caring community of kind, courageous thinkers.*



***What we can do and – what America does better than anyone – is spark the creativity and imagination of our people.” President Barack Obama, January 2011***

Creativity Challenge Community (C3) opened in August 2012 as a new Innovation Elementary School for Denver Public Schools. Over the last 5 years we have grown from 90 students in first and second grade to 301 students in Kindergarten through 5th grade and are full build and at capacity. Since we opened in August 2012 our Innovation status has supported our mission and vision which drives all aspects of our work from our students to our staff to our community. At C3 each member of the learning community thinks creatively, achieves at high levels, embraces challenges and works with our community of families and over 12 city wide community partners.

**I. 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.

**Vision**

At The Creativity Challenge Community (C3) each member of the learning community thinks creatively, achieves at high levels, embraces challenges, takes responsibility for their own learning and contributes to the learning of others. Students and staff focus on all aspects of creative thinking at our school and with our community partners as we challenge each other to our highest potential as leaders and learners.

B. State the mission of the school.

**Mission**

The Creativity Challenge Community will provide a 21st Century education for a diverse population of elementary age students in Southeast Denver. We believe in the importance of thinking creatively to solve problems, learning collaboratively through partnerships with community organizations and challenging each other to our highest potential. Our students will graduate with confidence in their ability to think critically and creatively, solve problems and contribute to the larger community.

At Creativity Challenge Community (C3) we will:

- Develop a collaborative community of learners encompassing students, families, educators and community partners where all members have an opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other.
- Learn to devise, carry out and evaluate creative thinking strategies to ensure students will master 21<sup>st</sup> Century critical thinking and reasoning skills and invention skills.
- Collaborate with the cultural and business community to create partners for learning experiences outside of the classroom to support increased student achievement.
- Support self--directed learning and encourage perseverance in academic pursuits.
- Create a strong culture of caring and diversity at all levels by strengthening parent and family engagement.



1. Identify the school's target student population and community to be served.

When we opened in 2012, we were created to give another option to Southeast schools that were overcrowded at the time. The population in the Cory/Merrill neighborhood where we are located had a large portion of students opting out of DPS for private school. We were created to give those families a less traditional option. As our enrollment patterns have shifted, our goal at C3 is to continue to serve a diversity of families who want rigorous academic programming with an interest in creative thinking and innovative learning approaches with a priority for students residing in this Southeast area of DPS. All students are enrolled through SchoolChoice lottery system with specified priorities. Our school priority list is as follows. Staff children, siblings of current students, neighborhood boundary of Ellis, Cory and Steele elementary, [students in Denver qualifying for FRL](#), all other [Denver residents](#) and then non-Denver residents.

2017-18 student population is made of of 10.5% FRL, 15% students of color, 3.3 % English Language Learners and 5.9% Special Education. We are working with our school's governing committee the Innovation Accountability team (IAT) to grow C3's diversity. We have also worked with the district to be a part of the FRL pilot to increase our FRL numbers to 20%, doubling our current numbers. C3's population is approximately 47% from the neighborhood priority zones, which include Cory, Ellis and Steele elementary.

- C. **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.**

Traditional instructional approaches and class structures do not adequately address creativity as a skill that can be nurtured and developed into an asset for achievement and learning. We have confidence that Innovation Status is enabling us to deliver on our C3 mission of developing students who will graduate with confidence in their ability to think critically and creatively, solve problems and contribute to the larger community. In order to create a school that will provides a foundation for students living and working in the 21st century, we plan to maximize autonomy over budget, staffing, schedule, program and curriculum:

**C3 is applying for renewal of Innovation Status** to support the following innovations:

**Luminary Learning Network (LLN) Innovation (Appendix P)**

The Luminary Learning network is an IZone formed to build on the already-approved innovation plans for each of the founding schools of the Luminary Learning Network: Ashley Elementary, Cole Arts and Science Academy (CASA), Creativity Challenge Community (C3), and the Denver Green School (DGS). The IZone application, developed collaboratively by members of these four school communities, demonstrates why the Luminary Learning Network is needed to accelerate student achievement, what it seeks to accomplish, and how it plans to organize itself in alignment with the common interests of the schools within the Zone as well as the interests of Denver Public Schools.



Proof points of success and lessons learned from individual schools of innovation create a ripe environment within Denver for its next transformational step. Based on each school's own successes and challenges, as well as those of their innovation school peers, the LLN school communities are united by a simple common interest: accelerate gains for students and move LLN schools over time from their current SPF performance rating to blue ( with an interim goal of moving up one performance band over 3 years) by leveraging the leadership and governance of an independent zone. For a school like C3 our goal is to move up within specific indicators on the SPF. In so doing, the Luminary Learning Network seeks to contribute to Denver's quest for great schools in every neighborhood by increasing the absolute number and

percentage of students attending green or blue schools while also creating innovative proof points for Denver Plan 2025 goals.

### **C3's Innovations**

C3 has received a distinguished blue rating for both the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. C3 will continue to focus on high growth for all students and improve student's status data and close academic gaps aiming to keep a blue rating year over year.

#### **EDUCATION PROGRAM**

- a creativity infused education program, adapting DPS curricula and instructional materials
- project--based, experiential learning opportunities with community partners
- promotion and acceleration of students based on leadership team determination

#### **TIME**

- student and staff schedules that incorporate field experiences and collaboration time
- additional professional development days for teachers to integrate creativity in instruction
- schedule of days off and late starts/early releases based on school needs
- additional time in the school day as needed to support mission and vision

#### **PERSONNEL**

- annual contracts for employment of all teachers
- teacher and staff evaluations that meet or exceed the district and state requirements
- recruitment, hiring schedule, selection, employment terms, and offer made by the school
- hire non---licensed teachers in non---core subjects that meet NCLB highly qualified and school program needs
- compensation system that meets or exceeds DPS rates and provides incentives, extra duty pay and stipends, which will be determined pursuant to the school's annual compensation philosophy.
- calendar of teacher work days, vacation days, and holidays based on school needs
- professional development content and schedule determined by the school
- staff assignments, transfers within the school, schedules and job sharing by school leader
- not subject to direct placements or the transfer of teachers by the District

#### **BUDGET AND OPERATIONS**

- managing school finances: collecting revenues and managing receipts of money
- direct contracting for goods and services
- selecting and purchasing district services on an annual basis as determined by school
- Governance model does not include a Collaborative School Committee. We have replaced our CSC with an Innovation Accountability Team (IAT).
- LLN will also allow greater flexibility over school budgets, curriculum and instruction, enabling educators to better-meet the needs of all students through SBB+.

Innovation status will allow us to remove the barriers and restrictions that stymie and diminish a school's ability to create a high-achieving school culture that provides the best possible education to all students.

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

#### **SCHOOL-WIDE CULTURE**

*"Authentic learning is important because our society and democratic way of life are dependent upon an unlimited reservoir of creative and effective people who know how to put knowledge to work in real-world situations."--- Renzulli*

C3 has a culture of thinking creatively, considering diverse perspectives, and working collaboratively to solve problems. This culture results in the C3 students achieving at high levels, embracing challenges, accessing community resources, taking responsibility for their own learning and contributing to the learning of others.

The C3 culture is aligned with the Denver Plan goal of dramatically improving student achievement through a district culture of high expectations, service, empowerment, and responsibility; strategic management of financial resources; family and community engagement; employing highly effective teachers and leaders; and implementing high-quality instruction that engages and challenges students to apply 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills.

#### **Fostering the C3 Culture**

All C3 students and staff will engage in learning challenges across the curricula that require the application of academic knowledge and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. To encourage Invention, learning activities will foster creative thinking and creative expression through multiple media and current technology.



Students will drive the focus of inquiry and creative endeavors. Through structured experiential learning with community partners, students will engage in authentic learning and apply content knowledge and reasoning skills to design creative solutions that will allow for self-direction, critical thinking and reasoning. To reinforce collaboration, ownership of learning, and information literacy, teachers will engage in collaborative planning and data analysis, students will track their own data, students will work in cooperative, and mixed-ability, groups, and leaders will collaborate with community partners on the community and technology-based experiences.

An expectation of excellence has been the message from day one and the ownership of each member of the community for this expectation. We are creating new traditions consistent with the culture of the C3 community. Renzulli Curiosity Crews give students an opportunity to pursue their passions through authentic projects in collaboration with multiple age students. As our student population grows, service-learning opportunities will be available and student leadership teams are forming to give student voice to all decisions.

*C3 is a safe and caring community of kind, courageous, thinkers.* Our inaugural staff and parents created this motto. It is part of the positive behavior intervention support (PBIS) plan, supporting campus-wide expectations for students and staff. The motto is said at the beginning of each day. Classroom teachers, staff, parents, and students will reinforce our motto throughout the day. Students and families will also be introduced to the Bully-Proofing Your School curriculum for our work about anti-bullying. This will also include parent learning opportunities around Restorative Justice.

### **Discipline at C3 and Restorative Justice**

When student behaviors or disruptions require discipline interventions, C3 follows the DPS District Discipline Matrix and Ladder. This year at C3, in compliance to district policy, we are practicing Restorative Justice: a culture where people who have caused harm acknowledge wrongdoing, take responsibility, repair harm to the extent possible to those whom have caused harm and are welcomed back into the community. An intervention tool we will be using is a restorative justice conversation, or RJ Circle, where students take accountability for their actions, share perspectives and create a plan to repair harm.

Students, teachers and parents also read and sign an agreement and commitment to our school distributed at registration. A copy of the Student /Teacher /Parent Agreement and the Discipline Ladder are included in the appendices A and B..

This fall we have also started a push in by our KCT teacher to work with each grade level on appropriate Social Emotional Learning. We use the lessons in Bully Proofing your school in combination with the Empowering Education SEL curriculum.

### **The C3 Culture for ALL Students**

Creativity Challenge Community embraces all learners as equal partners of the community. Too often, at-risk students, students with disabilities and English language learners are not held to high expectations or provided with access to rigorous curriculum and opportunities for higher order thinking. The culture at C3 engages all students in creative thinking and collaborative problem solving activities that are multi-sensory and help students deeply understand concepts taught. Collaborating with community partners fosters a sense of belonging to a larger community. It also fosters the excitement of participating in authentic learning in a variety of environments. C3 holds high expectations for all students to achieve at high levels, embrace challenges, take responsibility for their own learning and contribute to the learning of others.

With support of our teachers we created a KCT council to help students have more of a voice at C3. Our KCT council is comprised of our older students that are required to write why they would like to be part of the council and what positive impacts they'll make on the greater C3 community. Our KCT council is responsible for spearheading community outreach programs, supporting our staff on special events, such as Grandparents day and even helping share areas of need that school funds could help support.

All teachers are becoming or will be ELA-E qualified through DPS training and certification so that every classroom is a rich environment for second language learners. Daily lessons are based on ELD and content standards and will be designed to meet individual student needs as outlined in the DPS ELA Department's Best Practice documents. In addition to differentiated instruction, the classroom arrangements and displays are designed to support language development.

Innovation status has allowed us to develop a strong culture of caring and acceptance of diversity at all levels in order to achieve our vision to:

- develop a collaborative community of learners encompassing students, families, educators and community partners where all members have an opportunity to share ideas and learn from each other.
  
- learn to devise, carry out and evaluate creative thinking strategies to ensure students will master 21<sup>st</sup>
- 
- Century critical thinking and reasoning skills and invention skills.
- collaborate with the cultural and business community to create partners for learning experiences outside of the classroom to support increased student achievement.
- support self-directed learning and encourage perseverance in academic pursuits.
- create a strong culture of caring and valuing diverse perspectives at all levels by strengthening parent and family engagement.
- implement a parent/student/school compact that outlines the commitment of families to our mission and vision.
- create a culturally responsive school where student strengths are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student success.
- Maintain a school culture committee of staff and families who help support all of our school culture programs and offer parent education at back to school nights and after PTSA meetings.



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

**Instructional Model**

C3's education plan starts with a dedicated group of stakeholders: educators, students, families, community members, and business partners who share a commitment to lifelong creative learning. Together, we have developed a balanced education plan that integrates creative learning experiences into standards-based education. This learning environment will engage and inspire our students while challenging them to meet the rigorous requirements of state assessments.

“It is now a known fact that nearly all of us can become more creative, if we will. And this very fact may well be the hope of the world. By becoming more creative we can lead brighter lives, and can live better with each other. By becoming more creative we can provide better goods and services to each other, to the result of a higher and higher standard of living. By becoming more creative we may even find a way to bring permanent peace to all the world.”

