

2023

# APPLICATION FOR NEW SEATS

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts  
[www.tapaprovidence.org](http://www.tapaprovidence.org)



# 1. Cover Sheet

**Name of Charter:** TAPA: Trinity Academy for Performing Arts      **Charter Type** (Independent)

**Location of Charter School:** 275 Westminster St. Providence, RI 02903

**Enrolling Communities** (if statewide, write statewide): Providence

**Primary Contact Name:** Elizabeth Richards-Hegnauer

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Charter	Grade Levels Served	Enrollment	Communities Served
AY23-24 for the current charter (expansions only)	7-12	204	Providence
AY24-25 proposed new or expanded charter	5,7-12	262	Providence
AY28-29 (5-years) proposed new or expanded charter	5-12	320	Providence
Proposed new or expanded charter at-scale	5-12	320	Providence

**Signature of Charter Board Chair:**  DocuSigned by:  
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**Print Name:** Sarah Whiting

**Organization/Title:** TAPA Board Chair

**Date:** 8/3/2023

## 1a. Table of Contents

1a. Table of Contents	1
2. Executive Summary	3
3. Mission Statement	5
How our expansion will sustain our mission:	6
4. Proposed New Student Seats & Enrollment	9
Expansion Plan	9
Target Student Population	10
Rationale for Expansion	13
Demand for alternatives to low-performing traditional public schools	13
5. Goals and Track Record of Academic Performance	19
Academics	20
English Language Arts	20
Evidence from the RIDE Report Card	30
School Culture	35
Evidence from RIDE's Charter Performance Indicators	38
Goals	39
6. Community Need & Support	41
Community Need	41
Community Support	43
7. Educational Program (Expansion Proposals)	46
Guiding Principles (No Changes)	46
The Arts	46
Personalization	47
Curriculum and Coursework (augmented to serve grades 5 & 6)	49
Course Expectations and Focus Areas	51
Continuous Improvement	58
Learning Environment and Pedagogy (augmented to serve grades 5&6)	59
Specific Populations (augmented to serve grades 5 & 6)	59
Universal/Tier1 supports:	60

MLL Support:	60
Students with IEPs:	61
Assessment System (No Changes)	62
Promotion and Graduation Policy (No Changes)	63
School Culture (no changes)	65
Inclusive Community	67
Behavioral system:	68
8. Organizational Capacity (Expansion Proposals)	70
Administrative Structure	70
Community Partners	71
Parent Engagement	75
9. Facilities	80
10. Operations	81
11. Finance and Budget	82
Fiscal Track Record	82
Budget Assumptions & Justifications	82
Major Assumptions:	82
Operating Revenues:	83
Operating Expenditures:	83
Contingencies:	83
Fund Management	83
12. Variances	85
Appendix A: Assurances	86
Appendix B: Required Proposal Attachments	87
Enrollment Table	88
Organizational Charts	89
Five Year Budget Projection	90
Evidence of Community Support	92
APPENDIX C: Other Attachments	93

## 2. Executive Summary

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts (TAPA) is pleased to enter its submission for consideration of a grade-level expansion. At TAPA, arts are the catalyst to connect neighbors, amplify voice, and empower a safe community. Our students develop the artist mindset and a lifelong spark for learning. Our school is award-winning, student centered, and a clear alternative to the traditional public schools offerings within the Providence Public School District. We are excited to remain steadfast in our mission and programming, while extending our reach to additional scholars. Our mission will be enhanced by serving more students, from a younger age, giving them more time to develop as artists and scholars.

TAPA is currently approved to support 204 students in grades 7-12, all from the city of Providence. We are requesting to expand each of our existing grade levels from 34 to 40 students (**36 new seats**) and to add 40 additional students in each grade five and six (**80 new seats**). At scale, our school will serve **320 students** across grades 5-12 (**116 total new seats**). We will engage in a gradual roll out of grades to accomplish this goal, adding grade 5 in 2024 and grade 6 in 2025. For the 2024-2025 school year, we will also open grades 7-9 to six new students each, in order to expand to our new cap. We will not be changing our student catchment area, but instead remain committed to Providence, where there remains great need.

We believe that this expansion comes at a critical time, as 71% (5/7)<sup>1</sup> of Providence's Middle Schools have been identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI). This is an indicator that the vast majority of middle school students would be assigned to a significantly low-performing school, should they not have the opportunity to attend a school of choice. We also know that our urban core students are, on average, facing significant social-emotional gaps and a lack of sense of belonging within their schools.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, families are not generally feeling that they are involved in key decision-making, with only 69% of families statewide having a favorable opinion of their child's school's culture.<sup>3</sup>

These challenges are magnified by the fact that they also represent significant gaps for youth of color, which make up 92% of the Providence Public School District and 93.8% of TAPA students. And similar challenges for students from low-income families, who make up 81% of the Providence Public School District and 67.3% of students who attend TAPA. Given gaps in academic and social-emotional support within the large traditional public middle schools, TAPA has a very high demand for its seats, with multiple students applying for each open spot each year.

TAPA is prepared to address these challenges on behalf of an expanded population, as evidenced by its track record of success. In 2019, TAPA was awarded the XQ Superschools Challenge prize, as the school in the state that had the most innovative plan and highest capacity

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<sup>1</sup> RIDE Report Card for PPSD 2021-2022:

<sup>2</sup> RIDE Surveyworks 2023: <https://secure.panoramaed.com/ride/understand>

<sup>3</sup> Rhode Island's Strategic Plan for PK-12 Education: [https://ride.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur806/files/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Inside-RIDE/Commissioner/RIDEStrategicPlan\\_2021-2027.pdf?ver=2022-03-01-112620-227](https://ride.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur806/files/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Inside-RIDE/Commissioner/RIDEStrategicPlan_2021-2027.pdf?ver=2022-03-01-112620-227)

to implement future-thinking programming for its students. TAPA has also seen dramatic academic improvement and high growth in student achievement in recent years. For example, its average student growth percentile in ELA for the 2021-2022 school year was 59.3% and math scores rose by over 600% from the previous year. These outcomes came directly as a result of investments in high-quality curriculum and professional learning as well as a steadfast commitment to student's holistic development.

In order to meet the demands of the expansion, TAPA will add two administrative positions to its organizational structure as well as 4 classroom teachers (2 STEM, 2 Humanities - 2 per each grade 5 & 6). Following this, students in grades 5 and 6 will follow a hybrid model where they have a core classroom teacher but rotate to a STEM teacher and to Arts Specialists. The first new administrator will be an assistant head of school who will serve as the head of the lower school (5-8). The second new administrator is a dean of academics who will focus their support on lower school academic support and training for teachers. These roles (with a focus on 7-12) are currently (2023-2024) being piloted by 2 aspiring principals from within TAPA's community. Despite these changes, the general reporting structure of the organization and distribution of educators to grade levels 7-12 will remain the same. TAPA is well positioned to take on the expansion from a financial perspective as its current facility can accommodate the school at scale and no additional staff would be needed to service the 36 new seats in grades 7-12.

While we do not anticipate any changes to our mission or to the emphasis of our core programming, we do recognize that each grade level requires its own approach and is adherent to differing standards. We will work to ensure that all core classes reflect these requirements and continue to leverage a high-quality curriculum. In addition, we will expand our arts coursework such that students gain deeper exposure to the variety of offerings that TAPA has, rather than requiring them to select a major in the manner they will in upper grades. We believe that the more time students are with us the more they will get to understand themselves and their interests, become engaged in our school culture, and grow academically.

### 3. Mission Statement

TAPA is an urban charter school located in the heart of DownCity, Providence, Rhode Island. Serving 204 students across grades 7-12, the small size of the school allows for deep relationships to be built between students, families, and educators. The cultural, religious, racial, ethnic, sexual orientation, and linguistic diversity of the community, families, students, and staff enriches who we are at TAPA. TAPA's mission statement is as follows:

***At Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts (TAPA), arts are the catalyst to connect neighbors, amplify voice, and empower a safe community. Our students develop the artist mindset and a lifelong spark for learning.***

*En TAPA, las artes son el catalizador para conectar vecinos, amplificar la voz y empoderar seguridad en la comunidad. Nuestros estudiantes desarrollan la mentalidad artística y un fervor por el aprendizaje para toda la vida.*

TAPA's approach to academic learning is based on an arts-integrated curriculum, and its efforts toward responsible citizenship are accomplished by setting a warm/demanding tone throughout everything we do with our students. As a school serving mostly first-generation college applicants, Latine students, and multilingual learners, TAPA has an intentional, culturally responsive, and systemic approach to increasing access to higher education. TAPA knows that it is successful in fostering lifelong learning, as 70% of recent graduates have enrolled in higher education, with

others in full-time employment and job training. TAPA also has a robust alumni support system and takes great pride in witnessing our student's engagement with their local community, both while at TAPA and after they graduate, through the arts and beyond.

### **How our expansion will sustain our mission:**

TAPA has a proven track record of success in connecting neighbors, amplifying voices, and empowering a safe community through the arts. By expanding to include grades 5 and 6, TAPA aims to support and enhance its mission, ensuring that more students have the opportunity to develop the artist mindset and ignite their lifelong spark for learning. TAPA therefore does not plan to change its mission as a result of the expansion. The school community believes that the expansion of our school will not only enhance educational opportunities for its students, but also contribute to the broader development of arts education in Rhode Island.

Existing research supports the benefits of arts education and inclusive learning environments on children's development. The findings referenced below provide valuable insights into the positive effects of arts education on cognitive, social, emotional, and creative development, the importance of culturally responsive teaching, and the role of arts integration in enhancing learning outcomes.

The proposed expansion to grades 5 and 6 at TAPA will therefore build upon the existing success of our school and further our mission by:

1. **Fostering Holistic Development:** Research consistently shows that arts education positively impacts and fosters cognitive, social, emotional, and creative

development in children<sup>4</sup>. TAPA has seen how powerful holistic development is within the current grades 7-12; 204 students it serves each and every day. By expanding to grades 5 and 6, TAPA can provide a comprehensive education that nurtures students' overall growth, enabling them to develop critical thinking, communication skills, empathy, and self-confidence through artistic expression.

**2. Promoting Cultural Relevance and Representation:** TAPA's expansion will enable it to incorporate culturally relevant pedagogies and diverse artistic experiences into the curriculum, ensuring that our students can see themselves reflected in the educational process<sup>5</sup>. The school community believes in creating an inclusive learning environment that values and celebrates the cultural heritage and talents of all of its students.

**3. Enhancing Engagement and Motivation:** The expansion to grades 5 and 6 will offer students extended opportunities to engage with the arts, fostering increased motivation, improved academic performance, and aspirations for higher education.<sup>6</sup> By immersing TAPA's students in an arts-focused learning environment, the school community aims to inspire students' passion for learning

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<sup>4</sup> Farrington, Camille, Joseph Maurer, Meredith McBride, Jenny Nagaoka, J Puller, Steve Shewfelt, Elizabeth Weiss, and Lindsay Wright. n.d. "ACTION REFLECTION ARTS EDUCATION and SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES among K-12 STUDENTS: DEVELOPING a THEORY of ACTION." <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2019-05/Arts%20Education%20and%20Social-Emotional-June2019-Consortium%20and%20Ingenuity.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Lomelí, Karla, and Karina Gutierrez. "Examining the Intersections of Culturally-Relevant Pedagogies and Youth Literature in Theatre Performing Arts and Its Implications for a More Inclusive Learning Experience for BIPOC Students." *Journal of Education and Culture Studies* 6, no. 4 (November 29, 2022): p91. <https://doi.org/10.22158/jecs.v6n4p91>

<sup>6</sup> Mahnken, Kevin. 2023. "Arts Education Program Increases School Engagement, Study Finds." January 10, 2023. <https://www.the74million.org/article/arts-education-program-increases-school-engagement-study-finds/>

and provide them with a strong foundation for future success.

4. **Fostering Transferable Skills:** Arts education promotes the development of critical skills such as creativity, problem-solving, collaboration, and communication, which are transferable to various academic and professional domains<sup>7</sup>. The expansion of TAPA can offer students extended opportunities to develop these skills, preparing them for future success in both artistic and non-artistic pursuits.

5. **Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Environments:** Performance and arts-focused schools often prioritize creating inclusive and supportive environments where students can express themselves authentically<sup>8</sup>. TAPA can foster a sense of community, belonging, and emotional well-being among students, particularly BIPOC students, by embracing their cultural backgrounds, experiences, and artistic talents.

TAPA is committed to upholding the highest standards of arts education, fostering an inclusive learning environment, and contributing to the educational landscape of its state. The TAPA community is confident that with the state's support, it can make a profound impact on the lives of our students and further strengthen its community.

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<sup>7</sup> Winner, E., Goldstein, T., and Vincent-Lancrin, S. (2013). *Art for Art's Sake? The Impact of Arts Education*. Paris, France: OECD Publishing. Available: <http://www.oecd.org/education/ceri/arts.htm> [April 2019].

<sup>8</sup> Barrientos, Janet. 2020. "The Arts in Charter Schools." Education Commission of the States. September 9, 2020. <https://www.ecs.org/the-arts-in-charter-schools>

## 4. Proposed New Student Seats & Enrollment

### Expansion Plan

TAPA is currently approved to support 204 students in grades 7-12, all from the city of Providence. The school is requesting to expand each of its existing grade levels from 34 to 40 students (36 new seats) and to add two new grade levels, each with 40 seats (80 new seats). At scale, TAPA will serve 320 students across grades 5-12 (116 total new seats).

TAPA will engage in a gradual rollout of grades to accomplish this goal, adding grade 5 in 2024 and grade 6 in 2025. For the 2024-2025 school year, TAPA will also open grades 7-9 to six new students each, in order to expand to its new cap. TAPA will not be changing its student catchment area, but instead remain committed to Providence, where there is great need. The addition of 40 students in each grade was intentionally decided upon to keep grade sizes consistent and small, across all grade-levels at TAPA. The small size of the school and its classes are essential to TAPA's design, which prioritizes individual student support.

Year/Grade	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
(Pre-Expansion) 2023-2024	0	0	34	34	34	34	34	34	204
2024-2025	40	0	40	40	40	34	34	34	262
2025-2026	40	40	40	40	40	40	34	34	308
2026-2027	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	34	314
2027-20208 (at scale)	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	320
Total new seats	40	40	6	6	6	6	6	6	116

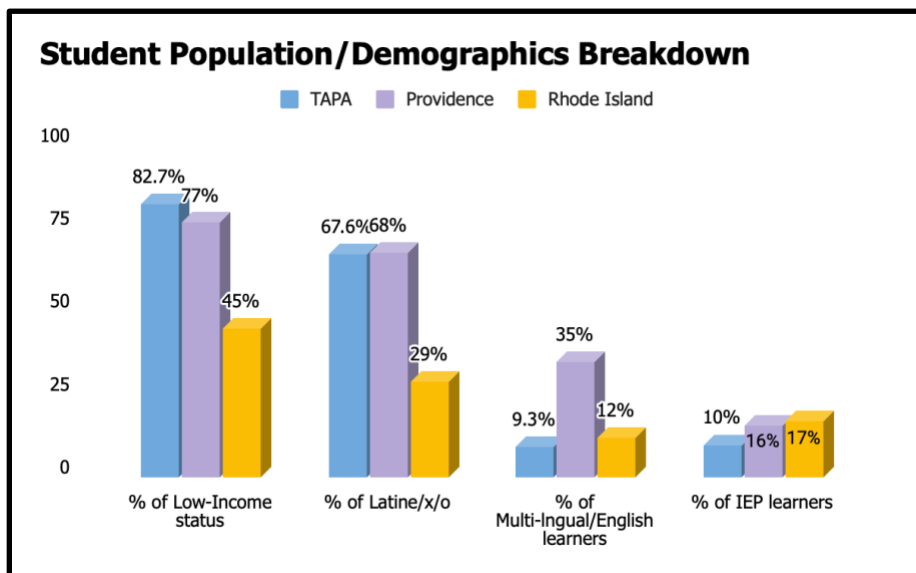
- This enrollment will not change the number of schools, will not constitute a network, and will not change catchment areas.

### **Target Student Population**

The state of Rhode Island is home to a total of 137,452 students enrolled in public schools. Within this population, it is noteworthy that 27% of students attend schools in the four core cities (Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket, and Central Falls), which are areas with the most pressing needs. Among these students, approximately 10% are enrolled in charter schools or state-operated schools.<sup>9</sup>

TAPA holds a strong commitment to serving educationally disadvantaged students. Where the state of Rhode Island is 52% White, 29% Hispanic or Latine, 9% Black, and 5% Multi-racial, TAPA's students are significantly more likely to be individuals of color (89.9%), multilingual learners (9.3%, even though our population is almost entirely multilingual: most

TAPA students have completed and then exited MLL services by the time they arrive at TAPA in the 7th grade), and from low-income backgrounds (82.7%)



<sup>9</sup> "RI Kids Count Factbook." n.d. [www.rikidscount.org. https://www.rikidscount.org/Data-Publications/RI-Kids-Count-Factbook](https://www.rikidscount.org/Data-Publications/RI-Kids-Count-Factbook).

Among TAPA's students , 75% are from low-income families, which stands in stark contrast to the 29% found in the rest of Rhode Island.

While differing from state demographics, the demographics of TAPA's student population closely mirror those of its sending community (Providence). As of October 2022, 77% of students in Providence come from low-income families, 68% identify as Hispanic or Latine and 35% are multi-lingual/English learners<sup>10</sup>.

One of the reasons why TAPA currently has a lower percentage of multilingual learners than the Providence Public School District is because its program currently caters only to secondary students, many of whom may have already exited MLL status. TAPA anticipates this figure to increase and more closely mirror Providence, as it welcomes students from grades 5 and 6.

It is important to note that TAPA's admission process relies on a lottery system, and unlike CTE programs in the Arts across the state, TAPA does not set any content-based or academic admission requirements. TAPA works diligently to recruit students of all backgrounds and levels of ability to ensure that its applicant pool authentically represents the diversity found within the city.

TAPA tailors its programming to serve a diversity of students, and stands ready to provide exceptional opportunities to all students, especially those of color and other marginalized individuals who possess the following characteristics:

- A keen interest in the performing arts
- A desire to embrace their authentic selves

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<sup>10</sup> "RI Kids Count Factbook." n.d. [www.rikidscount.org. https://www.rikidscount.org/Data-Publications/RI-Kids-Count-Factbook](https://www.rikidscount.org/Data-Publications/RI-Kids-Count-Factbook)

- A low-income family background
- Those who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color)
- Proficiency in multiple languages or are multilingual learners
- Those who have had marginalized experiences, been bullied, or have feelings of not belonging in other schools.
- Those who identify as Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, other/nonconforming (LGBTQIA+)

The aforementioned groups of students are of utmost importance. These students are often marginalized or overlooked by other educational institutions due to factors such as low-income backgrounds, minority group representation, or LGBTQIA+ identification. It is vital to provide these students with the support and opportunities they deserve, as they may face challenges in fitting into traditional school settings and may lack access to equal opportunities. TAPA serves as a safe haven for marginalized students who may struggle to find their place in other educational institutions. Moreover, TAPA is the preferred choice for families seeking a school that actively fosters transparent dialogue on the topics of race, politics, gender, sexuality, identity and community.

TAPA is unwavering in its commitment to create a safe and supportive environment that caters to the needs of all students. TAPA's diverse student population serves as a tremendous asset, and the school takes immense pride in its community. TAPA's attention to the diversity of its student body fosters a strong sense of community, while its focus on the performing arts allows students to express their creativity and find their voice. In addition, TAPA provides a wide range of rigorous academic and extracurricular programs that empower students to excel in their educational journey.

## **Rationale for Expansion**

TAPA's expansion request is in direct response to two sets of parental demands:

1. Growing demand for alternatives to Providence Public School District's persistently low-performing middle schools.
2. Growing demand for our unique model: a high-quality arts-based education, with a small learning community feel, a progressive pedagogy, and a track record of success in getting disadvantaged students to and through college.

## **Demand for alternatives to low-performing traditional public schools**

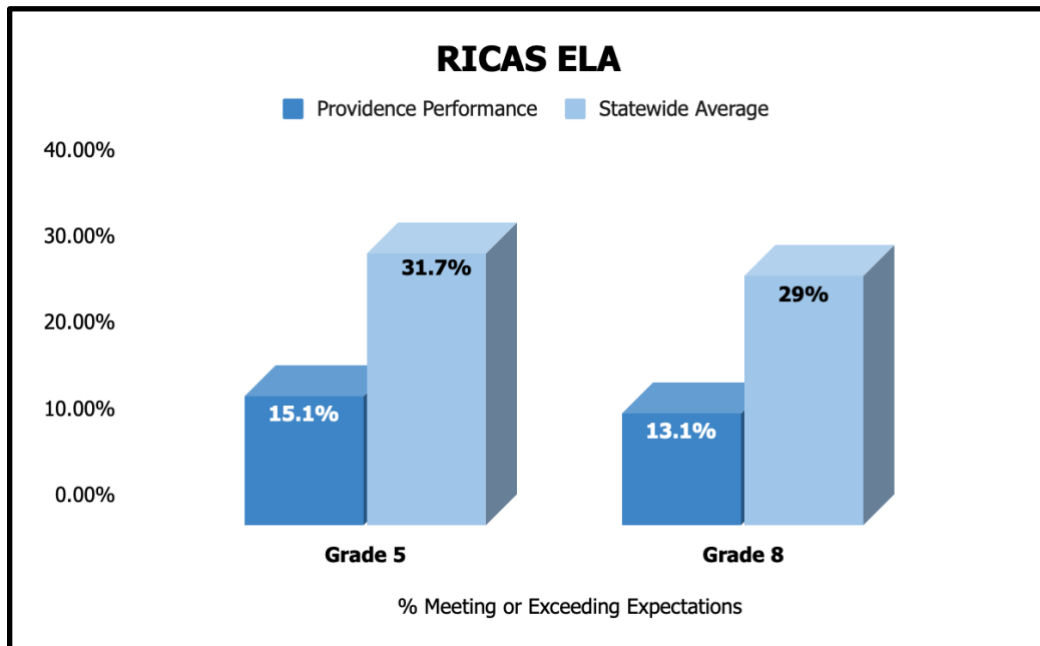
The demand for alternatives to underperforming middle schools reflects a broader nationwide trend toward school choice and parental empowerment. Parents increasingly desire a greater say in their children's education and seek options beyond traditional public schools. Advocacy groups and policymakers have also played a significant role in supporting parental choice, encouraging the development of innovative schooling models and expanding access to educational options beyond the traditional district system.<sup>11</sup>

Providence students in grades 5 and 6 are overwhelmingly likely to be assigned to a persistently low-performing school. TAPA's expansion plan is rooted in the understanding that educational opportunities play a pivotal role in addressing the systemic inequities faced by educationally disadvantaged students, particularly those identifying as Latine/o/x, Black, or Indigenous Peoples of Color (BIPOC) and living in poverty. The performance of students in the urban core has been persistently low, compared to state averages, highlighting the urgent need for targeted interventions and

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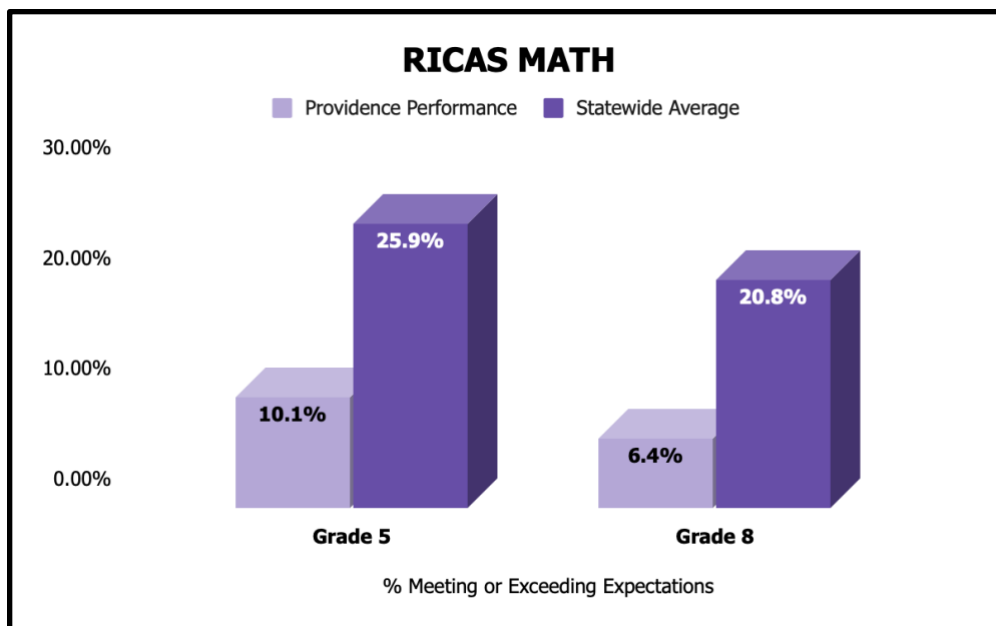
<sup>11</sup> Bedrick, Jason. n.d. "School Choice Chalking up More Wins across Country." The Heritage Foundation. Accessed July 31, 2023. <https://www.heritage.org/education/commentary/school-choice-chalking-more-wins-across-country>

high-quality education<sup>12</sup>. For instance, the performance of Providence Public Schools' middle school students on the RICAS assessment reveals a concerning situation. In the area of English Language Arts (ELA), only 35.8% of students are meeting or exceeding expectations. Similarly, in Mathematics, a mere 18.7% of Providence middle school students are meeting or exceeding expectations on the RICAS assessment. These figures highlight the significant challenges and academic disparities faced by students in Providence middle schools.<sup>13</sup>



<sup>12</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. 2019. "Urban Schools: Executive Summary." Ed.gov. 2019. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs/web/96184ex.asp>.

