

**Part I: INTRODUCTION**

**I. Applicant Information**

1. Name of proposed charter school: John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School
2. John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School is not a conversion of an existing public school.
3. Lead applicant: Kenneth Byalin, Ph.D.
4. Mailing address: Corporate Commons One at 1 Teleport Drive, Staten Island, NY  
10311. Telephone number(s): 347-855-2238
5. Facsimile number: 347-466-5746
6. E-mail address: kbyalin@lavelleprep.org
7. Name of management company (if any), Contact (name/phone/e-mail): None
8. Name of partner organization (if any), Contact (name/phone/e-mail): None
9. Tentative or preferred location of proposed charter school, including community school district: Staten Island, District 31
10. Tentative opening date of proposed charter school: September 8, 2009
11. First year projected student enrollment: 75
12. First year grade levels to be served: 6th
13. Projected student enrollment at full growth: 453
14. Grade levels served at full enrollment: grades 6 through 12
15. We have not applied previously to NYCDOE or to any other charter entity.
16. Proof of a federal and state criminal records check:

Lead Applicant, Kenneth Byalin, was fingerprinted by the New York City Department of Investigation, Office of Personnel Investigations on February 21, 2008. Fingerprints were submitted to Fingerprint Processing, New York State Education Department on February 25, 2008. **See Attachment 1 for receipts.**

## **II. Executive Summary**

### **1. Mission Statement**

The John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School provides a rigorous college preparatory education that equips and empowers students for success. Lavelle Prep expects all students to graduate with a foundation to attend and succeed in college and in life. Lavelle Prep welcomes all students, including those living with emotional challenges, and integrates all students in its classes and activities. Full integration of students empowers them to break down barriers through the power of their daily academic and social experience, enabling them to develop the academic skill, emotional fluency, and confidence required to be successful students today and thoughtful, open-minded leaders tomorrow. In fostering both the academic and emotional growth of all students, Lavelle Prep serves as an innovative, holistic educational model for other high-performing schools.

### **2. Goals**

Lavelle Prep is committed to preparing all students for college admission. We have, therefore established very high standards for our students both with respect to the courses and Regents Exams, which they are expected to pass, and the accelerated time table on which they are expected to do so. At the same, we recognize that some students enter Lavelle Prep poorly prepared academically. We use a variety of programs in Literacy and Mathematics to meet the needs of students who are two or more years below grade level. All students are expected to be functioning on grade level by the time they enter 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Lavelle Prep measures progress toward these goals using both Standardized Assessments (in intermediate grades, standardized New York State exams in English Language Arts and Mathematics; in the upper grades, Regents Exams) and Formative Assessments. Lavelle Prep maintains a Responsive Educational Program and Environment as reflected in annual improvements in average daily attendance, student retention, and parent and student satisfaction.

### **3. Educational Program**

The Lavelle Prep educational program is, first of all, designed to provide the highest quality college preparatory program to all students, to provide an education program comparable to that of the finest private prep schools. To this model are added those ingredients which enable students living with emotional challenges and other disabilities to be fully integrated in the Lavelle Prep program. The central tenet of Lavelle Prep is that the needs of students living with emotional challenges can be met in a fully integrated environment

Elements which make Lavelle Prep an outstanding college prep program include small classes, challenging academic curricula and high expectations, constructivist teaching, integration of technology into teaching and learning, a Wellness Curriculum, and a visual and performing arts curriculum.

Elements which enable Lavelle Prep to fully integrate students living with emotional challenges and which enhance the education of all students include dually certified teachers and teacher assistants; computer assisted instruction; a behavioral management system, and mental health services provided by collaborating community-based providers. Lavelle Prep fosters hope and confidence in all students. Lavelle Prep's strength-based approach is rooted in the "big idea" that recovery is possible. Neither mental nor physical

disorders nor other structural disadvantaging factors, for example gender, race, or poverty, need stand in the way of academic success and productive lives. The structure of Lavelle Prep is designed to reinforce this idea. Students learn in small classes with a teacher and a teacher assistant. Without regard to disability, all students follow the same academic program; all are expected to succeed in high school and go on to college. Teachers recognize and accommodate diverse learning styles and strengths, offer multiple means of representing content, and provide students with multiple means of expressing their mastery of that content. Content learning is supported by explicit instruction in skills and strategies. Constructivist pedagogy enables students to understand their individual learning style and to maximize their strengths. Serving primarily as guides and facilitators of learning, teachers utilize a variety of individual and small group learning experiences to encourage students to become self-regulated learners, aware of their own learning styles and capable of collaborative problem solving. Students requiring related services such as speech-language therapy or occupational therapy receive them within the classroom whenever appropriate.

#### **4. Enrollment Planning**

Lavelle Prep undertakes a variety of measures to recruit student applicants and to insure that the families of all Staten Island 5<sup>th</sup> graders are aware of the opportunity to apply. Lavelle Prep affirmatively reaches out to families of students with emotional challenges, making clear that their children will be welcome at Lavelle Prep, will be fully integrated in the school program, and will be expected to graduate from high school and go onto college at the same rate as their non-disabled peers.

Lavelle Prep's enrollment plan reflects a conservative approach to growth that places an emphasis on instructional quality and overall operational effectiveness. The school will enroll up to 136 6<sup>th</sup> graders each year, adding one grade each year until the school serves grades 6 through 12. The school admits additional students in grade 7 as enrollment allows. Enrollment of new students in later grades will be limited. Allowing for attrition, enrollment is expected to reach 471 in FY19. (See Chart below),

#### **5. Governance and Organizational Design**

The Lavelle Prep Board of Trustees is the School's policy-making body. It directs the affairs of the School by its delegation of authority to the school's President, who is responsible for insuring the integration of education and support functions as well as the overall financial viability of the school. Under the supervision of the President, the Principal is responsible for leading and supervising the educational program. Lavelle Prep utilizes a variety of mechanisms to obtain regular input from staff, students, and parents, including, a student government, a Parent Teachers Association.

The ultimate success of Lavelle Prep depends on the quality of its people. The recruitment and retention of qualified professionals is crucial to the school's success. To achieve this, Lavelle Prep is committed to providing a challenging and supportive work environment for all staff, to offer competitive salaries and fringe benefits, and to reward success in an environment where all staff are accountable for student achievement.

#### **6. Financial Management Plan**

Amended Charter approved by the Board of Regents on March 7, 2014

While Lavelle Prep has undertaken and expects to continue fundraising efforts, the fiscal viability of Lavelle Prep is not dependent on these efforts. Prudent management of per pupil funding will be sufficient to meet all long-term, mission critical needs.

**7. Facilities**

Lavelle Prep has concluded a long-term lease at Corporate Commons One and Two, 1 Teleport Drive, Staten Island, NY 10311,, and began occupying this space in September 2011. Final build out of the space will be completed in September 2013.

**JOHN W. LAVELLE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL Enrollment Years 1 to 7**

<b>Grade Level (ages)</b>	<b>FY15</b>	<b>FY16</b>	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY18</b>	<b>FY19</b>
Sixth (10-12)	136	119	119	119	119
Seventh (11-13)	102	102	102	102	102
Eighth (12-14)	92	92	92	92	92
Ninth (13-15)	45	46	46	46	46
Tenth (14-16)	32	41	41	41	41
Eleventh (15-17)	15	28	36	37	37
Twelfth (16-18)		14	26	33	33
Total Projected (Maximum)	422 (510)	441 (510)	462 (510)	470 (510)	471 (510)

**III. Capacity**

**1. Applicant Team, Board Members and Key Personnel**

**a. Key individuals**

**Board of Trustees**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Employer</b>	<b>Term Ends</b>
Sheldon Blackman (Teasure)	Vice President for Grants and Program Development, Staten Island University Hospital (retired)	2014
Joe Carroll	District Manager, Community Board #1, Staten Island	2013
Richard Fragiacommo	Entrepreneur	2013
William Henri (Chair)	CEO, South Beach Psychiatric Center (retired)	2014
Susan Lavelle (Vice-Chair)	Staten Island University Hospital	2015
Francisco Lugovina	Consultant, real estate developer	2013

Lily D. McNair, Ph.D.	Wagner College Provost	2014
Deborah Miller (Secretary)	Director, Parent Resource Center, Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, Staten Island	2015
Dolores Morris	SI Youth Media Project	2015
Doris Schueler	Psychologist in private practice	2015
Dirk Tillotson	Attorney At Law	2013
Nelly Tournaki	Associate Professor and Chair, Education Department, College of Staten Island	2014

### Management Team

Chief Executive Officer, **Kenneth Byalin, Ph.D.**, is the founder and president of both The Verrazano Foundation and Lavelle Prep. Dr. Byalin played a leading role in the development of the Brookdale Community Mental Health Center and South Beach Psychiatric Center, taught social work and sociology full-time on the college level, and maintained a private psychotherapy practice for over 20 years. Dr. Byalin received his Bachelor's degree in English literature from Carleton College, his Masters in social work from Columbia University, and his Doctorate in sociology from New York University

Co-Principal, **Evelyn Phair Finn**, has served as Founding Principal of Lavelle Prep since its inception. Previously, she has worked for 36 years with college, high school, middle school and elementary school students in both special and general education as teacher, Assistant Principal and Principal. She served as a principal in District 75 first in Manhattan and then in Staten Island where she worked closely with local elected officials and community-based organizations to create many innovative programs. She twice received the prestigious Annenberg Grant for Arts Education. She received a Bachelor degree from Trinity College, a Master in Education from Virginia Commonwealth University, and a Professional Degree in Administration from Long Island University.

Co-Principal, **Howard Lucks, Ed. D.**, has 38 years' experience in education and school administration, fueled by his passion for science as a student. Dr. Lucks has been Superintendent of the Red Bank Regional High School District, and served as Principal of New Utrecht High School in Brooklyn for 10 years. During his tenure with the NYC Board of Education, he was recognized five times as Educator of the Year, and received a mayoral proclamation for distinguished service. Dr. Lucks was awarded the competitive Chancellor Doctoral Scholarship to St. John's University where he earned his doctorate in 2002.

**Donald G. Mulligan** is the Vice President for Advancement at Lavelle Prep. He brings extensive experience in financial services experience at Citicorp, Chemical and Mellon and has extensive experience in development. He demonstrates an ongoing passion for education in Board positions, and has chaired capital campaigns, feasibility studies and facility construction oversight. Mr. Mulligan has a Bachelor degree in Management from St. Francis College, a Master degree in Business Administration from Wagner College. He is an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Management at St. Francis College.

**Dana Volini** is the Director of Operations at Lavelle Prep. She received her bachelor's degree in Political Science at Arizona State University, her Master's Degree in Education and Special Education from Touro College, and as a recipient of a Race to the Top grant, she is currently enrolled to receive an additional master's degree from Wagner College in Educational Leadership and Administration. Mrs. Volini worked as a Special Education Mathematics teacher for three years and the 7th grade team leader for two years. She was awarded one of the 2011 Staten Island Not-For-Profit Association Community Service Awards.

Assistant Principal, **Chris Zilinski** has worked for Lavelle Prep since the first year of its opening. During his time with Lavelle, Mr. Zilinski has helped improve the educational and cultural environment of the school. He has helped develop and implement several programs, and has shifted into a leadership and mentoring role. Previously, Mr. Zilinski has held teaching positions in the Department of Education as well as an Adjunct Professor position with Touro College. Mr. Zilinski holds a Master's degree in Education from the College of Staten Island, and a Bachelor's degree from the University of Pittsburgh.

**b. Describe your efforts to attract key personnel. How will you recruit board members, school leadership and key staff? What specific attributes will you look for in a school leader?**

Lavelle Prep understands that the excellence of its leadership is critical to its success in graduating students prepared to go to college and lead independent, contributive lives. The school's leadership begins with the Board of Trustees. Planning for Lavelle Prep began in 2005 and the first formal meeting of the planning team was held in January 2006. As work has progressed, leadership has evolved and continues to evolve, reflecting the changing needs of the school. The process of building Board capacity is described in section VIII. 4.

Lavelle Prep has enjoyed stable leadership since its inception. As the student body has grown, Lavelle Prep has added a co-principal and an assistant principal as well developing a strong cadre of teacher leaders. The close collaboration between the President and Principal throughout the planning and implementation, so vital to the school's success, has continued through the first charter. A Vice President for Advancement was added at the beginning of the second year of operation. The only key position in which we have experienced turnover is in Director of Operations, where after an initial period of adjustment, one Director of Operations served through three years. When she left for a promotion at a new charter school, we were able to replace her seamlessly from within.

Recognizing that the highly qualified and highly motivated teachers are key to school success, we have developed recruitment, induction, and compensation strategies which have enabled us to recruit and retain outstanding young teachers and to provide them with opportunities to develop into the educational leaders of the future. Over 90% of our teachers return annually. During the initial charter period, our faculty has grown dramatically, and we have often been able to fill new positions from among our Teacher Assistants. Recognizing shortages among dually certified teachers nationally, we have provided tuition support to teachers in obtaining certification in special education during their first three years of employment.

**c. Background information**

**Exhibit A—Résumés of Board Members and Key Personnel: see attached**

**Exhibit B—Board Questionnaires: see attached**

## **2. Institutional Partnerships**

Lavelle Prep has not and is not planning to enter into any institutional partnerships. Therefore, Exhibits C, D, and E are not applicable.

### **IV. Conversion Plan (if applicable)**

Section IV, Conversion Plan and Exhibits F and G are not applicable because Lavelle Prep is not a conversion of an existing public school.

### **V. Private School Status (if applicable)**

Section V, Private School status is not applicable because Lavelle Prep is not a conversion from a private school.

## **PART 2: HOW WILL YOUR SCHOOL BE AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?**

### **VI. Goals**

I am writing in regards to the creation of the John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School, and wish to express my full support for this initiative. As a youth in middle school I struggled with social interactions, and was an underachiever even though I still obtained good grades. Due to what I can now look back on as possible symptoms of an autistic spectrum disorder, I became socially withdrawn, and eventually fell into a state of psychological distress that I required hospitalization... During my hospitalization, and subsequent day treatment program, while some of my emotional needs were being met, my academic needs were neglected. The level of expectation in both the hospital and day treatment academic program were minimal.

-- Brian Lombrowski, Psychiatric Survivor<sup>1</sup>

As the Commissioner of the New York City Mayor's Office for People With Disabilities (MOPD), I am writing in support of the application for a charter of the John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School... By providing a model of service in which these New Yorkers living with disabilities can be helped to meet their potential in intermediate and secondary school and go on to college, Lavelle Prep makes an important contribution to our city.

-- Matthew Sapolin, Commissioner  
The City of New York  
Mayor's Office for People With Disabilities

## **1. Mission Statement**

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<sup>1</sup> For full text of this letter, see Exhibit P – Letters of Support

The John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School provides a rigorous college preparatory education that equips and empowers students for success. Lavelle Prep expects all students to graduate with a foundation to attend and succeed in college and in life. Lavelle Prep welcomes all students, including those living with emotional challenges, and integrates all students in its classes and activities. Full integration of students empowers them to break down barriers through the power of their daily academic and social experience, enabling them to develop the academic skill, emotional fluency, and confidence required to be successful students today and thoughtful, open-minded leaders tomorrow. In fostering both the academic and emotional growth of all students, Lavelle Prep will serve as an innovative, holistic educational model for other high-performing schools.<sup>2</sup>

## **2. Goals**

Lavelle Prep is committed to the highest educational standards. Lavelle Prep will meet or exceed local, state, and national standards for academic performance and will hold students with disabilities to the same standards of success as their non-disabled peers. At least 75% of each 9<sup>th</sup> grade cohort will graduate within five years. Lavelle Prep will measure progress toward these goals using both Standardized and Formative Assessments. Lavelle Prep will track student progress through weekly assessment of class work and homework, and through the assessment of student learning both during and at the end of each instructional unit. Data from both sources will be computerized and accessible to both faculty and administration.