Alex F. Osborn (creator of brainstorming)

**Educational Program**

There are three key features of C3's academic program that are innovative:

- a creativity infused education program, adapting DPS curricula and instructional materials
- project-based, experiential learning opportunities with community partners that will extend students' learning to real life experiences
- student driven learning groups, Curiosity Crews, based on the school-wide enrichment model developed by Joseph Renzulli

**Philosophy**

Each of the words of our school's name, Creativity Challenge and Community (C3) emphasizes the values we espouse. Creativity is the focus we want to add to the DPS curriculum so that children can nurture their natural curiosity and creative thinking. Challenge is our goal for every student on campus from our special needs and ELL learners to our gifted population; each learner, students and adults will be challenged to reach their potential. Community is the backbone of this model. C3 cannot exist without a strong community of staff and families as well as our ties to our community partners: To this point our external Community Partners have included The Denver Art Museum, the Young Americans Center for Financial Education and the Denver Center Theatre Academy, SPREE, Colorado Ballet, the Molly Brown House,, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, Central City Opera, Denver Botanic Gardens and History Colorado, Clyfford Still Museum and Moraporvida Dance. Reaching out to our community partners will strengthen the role of institutions in the city of Denver with C3 and make the city our classroom.



## **CORE**

**DPS Standards---Based Curriculum and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills are the core of our instruction.**

### **Standards---Based Curriculum**

DPS curriculum designed to address Colorado Common Core Standards will be used at C3. Students in grades Kindergarten through second grade follow the Lucy Calkins Units of Study curriculum, while grades third through fifth follow Engage New York literacy. Bridges Math program is implemented in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade. TCI curriculum is used for social studies and supplemented with community partner work. BSCS Science Tracks program is used for grades kindergarten through fifth grade and supplemented by community partners and STEM outreach. If DPS changes its core curriculums in any area we will use these programs, opt out through universal flexibilities. Our Arts and Physical Education/Movement program is taught through direct instruction as well as integrated into the SEL curriculum. Information, Media and Technology skills will not just be tools, but an integral part of our studies and our students' creative productivity. C3 has hired a part time technology teacher to support students keyboarding skills through Keyboarding Without Tears. The teacher pushes into every grade level classroom using ipads and Chromebooks.

### **21st Century Skills**

Learning and developing appropriate skills for our changing economy is an issue of nationwide interest. Almost 90 percent of voters believe 21st Century Skills can and should be part of the curriculum. C3 is also inspired by Colorado's adoption of the following 21st Century Skills: Invention, Self---Direction, Collaboration, Information Literacy and Critical Thinking and Reasoning. These skills will be emphasized in curricular design and through experiential---learning partnerships with cultural institutions in our community and learning experiences within our classrooms. At C3, students will be given multiple opportunities, within the framework of the DPS curriculum and through enrichment, to drive the focus of inquiry and creative endeavors. C3 teachers will focus their instruction to support student understanding through the use of researched---based instructional practices. Strategies for rigorous, differentiated instruction will include:, thematic units, experiential and inquiry learning and development of multiple intelligences.



## CREATIVITY

**The essential component of all teaching and learning at our school is creative thinking.**

### **Creative Thinking Skills**

Students at C3 will learn and use creative thinking skills across all content areas to promote engaged learning and rigorous achievement. Creative thinking objectives will be developed by C3 teachers through professional development and collaboration with community partners.

Activities and exercises in creative thinking include using the four Elements of Creativity: *fluency*, *flexibility*, *originality* and *elaboration*. These will be taught and nurtured in students, teachers, and parents.

- *Fluency*: Having many ideas and continuing to think of new ideas.
- *Flexibility*: Consider topic from many different points of views.
- *Originality*: Having a new idea or taking an idea and using it in a totally new way.
- *Elaboration*: Adding many details to embellish and thinking deeply about a topic.

### **Product---based Learning:**

At C3, students will express their learning through visual and verbal creative products in grade level and arts classrooms. In developing their products, students will demonstrate their understanding of creativity objectives and learning targets. Product---based learning also provides opportunities for differentiation that meets the needs of diverse learners.

### **Nonlinguistic Representation**

At C3, creative thinking and learning will provide opportunities for nonlinguistic representation. *Description from the DPS Department of Languages, Literacy and Cultural Studies website: "Many psychologists believe that we think and remember better when we store information in both linguistic and nonlinguistic forms. Research by Robert Marzano and colleagues demonstrates that teaching with nonlinguistic activities, such as graphic organizers, mental images, and movement helps to improve students' understanding of content."*

### **Creative Teaching Strategies**

C3 will use a variety of strategies to teach a wide range of idea---creation techniques, create new and worthwhile ideas and elaborate, refine, analyze and evaluate their own ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts. This will be an area of focus for staff professional development.

Creative Learning requires creative teaching. The more imaginative approaches teachers use to make learning exciting, active, fun, and relevant, the more students are engaged the more success they achieve. The basic foundation for teaching creatively includes subject expertise, strong motivation, the ability to communicate well, high expectations for rigor and achievement, and the ability to inspire. Teaching creatively requires that teachers:

- stimulate students' curiosity through their teaching practices and spirit of instruction.
- balance direct instruction teaching with opportunities for self-direction.
- use a variety of questioning and reflection techniques to elicit continued improvement in learning from their students.
- recognize when encouragement is needed, and value intensive student effort more than the completion of a product.
- realize student *confidence* is as important as student *competence*.
- use product-based learning as a tool for scaffolding student creativity skills.
- use differentiation in teaching practice and in conversations with teachers and students to promote a continued understanding and acceptance of diversity.
- introduce creativity in a skills-based approach.
- design the physical "look" of the classroom to intrigue and stimulate student ideas.

Excerpt from *Curiosita Teaching: Inviting Creativity Into 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classrooms*, (Shade & Shade, 2008)

## CHALLENGE

**At C3, we value student engagement and intentional instruction as pathways to high achievement.**

### Student Engagement through Voice and Choice

At C3, students will be given multiple opportunities, within the framework of the DPS curriculum and through enrichment, to drive the focus of inquiry and creative endeavors.

### Student Ownership (learning and assessment)

By setting goals, tracking data and through self-reflection, students will own and accept challenges in their learning. Teachers and peers will provide feedback and support students in self-assessment. All students at C3 will have Individual Learning Plans to record their goals and achievements. This will be recorded in physical and/or digital Portfolios to track their progress and throughout each year. Learning plans will be created collaboratively with teachers, students and their families. Portfolios may be physical or digital and will be shared with families throughout the year.

### Student Achievement

C3 teachers will focus their instruction to support student understanding through the use of researched-based instructional practices. Strategies for rigorous, differentiated instruction will include:

- **Thematic Units:** Teachers will periodically organize curriculum around themes through integrated units. This strategy promotes the understanding of big ideas and promotes English Language Acquisition through repetition of vocabulary throughout different content areas. This type of instruction is also appealing to creative thinkers who are often "global thinkers," and prefer to make connections between interrelated domains such as literacy, social studies, science, and math. Thematic units might be in collaboration with community partners, but are not limited to specific partnerships. In year two we did a unit on space and art and in the fall of 2016 the entire school attended the Washed Ashore exhibit at the Denver Zoo focusing on the issue of garbage and recycling and using those products to create works of art that were displayed at the Zoo.



- **Experiential and Inquiry Learning:** C3 employs experiential learning as an essential instructional strategy. Through a structured cycle of experience, reflection and application, students will engage in authentic learning experiences and draw connections to Essential Questions. Experiential learning may be inquiry--- based, in which students serve as researchers to investigate a question or problem, and/or creativity---based where students become the developers, designers, and producers of their own learning.
- **Product---based Learning**  
At C3, students will express their learning through visual and verbal creative products. Through products, students will demonstrate their understanding of creativity objectives and Essential Learning Goals. Product---based learning also provides opportunities for differentiation that meets the needs of diverse learners.
- **Development of Multiple Intelligences:** Students at our school will be encouraged to develop their intelligences through multiple modes of learning. *Description from the DPS Department of Languages, Literacy and Cultural Studies website:* “According to Howard Gardner’s revolutionary theory, every student is intelligent—just not in the same way. Because everyone learns in a different way, the best activities tap more than one kind of intelligence. Gardner has described these eight intelligences: verbal---linguistic, logical--- mathematical, visual--- spatial, body---kinesthetic, musical---rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist.”

## COMMUNITY

**We are a collaborative community of learners encompassing students, leaders, teachers, families and community partners.**

“Culturally responsive education reflects social justice at its highest level. It means doing whatever it takes to ensure that every child is achieving and ever moving towards their potential.”

-----Joyce Taylor---Gibson

- **Community Partnerships:** C3 collaborates with the cultural and business communities of Denver to create partnerships to develop creative learning experiences outside of the classroom. Students meet regularly with community partners through a series of learning experiences within each organization. Families will be asked to support these excursions and act as chaperones. These partnerships will help students and educators stay engaged in relevant learning experiences within authentic professional environments. Celebrations of learning can be added to the end of a partnership at school to showcase our learning. C3 will challenge our learners to understand the essential role of creative thinking within cultural and business communities.

- **Cooperative Interaction:** Students at C3 will have multiple opportunities to work collaboratively with each other as partners and in small groups. *Description from the DPS Department of Languages, Literacy and Cultural Studies website:* “Elizabeth Cohen’s research has led her to conclude that cooperative group work leads to learning gains and higher student achievement. Cohen has found that if students are trained in cooperative behaviors, placed in mixed---ability groups, and assigned roles to complete during a multiple---ability task, they tend to interact more equally. This increased student interaction leads to more learning and great content retention.” Classrooms will be designed to support these interactions. One example, would be the use of tables instead of desks.
- **Diversity and Cultural Responsiveness:** The C3 community will develop a strong culture of caring and acceptance of diversity at all levels. Community meetings with all students and staff will reinforce our respect for each other and C3’s commitment to excellence and acceptance within our creative learning environment. Students will be encouraged to consider diverse perspectives and to understand each other’s learning styles. A part of their learning plan will include instruction in communication skills and activities that promote the understanding of both cultural and learning diversities. Staff will have professional development on culturally responsive education working with in collaboration with DPS office of equity and culture. C3’s schedule will be designed to keep these opportunities in mind to support a culturally responsive classroom.

### C3 SUPPLEMENTAL PROGRAMS

When we opened we used **Curiosita Teaching Program™** developed by Patti and Dr. Rick Shade, to provide an organizational framework for integrating creativity into instruction and curricular design. As we have grown we have institutionalized the development of creative thinking in students and staff at C3 in addition to using the Curiosa program and activities. Each new teacher or intern hire receives the Curisota books as part of their C3 orientation.

In the 2016-17 school year we worked as a staff on a definition of creative thinking for C3. Our C3-created definition: *Creative thinking is actively questioning and synthesizing background knowledge with cultural and community experiences to solve problems and express ideas in novel, meaningful and empathetic ways.* This definition is posted in every classroom

Throughout the week students will practice exercises in creative thinking across all subject areas. Students at C3 display improved academic achievement, engagement and production as they focus on divergent and convergent thinking. This will naturally include a focus on Individualized learning approaches. The more imaginative approaches teachers use to make learning exciting, active, fun, and relevant, the more students are engaged the more success they achieve. The basic foundation for teaching creatively includes subject expertise, strong motivation, the ability to communicate well, high expectations for rigor and achievement, and the ability to inspire.



Teaching creatively requires that teachers:

- stimulate students' curiosity through their teaching practices and spirit of instruction
- balance direct instruction teaching with opportunities for self-direction
- use a variety of questioning and reflection techniques to elicit continued improvement in learning from their students
- recognize when encouragement is needed, and value intensive student effort more than the completion of a product.
- realize student confidence is as important as student competence
- use product-based learning as a tool for scaffolding student creativity skills
- use differentiation in teaching practice and in conversations with teachers and students to promote a continued understanding and acceptance of diversity
- introduce creativity in a skills-based approach
- design the physical "look" of the classroom to intrigue and stimulate

Teachers will receive professional development throughout the year on creativity. Once school begins, the creativity specialist works with teachers to infuse the skills and processes of creativity into all content areas including core content area and special subject teachers. The creativity specialist will also provide assistance to teachers in designing their specific curriculum around creative thinking. Support and ongoing professional development with outside consultants as applicable and will continue to move creativity to the institutional level of development throughout the school.

Starting in January 2017 and continuing this school year, we have used Creativity consultant Jim Stephens of 2 Revolutions and the C3 creativity specialist to guide staff towards institutionalizing the development of creative thinking in students and staff at C3. Action steps include articulating and regularly communicating our definition to all parts of the C3 community, as well as articulating the grade-by-grade continuum for development of student creativity. The staff will create a schedule/structure for teachers to move through an instructional cycle developing and reflecting on creativity. Implementation and personalization of the Creative Thinking Rubric (Appendix C) will be intentional in instructional cycles. The DPS GT Creativity Pilot adds tools and avenues towards this work.

