



Request for Major Charter Amendment

Respectfully Submitted to the Rhode Island Department of Education by:

RISE Prep Mayoral Academy Board of Directors

July 26, 2024

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Rosalind DaCruz, Executive Director

RISE Prep Mayoral Academy

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1. Cover Page

Name of Charter: RISE Prep Mayoral Academy

Charter Type: Independent Charter

Location of Charter School: Woonsocket, Rhode Island

Enrolling Communities: Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville

Primary Contact Name: Rosalind DaCruz

Primary Contact Role: Executive Director

Address: 30 Cumberland Street

City/State/Zip: Woonsocket, Rhode Island, 02895

Primary Contact Signature: _____

Date: July 26, 2024

Phone: 401-765-512

Email: rdacruz@riseprepri.org

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Enrollment Table Note: RISE Prep Mayoral Academy is not requesting new seats or an expansion of its current approved K-12 charter. All enrollment projections remain the same as currently chartered. Below is the enrollment approved by The Council of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Charter	Grade Levels Served	Enrollment	Communities Served
SY24-25 current approved charter enrollment	K-9	640	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY25-26 current approved charter enrollment	K-10	740	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY29-30 (5-years) current approved enrollment	K-12	1060	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville

Table 1.

Signature of Charter Board Chair: _____

Title: Mayor of the City of Woonsocket

Signed by: _____
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Signature: Christopher Beauchamp

Date: July 26, 2024

Name of Establishing Entity: RISE Prep Mayoral Academy

Signature of Establishing Entity Representative: _____

Title: Executive Director

Date: July 26, 2024

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Print Name: Rosalind DaCruz

2. Executive Summary

RISE Prep Mayoral Academy opened as a Rhode Island Mayoral Academy in September 2015, serving the communities of Woonsocket, North Smithfield, and Burrillville, and creating an intentionally diverse public charter school located in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. The mission of RISE Prep is to educate K-12 scholars for success in college and a life of community engagement. The three main pillars of RISE Prep's mission are a highly structured learning environment, rigorous college-preparatory curriculum, and character education

The purpose of this major amendment application is to formally request that RISE Prep be allowed to change its governance structure from a Mayoral Academy to that of an Independent Charter School.

The critical nature of RISE Prep's major amendment request is rooted in significant financial challenges unique to operating as a Mayoral Academy. Under current legislation, RISE Prep faces an untenable financial constraint as Mayoral Academy. In 2017, the legislature passed § 16-7.2-5 (c). This statute amended the funding formula as it relates to charter school funding. From 2017 onwards, districts were able to retain 7% per pupil off the top of their allocation. From there, a complex series of calculations is performed, the end result of which decides whether or not the holdback stops at 7%, or if it increases to the difference between a defined set of unique costs between the district and all charter schools averaged together. This amount has varied over the years, but has gone as high as a 24% holdback for Independent Charters pulling from the affected district. The statute then adds on the per pupil value of the district's unfunded pension liabilities and withholds that amount from the adjusted local share per pupil. The net result of this calculation is a holdback of 62% of RISE Prep's Woonsocket local share in the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. In 5 out of the 8 years this legislation has been in place, RISE Prep has experienced a local share reduction despite almost always spending more in unique costs categories than Woonsocket Education Department. In these years, RISE Prep has had to close gaps by making significant budget cuts, including a cut of \$547,000 in the upcoming fiscal year. All the while, RISE Prep is still educating the full number of scholars associated with those local share payments. Cumulatively, Woonsocket has held back \$1.1 million from RISE Prep between the 2018 and 2025 school years.

The calculations rely on UCOA data and thus the local share is published in late April or well into May. This is far into the budget cycle and causes significant hardship as it has required RISE Prep to reduce staffing, programming, and high need services to its scholars at the very end of the budget process. It also makes it difficult for RISE Prep and other Mayoral academies to project long-term facilities budgets as the revenue is unpredictable and the reduction is increasing each year. RISE Prep cannot accurately predict the local share from year to year and thus struggles to sustainably hire and plan a program that will ensure quality as the organization grows. When RISE Prep was founded, the pension participation waiver allowed for a more robust staffing model to support RISE Prep scholars. With the holdback legislation in place, RISE Prep aims to make program and staffing adjustments that allow pension participation. The reality is that pension payments are both predictable and fixed in a way that this unwieldy legislation can never be.

In addition to the financial benefits of transitioning to an Independent Charter School, RISE Prep acknowledges the unique political challenges of the governance model of Mayoral Academies. RISE Prep has undoubtedly faced the most local political opposition of any charter in Rhode Island in the past decade, and perhaps since the beginning of charters in the state. When RISE Prep prepared to open in 2015, it faced significant opposition resulting in litigation from both the sending city and town councils as well as the sending school committees. Litigation continued well into 2021.

RISE Prep’s status as a Mayoral Academy has subjected it to political pressures not faced by Independent Charters. At trial, Judge Sarah Taft-Carter found that the City Council, “appeared to have an axe to grind with the Mayor, who is President of the Board.” She also found, “the Council has attempted to place politics into the courtroom.” The two initial lawsuits against RISE Prep were filed on the basis of the zoning of 1 Social Street, the school’s first location; the second lawsuit challenged the Council’s granting of a charter to RISE Prep and alleged that the school did not follow the proper process. Founders Academy at the Beacon Charter School for the Arts was granted a charter in the same 2015 cycle using the same process, and also opened at 1 Social Street in 2015, yet was not included in either lawsuit. RISE Prep’s Board believes that the Mayor of Woonsocket’s presence on the Board of Directors is the factor that led the City Council to sue. These lawsuits were among multiple brought unsuccessfully against the school, largely political in nature, that took time and resources away from RISE Prep’s mission and work.

RISE Prep’s Board of Directors and School Leadership have confidence that moving to an Independent Charter model will mitigate instability and unpredictability, and allow RISE Prep to continue to provide excellent educational options for scholars in Woonsocket, North Smithfield, and Burrillville K-12.

3. Mission Statement

The mission of RPMA Mayoral Academy (RPMA) is to educate all K-12 scholars for success in college and a life of community engagement through a structured learning environment, rigorous college preparatory academic program, and character education. This mission has not and will not change. The promise of an education that prepares scholars for the academic and social rigor and environment of college is both ambitious and demanding, but RPMA remains unwavering that it is the type of education that all scholars deserve. While the mission statement of RPMA remains unchanged and ever critical, financial pressures require the Board of Directors to consider a new governance structure.

4. Proposed New Student Seats and Enrollment

RISE Prep is not seeking to add new seats. The enrollment table below reflects the enrollment plans that the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education has already approved.

Charter	Grade Levels Served	Approved Enrollment	Communities Served
SY24-25 current approved charter enrollment	K-9	640	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY25-26 current approved charter enrollment	K-10	740	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY29-30 (5-years) current approved enrollment	K-12	1060	Woonsocket, North Smithfiel, Burrillville

Table 2.

The financial projections discussed elsewhere in this application do not account for the approved second K-8 school. While RISE Prep has been approved to open that school in SY27-28, the Board has not yet begun the process of doing so. The originally approved enrollment plan as well as the plan used for financial projections is included in [Attachment 1](#).