Lavelle Prep is designed to meet the needs of students with emotional challenges in an integrated setting. We expect students living with emotional challenges to meet the same academic standards as their non-disabled peers. Lavelle Prep will meet or exceed local, state, and national standards for academic performance. Seventy-five percent of each 9<sup>th</sup> grade cohort will graduate within five years. Lavelle Prep will maintain a Responsive Educational Program and Environment as reflected in annual improvements in average daily attendance, student retention, and parent and student satisfaction. The school will achieve these goals through maintenance of a solid foundation and infrastructure as well as responsible governance and management. Through its involvement in the community, Lavelle Prep will contribute to the improvement of the quality of life on Staten Island.

The societal cost of mental illness is enormous. Success in high school and college can make the difference between a life of economic dependence and a life as a productive, contributive, tax-paying member of society. Many students living with emotional challenges have struggled to gain peer acceptance. Many have been teased or ostracized or have

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<sup>2</sup> This is crucial because “Mental health will never be a priority for schools unless school mental health providers can demonstrate to the general public and educators that the provision of quality school mental health interventions is directly linked to important academic outcomes.” Hunter, L., Hoagwood, K., Evans, S., Weist, M., Smith, C., Paternite, C., Horner, R., Osher, D., Jensen, P., & the School Mental Health Alliance (2005). Working Together to Promote Academic Performance, Social and Emotional Learning, and Mental Health for All Children. New York: Center for the Advancement of Children’s Mental Health at Columbia University. p. 17. See also Ringeisen, H., Henderson, K., & Hoagwood, K. (2003). Context matters: Schools and the “research to practice gap” in children’s mental health. *School Psychology Review*, 32(2), 153–168., and Hoganbruen, K., Clauss-Ehlers, C., Nelson, D., & Faenza, M. M. (2003). Effective advocacy for school-based mental health programs. In M. D. Weist, S. W. Evans, & N. A. Lever (Eds). *Handbook of school mental health* (pp. 45–59). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.



found it difficult to gain teacher approval. Some have responded to such frustration and rejection in a variety of dysfunctional ways, including truancy and school refusal. Many may have received home instruction or faced the possibility of out-of-home placement. Many, despite the potential for success in high school and college, have been ill-served by their elementary school experience. Many will enter Lavelle Prep already lagging in educational achievement.

Beyond the direct impact that Lavelle Prep has on the lives of the students which it serves, its impact on the broader education system may be of greater importance. By demonstrating that students with serious emotional challenges can be effectively educated in a public setting, Lavelle Prep can make an important contribution resolving a critical issue now facing the education system in New York and nationwide.<sup>3</sup>

### **Statement of Need**

The need for better educational programs serving students with emotional challenges is beyond question. **“Approximately 50% of students with a mental illness drop out of high school; this is the highest dropout rate of any disability group.”**<sup>4</sup> This affects far too many children in Staten Island and throughout the City. According to the New York City Department of Planning, “Staten Island’s school-age population will increase 7.4 percent, from 83,000 in 2000 to 89,000 in 2030.”<sup>5</sup> Assuming that the population is distributed evenly among grades, we can assume an annual 6<sup>th</sup> grade population of between 6900 and 7400. On the basis of the lower estimate, we can calculate the number of students with at least mild functional impairment as a result of mental illness as well as an estimate of the number living with Serious Emotional Disturbance. According to the Surgeon General’s report on mental illness, “20 percent of children are estimated to have mental disorders with at least mild functional impairment” while “approximately 5 to 9 percent” suffer from serious emotional disorders.<sup>6</sup> Conservative estimates, therefore, indicate that approximately 346 Staten Island residents will enter 6<sup>th</sup> grade each year with a Serious Emotional Disorder. An additional 1038 will enter 6<sup>th</sup> grade with a less serious, though significantly impairing disorder. National data indicate that less than one in five will receive treatment.<sup>7</sup>

The costs of failing to provide adequate education for youth with emotional challenges are enormous for society and for the education system. Psychiatric treatment alone is not sufficient. Unless youth with emotional challenges are served in an environment in which

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<sup>3</sup> “The U.S. Supreme Court today upheld a ruling that New York City must reimburse a father who enrolled his son in private school because he felt public schools didn’t meet the child’s special education needs.” New York Daily News, October 10, 2007.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Education, Twenty-third annual report to Congress on the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Washington, D.C., 2001.

<sup>5</sup> New York City Population Projections by Age/Sex & Borough 2000-2030, REPORT, NYC Department of Planning, Amanda Burden, Director, 2006, page 3.

<sup>6</sup> Department of Health and Human Services (US); Rockville (MD): Department of Health and Human Services; Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Center for Mental Health Services; National Institutes of Health; National Institute of Mental Health. *Mental health: a report of the Surgeon General*. 1999

<sup>7</sup> American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Statement for the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee Hearing on Mental Illness and Brain Disease: Dispelling Myths and Promoting Recovery Through Awareness and Treatment, June 28, 2006. Report of the Surgeon General’s Conference on Children’s Mental Health: A National Action Agenda, 2001.

their differences are respected; in which they feel safe, welcome, and appreciated; and in which their talents are nurtured and developed, they are unlikely to become constructive, contributive members of the community.

The long-term cost to society of such failure is enormous. Instead of contributive, tax-paying, successfully employed college graduates, current special education programs increase the likelihood that students with emotional challenges will become chronic psychiatric patients, dependent on the community for treatment and financial support.

Short-term consequences are severe as well. Schools already challenged by the need to improve education to many failing students find the special needs of students with emotional challenges overburdening for both teachers and administrators. All too often the result is a desire to get rid of the students with special needs, creating an environment that is inhospitable to both youth and their families. As a result, antagonism between Staten Island parents of special education students and the Department of Education has been escalating.

The failure of public schools to adequately meet the needs of youth with emotional challenges is likely to impose an increasingly onerous financial burden on New York City public education as well. Supreme Court rulings have established parental rights to recoup educational costs, even extremely high costs, of private education if no appropriate public education alternative is available. These costs are high and are expected to go higher. If no alternatives are found, the drain on the fiscal viability of the public education system will increase.

And tragically, if only occasionally, young people with emotional problems who have suffered from the all-too-common, discrimination and stigmatization have responded violently. This is a national problem as well as a potentially dangerous situation in New York City.

Alternative education models must be developed to address the special needs of youth with emotional challenges. The charter school initiative provides an excellent mechanism through which to explore alternative approaches to this special needs population. Lavelle Prep will contribute to this process by providing one model that can be examined, refined, and replicated. By demonstrating that it is possible for students with challenges to achieve extraordinary results, Lavelle Prep will contribute to an environment of innovation and rising standards. Specific goals to be achieved by Lavelle Prep over the first five years of operation are described in Appendix A.<sup>8</sup>

**APPENDIX A – Goals: See attached.**

## **VII. Educational Program**

### **1. Educational Design**

#### **a. Expected student population**

Lavelle Prep provides a college preparatory education for students in grades 6 through 12. Admission to Lavelle Prep is open to all students. Although Lavelle Prep will make outreach efforts designed to encourage applications by students living with emotional

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challenges, we anticipate a diverse student population. Based on our first four years of experience, we expect that 80% of our students will be eligible for free and/or reduced lunch, substantially above the 50% originally anticipated and more than double the District average. The charter amendment approved in 2012 will ensure that the percentage of Special Education students remains about 40%, doubling the District average. We also expect that we will continue to admit a student body which enters Lavelle Prep performing substantially below grade level. Forty-percent of entering sixth graders are three or more years behind in reading. We expect entering English Language Learners to continue to approximate the District average.

Admission to Lavelle Prep is open to all students. While there are no education, aptitude, or achievement standards students must meet for admission, all prospective candidates and their families are advised about the opportunities and limitations of Lavelle Prep. Because of the relatively small size of the school and our mission, we offer limited programmatic and course options. Because of our commitment to an integrated setting based on universal design principals, families seeking homogenous classrooms, -- either for students with Special Needs or for Gifted students, may find that Lavelle Prep is not suited to their goals. Consistent with our commitment to serve students with limited English proficiency, we provide orientation and application materials in languages relevant to the Staten Island immigrant communities.

In our first year of operation, we enrolled 75 6<sup>th</sup> graders. In Year 2, because of unanticipated limitations imposed in the DOE incubation space which we occupied, enrollment in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade was restricted to 68 students in each. As described in Section 4a (below). "Student enrollment growth plan", we have revised estimates of attrition based on experience and increased the number of students admitted annually in order to meet school enrollment targets.

Class size will average between thirteen and seventeen. Teacher student ratio will average approximately 1:9.25. Since its inception Lavelle Prep's Special Education population has varied between 30% and 40%. An amendment to the charter approved in 2012 ensures that this population will approach 40% within the next seven years. The population for Free or Reduced Price lunch exceeds 80%. Forty percent (40%) of entering students are performing substantially below grade level.

#### **b. Instructional methods and philosophy.**

The Lavelle Prep educational program is first of all designed to provide the highest quality college preparatory program to all students, to provide an education program comparable to that of the finest private prep schools. To this model are added those ingredients which enable students living with serious emotional challenges and other disabilities to be fully integrated in the Lavelle Prep program. The central tenet of Lavelle Prep is that the needs of students living with emotional challenges can be met in a fully integrated environment

Elements which make Lavelle Prep an outstanding college prep program include:

- *Small Classes;*
- *Challenging academic curricula and high expectations.* All students will successfully prepare for college; an accelerated curriculum leads to either a Regents or an Advanced Regents Diploma.

- *Constructivist teaching* engages students in thinking about big concepts and themes and requires them to demonstrate what they have learned through individual and small group projects enhanced by computer tools;
- *Integration of technology into teaching and learning*—technology curriculum, teacher use of Smart Boards; student use of word-processing, spread sheets, data bases, Power Point, etc. to complete assignments and projects.
- *Wellness Curriculum* equips students with the tools (attitudes, knowledge, and skills) they need to actualize their goals, to fulfill their aspirations, and to effectively manage the challenges that confront them, including the challenges of gender, race, poverty, ethnicity, and disability;
- *Visual and Performing Arts Curriculum* enriches learning in core curricular areas, promote self-expression, build self-esteem, and develop talents.

Elements which enable Lavelle Prep to fully integrate students living with emotional challenges and which enhance the education of all students include:

- Dually certified teachers *who are certified in special education as well as an academic subject area*;
- Teacher assistants, *who work with teachers to differentiate instruction and address individual student needs*;
- *Computer Assisted Instruction* which includes specific learning activities prescribed for students, based on diagnosis of their skill needs by teachers and from data from individual assessments, and delivery of instruction and assignments;
- *A behavioral management system* designed to motivate and support positive student behavior.

Lavelle Prep fosters hope and confidence in all students. Lavelle Prep's strength-based approach is rooted in the "big idea" that recovery is possible that neither mental nor physical disorders nor other structural disadvantaging factors, for example gender, race, or poverty, need stand in the way of academic success and productive lives. The structure of Lavelle Prep is designed to reinforce this idea. Students learn in small classes with a teacher and a teacher assistant. All students are expected to graduate high school college and career ready. Teachers recognize and accommodate diverse learning styles and strengths, offer multiple means of representing content, and provide students with multiple means of expressing their mastery of that content. Content learning is supported by explicit instruction in skills and strategies. Constructivist pedagogy enables students to understand their individual learning style and to maximize their strengths. Serving primarily as guides and facilitators of learning, teachers utilize a variety of individual and small group learning experiences to encourage students to become self-regulated learners, aware of their own learning styles and capable of collaborative problem solving. Students requiring adapted curriculum work, and other therapies, such as speech-language therapy or occupational therapy, receive them within the classroom whenever appropriate.

The tools that students need for success in high school, college, and beyond are of two kinds. First, they need the thorough academic preparation which good schools provide but which is often unavailable to students with special needs. These students are too often "tracked" into less rigorous academic programs. "[T]eachers of students with emotional and behavioral disorders who emphasize high academic expectations, meaningful instruction, and high levels of academic engagement typically experience fewer behavioral

problems than teachers who have low-level expectations for learning.”<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, it has been shown that academic failure increases risk for behavioral problems.<sup>10</sup>

Lavelle Prep’s model for classroom instruction provides a set of practices, which although proven effective in various settings as individual practices, are brought together for the first time in one place in our model:

- *Challenging academic curricula* leading to a Regents or an Advanced Regents Diploma taught by teachers *who are certified in special education*, especially in working with students with emotional challenges, and who are certified in an academic subject area;<sup>11</sup>
- Teacher assistants, *who work closely with students to promote academic success*;
- *Constructivist teaching*, which engages students in thinking about big concepts and themes and requires them to demonstrate what they have learned through individual and small group projects enhanced by computer tools;<sup>12</sup>
- *Computer Assisted Instruction* which includes specific learning activities prescribed for students, based on diagnosis of their skill needs by teachers and from data from individual assessments and delivery of instruction and assignments;<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Hunter, L., Hoagwood, K., Evans, S., Weist, M., Smith, C., Paternite, C., Horner, R., Osher, D., Jensen, P., & the School Mental Health Alliance (2005). Working Together to Promote Academic Performance, Social and Emotional Learning, and Mental Health for All Children. New York: Center for the Advancement of Children’s Mental Health at Columbia University, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup> Hallenbeck, B.A., & Kauffman, J.M. (1995). How does observational learning affect the behavior of students with emotional or behavioral disorders? A review of research. *Journal of Special Education*, 29, 43–71.

<sup>11</sup> Three secondary school programs for this type of student in the New York City area have significant experience in teaching them a Regents curriculum leading to a “regular” New York State High School Diploma: The Woodward Center for Children on Long Island, The Carol and Frank Biondi Center for Children in Yonkers, and the Brookhaven Academic Center of Eastern Suffolk BOCES. See for instance, Hunter, L., Hoagwood, K., Evans, S., Weist, M., Smith, C., Paternite, C., Horner, R., Osher, D., Jensen, P., & the School Mental Health Alliance (2005). Working Together to Promote Academic Performance, Social and Emotional Learning, and Mental Health for All Children. New York: Center for the Advancement of Children’s Mental Health at Columbia University, p. 10.

<sup>12</sup> The validity and benefits of constructivist teaching for special education students are well documented in the work of Joan Benevento, (*A Self-Regulated Learning Approach to Children with Learning/Behavioral Disorders*, 2004) and D. Mithaug et al in (*Self-Instruction Pedagogy: How to Teach Self-Determined Learning*, 2007). As Mithaug notes, this approach is based on decades of research on “instruction strategy.” Benevento cites the significance of focusing on growth in students with disabilities rather than on correction. In the constructivist context, teacher feedback leads to students reevaluating their own behavior and being motivated to change.

<sup>13</sup> The effectiveness of computer-assisted instruction(CAI) on student achievement, especially in mathematics, is well documented. (See John Ash, Tennessee State University, 2005, “The effects of computer-assisted instruction in middle school mathematics achievement”) and (Nicholas McDonald et al, “Computer-Assisted Middle School Remediation Intervention: An Outcome Study,” Buhl Middle School, Idaho, 2005) Several studies of CAI for special education students have also demonstrated its effectiveness with emotional and behavioral disabilities. (Bernard—Opitz et al, “Enhancing social problem-solving in children with autism and normal children through Computer-Assisted Instruction,” *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 31—377-384, 2001) (Blischak et al, “Use of technology to support independent spelling by students with autism,” *Topics in Language Disorders*, 23—293-304, 2003) (L Duhaney and D. Duhaney, “Assistive Technology: Meeting the Needs of Learners with Disabilities,” *International Journal of Instructional Media*, Vol. 27, 2000) The latter study cites the success of computer instructional software in learning mathematics and writing skills by students with learning and behavioral disabilities.

- *Wellness Curriculum* equip students with the tools (attitudes, knowledge, and skills) that enable them to effectively manage the challenges that confront them in their lives, -- to live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities.<sup>14</sup>
- *A behavioral management system* for external control of student behavior, utilizing a merit-based point system;<sup>15</sup> Second, all students, -- but students with special needs more so than others, -- need explicit opportunities to acquire the tools to manage the challenges which they face in life. The Lavelle Prep Wellness Curriculum provides these tools.

