



CHARTER SCHOOL SUMMARY

Capital City Charter School: A Public Charter School

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CAPITAL CITY CHARTER SCHOOL

“We need your service, right now, at this moment in history. I’m not going to tell you what your role should be; that’s for you to discover. But I am asking you to stand up and play your part. I am asking you to help change history’s course”.

*-- President Barack Obama, upon signing the
Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, 2009*

An Introduction

The following pages articulate our request for a state-issued charter for grades 6-8 creating an alternative approach to learning for a high-quality public education for the families of Concord, New Hampshire, and the surrounding areas. We propose an integration of service-learning (research-based teaching method of guided classroom learning applied through action) and the Common Core State Standards (provides teachers, parents, and students with a set of clear expectations that are aligned to the expectation in college and careers). Service groupings and an approach to teaching centered on the child, rather than the teacher, will allow children to move through the curriculum while meeting state standards and enabling children of all abilities and backgrounds to be successful.

The first phase of the School will begin with two classrooms of (grade 6) two to three classrooms of mixed ages (grades 7-8), and gradually add additional high school classrooms as well as junior high classrooms (grades 6-8 and 9-12).

Why Service-Learning?

Capital¹ City Public Charter School (CCCS) is dedicated to the educational journey of middle and high school students in New Hampshire. Service-learning is a research-based teaching method of guided or classroom learning, applied through action, that addresses an authentic community² need in a process that allows for youth initiative and provides structured time for reflection on the service experience and demonstration of acquired skills and knowledge. Simply put, service-learning connects school-based curriculum with the inherent caring and concern young people have for their world³.

CCCS, at its core, will employ the Five states of Service-Learning -- Investigation; Preparation and Planning; Action; Reflection; and Demonstration in all aspects of the school curriculum. These interdependent stages of successful service-learning constitute a process that is key to a student's effectiveness and critical to their learning transferable skills and content, which will allow them to become critical thinkers, global, and collaborative learners, ready to conquer what lies ahead.

¹ Capital – The name has a purposeful, dual meaning 1. Noun used to describe Concord: 2. Wealth in the form of money **or other assets** available or contributed for a particular purpose...**investing**, in NH and the nation/worlds future.

² Community, is defined as CCCS, sending school, living environment or town.

³ see Kaye, Catherine Berger, "Service-Learning: Strategies for Developing Character" (2005). *Special Topics, General*. 53.

- Investigation - All service-learning begins with investigation: resources within the student population, and investigation of the community need.
- Preparation & Planning - Students explore, research and discuss the topic and the teacher and students set the stage for learning and social action.
- Action - Direct result of preparation & planning. Solid preparation allows students to carry out their plan of action and apply what they learned to benefit the community.
- Reflection - One of the standards in service-learning and one of the five stages. A vital and ongoing process that integrates learning & experience with personal growth and awareness.
- Demonstration - What is often called “The Big Wow.” Students make explicit what and how they have learned and what they have accomplished through community involvement.

CCCS hopes to create learners that are not only prepared for schoolwork and their future, but also give more than just book smarts. We aim to create a service and civic-minded learning environment that will allow another method to engage the students to gain “real world” knowledge and better express the growth of their community and selves. Concord is our capital, centrally located and there is not an alternative public middle or high school choice for anyone between exit 19 and 11 on 93 N&S and exit 1 to 10 on exit 89.

EDUCATIONAL MISSION

Vision

Capital City Public Charter School (CCCS) aspires to provide curriculum that enables each student to become empowered with the knowledge and skills to use his or her voice effectively and with integrity in co-creating our global public world. Our vision is to create an environment in which students academic, social, and personal skills improve our schools and our communities by working together with the service-learning curriculum at the core to ensure each child's success.

Mission

The Capital City Charter School mission is both bold and pragmatic: to implement a service-learning program and high-quality⁴ education to the students of today and change-makers of tomorrow. CCCS consciously integrates student experience into the service-learning curriculum and addresses areas beyond the academic realm to create a high-quality education which includes; leadership, communication, collaboration and critical thinking.