5. Goals and Track Record of Performance

Track Record of Academic Success

RPMA has a proven track record of strong performance that was taken into account when considering its original expansion request which was approved in December 2022. As an organization grounded in data and performance, RPMA has assessed its ability to expand while building back to, in the wake of the pandemic, and sustaining excellence and quality at each of its operating schools. There are many ways to measure success and growth as a school but RPMA closely aligns its organizational and academic goals to both the statewide Star Rating Accountability system and internal and statewide academic assessment performance. As a school, RPMA believes that the Star Rating System rigorously holds each individual school accountable for all areas of student success including: attendance, discipline, academic performance, performance of special education and multilingual scholars, among other key metrics. Within this system, every student's growth and achievement is accounted for in varying levels and measures. In Fall of 2019, after receiving RPMA's first year of testing results, RPMA was the only non testing urban public school in Rhode Island to receive a Five Star Rating. As an intentionally diverse school, with the largest number of scholars enrolling from Woonsocket, RPMA, as a district, had the highest statewide ELA proficiency average of 76% and the second highest Math proficiency average of 66% during the Spring 2019 RICAS assessment window. During the 2022-2023 testing year, RPMA outperformed two of its sending communities, Woonsocket and Burrillville, in both ELA and Math, as well as outperformed the state average in both ELA (33.1%) and Math (29.60%).

- **RISE Prep RICAS Proficiency 2022-2023 Testing Year:**
 - ELA: 37.5% (State Average: 33.1%)
 - Math: 35.1% (State Average: 29.60%)
- **Comparison to Proficiency of Sending Communities:**
 - Woonsocket
 - ELA: 11.1%
 - Math: 10%
 - Burrillville
 - ELA: 30.2%
 - Math: 23.3%
 - North Smithfield
 - ELA: 55.3%
 - Math: 55.5%

As a whole, RPMA outperformed the urban traditional districts and charter schools in the state, and has intensely targeted the areas of gaps and learning loss to provide instruction and opportunities for RPMA's scholars.

Building Excellent Schools National Comparisons

Since its inception, RPMA has participated in a quarterly data share with Building Excellent Schools in Boston, MA which shares full internal NWEA MAP assessment data for national comparisons. Over the past 7 years, RPMA scholar performance has consistently ranked among the top 10 schools in every grade in both ELA and

Math in a comparison to typically 30-50 Building Excellent Schools Fellow-founded schools participating nationally.

Academic Goals

As a data-driven organization, RPMA uses rigorous goals to consistently track, monitor, and measure progress towards organizational and academic goals within the school. The same model would be implemented for each new school RPMA proposes to open. RPMA tracks progress against three sets of goals: 1) goals outlined in RPMA's final charter, 2) RPMA's annual Strategic Plan goals (Attachment A), and 3) RPMA's Star Rating on the statewide accountability system.

Like all public schools, RPMA's academic results saw a steep decline during the first and second year of COVID-19 pandemic testing. Due to attendance challenges from quarantines for both scholars and staff, as well as missed content and skills during distance learning, particularly in Spring 2020-Spring 2021, academic performance and scholar growth and achievement decreased in comparison to its pre-pandemic results and its projected results prior to the pandemic. RPMA has crafted new goals based on new programming targeting the needs of scholars based on data before and after the pandemic. To address gaps and learning loss from the pandemic, RPMA leadership has made high quality curriculum shifts, implemented a continuation of the co-teacher model in grades K-8, and individualized social emotional and academic supports and accelerated learning efforts to ensure that within the next 4 years, RPMA scholars are on track to achieve 75%+ proficiency in ELA and Math on RICAS, and 70%+ proficiency on NGSS Science Assessments.

Below are the schoolwide RICAS proficiency goals for academic years 2024-25 through 2028-2029, based on RPMA scholars' current performance and anticipated growth based on trimester NWEA MAP growth and performance analysis. All growth and performance goals are calibrated with Massachusetts' rigorous MCAS cut percentages: 68th percentile for ELA, and 63rd percentile for Math, which historically equates to proficiency on Rhode Island's statewide assessments. RPMA fully intends to achieve proficiency of 75%+ in ELA and 70%+ in Math by an intentional and targeted academic growth plan. By June 2030, RPMA commits to ensuring that 62% of RISE Prep scholars will demonstrate meeting or exceeding expectations on statewide ELA assessments (RICAS, etc.) Annual ELA Proficiency goals are noted below:

- 28-29: 60% Meets and Exceeds Expectations
- 27-28: 55% Meets and Exceeds Expectations
- 26-27: 51% Meets and Exceeds Expectations
- 25-26: 47% Meets and Exceeds Expectations
- 24-25: 42% Meets and Exceeds Expectations

Utilizing a similar targeted growth and performance plan, RPMA will increase Math RICAS Proficiency as it builds back to 75%+ proficiency. By June 2030, 60% of RPMA scholars will demonstrate meeting or exceeding expectations on statewide Math assessments (RICAS, etc.) Annual Math Proficiency goals are noted below:

- 28-29: 58% Meets and Exceeds Expectations
- 27-28: 55% Meets and Exceeds Expectations
- 26-27: 51% Meets and Exceeds Expectations
- 25-26: 45% Meets and Exceeds Expectations
- 24-25: 40% Meets and Exceeds Expectations

Progress towards RPMA's original academic goals

RPMA has a strong track record of student achievement and operational performance. In its original chart, RPMA set out to achieve 80% proficiency in ELA and Math on statewide standardized assessments. In its first testing year, RPMA's founding third grade scholars achieved 76% proficiency in ELA and 67% proficiency in Math. RPMA leadership is confident in the school's ability to rebuild academic results in the wake of the pandemic and strengthen its overall program to be stronger and more effective than its founding years as it grows.

The school demonstrates fiduciary and financial responsibility.

- External, annual audit reports will demonstrate that the school meets or exceeds professional accounting standards.
- Budgets for each academic year will demonstrate effective allocation of financial resources to ensure effective execution of mission as measured by yearly balanced budgets.
- All state and lender required metrics will be met consistently on an annual basis.

The school is fully enrolled, with high levels of attendance/re-enrollment.

- The school's waiting list will equal 50% of kindergarten enrollment annually.
- 90% of scholars who begin the school year will remain throughout the year.
- 90% of scholars completing the school year will re-enroll the following year.
- The school will average 95% (+) daily student attendance annually.
- The school will maintain waitlists in each of its sending communities each year.

Families are satisfied with RPMA's academic program and communication.

- Parent satisfaction with clear, open communication by staff, as measured by annual end-of-year surveys, on average will exceed 90%, with a minimum of 85% of families responding.
- Parent satisfaction with the academic program, as measured by annual end-of-year surveys, on average will exceed 90% with a minimum of 85% of families responding.

The Board of Directors provides effective school oversight.

- The Board will conduct a formal annual review of the Executive Director.
- The Board will conduct an annual self-evaluation to assess the Board's strengths/weaknesses.
- The Board will conduct formal annual review of Bylaws and policies.
- The Board will review progress towards organizational, operational, and academic goals at each monthly board meeting.

Despite opposition and costly litigation in its founding years, RPMA has met and exceeded organizational health metrics on the state accountability system and the school's rigorous internal metrics and is committed to continuing to deliver on its goals throughout the proposed expansion. When political and external financial factors have reduced RPMA's local share by over 55% in multiple years, the organization has pivoted, been

strategic with resources, and made adjustments to its model, such as this major amendment request to change RPMA's governance structure to ensure sustainability and the financial position to carry out RPMA's mission.