Both cultural/philosophical and structural factors contribute to an environment which fosters student belief in their ability own to succeed. For students living emotional challenges and mental illnesses, belief in the possibility of living successfully with a disability is crucial. The Lavelle Prep program is built around the big idea that “recovery is possible.” Once considered heresy in psychiatry, the possibility of recovery has now been documented repeatedly in both prospective and retrospective longitudinal studies of even the most serious mental illnesses.<sup>16</sup> Awareness of the possibility of recovery is transforming adult psychiatric services throughout the country.<sup>17</sup> An increasingly broad array of materials is available for adults<sup>18</sup> and is beginning to be available for young people as well.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> School-wide primary prevention programs, including those that teach and reinforce problem solving, bullying prevention, positive behavioral supports, and stop-and-think, enhance individualized interventions (Osher, D., Dwyer, K., & Jackson, S. (2003). *Safe, supportive, and successful schools step by step*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.).

<sup>15</sup> Effective school-wide behavior management systems have the following characteristics: (a) total staff commitment to managing student behavior; (b) clearly defined and communicated expectations and rules; (c) consequences and clearly stated procedures for correcting rule-breaking behavior; (d) an instructional component for teaching students self-control and/or social skill strategies; (e) a support plan to address the need of students with chronic, challenging behaviors. (See “Common Features of School-Wide Behavioral Management Systems,” Research Connections in Researching Special Education, Fall, 1997) All of these characteristics are found in the Lavelle Prep behavioral management system, especially our unique Wellness Curriculum for teaching students self-control and social skills and the use of Teacher assistants to remove severely disruptive students from classrooms for a 1:1 therapeutic intervention. In addition, researchers have reported the effectiveness of such systems in expanding school placement options for students with severe emotional disturbances and in reducing referrals to school offices for student disciplinary problems. (See Mary K. Fitzsimmons, “School-wide Behavioral Management Systems,” in *ERIC Digest*, 1998).

<sup>16</sup> *Recovery from Schizophrenia: An International Perspective*, eds., Kim Hopper, Glynn Harrison, Aleksandar Janca, and Norman Sartorius (Oxford University Press, 2007); *Recovery from Serious Mental Illnesses: Research Evidence and Implications for Practice. Vols. 1 and 2.*, eds. Larry Davidson, Courtenay Harding, and LeRoy Spaniol (Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University, 2005, 2006); *Psychological and Social Aspects of Psychiatric Disabilities*, eds. LeRoy Spaniol, Cheryl Gagne, and Martin Koehler (Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University Press, 1997).

<sup>17</sup> See for instance *Psychiatric Rehabilitation*, Anthony, Cohen, Farkas, Cagne (Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University, 2002); *Effective Psychiatric Rehabilitation*, Ed. Robert Paul Liberman (Camarillo, CA : Psychiatric Rehabilitation Consultants, nd); Robert Paul Liberman, Timothy G. Kuehnel, & Thomas E. Backer, *Professional Competencies for Psychiatric Rehabilitation* (Camarillo, CA: Psychiatric Rehabilitation Consultants, nd).

<sup>18</sup> Skills teaching modules from Psychiatric Rehabilitation Consultants (Camarillo, CA ) include Medication Self-Management, Symptom Management, Workplace Fundamentals, Friendship and Intimacy, and Involving Families; from Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University include Engaging: Consumer Participation Skills, Developing Readiness, Choosing Valued Roles, and Achieving Valued Roles. See also LeRoy Spaniol, Martin Koehler, and Dori Hutchinson, *The*

This philosophical perspective will be neither compelling nor convincing unless it is actualized in the structure of the program. At Lavelle Prep, this means that both the organization of class groups and the assignment of students as well as teaching approach reflect the conviction that all students can succeed academically. Students with the most serious disabilities, students with lesser challenges, and non-disabled students are integrated in classes and receive the same rigorous college preparatory curriculum. All students enjoy the small class-size intensive instruction. All are expected to succeed in high school and go on to college.<sup>20</sup> Teacher assistants work with the teacher in the classroom to insure that individual students receive the small group and one-to-one support they need when they need it.

Secondly, teaching at Lavelle Prep follows a universal design approach. Teachers teach to diverse learning styles and strengths by offering multiple means of representing the content in their classrooms and by providing students with multiple means of expressing their mastery of that content. With the exception of some choice within the arts curriculum, all Lavelle Prep students participate in the same curriculum. Content learning is supported by explicit instruction in skills and strategies. Concurrently, students are taught explicit and effective ways to study and organize their lessons. Lavelle Prep employs a constructivist pedagogy ideally suited to the needs of students living with disturbances of mood, thought, cognition or behavior. This approach also fits perfectly with the philosophy of recovery. By enabling each student to understand his/her own individual learning style and to maximize his/her strengths, the instructional program gives students the necessary skills to analyze the central issues of the academic disciplines they are studying, to examine real world problems, and to construct knowledge through analysis, interpretation, synthesis, and evaluation.

Constructivist pedagogy, by enabling each student to understand his/her own individual learning style and to maximize his/her strengths, cultivates higher-order thinking skills, giving students the scope, skills, and confidence to engage in in-depth analysis of topics of their own choosing and to apply their learning widely. Serving primarily as guides and facilitators of learning, providing open-ended questions and encouraging multiple perspectives, teachers utilize a variety of individual and small group learning experiences as well as peer tutoring to encourage students to become self-regulated learners, who are aware of their own learning styles, to develop collaborative problem solving, and to demonstrate content and skill mastery in a variety of ways.<sup>21</sup> This is particularly important for students whose learning styles do not match those of typical learners. Not only does

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*Recovery Workbook: Practical Coping and Empowerment Strategies for People with Psychiatric Disability* (Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University Press, 1994); LeRoy Spaniol, Richard Bellingham, Barry Cohen, & Susan Spaniol, *Recovery Workbook 2: Connectedness* (Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation, Boston University Press, 2003); Mary Ellen Copeland and Shery Mead, *Community Links: Pathways to Reconnection and Recovery* (West Dummerston, VT: Copeland Center, nd) and Mary Ellen Copeland and Shery Mead, *Wellness Recovery Action Plan™ & Peer Support* (West Dummerston, VT: Copeland Center, nd).

<sup>19</sup> See for instance Mary Ellen Copeland and Stuart Copans, *Recovering from Depression: A Workbook for Teens* (West Dummerston, VT: Copeland Center, 2002) and Mary Ellen Copeland, *A WRAP Workbook for Kids* (West Dummerston, VT: Copeland Center).

<sup>20</sup> When the more intensive instruction is provided only to the “most disabled” students, the result is discrimination and self-stigmatization which outweighs the benefits of small class size.

<sup>21</sup> Compare E. von Glasersfeld, A constructivist approach to teaching. In L. P. Steffe & J. Gale, *Constructivism in education* (Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum, 1995): 3-16.

understanding one's disability remove some of the stigma and self-blame associated with disability, but it is also a prerequisite to successful application of personalized learning strategies. As students gain in skills and maturity over the course of their education, student learning groups are given increasing autonomy.

Instructional time varies in accord with student needs to meet curriculum standards in specific grade levels. Some may need an additional year to meet graduation requirements, while others may be able to accelerate their progress and graduate in less than seven years--e.g. begin high school curriculum in the intermediate grades. We track the progress of each student towards receiving a Regents or Advanced Regents Diploma and gaining acceptance to college and career readiness, including such data points as scores on NYS 8<sup>th</sup> grade exams in mathematics and language arts, Regents Exams, course grades, and SAT scores. Grade teams composed of teachers and teacher assistants hold regular meetings with each student and his/her parents to review progress and to develop strategies to increase individual success. Subject area teams meet regularly to work on curriculum development and other areas of common interest. Aggregate and disaggregated data, strand and item data and individual student work on student progress are utilized in evaluating both staff and school performance.

**c. Methods, strategies and/or programs for meeting the needs of students at-risk of academic failures.**

Meeting the needs of students at-risk of academic failure is central to the mission of Lavelle Prep. Toward this end, Lavelle Prep has developed an innovative model of inclusion and a multi-faceted approach to differentiated instruction. Students with all levels of disability, with the wide range of special needs represented, are present in every classroom. Lavelle Prep utilizes a variety of approaches to differentiated classroom instruction to meet the needs of individual students. These include:

- assignment of students to small instructional groups of students with similar skill needs;
- instructional support by Teacher assistants;
- computer software which prescribes specific learning activities for students, based on diagnosis of their skill needs by teachers and from data from student assessments;
- self-management of their behavior by individual students, based on strategies developed through the Wellness Curriculum;
- "push in" support by the ESL teacher, as needed; and
- 1:1 support by the teacher during guided practice and independent practice activities.

Students with disabilities frequently suffer from unhappy peer relationships and poor self-esteem. Lavelle Prep addresses these challenges in multiple ways. These include the Wellness Curriculum which provides students with knowledge and skills essential for disability management, a school-wide behavioral management system, and a system of advisement, within a culture which continually reinforces the expectation that all students will succeed in high school and be accepted in college. Lavelle Prep fosters this culture by celebrating the achievements of students and of people in the community who have overcome disabilities, and by providing opportunities for community service within the school and the community. Lavelle Prep utilizes a system of tangible rewards and



ceremonies to encourage academic achievement.<sup>22</sup> Based on progress toward individual goals, students who are “on track” receive grade-wide recognition. As youngsters grow in maturity and demonstrate their capacity for independent functioning, the amount of time that they spend working independently and in peer groups increases. By the time the student approaches graduation, their learning experience will mirror, as closely as possible, that which they will encounter in college. Students who fall behind the milestones for progress participate in additional tutoring, extra homework, and special services that help them catch up. These crucial components provide important supports for students living with emotional challenges and are of benefit to all students.

The Lavelle Prep behavioral management system reflects the needs of an integrated educational setting. The point system highlights: (1) Behavior management system applies to all students; (2) A positive point system is employed. (There are no demerits); (3) Students can earn 5 points per class for being (a) On Time; (b) On Task; (c) Listening and Being Considerate; (d) Being Prepared; (e) Being In Seat; (4) Students can earn an additional 5 bonus points each day in recognition of behavior exemplifying the Optimist’s Creed. Teachers do not **GIVE** points; students **EARN** them. Students can redeem points weekly in the “point store”.

Students who have difficulty mastering specific behaviors receive in-classroom coaching. Students who have specific difficulties across multiple classes are identified and their needs reviewed and addressed by the grade teaching team in consultation with the special education support staff. Interventions may include changing the environment to keep behavior from starting in the first place, providing positive reinforcement to promote good behavior, employing planned ignoring to avoid reinforcing problematic behavior, and providing supports needed so that the student will not be driven to act out due to frustration or fatigue. For students with IEP’s, interventions incorporate Behavior Interventions Plans contained in the IEP. If necessary, changes to BIP’s are made in accordance with applicable policies and regulations for changes in a student’s IEP.

Homeroom periods begin each day with a brief mindfulness practice and a “check in,” where students report on the best thing that happened in the previous day and then the worst thing. This practice allows homeroom teachers to “take the pulse” of all students daily.

**d. Describe how information gathered by your school’s planning team through school visits, classroom observation, and research on best practices has informed the educational approach described above.**

Since opening in September, 2009, the Lavelle Prep team has continued to learn and evolve. Through participation of a variety of activities sponsored by a number of organization including CEI-PEA, the New York City Charter Center, and Wagner College, Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden, the Staten Island Zoo, the Girls Scouts, and the Staten Island Historical Society as well as continuous reflection of practice, the Lavelle Prep team has worked to improve every aspect of school performance. Among the learning highlights are:

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<sup>22</sup> As students move through their school years, tangible rewards will decrease so that by the time they enter college, students are functioning with a reinforcement program which is similar to that which they will experience as freshman in college.

- Hands on learning of curriculum in the areas of Science, (weekly visits the Zoo for field observation and learning), and Social Studies, (including trips to Historic Richmond Town to participate in historical reenactments).
- Participation in community events such as Breast Cancer walks and awareness events.
- Hosting technology presentations delivered by college students.

These events all came about after our planning teams observed student needs, as well as student surveys and requests. Lavelle routinely elicits information and feedback from students in order to positively influence school culture and instruction. In addition, staff routinely adjusts and shares best practices during their weekly meetings. Lavelle has a yearly “Winter Retreat” in which all staff meets to discuss ways in which to improve instruction and culture, as well as a two week session during the summer months aimed at achieving the same goals.

### **e. Instructional Decision Making**

Instructional decision making at Lavelle Prep occurs at multiple-levels:

Within the framework provide by the Lavelle Prep charter, applicable law, and policy set by the board, school-wide decisions regarding overall practices and procedures are arrived at through consensus of the faculty as a whole;

1. Development of Curriculum Units--by teachers working in subject area and grade teams, with support from instructional coaches, and the approval of the Principal;
2. Selection of Instructional Materials--by teachers working as grade-subject teams, with input from the instructional coaches;
3. Design and Implementation of Lesson Plans--by teachers working as grade-subject teams;
4. Differentiation of Instruction to meet individual student needs--by teachers, with input from parents and students and when appropriate from the SPED support team.

## **2. Curriculum**

### **a. Description of the curriculum and how it will be implemented, including the objectives, skills, and content to be covered in each grade the schools will serve.**

Lavelle Prep curriculum has three elements: (1) a rigorous academic curriculum, including English Language Arts, Social Studies, Mathematics, Science, and a Language Other Than English, and provides all Lavelle Prep students with a foundation of college and career readiness; (2) a visual and performing arts curriculum enables students to develop modes of creative self-expression while serving as important tools for dealing with emotionally upsetting issues; (3) a Wellness Curriculum includes a variety of skills training modules that enable and empower students to self-manage the coping challenges they face.

The Lavelle Prep Planning Team shaped an instructional philosophy and curriculum plan designed to prepare students living emotional disabilities for success in college and beyond. Teachers who have advised the Planning Team for Lavelle Prep created preliminary curricula for each grade level and major subject area, aligned to the New York State Standards. Over the past four years, the Lavelle Prep faculty has revised this preliminary design to align with New York State Core Curriculum Standards. These curricula continue to emphasize the following areas: (a) a challenging academic program which prepares students for college and career; (b) a performing and visual arts program, which enhances students' personal and emotional development through media of self-expression; and (c) a Wellness Curriculum, which teaches students concepts and strategies for living successfully with emotional challenges.

### **Core Curriculum**

The core curriculum for Lavelle Prep middle school equips students with the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to succeed in a rigorous college preparatory program in the high school.<sup>23</sup> Students concentrate on building competence in English Language Arts and mathematics, spending 8 periods a week on each subject, so that even students who were ill-prepared by their elementary school experience are prepared for a rigorous college preparatory curriculum in high school. Better prepared students are able to move ahead more quickly. Students will begin Spanish when they have achieved proficiency in either ELA or math.

In English Language Arts, the curriculum builds a strong foundation of vocabulary and basic reading comprehension skills to develop the students' capacity to understand a broad range of literary and non-fiction texts through analysis, interpretation and evaluation. Lavelle Prep employs a "writer's workshop" approach to the writing process. This includes identification of thesis statements, outline of paragraphs with supporting details, self-evaluation and peer evaluation of first drafts using a rubric, and final revisions based on feedback. Beginning in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, students adopt the five paragraph format and begin applying this format to various tasks including responses to literature, persuasive essays, research reports and narratives. This foundation of writing enables our students to write more complex essays as they move through the grades and into high school. Our approach to literacy is rooted in the belief that children should be immersed in both fiction and non-fiction reading daily.

Students are constantly expected to read, respond, and reflect in both small homogenous groups with students on the same reading level and in large heterogeneous class discussions. Instruction in reading also focuses on building fluency and accuracy of comprehension in students who are reading below grade level. From grade 6 on, we endeavor to build student vocabulary and ability to read and understand a wide variety of literary and non-fiction texts, including novels, drama, poetry, and essays in literary criticism. The emphasis is on comprehension at the levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the big ideas and themes of texts. In the writing curriculum, we emphasize building students' capacity to taking a point of view and defending it with evidence from texts. The comprehension and writing skills have applications in their work in social studies and science.