### **Community Partners**

C3 collaborates with its community partners to integrate DPS curriculum with the educational outreach programs of our partners, and develop protocol for successful field experiences. With our community partners, we will continually evaluate and refine our shared curricula to provide rigorous, standards-based experiential learning. Our partnerships will tie into our grade-level curriculum.

### **School-wide Enrichment**

C3 offers students "Curiosity Crews," interest-based, student-driven learning groups based on the School-wide Enrichment Model developed by Joseph Renzulli. The topics of the clusters will be based on school-wide interest surveys. Teachers and parents act as facilitators for the groups, which include rigorous, interest-based enrichment for all students. Curiosity Crews will take place three times per year with 4-6 week cycles.



## **SPECIAL POPULATIONS AND AT-RISK STUDENTS**

The C3 education plan is designed to address the individual and differentiated needs of all of our students. By differentiating for student interests, preferred learning styles, and academic needs, the Tier I instruction will meet the needs of many students whose needs are not currently addressed in traditional academic programs. Emphasis on student agency is a focal point to our community.

### **Response to Intervention (RTI)**

The administration team and intervention teachers in literacy and math focus on curriculum and professional development and will implement, monitor, and guide the RTI process at C3. The Instructional Leadership team of principal, assistant principal, and senior team leads will look at beginning of the year school-wide data and set school wide goals with the C3 Leadership team of specialists and admin to support professional development that will include school wide Tier 1 instructional strategies to be implemented in all classrooms. The classroom teachers, with support from the from admin staff will monitor and adjust instruction for all learners to make adequate progress towards their goals. When Tier 1 strategies are not enough, the classroom teachers will create a body of evidence and ask for a SIT team meeting based on observations, progress monitoring, I station and DRA levels and

other grade level appropriate assessments. In 2016 C3 added a reading intervention teacher for grades 3-5. In 2017 C3 was able to add a math intervention teacher for math, grades kindergarten through 5th grade.

The SIT team will be comprised of Administrative Partners, classroom teachers, intervention teachers and special education teachers. The focus of the SIT team will be to identify students in need of services for Tiers 2 and 3. A variety of stakeholders will be represented on the SIT team to allow for multiple perspectives and strategies to best meet the needs of students not making adequate progress. Another set of intervention strategies will be established for students. Data will be collected by classroom teachers for those six week cycles. After six weeks the SIT team will reconvene and determine if intervention should continue, or if starting an IEP process is appropriate.

Foundations, Orton-Gillingham and LLI will be used for Tier 1 and 2 interventions in classrooms and classroom teachers and Paraprofessionals will be trained on these programs as feasible. C3 will follow the Bridges math intervention curriculum to support student needs. C3 will purchase approved research based programs, including Wilson, Step up to Writing, Spellography, Math Navigator and Origo for Tier 2 and 3 interventions.

### **English Language Learners**

At C3, all learners will consistently participate in higher level thinking activities, including creative thinking and learning. Based on the region of need on our enrollment we will be serving a population that may have ELL students but at a lower ratio than many other DPS schools. C3 will have an ESL teacher to meet the needs of our ELL students and district requirements. Merrill Middle School is a newcomer's center and they will be able to support any special needs that arise in this area.

### **Identification of ELLs**

We are part of the DPS structure and comply with all curriculum, assessment, monitoring and parent involvement for all ELL students. Based on our audit of 2016 we were found to be in compliance with our structure. We will monitor ESL hiring requirements from the district to ensure we are providing the best opportunity for our ELL students.



### **Instructional Strategies for ELLs**

C3 will use DPS recommended research-based instructional programs, practices and strategies for ELL students. We will follow the Department of English Language Acquisition's *Best Practice in English Language Development*. This document outlines "Look fors" in program and lesson components, classroom environment, and assessment. It also addresses best practices in lessons, instructional strategies, classroom arrangement, libraries and displays and assessment of language and learning. The Transfer of Language Plan for ELA-E classrooms will also help guide C3 ELA-E classrooms.

C3 will provide direct English Language Development (ELD) with EL Achieve and use an intervention program including resources such as Leveled Literacy Intervention as needed. Additional community resources and district resources, such as translators and community liaisons, will be made available to C3 ELL students and their families.

### **ELA Assessment and Progress Monitoring**

C3 currently has a .50 ESL resource teacher to work directly with students who are identified through the WAPT screening. The ESL resource teacher will also manage files, organize testing, and support teachers in implementing effective ELL strategies, and work with the parents' ELA PAC. The ELL teacher coordinates our ISA team, which includes the resource teacher, administrative partner and a classroom teacher. A body of evidence will be kept on each student with pertinent assessment scores including ACCESS, school interims, and DRA and state tests as applicable. In our daily ELD programs teacher will monitor progress with exit standards. C3 will work with DPS to ensure we are always in compliance.

### **ELA Qualifications and Teacher Training**

All classroom teachers at C3 are/will become ELA-E qualified and this is stated in promotional and hiring materials through Human Resources. Our ESL teacher is also highly qualified to teach students with a variety of language backgrounds.

Teachers will have yearly training on ELA strategies as well as culturally responsive classrooms. We not only want our teachers trained in language skills but also in culturally sensitive issues so that they can understand cultural differences. Staff will participate in the ISA team and provide training for leaders and teachers in this area. Our work with community partners will also offer experiences that reinforce the Avenues curriculum. For example, at the Young Americans Center for Financial Education we can supplement pictures of money with real world monetary experiences.

### **ELL Parent Communication and Engagement**

At C3 parents must sign a parent contract to be an integral part of our community, this will include all parents and we will target additional support for parents of second language learners with translators as needed. Parents will be invited to the ELA-DAC meetings as well as meet with other C3 parents of second language learners at regular ELA-PAC meetings. Creative thinking is not limited by language or culture. We also support the cultural needs of our students through our classroom libraries. Our community events will strive to showcase our cultures. Merrill Middle School has an annual International Night in May that invites all of the schools in the Cory-Merrill community to participate.

### **Students with Disabilities**

C3 will follow all district guidelines in working with the needs of students with a special education teacher to meet the mild moderate needs of learners, offering students a continuum of services in the least restrictive environment.



### **Identification of Students with Disabilities**

For students who do not progress adequately in Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions, DPS special education evaluation protocols will be used to determine if lack of progress is related to a disability and to identify intensive interventions for an IEP.

### **Instruction for Students with Disabilities**

For mild to moderate needs students with disabilities we have a special education team who is trained to identify, monitor and teach to the needs of these students in their least restrictive environment whether that be in inclusion or a pull out model with individual or small group work. Special programs including Wilson, Foundations, LLI, Origo, Step Up to Writing and Bridges Math Intervention are used as well as the continuing support of the Student Services division. We seek out professional learning for our staff on Twice Exceptional students, those with executive functioning issues as well as students with sensory processing needs. We have a literacy intervention teacher who is supporting students with dyslexia. We have the resources of a speech/language and occupational therapist as needed to address those aspects of students' IEPs. We have a part time psychologist on staff and a nurse to support IEPs.

### **Progress Monitoring of Students with Disabilities**

Our special educators monitor progress of students weekly keeping a record of all time spent and interactions with student, classroom teachers and parents in relation to specifications in IEPs. The special Education teachers organize and run all IEP meetings in conjunction with family and administrator, and classroom teachers.

### **Special Education Staff Qualifications and Training**

Our special education staff will be hired in accordance with DPS policies and guidelines. Special education teachers will be appropriately licensed and qualified. Qualifications must meet NCLB Highly Qualified requirements and we will also seek individuals who have experience in creative thinking.

**The Office of Student Equity and Opportunity** at Denver Public Schools supports training of all special education staff. Special education staff also participates in C3 professional development retreats at the beginning of the school year giving mild moderate teachers a chance to adapt the creative thinking curriculum as needed to the special needs of our population.

### **Students Performing Below Grade Level**

C3 follows all district guidelines in working with the needs of students who are performing below grade level. Classroom teachers keep records of students' progress towards mastery of skills and concepts taught in curriculum aligned with standards. All students at C3 performing below grade level have individual learning plans. READ Plans will be created for students that are reading significantly below grade-level (SBG). C3 will follow district mandates in accordance with READ Plans.

### **Identification of Students Performing Below Grade Level**

Three half days will be set aside for kindergarten students at the beginning of the year to assess their levels. The Administrative Team will begin to look at school-wide data and meet with teachers to identify students performing below grade level in reading, writing and math. During the school year, when Tier 1 instruction strategies are not enough, the classroom teachers will create a body of evidence and will ask for a SIT team based on observations, progress monitoring, I-Station, TS GOLD, DRA levels, Bridges Math Intervention, Illuminate and other grade level appropriate assessments.



### **Instruction for Students below Grade Level**

Students performing below grade level (PBGL) as indicated by the READ ACT will also have a READ PLAN developed with

a body of evidence including I-Station testing. Best practice in instruction is our initial line of defense, but we provide additional supports for students using the RtI model. Teachers monitor and adjust instruction for students including the use of additional resources such as: Foundations, Wilson, Orton-Gillingham techniques and LLI for Tier 1 and 2 interventions in classrooms. For math, teachers will use Bridges Math Intervention. Teachers, specials teachers and paraprofessionals will be trained on these programs as feasible. C3 will purchase approved research based programs including those mentioned above and others such as: Wilson, Step---Up to Writing, for Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions. We also benefit from having intervention support in literacy in grades 3-5, math K-5 and math tutoring for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5th grade after school supported by the district for our math students performing below grade level.

### **Progress Monitoring of Students below Grade Level**

In addition to following the assessment schedule described in our assessment section, teachers will progress monitor as needed and adjust instruction for students below grade level to ensure adequate progress towards their goals. To create consistent progress monitoring at C3, teachers will use a schedule collaboratively created by administrative partners and teachers. Teachers will meet with students and parents in conferences aligned with Standard Based Progress Reports.

### **Additional Staffing for Students below Grade Level**

Additional support for students performing below grade level will include paraprofessionals, interns, student teachers and administrative staff as needed to support teachers during small group and independent work as needed

### **Gifted and Talented Students**

We follow state and district requirements in creating and delivering a robust program of identification of our gifted learners meeting their needs in the classroom through differentiated instruction and supplementing through push-in support and our unique focus on creative thinking and community partnerships. Students' passions are supported through direct instruction, push-in, curiosity crews, and Advanced Learning Plans. We have a C3 GT Programming Plan outlining differentiation strategies, the parent and family engagement plan, the social-emotional development plan, and professional learning. C3 will administer all state/district required GT screeners and assessments, including the NNAT, CogAT, and ITBS.

RTI also includes working with the high-ability learners and C3 has the support of a GT teacher and a Creativity expert on staff who supports these students and staff. The staff works with the DPS GT office to deliver the universal screeners for GT and HGT identification. The district's current universal screener, the NNAT (**Naglieri**), will be administered to students at the Kindergarten and 2nd grade levels. Families who wish to apply for HGT status will nominate their student, who will then take the CogAT (Cognitive Ability Test) on the district schedule. C3 leadership will continue to work with staff to investigate existing assessments in creativity as well as begin to create our own to monitor the creative thinking of all students.

C3 is not an HGT magnet but a school that focuses on fostering creative thinking, high levels of achievement, and embracing challenges. All teachers will have training on teaching gifted students and divergent thinkers.



### **Identification of GT Students**

In addition to DPS GT assessments that are designed to identify students, C3 will assess creativity through non-traditional assessment methods that will be designed to eliminate bias that might be associated with standardized assessments. Because of our emphasis on different learning styles we will be able to observe gifted behaviors frequently with the DPS Teacher Observed Behaviors Checklist and SIGS (Scales for Identifying Gifted students).

The DPS GT Office invited C3 to create a Creativity Gifted Identification Pilot. We are creating and implementing student activities and using a Creative Thinking Rubric (see appendix) to cultivate and assess creative thinking. Teachers are explicitly using the language from the rubric with students and personalizing the rubric to align with each grade level and content area. The SIGS has a section on identifying characteristics of creativity and we are using this list as a screening tool.