6. Community Need and Support

RPMA's Board of Directors includes representatives from each community that RPMA serves who weigh in on and share challenges, needs, and advocacy that comes directly from the community. Strong partnerships through enrollment, and before and after school programming, with local organizations such as Woonsocket Head Start, and Woonsocket Boys and Girls Club have also been helpful in identifying needs of the families in RPMA's enrollment communities who are not enrolled in RPMA or remain on RPMA's waitlist. Most significantly, RPMA's current Woonsocket families and Woonsocket families who have been placed on the waitlist, some who have been placed on the waitlist each year since the school's inception, have been the primary motivation and voice for access to RPMA for a K-12 option for the communities of Woonsocket, North Smithfield, and Burrillville.

Since RPMA opened in 2015, the Board of Directors, local community organizations serving school-aged children most impacted by high quality education, and the families of our current scholars as well as the families on RPMA's waitlist, remain consistently and steadfastly involved in the school community, its goals, and its direction. RPMA has always believed that the school's families are partners in the efforts to bring quality education to its scholars. With this in mind, RPMA leadership has spent significant amounts of time informally, conversationally, formally through polls and surveys, and anecdotally gathering input, feedback, and hopes from the parents and guardians of current and waitlisted families over the past 10 years regarding future opportunities for enrollment at RPMA.

While RPMA's original mayoral academy model required municipal leaders, such as the mayors or town administrators, to serve as governance leadership for the organization, the RPMA Board of Directors has found, over time, that the political tension and conflict, as well as the significant and unsustainable financial burdens of the mayoral model as it related to RPMA, do not serve RPMA specifically, and hinder its ability to carry out its mission of a high quality education for its scholars.

7. Educational Program

There are no proposed changes to the academic K-12 programs that have been approved by the Rhode Island Council of Elementary and Secondary Education in the original charter approval in 2014, major amendment approval in 2021, and RPMA's 5 year renewal process with the Rhode Island Department of Education. Please see RPMA's approved Major Amendment application from December 2023 for more information about RPMA's educational model.

8. Organizational Capacity

Close attention to, and investment in, organizational capacity remains one of the highest priorities in approaching governance, academic, and operational work within RPMA.

Governance Capacity

RISE Prep is seeking to convert from a Mayoral Academy to an Independent Charter School. Currently, RPMA's board of directors consists of Woonsocket's elected official as board chair fulfilling the Mayoral statute, community members from each enrollment community that RPMA serves, a combination of community members working in both public and private sectors, and strategic expertise areas. The current Board has

elected to stay on as the organization transitions to the new governance structure. RPMA will continue to nominate, add to, and fill vacant board seats in the coming years to reach the ideal size of 9-11 board members at maximum capacity.

In the coming weeks, RPMA's Executive Director plans to connect with the Executive Director of the Northern Rhode Island Boys and Girls Club to discuss nonprofit sponsorship as RPMA transitions to an independent charter school. RPMA and Boys and Girls Club have a productive, positive relationship and share enrollment of many children and families between the two respective entities, making it a strong partnership choice when considering sponsorship.

RPMA firmly believes that growing slowly and strategically, through a slow growth model at both of its approved expansion schools, is the only way to maintain quality at its flagship and each of the two new schools RPMA proposes to open. The current organizational structure has already made shifts in the past year to support the growth and development of school-based leadership, and slowly begin to separate out district-level leadership supports that will eventually be able to coach, guide, and provide accountability measures and support for each school site. One of the key factors in this expansion proposal is a strong buildout of the organization and its personnel over the first 5 years of expansion (2024-2028) to ensure that all departments are staffed by qualified, experienced, and mission-aligned team members, leaving instruction and academic programming fully staffed never sacrificing the academic program in regards to staff, time, energy or attention.

Staffing K-12

In the organizational staffing model for the two K-8 schools, the original founding Principal of RPMA K-8, or another founding leader, will support the opening of the second K-8 school bringing the vast experience of the startup, the model, and curriculum and instructional coaching to the proposed school. An internal leader from RPMA's flagship will likely shift into the Principal role after 3+ years of leadership experience in K-8. As high school calls for different grade span and content knowledge, as well as different experience than the K-8 grade configuration, RPMA partnered with Building Excellent Schools to recruit for the founding high school Principal through a national search. A commitment to diversity and equity, experience, a proven-track record, and mission-alignment were critical qualifications in RPMA's founding high school principal recruitment process. A full planning year was dedicated to ensuring the High School Principal had time to set vision, plan, and hire for a strong high school opening in Fall 2024.

The full staffing projections and models for the flagship, the high school, and the network leadership and support organization chart, are included in APPENDIX B, Attachment 2. The staffing model for the high school has gleaned best practices for staffing leadership and classroom-facing roles from high-performing high schools studied in the process of developing this expansion application. RISE Prep is not including the second K-8 in this application as a successful and sustainable high school is required first. The models presented in this application reflect cuts made based on the projected clawback of the Mayoral Academy local share; positions will be added back once sustainability is established.

Families as Partners

RPMA firmly believes that families are partners in the important work of educating RPMA scholars. Families often highlight appreciation for being able to connect and communicate frequently and consistently with teachers, leaders, and staff to ask questions, provide feedback, or share concerns. Since RPMA's founding year, it has been a priority to provide a welcoming space in which families feel heard, understood, and feel confident

that their hopes and goals for their scholars are being worked towards on a daily basis at school. As a public charter school, RPMA's model of governance is open in accordance with Rhode Island's Open Meeting Laws. All Board of Directors meetings are posted, inclusive of agenda and materials, on the Secretary of State website, and board meeting dates are shared with our families through internal calendars. Families are welcome to speak at board meetings and share thoughts, questions, or concerns. With that in mind, many families connect directly with teachers, the Principal, and the Superintendent on a regular and ongoing basis with specific needs or discussion. RPMA remains committed to having family representation on the Board of Directors and has since its earliest years of establishment. The Board currently has a parent serving as a board member and will continue to keep one or more seats on the Board available to parent/guardians if future vacancies arise to ensure family perspective is included in all decision-making at the board-level. Additionally, RPMA currently does have parents who are currently employed as staff members at the school who assist in both instructional and operational areas of the school. This dual role is helpful in having both a staff and parent perspective when making decisions within the school.

Various opportunities for meeting and discussion as well as school-formed groups are available to ensure parents at RPMA are empowered and supported. The Principal holds monthly virtual meetings to discuss parts of the program or model, ask for feedback on areas of improvement, brainstorm potential solutions to challenges, and get suggestions for enrichment or programming from families. Families who have scholars with special education services are also encouraged to join RPMA's local advisory council (LAC) which meets quarterly to discuss special education programming, progress, feedback, and advocacy. While RPMA includes progress reports, quarterly report cards and conferences, and weekly and monthly communication around scholar academic progress and character education, it is RPMA's communication policies that have continuously been the foundation of support and collaboration between families and teachers. Each RPMA staff member is available for communication with families from 7:00AM-7:00PM each day. Within these communication hours, families and staff are able to consistently initiate communication and provide updates on scholar progress, needs, and strengths. Lastly, grade-level teaching teams empower and support families at home by providing content resources to share the strategies, content, and skills that scholars are working on at school and step-by-step ways to support content being practiced at home.

RPMA's approach to communication has always been to provide many avenues for providing feedback and asking questions (surveys, meetings, conferences, questionnaires, committees) and to do so consistently. The school's goal is to make families feel part of the decision making and feedback process while also remaining clear in direction and pursuit of the school's ambitious mission. RPMA staff aims to create both formal and informal ways for families to connect, request, and receive support, and is committed to finding ways to empower families as partners in their scholar's academic success. Through this approach of open communication at all times, RPMA gathers satisfaction and critical feedback from our families consistently in both more structured surveys or by phone call, email, or text message based on a strong availability and partnership between families and staff. RPMA, since its inception, has had strong family retention rates outside of families who move out of RPMA's enrollment communities.