<sup>13</sup> "Assessment Results | RI Department of Education." n.d. Ride.ri.gov. <https://ride.ri.gov/instruction-assessment/assessment/assessment-results>.



Parents and students are also demanding better preparedness of students for their post-secondary plans. TAPA takes pride in its ability to guide graduates to and through college, with 70% of graduates enrolling in higher education, including 71.5% of the class of 2022, with others in full-time employment, military service, and job training. The school also values student engagement with the local community through the arts and beyond.

In the city of Providence, the educational landscape is undergoing significant changes. Following a critical report by Johns Hopkins in 2018 that revealed Providence as one of the lowest-performing districts in the nation, the state Department of Education assumed full control of the district through receivership.<sup>14</sup> Despite this intervention, students in Providence still face many of the persistent challenges that were identified prior to the state takeover. Even after the extended identification period due to the Covid-19 pandemic, five of Providence's high schools remain classified for Comprehensive

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<sup>14</sup> "Providence Public School District: A Review." 2019.  
<https://scholarship.library.jhu.edu/bitstream/handle/1774.2/62961/ppsd-revised-final.pdf>.

Support and Improvement (an indication that they are in the lowest 5% performance of all schools in the state), and the district's overall graduation rate stands at 77%, as compared to 100% at TAPA.

The challenges faced by the Providence school system in serving students in grades 5 and 6 are complex and multifaceted. Factors such as inadequate resources, socioeconomic disparities, and a lack of educational opportunities contribute to the system's shortcomings. An expansion of an arts-based curriculum specifically targeted at these grade levels can address these issues and provide much-needed support to the students.

Recognizing the need for high-quality middle grade programs that meet the unique needs of students from the urban core, TAPA aims to provide a safe and inclusive learning environment where students from BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Through a rigorous and engaging curriculum, personalized support, and opportunities for artistic expression, TAPA strives to empower students and equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary for future success.

The Providence school system faces significant resource constraints, resulting in larger class sizes, insufficient instructional materials, and a lack of specialized programs. Research consistently shows that smaller class sizes positively impact student learning outcomes, particularly in the early grades<sup>15</sup>. To address this issue, TAPA proposes expanding the arts-based curriculum for grades 5 and 6, which would result in smaller class sizes and allow for more individualized attention and personalized instruction.

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<sup>15</sup> "Class Size: What Research Says and What It Means for State Policy." n.d. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/class-size-what-research-says-and-what-it-means-for-state-policy/#:~:text=The%20researchers%20found%20positive%20effects>

Providence is also characterized by significant income disparities and a high poverty rate, which further exacerbate educational inequities. Research indicates that students from low-income backgrounds often face additional barriers to educational success, such as limited access to resources and educational support<sup>16</sup>. TAPA is committed to serving students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds so that they can be provided with a more holistic and enriching educational experience.<sup>17</sup>

An arts-based curriculum offers a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating visual and performing arts, which can enhance student engagement and foster a love for learning. TAPA approach provides a well-rounded education that cultivates their creativity, self-expression, and critical thinking abilities while preparing students to be college-ready<sup>18</sup>.

TAPA's commitment to social justice is evident in its culturally responsive approach to the college process, serving mostly first-generation college applicants, Latine students, and MLL students. By valuing and celebrating diversity, TAPA creates an inclusive and supportive environment that acknowledges the unique experiences and challenges faced by marginalized students.

TAPA provides comprehensive support for students and their families, recognizing that education extends beyond the classroom walls. By engaging the community in the design and continuous improvement of its educational model, TAPA ensures that the

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<sup>16</sup> "Rhode Island KIDS COUNT > Home." n.d. [www.rikidscount.org](http://www.rikidscount.org). Accessed July 17, 2023. <https://www.rikidscount.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Fact%20Sheets/10.26.20%20SCL%20Community.pdf?ver=2020-10-26-150822-017>

<sup>17</sup> "New NEA Research Report Shows Potential Benefits of Arts Education for At-Risk Youth." n.d. [www.arts.gov](http://www.arts.gov). <https://www.arts.gov/news/press-releases/2012/new-nea-research-report-shows-potential-benefits-arts-education-risk-youth>

<sup>18</sup> Barrientos, Janet. 2020. "The Arts in Charter Schools." Education Commission of the States. September 9, 2020. <https://www.ecs.org/the-arts-in-charter-schools/>

expansion plan remains responsive to the specific needs and aspirations of the students in Providence. This collaborative approach empowers families, builds trust, and establishes a strong foundation for academic success.

It is imperative to consider the developmental appropriateness and potential benefits when students join TAPA in their 5th-grade year instead of waiting until the 7th grade. By limiting transitions caused by switching schools twice - first in 6th grade within the public school system and then again in 7th grade to join TAPA - we aim to provide a more stable and consistent educational experience. Expanding TAPA's enrollment to include 5th-grade students will establish a strong foundation, fostering a sense of belonging and optimizing their growth and success within the arts-focused curriculum. This approach aligns with our goal of promoting holistic student development and enhancing their academic journey in a manner that is both pedagogically sound and socially supportive.

## **5. Goals and Track Record of Academic Performance**

At TAPA, a commitment to excellence in education and the performing arts is unwavering. The school community strives to provide our students with a holistic learning experience that not only fosters their artistic talents but also prepares them for lifelong success. As TAPA reflects on their goals and track record of performance, the school places great emphasis not only on overall proficiency but also on the continuous growth and progress of our students and organization. The TAPA model recognizes that assessing its performance requires a comprehensive understanding of the data that informs its practices.

Through diligent and meticulous analysis facilitated by our Director of Teaching and Learning, TAPA regularly delves into a wide array of indicators aligned with its school goals (such as STAR Reading and Math, RICAS, and Performance Based Assessment). This rigorous examination allows the school to gain valuable insights into student performance and the effectiveness of its programs. TAPA's focus extends beyond mere proficiency to the journey of growth and development that each student undertakes throughout their time at TAPA. The school is dedicated to providing an environment that nurtures not only artistic excellence but also academic achievement and personal growth.

By monitoring year-over-year progress, TAPA ensures that its students are consistently moving forward, reaching new heights, and surpassing their own expectations. Furthermore, TAPA's commitment to excellence extends to the overall organizational growth of the school. TAPA continuously evaluates its practices, policies, and curriculum to ensure they align with the evolving needs of its students and the

performing arts industry. By embracing innovation and adapting to this ever-changing landscape, TAPA strives to provide the highest quality education and artistic training.

In the following sections, this application delves into TAPA's track record of success, showcasing its achievements and growth. The narrative examines performance outcomes, comparing TAPA's results to those of students within the urban core. Through this comprehensive analysis, TAPA aims to provide a transparent and insightful overview of its goals and an ongoing pursuit of excellence in education and the performing arts.

## **Academics**

### **English Language Arts**

The latest administration of the RICAS in English Language Arts revealed a prevalent struggle among students across the state. In fact, only 29% of students across the state demonstrated proficiency in English Language Arts. Performance was significantly lower for students from the urban core, with no traditional public district having more than 17% of students meet expectations. In Providence, TAPA's only sending district, only 11.8% of students met or exceeded expectations. A glaring disparity becomes evident when comparing TAPA's performance, where 22.5% met or exceeded expectations in ELA.

Despite the challenges posed by the performance at this level, TAPA is confident that providing more time with students through an middle school program that integrates the arts can significantly increase their likelihood of being on track by high school graduation. This is evidenced by TAPA's average student growth in ELA of 58.9%, which dramatically outperforms all districts in the urban core and the state average student

growth percentile<sup>19</sup>. TAPA is confident that this holds significant weight, as most students who are current seventh-grade students came from underperforming traditional public schools. TAPA's high SGP is an indicator of readiness to take on younger students from Providence, as remediation and acceleration will remain integral components of TAPA's core strategy.

## Mathematics

After committing to an EdReports Green-Rated Math program, small-group support with student tutors, and double math blocks for all students, TAPA has seen significant growth in math. In 2021-22, TAPA achieved the highest statewide growth in math RICAS scores.<sup>20</sup> As each year unfolds, our teachers' familiarity with the curriculum deepens, paving the way for heightened academic rigor and elevated expectations. With 10 annual teacher PD days, as well as weekly time for common planning and professional learning, TAPA ensures teachers' ongoing success with administering our green-standard curricula. Our annual professional learning cycles track scope and sequence, and synthesize each term's lessons, ensuring instructional continuity year over year. In addition, our school has built strong systems for leveraging formative assessment data to inform instruction, curricular decisions and differentiated student services. These practices will be extended to grades 5 & 6 to ensure continuous improvement.

With the invaluable support of the XQ + RI process, TAPA embarked on a transformative journey to redefine itself as a school where students harness the artistic mindset to master rigorous academic content. For many years, TAPA was viewed as a

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<sup>19</sup> "Assessment Data Portal - Public." n.d. Wwww3.Ride.ri.gov. <https://www3.ride.ri.gov/ADP>

<sup>20</sup> "Assessment Data Portal - Public." n.d. Wwww3.Ride.ri.gov. <https://www3.ride.ri.gov/ADP>

warm and inviting school community but was known more for its arts offerings than its traditional academics. Our school has been working diligently to change this impression and prove that we provide equitable weight to both the Arts and students' general academic development.

Upon being awarded the XQ+RI grant, TAPA identified math transformation as our top priority. The school implemented a comprehensive green-standard curriculum spanning grades 7 to 12, increased the duration of daily math classes, introduced supplementary "practicum" sessions to provide hands-on math practice, and forged a partnership with RIDE's Math Readiness program. These measures aimed to ensure that our middle school students were well-prepared for algebra and our high school students were equipped for college-level mathematics.

TAPA's dedicated staff critically reassessed their grading policies and practices, placing a heightened emphasis on regular attendance, punctuality, and daily engagement. To bolster student learning, TAPA implemented a daily after-school tutoring block and collaborated with external experts who shared invaluable insights on optimizing the use of High-Quality Instructional Materials for STEM subjects.

While the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the progress of TAPA students, as it did for students nationwide, The school's unwavering commitment to academic rigor remained steadfast throughout 18 months of distance learning. The recent RI State Test Scores serve as evidence that this commitment is yielding positive results. Specifically, in the Math RICAS:

- The percentage of TAPA students meeting or exceeding expectations experienced a remarkable 600% increase, rising from 1.2% in 2020-2021 to 13%

in 2022.

- TAPA students demonstrated superior performance compared to their peers in Providence middle schools, with 13% of TAPA students meeting or exceeding expectations, while only 9.3% achieved the same in Providence.
- Notably, there was a significant decrease in the number of TAPA students not meeting expectations. In 2020-2021, 64.6% of TAPA students fell into this category, whereas in 2021-2022, this figure dropped to 42.9%, marking a one-third decrease.
- What we take immense pride in is the fact that 65% of TAPA students demonstrated growth in math: 45% exhibited high growth, while 20% exhibited typical growth. Even students who faced challenges on the RICAS are progressing in the areas necessary to meet grade-level standards during their tenure at TAPA.

At TAPA, students will consistently progress from strength to strength in the realm of mathematics. The school's ultimate aspiration is for them to embrace the mindset of a mathematician as an integral component of their artistic mindset. Together, TAPA's community is forging a path where the boundaries between artistry and mathematical prowess seamlessly converge, empowering our students to transcend conventional boundaries and embrace the full spectrum of their creative and analytical potential.

### Internal Assessment Data

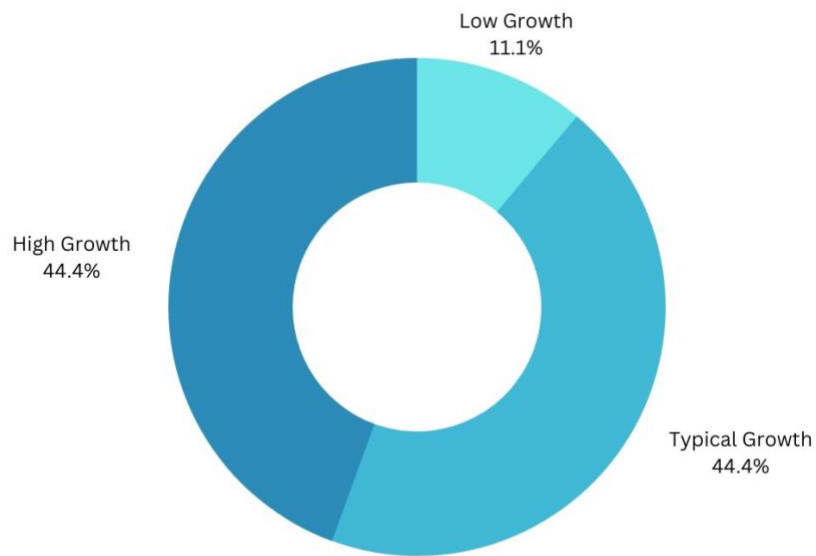
In its pursuit of academic excellence, TAPA has implemented a meticulous

approach to curriculum adoption. By leveraging various forms of internal assessment data, the school enhances the effectiveness of its educational programs. A key aspect of this strategy involves consistently monitoring students' performance on curriculum-based assessments. Additionally, TAPA administers the STAR Reading and Math exams three times a year to measure student progress. The school also aligns additional grants (XQ, CLSD, and ExcEL) to address areas of need for assessment collection, and conducts quarterly curricular audits for internal assessment tracking. This comprehensive approach ensures that TAPA continuously improves its curriculum to provide the best education possible.

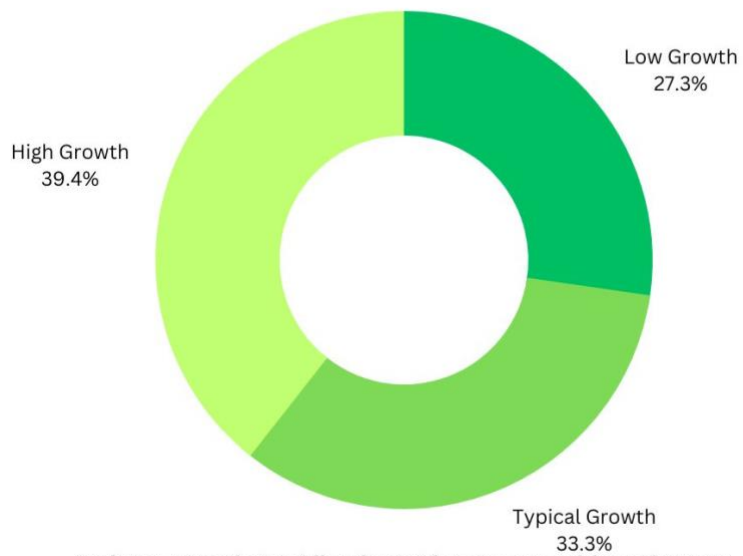
TAPA also conducts a comparative analysis of RICAS scores with STAR scores, which serves as a crucial indicator of the correlation between these primary forms of assessment. While complete consistency across multiple exams is not always achieved, a stronger alignment has emerged following the more routine implementation of Ed-Reports Green-rated curricula. TAPA's internal assessment data supports this alignment, highlighting significant learning gains among students.

For example TAPA has seen trends in students' academic growth on STAR (SGP) which generally mirror the high growth found on the RICAS (*discussed in the coming section*). In some cases, students showed much greater growth, however, on RICAS, than they did on STAR. This was particularly visible in mathematics.

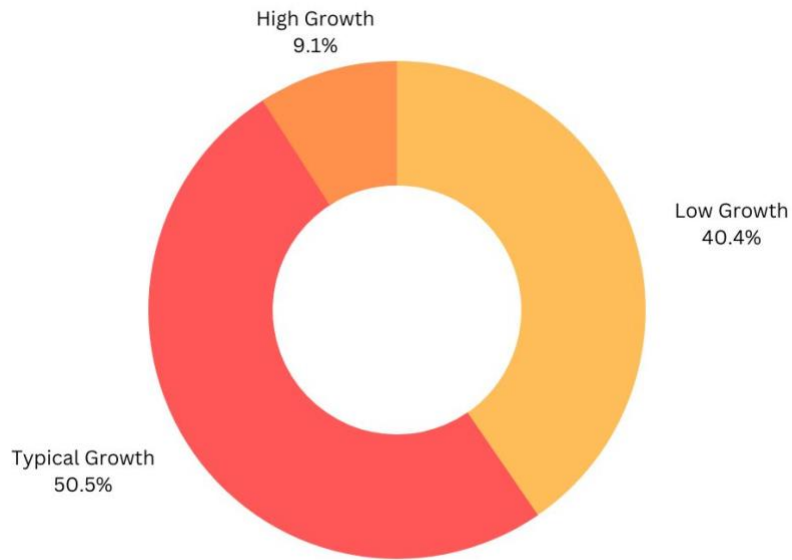
Please see the charts from STAR below as an indicator of overall success.



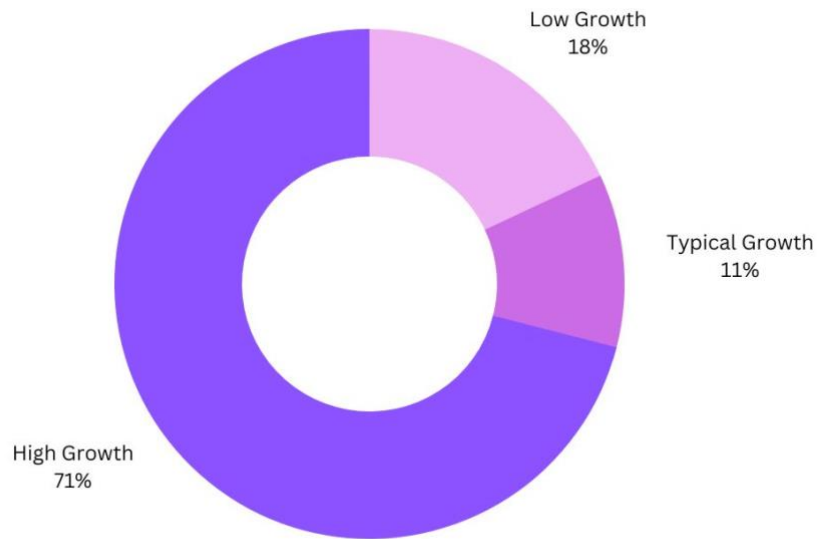
Grade 7 ELA Growth Tiers (all students with 2 or more tested data points 21-22).



Grade 8 ELA Growth Tiers (all students with 2 or more tested data points 21-22).



Grade 7 STAR Math Growth Tiers (all students with 2 or more tested data points 21-22.)

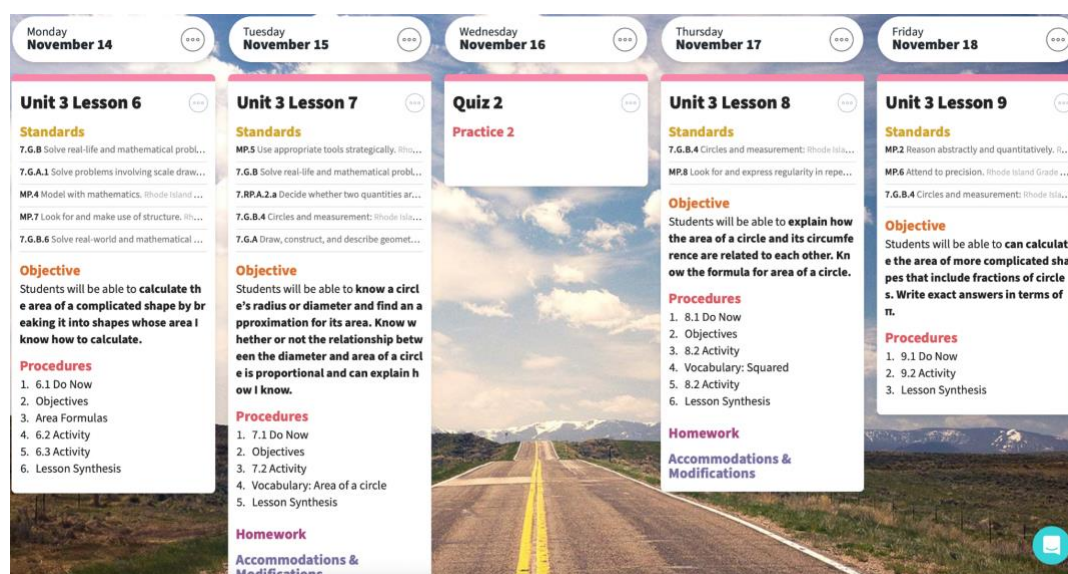


Grade 8 STAR Math Growth Tiers (all students with 2 or more tested data points 21-22.)

For example, within TAPA's embedded practice process, educators are required to successfully navigate the introduction of new curricula through Common Curriculum. This tool enables effective tracking of curriculum standards, ensuring students are

exposed to lessons that prioritize key areas of focus in alignment with the school's annual scope and sequence expectations and Department goals. The data associated with Common Curriculum demonstrates an increase in student engagement and academic achievement over time (~12% increase from Y1 to Y2). The majority of curricular-based assessments stem from formative assessments, such as integrated unit benchmark assessments and exit tickets, providing educators and departments with ongoing feedback on student progress.

*Example of an Educators Lesson Synthesis aligned to Core Standards:*



Using this data, personalized student support and accommodations are developed to ensure equitable access for all learners. Through collaboration, educators and departments identify additional learning opportunities and formulate intervention plans tailored to individual students. This data-driven approach empowers teachers to make informed instructional decisions, shaping the school's annual focus areas, professional development initiatives, and future planning strategies.

A notable outcome of this process is the significant improvement in lesson pacing. Educators are able to delve deeper into their content areas, allowing students to benefit from increased practice with high-priority lessons. This enhancement in pacing optimizes the learning experience, enabling a more thorough exploration of key concepts and themes.

By maintaining a steadfast commitment to regularly collecting, reviewing, and responding to data, TAPA ensures that all students benefit from a rigorous and meaningful education, fostering their academic growth and success. This continuous improvement model underscores TAPA's dedication to delivering a superior educational experience.