Every building at DPS is responsible for meeting the needs of GT students. Each year we will develop our individual building plan, which include the following services:

- Clustering of students for instruction
- GT teacher push-in to classrooms to support strength areas in Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs).
- Acceleration within a content area or across grade levels
- Curriculum compacting
  
- The services of the GT teacher to assist classroom teachers
  
- Opportunities for enrichment with Renzulli's *Curiosity Crews*
- DPS GT sponsored special programs including Destination Imagination, Shakespeare Festival, The Young Authors Conference, Spelling/Semantics Bee, Brain Bowl, Mathletics, etc.
- Technology supported learning. We have mobile labs with the highest-level computers and IPADS as part of our ILT program and to work on projects. All classrooms have mimeos and docu-cameras.

### **Progress Monitoring of GT Students**

Students who are identified as GT or above will have Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs) in place. Parents and teachers will work with classroom and GT teacher yearly to complete these plans. These list strength areas and areas to focus on. The GT specialist will screen students in accordance with district guidelines. State scores and other approved assessments will be added to a student's data portfolio throughout their time at C3.

### **GT Teacher Qualifications and Training**

C3 hired a half time GT teacher who is highly qualified. In addition, all C3 teachers will be provided with professional development and support from specialists in gifted education and developing creative thinking skills.



The professional development offered to all C3 teachers, including the GT teacher, will include GT strategies. Staff regularly attends the Colorado Association of Gifted and Talented (CAGT) fall conference as well as has a presence at the National Association of the Gifted Child (NAGC) when possible. In the fall of 2012 the C3 staff presented at NAGC in Denver. Julia Shepherd and Lisa Iverson, original members of the C3 design team, and now respectively the principal and the 5th grade teacher, have attended *Confratute* at the University of Connecticut with Joe Renzulli and Sally Reis. Dr. Renzulli and Dr. Reis are leaders in the field of gifted education and have established a relationship with members of our design team through these institutes as well as a presentation from Ms. Shepherd at NAGC in Atlanta in 2010. C3 GT Specialist Jenn Rix presented at CAGT 2017 on GT parent engagement and maintains a positive working relationship with the CAGT board. These professional relationships are crucial to the ongoing development of C3.

### **INNOVATIONS APPLIED TO EDUCATION PROGRAM**

Innovation Status is necessary to allow curricula and schedule adjustments incorporating creativity curriculum that will spark students' inquisitive nature and adjust schedules so that creativity skills can be woven into all curricula. Through this status C3 will be specifically able to deliver a:

- creativity infused education program, adapting DPS curricula and instructional materials
- project--based, experiential learning opportunities with community partners that will extend students' learning to real life experiences
- School--wide student driven Curiosity Crews based on the enrichment model developed by Joseph Renzulli.

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

The assistant principal partner operates as the primary SAL and is responsible for managing the C3 state and district assessment process including schedules, materials, and other related protocols to effective and efficient administration. He is supported by the principal, the special education team and the 504 coordinator.

C3 uses district formative and summative assessments, including, but not limited to ANET, Bridges and ENY end of unit assessments, I-station, TS Gold, teacher created assessments and PARCC/CMAS. Starting in 2018-19 C3 will phase out ANET and move to Illuminate. Both STAR and DRA assessments can be formative assessments to support progress monitoring. C3 also develops new assessments for creativity skills and learning that occurs with community partners and Curiosity Crews. C3 is focused on using a Creativity Rubric (Appendix C) in collaboration with 2Revolutions to assess students creative development. These assessments are critical for monitoring student progress toward C3 goals. Teachers follow a learning cycle starting with pre--- assessment, review of the results, planning, instruction, and starts again with formative assessment.

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

- C3 will follow the district's interim assessments using Illuminate starting in the fall of 2018 for grades 3rd-5th in both ELA and math.
- Bridges and ENY end of unit assessments.
- I-Station K-5. Students SBGL will take the I-station assessment monthly to progress growth.
- Body of evidence for running records and written responses. Running records given one time per month for all K-3 students. Written response given 3 times a year for grades 1st-3rd. 2 times a year for kindergarten.
- We will collaboratively design and conduct assessments to provide baseline data in our unique goal areas, based on The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and Colorado State Core Content Standards.
- We will design and conduct assessments using a creativity rubric to assess student fluency and understanding of the tenants of creativity.

**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.**

**Beginning of the year pre--assessment:**

- When the school year starts for students, based on the current proposed DPS calendar we have set aside 3 half days to assess kindergarten students and pull in new students to C3 and others as needed. Vertical teams use this data to support student placement. We have also used I-Station to help with reading assessments.
- Demonstrate student understanding of and ability to use creative thinking skills. They will use a wide range of idea--creation techniques, create new and worthwhile ideas and elaborate, refine, analyze and evaluate their own ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts. A creativity rubric has been created to support these efforts.
- Reading: We will be using I-Station testing.
- GT: GT teacher will follow district schedule for screeners (like NNAT) as well as students who nominate for HGT testing such as CogAT.
- Math will use Bridges pre-unit assessments to determine preparedness levels.

**Interim assessments:**

Between October and January, students will take teacher created assessments to guide teachers planning and support differentiation of instruction and learning opportunities to meet students' needs and interests. These assessments include:

- Reading: I-Station, illuminate, Bridges and ENY end of unit assessments.
- Writing: ENY end of unit assessments.
- Math: Bridges end of unit assessments, Illuminate
- Art, PE/dance: Teacher created
- District SLOs for preparedness levels.

### **Summative assessment at end of year**

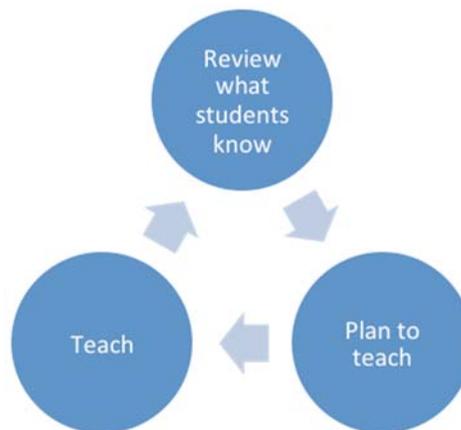
Between February and May, students will take district summative and teacher created assessments to measure growth towards goals. These assessments include:

- State required annual assessments. Currently CMAS/PARCC
- Reading: I-Station, Illuminate and ENY end of unit assessments.
- Math: Illuminate, Bridges end of unit assessments.
- Writing: ENY end of unit assessments.
- Art, Music, PE/Dance: Teacher created assessments
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills: We will monitor student progress for our unique goal areas, based on The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and Colorado State Core Content Standards.

### **Data Collection, Analysis, and Use**

Faculty will use DPS Teacher portal and school net to track data in literacy and math. Teachers will create professional learning communities during vertical time, centered on curriculum as they follow the learning cycle and meet with students to review individual learning plans. Teachers will meet as a vertical time at least two times a month to review student data and plan as necessary.

### **Learning Cycle**



### **Daily Assessment:**

Classroom teachers will keep records of each student's progress towards mastery of concepts and skills taught in curriculum aligned with standards. Teacher assessment tools will include; body of evidence, informal and formal observations (such as the Kingore Observation Index), exit slips, teacher made assessments and district assessments. Teachers will use these assessment results to adjust instruction as needed to ensure all students are making adequate progress towards their proficiency goals.

### **Technology**

Technology will be integrated in order to capture, display and maintain records that reflect not only traditional academic progress in reading, writing, math, science and social studies but also the creative output of projects and ideas. Periodically Idea walls will be installed in our main hallway where students, staff, and visitors can track and be inspired by others' ideas.

#### **Progress Monitoring of ELL Students**

An ESL teacher will support teachers in ensuring all ELL students are making adequate progress towards their goals. ELL students will be closely monitored in their avenues and ELD work. A body of evidence will be kept on each student with pertinent assessment scores including ACCESS, DRA2 and STAR. In the daily ELD programs, teachers will monitor progress with exit standards.

#### **Progress Monitoring of Students with Disabilities**

The special educators monitor progress and achievement of students weekly keeping a record of all time spent and interactions with student, classroom teachers and parents in relation to specifications in IEPs. The special Education teacher will organize and run all IEP meetings in conjunction with family and administrator, and classroom teachers. The special educator will ensure instruction tracks time and progress monitoring.

#### **Progress Monitoring of Students below Grade Level**

In addition to following the assessment schedule described in our assessment section, teachers will progress monitor as needed and adjust instruction for students below grade level to ensure adequate progress towards their goals. To create consistent progress monitoring at C3, teachers will use a schedule collaboratively created by administrative partners and teachers. Teachers will meet with students and parents in conferences aligned with Standard Based Progress Reports.

#### **Progress Monitoring GT students**

Students who are identified as GT or above will have Advanced Learning Plans (ALPs) in place. The ALPs will list strength areas and areas to work on each year. The GT specialist will screen students once a year in accordance with district guidelines. Approved assessments will be added to a student's data portfolio throughout their time at C3.

#### **Response to Intervention (RTI) (See Special Populations and at Risk Student Section)**

C3's goal is to stay a distinguished school, matching or exceeding schools in our area both in growth and status within three years.

- C. **If you are requesting waivers to DPS assessments, please complete Appendix B.**

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

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

C3 is not requesting any waivers from the district's graduation and promotion policies.

- B. Provide the school's exit standards for graduating students.

All 5th grade students will:

1. Demonstrate their ability to use creative thinking strategies. They will use a wide range of idea--- creation techniques, create new and worthwhile ideas and elaborate, refine, analyze and evaluate their own ideas in order to improve and maximize creative efforts. A Creativity Rubric will be used to evaluate this process.



2. Demonstrate their ability to use various types of reasoning, understand how the parts of a whole interact to produce an overall outcome, analyze, synthesize, reflect and evaluate to solve a problem.
3. Demonstrate their ability to collaborate by being flexible and respectful of each member's value to group. Students will share responsibility through experiences working with community partners and participation in Curiosity Crews.
4. Demonstrate self-directed learning and perseverance by setting their own learning goals and tracking progress towards those goals.
5. Demonstrate their ability to use technology to research in an ethical manner, organize, evaluate and communicate information.
6. Demonstrate knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions; set and achieve positive goals; feel and show empathy for others; establish and maintain positive relationships; and make responsible decisions. (SEL definition)
7. Demonstrate the ability to share perspectives and respect the perspective of others, acknowledge harm caused, take responsibility for their part, and repair harm to the extent possible in order to contribute to the community in a positive way. (Restorative Justice)
8. Students will be empowered to be kind, courageous thinkers as they move on to middle school.
9. Students will have experienced community partners throughout the city being positive citizens of Denver, while being aware of career opportunities in our region.
10. Our students will increase their growth in state assessments in grades 3-5.

(Goals based on The Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and Colorado State Core Content Standards)

**C. Describe how and when promotion and graduation criteria will be communicated to parents and students.**

C3 will provide trimester progress reports as well as parent teacher conference opportunities at least once a year. Parent information nights will be scheduled throughout the year as well as community nights for students to share their learning.

Progress monitoring will include I-Station and ANET. Starting in the fall of 2018 C3 will replace ANET with Illuminate. Both STAR and DRA assessments can be formative assessments to support progress monitoring. Unit assessments from both Bridges and ENY will also provide useful data in determining promotion and graduation. Also a body of evidence of student work will be collected throughout the year, focused on vertical team objectives. Both promotion and retention will be a collaborative conversation with teachers, parents, administration and SPED. A body of evidence, including assessments and work samples will be used to help determine the best decision to ensure student success.

**D. Explain what policies and processes the school will implement for students at risk of dropping out of high school and/or not meeting the graduating criteria proposed (i.e., credit recovery, etc.)**



### **C3 Innovation Accountability Team (IAT)**

The C3 IAT is responsible for shaping policy, directing resources, and adjusting the educational program as necessary in order to ensure that ALL students are able to make critical decisions about their futures with the knowledge and skills to succeed. (appendix K)

- E. **If you are requesting waivers to DPS graduation and/or promotion policies, please complete Appendix C.**  
C3 is not requesting any waivers from the District's Graduation and Promotion policies.

#### **IV. 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 Innovation Goals Model in **Appendix D.**

2. In 2015-16 and 2016-17 C3 achieved a rating of "Distinguished" on the SPF. Going forward as stated in our original innovation plan, C3 will seek to increase our metrics to maintain our current rating of distinguished. We will attempt to continue to improve our growth within the distinguished bands as stated in our LLN application. C3 will continue to work to improve our status scores in comparison to our similar schools indicated by the district. We know that the State indicators and metrics will change but our goal will be to strive for distinguished and maintain the SPF status we have already achieved.

- 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?**

As part of our LLN network C3 has a bi annual site review with a panel of outside educators who spend the day at C3 observing in classrooms, interviewing staff, families and students and creating an analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats ( SWOT). This immediate feedback pushes our continuous improvement in all areas of our school innovation plan.