9. Facilities

RPMA purchased the facility for its flagship K-8 school building in 2018 and completed a gymnasium addition in the 2022-2023 school year. RPMA has submitted a Stage I Necessity of School Construction application for a permanent high school facility and aims to submit a Stage II Necessity of School Construction application in Winter 2025. In the meantime, RISE Prep High School is opening in a swing space through a partnership with the Woonsocket Boys and Girls Club.

The Board of Directors has worked diligently to ensure that future facility opportunities are included to be deliberated in monthly board meetings. Finding a permanent high school location has been challenging; RPMA's status as a Mayoral Academy opens it up to political interference in ways that Independent Charters do not experience. RPMA explored the possibility of a collaboration with the Woonsocket Education Department throughout the 2023-24 school year. Ultimately, that collaboration did not come to fruition due to political pressures.

10. Operations

The local share clawback enacted in RI General Laws § 16-7.2-5 (c) has greatly impacted operations at the K-8 in the 2024-25 school year. In 2023-24, RPMA experienced a 53% reduction in per pupil funding for scholars from Woonsocket. The organization used cash reserve funds to support its operations through the year and sought outside funding. Historically, RPMA had never experienced the local share reduction two years in a row, and the organization's leaders believed that RPMA would be able to build its reserves back up to a healthy level in SY24-25. However, the local share reduction for Woonsocket scholars in SY24-25 is 63%. RPMA was forced to eliminate several positions at the K-8 and the network. While the organization has found a way to operate in SY24-25 that will most likely meet required financial metrics, it cannot support such reductions each year moving forward.

The nature of the legislation and the intricacies of the calculations leads to the local share rates being shared late in the budget season. Sometimes it is as early as April, but often the rates are shared in May. RPMA delays issuing offer letters to returning team members until these rates are published in order to avoid having to rescind offers. In years in which the reduction is in force, RPMA is forced to cut programming or scuttle plans for expansion. The ESSER I, II, and III funds were critical in keeping school operations moving along. RPMA planned for the sunset of ESSER funds and was confident it could avoid layoffs. The reduction in local funds has thwarted this careful planning.

11. Finance and Budget

Revenue & Costs Analysis

Enrollment

RPMA is committed to providing an authentic, meaningful high school experience for scholars. Based on 2024-25 enrollment, RPMA based its projections on between 79 and 82 scholars per high school grade in 2030. RPMA will still backfill seats above this target if it is able. The high school will grow one grade per year. In the K-8, RPMA has created a backfill bubble. In 2024-25, kindergarten and first grade will have 90 scholars each, while the remaining grades will sit at 50. This has required some reconfiguration of space but is easily accommodated within the current building. This bubble of scholars will progress through the schools over the years and will eventually allow the high school to have up to 100 scholars per grade. For example, in SY26-27, the enrollment bubble scholars will be in grades 2 and 3; kindergarten and first grade will revert to 60 scholars each.

For the projections presented here, RPMA has anticipated modest increases in the state share based on historic trends. The budget also anticipates that federal funds will scale with enrollment.

Predicting the local share is more tricky. The base local share is a reduction of 7% from the municipality's contribution per pupil in the prior year. The clawback legislation affects independent charters as well, though

less severely. Figure 2 shows the history of Woonsocket’s local share payments to both Independent Charters and Mayoral Academies, along with a simple linear regression that projects future local share rates.