### Additional Examples:

#### *A. Rubrics created based on Embedded Practice Priority Standards:*

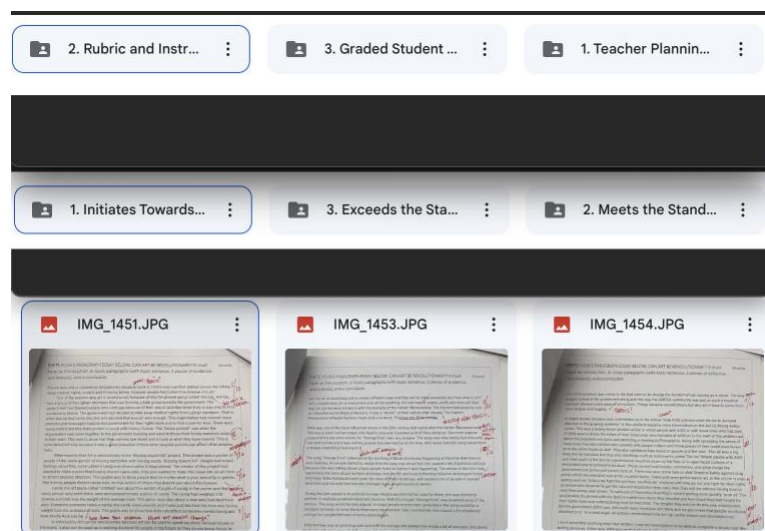
STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SONG SELECTION: \_\_\_\_\_

MU:Pr6.1.E.5a: Demonstrate attention to technical accuracy and expressive qualities in prepared and improvised performances of a varied repertoire of music						
Performance / Product	Proficient w/ Distinction	Proficient			Partially Proficient	
Technical Accuracy	10	9	8	7	6	5
<p><b>Proficient:</b> Student demonstrates technical accuracy through strong ability/control of (instrument-specific) fundamentals of music listed below, 70% of the time</p> <p><b>Instrument focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Vocals:</i> Pitch, Melody, Rhythm</li><li>• <i>Piano/Guitar:</i> Melody, Rhythm, Harmony</li><li>• <i>Drums:</i> Rhythm + Tempo</li></ul> <p><b>w/ Distinction:</b> Student demonstrates technical accuracy 90-100% of the time</p>	NOTES/ COMMENTS:					
Expressive Qualities	10	9	8	7	6	5
<p><b>Proficient:</b> Student demonstrates attention to expressive qualities in performance through use of facial and body expression that communicate intention/meaning/emotion within the piece, 70% of the time</p> <p><b>w/ Distinction:</b> Student shows confident posture and makes intentional eye contact with the audience throughout the piece.</p>	NOTES/ COMMENTS:					
Average Score (10)						

*B. Student Data Analyzed in-accordance with Embedded Practice Guidelines (re: student standard comprehension/progress from Beginning of year, to Mid-Year, to End of Year, with an educator final reflection).*

ser	BOY (10)	Met (80%); Almost (70%); Did Not Meet (Below 70%)	MOY (10)	Met (80%); Almost (70%); Did Not Meet (Below 70%)	BOY to MOY Growth?	EOY (10)	Met (80%); Almost (70%); Did Not Meet (Below 70%)	MOY to EOY Growth?	BOY to EOY Growth?
	8	Met	8.5	Met	0.5	9.25	Met	0.75	1.25
	6.3	Did Not Meet	7.5	Almost Met	1.2	8	Met	0.5	1.7
	6.2	Did Not Meet	8	Met	1.8	8.5	Met	0.5	2.3
	8	Met	9	Met	1	9	Met	0	1
	8.6	Met	8.5	Met	-0.1	9.25	Met	0.75	0.65
	7.8	Almost Met	8	Met	0.2	8	Met	0	0.2
	7.2	Almost Met	7.5	Almost Met	0.3	8	Met	0.5	0.8
	5.3	Did Not Meet	7.5	Almost Met	2.3	8.25	Met	0.75	2.95
	9.2	Met	9.25	Met	0.05	10	Met	0.75	0.8
	7.5	Almost Met	8	Met	0.5	8	Met	0	0.5
	9.2	Met	9.25	Met	0.05	9.25	Met	0	0.05
S	7.57	45% Met, 27% Almost Met, 27% Did Not Meet	8.27	73% Met, 27% Almost Met	0.71	8.68	100% Met Standard	0.41	1.11

C. Folders of Internal Assessments and Student Work Samples: [Here](#)



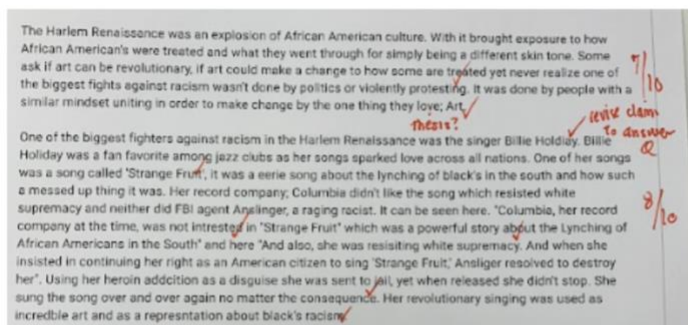
D. Internal Student Work Review/Analysis (Example: Springpoint): [Here](#)

## Student Work Review

### Student Product

Provide an illustrative excerpt from the student work sample (please record verbatim).

- The following excerpt was included in the "Meets the Standard" (medium) folder.



Does the student work faithfully and comprehensively meet the expectations of the task?

- No. The work does not address the second and third question: "To what extent can it be revolutionary? List art's power and art's limitations." There was minimal analysis of the broader impact of the artworks, which would support the thesis that art can be revolutionary.

### Teacher Feedback

Does the assignment have a grade or rubric score? If so, what is it?

- 62%

Does the quality of the student work align with the feedback/score it received?

- Yes, the majority of the text consisted of explanations of the art pieces reviewed. The students also left off the conclusion which caused them to lose a significant number of points. Otherwise, this would have received a score of 82%.

Provide examples or a summary/synthesis of the teacher feedback.

- See above.
- Each paragraph had a grade out of 10 included. At the end, the teacher wrote "analysis can be expanded....conclusion missing."

## Evidence from the RIDE Report Card

The expectation of charter schools in Rhode Island is to generally maintain at least at 3 star rating. As of 2022, TAPA has a 2 star rating. As you can see from the chart below, this is primarily due to 2 factors: 1) Student achievement and 2) English Language Proficiency.

Star Rating	Achievement – ELA and Math (Max. 8 Points)	Growth – ELA and Math (Max. 6 Points)	English Language Proficiency (Max. 4 Points)	Graduation Rate (Max. 5 Points)	Diploma Plus (Max. 6 Points)	Exceeds Expectations, Absenteeism, & Suspension (Max. 15 Points)	# of Low-Performing Subgroups
★★★★★	6-8 points (3-4 per subject)	4-6 points (2-3 per subject)	3-4 points	4-5 points	5-6 points	12-15 points**	None
★★★★	5-6 points (2-4 per subject)		2 points		4 points (2+ per indicator)	10-11 points**	1 subgroup
★★★	7-11 total points*			3 points	3-4 points	7-9 points**	More than 1 subgroup
★★	5-6 total points*		1 point	2 points	2 points	5-6 points**	
★	2 points	2 points		1 point			

As described in the sections above regarding literacy and math, while many TAPA students are not yet meeting achievement benchmarks, **they are making significant growth**. On one hand, part of this pattern is due to TAPA's design, where the school intentionally enrolls students at grade 7, who have likely had 6+ years of learning experiences in persistently underperforming schools. On the other hand, we still need to do better by our students so that they can dramatically increase their academic proficiency while at our school. Our current growth rates reflect that we are moving in the correct direction.

This expansion presents a unique opportunity to extend our reach and deepen our impact, as it allows us to allocate more time and resources to the crucial stage of a child's academic and personal growth (grades 5-6). By broadening our grade levels to include fifth and sixth graders, we extend our safe, supportive, and nurturing environment to a transitional period in the lives of young individuals. With this expansion, we envision a more comprehensive and seamless learning continuum for our students. By engaging with them during these formative years, we can better understand their individual needs, strengths, and challenges. This deeper understanding empowers us to tailor our

educational goals, programs, and support services effectively, ensuring that each child receives the attention and guidance they require to thrive.

It is important to also note that we will be creating new opportunities for students in grades 7-12 for success, within our structure without having to make any academic or operational changes. It is important to note that this will bring more fiscal resources to our school while adding new opportunities for students to access our model and for our existing students to engage with a greater diversity of their peers.

Additionally, by offering Grades 5 and 6, TAPA will foster continuity and consistency in its student learning experiences. This continuity eliminates the disruptions that can arise from transitioning to new educational environments (at break grades 6,7 and 9), enabling them to build strong relationships with their teachers, peers, and mentors. As a result, students can focus more on their academic studies and personal development, allowing achievements to soar.

In terms of English Language Proficiency, TAPA recently implemented an MLL intervention program aimed at providing targeted support for its multilingual learner students. Recognizing the importance of this initiative, the school leaders decided to increase the interventionist's role from a part-time position (.5 FTE) to a full-time position (1 FTE). This strategic move allows the interventionist to devote more time and resources to supporting MLL students, ensuring they receive the individualized assistance they need to thrive academically and linguistically. The decision has already shown promising results, with improved academic progress among the MLL student population at TAPA.

TAPA acknowledges the areas of improvement highlighted in the recent RIDE Report Card district assessment. While the report sheds light on the challenges TAPA

faces, it also presents an opportunity for growth and development. The school remains committed to enhancing its performance and expanding its impact on the education of grade 5 and 6 students in the Providence community. The analysis of the math and English language arts (ELA) state assessments underscore the need for improvement in proficiency rates. With only 16.7% of students demonstrating proficiency in ELA and even lower rates in math, TAPA recognizes the importance of addressing these academic areas.

TAPA's commitment to improvement also extends beyond academic achievement. While the school **achieved a 100% four-year graduation rate**, indicating strong support for student success, there is a need to enhance postsecondary success. Although a considerable number of TAPA graduates earned AP credits and dual or concurrent college credits, the percentage of graduates persisting to the third semester in post-secondary institutions could improve.<sup>21</sup> TAPA is working to remedy this by employing an excellent guidance counselor who works with all students to have a post-secondary plan by the time of graduation.

The report card also highlights the importance of addressing attendance and suspension concerns. Chronic student absenteeism within Providence Public School is a significant concern. For example, Hope High School and Central High School, with 78.8% and 76.1% of their students being chronically absent respectively, demonstrate an urgent need for the re-engagement of students<sup>22</sup>. These numbers indicate a considerable challenge in maintaining consistent attendance and engagement in these schools. In

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<sup>21</sup> RIDE Report Card - District Assessments." n.d. Reportcard.ride.ri.gov. Accessed July 17, 2023. <https://reportcard.ride.ri.gov/202122/DistrictAssessments?DistCode=61>

<sup>22</sup> RIDE Report Card - District Assessments." n.d. Reportcard.ride.ri.gov. Accessed July 17, 2023. <https://reportcard.ride.ri.gov/202122/DistrictAssessments?DistCode=61>

contrast, TAPA seems to be faring better in addressing absenteeism, as 35.9% of its students were chronically absent<sup>23</sup>. However, it is important to continue efforts to reduce absenteeism rates across all schools to ensure better educational outcomes for students. TAPA continues to track this figure, though the charter framework only uses daily attendance (overall) as an indicator and TAPA has consistently performed highly in this area.

TAPA believes that by starting students with our model younger, the school will interrupt patterns of absenteeism before they become as prevalent. TAPA is committed to implementing targeted interventions to ensure regular attendance and student engagement. TAPA recognizes that a positive and supportive learning environment is essential for student success. The school will work towards minimizing suspensions and implementing strategies that foster an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere for all students.

Despite the challenges identified, TAPA firmly believes in its potential for growth and improvement. The proposed expansion of the arts-based curriculum for grade 5 and 6 students aligns with TAPA's mission to provide high-quality education and opportunities for students in the urban core. By leveraging the transformative power of arts education, TAPA aims to inspire creativity, academic excellence, and personal growth in its students. Research shows that arts-based education can positively impact student achievement and engagement. The integration of arts into the curriculum not only enhances critical thinking and problem-solving skills but also fosters social-emotional development and

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<sup>23</sup> RIDE Report Card - District Assessments." n.d. Reportcard.ride.ri.gov. Accessed July 17, 2023. <https://reportcard.ride.ri.gov/202122/DistrictAssessments?DistCode=61>

cultural appreciation.<sup>24</sup> By expanding the arts-based curriculum, TAPA aims to create a dynamic learning environment that nurtures the diverse talents and abilities of its students, empowering them to thrive academically and artistically.

TAPA is committed to improving its performance in math and ELA proficiency, addressing achievement disparities among student groups, promoting postsecondary success, and creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment. The proposed expansion of the arts-based curriculum for grade 5 and 6 students will contribute to TAPA's ongoing efforts to provide a high-quality education to the Providence community, ensuring that all students can excel and reach their full potential.

### **School Culture**

TAPA truly values the results of Survey Works, the state's SEL survey, to gather valuable insights from various stakeholders within the educational community to inform and improve the educational experience for all. Through surveys conducted in Spring 2023, we obtained responses from students, teachers, and staff, as well as family members, providing a comprehensive understanding of their perceptions and identifying key areas for growth and enhancement.

The student survey revealed several significant trends. A majority of student respondents (68%) viewed rigorous expectations and school safety favorably, indicating a recognition of the importance of high standards and a secure learning environment.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Farrington, et. n.d. "ACTION REFLECTION ARTS EDUCATION and SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING OUTCOMES among K-12 STUDENTS: DEVELOPING a THEORY of ACTION." <https://consortium.uchicago.edu/sites/default/files/2019-05/Arts%20Education%20and%20Social-Emotional-June2019-Consortium%20and%20Ingenuity.pdf>

<sup>25</sup> SurveyWorks Resource Center | RI Department of Education." n.d. Ride.ri.gov. <https://ride.ri.gov/information-accountability/ri-education-data/surveyworks>

Furthermore, there was positive feedback regarding risk and protective outcomes, social-emotional learning, and college and career readiness. The school values the importance of high standards and a secure learning environment, which fosters a positive attitude toward learning. Additionally, TAPA recognizes the significance of risk and protective outcomes, social-emotional learning, and college and career readiness, and will continue to support and enhance these aspects of student development.

Teachers and staff demonstrated a strong commitment to educating all students, as indicated by their overwhelmingly favorable view in this regard. The survey also highlighted the importance of cultural awareness and action, both with a focus on students and on adult professional development, showcasing the recognition of diverse perspectives and the significance of inclusive learning environments. 83% of teachers and staff expressed confidence in their teaching efficacy such as topics of diversity and recognized the value of a positive school climate<sup>26</sup>. In addition, 72% of teachers and staff are comfortable leading discussions about race-related topics with their students<sup>27</sup>.

However, opportunities for growth were identified in the areas of professional learning frequency, school leadership, and the availability of high-quality instructional materials and resources<sup>28</sup>. TAPA appreciates the strong commitment demonstrated by teachers and staff to educate all students effectively. The school recognizes the importance of cultural awareness and action in creating inclusive learning environments, both for students and professional development opportunities for educators. TAPA will

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<sup>26</sup> SurveyWorks Resource Center | RI Department of Education." n.d. Ride.ri.gov. <https://ride.ri.gov/information-accountability/ri-education-data/surveyworks>

<sup>27</sup> SurveyWorks Resource Center | RI Department of Education." n.d. Ride.ri.gov. <https://ride.ri.gov/information-accountability/ri-education-data/surveyworks>

<sup>28</sup> SurveyWorks Resource Center | RI Department of Education." n.d. Ride.ri.gov. <https://ride.ri.gov/information-accountability/ri-education-data/surveyworks>

continue to further support teachers and staff by addressing opportunities for growth in professional learning frequency, school leadership, and the availability of high-quality instructional materials and resources. For example TAPA has a history of providing intensive curricular coaching for teachers as new curricula have been adopted and also offers an extensive teacher induction program that is individualized to need.

86% of TAPA family members expressed high satisfaction with special education services, cultural awareness and action, school climate, family-school communication, and family support.<sup>29</sup> These positive perceptions indicate that families feel their children are receiving appropriate support, experiencing an inclusive and supportive environment, and benefiting from effective communication between home and school. However, family engagement emerged as an area for improvement, where favorable perceptions were relatively lower<sup>30</sup>. TAPA will focus on continuing to strengthen family engagement to foster stronger partnerships and enhance the educational experience for students.

These insights will continue to serve as a foundation for targeted improvements and interventions to create a more positive, inclusive, and engaging educational environment. We will continue to address areas such as teacher-student relationships, valuing of school, school climate, school belonging, professional learning frequency, school leadership, and family engagement, to work towards enhancing student well-being, engagement, and success. TAPA will implement initiatives that address the

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<sup>29</sup> SurveyWorks Resource Center | RI Department of Education." n.d. Ride.ri.gov. <https://ride.ri.gov/information-accountability/ri-education-data/surveyworks>

<sup>30</sup> SurveyWorks Resource Center | RI Department of Education." n.d. Ride.ri.gov. <https://ride.ri.gov/information-accountability/ri-education-data/surveyworks>

identified areas for improvement, leading to a more fulfilling and effective educational experience for all stakeholders involved.

### **Evidence from RIDE's Charter Performance Indicators**

Over the course of the charter term, TAPA was rated as Meets Expectations or Exceeds Expectations in all performance indicators related to organization and sustainability:

Indicator	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
<b>2.1 School Specific Goals</b>	NR	NR	NR	NR
<b>2.2 School Environment</b>	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds	Meets
<b>2.3 Equity and Access</b>	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
<b>2.4 Dissemination</b>	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds
<b>2.5 Board and Leadership Quality</b>	Exceeds	Exceeds	Exceeds	Meets

### **Sustainability Indicator III: Compliance - no "Exceeds" on this indicator**

Indicator	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
3.1-5 Student Rights	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
3.6-8 Employee management	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
3.9-12 Health and Safety	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
3.13-16 Educational Program	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
3.17-3.19 Leadership	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets

3.20-3.29 management	Financial	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
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TAPA is proud of its fiscal responsibility and strong financial oversight. During the charter term, TAPA consistently met all of RIDE's financial expectations. The one exception to this was the Debt to Asset Ratio in FY21, which exceeded the threshold by 0.01. This slight overage was a result of timing of TAPA's purchase of its new building, and has since been fully resolved.

Indicator	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
1.1 Current Ratio	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
1.2 Unrestricted Days of Cash	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
1.3 Debt to Asset Ratio	Meets	Approaches	Meets	Meets
1.4 Total Margin/3 Year Aggregate Total Margin	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
1.5 Debt Service Coverage Ratio	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets

### Goals

TAPA does not have school specific goals with the charter office. However, the school recently engaged in a strategic planning process and established the following goals:

1. By the end of the 2024-25 school year, the percentage of students scoring proficient or above will increase from 2% to 10% on the state math assessment.
2. By the end of the 2024-25 school year the percentage of students scoring proficient or above in both ELA and Math will outperform TAPA's sending district by 10%.

3. By the end of the 2024-25 school year, the percentage of students scoring proficient or above will double from 4.8 to 10+% on the NGSS state assessment.
4. By the end of the 2024-25 school year, 56% of students will have a favorable response to SEL at TAPA based on state Survey Works results.

The TAPA community is confident that we will meet its goals because the school is continuing to implement the practices which have yielded us high growth in ELA and mathematics (see section on track record of success above). The Impact of expansion on our goals is expected to be positive. We hold strongly that the longer we have students in our school the more academic growth and proficiency we are able to help them achieve. The expansion will also bring in additional funding which can be applied to allow students to participate in more hands-on learning experiences and gain greater support (for example, greater access to TAPA's MLL interventionist).

## 6. Community Need & Support

### Community Need

All students who attend TAPA are residents of Providence, and would otherwise be assigned to a Providence Public School. The Providence Public School District has been under state receivership since 2019 and continues to operate under significant strain. Both leading up to, and into the state takeover, the performance of Providence's schools has continued to decline. This is especially true of Providence middle schools, where 5/7 schools are currently identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement. This means that if a student does not have access to TAPA or an alternative, they will almost certainly be placed in a severely underperforming school.

In addition to abysmal academic performance, Providence's middle schools are quite large, leaving little room for personalized learning experiences. At scale, TAPA's lower school will remain relatively small, with a total of only 160 students. The smallest Providence public middle school is Esek Hopkins, which **has nearly three times** as many students as TAPA's proposed lower school at scale<sup>31</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> Baker, B. D., Farrie, D. and Sciarra, D. G. (2016), Mind the Gap: 20 Years of Progress and Retrenchment in School Funding and Achievement Gaps. ETS Research Report Series, 2016: 1–37.

Providence Middle School Enrollment					
Middle Schools	Total Enrollment	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
TAPA**	160	40	40	40	40
Nathan Bishop*	636	-	216	185	235
DelSesto Middle*	817	-	247	280	290
Nathanael Greene*	907	-	286	287	334
Esek Hopkins	492	-	168	131	193
Gilbert Stuart*	790	-	245	251	294
West Broadway*	498	98	119	138	143
Roger Williams	735	-	237	225	273
PPSD Enrollment based on the 2021-22 school year Comprehensive Support and Improvement* At Scale**					

The need for the school is also solidified through TAPA's extensive waiting list. Last year (22-23) there were 427 applicants to TAPA for 71 seats, meaning that only 16% of students' requests to join the school community could be accommodated. Notably, the largest waiting lists were for grades 7-9, indicating the need for more middle school seats, and more seats for those who wish to join TAPA at the natural transition year (9).

In addition to the lack of high-quality seats in Providence Public Schools to accommodate family demand, there are currently no whole-school models dedicated to the performing arts within the district. Moreover, most students will have little to no access to the performing arts in middle or high school should they remain within PPSD. The potential expansion of TAPA to include grades 5 and 6 offers a unique opportunity for students to thrive in an environment that embraces their diverse identities and nurtures their artistic talents. Parents and community members recognize the transformative power of the arts in education and are currently rallying behind the cause of expanding

TAPA's reach. They understand that by providing a specialized performing arts curriculum, TAPA could offer a comprehensive educational experience that goes beyond traditional academics.

### **Community Support**

In the summer of 2023, TAPA conducted a survey to monitor community sentiments regarding the potential expansion of grades 5 and 6. This was a complement to informal conversations that TAPA has had with its community over the past year through its renewal and strategic planning processes. The survey was available in both English and Spanish, allowing respondents to comfortably express their views in their preferred language. Nearly half of all respondents replied in Spanish, which we feel is a testament to the comfort TAPA has provided through its school outreach.

With great enthusiasm, over 70% of the participants expressed confidence in TAPA's ability to provide a high-quality arts-based education to students in grades 5 and 6. The overwhelming support for this expansion was evident, as 87% of the respondents viewed expansion as an opportunity for a significant benefit to the school. Many community members believed that expanding TAPA's grades would have a positive impact on the overall quality of education, with 72% foreseeing a brighter educational experience for all TAPA students as a result. An impressive 89% of the respondents recognized the potential for lower school students to develop vital social and emotional skills at an earlier stage, creating a supportive and encouraging atmosphere for academic growth.

In conducting this survey, TAPA realized that it has some work to do to explain the fiscal impact of the expansion on the school model. The additional funding from the

expansion will provide essential resources and opportunities for the lower school at TAPA to flourish. It will enable the hiring of experienced admin staff specializing in lower grade structure and development, enriching the learning experience for younger students. Moreover, the funding will support the implementation of innovative programs, extracurricular activities, and enhanced student experiences, all contributing to a thriving lower-grade culture that seamlessly transitions to the upper grades, promoting a unified and dynamic educational journey for all students. It is important that TAPA continue to share these realities with families, as concerns expressed by those who were not in favor of the expansion often stemmed from a concern that resources would be taken from the High School to support the new grades.

The community's support also extended to the belief that younger kids would greatly benefit from starting their TAPA journey early, with 87% of the participants agreeing that it would instill a love for learning from the very beginning. Over 90% of TAPA survey respondents believe it will enhance the school's reputation, and 95% said they would recommend the school to their friends. Additionally, 81% of the respondents were delighted at the prospect of having all their children attend the same school, promoting family cohesion within the community.

Though some participants voiced concerns about limited space and staffing challenges (mentioned by 35% of respondents), these apprehensions did not dampen the overall support for the expansion. Parents may not be fully aware of the additional two floors which TAPA has to locate the additional grades, or that the expansion will only necessitate 4 new hires. TAPA will engage staff members and parents early in the process to participate in the rollout of the expansion plan, collectively mitigating any

concerns or issues that may arise as grades 5 and 6 are phased in.