Capital City Charter School will:

- Strengthen students service and academic learning with our service-learning curriculum.
- Include the philosophy and methodology of service-learning which best ensures the program quality and continuity are maintained.
- Provide concrete opportunities for students to learn new skills, to think critically, and to test new roles in an environment that encourages risk-taking and collaboration through the curriculum.
- Recognize students efforts to connect required curriculum to meet the needs of their target community while faculty and staff serve as guides.

⁴ Civic mindedness, leadership, communication, collaboration and critical thinking intertwined in all aspects of the curriculum

- Involve students in planning and integrate systematic, formative and summative evaluation.

MAXIMUM NUMBER, GRADE OR AGE LEVELS

During the first year of operation, the CCCS will serve middle school students in grades 6-8, in one middle school classroom, which will serve students in grade 6, and two mixed-age classrooms, serving grades 7 and 8. CCCS will accept up to 60 students in its first year. New, incoming classes will be added each year thereafter, including grades 9-12. Maximum enrollment at full capacity shall be 320 students. Should the number of potential students exceed the available spots; a blind lottery will be conducted to determine enrollment.

Capital City Charter School Projected Enrollment

Grade	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
6	20	35	60	60	60
7	20	35	35	65	65
8	20	35	35	35	65
9	0	35	35	35	35
10	0	0	35	35	35
11	0	0	0	35	35
12	0	0	0	0	35
Total	60	140	200	265	330

Projected Teacher **20 FT/**

Needs **4FT/HT** **8 FT/HT** **12 FT/HT** **16 FT/HT** **HT**

CURRICULUM THAT MEETS OR EXCEEDS STATED STANDARDS IN THE SUBJECT AREAS OFFERED

The intellectually conscious mission of The Capital City Charter School engages students in applying their knowledge through the deeper learning skills necessary for students to compete with their peers around the world. CCCS' curriculum will be developed using Common Core State and National Standards as a guideline to ensure that students demonstrate mastery in all subject areas. Based upon our current knowledge of best educational practice, students will, with the use of Common Core State Standards and Service-Learning curriculum⁵, gain valuable knowledge in various domains and connect their academics to service, career paths, and internships (when applicable and possible).

Students will engage directly with making meaning of the standards: co-design work that will best engage them in deep exploration of the standards that will assist students in gaining a deeper understanding of core academic content and simultaneously build more in-depth learning skills through the integration of content knowledge with application. In the middle school, students will study “traditional” middle school content — language and literature, rhetoric, math, history and government, the sciences, music, and art — in a program aligned with the K-12 Service-Learning Standards⁶ & ASLER Standards (Appendix E) and the Common Core State Standards⁷. The alignment will allow for the state standards to be met and exceeded, in unconventional ways, with a combination of instruction (“seat time” and knowledge with application in the community. CCCS's future high school curriculum will deliver specific content

⁵ see ASLER Standards – Appendix E

⁶ Figure 1.1, page 15 of application (next page)

⁷ see Common Core State Standards, Department of Education

and skills, aligned with but exceeding the state content standards while also aligning with the K-12 Service-Learning & ASLER Standards, for all subject areas.

DISTINGUISHING (SPECIAL) CURRICULUM FEATURES

State and national standards currently provide the blueprint of our students learning, the K-12 Service-Learning and ASLER Standards paired with Common Core Standards act as the foundation of CCCS. In concert with the Common Core Standards, that now provide the blueprint for student learning, the K-12 Service-Learning Standards will be aligned with New Hampshire state Grade-Level and Grade-Span Expectations and incorporated into CCCSs academic expectations.

K-12 SERVICE-LEARNING STANDARDS

<p>Meaningful Service Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.</p>	<p>Link to Curriculum Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.</p>
<p>Reflection Service-learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one’s relationship to society.</p>	<p>Diversity Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.</p>
<p>Youth Voice Service-learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning experiences with guidance from adults.</p>	<p>Partnerships Service-learning partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and address community needs.</p>
<p>Progress Monitoring Service-learning engages participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals and uses results for improvement and sustainability.</p>	<p>Duration and Intensity Service-learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.</p>

K-12 Service-Learning Standards

All curriculum standards will correlate to the best practices for service-learning curriculum and the eight key elements involved. The Eight elements are Meaningful Service; Intentional Link to Curriculum; Reflection; Diversity; Youth Voice; Partnerships; Progress Monitoring; Duration and Intensity. Each element will be illustrated by appropriate Common Core Standards, NH Grade Level Expectations, and social and emotional developmental tasks, with clearly defined documentation for progress.