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<sup>23</sup> Importantly, evidence supports the expectation that an environment which combines an intellectually challenging curriculum with effective instruction results in a reduction of inappropriate behavior. See for instance, Munk, D. D., & Repp, A. C. (1994). The relationship between instructional variables and problem behavior: A review. *Exceptional Children*, 60, 390–401.

Writing is included in all subject areas. Our school's program expects that beginning in grade 6 all students write essays using the skills and format taught in ELA, in all subject areas. The writing-skills curriculum builds on a strong foundation in grammar and syntax to develop the capacity to write narrative and analytic essays and poetry that demonstrate skills in organization and variations in the use of figurative language. Students begin to develop a formal portfolio in grade 6, that they continue each year. Each year the students must select five essays they've completed in English Language Arts and three essays they've completed in other content area classes. The literacy coach works with all content area teachers during the two week summer training to develop rigorous student writing tasks, rubrics and other materials to help guide students through the writing process. The literacy coach trains the entire staff during the summer training in the portfolio process. The portfolio process is as follows: the ELA teacher is responsible for assisting the student in maintaining their portfolio and the portfolio remains in the ELA classroom in a binder. The subject area teachers assign their prompts based on an interdisciplinary writing calendar. The writing pieces must reflect all of the stages of the writing process including, brainstorming, drafting, editing/revising, publishing and reflecting. The subject area teacher grade the writing pieces after students have submitted them on the assigned due date. The subject area teacher meets with the student's ELA teacher to review the writing piece and discuss the student's grade. The student then logs the writing piece in their portfolios' table to contents and write a reflection on their work. The literacy coach monitors this process throughout the year. In the future, we hope to make the portfolios digital.

In mathematics, students build a foundation of basic skills and concepts necessary to begin an Integrated Algebra Regents curriculum in eighth grade, when appropriate. Emphasis is on mathematical reasoning and problem-solving. In mathematics, we accelerate the development of students who are below grade level and focus on building mastery of the concepts that underlie the procedures of operations necessary to be prepared to succeed in learning algebra. A key strategy to teaching toward conceptual understanding is the activation of students' prior knowledge related to the concepts. Visual aids and manipulative materials are used to ground the concepts in hands-on learning experiences. Computer software which prescribes specific exercises for students who need more practice on concepts and skills allows greater individualization of instruction. Middle school students use a variety of computer-based and web- to improve their basic skills and accelerate learning.

In science, teachers focus on developing students' capacity to employ the scientific method across curricula—to form hypotheses, gather and interpret data, and draw conclusions from the results. Through this practice, students are able to further develop their critical thinking skills as they make connections between course content and real-world application. Concepts within each curriculum are taught through an inquiry approach. Students are encouraged to form questions about what they learn and develop answers based on hands on activities and experiments. Each course features an extensive laboratory component, in which students learn important concepts through hands-on experiences and develop skills using scientific tools. In sixth grade students are introduced to laboratory instruments and taught how to use these tools to answer scientific questions. Each grade builds on the skills that were developed the previous year. Labs are followed up with thoroughly written lab reports that include research and a fully developed analysis and conclusion, which are aligned with the common core. Lab reports also include data transformations and analysis of those transformations. Students learn to convert data to graphs and interpret what those graphs mean, and how they are relevant the question they

are asking. In addition to performing numerous experiments and hands on activities, students connect their in class experience to real world application through scientific articles. The science curriculum enables students to master the scientific concepts and skills such as the design and conduct of scientific experiments and the analyses of resulting data. In this way, students prepare to begin the NYS Earth Science Regents, some as early as eighth grade.

In social studies, the curriculum focuses on helping the students develop an understanding of how the modern world was shaped by the events of the past. Lavelle uses the scope and sequence as a guide to deliver the curriculum, beginning with the ancient world in sixth grade, and moving to U.S. History in grades 7 and 8. High-achieving 8<sup>th</sup> graders take the US History Regents. In social studies, teachers create units of study from the curricula centered on big ideas and themes, which give students “a hook” around which they can organize specific facts which are important to understanding historical periods and movements. Projects by individuals and small groups of students require them to learn to make inquiries—to pose questions and find information to answer them—and demonstrate their understanding of the concepts. In High School, students take U.S. History and Global History, both culminating in Regents exams, in which the students investigate and explore the events that have shaped the modern world climate. Students frequently use computer tools such as Power Point, spread sheets to create charts, and graphics in these demonstrations of learning. Skills commonly employed across curricula include map reading, analysis of charts and graphs, and historical timelines. Students also are responsible for finding a current events article weekly and explaining a current issue to their classmates.

Work in the intermediate grades lays the basis for work at the upper level. On the upper level, English Language Arts include a college style portfolio of options including, but not limited to: Genre based classes (ie. Science-Fiction, Mystery), Author focused classes (i.e. Shakespeare), Thematic classes (ie. Women in Literature), and Region based classes (i.e. British, American, and world literature). These courses focus on developing writing skills each year, and provide the opportunity to take an AP English course in the junior year. Mathematics includes Integrated Algebra and Geometry, with the opportunity to take advanced courses after those are completed. Science includes biology, physics, earth science, and an advanced course in one of these subjects. Social Studies includes American and Global history. Study of a Language Other Than English begins as soon as students have achieved proficiency in either ELA or math, usually in the Intermediate grades, and may be extended in the Upper Level to an additional language. All students create a portfolio of five to seven essays as a condition of graduation.

### **Arts Curriculum**

Lavelle Prep places a strong emphasis on visual and performing arts both as methodologies for enriching learning in core curricular areas and as a vehicle through which students can achieve self-expression, build self-esteem, and develop their talents. Lavelle Prep offers four areas of arts concentration: visual arts, creative movement, music and theater. In creative movement, students build their technical and expressive skills and develop their artistry while enriching their understanding through an exploration of the historical, social and cultural contexts of dance. Students participate in creative movement up to three times each week. In creative movement students participate in units on the elements of dance, zumba, capoeira, elements of fitness and other collaborative fitness activities. Through theater activities that foster creative expression, discipline,

collaboration, self-awareness and personal transformation, students learn to express themselves and to develop empathy for their own and other's situations, to channel their energies into inspiring artistic endeavors, and to appreciate diverse cultural traditions. In music, students learn, practice, and master a repertoire of vocal and/or instrumental pieces, representative of the diverse cultures of our community, and focus on the skills of good musicianship. Students participate in the school choir as an extracurricular activity. In the visual arts, students learn to construct meanings about the world through art making, to build upon their own experiences to express a personal vision while developing a global perspective and to recognize the power of art to communicate beliefs and values. Students are immersed in the film-making process by writing scripts, acting, directing, filming and editing short movies. Each student creates a portfolio of their artistic work as a condition of graduation.

During the intermediate grades, students have an opportunity to explore intensively each area of artistic expression (music, dance, theater, or visual arts) During the two-period per week arts sequence, 6<sup>th</sup> grade students study visual arts, 7<sup>th</sup> grade students study theater arts, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students study music. In grades 6 through 8, physical education sequence provides an integrated movement/dance experience. On the basis of this introductory experience, students in the upper grades select an area of concentration in which to hone their skills. Students at all levels have multiple opportunities to present their accomplishments to the school and the community.

### **Wellness Curriculum**

The Lavelle Prep Wellness Curriculum is a unique and essential ingredient of the school's educational design, one that fosters academic engagement and growth for all students.<sup>24</sup> Self-management strategies are essential to healthy social and academic growth for all students. The Wellness Curriculum focuses on strategies that enable students to succeed in a rigorous high school academic program, in college, and in life. For many students, lack of school success is rooted not only in academic deficits but in an inability to overcome social and emotional issues which interfere with academic performance. The Wellness Curriculum provides the tools to achieve this objective by equipping students with the tools (attitudes, knowledge, and skills) that enable them to effectively manage the challenges that confront them in their lives, -- to live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities.<sup>25</sup> Utilizing models such as Sean Covey's *The 7 Habits Of Highly Effective Teens*,<sup>26</sup> students demonstrate the ability to establish meaningful goals for themselves, identify the obstacles standing in the way of success and develop alternative plans for overcoming these obstacles, implement a plan, evaluate the outcomes, and revise their plans accordingly. Students approach this spiral process of goal setting, planning, action, and review repeatedly throughout their years at Lavelle Prep and are evaluated on the quality of their plans as well as their success in implementation.

In so doing, students demonstrate awareness of their own patterns of thought and action. They demonstrate an understanding of their individual learning styles and demonstrate the

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24 School-wide primary prevention programs, including those that teach and reinforce problem solving, bullying prevention, positive behavioral supports, and stop-and-think, enhance individualized interventions (Osher, D., Dwyer, K., & Jackson, S. (2003). *Safe, supportive, and successful schools step by step*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.).

25 School-wide primary prevention programs, including those that teach and reinforce problem solving, bullying prevention, positive behavioral supports, and stop-and-think, enhance individualized interventions (Osher, D., Dwyer, K., & Jackson, S. (2003). *Safe, supportive, and successful schools step by step*. Longmont, CO: Sopris West.).

26 Simon & Schuster, 1998.

ability to maximize their strengths. They demonstrate an understanding of and the ability to use techniques for maintaining hope and a positive outlook. Students are able to offer clear explanations for the goals that they choose and the strategies they employ in achieving these goals. Students demonstrate the ability to gather relevant information and to construct explanatory models.

The Wellness Curriculum extensively utilizes a project-based approach. Presentations can take a variety of forms including posters, debates, plays, PowerPoint presentations, and videos. Teachers assign forms to support technology learning goals. A second series of projects emphasize community service. Other content is addressed through individual assignments organized around such broad themes as college preparation. For instance, topics related to personal finance and budgeting may be addressed in the context of discussions about how to pay for college. Students also take trips to local colleges and universities and participate in local college activities such as sporting events and reading initiatives. For example, students have been invited to participate in a Wagner College basketball game as halftime performers and have also been invited to partner with college students at a literacy fair and work as mentors with younger students on Staten Island. Each homeroom cohort is named after a college, and the students study this college extensively throughout the year and make a PowerPoint Presentation to their entire grade at assemblies.

The Wellness Curriculum is supplemented by a variety of experiences geared to encourage and support student in acquiring the knowledge skills and attitudes essential for success in college and beyond. For example, an annual career month brings speakers to Lavelle Prep to meet with small groups of students about their field and what it takes to succeed.

Lavelle Prep has established several community partnerships; currently we are working with the Wagner College Nursing Department and the St. Paul's School of Nursing. These student-nurses are coming to Lavelle Prep on a weekly basis to co-teach with Lavelle's wellness teachers about the most current research on health and wellness topics. The Wellness Curriculum covers all material required under the New York State Standards for Health, Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences and Career Development and Occupational Studies except the physical education standards which are covered in the Physical Education class.

### **Physical Education (Creative Movement)**

Lavelle Prep plans to focus physical education instruction around activities which can be conducted in the dance studio. In creative movement, students build their technical and expressive skills and develop their artistry while enriching their understanding through an exploration of the historical, social and cultural contexts of dance. Students participate in creative movement three times each week. In creative movement students participate in units on the elements of dance, zumba, capoeira, elements of fitness and other collaborative fitness activities. Life-long physical activities such as yoga and Tai Chi, that can be used effectively to manage stress, are introduced.

### **Elective Curricula**

The Lavelle Prep high school program emphasizes college and career readiness. Increased awareness of the challenges of financing college education have caused us to

provide opportunities for our students, not only to explore career options but to acquire the credentials and experience which enable them to reduce dependence on student loans. While meeting Regents Diploma requirements, students are offered the opportunity to apply to specialized programs in the high school. Based on a survey of current student interests, career readiness curricula are being developed in the fields of medical care, hospitality and hotel management, and cosmetology.

While all entering students begin on a track for the Advanced Regents Diploma, high school students, who so choose, are able to opt for the Regents Diploma, in this way affording themselves increased opportunities for elective courses. The curriculum, which is fully aligned to the Common Core Standards, addresses students in a manner conducive to success in 21st century learning and life. Each class is designed in a relevant manner, allowing for students to find meaning in what is happening in the classroom. In addition, advanced placement classes and specialized programs allow for students the opportunity to earn college credits and career certifications upon graduation. Each student earns at a minimum a Regents diploma in their tenure as students.

Lavelle Prep has initiated discussions with several community-based career education organizations and will enter into collaborative relationships with other educational institutions, such as the St. Paul’s School of Nursing, in order to enrich educational opportunities for the students. In the medical field, Lavelle Prep will work with the St. Paul’s School of Nursing to create a program in which our students will have the opportunity to simultaneously earn an Associate of Occupational Studies degree and qualify for both state and national certification as a Certified Medical Assistant. The hospitality and hotel management program will partner with the Hilton Garden Inn to provide experiential internships integrated with Lavelle Prep course work. A program leading to State certification in cosmetology is being developed in collaboration with The Academy NYC, A Paul Mitchell Partner School. These specialized educational programs and others which will be developed in response to student and community/business interest will supplement the standard Regents high school curriculum. While not every student will enroll in one of these programs, each student will have the opportunity to take AP classes as a means of potentially earning college credits.

**Pathways to Diplomas**

Because so many students enter 6<sup>th</sup> grade with significant academic deficits, Lavelle Prep has evolved alternative paths to graduation. Since we place the highest priority on assuring that our graduates are college ready, our first goal is to insure that all students graduate proficient in both math and English. We expect that the majority of students will graduate with Advanced Regents Diplomas. However, in order to earn an Advanced Regents Diploma, students must be eligible to begin Spanish by the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade (achieve proficiency in either ELA or math). Other students may choose the Regents Diploma track instead of the Advanced Regents Diploma track in order to take advantage of a career readiness option. The table below outlines the pathways of Honors students (those who have achieved proficiency by the end of 7<sup>th</sup> grade), Non-Honors students who achieve proficiency by the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade and Late Bloomers who achieve proficiency at the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade, as well as struggling students.

	Advanced Regents Diploma			Regents Diploma
	Honors Students	Proficient Non-Honors Students	Non-Honors (late bloomers)	Non-Proficient Non-Honors Students



8 <sup>th</sup> grade	Int Algebra (R) US History (R) Earth Science (R) (8 <sup>th</sup> grade ELA , Music, Spanish, Wellness, PE)			
9 <sup>th</sup> grade	Geometry (R) Living Environment (R) Global History I Spanish English Electives Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	Int Algebra (R) US History (R) Earth Science (R) Spanish English electives Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	Int Algebra (R) US History (R) Earth Science (R) English electives Arts Concentration Wellness/PE Extra math/English	Int Algebra (R) US History (R) Earth Science (R) English electives Arts Concentration Wellness/PE Extra math/English
10 <sup>th</sup> grade	Global History II (R) Science Elective English Electives Algebra II/ Trig Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	Geometry (R) Living Environment (R) Global History I Spanish English Electives Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	Geometry (R) Living Environment (R) Global History I Spanish English Electives Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	Geometry (R) Living Environment (R) Global History I English Electives Arts Concentration Wellness/PE Extra math/English
11 <sup>th</sup> grade	English (R) Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	Global History II (R) English (R) Science Elective English Electives Algebra II/ Trig Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	Global History II (R) English (R) Science Elective English Electives Algebra II/ Trig Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	Global History II (R) English (R) Arts Concentration Wellness/PE
12 <sup>th</sup> grade	English Electives Participation in Gov/ Economics Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	English Electives Participation in Gov/ Economics Arts Concentration Wellness/PE	English Electives Participation in Gov/ Economics Arts Concentration Wellness/PE Spanish	English Electives Participation in Gov/ Economics Spanish Arts Concentration Wellness/PE

**Balancing Academic and Wellness Curricula**

Preserving the appropriate balance between the Wellness Curriculum and the core academic curricula, -- a balance, in which the overarching goal is academic achievement

and the Wellness Curriculum a set of tools for achieving that goal, -- is essential to the success of Lavelle Prep. Through the Wellness Curriculum, students acquire the tools (attitudes, knowledge, and skills) that enable them to effectively manage their challenges, as well as other obstacles that confront them in their lives, -- to live, work, learn and participate fully in their communities. The Wellness Curriculum covers all material required under the New York State Standards for *Health, Physical Education, and Family and Consumer Sciences* and *Career Development and Occupational Studies* except the physical education standards which are covered in the Physical Education class. The Wellness Class meets three times per week in each grade. The extended Lavelle Prep school day, which extends from 7:55 AM – 3:40 PM on Mondays through Thursdays and 7:55AM – 2:43PM on Fridays), allows for an extra period of instruction each day for all students. In this way, not only the Wellness Curriculum but also the enriched Arts Curriculum can be accommodated without reducing instructional time in core academic subjects.