The survey results clearly indicate that the TAPA community overwhelmingly favors expanding the school to include grades 5 and 6. With a resounding majority of community members endorsing this move, there is a prevailing sense of excitement about the potential for an even more inclusive, nurturing, and enriching educational environment. This is a testament to the power of community need, support, and the transformative impact of the arts on young lives.

*Note: A letter of support from Providence's Mayor Smiley is attached in the appendix of this application.*

## 7. Educational Program (Expansion Proposals)

### Guiding Principles (No Changes)

TAPA's school and curricular design provides a unique model for engaged learning by anchoring students' education in the Arts, Personalization, and Social Advocacy.

#### The Arts

The development of the Artist Mindset is critical to the learning experience at TAPA. Arts integration is the practice of infusing the arts into academic content and using the same academic content to enhance the arts. This practice is the foundational practice of TAPA, and while we are creating change school-wide, arts-integrated practices are still at the core of its academic approach. In all classes, an artistic skill set allows students to tackle content in a different way. Challenges are attended to through a creative and flexible lens, and academic subjects come alive through the arts.

The high school art experience begins at the very end of 8th grade, with all students engaging in the Arts Audition Process. This process requires extensive practice, interviews with school leaders, written testimony, and concludes with an audition in front of the full student body and a judging panel of staff, parents, alumni, and local working artists. From here, students enter their high school majors in Film, Dance, Theatre, or Music. The art major becomes the foundation of their daily schedule for all four years of high school, and their work concludes with a Senior Written Thesis and Performance Assessment. The student-artist relationship is one of the most important ones developed at TAPA. The artists-in-residence at TAPA serve as mentors over the high school experience, and these relationships are long-lasting. When alumni visit TAPA, the first

person they tend to visit is their artist. It is within this relationship that students develop their Artist Mindset; through mentorship, they are guided through real-world experiences using the skills developed in the arts.

## Personalization

Students are also engaged through curricular experiences and resources which are personalized to both their interests and needs. For example, small-group instruction in math, done in coordination with student-tutors from Brown University, allows for more individualized support. 7th-9th graders all have double blocks in math and ELA through our “seminar” courses. While the grade-level courses focus on grade-level content, seminar classes allow the opportunity to identify areas of student academic needs and directly address those gaps in instruction.

Additionally, Dual Enrollment, a program growing nationally and in the state of Rhode Island, is an optional program that provides high school juniors and seniors the opportunity to take tuition-free courses at local colleges. Dual Enrollment allows high school students avenues to earn college credits while still in high school, and allows students to explore topics of interest and challenge themselves. It is an umbrella program which includes opportunities such as the Advanced Course Network, a partnership between local organizations, colleges and high schools to increase access to rigorous courses for all students. Recognizing this state program as a clear path towards increasing the rigor and real-world experiences of TAPA students, we have invested significant time, funding and staffing in creating a unique internal approach to Dual Enrollment.

For students requesting an additional challenge, TAPA has also launched Advanced Placement coursework in English Language Arts, providing an opportunity for even more rigorous study. Elements of the school's schedule have been designed to ensure additional, rigorous support is given to Heritage Spanish speakers and multilingual learners. Students may opt-in for a third year of Spanish or Heritage Spanish in a practicum format, where the course is individually designed with collaboration from the student in conjunction with the Spanish teacher and Guidance Counselor.

TAPA also personalizes the learning experience of all students through the use of proactive guidance counseling. All TAPA students (grades 7-12) acquire professional behavior and skills necessary to succeed in college and the workplace through push-in lessons from the school's full-time and award-winning guidance counselor. Guidance follows a scope and sequence of college and career readiness coursework that supports students in grades 7-12, with a hyperfocus in grades 10-12. In 12th grade, all TAPA students enroll in either dual enrollment or college prep coursework; classes meet daily with graded weekly assignments. TAPA enrolls an average of 80% of its graduates in post-secondary programs, whether traditional college avenues, job training, internship programs, or the National Guard.

### Social Advocacy

In order to keep students engaged in school and able to apply their learning to the real world, TAPA is a school that embraces active participation in a global society, which includes a comprehensive, culturally-relevant history and civics education. Our Historical Perspectives curriculum takes a 6 year sequential approach that includes law, civics, media literacy, and ethnic studies. The history education that students receive at TAPA

is rooted in the 21st century goals of history and civics as well as including Rhode Island history and students' personal and family historical narratives. Lastly, engaged learning is modeled for students by adults. For example, teacher coaching has been established at TAPA, with a specific focus on observation, feedback, and strategic support in math.

### **Curriculum and Coursework (augmented to serve grades 5 & 6)**

The table below provides a broad overview of TAPA's Lower School Course offerings.<sup>3233</sup>

Grade Level	Math	Science	ELA	Civics	Exploratory Arts
5	Math 5 Math Seminar 5 Science 5		Literature 5 Composition 5 Ethnic Studies 5		Film Dance Theatre Music  (1 genre per quarter)
6	Math 6 Math Seminar 6 Science 6		Literature 6 Composition 6 Ethnic Studies 6		
7	Math 7 Math Seminar 7	Science 7	Literature 7 Composition 7	Ethnic Studies 7	
8	Math 8 OR Algebra 1 Math Seminar 8	Science 8	Literature 8 Composition 8	Ethnic Studies 8	

The Lower School (Grades 5-8) is the foundational period for a TAPA student; it has historically been when a seventh and eighth grader transitions from being a student to an artist-scholar. TAPA will now extend this transition to students more gradually, beginning with their 5th and 6th grade years. Students will spend 4 years in the Lower School at TAPA experiencing all of the arts as well as acclimating to the rigor required for all of their academic classes. Students will experience an arts-integrated curriculum and have constant guidance from their teachers towards developing academic, artistic, and social-emotional skills and resilience.

<sup>32</sup> Math/Science and ELA/Civics grouped together in grades 5 & 6 to demonstrate that these topics will be cross cutting and covered by one teacher each. Starting in grade 7, students will see a different educator for each science, math, ELA and civics.

<sup>33</sup> No changes will be made to the curricular offerings of grades 7-12 as a result of the expansion.

Lower School teachers meet daily to analyze student data and support student learning as a team of warm and demanding teacher-artists. Culminating with the 8th grade arts auditions, a student's four years in the TAPA Lower School engage them in the process of learning about themselves and becoming a TAPA star.

Students in TAPA's Lower School are considered to be in an exploratory phase in regards to the performing arts. As such, they do not pick a single performing art of focus but instead gain broad exposure to all four majors offered by TAPA's upper school program (Theatre, Film, Music, and Dance). Students will take one quarter of each of these arts content courses in each year of their Lower School experience (grades 5-8), before refining their choice to one arts major at the end of their eighth grade year.

In addition to the arts, TAPA's Lower School students are required to participate in ethnic studies, science and two blocks per day of both ELA (Composition and Literature) and Math (Math and Math Seminar). In an effort to address any learning gaps incoming TAPA students may have, as well as to have an opportunity to tailor specific enrichment and remediation for all students, TAPA offers these two academic blocks of Math and ELA to **all** students.

In Math, these blocks are back-to-back and allow instructors to go more in-depth with grade-level mathematical concepts, while also differentiating instruction to fit all student needs. In order to accelerate student learning and close existing learning gaps, one of our goals upon receiving expansion is that 8th grade students will place into Algebra I rather than Math 8, although both will be offered.

In ELA, one block is focused on reading skill development through engagement with a variety of literary and textual formats, with an emphasis on meaning and analysis

through evidence and reasoning. Another block focuses on building comfort, confidence, and skill in writing ability through practice with grammatical and mechanical characteristics of writing while preparing for both real world and academic writing, as well as state testing expectations.

### **Course Expectations and Focus Areas**

#### **Lower School Math:**

Math 5 & Math Seminar I: Math 5 Seminar is a full-year double block course designed to build foundational math skills. In alignment to the CCSS, students in grade 5 will explore: Operations and algebraic thinking, number operations and base 10, number operations with fractions, measurement and data, as well as the building blocks of geometry.

Math 6 & Math Seminar II: Math 6 Seminar is also a full-year double block course designed to build foundational math skills. In alignment to the CCSS, students in grade 6 will master: ratios and proportional relationships, the Number System, Expressions and Equations, Geometric applications to the real world such as surface area and volume and the beginnings of statistical thinking and probability.

Math 7 & Math Seminar III: Math 7 & Math Seminar III is a full-year double-block course that reinforces and expands students' foundational math skills, such as arithmetic operations using rational numbers, area, perimeter and volume of geometric figures, congruence and similarity, angle relationships, the rectangular coordinate system, sets and logic, ratio and proportion, estimation, formulas, solving and graphing simple equations and inequalities.

Math 8 & Math Seminar IV: Math 8 & Math Seminar IV is a full-year double-block course that combines the study of pre-algebra and algebra topics with introductory geometry topics. This course includes the study of formulas, algebraic expressions, first-degree equations, the rectangular coordinate system, area, perimeter, volume of geometric figures, and properties of triangles and circles; including the Pythagorean theorem.

#### Lower School English Language Arts:

Literature and Composition 5: Literature and Composition 5 is a full-year double-block course which will be taken by all students at TAPA in grade 5. During the fifth grade year, students will explore how to read and comprehend literature and informational texts, analyze text structure and determine themes. They will write narratives, opinion pieces and conduct research projects, which leverage the writing process to persuade others. Students will also focus on speaking and listening skills, learning to effectively discuss texts with their peers. Lastly, a pivotal component of the grade 5 ELA curriculum is a study of language, as students learn the standard conventions of English grammar, usage and punctuation as determined by the Common Core Standards.

Literature and Composition 6: Literature and Composition 6 is a full-year double-block course which will be taken by all students at TAPA in grade 6. During the 6th grade years, students will be introduced to activities which activate their learning in the following areas: learning to analyze; compare and contrast different types of text; writing opinion pieces and incorporating research; and becoming stronger classroom discussants.

Literature and Composition 7: Literature and Composition 7 is a full-year double-block course that introduces students to the concept/theme of “choice” and “consequences actions may have on one’s self” through engaging and informative readings of a variety of formats. Texts will vary from fables and myths to historic accounts. Emphasis will be placed on building reading confidence and text analysis skills both independently and in group work. Students will learn to analyze and explain the meaning of texts, supporting them with evidence and reasoning by participating in class discussions. They will also broaden their vocabulary to be utilized in other classes. Students will study the structures of academic writing, specifically informational, persuasive, and narrative essays. Students will utilize the vocabulary learned in Literature 7 in their writing pieces to show comprehension of grade-level content vocabulary. Students will learn conventions in grammar and how to present their compositions in a professional manner. Students will demonstrate comprehension through composition, multiple-choice, and TEQ (Technology Enhanced Questions) as seen on RICAS. Students will use the arts to respond to texts read in Literature class to practice the performance and artistic skills taught in Arts classes.

Literature & Composition 8: Students will more deeply analyze and explore the concept/theme of decisions and consequences through a variety of different texts and literary formats. Text will vary from utopian/dystopian novels and heroes’ journeys to Shakespearean comedies. We will once again focus on building students’ reading confidence and skill through text and individual study. Students will grow their autonomy in analyzing texts with close reading strategies and posing text-based probing questions through student-led class discussions. They will also broaden their vocabulary to be

utilized in other classes. Students will more deeply study the structures of informational, persuasive, and narrative essays, as well as receive instruction on creating a resume and cover letter for their 8th Grade Arts Audition, teaching students real-world skills through arts integration. Students will utilize the vocabulary learned in Literature 8 in their writing pieces to show comprehension of grade-level content vocabulary. Students will learn conventions in grammar, and how to present their compositions in a professional manner. Students will demonstrate comprehension through composition, multiple-choice, and TEQ (Technology Enhanced Questions) as seen on RICAS. Students will use the arts to respond to texts read in Literature class to practice the performance and artistic skills taught in Arts classes.

#### Lower School Ethnic Studies:

Ethnic Studies 5: Ethnic Studies 5 is a yearlong course that teaches students the foundations to historical inquiry through an investigation of the lives of different ethnic groups in the United States. Students will develop questions about the experiences, contributions and challenges faced by different ethnic groups in the U.S., plan inquiries to guide research, and understand primary and secondary sources. These students will learn to apply their knowledge of history, culture and geography to understand the experiences of those in the U.S. Students will also analyze the historical contributions of many groups and learn to understand the connection between past struggles, achievements, and present-day social issues.

Ethnic Studies 6: Ethnic Studies 6 is a yearlong course that teaches students skills in the social sciences and positions them as geographers, economists, and sociologists. Students will explore the contributions and challenges faced by different ethnic groups

around the world. Students will deepen their understanding of the concepts of cultural diversity, tolerance, equity and cultural exchange. Students will sharpen their understanding of geography and basic economics such that they are prepared to explore intersectionality at a deeper level, beginning in grade 7.

**Ethnic Studies 7:** Ethnic Studies 7 is a yearlong course that teaches students how to use historical theories to investigate their own lives and global history. Students will explore the intersection of the identities of race, class, and gender for themselves, society at large, and major historical narratives. The 7th grade focuses on the macro-narrative from pre-Columbian contact to early anti-imperialism. Students will also begin to explore the foundations of research, citation, and informational formal writing skills.

**Ethnic Studies 8:** Ethnic Studies 8 is a yearlong course that teaches students to utilize their knowledge of intersectional analysis to research and interrogate the narratives of modern history. The 8th grade focuses on developing students' abilities to analyze where their personal narratives fit into the macro-narratives of the modern world. Students will develop their skills in formal writing, research-based presentation, and personal historical research.

TAPA is one of the few schools in the state of Rhode Island that incorporates the C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards with a focus on ethnic studies and civics. This is a defining practice of the school and one that the school community feels is essential to promoting TAPA Stars who are committed to using their knowledge for the betterment of the communities in which they identify themselves as part of.

Lower School Science:

Science 5: In 5th grade, students are introduced a broad range of scientific topics and practices. Students will explore physical science, including matter and forces, as well as life science, focusing on ecosystems and the human body. They will also study Earth and space science, including weather patterns, the water cycle, and the solar system. Engineering and design practices are also integrated into the curriculum, allowing students to apply scientific knowledge to real world problems.

Science 6: In 6th grade, students will take part in a comprehensive exploration of various scientific disciplines and practices. Students will delve into physical science, investigating concepts like energy, motion, and the properties of matter. Life science topics cover cells, genetics, and ecosystems, while Earth and space science delve into geology, weather patterns, and the solar system. The curriculum incorporates engineering and design practices, encouraging students to apply scientific principles to real-world challenges. Crosscutting concepts, such as systems and models, are integrated throughout to foster a deeper understanding of scientific phenomena. Through hands-on experiments and inquiry-based learning, students develop critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and a lifelong curiosity for scientific exploration.

Science 7: In 7th grade, students are exposed to a wide scope of sciences aiming to give a base set of knowledge to be expanded in the Upper School. Students start the year learning how to utilize scientific measurement tools and how to design an effective experiment. Students will learn the basics of biology, chemistry, and physics throughout the rest of the year, exploring topics such as chemical reactions, metabolic reactions, ecosystem changes, and human impact on Earth. Students will engage in phenomena-based learning aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards.

Science 8: In 8th grade, students continue to deepen their foundational knowledge in Upper School sciences: biology, chemistry, and physics. Students learn topics such as genetics, natural selection, magnetic and physical forces, and sound waves. They engage in engineering internships to design their own solutions to real-world problems, replicating the jobs of mechanical and biomedical engineers, learning how to design plans using design criteria and data analysis.

#### Lower School Exploratory Arts

Upon entering the 5th grade arts program, students begin an exploration of all four performing art forms through multiple class rotations. These cycles are repeated in each grade 5-8. The purpose of these rotations is to immerse students into the wealth of art variety; allowing them to experience and appreciate each art on their path to declaring an art major at the end of their 8th grade year. Grades 5-7 are largely exploratory, with the goal of exposing students to all major offerings of TAPA's arts program (Dance, Film, Music, and Theatre).

8th grade students must submit a written proposal advocating for their preferred art placement in Quarter four that will be reviewed and approved by the Lower School and Artistic Team. In addition, they will have previously been interviewed individually by a member of the admin team to ensure they are in the appropriate art pre-major. During the pre-major quarter, they will experience audition preparation, creating independent art, rehearsal, revision, and building interview skills. All of this will culminate in their end-of-year Art Major Auditions, which will be performed for the entire school and an invited panel of judges.

The table below provides a broad overview of TAPA's Lower School Arts Experiences and how they fit within TAPA's schoolwide model of pre-professional arts coursework:

Grade Level	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Culminating Project (in addition to annual arts integration projects).
5	Intro to Dance	Intro to Film	Intro to Music	Intro to Theatre	Successful completion of introductory-level art courses
6	Exploratory Theatre I	Exploratory Dance I	Exploratory Film I	Exploratory Music I	Completion of introductory and exploratory arts requirements spanning grades 5 and 6
7	Exploratory Theatre, Dance, Film and Music II			Arts Pre-Major	7th grade pre-major planning and "trial period" in proposed arts major
8	Exploratory Theatre, Dance, Film and Music III			Arts Major selection and preparation	8th grade arts audition and Arts Major selection
9-11	Arts Major Courses	Arts Major Courses	Arts Minor Courses	Arts Major Courses	Mid-year and End-of-year culminating performances based in grade-level-specific arts standards
12	Arts Major Senior Thesis: planning, creation and implementation				Senior Thesis project including performance, written senior thesis document, and public senior thesis defense

### **Continuous Improvement**

TAPA leverages a Director of Academics and a Dean of Academics as the leaders for the continuous evaluation and improvement of its curriculum. In partnership with the school leader, they will work to ensure that the offerings for grade 5 and 6 are as effective as those for its current grade 7-12 courses. An essential component of their roles is to support teachers in faithful implementation of several Ed-Reports Green Rated curricula. An alignment to these externally validated resources help our teachers to remain aligned with all required standards, while ensuring rigor and increasing engagement.

### **Learning Environment and Pedagogy (augmented to serve grades 5&6)**

TAPA prides itself on creating a warm learning environment where students feel encouraged to voice their opinions and take academic risks. While the school does not anticipate any significant changes to its learning environment or school culture, TAPA does anticipate one structural change in staffing which will affect our pedagogy:

Currently, students in grades 7-12 rotate classrooms and have one teacher per discrete course content area. For grades 5 & 6, TAPA students will only rotate to their Arts exploration coursework but will otherwise be supported by two educators, a humanities teacher (ELA/Ethnic Studies) and a STEM teacher (Math/Science). We believe that this structure will allow for deeper relationships to be built between teachers and students as they transition into the broader culture of TAPA's community<sup>34</sup>.

TAPA feels it is important to note here that the learning environment may look slightly different for students in grades 7-12, whose grade-level cohorts will increase from 34 to 40 students. This will mean an average class size of 20 students compared to 17. While TAPA does not anticipate this making a significant difference in the student experience, we will be mindful to consistently check this assumption by monitoring our student progress data and asking our educators for their informal reflections.

### **Specific Populations (augmented to serve grades 5 & 6)**

TAPA has worked diligently to create a learning environment that recognizes the diversity of its students. The school community knows that many of the youth who enter

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<sup>34</sup> Gardner, Margery, and John Tillotson. "Interpreting Integrated STEM: Sustaining Pedagogical Innovation within a Public Middle School Context." *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education* 17, no. 7 (October 3, 2018): 1283–1300. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10763-018-9927-6>

our school come in with significant learning gaps, some due to access, others due to language needs and even others due to specific disabilities. As such, TAPA has both universal and targeted support which are provided to address all students.

### **Universal/Tier1 supports:**

All students in TAPA's Lower School receive two periods per day of Math and ELA instruction. This allows for both whole group support and individual targeted instruction. Our math interventionist and MLL Educator are able to push into these courses to provide additional support to students as well as to coach faculty. All TAPA courses leverage universal design for learning (UDL) to implement an inclusion model. All students also benefit from an environment that prioritizes student engagement, culturally responsiveness and productive expressions of dissent and conflict. TAPA believes that these priorities contribute to a learning environment that both supports and motivates our scholar-artists.

### **MLL Support:**

As (10%) of TAPA students are identified as multilingual learners and an additional significant population are former MLL students, TAPA recognizes the need for a deep commitment to language learning support. TAPA anticipates that its MLL population will grow, as youth in grades 5 & 6 are less likely to have exited MLL services before entering the school. As a result, TAPA will increase the support of its MLL interventionist from .5 to 1FTE. Additionally, TAPA has worked diligently to get its faculty MLL endorsements through the excEL program at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). In addition to formal supports, TAPA has also prioritized the hiring of bilingual (English/Spanish) educators. Currently, 50% of staff are bilingual (defined as having the

competency level to teach in Spanish) and all staff have been asked to work on their understanding of the Spanish language as a commitment to our students and school-wide culture. In addition, all teachers have been trained in the practices of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESOL) instruction in response to an audit of practices conducted by Dr. Rabia Hos of University of Rhode Island. Dr. Hos is the Director of URI's TESOL programs and is a national leader in MLL support.

### **Students with IEPs:**

TAPA's special education program is overseen by a part-time Director of Special Education, Teresa Egan. Ms. Egan is a veteran special educator who spent the majority of her 40+ year career working in the Providence Public School District. Reporting to Ms. Egan are two special educators who manage the day to day services of all students at TAPA who have IEPs. For many years, TAPA only had 1 certified special educator. However, as need has grown and gaps in learning have become more evident as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, TAPA has moved to having two full time special educators. The school's philosophy for support of these learners is to do all that it can to keep students within the general education classroom, unless their needs truly necessitate pull out intervention. TAPA's special educators push into classrooms to support classroom teachers, as they implement differentiated instruction. TAPA's Director of Teaching and Learning has developed an internal rubric that is used to measure the rigor of lesson plans to ensure that they are providing increased scaffolds for students with special needs, rather than reducing rigor.

As post-secondary success has been a core goal of TAPA for all of its students, TAPA has made special efforts to prepare students with IEPs for life after graduation from

high school. The school recognizes that some students may have disabilities that prevent them from attending a traditional 4-year college experience. Following this, TAPA has worked with students and families to explore alternative training programs, employment opportunities, and complete applications for financial assistance.

*Please reference the section below on assessment for further information on how TAPA's MTSS policy additionally supports the identification and support of students with special needs.*

### **Assessment System (No Changes)**

TAPA does not anticipate any changes to its assessment system as a result of the expansion. Students in grade 5 & 6 will participate in an assessment process that mirrors that of grade 7:

Assessment	Formative	Summative
Math	Homework, course performance, quizzes and tests (illustrative math)  STAR Math (3x/year)	RICAS Math
ELA	Homework, course performance, quizzes and tests (EL Education)  STAR Reading (3x/year)	RICAS ELA
Arts	Arts Auditions Arts Showcases Critique of Artistic Works	Performance Based Assessments 8th grade Arts Portfolio
Science	Homework, course performance, quizzes and tests.	NGSS Exam is given only in grades 5 & 8.

\*additional assessments are used to support our MLL and students with IEPs based on their status.

The most important indicator of the success of TAPA's assessment system is whether it allows us to make informed decisions about student learning. TAPA recently revamped its Multi-tiered Systems of Support and Response to Intervention (MTSS & RtI) systems to both modernize the system and to make necessary adjustments for the ever-expanding ripple effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. This process had to be rooted in the realities of the pandemic, which caused two years' worth of gaps in our crucial qualitative and quantitative data collection. Therefore, TAPA turned this into an opportunity to reimagine a RtI and MTSS process to include the latest research around the risks of bias-manipulation in the RtI structure and to reflect the growing robust team of student supports in the school.

TAPA set an [aspirational structure](#) rooted in the research phase that we aim to have fully in place in the 2023-24 school year. Over the last two years, our goal was to re-calibrate the ways in which the RtI and MTSS team evaluates data and identify students in need of higher tiers of support. The inclusion of math and ELA interventionists (new in 2021-2022) in the 7th and 8th grades also added an additional layer of tier two and three supports that had not been previously possible. This has elevated the quality of our MTSS and RtI team meetings. The implementation of standardized protocols has also helped us stay efficient and data-driven.