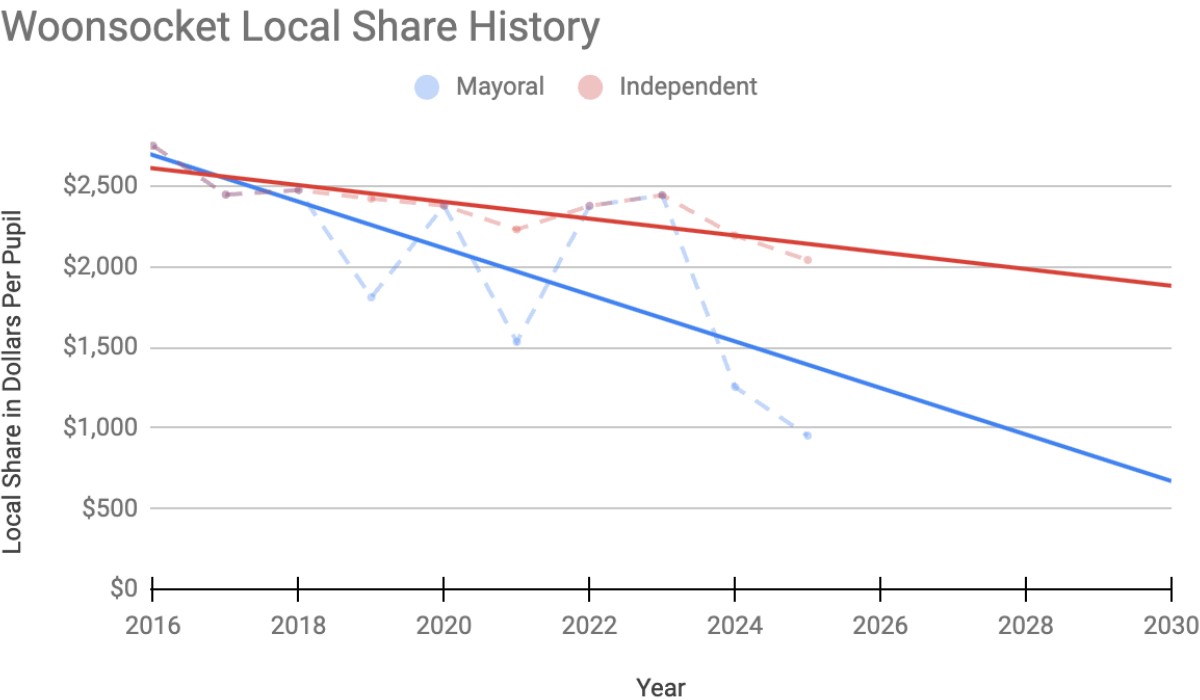
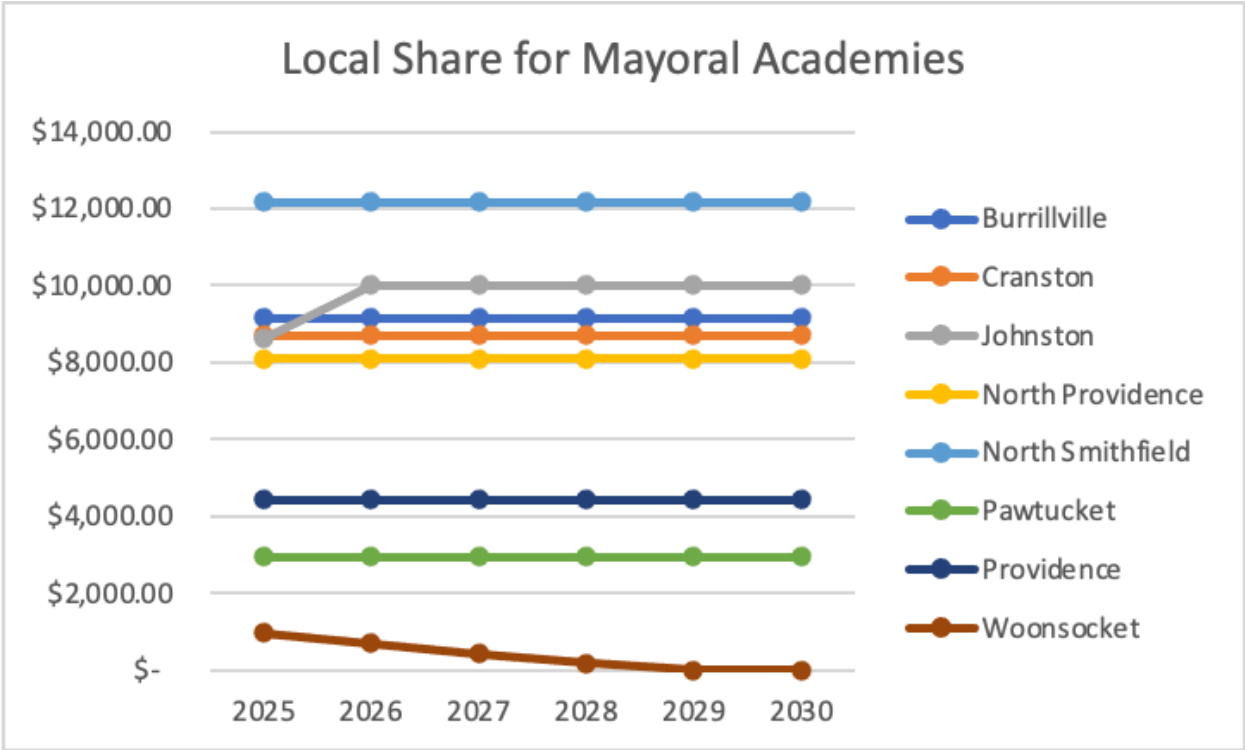
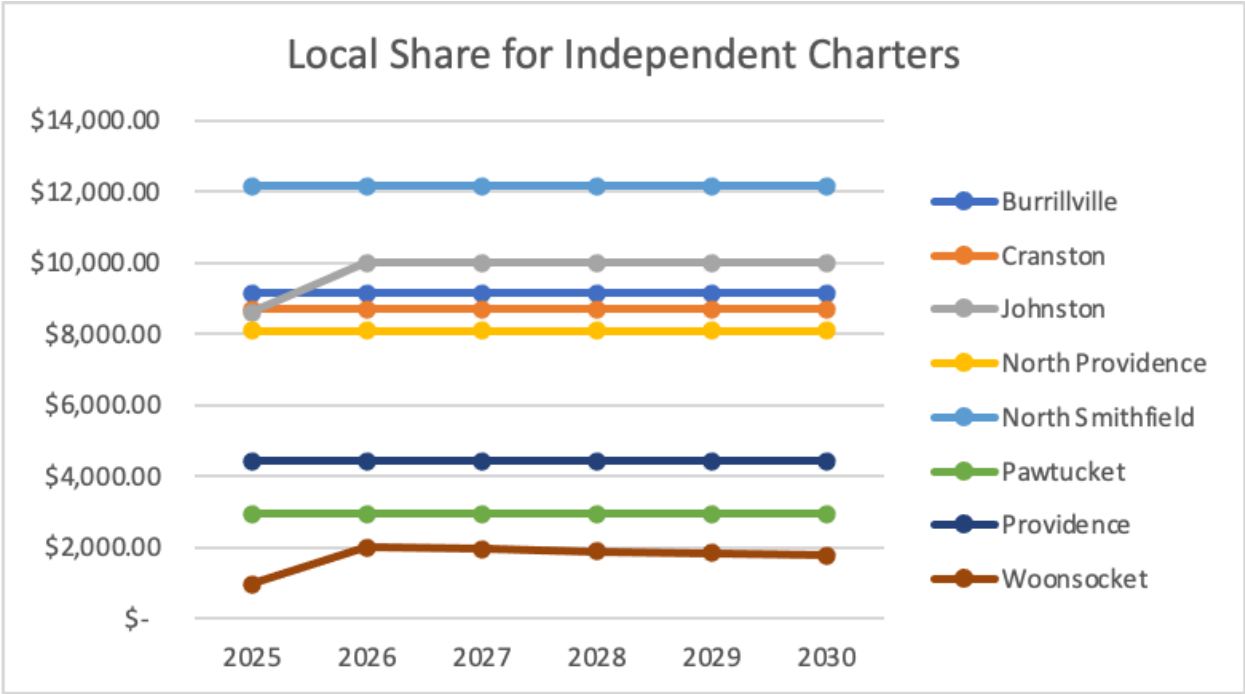


Figure 2.

To project future Woonsocket rates as a Mayoral Academy, RPMA analyzed the dollar amount and percentage of reductions in years it experienced the clawback. Each reduction year yielded a reduction that was on average 10% worse than the prior reduction year. Assuming that the reduction will be triggered each year moving forward, in SY2027-28, the local share reduction for Woonsocket will be 93%, an inversion of the standard local share. In 2028-29, the reduction is projected to yield a negative local share; the legislation does not speak to payment from Mayoral Academies to Districts, so RPMA has assumed that the Woonsocket local share will be zero in SY28-89 and SY29-30. RPMA would likely enter a deficit state in SY28-29, barring extraordinary measures.

To project the local share for independent charters, RPMA reviewed the average decrease in local share funding in years in which a clawback is triggered, and used those declining figures to predict Woonsocket’s contribution.



Personnel and Expenses

The projections use the 2024-25 school year as a base and assumes the current staffing model remains in place. Several positions were cut in 2024-25, including a Dean of Operations at the K-8 and a Director of Technology at the LEA level. The attached staffing charts show the full scale model for the K-8, High School, and LEA.

Other expenses, such as transportation, instructional materials, and basic business and office expenses are estimated on a per grade level basis and generally scale with enrollment.

Facilities

Facilities are RPMA's biggest costs after personnel. RPMA does not have a municipality to back the construction of its high school. The Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer are working closely with developers to finalize a Stage II application for a permanent facility. The projections assume an initial debt of \$32 million, with the corresponding principal and interest payments. Occupancy and maintenance costs are also high and scale with square footage.

12. Variances

RPMA's legal counsel has reviewed the statute that governs independent charter schools and notes that the two key differences in the transition from mayoral academy to independent charter school are that RPMA must adhere to teacher tenure and retirement. It is noted that neither of the two elements of statute can be waived. If there was to be flexibility in this unprecedented transition, RPMA would request variance related to teacher tenure regulations. RPMA believes firmly that high quality teaching must remain consistent year after year and teacher tenure could potentially create barriers to maintaining this level of teacher instructional quality. With that in mind, RPMA Board of Directors and Leadership understands that there may be no variance pathway for teacher tenure and will work diligently to ensure its coaching program and evaluation systems reflect the expectations of instruction and learning at RPMA schools.

Appendix A: Assurances

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

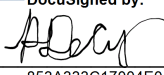
1. Curriculum must be aligned with Common Core Standards and other standards adopted by the state of Rhode Island, such as the Next Generation Science Standards. Additionally, curricular choices must align to state statutes regarding High-Quality Curricular Materials.
2. The school will craft a comprehensive 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 School Opportunities 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 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.