We are also continuously collecting, analyzing and reporting student academic achievement data both at the site level to address individual student learning, and also at the Board level, where school success and staff are measured by objective measures of student achievement. Lavelle Prep is first and foremost a school, and academic outcomes is the primary measure of program success, with the Wellness Curriculum serving as a foundational aspect that give students the opportunity to succeed.

Integration of the Wellness Curriculum with the core academic disciplines is crucial to student success as they learn to use the self-management skills learned in Wellness to enhance their general academic performance. Lavelle Prep achieves this objective through a unique design element: teachers of core academic disciplines also teach each section of Wellness. This design maximizes the likelihood that academic teachers will identify opportunities for cross-fertilization between Wellness content with that of core academic subjects.

**Exhibit H—Curriculum to Standards Crosswalk: See attached**

**Exhibit I—Curricula: See attached**

**Exhibit J - Curriculum & Instruction Models**

### **3. Assessment**

Lavelle Prep accepts students who have been on Alternate Assessment but does not utilize Alternate Assessment to measure student readiness for promotion. We are committed to preparing all students for college and career. Our curriculum and promotional standards are geared toward this. Student portfolios are maintained, and they are considered in the overall promotional policies. Individualized Education Plans are accordingly modified by the CSE of entering students in accordance with CSE standards and procedures.

#### **Standardized Assessment**

Standards-based tests measure student and school progress toward reaching state content standards. Lavelle Prep students take the state standards - based test once a year, often in the spring. Results are provided to teachers, school, and parents several

months after the test. Federal legislation contained in the *No Child Left Behind Act* requires all students to reach the proficient level in reading and mathematics on their state test by the year 2014.

### **Nationally Norm-Referenced Tests**

Lavelle Prep includes a national norm-referenced test as a part of its assessment program. Norm-referenced tests measure basic concepts and skills commonly taught in schools throughout the country. These tests are not designed as measures of any specific curriculum or instructional program. Lavelle Prep will utilize a program such as the Performance Series from Scantron, a computer-adaptive test that lets teachers quickly pinpoint the proficiency level of their students across a range of subjects that corresponds with the specific standard of the state. This provides for more accurate student placement, diagnosis of instructional needs, including instructional adjustments, and measurement of student gains across reporting periods. It is expected that a program such as the Scantron Performance Series will be administered multiple times each year.

### **Formative Assessment**

Teachers of academic subjects at Lavelle Prep track student progress in their curricula on a weekly basis through assessment of class work, homework, and quizzes in order to determine the need to re-teach curricular content that was not mastered by most students, or where that is not necessary, to identify individual students who need further classroom support to keep up with the progress of the rest of the class.

Teachers assess student learning at the end of each instructional unit in two ways:

- (1) through chapter tests of basic concepts and skills from the foundational text books in each course;
- (2) through a rubric that assesses student understanding of major concepts/themes on a performance assessment which is the culminating activity of the unit—e.g. research paper or project.

Each teacher identifies content from the unit that needs to be reviewed with the entire class because of a lack of mastery of it by most students. In cases where no class review is necessary, the teacher identifies individual students who need further instruction in specific content. The teacher gives review assignments to those students and monitors the progress of the students on the review work during the regular class period.

The class assessment reports are shared with other academic teachers on the same grade level team. The principal meets regularly with grade and subject teams to analyze patterns in the assessment data from their classrooms and share successful teaching strategies with specific students.

The data from the Interim assessment at the school are analyzed at special meetings of the grade level teacher teams to plan for further instruction in developing student skills across the subject levels and to identify students in need of additional support.

Three times a year, usually in October, January, and March, the monthly meeting of the grade level team analyzes the progress of each student toward annual growth targets. This data complements the unit assessment data, which the teachers have been tracking to

determine adjustments in curricular content in the remaining semester units and in identifying students for further support in the classroom and outside of it.

Methods of teacher analysis of data from the various types of assessments as feedback on curriculum and instruction and the construction of rubrics for performance assessments are major topics of the monthly professional development sessions throughout the school year. The academic instructional coaches identify professional resources for this training and follow up in conferences with individual teachers.

Student progress toward mastery of learning standards in the arts are monitored and measured by teacher created assessments. These include student portfolios that demonstrate student progress as well as best work; musical, dance, and theatre performances; and written responses to writing prompts, among others. These assessments are modified for special education students when necessary, as required by their individualized education programs. All student work is evaluated using a teacher created rubric that is closely aligned to the related performance indicators.

Teachers assess student learning in social studies through the use of “chapter tests” from the curriculum materials at the end of each unit of instruction, which measure mastery of content and skills. Teachers also develop performance assessments for each unit, which require students to demonstrate their understanding of the major concepts and essential questions of the unit. Such demonstrations may include small group and individual research projects, analysis of case studies, and creation of visual models such as diagrams and charts. Data from these assessments inform teacher decisions regarding whether to re-teach specific content and the identification of students who need extra support. Major benchmark assessments include the New York State exam in social studies in grade 8 and the Global Studies Regents Exam in grade 10.

Teachers assess student learning in English Language Arts through reading comprehension and vocabulary tests at the conclusion of each unit of instruction. Teachers also utilize informal reading inventories (Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System 2) to assess student reading fluency and comprehension on an individual student basis. Teachers also develop performance assessments for each unit of instruction, which require students to demonstrate their understanding of the major elements and essential questions of the literature they have read and their capacity to write about them. Such demonstrations may include analytic and evaluative essays, comparisons of what they have read with other works of literature, and creative writing such as poems, short stories, and short plays. Major benchmark assessments include quarterly Fountas and Pinnell literacy assessments of functional achievement levels by skill areas in grade 6-8 or until students have reached a level Z. Students complete a writing skills assessment in grades 6-8 at the completion of each unit. For example, students write essays in a specific genre over the course of four weeks completing all of the phases of the writing process and then at the end of the unit do a writing “on demand” piece in that same genre to assess whether or not the skills they learned throughout the unit have been mastered. All of the writing units in grades 6-12 are rooted in the common core standards. Students have several opportunities in every grade to write narratives, argument based essays, literary essays and informative/explanatory essays. Students are expected to establish and maintain a formal style through all writing projects.

#### **a. Teacher accountability for Student Results**

At Lavelle Prep, all staff are held accountable for student performance as measured against goals set forth in the school's charter. From its inception, Lavelle Prep has rewarded teachers and other staff on the basis of objectively-measured student outcomes linked to school goals. In 2013, Lavelle prep adopted a state-approved Annual Professional Performance Review process for the principal and all teachers. The school is part of a TIF-funded consortium of charter schools led by CEI-PEA. As a member of this consortium, Lavelle is committed to refining the review process.

**b. How assessment data drives the instructional program.**

Lavelle Prep is a data driven school. Data drawn from a variety of assessments is utilized to measure student performance, guide instruction, and monitor staff performance. Evaluation processes for middle school and high school are described below.

Student performance data are used for two purposes: (1) as feedback to teachers and administrators on the effectiveness of curriculum and instruction in individual classrooms and across grade levels; and (2) to identify students in need of additional instructional support within classrooms and beyond—e.g. tutoring, after-school program.

Teachers use data from assessments given at the conclusion of their curriculum units, formative assessments given at various points during the year, and year-end assessments as feedback about their instruction through analysis of the percent of students who have mastered key concepts and skills from the curriculum. Where necessary, curriculum content is re-taught. In other cases, teachers note the need for revised instructional strategies for curriculum units or changes in curricula, in subsequent years. These considerations are reviewed with teachers by administrators followed formal and informal observations and during annual reviews of teacher performance. Teachers use the above assessment data in preparing “progress reports” on individual students.

Analysis of data to drive instruction is a major topic in professional development sessions throughout the school year. Instructional leaders and coaches identify professional resources and follow up in conferences with individual teachers.

**Serving Students with Varying Academic Levels**

There is enormous variation in the proficiency of students entering Lavelle Prep. While there is no “tracking” of students in grades 6 and 7, incoming students who test below “proficiency” level in reading and/or mathematics skills receive supplemental instruction during thrice-weekly “extra” periods. The Lavelle Prep Targeted Literacy Program rooted in the Orton and Gillingham methodology is used with struggling ELA students. Lavelle Prep uses remediation programs such as CATCH-Up Math and Learnzillion that accelerate the development of struggling math students. These programs employ a research-based pedagogy called sheltered instruction that had proved effective in a classroom setting. This kind of sheltered instruction is designed to improve a student’s understanding of the content by breaking down concepts into small, comprehensible “learning chunks”. Lavelle Prep students receive these supplemental instructions twice a week as “extra class”. These “extras” supplement the standard academic curricula for ELA and math which all students receive in integrated classes where instruction is differentiated according to their skill levels, assigning the groups work that is challenging, but appropriate for each student. Students who have achieved proficiency in either ELA or math begin Spanish. Middle

school students who have achieved proficiency in both ELA and math are eligible to take an elective in addition to Spanish.

As students reach the high school grades, they may elect to pursue a standard Regents Diploma instead of an Advanced Regents Diploma and may take more than four years to complete graduation requirements, according to their academic needs. Special Education students may take as much time as they need, up until their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday to graduate.

### **Middle School (Gr. 6-8) and High School (Gr. 9-12)**

#### Individual Teachers:

Besides the quarterly Writing Skills Assessment (See the “Chart describing Lavelle Prep assessments”), Lavelle Prep employs performance assessments created at the end of curriculum units by teachers, and literacy and mathematics benchmark assessments in grades 6-8. In grade 6, those assessments are the formative assessments developed by the Lavelle Prep Literacy and Mathematics Programs. In grades 6-10, the winter administration of the Interim Assessments and a standardized test such as the Scantron Performance Series serve as mid-year benchmarks. These formative assessments complement the performance assessments designed by teachers at the conclusion of curriculum units—about monthly. The creation of performance assessments and rubrics for grading them are another major topic in the monthly professional development sessions teachers for teachers and the follow-up by the instructional coaches.

Students and parents are updated consistently with respect to academic progress. Beginning in 2013-14, teacher grade books be live and available online for students and parents to see, enabling a real time updating system. In addition, on each report card, a “Promotional Percentage” number enables the students and parents to see at what pace the student is moving toward completion of the grade.

#### **Middle School: (Gr. 6-8)**

Individual Teachers: Review quarterly course grades, writing skills assessment data, NYS exams, and NYSLAT data for feedback on areas of classroom curriculum, instruction, and standardized assessments.

Grade Level Staff Teams (Teachers and Teacher assistants): Review above data to identify individual students who need additional academic and personal support and/or consider their options for promotion to the next grade level.

Annual School Self-evaluation by Administrators and Staff: President, Principal, Teachers, Teacher assistants, and other staff review above academic data and other metrics—e.g. student attendance, parent and student satisfaction surveys, etc.—for feedback on school strengths and areas in need of improvement in preparing students to succeed in a rigorous college preparatory program in high school. These reviews occur in grade level staff meetings and in a school-wide middle school staff meeting. Data from these reviews is incorporated in annual school-wide reviews by the administration and the Board of Trustees. The Middle School Improvement Plan for the coming year includes objectives that respond to the areas in need of improvement.

#### **High School (Gr. 9—12)**

Individual Teachers: Review quarterly course grades, Regents Exams data, and AP Exam data for feedback on areas of classroom curriculum, instruction, and assessment that need improvement.

Grade Level Staff Teams: Review above data to identify individual students who need additional academic and personal support and/or consider their options for promotion to the next grade level.

Annual School Self-evaluation by Administrators and Staff: President, Principal, and Teachers, Teacher assistants, and other staff review above academic data, data on quality of College Preparatory Portfolios, PSAT, and SAT data, and graduation rates and college acceptances in grade 12, plus other metrics—e.g. student attendance, parent and student satisfaction surveys, student suspension rates, etc.—for feedback on school strengths and areas in need of improvement in preparing students to achieve an Advanced Regents Diploma and acceptance into a four year college. These reviews occur in grade level staff meetings, and in a school-wide high school staff meeting. Data from these reviews is incorporated in annual school-wide reviews by the administration and the Board of Trustees. The High School Improvement Plan for the coming year includes objectives that respond to the areas in need of improvement.

As part of the **Annual Lavelle Prep Comprehensive School Self-Evaluation (Gr. 6-12)**, the President, Principal, and other administrative staff review data and results of the middle and high school annual self-evaluations and write comprehensive annual school self-evaluation (gr. 6-12) for Lavelle Prep, recommending improvements in the school’s instructional program and student support systems for the coming year(s), based in part on the School Improvement Plans of the middle school and high school. This report is reviewed by the Board of Trustees as part of their self-assessment and their evaluation of the performance of the President. It is used by the Board as an important baseline in establishing performance goals for the subsequent year.

**Chart describing Lavelle Prep assessments.**

<b>Academic Metrics</b>	<b>Administered When</b>	<b>Baseline Data</b>	<b>Outcome Data</b>	<b>Grades Used</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<i>Scantron - Performance Series</i>	Winter, Spring	Achievement Level and percentile rank of incoming students	Achievement Level, percentile rank of incoming students, and growth scores of individual students	6-10 (Winter, Spring)	Baseline achievement levels for new students, measurement of fall-to fall or spring-to-spring comparison of student achievement levels to national sample.
<i>NYS Exams</i>	Spring ELA/Math Science	Number/Percent of students proficient in previous	Number/Percent of students proficient	6-8	Track increase in number of students who reach proficiency and whose scores

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<i>NYS Regents Exams required for Advanced Regents Diploma (8)</i>	January, June, and August	year Number/ Percent of students passing with a score of 65 or better on previous exam	Number/ Percent of students passing with score of 65 or better	9-11, 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Honors	improve Track number of students on pace to meet Diploma requirements; Track longitudinal improvement in number of students passing the same exam
<i>Remediation Programs in Literacy/Math</i>	Monthly	Functional achievement levels by skill areas	Functional achievement levels by skill areas	6-8	Feedback re: effectiveness of curriculum units of study. Identification of students in need of instructional support
<i>Teacher made homework assignments and quizzes</i>	Weekly/ Biweekly	Mastery of Course Content	Mastery of Course Content	6-12	Teacher decisions re: re teaching content and identifying students who need extra support
<i>Teacher made homework assignment and quizzes</i>	Weekly	Mastery of Course Content	Mastery of Course Content	6-12	Teacher decisions re: re teaching content and identifying students who need extra support
<i>Chapter Tests</i>	At completion of curriculum units (every 2-3 weeks)	Mastery of Course Content	Mastery of Course Content	6-12	Teacher decisions re: re teaching content, identifying students who need extra support, and curriculum evaluation
<i>Teacher-made performance assessments</i>	At completion of curriculum units	Mastery of Course Content	Mastery of Course Content	6-12	Teacher decisions re: re teaching content, identifying students who need extra support, and curriculum evaluation
<i>Writing Skills Assessment (school-based, with</i>	September, December March,	Number/ Percent of students proficient on writing skills	Number/ Percent of students proficient	6-8	Ensure all students enter high school with highly developed writing skills



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<i>new higher standard at each grade)</i>	June	rubric on previous assessment			
<i>Course Grades</i>	Quarterly, with final grade in June, based in part on final course exam	Number/Percent Of students with grades of 65 or higher in previous year in each course	Number/Percent of students with passing grade in each course	6-12	Track progress of individual students to graduation; Track improvements in number of passing students in each course
<i>NYSESLAT</i>	May	Previous year's score	End of Year score	6-8	Track progress of students and determine which are eligible to exit ELL Program
<i>PSAT/SAT</i>	January, June	Previous year's mean scores per cohort tested and distribution of scores	Mean score per cohort tested and distribution of scores	9-12	Track progress of students for admission to 4 year colleges; Track improvement in preparation of students for 4 year colleges
<i>AP Exams</i>	May	Number/Percent of Students scoring 3,4, or 5 on previous year's exams	Number of Students scoring 3,4, or 5	11-12	Track number of students who earn college credit in high school; Track improvement in the number of those students

**c. Describe your school's promotion requirements for each grade.**

Lavelle Prep is committed to preparing students for college and career readiness. Our curriculum is designed to prepare all students, including those who enter 6<sup>th</sup> grade significantly behind academically, to obtain either a Regents or an Advanced Regents Diploma. We have, therefore established very high standards for our students both with respect to the courses and Regents Exams, which they are expected to pass, and a flexible schedule which allows students to proceed at their own pace: an accelerated schedule allows some students who are able to advance quickly to earn college and Regents credits in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and enriched instruction in ELA and math for our less well-prepared students who have not achieved proficiency.