### **Promotion and Graduation Policy (No Changes)**

TAPA's promotion and retention policy in grades 7-8 was designed to ensure that students make progress at a pace that will prepare them for success in TAPA's Upper School. Students in grades 5 & 6 will follow the same policy. Students who fail one or two

classes during the regular school year have the opportunity to make up those classes in Summer Skills during July-August in order to be promoted to the next grade.

- If they pass those classes in Summer Skills, they will be promoted to the next grade.
- If they do not pass those classes in Summer Skills, they must repeat the grade level.
  - Students who fail three or more classes during the regular school year will be retained in grade and must repeat the year and must complete Summer Skills to prepare for success in the repeated year.

Failure to attend and complete the entire Summer Skills Program will impact the student's status in regard to retention and grade placement. The rules and attendance policies of Summer Skills stand alone and are significantly stricter than the regular school year given the shortened nature of the program.

The anticipated outcome of the TAPA Summer Skills program is the enhancement of the skills needed to succeed in the subject area(s) in which the student is receiving extra support. This will be measured and tracked by pre, mid, and post-assessments as well as their daily coursework.

If the student does not successfully complete the Summer Skills Program, the Summer Skills Coordinator or a member of the TAPA Admin Team will meet with the parent/guardian and student to discuss the best path forward for the student, and the following may occur:

- The student will need to repeat the grade-level, to earn the required number of academic credits.
- The student will need to repeat the class during the school year to earn the required academic credit.
- The student will progress to the next grade but will be short of the required number of academic credits and will have to attend a summer program (or equivalent) before becoming eligible for graduation.
- The student will be short academic credits and not be eligible for graduation.

### **School Culture (no changes)**

TAPA is excited to welcome students in grades 5 & 6 into its warm and supportive culture. The school's leaders are proud of the environment which TAPA creates for students and will place significant emphasis on creating a welcoming school for its newest and youngest students.

### **The TAPA Staff Pledges To:**

1. Acknowledge and demonstrate respect for our diverse Ensemble of different races, religions, genders/gender identities, cultures, sexual orientations, classes, abilities, and points of view.
2. Demonstrate respect by considering others' feelings and needs when making choices that impact the Ensemble.
3. Demonstrate respect for the TAPA Ensemble by putting forth the maximum effort in all curricular and extracurricular events and activities.
4. Remember that the welfare of the students is our primary concern. The heart of our job is caring for the students.

5. Demonstrate an assumption of best intentions.

**In the TAPA Classroom, All Educators and Artists Pledge To:**

1. Demonstrate extensive knowledge of content and a wide range of pedagogical approaches.
2. Strive to reach an extensive understanding of individual students' developmental or learning characteristics, skills, abilities, special, medical, or learning needs, and/or cultural heritage.
3. Set consistent high expectations for student success and learning.
4. Implement instruction that is rigorous and provides differentiated pathways to learning and demonstration of knowledge
5. Maintain a system to monitor and record students' completion of assignments, progress and learning which is accessible to students and families.
6. Set strategic, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely (SMART) goals for students, implement strategies to aid students in achieving their goals and monitor their progress.
7. Utilize data provided and collected on students to effectively implement increased rigor and a variety of teaching strategies to increase learning for all students and close achievement gaps.

The greatest measure of TAPA's success is the school's lifelong impact on our students. We strive for positive student outcomes not only in higher education, employment, and economic stability, but also in the areas of civic leadership, social conscience, and emotional intelligence. TAPA will have succeeded if, by continuing to

shape creative and compassionate artist-scholars, we affect positive change in the city we serve and the community at large.

### **Inclusive Community**

TAPA strives to be an inclusive community that reflects the diversity of its city, student body, and local arts community. Just as TAPA's approach to academic learning is based on an arts-integrated curriculum, its approach to responsible citizenship is accomplished by setting a "warm/demanding" tone throughout everything it does with its students. TAPA teaches students to accept and value differences among their peers by discussing those differences respectfully. The aim is to create understanding and build a strong sustainable, accepting community.

TAPA's community is enriched by the cultural, religious, racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of its families, students, and staff. TAPA welcomes the differences in sexual orientation and gender identity brought to our school by our staff and families. Our families' varied compositions—traditional or single parent or same-sex parent, nuclear or extended, adoptive or blended—reflect the larger community in which we live and illustrate for our students the many different ways we build our families. TAPA celebrates differences and is committed to creating a safe, caring environment where everyone can be him/them/herself without fear of harassment, ridicule, or rejection.

In choosing to send their student to TAPA, a parent has chosen for them, not only a rigorous academic program taught by dedicated teachers in small classrooms, but also to broaden their student's worldview through their friendships and conversations with others.

### **Behavioral system:**

The School community believes in building relationships and repairing harm, rather than simply punishing students for misbehavior. This is the core of its Restorative Justice model. It's not as simple as detention-suspension-expulsion. While the result of the student's actions may include some form of consequence, the lens is much wider than that. It is not a cut-and-dried system with prescribed steps to follow in every situation. Just as every student is unique and different, every incident is also unique and different. What TAPA is teaching students is that their behavior affects people. The school's community wants to ensure that students are recognizing when they made a mistake and finding a way to make it right.

Additionally, TAPA leverages a system of positive role-models, aligned to its core value of community. As part of the expansion, high school students will be matched with lower school students to form a mentoring relationship. Together, pairs will meet on the school grounds for at least one hour per week throughout the school year. Typical activities will include eating lunch together, playing music together, doing homework, dancing in the dance room, etc. The relationship formed will benefit both parties. Younger students will have a caring mentor whom they can go to and confide in as they navigate their way through TAPA and through middle school. The high school students will learn the importance of helping another and sharing with them what they have learned while at TAPA. And, when a student's mentee gets referred to the Dean of Students, the Mentor can be included in conversations and used as a resource for the mentee and Dean of Students to help correct the negative behavior.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> TAPA will of course be mindful of student confidentiality concerns and navigate this process carefully.

The purpose of this process is to assist the younger student to understand what it is like to be at TAPA, why things are done the way they are here, and how to adjust to the new rules. It allows the older students to share their experiences, their mistakes and what they have learned, in an attempt to make the younger students' transition to TAPA an easier one, and a more enjoyable one. It will allow the younger students to have an older student to go to, to vent, to ask questions, to seek out when stressed, etc. It allows the older students to help another human being and make the transition much easier for any who may struggle.

## **8. Organizational Capacity (Expansion Proposals)**

### **Administrative Structure**

TAPA is operationally prepared to offer grades 5 & 6 as part of their educational program. Currently, TAPA's senior leadership consists of the following positions:

- Head of School
- Assistant Head of School (historically filled but currently vacant)
- HR Coordinator
- Finance Director
- Dean of Students
- Family Liaison/Community Admissions Coordinator
- Director of Facilities
- Director of Teaching and Learning/Academics
- 2 Aspiring Principals

Upon approval of the school's expansion and the completion of all licensing requirements, TAPA's two aspiring principals will transition into long-term roles as an Assistant Head of School (Director of the Lower School) and a Dean of Academics. These roles will function largely the same as they are currently,. However, the individuals in them will have greater decision-making authority and full release from teaching.

In addition to the administrative structure updates, TAPA will also make the following changes:

- Addition of 2 humanities (Ethnic Studies and ELA) educators (1 per grade 5 and 6)
- Addition of 2 STEM (Math and Science) educators (1 per grade 5 and 6)
- Increase the school's MLL coordinator/teacher from .5 to 1 FTE
- Increase TAPA's part-time artists-in-residence to full-time educators to accommodate the new art classes for grades 5 and 6.

3 organizational charts have been added to this application within the appendix to demonstrate these changes over time.

No changes to TAPA's governing board are expected as a result of the expansion. This decision was made in light of the fact that TAPA has consistently had highly rated board governance (please refer to our track record of success for further details). Moreover, no changes to the school's mission or catchment area will be made that necessitate shifting the makeup of the board.

### **Community Partners**

TAPA does not have a contract with an EMO or CMO. However, the school does partner with some organizations for services and work with many community organizations. TAPA works with CBS therapy for Occupational Therapy and Speech services and with TIDES family services for counseling when a student may need more than TAPA's two internal social workers can provide.

A sampling of community partnerships include:

Organization	Contact Name	Contact Email	Description of Partnership
Grace Episcopal Church	Rev. Canon Jonathan Huyck	SQuinn@gracechurchprovidence.org	Grace Church and TAPA established a partnership to host events in church and meeting hall, alongside conducting food and gift drives for TAPA families during the holidays. Through this collaboration, we have been able to promote community development and foster unity and compassion within the PVD neighborhood.
Rhode Island Kids Count	Paige Clausius-Parks	<a href="mailto:PClausius-Parks@rikidscount.org">PClausius-Parks@rikidscount.org</a>	TAPA and RI Kids Count joined forces to champion access to high-quality education for all children in the state. Both organizations are aligned in the goal of improving graduation rates and offer multiple pathways to success. Together, they empower students, foster a love for learning, and advocate for equitable opportunities for BIPOC students.
Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England	Dana Borrelli-Murray	<a href="mailto:dborrelli@gssne.org">dborrelli@gssne.org</a>	The partnership between Girl Scouts of Southeastern NE and TAPA is based on creating long-term peer-to-peer bonds with a focus on youth voice and mentoring, fostering holistic, positive, and radically inclusive learning environments. Both organizations share a commitment towards empowering students and drawing out innate talents.
ExcEL Leadership Academy	Laureen Avely	<a href="mailto:avery@gseis.ucla.edu">avery@gseis.ucla.edu</a>	The partnership between ExcEL Leadership Academy and TAPA is a testament to their shared commitment to providing high-quality and equitable education for English Learners. ExcEL, a

			<p>national program of the UCLA School of Education, collaborates closely with TAPA, which is one of Rhode Island's pioneering and most successful partners in this endeavor. The dedication of TAPA to cultivating skilled teacher-leaders has been a driving force in achieving student success. Through the ExcEL partnership, TAPA educators have honed their expertise and now serve as mentors and coaches to their peers throughout New England. This collaboration has fostered a learner-centered, creative, exploratory, and inclusive culture that shines in every aspect of their work together. As community professional development providers, they eagerly anticipate continuing their joint efforts as new grades are added to TAPA's educational landscape.</p>
New Urban Arts	Daniel Schleifer	<a href="mailto:daniel@newurbanarts.org">daniel@newurbanarts.org</a>	<p>New Urban Arts and TAPA have forged a formal partnership since 2017 through our joint involvement in the 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant. Over the years of our collaboration, we have witnessed firsthand the impressive commitment and accountability exhibited by TAPA as partners. Their staff's unwavering dedication to students has been nothing short of remarkable, creating a palpably positive school culture that fosters growth and creativity. This dynamic alliance between our organizations has proven to be fruitful, empowering young artists and learners with enriching</p>

			experiences and opportunities.
Highlander Institute	Heidi Vazquez	<a href="mailto:hvazquez@highlanderinstitute.org">hvazquez@highlanderinstitute.org</a>	The Highlander Institute and TAPA have a longstanding partnership focused on leveraging students' identities, interests, and values to create meaningful and effective learning experiences. From April 2022 to June 2023, the Highlander Institute supported TAPA in developing a school improvement plan and professional learning initiatives focusing on instructional equity and high expectations for all. This collaboration included synthesizing data reports, facilitating School Improvement teams, coaching leaders, and implementing strategies to make high-quality instructional materials accessible to all learners, ultimately working towards empowering students and improving their math identities and achievements.
College Visions	Dionna Jenkins	<a href="mailto:dionna@collegevisions.org">dionna@collegevisions.org</a>	Through close collaboration with guidance staff at the school, CV has increased the number of students served from TAPA over the past few years. It is through this intentional and ever-evolving partnership they have been able to advocate for educational equity.
Center for Leadership & Educational Equity	Kevin Cordeiro	<a href="mailto:kevincordeiro@cllee.org">kevincordeiro@cllee.org</a>	CLEE (Center for Learning and Educational Excellence) and TAPA partnership has spanned over eight years. Kevin is someone who has been closely involved with TAPA's dedicated students, supportive families, committed staff and leaders. They have facilitated and provided

			feedback to TAPA's leadership on their vision and goal-setting process. Throughout the years, their commitment to collaboration has led to evident growth in student outcomes, making the school's progress increasingly equitable over the recent years.
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### Parent Engagement

The TAPA community believes in fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment for parents and guardians. TAPA understands the importance of parental involvement in a child's education and aims to break down barriers to accessing the school community. This work is a known responsibility of all TAPA staff members. However, it is spearheaded by the school's community liaison, Zuleika Vidal. Zuleika (she/her) comes to TAPA after years of working for non-profit organizations and community agencies. Her bilingual skills, community connections and extensive knowledge of services available to RI families makes her a perfect fit for TAPA, its students and their families.

Some of the initiatives facilitated by Ms. Vidal and the school team are:

**On-site Food Pantry:** TAPA has an on-site Food Pantry that provides non-perishable food items and canned goods for TAPA families. Boxes are prepared and distributed once a week, and parents can either pick them up or have them sent home with students. This initiative ensures that families have access to nutritious food, promoting their well-being and eliminating food insecurity concerns.

**Access to Computers and Internet:** TAPA provides desktop computers and internet access to parents from Monday to Friday, and we are working towards expanding these services to include Saturdays. This enables parents to use the internet for various

purposes such as job hunting, emailing, researching, studying, accessing online courses, and communicating with teachers. Printing of important documents is also available in our Parent-Community Center.

**Support for Homeless Families:** For students and families experiencing homelessness, TAPA offers access to community resources and referrals. This support is particularly important for displaced families staying in shelters or temporarily living with family members or friends. Additionally, academic support is available for TAPA students from families experiencing homelessness, overseen by our school's Family-and-Community Liaison.

**Safe and Inclusive Environment:** TAPA prioritizes creating a safe environment with low incidences of bullying and high tolerance and acceptance of LGBTQIA youth. This reputation attracts families to the school, as they value the well-being and emotional safety of their children. By fostering trust and positive relationships, TAPA ensures that students feel safe and comfortable enough to learn and grow.

**Engaging Home Visits:** TAPA organizes sessions led by educators and parents from diverse backgrounds to check internal biases and preconceived notions. These visits focus on building respect and appreciation for our students, families, and their homes. This initiative helps break down stereotypes and promotes a deeper understanding of our school community.

**DEI Conference:** TAPA school hosts a multi-day DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) Conference, developed by the TAPA DEI committee. This conference brings together

parents, students, and community activists to facilitate panel discussions, workshops, and affinity-building activities. Sessions cover topics such as Latin dance, diverse learners, step dance, gender and sexuality, and critical conversations led by TAPA students.

**Parent Ensemble (Parental Governance):** TAPA has a Parent Ensemble, which is their version of a Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO). Led by a parent representative and the school's Family and Community Liaison, the Parent Ensemble actively involves parents in various school processes. They play a crucial role in providing input and feedback on the school's mission statement and addressing the needs of the school community.

**Communication and Transparency:** TAPA prioritizes effective communication between the school and parents/guardians. Parents receive their students' quarterly report cards, and we provide access to the "Parent Portal" on Skyward. This portal allows parents to access up-to-the-minute grades and academic progress. We also utilize the Skylert feature to give essential news to parents. Additionally, we maintain an active presence on social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep parents informed about school events and updates.

**Open-Door Policy and Bilingual Support:** TAPA has an open-door policy for parents who wish to visit during the school day, ensuring they feel welcome and encouraged to engage with the school community. To facilitate effective communication, TAPA has a bilingual Family and Community Liaison who supports communication between staff and parents. We also have a 100% bilingual front office to ensure effective and direct communication with parents.

**Family Resource Center and Outreach:** TAPA has a Family Resource Center located at the front of the school, providing computers for parent use and information about community events. We also host an on-site food pantry and facilitate a backpack program at the start of the year. Additionally, we organize large food giveaways near the holidays. These initiatives aim to support families and provide them with essential resources.

**Special Education Engagement:** TAPA's Assistant Head of School co-leads the TAPA Special Education Local Advisory Committee (TAPA LAC) with parents. These committees provide opportunities for parents to meet with staff in an informal setting to discuss student advocacy, special education rights, and specific needs. This collaboration ensures that parents of students with special needs are involved in decision-making processes and have a platform to voice their concerns.

**Commitment to Cultural Responsiveness:** TAPA recognizes the need to provide services to students and their families that are not only effective but also culturally responsive. One way that we work to meet this goal is by prioritizing Spanish language expertise as a preferred qualification for the onboarding of staff. Our goal is to have at least 50% of our staff members be bilingual in Spanish and English in order to best support and understand our students who speak Spanish at home. We also have a grant-funded partnership with UCLA to ensure that all of our teachers become MLL Endorsed through their eXcEL Leadership academy.

By implementing these strategies, prioritizing evidence-based practices, and continuously seeking feedback through surveys, focus groups and the school's parent ensemble, TAPA fosters a strong partnership between the school and parents/guardians.

TAPA truly values parent involvement and believes that it plays a vital role in enhancing the educational experience and success of its students.

## **9. Facilities**

TAPA is currently housed in the center of downtown Providence at 275 Westminster St. This facility, owned by the school, is a former office building that is proximate to all that downtown Providence has to offer, including being just steps away from the central transportation hub for the state.

One significant signal of readiness for TAPA's expansion is the fact that the school already owns its facility and has space for all additional seats proposed through this application. TAPA currently has two floors of its building which are unoccupied, but are available to house additional students. These facilities require only minor construction, which can be completed prior to the first day of the 2024-2025 school year (when grade 5 will first enter TAPA). The 4th and 5th floors of the building will be retrofitted to mirror the same layout/floor plan currently used on the other two floors of operation. Schematic floor plans of the building are attached to the application for reference.

## **10. Operations**

TAPA does not anticipate any operational changes as a result of its expansion. This is because the same services and support which are offered to TAPA's students in grades 7-12 can be shared with students in the new grades (5 & 6).

Transportation services for students in grades 5 & 6 will mirror the policy for students in grades 7 and 8. All students who live 1.5 miles or more from TAPA will be provided with a bus. All other students in grades 5-8 are responsible for their own transportation. In grades 9-12, students only receive a RIPTA public bus pass if they live over 2 miles from school. TAPA is conveniently located in downtown Providence, just steps away from Kennedy Plaza, Rhode Island's central bus hub.

## 11. Finance and Budget

### Fiscal Track Record

TAPA is proud of its fiscal responsibility and strong financial oversight. During its last charter term, TAPA consistently met all of RIDE's financial expectations. The one exception to this was the Debt to Asset Ratio in FY21, which exceeded the threshold by 0.01 due to the timing of the school's purchase of its building. This is now fully resolved.

Indicator	FY22	FY21	FY20	FY19
1.1 Current Ratio	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
1.2 Unrestricted Days of Cash	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
1.3 Debt to Asset Ratio	Meets	Approaches	Meets	Meets
1.4 Total Margin/3 Year Aggregate Total Margin	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets
1.5 Debt Service Coverage Ratio	Meets	Meets	Meets	Meets

TAPA does not have any areas of the financial performance indicator that are not being met. The school also does not have any compliance violations or active litigation. There also have not been any material audit findings against TAPA.

### Budget Assumptions & Justifications

Please find a 5 year budget projection attached to this application, which describes the school's fiscal plan for growing from 204 students to 320 over the next 4 years.

**Major Assumptions:** In alignment with the narrative of this application, TAPA's proposed budget is built upon the assumption that at scale, the school will serve 116 additional students from the current state, beginning with FY28. All students will come from

Providence and the budget has been predicated on the per pupil allocation associated with the sending district. Mirroring the school's operational growth plan, the budget also accounts for the addition of 4 educators and 2 administrators over the course of this period.

**Operating Revenues:** Revenues are expected to grow from \$4,679,666.96 in 2024 to \$6,528,791.31 in 2028. The vast majority of this increase is explained by the state and local per pupil allocations which accompany the growing student population. Some additional revenue is expected for capital projects, assuming a 4.25MM loan at 6% and a 40% Housing Aid reimbursement.

**Operating Expenditures:** TAPA's operating expenditures are not expected to increase dramatically during the five year period. Areas which are impacted by the expansion include:

- Increase in FTEs to accommodate 2 administrators and 4 teachers (salaries and benefits)
- Increase in instructional materials purchases to accommodate new students
- Increase in Food Services and Transportation to accommodate new students

**Contingencies:** According to these projections, TAPA anticipates a modest surplus in each of the next 5 years (ranging from \$32,000 to \$206,000), as well as room for substantial budgeted contingencies (ranging from \$25,000 to \$75,000 per year).

### **Fund Management**

TAPA upholds a strong structure for fiscal oversight which is overseen by the school's business manager. The school's fiscal track record demonstrates a readiness to

uphold excellence in fiscal oversight as the school expands. Specifically, TAPA's Board, Finance Committee, School Leader and Business Manager will ensure that:

- The charter's ratio indicates that its assets can cover its liabilities, demonstrated by maintaining an asset/liability ratio equal to or greater than 1
- The charter has 60 or more days of unrestricted cash on hand
- The charter's debt to asset ratio is less than .90
- The charter's aggregated three year total margin is positive
- The charter's debt service coverage ratio is greater than or equal to 1.1
- The charter submits its required periodic UCOA reports on time and with accurate information.
- The charter submits its Agreed Upon Procedure (AUP) Audits, as required by the Office of the Auditor General and the Office of Statewide Efficiencies, on time and with accurate information.
- The charter submits its Annual Financial Audit and corresponding management letter as applicable, as required by the Office of the Auditor General, on time and with accurate information
- The charter receives an unqualified/unmodified audit.
- The charter's auditors determine the charter has "no significant deficiencies" or equivalents, as outlined in any applicable management letter accompanying the annual audit.
- The charter's auditors determine that the charter has "no material weaknesses" or equivalents, as outlined in any applicable management letter accompanying the annual audit.
- The school receives an unmodified/unqualified single audit.

## 12. Variances

TAPA does not request any additional variances because of its expansion. This is because the school has established systems for school operations, in accordance with state law, which can be extended to grades 5 and 6 without revision. The primary variance which TAPA currently operates under and would like to extend to grades 5 & 6 is a waiver to allow the school's rigorous dance instruction to meet the state's requirements for physical education.

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## **Appendix A: Assurances**

## Appendix A: Assurances Form

This Assurance Form enumerates the requirements and, when you submit this signed sheet as part of your Charter School Application Package, you are providing the legal assurance that your charter school understands and will do these things. This form must be signed by the school's governing board chair or the lead applicant for all applicants (new charters and expansions). These assurances should not be considered a exhaustive list, as RIDE may determine there are additional legal requirements for the board and school.

As the authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that if awarded a charter:

1. Curriculum must be aligned with Common Core Standards and other standards adopted by the state of Rhode Island, such as the Next Generation Science Standards.
2. The school will craft a comprehensive discipline policy in compliance with all federal, state and local laws and regulations, including a general discipline policy and a differently-abled student discipline policy.
3. The board will comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
4. The RIDE Office of Charter Schools will be provided with the terms and conditions for use of a facility, including draft lease or purchase agreements, once a space has been identified.
5. The school will comply with the statutory and regulatory requirements for school health programs and school safety plans.
6. The school will develop school safety and emergency response plans.
7. The school will provide health services to all students, including a plan to hire a nurse taking into consideration of the statutory requirements in the Rhode Island Rules and Regulations for School Health Programs.
8. The school will comply with reporting to the Office of Municipal Affairs and State Auditor General under RIGL 16-77.2-8; 16-77.3-8; 16-77.4-8
9. The school board will annually seek and approve an operational budget and cash flow statement, with a copy to RIDE.
10. The school will complete a fiscal audit each year with an independent firm, with a copy to RIDE.
11. The board and school will comply with all of the requirements in the RIDE Pre-Opening handbook.