As C3 grows as a school, enrollment and re---enrollments rates will be closely monitored. Parent surveys and focus group evaluations will allow the school to expand areas or adjust as needed to continue to

C3 will continue to work on attracting a diverse population of students as intended from our original Innovation Plan. C3 will work collaboratively with the office of Choice and Enrollment to participate in the FRL pilot making it a priority for enrollment following our boundary zone.

C3 opened with a spirit of collaboration striving for staff satisfaction at all levels to ensure a high achieving, quality school. Dialogue is encouraged and the shared leadership model opens avenues for teachers to grow their practice . We maintain a high teacher retention rate ( 95% in 2017)



Parent involvement is vital to the success of C3. Each year we re revamp parent contracts and our Parent Student Handbook ( Appendix E) and outline involvement and engagement and encourage it at many levels. C3 will seek out information about families and the best way for them to support the mission and vision of our school. We had a large contingent of families join us at the DPS board meeting in 2016 when LLN was approved. All parents are asked to commit to 20 hours of community volunteer time as a family each year, this includes attending conferences, back to school night and supporting classroom activities at school and with our community partners.

C3 established an Advisory Council before we opened comprised of community members and staff that help guide the school's mission and vision by supporting the PTSA and its financial needs. Parents are involved in a PTSA to support community building and fundraising needs. The school culture committee reaches out to all members of the community in order to maintain social supports and a commitment to our school motto to be a safe community of kind, courageous thinkers for the entire C3 community.

Conferences are scheduled with families in the fall and additional meetings will be added as needed. Report cards will be sent out three times a year to document student progress.

C3 will use the support of the LLN and school improvement partners to measure progress and to create the Unified Improvement Plan documents for the state. The instructional leadership team meets on a weekly basis and the C3 leadership team meets monthly and each person on the team is responsible for data in their assigned areas. The teams track all of the key areas that define the mission of our school: creativity, challenge (all of our academics), and community. As needed, just as in the SIT process for our students, the team will diagnose which areas need additional intervention for success.

The C3 administrative team facilitates professional learning meetings in collaboration with the teacher leadership teams. Student data is collected both in achievement and in social/emotional and engagement areas. As the staff increases, data teams have been implemented and we develop creative ways to display the data integral to the success of the C3 program. C3 will work to engage students from a young age, making them invested in owning their own data. This year third graders create WIN goals. The specials teams will be integral to the success of our students through their own subject areas but also as supports for interventions as needed. Specials teachers will be creating data collection tracking student progress.

The work with community partners will also be monitored and assessed through professional development time. C3 creates a community partner evaluation that is filled out by teachers and parents. The goal is to monitor how well our community partners are integrating classroom curriculum. Assessment tools will be used to monitor how we are doing on teaching the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and creative thinking skills.

C3's opportunity to create an innovative, high performing school is a rare one and the team will be innovative and creative as a community of leaders and learners to monitor progress toward the vision and the mission to ensure success in all areas. The integration of technology will give us opportunities to capture, display and maintain records that reflect not only traditional academic progress in reading, writing, math, science and social studies but in our creative output of projects and ideas.

Our innovative work with the LLN teacher council will add to the continuous improvement of our teaching staff as they invest in their growth by observing colleagues across the zone and work together.



V. 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.

1. Attach the school's proposed calendar and daily schedule of classes under innovation status. Include both a teacher and student schedule. (Appendix G )
2. Summarize the length of the school day, including start and dismissal times.
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.
4. Summarize the total number of hours and days allocated for tiered interventions, enrichment, tutoring and other non--academic activities.

### **Structure of School Day**

C3 will infuse creative thinking, challenge and collaboration with community partners into all aspects of learning. The school day will begin and end highlighting this focus and be extended beyond the normal hours required. Community meetings will be held on a regular basis, both in the classroom and as a school community.

Students will be supported in taking partial leadership roles in the community in the KCT Council as we develop leadership skills in all members of our community. We use our monthly rock ceremony to come together to develop a school culture that is caring and inclusive of diversity. Our moto, "C3 is a safe and caring community of Kind, Courageous, Thinkers," will guide our community work. Creativity sparks will be integrated throughout C3's curriculum as we engage students in thinking creatively and developing problem solving skills to achieve at high levels.

C3 is currently using the Content Specialization model (Platooning). We are currently working with the same number of academic content hours that is required by the district. The school day is divided into a morning block and an afternoon block of time (2 hours) for literacy and (2 hours) for math/science/social studies. Currently our school day for students begins 8:10 AM and ends at 3:15 PM. This is about 10 minutes longer than district requirements for the student day. Our staff day is 7:45 AM to 3:45 PM. On Wednesdays staff stays until 4:35 for vertical teams, professional learning or staff meetings. Large blocks of time will allow for creative inquiry activities that help children solve problems and develop creative products by using their imagination, and collaborating with other students. Teaching is collaborative with specials teachers assisting literacy and math/science teachers during the course of small group work or individual instruction as time allows. The large blocks will allow for flexibility in meeting students' academic needs (ELL, GT, Special Ed) and interests with related working with community partners. On average classrooms receive 40 minutes of specials per day with an additional 60 hours per year working with Community Partners. Because of our unique Community Partner schedule, classroom specials may be slightly modified week to week.



Another advantage of an extended day is our ability to allow for a technology and social emotional block weekly within each classroom. Technology will focus on developing typing skills using Keyboarding Without Tears, while our social emotional block will use C3's motto as its guide supporting a variety of curriculums such as Bully Proofing, RJ and Empowering Education. A 50 minute lunch and recess block will split the day.

The school day structure changes on Fridays or other days as needed when different grades of students meet with community partners. Departing students will start their day at school with a classroom meeting and a content block. At 9:30 a.m., students will get on a DPS bus or public transportation and head to their community partner's location, such as the Denver Art Museum, History Colorado or SPREE. Since opening the Denver Center Theater Academy comes to C3 meeting with our kinder students before they visit the theater. Teachers and community partners work together to connect partners to our curriculum whether to concepts of art, history, literacy, science or environment. Students will get to participate in real life learning and develop a deep understanding of the knowledge and resources our partners' possess.

Students will bring a sack lunch on these days so they can make the most of their two and a half hours. The cafeteria will provide a sack lunch for all students on free and reduced lunch or anyone who would like to purchase one. Students will get back between 12:30 and 1:30 p.m. Finally, all students will end their Fridays participating in Curiosity Crews in three sessions per year led by teachers, community members, paraprofessionals and parents that run from 2:20 to 3:00 p.m.

#### **INNOVATIONS APPLIED TO TIME**

The daily schedule for C3 students and staff is innovative in its flexibility to allow for additional blocks of times for technology and school culture work in the classroom and for teachers to collaborate in grade level and vertical teams. Students will also have multiple opportunities to work collaboratively with each other as partners and in small groups. The day is also longer and is changed as needed to meet all academic needs.

Innovation Status for teacher time and schedules will support us to facilitate at least 1 to 4 days of professional learning (PL) for all C3 staff prior to the start of the school year based on available funding. During January budgeting, administration evaluates the budget for PL prior to school starting. After all other budget needs are met and LLN funding is determined remaining funds can be used to add additional PL days for C3's staff. This will be determined before January and August. These PL days include an off-site retreat, this year to visit the Calder exhibit at the Denver Botanic Gardens, one of our community partners, as well as work on campus culture focusing on 1) C3 vision and mission; 2) How to infuse creative thinking into the curriculum; 3) Culturally responsive teaching and 4) How to integrate innovative technologies into instruction and 5) Addressing needs of all C3 learners.

Additionally, C3 teachers will participate in curriculum planning with community partners. Kindergarten teachers will spend three half days conducting individual assessments of students during the first week of school. All grade-level teachers will analyze student achievement data and plan for beginning instruction within the first two weeks of school. We currently have made minor changes to the DPS calendar; as a result of Merrill Middle school changing their bell schedule. We have implemented a modified conference schedule to allow for a fall break. We are trying to find more opportunities for professional learning throughout the year. Moving forward we will involve the administrative team as well as teacher leaders to help evaluate professional learning opportunities well as how they fit in our yearly schedule.

Innovations in scheduling will let us create big blocks of time for our entire staff to meet with small groups of students supporting standards based learning and individual areas of interest. We need Innovation Status to adjust the school calendar to find additional professional learning for staff training, assessment and reflection. Specifically these innovations will allow C3's administration team to meet around budget time to discuss our future calendar and staff training time.

- create student and staff schedules that incorporate community partner time, creativity time, technology, social emotional learning and collaboration time.
- have additional professional learning days for teachers to integrate creativity in instruction.
- create a schedule of days off and late starts/early releases based on school needs. C3 is following the district calendar for holidays, testing and most green days. The school leadership team during the budget cycle will determine if any modifications should be needed moving forward and opportunities for summer professional learning.
- increase of length of school day by 10 minutes compared to district recommendations. Currently, C3 has felt successful with our current calendar and school day. However, should C3 want to reevaluate our school day the following process would occur. First, the administrative team would make a proposal to the teacher leaders. Collaboratively, they would evaluate both the pros and cons of making any changes to the school day with student success being the guiding factor. Once a decision has been made, the administrative team would present it to the IAT for further review. Once approval has been determined from both the teacher leader team and the IAT plans will be implemented to make changes as needed.

**VI. 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.**

C3 is an entirely choice school with a preference zone and is committed to diversity and will seek a diverse enrollment by:

- targeting neighborhoods where existing school enrollment includes high diversity.
- participate in the FRL pilot with the Office of Choice and Enrollment.
- contacting and presenting at neighborhood associations (Virginia Vale, Cory---Merrill etc.) to offer services for diverse student populations.
- providing recruitment information at pre---schools including those with a diverse population.
- researching transportation opportunities allowing C3 students who have siblings at Merrill Middle School to use the buses that serve Merrill.



- participating in the district School Choice enrollment system, which includes a website and recruiting EXPO
- working with GT itinerants across the city to identify creative students.
- working with DPS Communications Office to get the word out to necessary neighborhoods
- enlisting our parent community to share our school with neighbors and friends.

Information on C3 is made available through the:

1. DPS Enrollment Guide and on the DPS website.
2. C3 website.
3. C3 postcards mailed to Denver neighborhoods.
4. C3 Facebook page that contains community information.
5. C3 twitter feed shares exciting news and updates
6. C3 pencils, magnets, postcards, rulers and flyers.
7. PowerPoint presentations shared at community meetings which highlights C3.

C3 hosts community engagement meetings including:

- Reaching out to the neighborhood preschools and organizations.
- Upcoming community meetings in the spring once acceptances go out so parents can meet each other and already hired teachers.
- Tours of the C3 Merrill Campus for prospective families on Thursday mornings from October through May.
- A C3 Saturday Open House for prospective parents prior to the 1st round choice window

Opportunities to Market School

1. Brochures and postcards sent to the entire preference zone and impacted SE schools
2. DPS choice EXPO
3. January choice information open house
4. Spring meeting with new families and staff
5. Work with LLN and DPS marketing department for press releases and articles
6. C3 Facebook page
7. C3 Open House posted on the DPS website
8. Inclusion in the DPS enrollment guide
9. We have community visitors throughout the year who spend time in our classrooms. Last year this included the Imaginarium, Boettcher teacher residency interns, teachers from the Clyfford Still Museum and fellows from the Hunt Kean Institute.

- 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. ( Appendices A, E and F)

Enrollment Documents

- DPS enrollment guide and website: <http://schoolchoice.dpsk12.org>
- C3 Parent and Student Handbook [Handbook](#) (Appendix E)

**VII. 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. Attach a copy of the school's personnel policies under innovation status. ( Appendix H)

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 is high performing and meets the needs of its learners.

**Employment Status**

Annual contracts will be provided to all teachers employed at C3. C3 and DPS will have the right to end the work relationship at any time with cause and at the expiration of an annual contract without cause. Teachers hired after the adoption of the innovation plan will be subject to agreeing to adhere to all provisions outlined in the innovation plan and will be offered annual contracts. The contract will outline general terms of employment to include the process for a teacher to end his/her work relationship with C3 and Denver Public Schools. If the school wishes to terminate a teacher contract early, the teacher will have a right to the review procedures described in DPS Policy GDQD and Regulation GDQD-R. We also have our protocol listed within our waivers. Dismissal of C3 teacher hired on annual contracts who have not previously obtained non-probationary status with Denver Public Schools shall comply with the policies referenced below. Nothing in this handbook guarantees employment at C3 or Denver Public Schools beyond the initial annual contract. C3 may, in its discretion, modify or revoke this procedure in whole or in part. These procedures are an effort to maintain fair and equitable treatment of employees. These procedures do not change the terms of the annual contract. C3 will make annual decisions regarding teacher contract renewal and communicate those decisions as early as possible. Teacher employment will not be subject to the Teacher Employment Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990, § 22---63---101, et seq.