While our program is designed to encourage students to move quickly, we are also prepared to address the needs of students who require more time. We recognize that some students may need to withdraw from Lavelle Prep for periods of time if their disability requires hospitalization or placement out of the community. For students who are hospitalized or placed in residential treatment, Lavelle Prep assures that the treating facility receives all necessary materials so that the student's education can continue with minimal interruption until the student is able to return to Lavelle Prep. For students who are placed in community settings, Lavelle Prep works with the responsible agency and with the mental health provider to facilitate the student's uninterrupted attendance. Whenever appropriate, the school advocates for placement on Staten Island and attempts to facilitate appropriate transportation where required. If travel proves too great an obstacle, Lavelle Prep works to facilitate transfer to an appropriate school closer to the student's current residence.

We also recognize that even less disruptive events may interfere with a student's ability to function academically up to full potential. When student refusal to attend school is rooted in an emotional or psychiatric disability, Lavelle Prep works with the student, the family, and the mental health provider to develop a plan which enables the student to attend school. If all efforts fail to overcome the student's school refusal, referral is made to the Committee on Special Education for re-evaluation, perhaps for placement in a more restrictive setting, and in the case of students who have not already been classified for Special Education for an initial evaluation. Furthermore, some students may simply progress more slowly. Students who do not meet a grade level promotion requirement specified in the "Guidelines for grade level classification" (below) are required to repeat the course in a subsequent year. We anticipate that a significant number of students will require five years to meet all high school graduation requirements. Should a student fall significantly behind in accumulating the credits needed for a Regents Diploma, he and his parents will be asked to conference with school staff and the Principal to examine alternatives.

While every effort is made to help students successfully complete all requirements for the Advanced Regents Diploma and to advance along with their classmates, emotional challenges (as well as other disabling conditions) may demand a slower pace. Lavelle Prep is cognizant that special education students are entitled to remain in school until their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthdays in order to complete diploma requirements. We encourage students to do so. We, however, respect the right of students who have met alternative diploma requirements (e.g., the regular Regents Diploma) to choose to graduate with an alternative diploma.

To be eligible for promotion from Intermediate grades, students must meet three performance criteria: regular school attendance (18 or fewer unexcused absences), achievement of passing grades in sufficient numbers to meet criteria below, and achieve a threshold score in statewide tests in both ELA and math. These scores graduated to ensure that all students achieve proficiency and college readiness by the time they graduate from high school. (Based on 2011-12, statewide scores, the following cut-offs have been established: Promotion from 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 2.20; promotion from 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 2.50; promotion from 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 2.8. These cut scores will be modified as changes in statewide tests occur).

[There are several options available to Lavelle Prep to meet the needs of students who do not achieve year-end performance expectations. The choice among these options will be made by the Principal in consultation with the student, the student's guardians, and faculty.](#)

To earn credits for a course, students must earn a final grade of 65 or above and, when indicated pass the relevant Regents Examination. Guidelines for promotion in good standing to the next grade are as follows:

<b>Grade credit achievement guidelines</b>	
6 <sup>th</sup> grade standing	admission to Lavelle Prep
7 <sup>th</sup> grade standing	5 Intermediate school credits
8 <sup>th</sup> grade standing	11 intermediate school credits
9 <sup>th</sup> grade standing	16 intermediate school credits
10 <sup>th</sup> grade standing	11 high school credits
11 <sup>th</sup> grade standing	22 high school credits
12 <sup>th</sup> grade standing	33 high school credits
Graduation	Meeting requirement for Advanced Regents Diploma and distribution of course credits required by NYS

While we anticipate that many students will pass Regents Examinations meeting requirements for the Advanced Regents Diploma on the following schedule, others will proceed more slowly or more rapidly.

<b>Regents Examinations</b>	
Earth Science	Grade 9
Living Environment	Grade 10
Integrated Algebra	Grade 9
English Language Arts	Grade 11
Geometry	Grade 10
Global History	Grade 11
Physics	Grade 11
U.S. History	Grade 9

#### **4. Student Enrollment**

##### **a. Student enrollment growth plan**

Central to Lavelle Prep’s enrollment plan is the decision to make 6<sup>th</sup> grade the primary entry point for new students. Although we believe that all students have the potential to succeed in high school and to go on to college, we recognize that many entering students are not well-prepared academically for a college-preparatory curriculum. To address this, the Lavelle Prep intermediate curriculum is designed to bring these students to proficiency. Students who are not able to take advantage of this (admitted later from other schools) would be at a great disadvantage. It is, therefore, our plan to rarely replace students who withdraw from Lavelle Prep beyond grade 7. This plan required us initially to make assumptions about attrition based on the experience of charter schools in dramatically different demographic districts and the advice of experts. District 31 which encompasses all of Staten Island is unique in its size, socio-economic diversity, and range of educational options. Our experience, while still limited has led us to propose a modified growth plan. Our current plan is based on the following estimates of attrition: From 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, 10%, from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 40%, from 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades 10%. From 6<sup>th</sup> grade, attrition may exceed 15%, but a small number of students will be admitted in 7<sup>th</sup> grade to insure that targets in that grade are achieved.

Estimated of Maximum Enrollment are consistent with original charter. In the event that attrition proves dramatically lower than currently estimated, admission to 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade will be reduced in order to keep total enrollment in the projected range.

*JOHN W. LAVELLE PREPARATORY CHARTER SCHOOL Enrollment Years 1 to 7*

<b>Grade Level (ages)</b>	<b>FY15</b>	<b>FY16</b>	<b>FY17</b>	<b>FY18</b>	<b>FY19</b>
Sixth (10-12)	136	119	119	119	119
Seventh (11-13)	102	102	102	102	102
Eighth (12-14)	92	92	92	92	92
Ninth (13-15)	45	46	46	46	46
Tenth (14-16)	32	41	41	41	41
Eleventh (15-17)	15	28	36	37	37
Twelfth (16-18)		14	26	33	33
Total Projected (Maximum)	422 (510)	441 (510)	462 (510)	470 (510)	471 (510)

**5. Special Populations**

**a. Special Education Students**

Lavelle Prep welcomes Special Education students and works vigorously to address their special needs and to ensure compliance with all applicable law. Initial evaluations, re-evaluations, and revisions of IEPs, and the procedures relating thereto, are the responsibility of the local educational agency – the school district of a student’s residence (see 34 CFR §§300.22, 300.312 and 300.340 *et al*). Lavelle Prep fully cooperates in the evaluation/reevaluation process. Lavelle Prep implements the IEP developed by the CSE of the student’s district of residence for each student with a disability, and cooperates with the student’s district of residence to ensure that all services as recommended in that IEP are provided to the student, including class size and teacher-to-student ratio. Strict adherence to the student goals and services provided for in the IEPs will be ensured by the principal through observation of classes, parent and staff meetings, communication with students when appropriate. If there is a perceived need for change in an IEP, Lavelle Prep will contact the appropriate Committee on Special Education to re-evaluate the student and consider revising the IEP as needed. Under IDEA and the implementing federal regulations and applicable state law, Lavelle Prep will continue to provide appropriate accommodations to the student during the CSE review and evaluation process.

Lavelle Prep is committed to the Inclusion Model as the means of serving the needs of all of its students. Therefore, all classrooms are staffed to meet the requirements of the special education students included. Students requiring adapted curriculum work, and other therapies such as speech-language therapy and occupational therapy, receive them within the classroom whenever appropriate, and according to their IEP, compliant with governing law and regulations. The Wellness Curriculum provides a structured opportunity for all students to learn the skills essential to manage the challenges they face and to respect their differences.

Students with disabilities at Lavelle Prep have the opportunity to participate and progress in the general education curriculum and they participate in the State and District-wide assessments in accordance with their Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs).

Teachers and related service personnel who have the responsibility for implementing students' IEPs have access to these records and be informed of specific responsibilities for implementing the IEP. This is done during the Annual Review process, requested reviews and team meetings. If it is determined that a student in general education with no IEP requires academic or related services, a series of interventions will first be implemented, including revised scheduling or teacher change for that student, academic interventions including constructionist strategies and multi-disciplinary instruction and parent involvement. If, after exhausting all interventions, there is still a need for more intense service, the student would be referred to the Staten Island Committee on Special Education (CSE), where additional special services might be recommended.

Under the supervision of a Special Education Coordinator, Individualized Educations Plans (IEPs) of incoming students are reviewed by a teacher certified in Special Education to ensure compliance. All IEPs are reviewed annually.

If a student entering Lavelle Prep without an IEP appears to be eligible for special education services, Lavelle Prep will issue a request in writing to the chairperson of the appropriate Committee on Special Education for an initial evaluation. A copy of this request along with the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR 300.504 (Parents Rights Brochure) will be sent to the student's family. This request will:

1. Provide the reasons for the referral including any applicable test results, reports, or records;
2. Outline the interventions taken prior to referral;
3. Describe the family involvement throughout the Lavelle Prep assessment process; and
4. Provide relevant documentation generated during the pre-referral process.

Under the direct supervision of the Principal, certified special education teachers coordinate implementation of this policy. All special education teachers are appropriately certified pursuant to applicable state and federal law.

The Principal has the responsibility to ensure that students and their families have access to the CSE, the Annual Review and to receive all the services provided for in the IEP. The Principal, or designee, participates through meetings with the CSE, phone calls, e-mail contact with the CSE Chairperson of relevant members of the CSE on Staten Island, or the district of referral. The principal has the responsibility to maintain current CSE files at the school and to see that there is a flow of information between parents, CSE and the school. Further, timely notice of proposed meetings regarding special education services including IEP updates are given to parents, staff and students, when appropriate. Time is provided for the teachers and related service staff who are responsible for implementing the student IEP to be present (or participate by phone) at any CSE meeting.

#### **b. Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)**

Lavelle Prep staff asks all incoming families to complete a Home Language Survey in the language or format the parent or guardian best understands. The data provided by this survey identifies students that may be LEP/ELL and therefore require further screening. Appropriate school staff then interview any student whose home language or first language

is not English. Based on the results of this interview, the school staff determine the student's oral proficiency in English. Once this initial screening process is completed, the staff conduct a formal assessment of any student who speaks little or no English to determine the student's level of English language proficiency. This assessment, which is administered only once per student is the New York State Identification Test for English Language Learners (NYSITELL). Future assessments of the student's English language proficiency are conducted in the spring using the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT).

Lavelle Prep uses the research-based Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) program model. The goal of SEI is to develop English language and academic skills among ELL students. Content instruction is provided in English, with Sheltered English instructional methods to make content comprehensible. According to Short, Hudec and Echevarria,<sup>27</sup> sheltered English immersion is "a means for making grade-level academic content more accessible for English Language Learners while also promoting their English language development." Teachers also utilize special instructional strategies, sometimes referred to nationally as Sheltered English Techniques (SET) or Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), for delivering content to English language learner students in English. As needed, Lavelle Prep provides summer training in the SEI model's instructional strategies for the teachers.

English Language Learners will be provided with ESL services by a certified ESL teacher to meet their needs. Their instruction takes place in the academic classroom with the assistance of an ESL teacher as a "push in" support in selected sections of English Language Art. At Lavelle Prep, limited English proficient (LEP)/English language learners (ELL) are not excluded from curricular and/or extracurricular activities due to their inability to speak and understand English. At Lavelle Prep, LEP/ELL students are not assigned to special education programs due to their level of English proficiency alone. At Lavelle Prep, there are no separate classes for special education students. All students are assigned to inclusive, integrated classrooms.

## **6. School Characteristics**

### **a. Your school's daily and weekly schedule and an annual calendar [Ed.L. §2851(2)(n)]**

Lavelle Prep provides a rigorous college preparatory curriculum emphasizing visual and performing arts in an environment that supports and nurtures student potential within an extended school day (7:55 AM – 3:40 PM on Mondays through Thursdays and 7:55 AM – 2:43 PM on Fridays).<sup>28</sup> In the intermediate grades students are divided into sections of 13-17 students each. In the high school, students are grouped by course rather than grade. All students receive instruction from certified special education teachers for a minimum of 4.5 hours per day, either from a teacher who is dually certified in special education and content area or from two teachers one certified in special education and the other in the

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<sup>27</sup> Deborah J. Short, Justine Hudec, & Jana Echevarria. *Using the SIOP model: Professional development manual for sheltered instruction*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics, 2002.

<sup>28</sup> Beginning in September 2014, the school day time has been amended to allow for 60 minute classes. This allows students to meet the physical education requirements of 120 minutes per week in two periods, instead of three, thus permitting one additional period of academic instruction.

content area, working as a team. Sections of the Wellness Curriculum are taught teachers of other subjects. As a result of attrition, it is anticipated that the number of sections will be reduced in advancing grades. Teacher assistants are generally assigned to a grade team in the intermediate grades and work closely with teachers to support instruction.

Small class size allows for intimate discussion within each class as well as intensive individual instruction. The school day is divided into seven instructional periods of 52 minutes.<sup>29</sup>

In the intermediate grades, each student receives eight periods of instruction per week in both Math and ELA. Students who have not achieved proficiency in these subjects receive three extra periods a week of instruction. All students receive instruction in Social Studies and Science for 3 periods per week. All students take Wellness, and Physical Education for an average of 2.5 periods per week. Sixth graders take Visual Arts, 7th graders Theater Arts, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders Music, all for two periods per week. All students who have not achieved proficiency in either ELA or math receive extra instructions for three periods a week. Students begin Spanish when they have achieved proficiency in either ELA or math. Students who have achieved proficiency in both have an opportunity to select an elective course.

In high school, each student receives five periods per week in their major subject areas, (English, Math, Social Studies, Science), and four periods per week for Language Other Than English, as their credit requirements demand. Students take Wellness and Physical Education for an average of 2.5 periods per week. Students take their Art track for two periods per week. All students who have not achieved proficiency in English and Math receive extra instructions in those subjects.

Beginning in 11<sup>th</sup> grade, weekly classes in each core subject are combined into increasingly larger lecture sessions to prepare students for the kinds of learning environments that they are likely to encounter in college. In grade 11, two cohorts meet jointly for the single periods that conducted as lecture sessions. In grade 12, the lecture groups are larger.

Students enter Lavelle Prep at different academic levels. Lavelle Prep staff work diligently with all students to move them toward academic proficiency. All students continue to achieve enriched instruction in ELA and math until they achieve proficiency in these areas. This extra instruction provides a unique opportunity for struggling students to receive differentiated attention while still remaining in integrated, heterogeneous classes. Lavelle Prep utilizes a Targeted Literacy Intervention Program which allows struggling readers who are many years below reading levels may receive extra reading support led by trained teachers using the Orton-Gillingham approach. This multisensory reading approach uses systematic phonics lessons that focus on the initial stages of reading. Students move ahead in learning linguistics in more advanced stages of syllabic, morphemic, syntactic, semantic, and grammatical structures of language. Struggling math students may participate in an 'extra' math instruction, utilizing a variety of online programs.