DocuSigned by:

Sarah Whiting

Governing Board Chair, Charter School

8/3/2023

Date

DocuSigned by:

Liz Richards-Hegnauer

Lead Applicant, Charter School

8/3/2023

Date

## **Appendix B: Required Proposal Attachments**

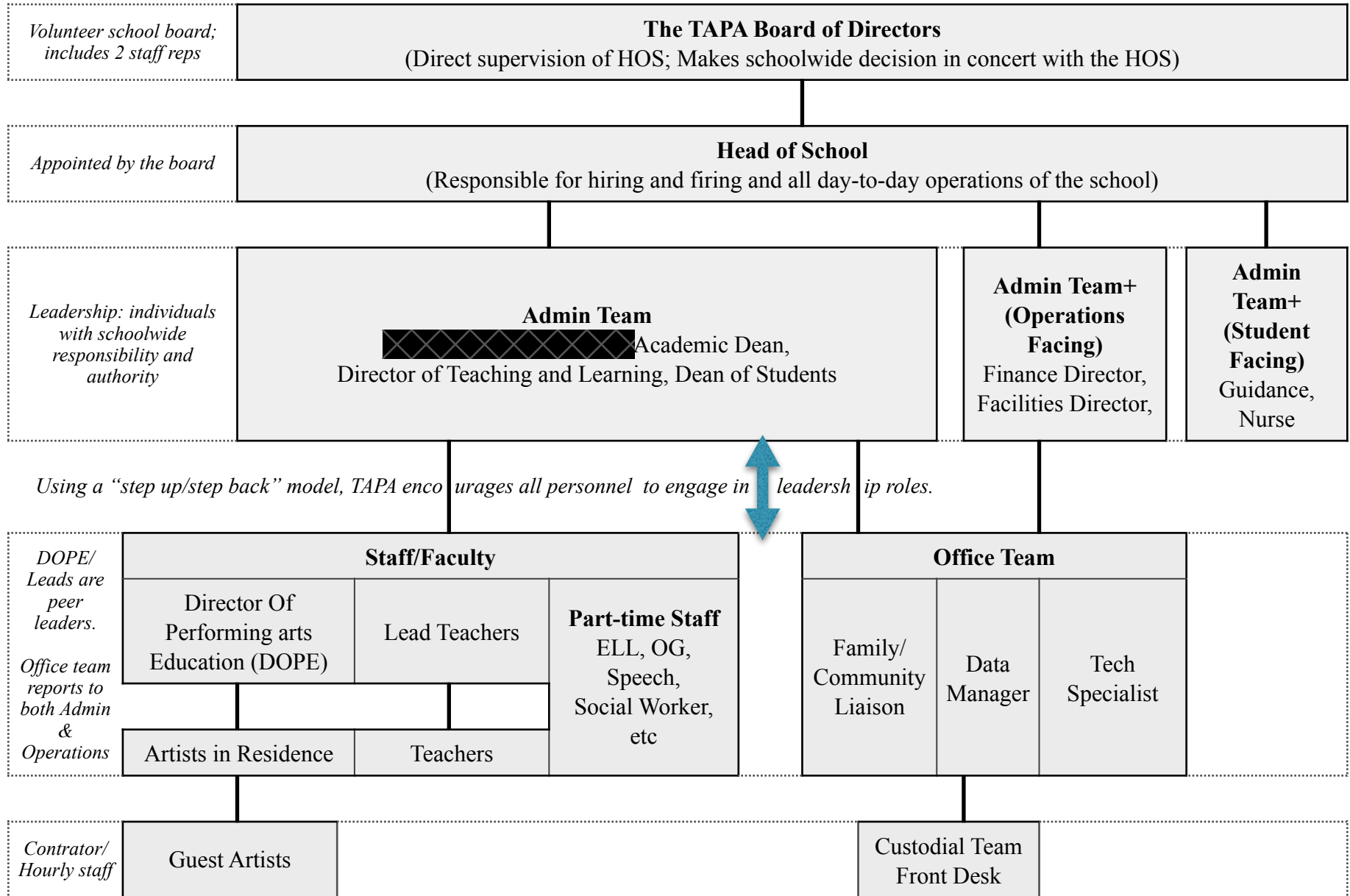
## Enrollment Table

Year/Grade	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
(Pre-Expansion) 2023-2024	0	0	34	34	34	34	34	34	204
2024-2025	40	0	40	40	40	34	34	34	262
2025-2026	40	40	40	40	40	40	34	34	308
2026-2027	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	34	314
2027- 2028 (at scale)	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	320
Total new seats	40	40	6	6	6	6	6	6	116

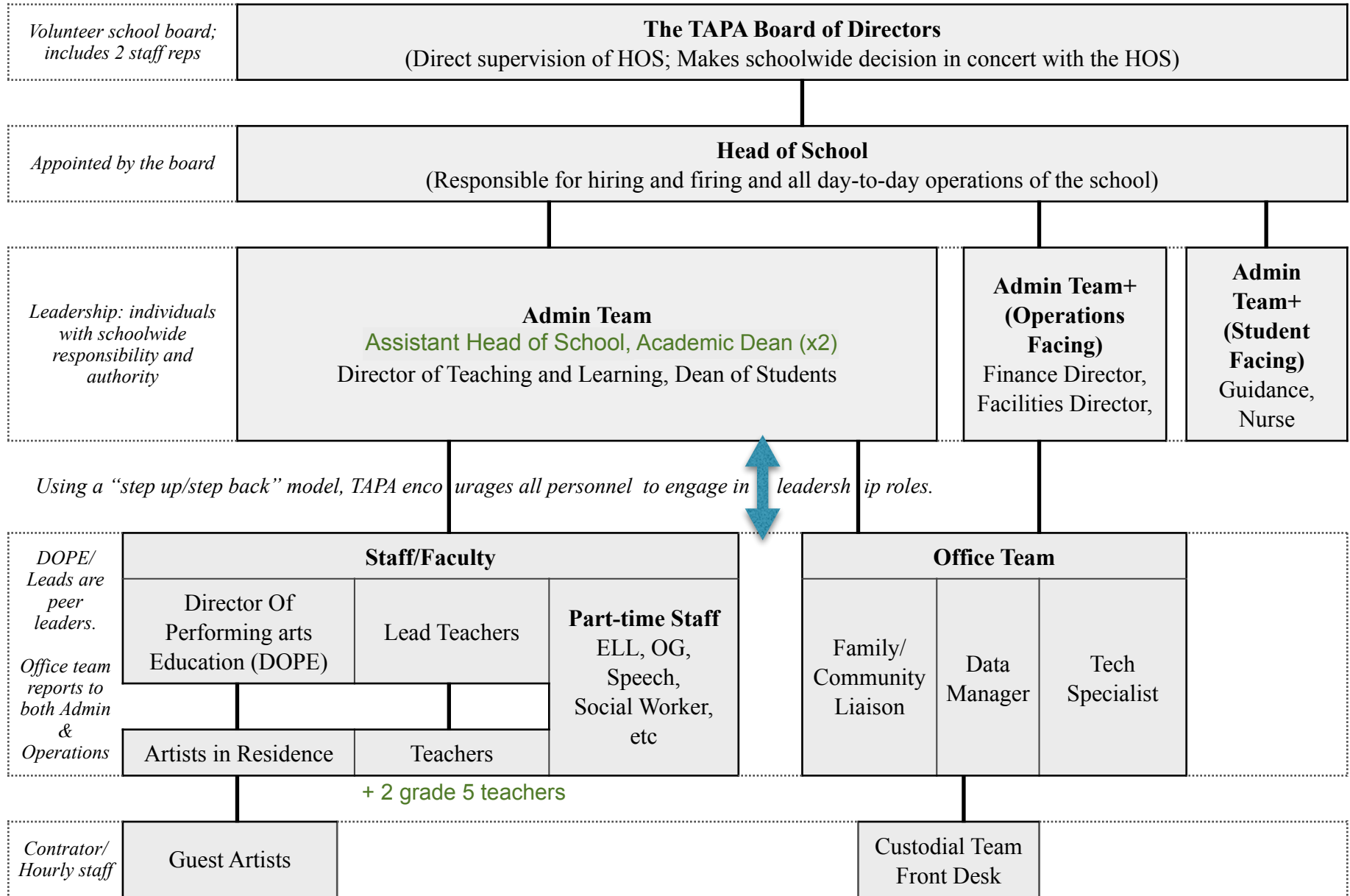
- This enrollment will not change the number of schools, will not constitute a network, and will not change catchment areas.

## Organizational Charts

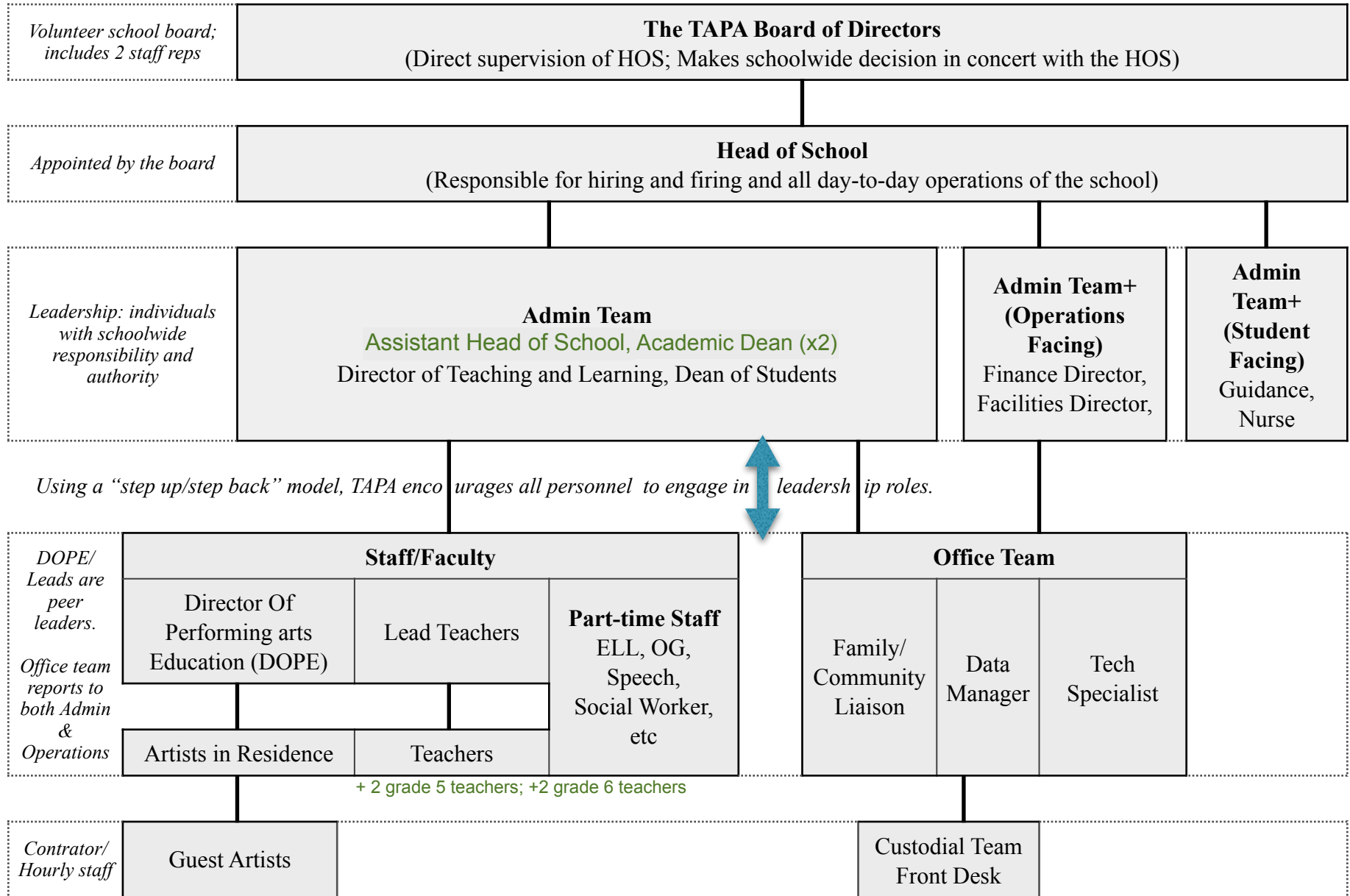
# TAPA Org Chart - 2023-2024



# TAPA Org Chart - 2024-2025



# TAPA Org Chart - 2027-2028



## **Five Year Budget Projection**

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND  
CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATING BUDGET PROJECTIONS**

**Charter School:** Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts.

Implementation and Operations					
	FY2024	FY2025	FY2026	FY2027	FY2028
<b>MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS</b>					
A Average local aid per pupil	4,268.00	4,268.00	4,268.00	4,268.00	4,268.00
B Average state aid per pupil	13,181.00	13,181.00	13,181.00	13,181.00	13,181.00
C Student Enrollment	204	262	308	314	320
D Gross Square Footage (GSF) of facility	48,000	48,000	58,000	58,000	58,000
E Staffing					
E1. School Principals/Asst Principals	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
E2. School Support Staff	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
E3. Executive Director/Superintendent	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
E4. Deputies/Administrators	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
E5. Program/Operations Support Staff	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
E6. Teachers	18.0	20.0	22.0	22.0	22.0
E7. Paraprofessionals	2.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
E8. Pupil Support	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
E9. Teacher Support	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
E10. Program Management	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
E11. Special Services	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
E12. Facilities Maintenance	1.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
F Staff FTE	43.0	46.5	48.5	48.5	48.5
<b>OPERATING REVENUES</b>					
1 Local Revenue	870,672.00	1,118,216.00	1,314,544.00	1,340,152.00	1,365,760.00
2 State Revenue	2,688,994.96	3,453,513.13	4,059,855.13	4,138,943.22	4,218,031.31
3 Grants - Charter Schools Program	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4 Grants - Private	250,000.00	250,000.00	250,000.00	250,000.00	250,000.00
5 Federal formula funds (inc. Title I, III and IDEA)	250,000.00	321,075.00	377,455.77	380,000.00	380,000.00
6 Capital Projects Funds	180,000.00	300,000.00	300,000.00	300,000.00	300,000.00
7 Other:	440,000.00	62,500.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
8 <b>TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES</b>	<b>4,679,666.96</b>	<b>5,505,304.13</b>	<b>6,316,854.90</b>	<b>6,424,095.22</b>	<b>6,528,791.31</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>					
<b>School Management</b>					
9 Salaries: Principals and Assistant Principals	144,000.00	148,320.00	152,769.60	157,352.69	162,073.27
10 Salaries: Support Staff	40,000.00	85,200.00	87,756.00	90,388.68	93,100.34
11 School Office	3,500.00	3,605.00	3,713.15	3,824.54	3,939.28
12 Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
13 Subtotal:	187,500.00	237,125.00	244,238.75	251,565.91	259,112.89
<b>Program/Operations Management</b>					
14 Salaries: Executive Director or Superintendent	124,000.00	127,720.00	131,551.60	135,498.15	139,563.09
15 Salaries: Deputies and Administrators	316,000.00	325,480.00	335,244.40	345,301.73	355,660.78
16 Salaries: Support Staff	199,200.00	205,176.00	211,331.28	217,671.22	224,201.35
17 Legal	25,000.00	40,000.00	41,200.00	42,436.00	43,709.08
18 School Board	17,647.00	18,176.41	18,721.70	19,283.35	19,861.85
19 Business Operations	122,000.00	125,660.00	129,429.80	133,312.69	137,312.07
20 Information Management and Technology	1,000.00	1,030.00	1,060.90	1,092.73	1,125.51
21 Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
22 Subtotal:	804,847.00	843,242.41	868,539.68	894,595.87	921,433.75
<b>Instruction</b>					
23 Salaries: Teachers	936,000.00	1,068,080.00	1,204,122.40	1,240,246.07	1,277,453.45
24 Salaries: Paraprofessionals	80,000.00	132,400.00	136,372.00	140,463.16	144,677.05
25 Stipends and Bonuses	27,000.00	27,810.00	28,644.30	29,503.63	30,388.74
26 Pupil-Use Technology, Hardware, and Software	40,000.00	60,000.00	61,800.00	63,654.00	65,563.62
27 Instructional Materials Supplies	55,000.00	72,755.60	88,097.42	90,740.34	93,462.55
28 Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
29 Subtotal:	1,138,000.00	1,361,045.60	1,519,036.12	1,564,607.21	1,611,545.42
<b>Instructional Support</b>					
30 Salaries: Pupil Support	272,000.00	280,160.00	288,564.80	297,221.74	306,138.40
31 Salaries: Teacher Support	132,000.00	153,960.00	140,038.80	144,239.96	148,567.16
32 Salaries: Program Management	88,000.00	90,640.00	93,359.20	96,159.98	99,044.78
33 Salaries: Special Services	64,000.00	65,920.00	67,897.60	69,934.53	72,032.56
34 Guidance and Counseling	2,000.00	3,060.00	3,151.80	3,246.35	3,343.74
35 Library and Media	2,000.00	3,060.00	3,151.80	3,246.35	3,343.74
36 Extracurricular	2,500.00	3,575.00	3,682.25	3,792.72	3,906.50
37 Student Services, Outreach, Recruitment	4,250.00	5,377.50	5,538.83	5,704.99	5,876.14
38 Student Health Services	1,500.00	2,045.00	2,106.35	2,169.54	2,234.63
39 Academic Interventions	1,500.00	2,045.00	2,106.35	2,169.54	2,234.63
40 Curriculum Development	2,500.00	17,575.00	18,102.25	18,645.32	19,204.68
41 In Service, Staff Development, and Support	3,500.00	13,605.00	14,013.15	14,433.54	14,866.55
42 Assessment	3,000.00	3,090.00	3,182.70	3,278.18	3,376.53
43 Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
44 Subtotal:	578,750.00	626,112.50	644,895.88	664,242.75	684,170.03
<b>Operations</b>					
45 Salaries: Facilities Maintenance	88,000.00	138,640.00	142,799.20	147,083.18	151,495.67
46 Transportation	185,000.00	190,550.00	196,266.50	202,154.50	208,219.13
47 Food Services	150,000.00	154,500.00	159,135.00	163,909.05	168,826.32
48 Safety	0.00	25,750.00	26,522.50	27,318.18	28,137.72
49 Building Upkeep and Maintenance	152,000.00	276,560.00	284,856.80	293,402.50	302,204.58
50 Maintenance Contracts	36,575.00	62,672.25	64,552.42	66,488.99	68,483.66
51 Utilities	158,000.00	160,680.00	165,500.40	170,465.41	175,579.37
52 Lease	10,000.00	12,800.00	13,184.00	13,579.52	13,986.91
53 Debt Service	407,000.00	519,210.00	734,786.30	756,829.89	779,534.79
54 Capital Projects	50,000.00	51,500.00	153,045.00	157,636.35	162,365.44
55 Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
56 Subtotal:	1,234,575.00	1,592,862.25	1,940,648.12	1,998,867.56	2,058,833.59
<b>Other Obligations</b>					
57 Fringe Benefits	620,800.00	702,424.00	749,496.72	771,981.62	795,141.07
58 Insurance (non-employee)	45,000.00	46,350.00	47,740.50	49,172.72	50,647.90
59 Retiree Benefits	10,000.00	10,300.00	10,609.00	10,927.27	11,255.09
60 Purchased Management Services	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
61 Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
62 Subtotal:	675,800.00	759,074.00	807,846.22	832,081.61	857,044.05
<b>Community Services</b>					
63 Community Service Operations	2,500.00	5,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
64 Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
65 Subtotal:	2,500.00	5,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
66 <b>Budgeted Contingencies</b>	<b>25,000.00</b>	<b>25,000.00</b>	<b>75,000.00</b>	<b>75,000.00</b>	<b>75,000.00</b>
67 <b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>4,646,972.00</b>	<b>5,449,461.76</b>	<b>6,110,204.77</b>	<b>6,290,960.91</b>	<b>6,477,139.74</b>
68 <b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>32,694.96</b>	<b>55,842.38</b>	<b>206,650.14</b>	<b>133,134.31</b>	<b>51,651.57</b>

## **Evidence of Community Support**



Mayor of Providence

Brett P. Smiley

July 26, 2023

Rhode Island Department of Education  
255 Westminster Street,  
Providence, RI 02903

To Whom it May Concern:

This letter is to voice the support of the City of Providence Mayor's Office for the Trinity Academy of the Performing Arts' (TAPA) grade-level expansion proposal.

The City of Providence is deeply invested in efforts to provide our students with high quality educational opportunities. Our charter schools are one of the key ways students in our city have are provided such access. TAPA is conducting transformational work towards this goal. Their unique arts-focused curriculum has demonstrated significant improvements in student performance, especially with regards to social-emotional learning.

This proposal will increase TAPA's overall enrollment from 192 to 320 students. Over the course of the next two years, eight students per grade will be added to grades 7-12, and forty students per grade to newly created grades 5-6. By increasing their enrollment, TAPA will be able to provide more students with access to their unique pedagogical programming. TAPA has existing capacity to accommodate the expanded 7-12 grades without additional staff, and their financial standing is well positioned to add the new staff needed for the new grades.

TAPA's model has begun to generate significant improvements in student outcomes. In the 2021-2022 school year math scores at the school rose by over 600% and their growth percentile in ELA was 59.3%. In 2019, the school was awarded the XQ Superschools Challenge Prize, being recognized as the single Rhode Island school with the most innovative plan and highest capacity to implement future-thinking programming for its students. Given the challenges currently facing the City of Providence's student body, increasing access to innovative programming like TAPA's is imperative.

The City of Providence enthusiastically recommends that TAPA be granted a grade-level expansion to increase enrollment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brett P. Smiley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mayor Brett P. Smiley  
City of Providence



July 28, 2023

To whom It May Concern,

As rector of Grace Church in Providence, I would like to lend my support to TAPA growing to include 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades. Grace Church is located half a block from TAPA, and we have, since TAPA's arrival on Westminster Street, been pleased to host TAPA events in both our church and meeting hall. We have also conducted food and gift drives for TAPA families during the holidays.

I have been very impressed with all that TAPA has done in education and outreach, and their presence in the downtown neighborhood brings an energy to downtown that is truly a blessing. We are happy to have them as neighbors and to support this wonderful school and its mission. As the father of two PPS students, I am heartened to see this supportive and creative education offered to young people regardless of their financial circumstances.

We look forward to working with TAPA for many years to come. I am happy to hear from anyone at [jhuyck@gracepvd.org](mailto:jhuyck@gracepvd.org).

Sincerely,

The Rev. Canon Jonathan Huyck  
Rector, Grace Church in Providence

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**Grace Church in Providence**

300 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903  
(401) 331-3225    [info@gracepvd.org](mailto:info@gracepvd.org)  
[www.gracechurchprovidence.org](http://www.gracechurchprovidence.org)



August 2, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of TAPA's application to expand to grades 5 and 6 and to scale each grade level to 40 students. New Urban Arts has partnered formally with TAPA since 2017 on our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Grant. In our time working with TAPA, we have consistently been impressed by their accountability as partners, their staff's remarkable dedication to students, and the palpably positive school culture.

The future is bright for TAPA, their students, and their community. TAPA's concept of "Artist Mindset" pervades the building, and through it, students receive an education that encourages creativity and joy. As a result, they are passionate about learning and emerge with the skills to adapt to the ever-shifting demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century's job market.

This expansion will allow even more of Rhode Island's young people to engage with TAPA's remarkable educational environment.

We hope that you will see fit to support TAPA through the next phase of their development.

Sincerely,

Daniel Schleifer  
Executive Director

(401) 751-4556  
daniel@newurbanarts.org

Board of Directors

Marcela Betancur (Chair)  
RI Latino Policy Institute

Corey Fontes (Vice Chair/Treasurer)  
Bank of America

Emily Gonzalez (Secretary)  
Providence College

Adrienne Adeyemi  
Planned Parenthood of SNE

Cassie Balzano  
Gilbane, Inc

Judy Croyle  
Residential Properties

Brenda DeSantiago  
La Piana Consulting

AJ Febles  
NUA Alumnus

Jen Geller  
Providence Public Schools

Wini Lambrecht  
Rhode Island School of Design

Rodney Eric López  
Independent Nonprofit Consultant

Jennifer Petreccia  
RE/MAX

Amy Punchak  
Art Educator

Jordan Seaberry  
US Department of Arts and Culture



500 Greenwich Ave, Warwick RI 02886

To the Charter School Team at RIDE,

This letter is my enthusiastic and unbridled support for Trinity Academy for Performing Arts (TAPA)'s charter expansion to include 5th and 6th graders in the "ensemble." My passion for this school is almost two decades long, from its philosophical inception and design to today.