Signed by:

1CADD0162D7044CF...
 Governing Board Chair, Charter School

7/26/2024

Date

DocuSigned by:

853A333C17004E0...
 Lead Applicant, Charter School

7/26/2024

Date

Appendix B: Required Proposal Attachments

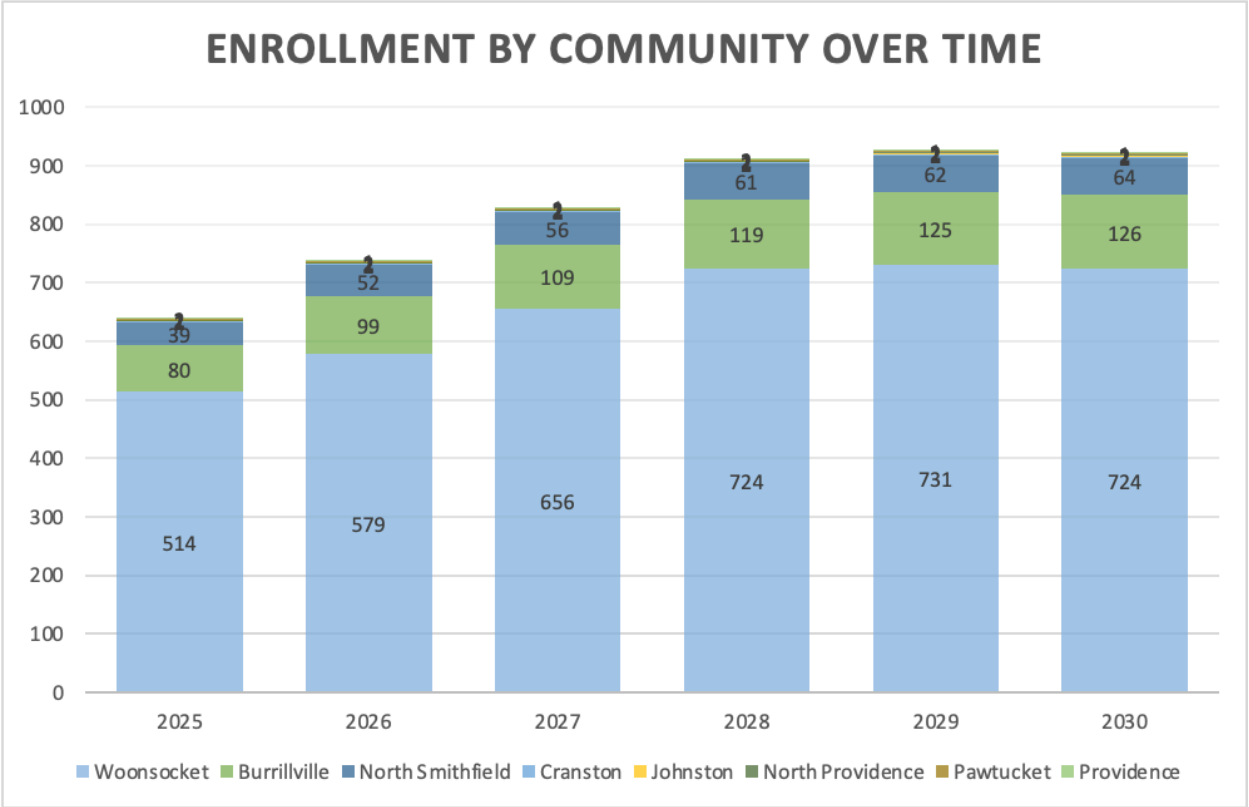
1. *Enrollment Charts*

Previously Approved Enrollment Plan:

Charter	Grade Levels Served	Approved Enrollment	Communities Served
SY24-25 current approved charter enrollment	K-9	640	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY25-26 current approved charter enrollment	K-10	740	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY29-30 (5-years) current approved enrollment	K-12	1060	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville

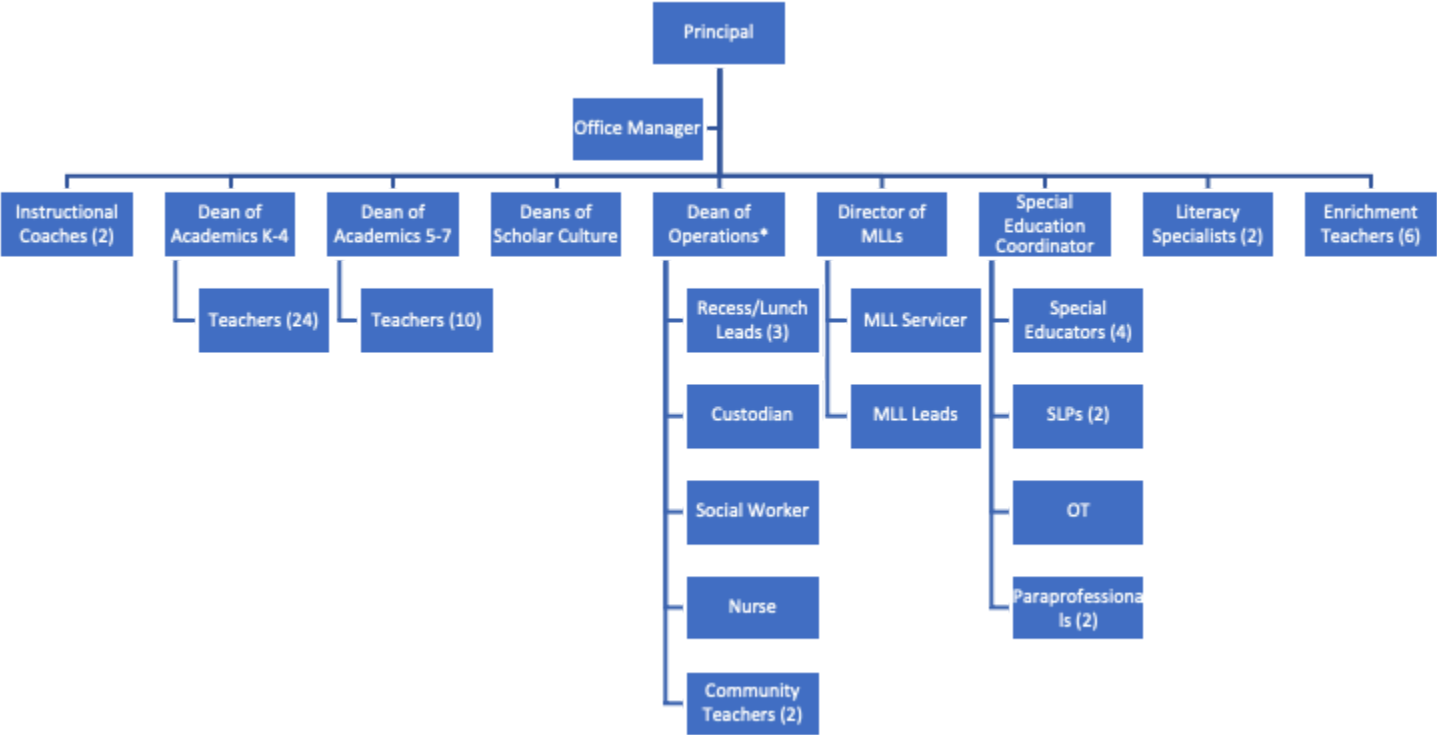
Enrollment Plan Used in Financial Projections:

Charter	Grade Levels Served	Approved Enrollment	Communities Served
SY24-25	K-9	640	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY25-26	K-10	738	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY26-27	K-11	829	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY27-28	K-12	912	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY28-29	K-12	926	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville
SY29-30 (5-years)	K-12	922	Woonsocket, North Smithfield, Burrillville