Meaningful Service: Service-learning at CCCS will actively engage students in significant and personally relevant service activities. Students identify, investigate, learn about, and articulate a genuine, recognized community need. This need is often verified through the media, surveys, observation, or interviews with informed community partners (Teacher/Staff Community Liaison). With well guided and thought-out plans, students can see their actions having verifiable positive consequences as they learn and apply academic skills and knowledge. When a service experience has meaning, and students understand the purpose, engagement, and action.

Intentional Link to Curriculum: When service-learning is employed as a teaching method to meet designated content and skills, academics come alive. This is our goal for CCCS. Knowledge is applied with transparency, allowing students to make explicit connections between subject matter and application within the context of community. While the subject matter and social context may change, the skills learned and practiced by students are transferable. It is the goal of CCCS to create curriculum where the learning and the service weave together and reinforce each other, with the service informing the curriculum and the curriculum informing the service.

Reflection: Through service-learning, students at CCCS participate in systemic processes that integrate cognitive thinking--related to social issues and their lives--with an empathetic response. This blend of active and cognitive thought deepens the service-learning as students apply and transfer new understandings of themselves, others, and the world around them. While all the standards have importance, “reflection” is a word often repeated in the service-learning community.

Diversity: Imagine all the possible ways service-learning can expose young people to the concept of diversity. Whether it involves interfacing with local, or town/city community partners, an elder in a retirement community, a veteran just returning from war, a recent immigrant or a government official, participation in service-learning provides exposure to a range of backgrounds, perspectives, and ways of thinking and solving problems. The term diversity takes on a deeper meaning and relevance. Social and cultural boundaries lessen as relationships resonate with mutual respect.

Youth Voice: Young people need ample opportunities to express their ideas and opinions, and to make constructive choices and see the results. Service-learning based education will enable students at CCCS to take the initiative, make decisions, interact with community representatives, learn about the role of government in social issues, develop critical-thinking skills, put their ideas into action, and assess and evaluate what happened. Our students meet significant age and grade appropriate challenges with tasks that require thinking, initiative, problem-solving, and responsibility in an environment safe enough for them to make mistakes and to succeed.

Partnerships: Our students participate in the development of partnerships and share responsibility with community members, parents, and other students, as well as with people from sponsoring and outside organizations business, and governments. These relationships give our students opportunities to interact with people of diverse backgrounds in different settings. Through these dynamics, our students and community members learn about each other and gain mutual respect, understanding, and appreciation. There is an exchange of information, ideas, and skills among all participants in the service-learning experience.

Progress Monitoring: Even the best service-learning intentions can fall flat or require a makeover. Since the service-learning experience typically takes place in a group or classroom, which are laboratories for learning and efficacy, if something goes awry benefits may still occur. At CCCS, the goal is to have continuous success; this will serve our students to continue to garner results from their service-learning experiences through the curriculum. For example, our students can learn about the need for perseverance, or find a better strategy to turn a good idea into a policy or action. With progress monitoring, our students set a baseline of what the status quo is when they begin the process and learn the skill of comparing this with the results. Along the way they observe, report, and calculate to have a sense of where they are headed allowing for modifications even while in process.

Duration and Intensity: How long should the service-learning process last? As long as necessary for a quality experience. The charter is based on the theory of service-learning, and therefore, projects will continue throughout the year. A sufficient duration allows the participants to move through the Five States of Service-Learning--investigation, preparation, and planning, action, reflection, and demonstration--with ample time to authenticate and address identified community needs and achieve learning outcomes. The emphasis at CCCS is in the process; service-learning is about moving forward with purpose while allowing for flexibility.

CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

All instruction at CCCS will employ best practices and research based methods.

Teaching styles may vary, though content coverage and alignment with standards will not. All curriculum standards will correlate to the best practices for service-learning curriculum and the eight key elements involved (See p. 15) with clearly defined documentation for progress.