If there is not adequate progress from the process listed above, teachers who continue to not perform satisfactorily shall be placed on the school's performance improvement plan. Once a teacher has received a performance improvement plan from the school's principal the school leader will identify areas for improvement with the teacher, give the teacher notice of these areas for improvement in writing, and conduct weekly observations with written feedback. If, after a minimum of 30 teacher contact days, the teacher fails to make sufficient progress under the plan, the teacher's unsatisfactory performance will constitute cause for terminating the annual contract before the end of the school year. Also, should there not be adequate growth as a result of targeted supports indicated above, the 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. The plan for support will follow HR and DPS protocols and time frames for the performance supports as indicated in replacement policy for article 10 waiver. DPS performance performance plan templates can be found in the appendix.

Teachers employed by DPS who obtained non---probationary status in DPS prior to their employment at C3 will work under the terms reflected in the annual contract. Such teachers will have the right to participate in the DPS staffing cycles available to all DPS teachers, but will not be guaranteed placement in any other school or further employment beyond their employment at C3 if they do not secure a position through mutual consent. All teachers who previously obtained non-probationary status in DPS are encouraged to review the District's FAQ on Probationary and Non-Probationary Status on the DPS Employee Associations website (under DCTA) to determine the impact on their status when they move to an innovation school. The current FAQ is available [here](#).

The employment rights of secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians, facility managers, and food service personnel will be determined by District policy and the applicable collective bargaining agreement and/or memorandum of understanding. C3 will collaborate with the district regarding the selection and placement of all personnel including secretaries, paraprofessionals, custodians, facility managers, and food service personnel. In the event that a classified staff member is deemed to not be a good fit at C3, the school will work with the district to remove the staff member and find a more suitable placement. The C3 principal will be the ultimate decision maker regarding the selection and hiring of secretaries and paraprofessionals.

As Described in this document, including Appendix H, the school is requesting maximum flexibility to:

- Recruit and hire staff, including teachers, administrators, and other support personnel, using practices that will ensure employees fit with the school's Innovation Plan.
- Post vacant positions, recruit, and hire staff as the need arises, even if such need falls outside the District's standard hiring cycle with the approval of the DPS Dept. of Human Resources.
- Not be subject to direct placement of teachers by the District.
- Hire part-time staff on fractional increments (e.g., .30 FTE, .65 FTE) that meet the needs of the school.
- Create non-traditional job descriptions, which may include adding roles to any job description.
- Hire non-licensed teachers for non-core subjects, i.e. Technology, who are not required to meet ESSA highly qualified criteria; the school will hire core subject teachers who meet the highly qualified requirements for their particular content area (s) language arts, math, science, social studies. arts ( visual arts and music). Create a professional learning program that supports the Innovation Plan. C3 will have the option to participate in the District--provided professional learning or to opt out and provide its own professional learning that is specific to the unique needs of C3 students, staff, and programs. This applies to teacher leaders, administration and teachers.
- Create a process to evaluate and improve teacher performance.
- All teachers will, at a minimum, hold a bachelor's degree.
- Create a process to address underperforming employees.
- Establish compensation rates and other methods of rewarding performance, including additional bonuses and/or incentives, pursuant to the schools annual compensation philosophy. Any such compensation will meet or exceed district standards.

Such flexibility will be limited only by federal law, and Colorado statutes, DPS/DCTA Collective Bargaining Agreement provisions and District Board policies not waived in this application.

- B. Describe any innovations in the school's staffing plan under innovation status and how these changes will produce gains in academic achievement.
1. Describe all non-teaching staff positions and how they will contribute to achieving the school's goals.

The administrative team at C3 will add C3\ specific details to all job descriptions for all staff assignments at the school. The team may use standard DPS job descriptions, but is in no way limited to them.

The paraprofessionals and math tutors provide needed supervision of students during lunch, before school, after school, and during recess. They also provide instruction under the guidance of classroom teachers and learn progress monitoring of assessments as needed. This support enables students to receive on target instruction to increase learning. The library/tech paraprofessional prepares and organizes media materials to promote independent reading and building the habit of reading . Our tech specialist works with students in the classroom with the keyboarding without tears program to educate our students on iPad and Chromebook usage. The enrollment secretary and nurse are responsible for recordkeeping, attendance monitoring, and communication with the public, among other tasks assigned by the principal and administrative team. 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 database system for all records of the school. We have two health tech paras who support the special health needs of our students.

Currently we are working with the Boettcher Teaching Residency Program. This opportunity allows us to bring in qualified candidates that are in the process of acquiring their teaching license. Residents will be working under a veteran teacher.

The structure of the administrative team consists of the Principal Partner and Assistant Principal Partner. C3's administrative team is designed to support challenge, community and creativity. The administrative team acts as the pedagogical leaders of the program in the school. The team has grown with the school's enrollment and the teacher leader program. We now have an Instructional leadership team that includes the admin team and two senior leads.. The administrative team ensures that the standards for implementation are understood, and that the program is planned, taught and assessed collaboratively. Together, with the ILT and the C3 leadership team the administration is responsible for the development of the program. The C3 leadership team works directly with the teaching team and are involved in the planning and training of the staff.

2. Attach a copy of the school's organizational chart with innovation status. (Appendix I)
  - a. Highlight any changes in the organizational structure with innovation status and how these changes will lead to increased student achievement.

“A good school for me is a place where everyone is teaching and everyone is learning – simultaneously, under the same roof. Students are teaching and learning; principals are teaching and learning; and teachers are teaching and learning.”

*Roland Barth, Improving Schools from within, p.162.*

### **C3 Leadership Statement**

Schools are places for students to grow and learn under the tutelage of talented and caring teachers and leaders who can guide them. The learning of the adults as they create professional learning communities is essential to the student learning. Crucial as well is the community's involvement in the programs and supports for their students and the school culture. An integral part of a school's success is offering a safe environment that nurtures and fosters each student's greatest potential and models for them a culture of caring and respect.



### **Administrative Team Leadership Model**

Creativity Challenge Community will have a shared leadership model of a principal partner and assistant principal partner who fulfill the traditional roles of principal and assistant principal. These admin partners will oversee operations and will anchor the C3 instructional and leadership teams and the organizational structure including budget with the support of the office secretary and shared budget analyst at the central administration office. Each member of the administrative team will have specific leadership responsibilities. Beyond the traditional administrative duties, C3 leaders' focus on creativity, challenge and community will require coordination, curriculum development and training for staff. C3's Instructional Leadership Team (ILT) is made up of a Principal Partner, Assistant Principal Partner and two Senior Team Leads. Roles and responsibilities of the ILT include, but are not limited to LEAP evaluations, professionalism conversations, review of student data and teacher retention and support.

### **C3 Leadership Team With Team Specialists**

C3's leadership team is made up of the ILT and includes teacher Team Specialist (TS) with stipends supplemented by the district. Currently, C3 has TS for math, literacy and specials, Creativity and Culture and a new teacher liaison. Each TS takes responsibility for one of these focuses. Teacher leaders also sit on the leadership team as well and help make decisions on schedules and professional learning. The school leadership team will meet bi-weekly or monthly depending on need and make decisions by consensus. This team will work to create the professional learning community at C3. The Administrative Team will check-in daily and meet on a weekly basis to manage all of the areas. The Principal Partner will evaluate the Assistant principal partner and share responsibilities of evaluating the senior team leads with the assistant principal partner.

The C3 Principal Partner will have the autonomy and accountability outlined in both the school and LLN Innovation Plans and will report to LLN Executive Director and Board. The C3 Principal Partner is evaluated by the LLN Executive Director and reviewed by the IAT each year.

**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.**

C3 is continuously searching for teachers who align with our philosophy through our intern program and networking. C3 will use the following official processes to identify, recruit and select staff beginning in late Fall:

- Develop job descriptions aligned to the C3 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 all DPS website, job announcement, and job fair opportunities.
- Post open positions on alternate websites
- Create an orientation program for staff new to the building with support of new teacher ambassador. This is in addition to any necessary DPS induction program.
- Clearly communicate in job postings that teachers will be held accountable for implementation of the C3 program with fidelity; that the use of technology and embracing creative thinking and community partners are job expectations; and that all staff will be on annual contracts and continuing employment depends on performance and meeting criteria established in the job description.
- Include innovation status in job posting on DPS website.

**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 personnel committee, shall select the best---qualified applicant for each position, without discrimination based on age, race, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, ancestry, place of residency and consistent with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act or such other specified human or civil rights as may be protected by statute.

C3 Teacher Qualifications/Essential Functions:

**Culture**

- Philosophy of understanding the role of persistence (in creative thinking and work products) and coaching incremental change in student work
- Monitor, supervise, coordinate and enforce rule of conduct and behavior assigned students; and reinforces positive student behaviors in accordance with school and District policy.
- Ability to establish a safe climate that allows students to take academic and personal risks
- Knowledge of creative student characteristics
- Communicate with parents or guardians, teachers, counselors, and administrators to resolve students' behavioral and academic problems; and coordinate instructional efforts.
- Possession of a growth mindset.

**Pedagogy**

- Establish and communicate clear objectives for lessons, units, and projects to students.
- Present subject matter to students, using various teaching methods and technology, adjusting teaching style and method to meet student---learning style and to conform to C3 tenets.
- Instruct students individually and in groups, using various teaching methods (e.g. lectures, technology, discussions).
- Collaborate with students and parents to prepare Individual Learning Plan for students in strength areas.

**Content Knowledge**

- Prepare educational course outlines, objectives and materials according to curriculum guidelines or state and local requirements.
- Expand, enrich and accelerate district curriculum as appropriate for advanced learners.
- Multiple Intelligence training
- Project based learning experience.
- Culturally responsive training and strategies.

**Assessment**

- Observe, evaluate, report and record students' performance, behavior, social development and physical health.
- Prepare, administer, assign and grade tests and assignments to evaluate student progress, reporting grades using District software and assessments.
- Prepare student, attendance and activity reports as required by Principal.



### **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

At Creativity Challenge Community (C3) all teaching staff will be required to be ELA---E qualified. Applicants must also have experience with diverse learning styles and be knowledgeable in the work of Howard Gardner and other related authors on Creativity and increasing student engagement. As an innovation school we will provide a one to four day retreat in August with our staff to immerse our staff in our Mission and Vision, share our innovation status and integrate creative thinking skills into the curriculum. As part of our program students will spend Fridays or an alternate day at a community partner. There will be additional professional development with our community partners to learn about these programs. Applicant must be flexible with a variety of ages and learning styles, including special education, ELA and highly gifted. Applicants must be ready to teach 21st Century learning skills and be able to contribute leadership to the teaching team. Experience in technology in the classroom and with a high performing school is preferred.

**Note:** Without innovation status and accompanying waivers C3 would encounter roadblocks to not only having the right staff in the school but also resistance to the enormous amount of training and collaboration required to implement the C3 creative thinking curriculum and community partner work.

**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 abide by the minimum requirements of the DPS salary schedule/Procomp as explained above. Compensation will be based on employee qualifications and performance and not solely on a predetermined salary schedule. Base teacher compensation may be supplemented with periodic stipends or bonuses based on performance, attendance, and extra time worked, as determined by school leadership and available funding, as described in the annual compensation philosophy. Involvement by teachers in the LLN Teacher council and cohort sponsored activities may include stipends.

Senior team leads and team specialists will receive additional stipends for their added duties and responsibilities.

Currently C3’s salaries are based on a district average, not actuals. Each year during budgeting, C3 will look at both the pros and cons of averages vs. actuals and work in accordance with our budget partners, staff and IAT to make adjustments as needed.



**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, C3 will develop certain components of its professional learning program, but may continue to participate in the programs offered by DPS. C3’s Leadership Team will make these decisions, unless it is a district mandated professional development.

Consistent with the school’s mission of developing knowledgeable, inquisitive, and creative young people, C3 teachers will participate in collaborative professional development that includes peer observations and feedback and collaborative data analysis and planning. All teachers will take part in a professional development retreat to learn to integrate creative thinking skills into the curriculum. There will be professional learning with each of the community partners before school starts. Staff will also participate in hands on professional learning on creative thinking.

C3 will increase student achievement by ensuring that C3 teachers are knowledgeable about the content and skilled at implementing the programs that they teach and which are part of our mission and vision.

Teachers also have the option to participate in cohorts and labs sponsored by the LLN Teacher Council and offered with all 4 schools.