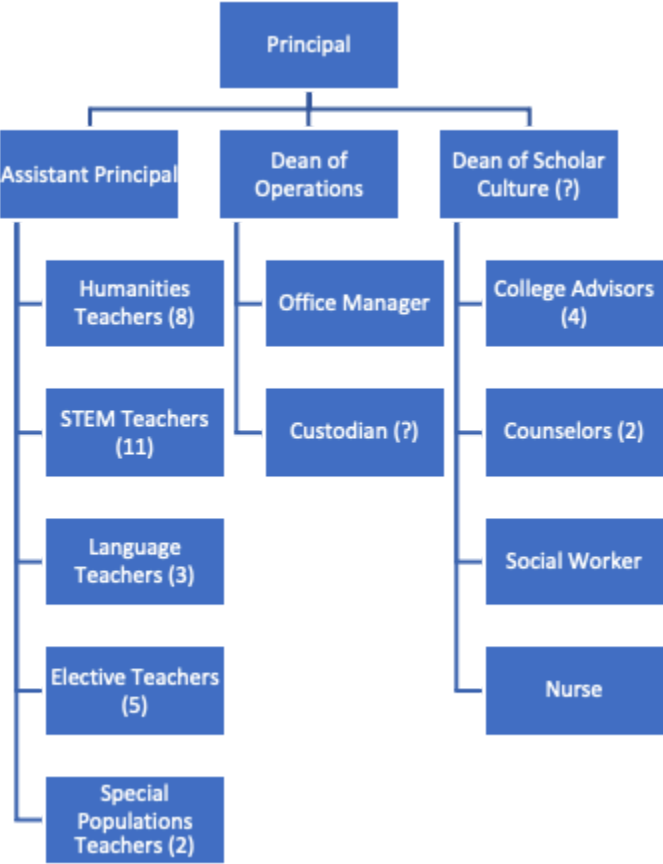
2. *Staffing Models*

K-8 2030¹



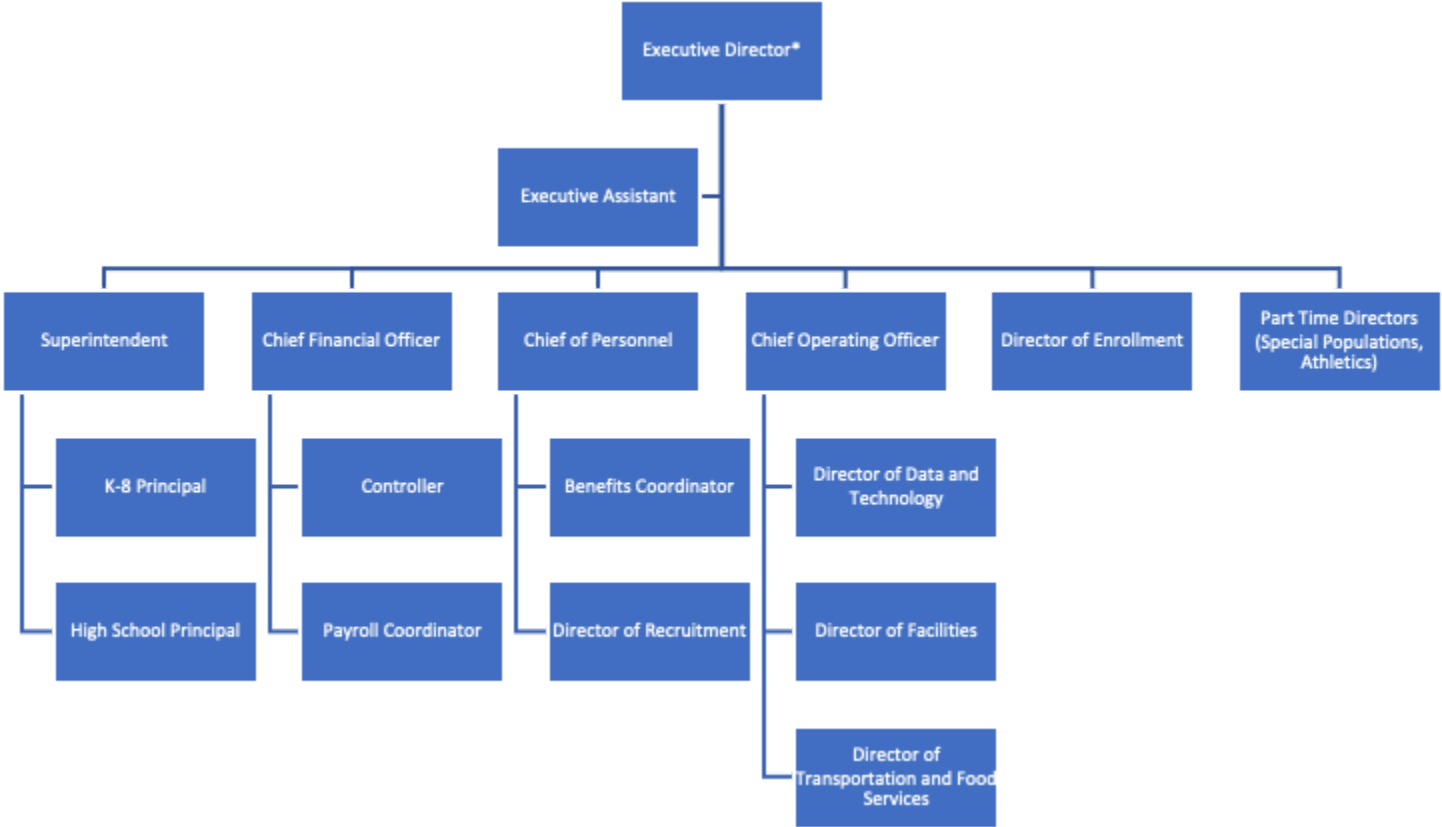
¹ Positions with a question mark were cut due to Mayoral Local Share Clawback. RPMA intends to add them back if possible.

High School 2030²



² Positions with a question mark were cut due to Mayoral Local Share Clawback. RPMA intends to add them back if possible.