The Capital City Charter School expects our students, teachers, administration and staff to maintain a safe, nurturing, participatory and productive learning environment. In order to maximize learning time and promote positive behaviors, CCCS Administration will use a multi-tiered system of support based on proven models such as the RTI (Response to Intervention, Tier 1: quality core instruction, Tier 2: supplemental intervention, and Tier 3: individualized interventions) for students' social, emotional and behavioral needs. This includes, once authorized and in accordance with 194-B:3, II(p), developing clear expectations, teaching social-emotional competencies, and fostering positive relationships among all members of the school community. CCCS is committed to an instructive, corrective, and restorative approach to behavior. If behavior incidents arise that threaten student and staff safety or severely disrupt the educational process, the response should minimize the impact of the incident, repair harm, and address the underlying needs behind student behaviors. In accordance with the RTI multi-tiered system, all disciplinary responses must be applied respectfully, fairly, consistently, and protect students' rights to instructional time whenever possible. A safe, welcoming, and productive school requires the support of all staff, students, and families.

ACADEMIC AND OTHER LEARNING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Service-Learning defined as a researched based teaching method where guided classroom learning is applied through action that addresses an authentic community need in a process that allows for youth initiative and provides structured time for reflection on the service experience and demonstration of acquired skills and knowledge. Picking up trash on a river bank is *service*. Studying water samples under a microscope is *learning*. When science students collect and analyze water samples, document their results, and present findings to a local pollution control agency – that is ***service-learning***⁸.

In such settings, service-learning applied in a structured, but flexible way that connects to their classroom content; students will *Investigate; Prepare and Plan; Take Action; Reflect; and Demonstrate* across all content areas (See Appendix C, CCCS Curriculum Guide). Through a variety of project-based and service-learning opportunities, ranging from interdisciplinary classes to personal learning experiences, **students work with teachers and mentors** to design personally meaningful work that addresses curriculum standards while infusing global competencies. Progress is mastery-based, with clearly identified standards⁹ and documentation requirements articulated and shared with students and parents/families, which will be in line with the current State Standards. At CCCS, service-learning is an integral component of our education program, beginning with service-learning curriculum and projects for younger students and culminating in internships (and apprenticeships as appropriate) for older students.

⁸ see National Youth Leadership Council

⁹ see Common Core State Standards, NH Grade Level Expectations and ASLER Standards

The National Youth Leadership Council has clear examples (Appendix C) of ways in which CCCS can and will use Service-Learning over the academic year. NYLC states, service-learning is an incredibly flexible tool easily adapted to different age levels, community needs, and curricular goals. Projects can engage entire schools over an academic year, or involve a small group for a short period.

Because service-learning is defined as *a teaching strategy that explicitly links community services experiences to classroom instruction*, and because at CCCS, we will ensure the service-learning process mentioned in Section F produces appropriate learning for our students.

Traditional assessment methods (essays, quizzes, research papers) can be used along with other forms of inquiry and analysis, along with the specific goals located in Appendix C, we will strive for the following:

OVERARCHING GOALS:

- >90% of students will make 1 year's gain in reading, writing, and math each year.
- >90% of students will show gains in information and concept understanding in core curriculum areas, as per pre- and post-unit assessments
- Compile annual and longitudinal portfolios to be used for summative assessment and planning.
- Ongoing reviews with parents, staff and students
- Portfolios of student work
- Progress reports documenting skill and content knowledge development
- Teacher observation (during all phases of service-learning in class and during project) including, but not limited to note taking, group discussion, pre-post student questionnaires, etc.)

CCCS will create an Accountability plan to review student learning and use assessment results to create and implement curriculum. Our curriculum will be designed to develop knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics, spelling, history and geography, and

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science. Foreign language, technology, and health content will be woven into the core academic program. The arts are emphasized through a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary arts program beyond core academic instructional time as well as through Integrated Service-Learning Curriculum Projects (Figure 1.2).

Middle School	High School
A middle school science class studying pollution and disease worked with Environmental Protection to learn about the dangers of radon and how to test for it in homes. To educate the community on hazards, testing, and cleanup, students created an infomercial to share with local schools and community groups.	Tackling discrimination against HIV-positive people, tenth-graders wrote skits that drew parallels between the treatment of individuals living with AIDS and racial discrimination. They built sets, made costumes and programs, and performed their work for the community. Proceeds supported a local AIDS hospice.