During the 2014-2015 academic year, there will be at least 180 instructional days.

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<sup>29</sup> Beginning in 2011-12, each student will receive 7 hours of instruction per day, in 7 1-hour instructional periods. Students will also spend ½ hour per day in homeroom/advisory and ½ hour at lunch.

**See Attachment 2 – Annual School Calendar**

**See Attachment 3 - Typical Student Schedules**

**See Attachment 4 - Typical Teacher Schedule**

**b. Your school's code of conduct / discipline policy**

At Lavelle Prep we believe that most all students will be able to meet our behavioral expectations. With in-class supports provided by teachers and teacher assistants and a curriculum that explicitly identifies and teaches self-management strategies, we expect most all students to experience success in learning to manage their own behaviors. By implementing these strategies in conjunction with individual Behavior Intervention Plans, where appropriate, we expect to achieve a high degree of success. Classroom management is a focus of attention during the Lavelle Prep new teacher training orientation and our annual summer institute. In the rare event that behaviors of students are not responsive to our supports and interventions, and those behaviors are disruptive to the educational environment and/or pose a danger to the student or others, those behaviors will be addressed, consistent with the requirements of Due Process, by the school's code of conduct/discipline policy. Students with disabilities are governed by the same discipline policy as other students, except when it is determined that the behavior under consideration is a manifestation of the student's handicapping condition. In such instances, compliant with our policies on disciplining students with disabilities and Due Process, where applicable, a review will be undertaken to determine if referral to the Committee on Special Education is indicated for possible modification in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

**Classroom Rules and Expectations**

At Lavelle Prep, the behavior management system is organized in levels relating to the severity of the behavioral challenges and is a guide for teachers and administrators who use professional judgment in its application.

Lavelle Prep is committed to a policy of positive behavioral reinforcement and rewards. Minor challenges that impedes orderly classroom procedures or interferes with the orderly operation of the School can usually be handled on the spot by individual staff. Our point system and instructional practices are designed to shape prosocial student behavior. We recognize that many students come to Lavelle Prep with both academic and/or behavioral challenges. It is our intention to help all students overcome these challenges, to succeed in high school, in college and beyond.

Students can earn PREP POINTS in in each period for being: on time, on task, prepared, staying in seat, and listening and being considerate/respectful. At the end of each period, students who have exhibited the above behaviors earn one Prep Point per behavior. Therefore, the maximum number of Prep Points per period is 5. Students can earn an additional 5 bonus points each day in recognition of behavior exemplifying the Optimist's Creed. Teachers do not GIVE points, students EARN them.

Examples of behaviors which may result in the failure of students to earn Prep Points include but are not limited to: Dress code violations, Talking back, Defiance (including willful, open or continued disobedience, or inappropriate language towards a school



employee or volunteer), Inappropriate language such as the use of profanity, vulgarity, insults or obscenities, Tardiness, Horseplay, Abuse of bathroom passes, Disruptive talking, and Refusal to participate.

All Lavelle Prep faculty acknowledge and reward students for exhibiting positive behaviors. In the event that they need to redirect negative behaviors, the following techniques are used:

All students receive a non-verbal cue first, prompting them to stop what they are doing and help them to refocus. If the non-verbal cue is not successful a verbal cue is given.

If the student needs to be relocated so that they can refocus, an area in the classroom has been designated within the class so that at all times the student will still be a part of the class and not disengaged.

Students who are egregious in their misbehavior can be referred to the Reflection Room during their lunch period. Parents of students referred to the Reflection Room are notified by phone of their child's referral. In the Reflection Room, students work with staff and develop writing skills while reflecting upon their behavior that caused them to spend time in the Reflection Room. Reasons for referral include four tardinesses to class in a week, being out of uniform, being in the hallway without a pass, inappropriate touching, extremely disruptive classroom behavior, and inappropriate use of electronics or technology. Students' parents must be called and notified before a student attends the Reflection Room.

For every four Reflection referrals a student accumulates, he or she automatically receives a day in the *Reflect, Correct, Learn* (RCL) Room. Before students attend the RCL Room, their parents are notified by phone and the student is sent home with a letter from the principal explaining why they are attending the RCL Room. Students in RCL spend the school day separated from their class completing that day's course assignments with teachers assigned to the RCL room. Along with completing their assignments, students must also reflect, correct, and learn from the behaviors that resulted in a day spent in the RCL Room.

In certain cases of disruptive behavior, students can be placed in the RCL Room rather than receiving a referral to the Reflection Room. See the section below entitled *Serious Violations* to see how Category A, B, and C Violations are addressed.

**Parent/Guardian Contact:** Teacher may contact parent or guardian and conference on the phone or in person depending on the severity of the issue.

**Additional Consequences:** In the event that the above interventions are not successful, consequences such as temporary loss of assembly privileges, cafeteria privileges, or trip privileges may be employed at the Principal's discretion depending on the behavioral issue being addressed.

### **Cellphones and Electronics**

Lavelle Prep students are encouraged not to bring cellphones or other electronics to School. If students bring these devices, students are expected to store them in their lockers before reporting to their homerooms. Students can retrieve their devices from their

lockers at the end of the day immediately before dismissal. Noncompliance results in the Principal's intervention with the student's parent(s) or guardian.

### **Serious Violations**

We recognize that some behaviors threaten the learning environment for all students and address these through a system of suspensions and, if necessary expulsion. For Special Education students, the suspension program applies unless it is determined that the behavioral challenge presented is a function of the student's disability. Instead of expulsion, Special Education students whose behavioral challenges cannot be safely addressed at Lavelle Prep are referred to the Committee on Special Education for reevaluation of placement. Each student is a unique individual with unique personal, social, and educational needs. As a result, every disciplinary situation is unique in nature. Consequences for misbehavior provide the best learning value when matched to the unique student and the unique situation. The needs of all students differ and it is expected that the Principal will, relying on professional experience, take into account the needs of individuals as well as the overall effective functioning of school in making judgments regarding suspension and expulsion. The type and length of discipline is based on factors such as previous violations, severity of conduct, and other relevant educational concerns.

First Lavelle Prep suspensions normally are for one day. Subsequent suspensions increase by a day. No suspension is longer than 5 days, except as described below. Students are evaluated for expulsions when they have been suspended five times or sooner if the seriousness of their misconduct requires this. All violations of law are reported to law enforcement agencies.

**Category A Violations.** A student will be immediately suspended from school and will be considered for suspension for serious violations including, but not limited to, the following: possession of a weapon, arson or possession of an explosive or flammable material, or threatened use of a look-a-like weapon with intent to intimidate.

**Category B Violations.** A student will be suspended from school for a violation involving, but not limited to, the following: bullying, hazing, threats to kill or harm, intimidation, assault, discrimination, harassment, etc.; possession of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other controlled substances or look-a-like and imitation controlled substances and/or drug paraphernalia; physical aggression, including fighting and or throwing objects at another person; fighting; inappropriate exposure of body parts.

**Category C Violations.** A student MAY be suspended from school for a single violation or repeated violations involving, but not limited to, the following: Gang activity; failure to adhere to the terms of the acceptable computer use agreement; defying authority; disruptive behavior; foul, profane, vulgar, or abusive language; defacing or destroying school property; truancy; Leaving school area or area of staff supervision without permission; theft; repeated violations or habitually disruptive behavior.

### **Other Considerations**

- School personnel may use reasonable physical restraint, if necessary, to protect a person or property from physical injury or damage or to remove a violent or disruptive student.
- If damage or loss of school property occurs, official report cards and transcripts may be withheld until payment for the damage is received or the lost property is recovered.

All violations of law are reported to law enforcement authorities.

## **Disciplinary Procedures**

**Major misbehaviors** include acts against persons and property that endanger the health or safety of others in the school but do not violate the law. These include leaving school without authority, fighting, vandalism, and drug or weapons possession. All major misbehaviors result in an investigation by the administration, an interview with the student, and a meeting with the student and parents to determine disciplinary consequences, which may include short or long-term suspension. All violations of the law are reported to law enforcement authorities.

Lavelle Prep disciplinary policy/procedures apply to events occurring on the school bus (yellow bus) or on officially sponsored school trips. Because of the grades to be served by Lavelle Prep, the majority of students utilizing General Education Transportation (yellow bus) service will be doing so in accordance with an Individualized Treatment Plan. In the event of potential disciplinary action in such cases, Lavelle Prep will be mindful of this plan and will involve the Committee on Special Education as appropriate in addressing the situation.

Lavelle Prep complies with all binding and applicable, constitutional, statutory or regulatory Due Process requirements for long terms suspensions or expulsions. Before imposing a short-term suspension, the Principal shall immediately notify the parents or guardian in writing that the student may be suspended from school. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery or express mail delivery within 24 hours of the decision to impose suspension at the last known address(es) of the parents or guardians. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone. Such notice shall provide a description of the incident(s) for which suspension is proposed and shall inform the parents or guardian of their right to request an immediate informal conference with the Principal. Such notice and informal conference shall be in the dominant language or mode of communication used by the parents or guardian.

The Principal may also impose a long-term suspension. A student may be suspended from instruction for more than five days only after his/her rights to written notice of charges, representation by counsel, a hearing before the Principal or designated hearing officer, and present evidence and witnesses and to cross examine witness as well as the right to appeal to the Lavelle Prep Board of Trustees. Such a suspension may be imposed only after the student has been found guilty at a formal suspension hearing. In extreme circumstances, the Principal may expel the student from school. Upon determining that a student's action warrants a possible long-term suspension, the Principal shall verbally inform the student that he or she is being suspended and is being considered for a long-term suspension (or expulsion) and state the reasons for such actions. The Principal shall also immediately notify the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) in writing. Written notice shall be provided by personal delivery, express mail delivery, or equivalent means reasonably calculated to assure receipt of such notice within 24 hours of suspension at the last known address. Where possible, notification also shall be provided by telephone if the School has been provided with a contact telephone number for the parent(s) or guardian(s). Such notice shall provide a description of the incident or incidents, which resulted in the suspension and shall indicate that a formal hearing will be held on the matter which may result in a long-term suspension (or expulsion). The notification provided shall be in the dominant language used by the parent(s) or guardian(s).

At the formal hearing, the student shall have the right to be represented by counsel, question witnesses, and present evidence. If the Principal initiates the suspension proceeding, he or she shall personally hear and determine the proceeding or may, in his discretion, designate a hearing officer to conduct the hearing. The hearing officer's report shall be advisory only and the Principal may accept or reject all or part of it. The Principal's decision to impose a long-term suspension or expulsion may be challenged by the parent or guardian and appealed to the Board of Trustees who may meet as a whole or as a designated committee with student rights equivalent to the initial formal hearing. The appeal shall be scheduled within 5 school days of the implementation of the long term suspension or expulsion.

All suspended students are provided alternative instruction, equal to that which they would have received, within 24 hours of the suspension or expulsion.

The Principal is responsible for insuring that every plan of correction is reviewed in a timely manner and the need for further action identified.

The Due Process Policy and Procedure is included in the *Lavelle Prep Student/Family Handbook*.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Lavelle Prep shall implement the following disciplinary policy procedures with respect to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are governed by the same discipline policy as other students, except when it is determined that the behavior under consideration is a manifestation of the student's handicapping condition. In such instances, a review is undertaken to determine if referral to the Committee on Special Education is indicated for possible modification in the student's Individualized Education Plan.

If a student violates Lavelle Prep's discipline code and is being considered for a suspension or removal, Lavelle Prep ensures the following due process protections are provided to the student and to the student's parent(s) in addition to those set forth in the regular education discipline code. For suspensions of five school days or less, the student's parent(s) or guardian is provided with a written notice, and a follow up telephone call if possible, within 24 hours of the incident leading up to the suspension which describes the basis for the suspension and explains that the parent or guardian has the right to request an informal conference with the principal and appropriate staff to discuss the incident. For suspensions in excess of five consecutive school days, the student's parent(s) or guardian must be provided with a written notice which indicates that the district proposes to suspend the student from school in excess of five consecutive school days, describes the basis for the proposed suspension, explains that the student has an opportunity for a fair hearing conducted by the principal or designated officer at which the student will have a right to question any witnesses accusing him/her of committing the misconduct charge and to present witnesses on his/her behalf. Where possible, notification will also be provided by telephone. For any student of compulsory school age, Lavelle Prep will provide alternative education to the student during the suspension as set forth below, including any special services required by the Individualized Education Program prepared by the students' CSE. Final determination on a suspension or removal of a student, following due process, shall be made by the principal.

In addition to the above, there are additional procedures and protections that apply to students with disabilities including:

- The provision of a free and appropriate education to students who are suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons for more than ten school days in a school year, this includes a teacher going to the student's home or the student coming to the school during or after the scheduled school day to receive the required instruction according to the IEP;
- The responsibility of schools to address behaviors that result in suspensions or removals for more than ten school days in a school year (functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plans);
- The determination of the relationship between the behavior and the student's disability when a suspension or removal would result in a disciplinary change of placement (manifestation determination);
- Providing the parent of the student a copy of the procedural safeguards notice (special education rights) whenever a disciplinary action will result in a disciplinary change in placement which is a removal for more than 10 consecutive school days;
- An expedited process to resolve disagreements between parents and schools regarding certain disciplinary actions. Protections for students who are not classified when a parent asserts that the school had knowledge, prior to the behavior that resulted in the disciplinary action, that the student was a student with a disability;
- Expedited evaluations of students suspected of having a disability during the time the student is suspended.

Lavelle Prep has the authority to suspend or remove students with a disability to interim alternative educational settings for up to 45 days for offenses relating to illegal drugs, controlled substances, weapons, or where the student represents a safety concern. In instances when the school maintains that it is dangerous for a student to remain in his current educational placement, the school can request an expedited due process hearing to move the student to an interim setting. The school can remove a student with a disability from his or her current placement when necessary, even though the student had previously been removed earlier in the school year, as long as the removal does not constitute a disciplinary change in placement.

Lavelle Prep works closely with the appropriate Committee on Special Education to establish clear guidelines for communication and decision-making on disciplinary matters.

In addition to the discipline procedures applicable to all students, the following procedures are applicable to students with disabilities. [A student not specifically identified as having a disability but whose school district of residence or charter school, prior to the behavior which is the subject of the disciplinary action, has a basis of knowledge—in accordance with 34 CFR 300.527(b)—that a disability exists may request to be disciplined in accordance with these provisions.] Lavelle Prep shall comply with sections 300.519-300.529 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and the following procedures, except that in the event that the following procedures are inconsistent with federal law and regulations, such federal law and regulations shall govern.

Lavelle Prep shall maintain written records of all suspensions and expulsions of students with a disability including the name of the student, a description of the behavior engaged in, the disciplinary action taken, and a record of the number of days a student has been suspended or removed for disciplinary reasons.

Students for whom the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) includes a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) will be disciplined in accordance with the BIP. If the BIP appears not to be effective or if there is a concern for the health and safety of the student or others if the BIP is followed with respect to the infraction, the matter will be immediately referred to the appropriate Committee on Special Education for consideration of a change in the guidelines.

If a student identified as having a disability is suspended during the course of the school year for a total of eight days, such student is immediately referred to the CSE of the student's district of residence for reconsideration of the student's educational placement. Such a student shall not be suspended for a total of more than ten days during the school year without the specific involvement of the CSE of the student's district of residence prior to the eleventh day of suspension, because such suspensions may be considered to be a change in placement.

In considering the placement of students referred because of disciplinary problems, the CSE of the student's district of residence is expected to follow its ordinary policies with respect to parental notification and involvement.