LEA 2030



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND
CHARTER SCHOOL OPERATING BUDGET PROJECTIONS

Charter School: RISE Prep Mayoral Academy

		Implementation and Operations				
		FY2026	FY2027	FY2028	FY2029	FY2030
MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS						
A	Average local aid per pupil	3,733.24	3,633.96	3,570.51	3,559.06	3,552.86
B	Average state aid per pupil	13,353.84	14,158.40	14,923.66	15,623.83	16,318.79
C	Student Enrollment	738	829	912	926	922
D	Gross Square Footage (GSF) of facility	42,000	42,000	112,000	112,000	112,000
E	Staffing					
	E1. School Principals/Asst Principals	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
	E2. School Support Staff	10.0	11.0	11.0	11.0	11.0
	E3. Executive Director/Superintendent	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	E4. Deputies/Administrators	4.0	4.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
	E5. Program/Operations Support Staff	2.0	4.0	7.0	7.0	7.0
	E6. Teachers	58.0	69.0	73.0	74.0	74.0
	E7. Paraprofessionals	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	E8. Pupil Support	7.0	9.0	11.0	11.0	11.0
	E9. Teacher Support	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	4.0
	E10. Program Management	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
	E11. Special Services	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0
	E12. Facilities Maintenance	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
F	Staff FTE	99.0	115.0	125.0	126.0	126.0
OPERATING REVENUES						
1	Local Revenue	2,755,133.00	3,012,556.00	3,256,304.00	3,295,685.00	3,275,733.00
2	State Revenue	9,855,130.61	11,737,316.45	13,610,376.14	14,467,662.05	15,045,922.21
3	Grants - Charter Schools Program	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4	Grants - Private	200,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
5	Federal formula funds (inc. Title I, III and IDEA)	644,164.00	725,342.00	798,469.00	809,724.00	804,155.00
6	Capital Projects Funds	0.00	1,120,000.00	1,120,000.00	1,120,000.00	1,120,000.00
7	Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
8	TOTAL OPERATING REVENUES	13,454,427.61	16,595,214.45	18,785,149.14	19,693,071.05	20,245,810.21
OPERATING EXPENDITURES						
School Management						
9	Salaries: Principals and Assistant Principals	363,617.10	386,011.78	405,436.78	404,041.16	409,041.16
10	Salaries: Support Staff	353,746.26	474,971.92	494,515.78	532,891.12	554,464.66
11	School Office	117,630.05	137,630.05	137,630.05	137,630.05	133,280.05
12	Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
13	Subtotal:	834,993.41	998,613.76	1,037,582.62	1,074,562.33	1,096,785.87
Program/Operations Management						
14	Salaries: Executive Director or Superintendent	350,000.00	360,000.00	175,000.00	180,000.00	185,000.00
15	Salaries: Deputies and Administrators	320,799.83	346,381.83	435,091.60	458,841.01	472,778.76
16	Salaries: Support Staff	118,857.61	265,167.83	465,428.31	492,366.20	555,029.20
17	Legal	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
18	School Board	24,104.00	24,104.00	24,104.00	24,104.00	17,811.00
19	Business Operations	151,573.75	159,987.35	165,812.15	166,459.35	155,459.35
20	Information Management and Technology	97,093.39	94,128.39	99,408.39	94,128.39	73,240.00
21	Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
22	Subtotal:	1,077,428.59	1,264,769.40	1,379,844.44	1,430,898.95	1,474,318.30
Instruction						
23	Salaries: Teachers	3,639,044.06	4,523,143.48	5,037,282.37	5,463,925.99	5,664,099.71
24	Salaries: Paraprofessionals	96,864.16	99,997.66	114,444.31	118,180.85	120,236.57
25	Stipends and Bonuses	223,620.00	240,820.00	246,020.00	253,520.00	263,520.00
26	Pupil-Use Technology, Hardware, and Software	167,538.50	193,038.50	193,038.50	154,538.50	172,938.50
27	Instructional Materials Supplies	234,381.54	260,322.80	249,885.25	255,885.25	243,425.16
28	Other:	37,148.00	37,148.00	37,148.00	37,148.00	37,148.00
29	Subtotal:	4,398,596.26	5,354,470.44	5,877,818.44	6,283,198.60	6,501,367.95
Instructional Support						
30	Salaries: Pupil Support	509,770.45	576,182.97	706,694.62	734,406.45	763,503.06
31	Salaries: Teacher Support	378,746.03	393,895.87	401,030.77	408,451.05	411,857.68
32	Salaries: Program Management	155,261.78	157,761.78	162,761.78	167,761.78	167,761.78
33	Salaries: Special Services	354,518.00	376,154.82	399,771.39	412,593.42	432,465.13
34	Guidance and Counseling	370.98	370.98	370.98	370.98	370.98
35	Library and Media	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
36	Extracurricular	66,500.00	66,500.00	66,500.00	58,000.00	55,750.00
37	Student Services, Outreach, Recruitment	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	30,000.00
38	Student Health Services	18,626.77	18,626.77	18,626.77	18,626.77	10,826.77
39	Academic Interventions	28,000.00	28,000.00	28,000.00	28,000.00	28,000.00
40	Curriculum Development	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
41	In Service, Staff Development, and Support	90,331.00	90,331.00	85,291.00	73,791.00	18,193.00
42	Assessment	35,701.69	35,701.69	35,701.69	35,701.69	35,701.69
43	Other:	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

44		Subtotal:	<u>1,679,826.71</u>	<u>1,785,525.89</u>	<u>1,946,749.00</u>	<u>1,979,703.15</u>	<u>1,966,430.10</u>
	Operations						
45	Salaries: Facilities Maintenance		<u>38,209.09</u>	<u>39,557.87</u>	<u>40,954.26</u>	<u>42,399.95</u>	<u>43,247.95</u>
46	Transportation		<u>599,791.43</u>	<u>703,817.03</u>	<u>703,817.03</u>	<u>703,817.03</u>	<u>703,817.03</u>
47	Food Services		<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
48	Safety		<u>7,984.00</u>	<u>16,984.00</u>	<u>7,984.00</u>	<u>7,984.00</u>	<u>7,984.00</u>
49	Building Upkeep and Maintenance		<u>244,639.00</u>	<u>408,400.00</u>	<u>408,400.00</u>	<u>448,839.00</u>	<u>333,400.00</u>
50	Maintenance Contracts		<u>55,500.00</u>	<u>92,500.00</u>	<u>92,500.00</u>	<u>92,500.00</u>	<u>92,500.00</u>
51	Utilities		<u>111,719.00</u>	<u>112,749.00</u>	<u>112,749.00</u>	<u>112,749.00</u>	<u>112,749.00</u>
52	Lease		<u>20,128.50</u>	<u>23,600.00</u>	<u>11,600.00</u>	<u>11,600.00</u>	<u>11,600.00</u>
53	Debt Service		<u>672,858.76</u>	<u>2,080,000.00</u>	<u>2,863,000.84</u>	<u>2,863,000.84</u>	<u>2,863,000.84</u>
54	Capital Projects		<u>50,000.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
55	Other:		<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>10,000.00</u>	<u>10,000.00</u>
56	Subtotal:		<u>1,820,829.78</u>	<u>3,497,607.90</u>	<u>4,261,005.13</u>	<u>4,302,889.82</u>	<u>4,178,298.82</u>
	Other Obligations						
57	Fringe Benefits		<u>1,809,343.66</u>	<u>2,065,177.71</u>	<u>2,275,669.47</u>	<u>2,386,947.24</u>	<u>2,467,867.88</u>
58	Insurance (non-employee)		<u>37,373.00</u>	<u>73,121.00</u>	<u>73,121.00</u>	<u>73,121.00</u>	<u>73,121.00</u>
59	Retiree Benefits		<u>1,098,475.74</u>	<u>1,311,579.01</u>	<u>1,426,145.92</u>	<u>1,509,545.14</u>	<u>1,580,317.71</u>
60	Purchased Management Services		<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
61	Other:		<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
62	Subtotal:		<u>2,945,192.40</u>	<u>3,449,877.72</u>	<u>3,774,936.39</u>	<u>3,969,613.38</u>	<u>4,121,306.59</u>
	Community Services						
63	Community Service Operations		<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
64	Other:		<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
65	Subtotal:		<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>0.00</u>
66	Budgeted Contingencies						
67	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURES		<u>12,756,867.15</u>	<u>16,350,865.11</u>	<u>18,277,936.02</u>	<u>19,040,866.21</u>	<u>19,338,507.62</u>
68	SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		<u>697,560.45</u>	<u>244,349.34</u>	<u>507,213.13</u>	<u>652,204.84</u>	<u>907,302.59</u>

Appendix C: Additional Charter Type Proposal Requirements

RPMA is in the process of finalizing a nonprofit partnership which it plans to solidify by August 2024 in accordance with RIGL 16-77.3-2(b). RPMA plans to submit the financial documents to RIDE along with a letter of support within the coming month as it works to secure these documents from its partner.