**Overview of Professional Development Plan**

The C3 professional culture will include all staff working collaboratively to analyze student needs and design instruction to ensure that students succeed. Consistent with the C3 mission, all members of C3, children and adults, will engage in creative thinking, consider diverse perspectives, and work together to solve problems. The school will foster an “all for one and one for all” attitude and staff will hold one another accountable for actions that are congruent with the mission of the school. Administration team and teacher leaders will be responsible for developing, leading and evaluating professional development with the support of teacher leaders.

All C3 teachers will participate in new district training related to the Colorado Common Core Standards in their discipline areas. Teachers new to the DPS curriculum will participate in District and school professional development on curriculum. Additionally, all C3 teachers will engage in continuous professional learning on how to integrate creativity into curriculum, instruction, and assessments using the design thinking model.

Over the course of the year, C3 teachers will engage in professional learning that is differentiated based on their own learning interests and needs as well as the needs of the students. Staff will meet Wednesdays after school and on district Green Days. Additional meeting time with Community Partners may happen as well as any other meeting times that may arise. Wednesday meetings will be split between, business meetings, vertical teams and creativity and school culture.

C3 teachers also have an opportunity to participate in professional learning through the LLN teacher council.

### **Professional Learning Communities**

C3 staff will participate in Professional Learning Communities around their academic focus areas as well as student needs and development, creative thinking and school culture. This is a meaningful method of engaging teachers in professional development that directly connects to their teaching and is driven by student data and the special needs of the school's mission and vision. The PLC process supports C3's culture of taking ownership for our learning through a process of discovery and critical thinking that helps teachers refine their teaching techniques and collaboratively reflect on student learning in the classroom. On alternate Wednesdays classroom teachers meet in vertical teams around math or literacy and specials teams work together. We also have professional learning around creativity and school culture.

Educational researchers Hargreaves and Fullan, describe the benefits of professional learning communities, "Effective collaborations operate in the world of ideas, examining existing practices critically, seeking better alternatives, and working hard together at bringing about improvements and assessing their worth."

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

C3 teachers can participate in DPS's leadership opportunities. C3 also includes differentiated role opportunities for our veteran teachers as part of the STL program at DPS. This also includes teacher specialist positions. Senior Team Leads and Teacher Specialist participate in the School Leadership Team. We will facilitate mid-year conversation with teachers we will discuss future plans to guarantee retention of our most effective teachers. With the advent of the LLN we have teachers involved on the Teacher Council planning professional learning for colleagues across the zone.

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

Multiple opportunities will be provided to support the growth of C3 teachers. C3 has established a leadership team comprised of both Senior Team Leads and Teacher Specialists. During budget season, monies will be set aside to support professional development offered to all C3 teachers, including the GT teacher, will include GT strategies. Professional development opportunities include DPS PD, Colorado Association of Gifted and Talented fall conference as well as the National Association of Gifted Child (NAGC) conference. The Aesthetic Institute of Colorado offered in collaboration between the University of Denver and Think 360 and Confratute at the University of Connecticut in the summer, as well as other opportunities teachers are passionate about exploring. Opportunities have been offered with our staff in collaboration with PEBC that focuses on different areas of our curriculum. We also provide our strongest teachers with the opportunity to be mentors as part of the Boettcher Teacher Residency Program.



Teachers are all also able to access cohort learning through the LLN teacher council. This involves visiting classrooms in the LLN zone schools with teachers supporting similar instructional areas from academic subjects to social emotional learning.

Teachers will decide on PDU units of study and use the School Net and Schoology resources for additional professional development needs around the school wide and individual areas of focus in LEAP.

**3. Describe the school's plan to cultivate future leadership capacity.**

C3 will participate in district leadership programs to look for and grow leadership opportunities. Currently, C3 has added two STL and multiple TS as part of the STL program at DPS. Stipends are included in these roles determined by the district. C3 is also interested in establishing a leadership pipeline within the LLN. This would be in collaboration with an already established principal licensure program such as Denver Lead Today. Other possible partners include but are not limited to Catapult and Learn To Lead and the Ritchie Program.

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

As part of the LLN, C3 administrative team will participate with LLN School leaders, district Principals as well as shared campus leaders in the district with the express purpose of sharing practices and learning from the successes and challenges of others.

We have opened our campus to a variety of visiting educator groups including the imaginarium, PEBC/Boettcher learning labs, community partner organizations, and a national leadership group the Hunt Kean Fellows.

**E. 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.**

C3 will continue to use the LEAP evaluation system and observation tools to set individual performance goals. Teachers will set goals in consultation with their evaluator around school wide area of focus, individual areas of focus and Student Learning Objectives.

C3 will use Student Learning Objectives SLO's in accordance with the district to monitor student progress and growth year to year.

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.

We are also piloting identification criteria for gifted students in creativity.

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

Teachers will be evaluated using the Denver Public Schools LEAP multiple measures that include principal and peer observations, professionalism and contributions to the team and school, student perception data, and student outcomes which include student growth data as measured on standardized assessments.

All teachers will be observed as stated in LEAP guidelines using the Framework for Effective Teaching with a school wide and teacher area of focus. We are also planning to pilot some language around creativity to add to our use of the framework. C3 is currently using the LEAP system at DPS but the school has the authority to create its own evaluation system, provided such system meets the standard provisions of SENATE BILL 10-191 and is approved by the District. See waiver article 10.

Staff excellence will be recognized and celebrated through vertical team staff meetings where teams will share results with other teachers. Teachers will model best practices and will work with collaborative teams to analyze instruction that is resulting in exceptional student achievement. Each faculty meeting we will celebrate teacher success and give public recognition around DPS shared core values, academic achievement and Kind, Courageous, Thinking.

Administrative team is evaluated through LEAD, nursing, psychologist, paraprofessionals and secretary each have evaluations systems aligned to their role. We hold regular meetings of classified staff to address additional training.

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

Consistent with the DPS LEAP evaluation system, the Principal Partner and Assistant Principal Partner, and senior team leads, and peer observers will be involved in the observation process in LEAP. Teachers will be formally observed with specific feedback throughout the year with partial, walkthrough, full and bite sized observation and feedback.

**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 C3 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 administrators will offer support as necessary and will monitor progress weekly. Administrators will follow the DPS LEAP framework to monitor growth. If a concern is evident the admin team will work with HR partner to determine the best plan of action moving forward, including targeted intervention, observation goals, visit other schools for PD growth, IS observations and student data. Other observations such as conferences or SIT meetings will be observed for parent interaction.



If there is not adequate progress from the process listed above, teachers who continue to not perform satisfactorily shall be placed on the school's performance improvement plan. Once a teacher has received a performance improvement plan from the school's principal the school leader will identify areas for improvement with the teacher, give the teacher notice of these areas for improvement in writing, and conduct weekly observations with written feedback. If, after a minimum of 30 teacher contact days, the teacher fails to make sufficient progress under the plan, the teacher's unsatisfactory performance will constitute cause for terminating the annual contract before the end of the school year. Also, should there not be adequate growth as a result of targeted supports indicated above, the 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. The plan for support will follow HR and DPS protocols and time frames for the performance supports as indicated in replacement policy for article 10 waiver. DPS performance performance plan templates can be found in the appendix.

Principal partners and senior team leads will also be subject to evaluation and will be monitored for any concerns around unsatisfactory performance. The LLN Executive Director will support this work as aligned with district standards.

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

Teacher performance data and student achievement data will be used to provide specific feedback to improve instruction and subsequently increase student engagement and achievement.

**F. 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 shared leadership model. This model creates a shared responsibility for creating a common understanding of the standards and practices of C3. With a shared leadership model, individuals on the administrative team benefit from increased empowerment. Oversight and accountability for the effective implementation of the innovation plan remains the school principal's responsibility with the support of Administrative Partners, leadership team and the IAT.

**G. 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.**

The Principal Partner should have the following characteristics:

1. Proven track record of leading a school to be very high performing
2. Experience with Denver Public Schools' departments
3. Ability to build consensus among groups
4. Proven skill at establishing direction for an organization and design multiyear plans to implement the plans successfully
5. Broad knowledge of instructional issues
6. Proven staff developer related to curriculum and instructional issues
7. Experience with budgetary issues related to schools and school development
8. Experience with school enrollment marketing and fundraising
9. Understanding of Central Office issues, perspectives, and support systems
10. Cares deeply about students and their success
11. Experience in enrollment and marketing
12. Understanding the tenants of creativity
13. Experience working with business in the arts or academic world
14. Clear understand of implementing vision and mission
15. Strong track record with parent engagement
16. Prior knowledge of community where school is located
17. Community partner connections to support addition of new partners

An Assistant Principal Partner at C3 will have the following characteristics:

- Is an integral part of the Denver community, connecting with universities, arts and business institutions.
- A creative thinker who considers diverse perspectives and works collaboratively to solve problems.
- a highly motivated, self--directed, resourceful leader
- embraces the mission, vision, and goals of the school
- has knowledge, experience and/or credentials appropriate to this position
- is comfortable with leading complex systems change
- is positive, articulate, and inspiring
- is able to identify and resolve problems resourcefully
- has excellent written and verbal communications skills
- understands the diverse needs and demands of the community
- experience with high performing schools
- Community partner connections to support addition of new partners
- familiarity with SAL work



Background: Experience with helping a community create a vision and then designing the means to achieve the vision in all aspects of the organization.

- G. Provide a detailed leadership succession plan that 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 C3 Leadership Succession Plan is as follows:

Based on C3's unique model the ideal best practice for succession at our school includes the Principal Partner mentoring a candidate for succession in advance of a vacancy who has a strong understanding of our mission and vision, innovation plan and the unique nature of C3 and its role on the Merrill shared campus. C3 will also follow the LLN succession plan model outlined below. A minimum of a semester would be best practice to prepare a potential candidate for the needs of C3. To develop an ongoing leadership pipeline, C3 will seek out teachers who want to be leaders with their peers as well as those who might want to begin to take on administrative duties and mentor with the Principal Partner as well as take part in programs like the Catapult, Learn to Lead and Ritchie Fellowship for further education and training. The Principal Partner will mentor and develop internal leaders from the administrative team and teacher leaders. This may also include leaders from outside programs such as Catapult, Denver Lead Today, Learn to Lead and Ritchie who may be a part of the C3 staff.

This intentional focus on distributed leadership and succession planning will expand also to school-based leadership, where the Zone intends both to accelerate and innovate on the district's teacher leadership program while also working to pilot an explicit succession planning programming for Zone school leaders. This is an important strategic initiative of the zone for a few reasons. First, it ensures a strong pipeline of talent to fill leadership roles at LLN schools and in LLN's administration. As previously acknowledged, effective school leadership drives positive student outcomes and this is the ultimate goal of the zone. Second, shared/distributed leadership helps to break down silos and foster more authentic collaboration; this is why it is one of the key principles of the zone. Zone leaders who have previously held school leadership roles in innovation schools can better relate to the needs of the community they serve. Finally, this focus communicates an important message throughout the zone that 'talent matters'. Championing leadership development programming and making it visible helps to establish and reinforce a culture of continuous improvement in the zone. Teachers are more likely to strive to constantly improve their performance if they see that development is a focus for the leaders within the zone as well. Constant and consistent improvements in teaching quality will ultimately have significant positive impacts on student outcomes.

In the event that the current school Principal Partner vacates the position, the LLN Executive Director in tandem with C3's Innovation Accountability Team will be responsible for implementing the principal selection process. Consideration for candidates will be given to other Administrative Partners and teacher leaders who have demonstrated successful leadership if they are qualified to do so. The LLN ED will work with DPS to identify and interview pool and the IAT will identify an interview team including the LLN ED, school staff and community members, which may include families and/or a community partner representative. The team will create selection criteria that align with the



Innovation Plan as above. The LLN ED and/or the Principal Partner will help with the selection of the candidates and advise the committee.

C3 will implement a multi-step interview and application process.

In addition to an individual interview, the candidates will be a part of a collaborative group interview process centered on C3's mission and vision to help gauge candidates' abilities to align with the creative and community aspects of our campus. A selection of 2-3 finalist candidates will be required to do a learning walk for instructional criteria and there will be site visits to the candidates' current assignment. A staff forum and a community forum will also be part of the process to ensure the candidate is a fit for this unique environment. A neutral person will be invited to facilitate all staff and parent/community meetings around hiring. Potential applicants who currently work at the school will not be able to participate in or attend any selection related meetings except for candidate forums.