At Girl Scouts, I work to create long term peer to peer bonds with youth voice and mentoring at the core, growing relationships and learning environments that are holistic, positive and radically inclusive. When I think of the role TAPA plays in our school choice landscape, I can say the exact same words to describe its unique and inspiring culture. TAPA was built on a foundation that partners exceptional staff with an arts integration model that draws out the innate talent and treasure of each student.

It is imperative for the students in Providence that TAPA's power to transform be realized at an even younger age. By 7th grade, TAPA students are already entering treacherous water, forced to play catch up and work twice as hard to make gains across their academic and arts goals. By adding 5th and 6th grade, the school admin and faculty will be two giant steps closer to helping each student perform at and above grade level by graduation. I look forward to this expansion, which would allow the school the ability to meet these challenges head-on through data, and with more time and resources for positive changemaking.

In my prior work as Executive Director of Highlander Institute, I worked directly with almost every school district in RI as well as school systems across the US. It is my belief that TAPA ranks among the very best in terms of inclusive school culture, caring and committed adults, and life changing outcomes from graduates.

Do not hesitate to contact me with any questions at [dborrelli@gssne.org](mailto:dborrelli@gssne.org) or 401-378-4322. I look forward to hearing from you.

In service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "D. Borrelli-Murray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized "D" and a long, sweeping underline.

Dana Borrelli-Murray, CEO, Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England



To whom it may concern,

With abundant confidence, I offer my support to Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts submission for grade-level expansion. Having been directly involved professionally with TAPA's inspiring students, families, staff, and leaders for over eight years, I can attest to the unwavering commitment to educational improvement that they all exemplify. So much so that they have made a point of authentically embedding the feedback of state and local leaders in their vision and goal setting. The effects of that are evident in the exemplary growth of increasingly equitable student outcome data over the recent school years.

TAPA has also consistently demonstrated an institutional emphasis on the empowerment and development of leaders within their community of students, families, staff, and teachers. They have encouraged and placed resources behind student panels to amplify student voices state and nationwide through their work with XQ. They have, in direct collaboration with RIDE, led the charge in major overhauls of family outreach and enrollment to empower parents and families to advocate for their student's educational opportunities. And they have regularly invested in the leadership development of their staff with intentionality to leverage organizational resources to support emerging first-generation leaders and leaders of color.

For all of these reasons and more not listed here I believe it is evidently clear that the expansion of Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts will have an exponentially beneficial impact on the students and families of Providence as well as the educational field of Rhode Island at large. Granting this hard-earned expansion will broaden the availability of rigorous arts-based education for generations to come.

Kevin Cordeiro  
Continuous Improvement Facilitator & Coach



July 28, 2023

Elizabeth Richards-Hegnauer, Head of School  
TAPA: Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts  
275 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Dear Ms. Richards-Hegnauer,

I am writing today to express my wholehearted support for TAPA's proposed expansion to grades 5 and 6 and scaling each grade level to 40 students.

The ExcEL Leadership Academy provides professional learning for teachers to support high quality, equitable education for English Learners. ExcEL is a national program of the UCLA School of Education, and TAPA is home to one of the first Rhode Island partnerships (and one of the strongest!). From the beginning of our work together we have been impressed by the depth of the commitment to developing skilled teacher-leaders at TAPA, and we see how this readily translates to student success. TAPA educators have grown through the ExcEL partnership and now share their expertise with peers as mentors and coaches across New England. The learner-centered, creative, exploratory, inclusive culture is evident in every interaction. As community professional development providers, we look forward to continuing our work together as the new grades are added.

As a Rhode Island resident, I must add that TAPA is a special place and increasing the number of families served makes our state a better place. Please feel free to contact me at 424-442-5308 or [avery@gseis.ucla.edu](mailto:avery@gseis.ucla.edu) if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

**Laureen Avery**

Laureen Avery, Director  
ExcEL Leadership Academy  
45 Industrial Road, Suite 100  
Cumberland, Rhode Island 02864

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July 28, 2023

Dear Committee Members,

I am pleased to provide this letter of support for Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts (TAPA) for their grade-level expansion.

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is a statewide children's policy organization dedicated to improving the health, education, economic well-being, and safety of Rhode Island's children with a commitment to equity and the elimination of unacceptable disparities. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT collects and disseminates data on the well-being of Rhode Island's children and advocates for and facilitates the development of equitable and responsive policies and programs.

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT has enjoyed a strong relationship with Trinity Academy for Performing Arts, as we have jointly championed access to high-quality education for all of the children in our state. TAPA's approach to education aligns with Rhode Island KIDS COUNT's recommendations for improving the state's graduation rates, demonstrate a commitment to improving outcomes and providing multiple pathways to graduation for all students who need them. From its inception, TAPA's arts are the catalyst to connect neighbors, amplify voice, and empower a safe community. Their students develop the artist mindset and a lifelong spark for learning. The school is award-winning, student centered, and a clear alternative to the traditional public schools offerings within the Providence Public School District.

TAPA's request to expand their existing grades 7-12 from 32 to 40 students and adding grade-5 in 2024 and grade-6 in 2025 (80 new seats) comes at a critical time, as 71% (5/7) of Providence's Middle Schools have been identified for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI). TAPA is prepared to address these challenges on behalf of an expanded population. In 2019, TAPA was awarded the XQ Superschools Challenge prize, as the school in the state that had the most innovative plan and highest capacity to implement future-thinking programming for its students. TAPA has also seen dramatic academic improvement and high growth in student achievement in recent years. For example, its average student growth percentile in ELA for the 2021-2022 school year was 59.3% and math scores rose by over 600% from the previous year. These outcomes came directly as a result of investments in high quality curriculum and professional learning as well as a steadfast commitment to students' holistic development.

I commend TAPA's efforts to effectively address the needs of at-risk students by providing a student-centered education that helps to address barriers to success. I hope that the reviewers will give this proposal their full consideration.

Sincerely,

Paige Clausius-Parks  
Executive Director

## Family survey Results

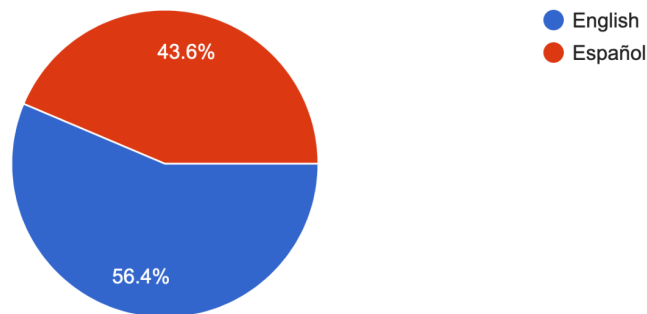
See Survey here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScy0wO1RjldNB7JX35ykxHJnFPuMchETWqq8eoiNxr5430OWA/viewform>

**Respondents: 55**

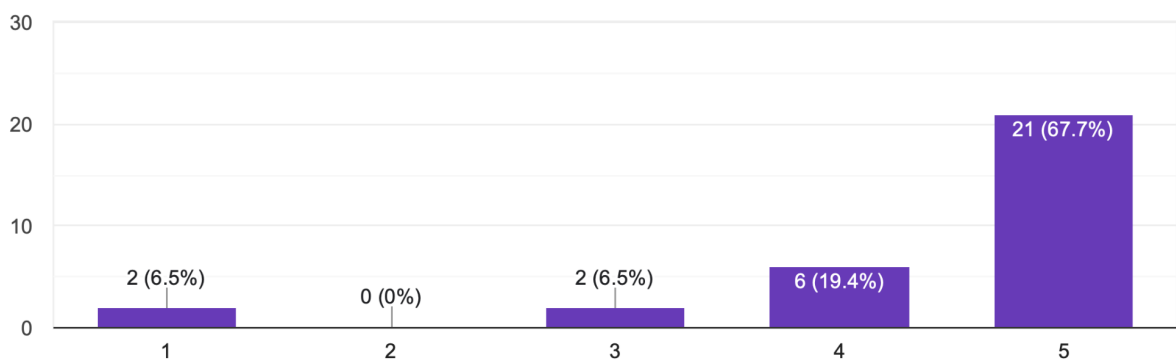
In what language do you prefer to take the survey? — ¿En qué idioma prefiere realizar la encuesta?

55 responses



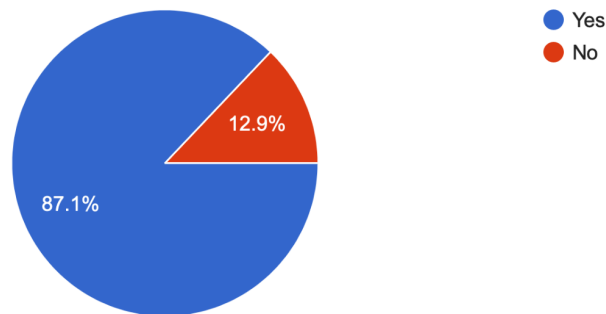
How confident are you that TAPA could provide a high-quality education to students in grades 5 & 6?

31 responses



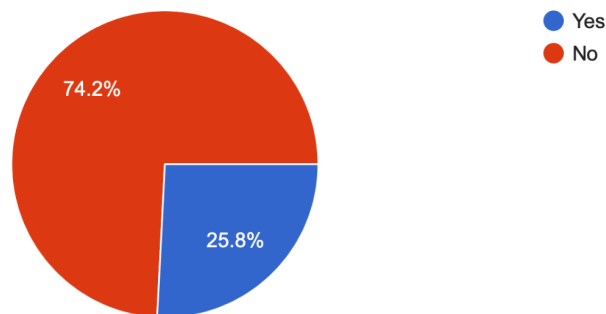
Would you view the addition of grades 5 and 6 as a benefit to TAPA?

31 responses



Are you concerned about potential challenges or drawbacks that may arise from expanding TAPA School to include grade 5 and grade 6?

31 responses



Rationale for concerns:

Lack of teachers and turn over

I would like the addition, but am concerned about the impact for current students.

What if TAPA doesn't have enough classes for the younger students?

The younger grades having to share the school with highschool and middle school

Already did.

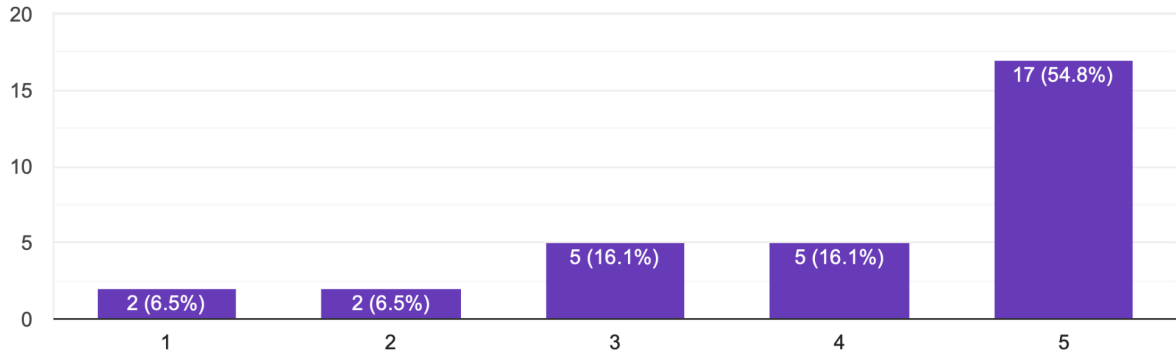
No

I think the only real challenge would be keeping everyone in line because we only have so many members of the staff that it might become too much to handle

The age differences for one is substantial 5/6 graders

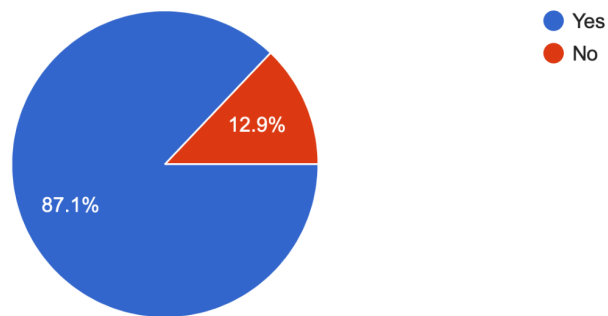
How confident are you that TAPA School has the necessary resources and infrastructure to successfully accommodate the expansion to grade 5 and grade 6?

31 responses



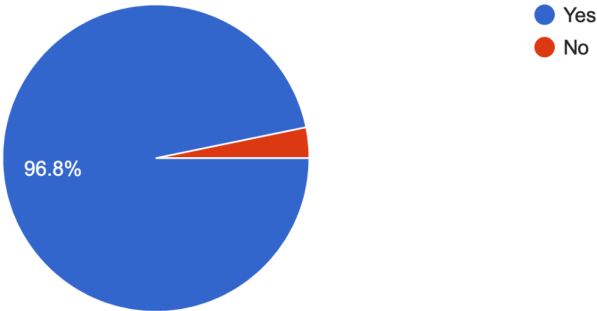
Do you believe that expanding TAPA School to include grades 5 and 6 would enhance the school's overall reputation in the community?

31 responses



Would you recommend that a friend send their child to TAPA?

31 responses



## **APPENDIX C: Other Attachments**

# Elizabeth Richards-Hegnauer

ElRichards@Alum.Vassar.edu • 253 Washington Street, Warwick RI 02888 • (401) 644-4790

## Degrees and Licensure

---

<b>Principal Residency Network, RI</b> RIDE-approved Alternative Administration Certification Program	<b>May 2013</b>
<b>Brown University, Providence, RI</b> Master's Degree, Urban Education Policy; GPA: 4.0	<b>May 2009</b>
<b>Vassar College, Poughkeepsie NY</b> Bachelor of Arts in English Language Arts and Secondary Education; GPA 3.59 Concentration in Studio Art (Sculpture) and Theatre Arts Received High Honors in Student Teaching and full NYS Certification in Secondary English Education	<b>May 2005</b>
<b>Rhode Island PK-12 Building Level Administrator Certification</b> <b>Rhode Island Teaching Certification, Grades 7-12 (English Language Arts)</b>	<b>Certificate Number 55600</b>

## Education Leadership, Research, Policy and Teaching

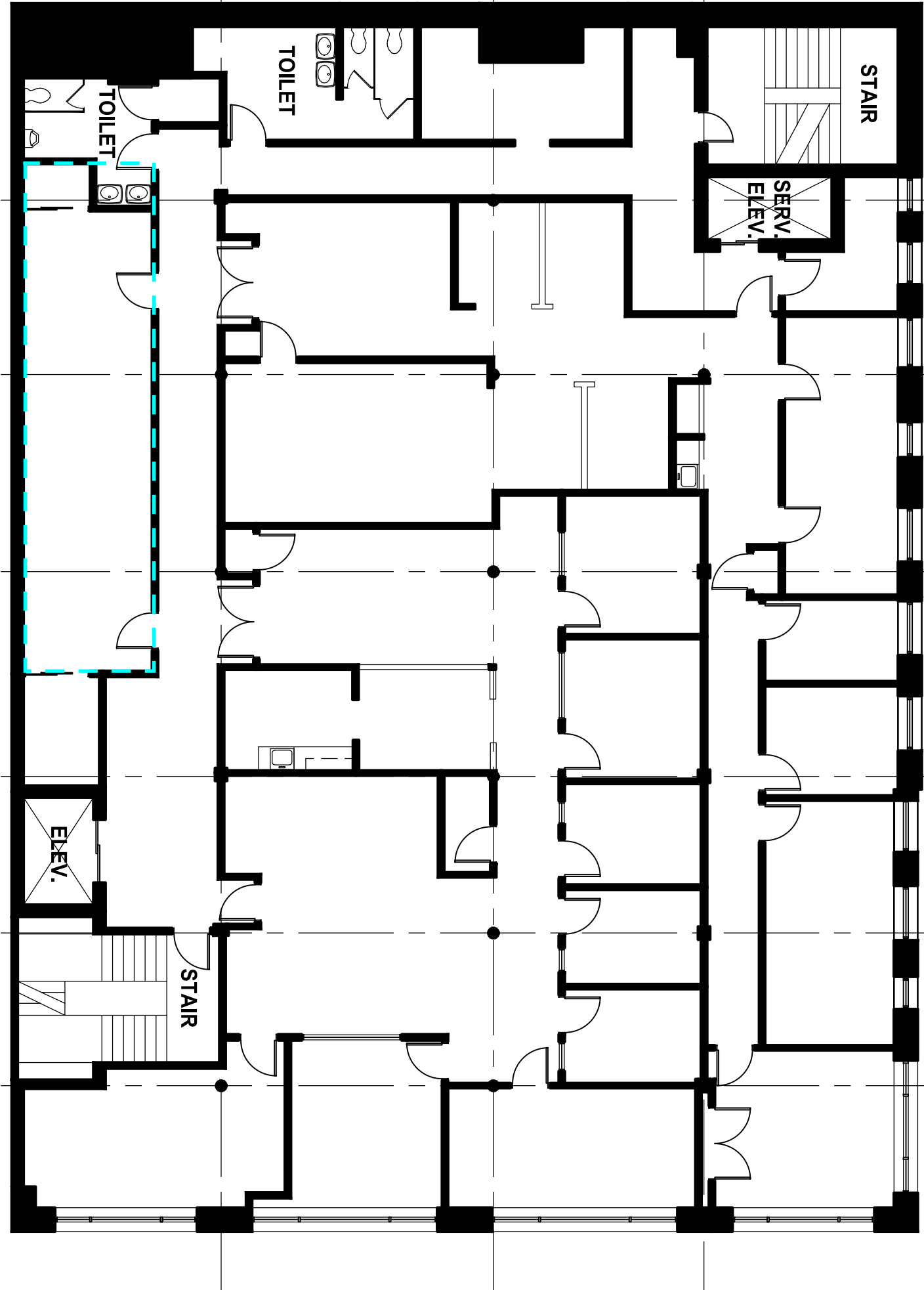
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<b>TAPA: Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts</b> <i>Head of School (2016-present)</i> <i>Founding Administrator and Assistant Head of School (2010-2016)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Develops, designs and enacts programming, teaching and learning at an innovative rigorous Title I school.</li><li>- Recruits, hires, leads and supports a staff of artists and educators who are 50% BIPOC and 30% LGBTQ+.</li><li>- Spearheaded the \$10 Million purchase and rehabilitation of a building; secured RIDE support, RIBEC funding.</li><li>- Overhauled ELA and Math curriculum to meet Green Standards and better serve MLLs and students with IEPs.</li><li>- Revised all TAPA policies to align with the needs of a progressive and inclusive school community.</li></ul>	<b>Providence, RI</b>	<b>January 2010 - Present</b>
<b>Annenberg Institute for School Reform</b> <i>Author: Voices in Urban Education,</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Author "Threads in the TAPAstery: Student Engagement at Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts,"</li></ul> <i>Researcher, Database Manager</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Conducted extensive research, data organization/management, and writing support for numerous journal articles.</li></ul>	<b>Providence, RI</b>	<b>May-Oct 2009, Spring 2012</b>
<b>The Rhode Island Department of Education</b> <i>Education Specialist - Title I</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Provided school districts with technical support and knowledge of education funding for underserved students.</li></ul>	<b>Providence, RI</b>	<b>January - August 2010</b>
<b>Central Falls School District</b> <i>English Language Arts Teacher, Calcutt Middle School</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Created innovative, data-driven, student-lead projects to engage struggling learners and combat learning loss.</li></ul> <i>Action Researcher</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Designed and implemented a Needs Assessments Survey for students and teachers at Central Falls High School.</li><li>- Utilized survey results to facilitate discussion and recommend academic and cultural changes to administration.</li></ul>	<b>Central Falls, RI</b>	<b>June 2008 - August 2009</b>
<b>Poughkeepsie City School District</b> <i>English Language Arts Teacher, Poughkeepsie High School</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Designed and utilized multidisciplinary standards-based techniques to bring students up to grade level.</li><li>- Directed "The Wiz," Poughkeepsie High School's musical; the most successful student production to date.</li></ul>	<b>Poughkeepsie, NY</b>	<b>September 2004 - June 2006</b>

## Community Outreach

---

<b>Teen in Action Youth Group, Grace Church</b> <i>Founder and Co-leader of a mission-driven community service group for Rhode Island youth ages 12-18.</i>	<b>Providence, RI</b>	<b>2008 - 2018</b>
<b>Troupe Alumni: Summer Theatre for Charity</b>	<b>Northport, NY</b>	<b>2002 - 2004</b>



Scale - 3/32" = 1'-0"

STUDIO 401

STUDIO 401 ARCHITECTURE, LLC

5600 Post Road,  
Suite 114, #204  
East Greenwich  
Rhode Island, 02818

PROJECT

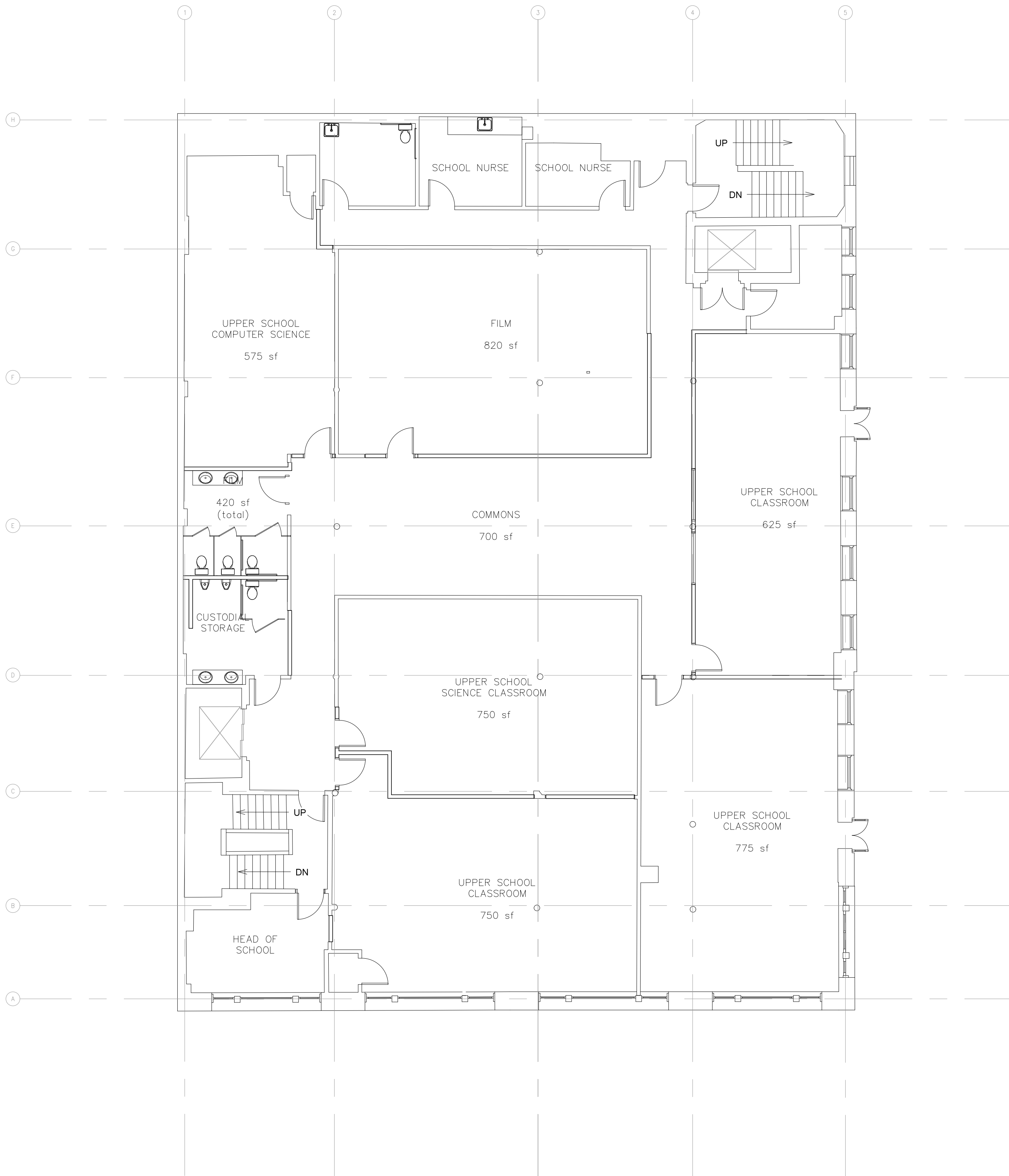
Existing Conditions

275 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island

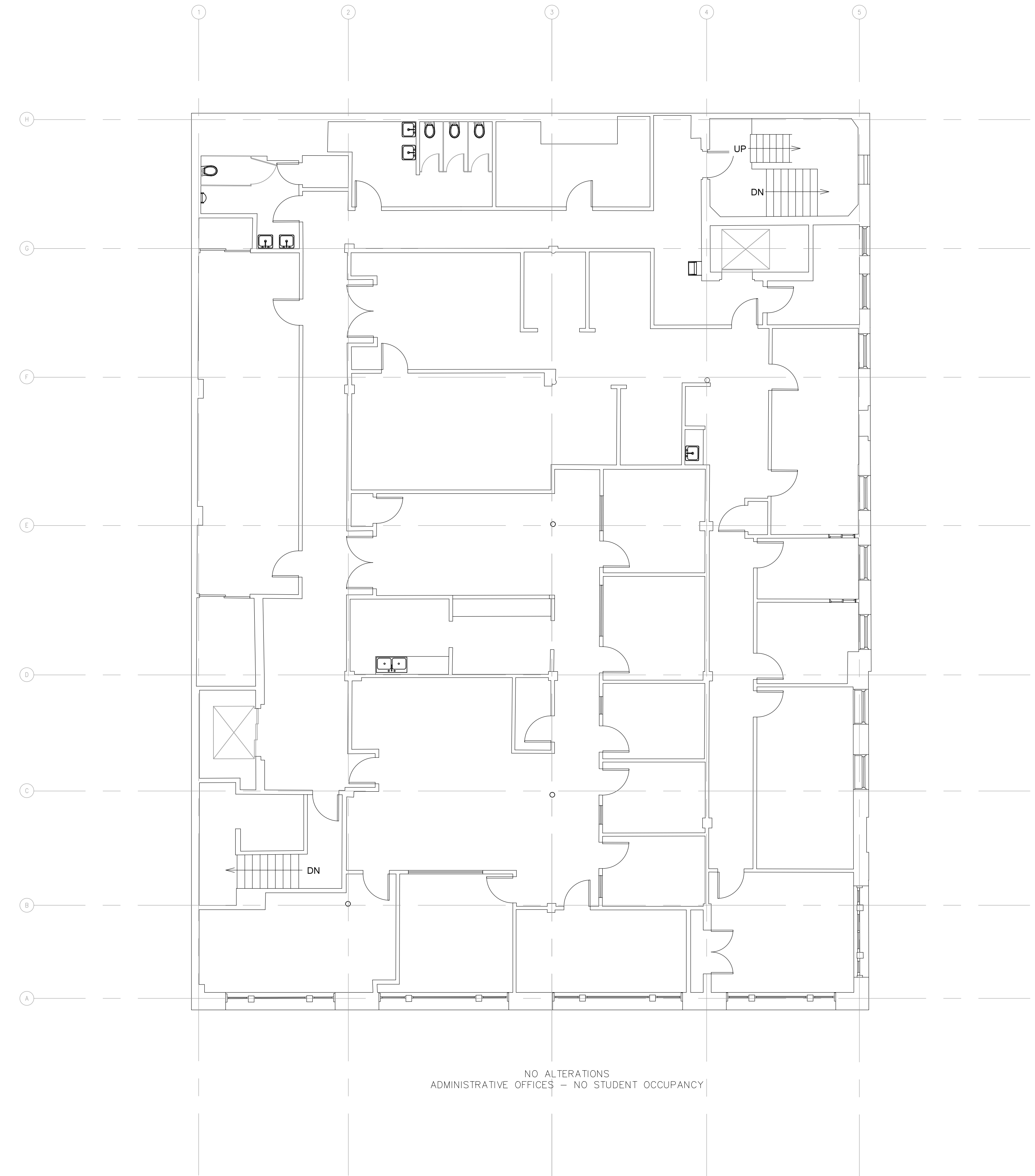
CONTENTS

Fifth Floor Plan

PROJECT	0003	A105
AUTHOR	CSM/CLG	
ISSUED	09/29/2014	



1 Phase II Proposed Floor Plan - 4th Floor  
A1.2 1/8"=1'-0"



2 Phase II Proposed Floor Plan - 5th Floor  
A1.2 1/8"=1'-0"

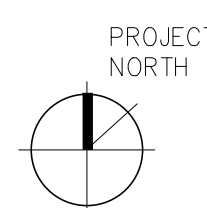


studio MEJA  
11 Aleppo Street  
Providence, RI 02909  
p 401 . 400 . ARCH

Trinity Academy for Performing Arts  
275 Westminster St  
Providence, RI 02903

Phase II  
Proposed Floor Plans

REVISIONS



#1838  
1/24/2019  
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Phase II A1.2

# **Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts**

## **Accounting and Financial Policies and Procedures**

**Revised: March 2022**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATION	2
ORGANIZATION PRACTICES	2
Ethics and Conduct	2
Conflict of Interest	3
SECURITY	3
Computer Systems & Records Retention	3
Insurance Coverage	3
ACCOUNTING OVERVIEW	3
Budget	3
Internal Reporting	4
External Reporting	4
General Ledger and Chart of Accounts	4
Bank Accounts	4
REVENUE AND RECEIPTS	5
Receipts - Support	5
Receipts - Program revenue	5
Receipts - Grants/Contracts	5
Processing of Deposits	5
Processing Receipts for Performances and Fundraisers	6
Restricted gifts	6
Donated Materials, Facilities, Services	6
DISBURSEMENTS	6
Purchasing	6
Accounts Payable	7
Check Disbursements	7
Electronic Payments	7
FIXED ASSET CAPITALIZATION POLICY	8
Definitions and Provisions	8
Machinery, Furniture and Equipment	8
Recording and Accounting	9
PROCUREMENT OF FEDERAL CONTRACTS, LEASES AND MAJOR PURCHASES	9
PAYROLL & RELATED LIABILITIES	9



## 1. INTRODUCTION AND ORGANIZATION

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts (TAPA) is an independent public charter school, which operates as a distinct Local Education Agency (LEA; i.e. school district) of the State of Rhode Island.

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts charter was granted in 2009 by the Board of Regents for Elementary and Secondary Education upon recommendation by the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The School opened for the 2010-2011 school year. The School operates as a private non-profit corporation, and it has been granted tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The School is governed by a Board of Trustees and committees of the Board. The Board of Trustees hires and evaluates the Head of School who serves as the chief executive of the organization and superintendent of the School.

The President of the Board, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee, appoints Finance Committee members and the Finance Committee Chair. One member of the Committee must be the Treasurer. The Head of School shall serve as a non-voting member. The Finance Committee exercises the powers of the Board in all cases where specific directions have not been given by the Board in the following matters:

- (a) Audit responsibilities for operations of the Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts School, including approval of an independent auditor, consulting with such auditor as the Finance Committee deems appropriate, reviewing methods of internal accounting and other management practices, reviewing expenditures and actual or contingent obligations contracted by the School; and
- (b) Budget responsibilities, including presenting the annual budget to the Board for approval, and the monitoring of the School's financial performance under the approved budget

## 2. ORGANIZATION PRACTICES

### Ethics and Conduct

The reputation and successful operation of Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts are built upon the principles of fair dealing and ethical conduct of its employees. The School's reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit

and letter of all applicable laws and regulations, as well as scrupulous regard for the highest standards of conduct and personal integrity.

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts is a public school. Its continued success is dependent upon the trust and confidence of the students, families, and community that it serves. Employees owe a duty to their colleagues and the Board of Trustees to act in ways that maintain that trust and confidence.

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts will comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Employees, Trustees and volunteers are expected to conduct operations and programs of the School in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct. If a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, discuss the matter with your supervisor, Human Resources Coordinator, and if appropriate, the Business Office Manager and then the Head of School.

All staff members are expected to comply with all School policies and procedures as may be in effect or implemented during their employment.

#### Conflict of Interest

Anyone affiliated with Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts must disclose any potential conflict between their personal interests and the interests of the School to the Board and to the Rhode Island Ethics Commission. However, all affiliated members have an obligation to address both the substance and appearance of actual and potential conflicts of interest and, if they arise, to disclose them. The complete Policy is in the Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts By Laws, and it includes definitions, responsibilities, administration, and a blank Conflict of Interest Annual Statement.

### 3. SECURITY

#### Computer Systems & Records Retention

The organization uses Abila MIP accounting software which is hosted by NetApp on a cloud-based platform. All hardcopies and historical documents to support all accounting activity are housed in secured cabinets in the Business Office and a secure storage room. ADP is used for all payroll services, and the payroll is processed on the ADP website. All employee hard copy files are kept locked a fire proof locked cabinet in a secure storage room. Bank documents, contracts, leases, checks, payroll information,

personnel files, and other confidential files are stored in locked file cabinets in the business office, data office, and secured storage room all which are locked at night.

#### Insurance Coverage

The School maintains comprehensive property and liability insurance for the property at 275 Westminster Street, Providence, RI 02903. It also carries Directors & Officers insurance and Workers' Compensation insurance. Coverage is reviewed annually with the School's insurance agent and the Finance Committee.

### 4. ACCOUNTING OVERVIEW

The School uses Abila MIP for accounting tasks and ADP for payroll and payroll tax applications. Financial projections and other supplementary records are prepared and maintained on Excel. The state mandated Uniform Chart of Accounts, was implemented effective August 1, 2009.

#### Budget

The Director of Finance maintains a long-term projection model which is updated throughout the year and together with the School administrators and Treasurer prepares the annual budget for the following year. The long-term model plus prior year actuals provide the basis for a draft of the next year's budget. The Finance Committee shall review the projection model throughout the year and adjust as seen fit. The finance committee formally approves the final budget and recommends it for approval and adoption by the Board. The final budget is approved by the Board. Adjustments to an active budget are adopted by the Board if they are deemed appropriate and necessary.

#### Internal Reporting

The Accountant prepares the quarterly Statement of Activities and Statement of Financial Position reports which are reviewed and finalized by the Director of Finance. TAPA utilizes a quarterly close checklist to close out accounts to prepare interim financial statements. The Director of Finance prepares quarterly budget to actual reports. These reports are reviewed with the Head of School and Finance Committee and then distributed to the Board of Directors. The Finance Committee meets at least four times per year, with additional meetings as may be deemed necessary.

#### External Reporting

Quarterly revenue and expenditure reports are due to RIDE within 25 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter. These OAG (Office of the Auditor General) reports are

prepared by the Accountant and reviewed, signed, and submitted by the Director of Finance. TAPA is also required to submit semi-annual statements to the UCOA. These are prepared by the Accountant, and reviewed, signed, and submitted by the Director of Finance.

Financial statements and accompanying footnotes are prepared annually in accordance with U.S. generally accepted accounting principles. They are audited by an independent audit firm in accordance with U.S. generally accepted auditing standards. The Independent Auditor's Report is issued on the financial statements. The independent auditors present drafts of the financial statements and reports to the Finance Committee for acceptance. Final statements with signed reports are distributed to the Board of Directors. The independent auditors also prepare IRS Form 990, which is presented to the Finance Committee and distributed to the Board of Directors.

#### General Ledger and Chart of Accounts

The Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) issues guidelines for and requires compliance with its Uniform Chart of Accounts (UCOA). RIDE publishes and updates guidelines to assist school districts with compliance, and it reviews data file submissions on a bi-annual basis. The chart of account string includes 7 segments and 31 digits, with an optional eighth, 3-digit segment. The structure is as follows: Subfund (8), Location (5), Function (3), Program (2), Subject (4), Object (5), Job Class (4) and MR (3). Subfunds are very specific with respect to nature and funding source as per RIDE UCOA guidelines. The School has distinct Subfund numbers for its general operations (10000000). There are distinct Subfund numbers for each federal grant received through RIDE (e.g. Title I, Title II, IDEA), each federal grant received directly (Federal Start Up Grant), and each restricted grant (e.g. from foundations, family trusts, corporations).

#### Bank Accounts

The bank accounts are held at Citizens Bank, and they include the operating account, money market and the HRA account.

#### 5. REVENUE AND RECEIPTS

##### Receipts - Support

Fundraising activities include the Annual Fund, capital campaigns (none currently), and various activities such as TAPA Gear sales and social events. Grants are written and submitted as opportunities arise. Staff or students may collect cash in connection with the various activities. The person or group collecting the funds counts the cash and

sends it to the Business Office. Either the Director of Finance or the Accountant counts the cash again and prepares the deposit.

Checks received as donations are recorded by the Director of Development who files a copy of the check and donor letter. The checks then are given to the Business Office and deposited. Donations can also be made using the online Facebook and PayPal. When donations are made through the TAPA website, they go through PayPal. The Accountant processes the PayPal fund transfer to the Citizens checking account. Facebook automatically transfers the donations into the checking account. The Accountant processes the deposits in the MIP accounting system. These amounts vary throughout the year.

#### Receipts - Program revenue

Program revenue includes per student tuition from the State of Rhode Island and City of Providence, Medicaid reimbursement, CRP reimbursements and miscellaneous receipts (e.g. sale of merchandise). The State deposits per student tuition directly into the School's Citizens CWI account. A third party submits Medicaid claims on behalf of the School. The State, on behalf of RI Medical Assistance, deposits reimbursements directly into the School's Citizens CWI account. The explanation for any of the ACHs processed by the State can be found on its RIPAY website. This is used as backup when entering the deposits into MIP. The administrative office sells merchandise such as school shirts and sweatshirts. It receives cash and checks and forwards them to the Business Office.

#### Receipts - Grants/Contracts

The Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (RIDE) is the intermediary for the federal grants. The Director of Finance submits reports of reimbursable expenditures quarterly to RIDE. These are used to compile the Accounts Receivable/Revenue entry for the financial statements. The State deposits reimbursed grant expenditures directly into the School's Citizens CWI account as described above.

The School also receives grants, both restricted and unrestricted, from individuals and private foundations. Funds are generally remitted using checks, and copies of the checks and any documentation are filed in the Development Office.

#### Processing of Deposits

Cash/checks dropped off at the Business Office will be handed to the Business Office staff and placed directly into a deposit. The deposit packet consists of a deposit cover sheet, copies of the checks, deposit slip and confirmation. Checks are stored in a

locked cabinet in the Business Office while waiting to be brought to the bank. Checks are deposited once a week into the Citizens checking account depending on volume and amount of the check by either the Accountant or the Director of Finance. Each deposit is recorded through the MIP cash receipts function. The Business Office staff will review and verify the cash/check amounts and signoff on the amounts received. Deposits totaling greater than \$5,000 will be deposited within 24 hours and deposits less than \$5,000 will be made weekly. All cash will immediately be put into a locked file cabinet.

#### Processing Receipts for Performances and Fundraisers

Coordinator will be designated, who will be responsible for collecting and holding all cash and checks for the purpose of the fundraising activity. The Volunteer Coordinator will record each transaction in a receipt book at the time the transaction is made, with a copy of the receipt provided to the donor if requested. The cash, checks, receipt book, and deposit summary must be given to the Business Office by the end of the next school day, who will immediately put the funds in a secure, locked location. Both the Volunteer Coordinator and the Business Office will count the deposit and verify the amount of the funds in writing.

For any cash or checks received in the mail, the Business Office will prepare a deposit worksheet itemizing the amount, source, purpose of each payment and G/L account number with a designated office staff member counting the funds and initializing with date. All checks will immediately be endorsed with the school deposit stamp. A deposit slip and packet will be completed by the Business Office and initialed by the Director of Finance for approval to deposit.

#### Restricted gifts

The Development Director acknowledges all gifts in writing and maintains donor correspondence and other documentation relating to the gifts. Award letters are filed by payor in the Business Office. Multiple SubFund numbers, representing Operating and Temporarily Restricted fund classifications, are maintained in the accounting records as per UCOA.

#### Donated Materials, Facilities, Services

Facilities or property donated to the School for its use would be valued and recorded at fair market value on the date of donation in the MIP accounting system.

## 6. DISBURSEMENTS

## Purchasing

All Purchase Request Forms are submitted to Department Heads for evaluation and authorization. The Director of Finance reviews them for adherence to the budget and processes the request based on his findings. Purchases may not be made without the final approval of either the Director of Finance and/or the Head of School. Either of their signatures on checks or authorization to use the credit card via the PRF shall serve as final approval. They may choose to sign the Purchase Request Form in lieu of signing a check and another signer on the account will sign the check or credit card authorization. Purchase orders are not required but are used for certain vendors.

## Accounts Payable

The Director of Finance reviews and signs off all bills and all invoices to determine if they are within budget amounts. Invoices are received by the front desk associate and placed in the Director of Finance's mailbox. The mail is reviewed and then given to the Accountant for processing. The Director of Finance will review the invoices with department heads if applicable. This is not required for payrolls, payment for retirement contributions, utility bills, and invoices for payables whose payment schedules and agreements are supported by contracts. The Accountant enters the invoices into the MIP Accounts Payable system with the appropriate UCOA string and checks the corner of the invoices as evidence of entry. Unpaid invoices are kept in a file in the Business Office.

## Check Disbursements

Staff members may submit requests for reimbursement for School expenses paid from personal funds. They also submit check requests for materials or services to be acquired. Approval and authority are the same as noted under "Purchasing" above. The Director of Finance reviews the list of open payables and decides which invoices to pay. The Accountant prepares the checks from the MIP system, and the check and attached invoices/requests are submitted to the Head of School for signing. If unavailable to sign, another signer will be used, but the check info will be forwarded to the HOS. Most checks are mailed out except for the staff checks which are put in their mailboxes. The check packet is filed in the Accounts Payable file in the Business Office.

Blank check stock is kept in a locked cabinet in the Business Office. Checks are prenumbered and used in sequence. There is no signature stamp, and all checks are signed by hand. No checks are signed without payee designation. Voided checks are canceled and retained. Outside contractors submit Forms W-9 and DWC-11, when needed, and 1099s are processed and mailed annually by the appropriate deadlines.

The following individuals are authorized to sign checks or approve the use of the credit card: Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Director of Teaching and Learning, Director of Finance, Board President and Board Treasurer. Two signatures are required for checks \$5,000 and greater. The Finance Committee approves check signatories.

The Accountant performs monthly bank reconciliations for all accounts. The reconciliations are reviewed and signed off on by the Director of Finance. Outstanding checks are reviewed at the time of reconciliation and any that are older than 60 days are followed up on by the Accountant.

#### Electronic Payments

The School makes ACH transfers through its operating checking account with Citizens Bank. This is primarily used to transfer funds relating to the ERSRI and TIAA-CREF retirement plans. The Accountant processes these payments, and they are approved by the Director of Finance or the Head of School. They are notified by the Accountant when the ACH is set up, and they need to approve this transfer online with Citizens Bank.

### 7. FIXED ASSET CAPITALIZATION POLICY

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts (TAPA) Board of Directors establishes the following Fixed Asset Capitalization Policy:

#### Definitions and Provisions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions shall apply:

- "Tangible Assets" - Assets that can be observed by one (1) or more of the physical senses. They may be seen or touched, in some environments heard or smelled.
- "Fixed Assets" - Tangible assets of a durable nature, generally with a useful life in excess of one (1) year, which are employed in the operating activities of the School and that are relatively permanent in nature. They may be termed property, plant, equipment, furniture, or fixed assets. They are usually separated into classes according to the physical characteristics of the items (Example: land, buildings, improvements other than buildings, machinery and equipment, furniture and fixtures).

- Some items may be identified as "Controlled Assets" that, although they do not meet all of the fixed asset criteria, are recorded within the fixed asset system to maintain a control of value, number, or location.
- "Capital Outlays" - Expenditure which benefits both the current and future fiscal period. This includes the costs of acquiring land and structures; construction or improvements of buildings, structures, or other fixed assets; and equipment purchases having an appreciable and calculable period of usefulness. These are expenditures resulting in the acquisition of or an addition to the School's general fixed assets.

#### Machinery, Furniture and Equipment

For the purposes of this policy, machinery and/or equipment is an apparatus, tool, or conglomeration of pieces, to form a tool. Machinery, furniture and equipment are not expendable in nature so as to be consumed. They do not lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into a different or more complex unit. Machinery, furniture, or equipment will stand alone and will not become a part of a basic building structure and may be moved between or among rooms to best meet the needs of the School.

TAPA will tag items with an individual value equal to or greater than \$5,000. Shipping charges, consultant fees, and any other costs directly related to the acquisition or purchase such as delivery, set-up charges, software operating systems which make the equipment operable as intended may be included and capitalized as a part of the cost. Physical inventory will be taken at least once a year prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>. All donated items are included in such inventory procedures. All teaching staff will accomplish their own room inventory at the beginning of the school year and prior to leaving for the summer break.

Improvements or renovations to existing machinery and new equipment will be capitalized only if the result of the change extends the useful life by two years or more.

#### Recording and Accounting

TAPA shall classify capital expenditures as capital outlays within the fund from which the expenditure was made. Acquisitions will be recorded following generally accepted accounting principles. The list of assets is found on the depreciation schedule which is submitted to the Auditors annually.

### 8. PROCUREMENT OF FEDERAL CONTRACTS, LEASES AND MAJOR PURCHASES

Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts will follow the code of conduct governing the awarding and administration of contracts using Federal funds.

Awards shall be made to the bidder/offer or whose bid/offer is responsive to the solicitation and is most advantageous to TAPA. Price and other factors will be considered. A search is done on all potential vendors found on the Federal System for Award Management website to insure eligibility to provide services.

As part of the procurement process, no employee, officer or agent of the TAPA shall participate in the selection, award, or administration of a contract supported by federal funds where the possibility of a conflict of interest, real or apparent, exists. Additionally, the TAPA officers, employees or agents shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from contractors, potential contractors, or parties to sub agreements.

## 9. PAYROLL & RELATED LIABILITIES

The School uses ADP for bi-monthly payroll and tax filings. The Director of Finance and the Head of School are the primary staff members who have the access rights in ADP to process payroll and other employee-related changes. Hourly employees submit their timesheets approved by their supervisors. The Director of Finance verifies clerical accuracy, approvals and paid time off, and then enters the data into the ADP system. The Director of Finance is also responsible for adding and removing employees, updating salary amounts and employee contributions for benefits and pension.

The Accountant has the rights in ADP to run the necessary reports to complete the payroll journal entry. If needed, the Accountant will serve as backup to the Director of Finance to process payroll. The payroll is reviewed as part of completing this entry which includes all salary and tax expenses plus employee withholdings for taxes, benefits and pension. These liabilities are paid in accordance with all requirements of federal and state laws. Accrued payroll is recorded at year end for the first three pay periods of the new fiscal year. All employees have the option to be paid via direct deposit or live check and also have the option to receive their pay stubs via USPS or electronically.

Employees with certifications from RIDE who work 20 or more hours per week participate in the state sponsored retirement plans, and the TIAA-CREF defined contribution plan. The School matches based on state mandates. Employees are eligible to participate in TAPA's Simple Plan after working 12 months and if their yearly income exceeds \$5,000. A matching contribution equal to the employees' salary reduction up to a limit of 3% is offered.

Each employee file contains contract agreements prepared annually and signed by the Head of School. For all employees, these files include the nature of pay (salary or hourly), pay rates, benefits and work schedules. Personnel files also include benefit election forms, W-4 forms, I-9 forms, etc. Only the Director of Finance and the Human Resource Coordinator have access to these personnel files. Each hourly employee has a payroll status form that authorizes the employee's wage. Staff employees are given contracts and a new contract is written for any changes in pay, such as a teacher's new contract for a new school year.

Teacher evaluations are completed three times during the school year in accordance with RIDE standards. There are formal forms that are submitted to RIDE and teachers are evaluated by the performance committee of TAPA HOS and administrators. Administrative positions are evaluated once a year and formal evaluations are kept in each employee's file after graduation.