The interview team and LLN Executive Director will select the two best candidates and make recommendations to the LLN Board, which in turn will make a final recommendation to the DPS Superintendent. The LLN Executive Director will inform the community of the final decision. The exiting principal will work with the incoming principal for a smooth transition for a minimum of one semester if at all possible.

#### **INNOVATIONS APPLIED TO PERSONNEL**

- annual contracts for employment and dismissal of all teachers and non-teaching staff
- teacher and staff evaluations that meet or exceed the district and state requirements
- school policies for dress and grooming of teachers and staff
- recruitment, hiring schedule, selection, employment terms, and offer made by the school
- compensation system that meets or exceeds DPS rates and provides incentives and stipends
- calendar of teacher work days, vacation days, and holidays based on school needs
- professional development content and schedule determined by the school
  
- staff assignments, transfers within the school, schedules and job sharing by school leader
- not subject to direct placements or the transfer of teachers by the District

#### **VIII. 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.

Our founding design team was strong in their dedication and knowledge of DPS while writing our application and getting approval. As we go forward, we are looking for diversity in teaching staff, parents and community members to contribute expertise in areas of second language learners, recruiting minority populations, and seeking out innovative funding sources.

We have added programs to support our parent engagement including a Grandparents and Special people day in November 2017 which is expanding our family outreach.



1. If applicable, attach a copy of the school's committee descriptions. (Appendix J) (See next question for description of CSC (IAT) and PTSA).
- B. Describe the parent and community engagement plan that will be implemented to support the school's mission.

C3 opened with a spirit of collaboration at all levels. We anticipated minority students to make up 34% or more of our population. Therefore, all C3 parent and family engagement strategies are geared toward a diverse community. In addition, all written communications are provided in English and Spanish as needed and translations or interpreters are made available.

C3 Parent and Family Engagement Strategies:

- New family event: Each spring we host an event for our new families at C3. In August we start by having grade-level lemonade coolers on the playground the week before school starts. Our PTSA also hosts a coffee cart and pancake breakfast in the first few weeks of school to encourage community engagement.
- School picnic – A school wide picnic is held on the first Friday of the school year. This is an opportunity for all students to see one another.
- School community meetings – There are several evening community meetings held throughout the year to help set the culture and introduce parents to our school culture and equity focus, our curriculum and creativity. Also, we hold regular ELA PAC meetings with parents of ELA students.
- Advisory Council—We have an Advisory Council for our community members and partnerships that will guide the school's mission and vision and support its financial needs. It meets monthly throughout the year.
- Innovation Accountability Team –. The Innovation Accountability Team (IAT), which includes four elected parent representatives, four elected teachers, one community member, one classified staff member and Principal Partner, meets monthly and provides input on school operations and accountability for implementing the Unified Improvement Plan and Innovation Plan. The IAT receives regular student achievement updates. (Bylaws appendix K)
- Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) – We have a PTSA that helps build strong school community and supports a direct giving campaign to support our fundraising needs. The PTSA meets monthly to discuss parent engagement, involvement, accountability and support. Participants of the PTSA represent C3's diverse student body. They also sponsor parent education sessions on school culture and other relevant topics.
- Parent Volunteering Opportunities – In order for parents to stay engaged and for C3 to be successful, all parents are required to give community hours of time or resources. We tap into family strengths in our "Curiosity Crews", extra-curricular programming, teacher and administrative support, school committees, PTSA and school improvement projects such as: Creativity, Garden, Technology, Culture and Equity. Families track these hours, this year with a new online program, and C3 tallies all the hours which exceed over 4000 a year, equal to one and a half staff members.



- Grandparent and Special friends day. This year we are instituting a new tradition of inviting grandparents and special friends of our students to visit the school in the week before Thanksgiving, We hope that the local grandparents will continue to be community volunteers and be involved in C3.
- Weekly Newsletter / Communication – The school leadership team coordinates an electronic weekly newsletter (C3 Chatter) that is distributed by email and in hard copy, if needed, to parents to communicate about weekly schedules of events, school initiatives and progress toward goals. Parent---teacher---student conferences are held in the fall and as needed to provide parents with information about the academic achievement and progress of individual students. Parent/Teacher Shutterfly websites have been established to facilitate communication regarding classroom activities including; testing, homework, curriculum, field trips and general updates. MSA blasts are sent as needed to share special information and remind families of community activities. Thursday folders are used to distribute community messages and homework.

We will have special evenings yearly to involve our families with creativity and special projects, which may arise. In our second year we had a gallery opening for our students work from our Art and Space artist residency.

C. Describe how innovation status will be used to leverage parental involvement.

At C3 we have developed a C3 Family Community Volunteer Service Policy that details a variety of ways that parents can volunteer/contribute to our community. We have staff who is assigned to maintain the contacts, support the online tracking of hours and forge the relationships with the families in our community. This will include training of volunteers who work with children in classrooms or as chaperones on excursions. Training will include strategies and background in inquiry---based learning, positive behavior support, and creative thinking strategies. In addition to volunteering through time or resources, parents will also be required to sign on to the school's website and classroom *shutterflys* for class assignments and weekly updates, attend parent/teacher/student conferences and be members of the C3 community. If a family does not have a computer at home, there will be a computer in the office for parent/guardian use. As part of our first year the families helped us write a creed for our school: *Creativity Challenge Community is a safe and caring community of kind, courageous thinkers*. One of our staff will also be in charge of working with the PTSA and assigning mentor families who help bridge the gap. We will also have interpreters for families who need them at all community events. We have created "family homework" that goes home in our Thursday folders to help involve all families in our school's culture. These are shared on our community bulletin boards.

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

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

C3 works collaboratively with over 12 community partners to develop lasting relationships that provide: in-depth students experiences at our partners facilities, introduces students to organizations in community for their educational and recreational benefit and explores future career opportunities. Our partner programs are customized through planning with teachers and partner's education personnel for a unique C3 experience that stretches across many visits. We continue to explore new community partner relationships.



## **University of Denver and Think 360 Arts Complete Education–Aesthetic Education Institute of Colorado**

- The University of Denver in collaboration with Think 360 ARTS sponsors an annual Aesthetic Education Institute, which gives teachers and administrators professional development in many areas relevant to C3. We are in consultation with the university’s education department about our program.

### **Denver Art Museum**

- The education department of the art museum has collaborated with our staff to develop programs that support C3’s mission and vision using the museum’s resources and staff. DAM and C3 have a strong interest in creative thinking skills and have shared resources to strengthen both of our programs.

### **Young Americans Center for Financial Education**

- YACFE supports the mission of Young Americans Bank in Colorado to promote financial education for the young people of this state. They sponsor a variety of programs for schools and individuals. We have worked with them to develop unique programs for C3 supporting math and social studies financial literacy. We plan to participate in the Young Ameritowne program with our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students.

### **Denver Center Theatre Academy at the Denver Center for the Performing Arts**

- We work with the education department to develop a unique drama program supporting literacy, creativity and our UIP writing goal. DCTA has provided a teacher who comes to C3 and works with all students for 5 Fridays and we end the study by visiting DCTA.

### **Museum of Nature and Science**

- C3 piloted several of the new programs DMNS introduced in the 2013-14 school year. We are utilizing programs at DMNS that support creative thinking strategies in the areas of science as it relates to C3 and DPS curriculum including inquiry based learning and hands-on opportunities.

### **History Colorado Center**

- C3 partners with History Colorado Center to teach social studies and literacy standards while inspiring students to find wonder and meaning in our past and engage in creating a better tomorrow.

### **Central City Opera**

- CCO has provided in-depth training for staff involved in this partnership. We have collaborated to teach social studies, literacy and music standards in a multi-sensory approach, culminating in an operatic performance totally created by students.

### **Colorado Ballet**

- We are working with Ballet education staff to create new learning opportunities that support literacy and dance.

### **South Platte River Environmental Education (SPREE)**

- We are utilizing SPREE programs that support C3’s science and social studies standards as well as develop environmental awareness through visits to parks along the Platte River.



### Clyfford Still Museum

- Working with the teaching staff at the CSM students learn about the work of Clyfford Still and the running of the museum. They put on a curator hat and review criteria for exhibitions and end the unit with a gallery presentation of an artwork they have created at C3 giving tours of the collection to their families and friends.

### Morporvida Dance

- Students visit the dance studio and create a group dance around a curricular subject being studied in the classroom. They work with studio dancers to create the work and perform back at C3 for families.

**IX. 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.**

C3 is a member of an innovation zone, the Luminary Learning Network (LLN). In alignment with the MOU between the LLN and DPS, the District shall provide to C3 their pro-rata share of funds associated with District services to which they have opted-out, if such pro-rata share can reasonably be calculated and implemented, and if the withdrawal of such funds will not result in a long term measurable increase in cost to the District nor a long term measurable reduction in the funding available to other schools within the District.

In order to determine the pro-rata share for C3 the District will use the collaboratively developed School Based Budgeting + funding ("SBB+") model for funding the IZone Schools. The BOE expects the District and LLN to continue refining in good faith the optional and required services list related to SBB+ and to review the overall funding model annually, in alignment with the District's budgetary timeline. In alignment with the Innovation Schools Act of 2008, there is an expectation by the parties that a different funding model will be explored and implemented in the event that the SBB+ model is unable to allow the IZone schools the maximum flexibility over resource use. The BOE will balance the equity of allowing IZone Schools to use resources at the school-level to best serve its students and the District equity of serving all students across all District schools.

C3 will receive the annual budget allocation based on the number of students enrolled on the annual DPS fall adjustment day. The budgeted funds provided by DPS will be supplemented by C3 fundraising and grants. In respect to all funds, C3 will seek to exercise maximum autonomy over the budget and purchasing decisions. As an innovation school, C3 will also analyze the costs and benefits of budgeting based on actual staff salaries versus district averages as part of the planning process.

- A. 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.  
C3 has developed a yearly budget along with our budget liaison and OSRI to support the essential financial needs of our program within our allocated yearly funds.
  2. Explain major revenue sources, including any funds originated from private sources.  
C3 will be seeking out opportunities to apply for grants from private resources that align with and support our mission and vision.

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.

a.

An Advisory Council was started before we opened the school made up of parents and staff. A PTSA was formed our first year in operation. Fundraising goals are set with the PTSA board each year for funds for large needs or projects. In 2012, our first year, we raised funds through direct giving for our library. A fundraising dinner and auction at Lola Restaurant raised the necessary funds needed to support our first year costs.

In 2013-14 we instituted the Great Create annual fundraiser, which raises the largest portion of our fundraising. Each year this fundraiser has targeted a specific need. In 2013-14 we raised funds for school garden which were matched by the Kitchen Community who helped build the C3 Learning container garden on our playground. Our goal last year was \$50 K to support staffing and student needs, including a new .50 position in social emotional learning and restorative justice, this is our KCT teacher . We organize dining out nights with community restaurants. Throughout the year we have smaller fundraising events at PTSA events (a school dance, a Fall Fitness Festival F3, an annual book fair). The Advisory council taps into parents' resources and local businesses to have smaller events to contribute to the annual needs.

We have been a fortunate recipient of an anonymous grant of 25 K for three years to support the fees for our community partner program. The Kitchen Community supported our Learning Garden at its inception and we have a received a small school culture grant in the past from the state of Colorado. In 2016-18 we are the recipients of an EPA grant which focuses on environmental education (\$5000)

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).



Our transportation needs to and from our community partners is an additional cost to our program. We are supporting this need by having a fee that each family pays to support additional transportation by DPS and/or public transportation. Families may ask for assistance for this fee. We also put in funding each year for additional staff hours for our 4 extra days of professional development before school and for special projects throughout the year.

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

This is built into our operating expenses.

4. 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).

We hope to see efficiencies due to our shared campus model with Merrill middle school in the areas of personnel. We have shared a library Para for all of our students and a school nurse but look for opportunities in other areas. We have also worked to use our innovation status to secure leadership interns who want to learn about innovation. In 2013 and 2014 we had resident assistant principals from Catapult (formerly Get Smart Schools). We continue to work as a shared campus team to think out of the box.

- B. 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.
1. Identify the person(s) who will directly manage and oversee the school's budget.
  2. The Principal Partner with the support of our itinerant budget liaison at DPS and school secretary will monitor day---to---day budget issues. The Administrative Partners will support daily operation and the IAT will approve budget on an annual basis that supports our Innovation Status and school mission.

#### **INNOVATIONS APPLIED TO BUDGET AND OPERATIONS**

- managing school finances: collecting revenues and managing receipts of money
- direct contracting for goods and services
- selecting and purchasing district services on an annual basis as determined by school
- governance model does not include a Collaborative School Committee but instead an Innovation accountability team (IAT) which supports and approves annual budget.

**X. 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 for each waiver.**