Lavelle Prep shall work with the district to ensure that the CSE of the student's district of residence meets within seven days of notification of any of the following:

1. The commission of an infraction by a student with a disability who has previously been suspended for the maximum allowable number of days. The commission of an infraction resulting from the student's disability.
2. The commission of an infraction by a disabled student, regardless of whether the student has previously been suspended during the school year if, had such infraction been committed by a non-disabled student, the principal would seek to impose a suspension in excess of five days. Lavelle Prep shall ensure that when the suspension or removal of a student with a disability will constitute a disciplinary change of placement, the CSE will be immediately notified so that the CSE can meet its required obligations to:
  - a. Convene a CSE meeting within 10 school days to make a manifestation determination.
  - b. Convene a CSE meeting within 10 business days to develop a plan to conduct a functional behavioral assessment or review an existing functional behavioral assessment or behavioral intervention plan.
  - c. Provide the student's parent with a copy of their procedural due process rights.
  - d. Work closely with the CSE of the students' district of residence in determining education services or the interim alternative educational setting consistent with the FAPE requirements.

#### Provision of Services during Removal

Those students removed for a period fewer than ten days will receive all classroom assignments and a schedule to complete such assignments during the time of his or her suspension. Provisions will be made to permit a suspended student to make up

assignments or tests missed as a result of such suspension. The school also shall provide alternative instruction to assist the student, so that the student is given full opportunity to complete assignments and master the curriculum, including additional instruction, phone assistance, computer instruction and/or home visits and one-on-one tutoring.

During any subsequent removal that, combined with previous removals equals ten or more school days during the school year, but does not constitute a change in placement, services must be provided to the extent determined necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. In these cases, school personnel, in consultation with the child's special education teacher, shall make the service determination.

During any removal for drug or weapon offenses [pursuant to 34 CFR §300.520(a)(2)] services will be provided to the extent necessary to enable the child to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. These service determinations will be made by the CSE of the student's district of residence. The school will place students in interim alternative educational settings as appropriate and mandated by 34 CFR §300.520(a)(2).

During any subsequent removal that does constitute a change in placement, but where the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, the services must be provided to the extent necessary to enable the student to appropriately progress in the general curriculum and in achieving the goals of his or her IEP. The CSE of the student's district of residence will make the service determination.

### CSE Meetings

Meetings of the CSE of the student's district of residence to either develop a behavioral assessment plan or, if the child has one, to review such plan are required when: (1) the child is first removed from his or her current placement for more than ten school days in a school year; and (2) when commencing a removal which constitutes a change in placement.

Subsequently, if other removals occur which do not constitute a change in placement, the school will work with the CSE of the student's district of residence to review the child's assessment plan and its implementation to determine if modifications are necessary. If one or more members of the CSE of the student's district of residence believe that modifications are needed, then the CSE is expected to meet to modify the plan and/or its implementation.

Lavelle Prep ensures the special education coordinator or special teacher and the general classroom teacher attend all meetings regarding their students initiated by the committee on special education from the student's home district. These meetings could be relating to the development and implementation of behavioral intervention plans, initial referrals, change in service, or annual reviews, etc.

### Due Process

Any time the behavior of a student with a disability constitutes a disciplinary action, a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) will be conducted and a decision will be made as to preparing or modifying the behavioral intervention plan. These procedures are followed

each time to ensure that when a behavior incident occurs that a suspension or removal of a student with a disability does not constitute a disciplinary change in placement, and that the student is not suspended or removed for behaviors related to the student's disability as determined by the CSE and other qualified individuals.

If discipline which would constitute a change in placement is contemplated for any student, the following steps shall be taken: (1) not later than the date on which the decision to take such action is made, the parents of the student with a disability shall be notified of that decision and provided the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR §300.504; and (2) immediately, if possible, but in no case later than ten school days after the date on which such decision is made, the CSE of the student's district of residence and other qualified personnel shall meet and review the relationship between the child's disability and the behavior subject to the disciplinary action.

If, upon review, it is determined that the child's behavior was not a manifestation of his or her disability, then the child may be disciplined in the same manner as a child without a disability, except as provided in 34 CFR §300.121(d), which relates to the provision of services to students with disabilities during periods of removal.

Parents may request a hearing to challenge the manifestation determination. Except as provided below, the child will remain in his or her current educational placement pending the determination of the hearing.

If a parent requests a hearing or an appeal to challenge the interim alternative educational setting or the manifestation determination resulting from a disciplinary action relating to weapons or drugs, the child shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided for in the disciplinary action, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and charter school agree otherwise.

**c. Describe the manner in which the school will communicate with students' families and how the school will promote parental and staff involvement in school governance. [Ed.L. §2851(2)(c)].**

Communication and collaboration between school and parents is valuable for all schools and all students. Recognizing the importance of parental involvement in school governance, Lavelle Prep provides a variety of opportunities for parental involvement which go beyond the requirements of the Open Meeting Law. There are opportunities for parent participation through the Parent Teacher Association and through participation on Board committees and task forces. The Principal meets regularly with the leadership of the Parents Association, and parent input is solicited by the Board of Trustees as part of their annual evaluation process. Families and parents are also eligible to serve as trustees, if so elected. In addition, Board committees and task forces may include parent members.

Lavelle Prep utilizes a number of mechanisms to insure that regularly distributed school information is available to parents whose primary language is not English. We utilize bi-lingual staff and bi-lingual members of the Parents Association to assist in translation, as well as community volunteers. Lavelle Prep cultivates collaborative relationships with community-based organizations serving the immigrant community to increase this capacity and to solicit feedback designed to enhance our cultural sensitivity. Lavelle Prep is also developing a website which will utilize state-of-the-art techniques to provide a highly



interactive environment, a vehicle for communication and information exchange. Because Lavelle Prep is committed to the inclusion of students and families who have often felt unwanted in other schools, the website will serve a crucial, welcoming function.

Lavelle Prep faces an additional challenge. When a school intentionally includes a special population such as emotionally challenged youth, communication between school staff, parents, and mental health providers is absolutely critical.<sup>30</sup> The development and maintenance of positive collaboration is a priority task for Lavelle Prep. We expect this will be difficult. Parents of special needs students have frequently felt themselves blamed and harassed by school personnel. We expect that the parents of many of our students have had this experience. Many parents of special needs students have never been called to school for anything “good.”

Lavelle Prep has sought to transform these parent-school relationships into positive resources for all students. We do a number of things to achieve this objective. We create opportunities for parents to visit the school to observe student success: performances, art shows, holiday parties, trips. We hold regular conferences involving parents, teachers, and mental health providers to assess student progress so that parents are frequently hearing good news.

## 7. Professional Development:

Professional development/growth at Lavelle Prep begins in the recruitment and hiring process and is deeply embedded in the daily life of the school. Even before they are hired, teacher and assistant teacher candidates participate in a 16-week seminar, conducted by the Lavelle Prep faculty, in which they are introduced to the Lavelle Prep approach to instruction. This process gives both existing faculty and candidates the chance to assess their ability to work together effectively as an instructional team.

Once hired, teachers have two teams that meet on a regular schedule for professional growth. One team focuses on grade-level alignment and one focuses on subject/inquiry teams surrounding common core standards and instruction, as the school has a commitment for all teachers to be highly effective in teaching common core standards. All meetings incorporate data as a key component of discussions. These teams elect leadership team members, who are vetted and approved by the administration. The leadership team meets weekly both to address urgent issues and to manage long-term strategic planning. Leadership team members provide two-way communication between teacher teams and administration.

In addition, all teachers and teacher assistants participate in half-day staff development once a month, a mid-year retreat, and a two-week Summer Institute. At the mid-year

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<sup>30</sup> See for instance, Hibbs, E.D. **Child and adolescent disorders: issues for psychosocial treatment research - Special Issue: Psychosocial Treatment Research** (Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, Feb, 1995); Brannan, A.M. Ensuring Effective Mental Health Treatment in Real-World Settings and the Critical Role of Families (Journal of Child and Family Studies, March, 2003); Hoagwood, K., Burns, B.J., Kiser, L., Ringeisen, H., Schoenwald, S.K. Evidence-based practice in child and adolescent mental health services (*Psychiatric Services*, 2001); and Rones, M., Hoagwood, K. School-based mental health services: A 15-year research review (Child Clinical and Family Psychology Review, 2001).

retreat, the staff conducts a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) on all elements of the school and identifies and adopts action steps to modify instruction and policies. At the Summer Institute, working as a whole staff and in grade teams, teacher and teacher assistants review and re-invent classroom and instructional policies and procedures and commit to their consistent implementation. Summer Institute time is also used productively for joint curriculum and project planning.

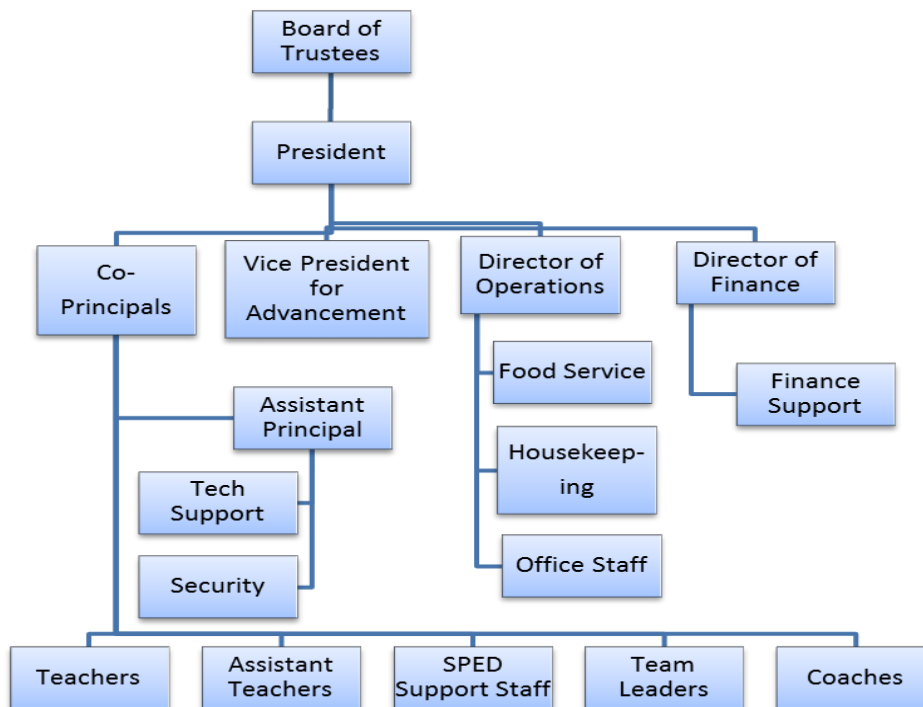
Finally, all teachers and paraprofessionals are supported in pursuing any additional credentials needed to be fully certified in critical subject areas and dual certified in special education. The ultimate goal is for teachers to both be supported and have the capacity to lead the school improvement process.

### **PART 3: WILL YOUR SCHOOL BE A VIABLE ORGANIZATION?**

#### **VIII. Governance Structure and Organizational Design**

##### **1. Organizational Design**

###### **a. Organization Chart**



###### **b. Reporting and Oversight Structure**

The mission of Lavelle Prep is to provide a rigorous college preparatory education that equips and empowers students for success, including students living with emotional and other challenges.

Lavelle Prep achieves the critical balance through clarity of mission, ongoing and focused review of student outcome data, and a balanced organizational design: Although many students need a variety of mental health supports and services in order to succeed, Lavelle Prep is a school and not a mental health treatment program. While Lavelle Prep provides a variety of educational support services, mental health treatment will be provided through collaborating community-based mental health professionals and organizations. Lavelle Prep provides, in addition to the core college preparatory curriculum, a variety of trainings and supports designed to help students learn to self-manage their disabilities and to cope with the emotional challenges which they face, but does not provide treatment. Improved mental health is a necessary but not sufficient condition for academic achievement. By supporting improved student health, providing them with a rigorous and engaging academic program, collecting and continually monitoring data and adjusting instruction on that basis, our students can and will show academic success based on Core Curriculum standards.

The Governance structure, policies and procedures of Lavelle Prep are consistent with the school's vision, mission, goals and governance philosophy as proposed in the school's charter, as well as applicable Federal and State laws and the requirements of the charter authorizing entity.

The Lavelle Prep Board of Trustees is the school's policy-making body. Board will be comprised of 5 to 15 members. The officers of the Board are: Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Treasurer, and Secretary. The standing committees of the Board include the following; Executive Committee, Finance/Audit Committee, Governance and Nominating Committee, and Education/Accountability Committee. Each Board member will be assigned to one or more standing committees. The Executive Committee consists of all Board officers. At least three members of other committees will be members of the Board of Trustees. The Board strives to include expertise in key areas (finance, development, adolescent mental health, community organization, public administration, quality management) and access to significant public and private resources.

The Board of Trustees directs the affairs of Lavelle Prep by its delegation of authority to the school's President. The President is responsible for insuring that the mission and the philosophy are maintained and for the overall financial viability of the school. The President assures that the Board of Trustees as well as the committees of the Board receives timely information and reports.

The President supervises senior school leaders including the Principal (or co-principals), the Vice President for Advancement, the Director of Operations, and the Director of Finance. Together with other members of the school leadership selected by the president, they constitute the Lavelle Prep management team. Under the leadership of the President, the management team meets weekly to coordinate operations and to develop coherent approaches to the challenges facing the school. Together the management team develops financial and budgetary plans for submission to the Board of Trustees. The budgeting process is a deliberative and iterative one, where those closest to the program will provide critical and ongoing input into budget development. This data is aggregated and balanced by the management team and the budgeting process facilitated by the President. These budget requests and program priorities then feed into the Board budget setting and approval process again in a deliberative and iterative way, such that the final approved

budget reflects both the strategic priorities of the school and also the site identified program priorities.

The Co-Principals and the Assistant Principal are responsible for leading and supervising the educational program, including the selection, training, and supervision of teachers.

The Director of Operations is responsible for overseeing human resource administration and all non-educational functions other than finance.

The success of Lavelle Prep depends on the leadership provided by the management team. Their ability to develop and lead strong teams of professionals, their commitment to professional development and to student achievement, to rigorous measurement and accountability are all crucial to the school's success. By creating an internal accountability system that provides ongoing data about academic, organizational, and financial performance, we are able to anticipate and address challenges or adjust program where we are not seeing appropriate results.

### **Failing Students**

At the core of Lavelle Prep's efforts to support failing students is a process for ongoing monitoring of student progress, continuous communication between school and parents, and the development of individualized focused interventions. This is based on an understanding that parents can be crucial allies in the academic success of their children. Communication is both individualized, between teachers and parents and between school and parents. Individualized communications include such routines as requiring parent signatures on exams and homework, individualized communication utilizing a variety of media (written, telephone, email, face-to-face meetings) adjusted to accommodate parental communication preferences as well as formal periodic progress reports. General school wide communication between school and parents is also critically important in creating an environment in which parents feel that their involvement is truly welcomed. Lavelle Prep uses a system of weekly automated phone calls to parents to supplement traditional communication modalities. Many parents of students facing emotional challenges have felt stigmatized and unwelcome in their children's schools as well as in parent organizations. The special needs of their children may have seemed to drain resources from other students. Or they have been embarrassed to acknowledge the difficulties which they were having. Some have been ashamed of their children. Many parents have only been "invited" to school when their children are in trouble. Lavelle Prep creates many positive events, -- performances, exhibits, demonstrations by students, -- to which parents are always invited. Relationships formed in this way enable Lavelle Prep to successfully involve parents in a collaborative assessment and planning process from the beginning.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that planning and assessment meetings with parents are scheduled in a timely way. The Principal in collaboration with the academic teachers determine who, in addition to parent and teacher, should be involved in the planning conference. Among the alternatives which can then be considered are extra help at home as well as in school. The interventions may focus directly on academic skills or on other psychological or social factors which may be impacting the student's performance. While every effort is made to help the student succeed at Lavelle Prep and to continue on to college, Lavelle Prep is committed at each step in the educational process to help students and parents examine available options and to choose the alternative which they

feel is in their best interest. (This planning process is a key skill which students develop throughout the Wellness Curriculum). When students are continually failing despite intense efforts amid coordinated focused interventions, staff help parents and students to identify possible alternatives to Lavelle Prep, to gather information about these possible alternatives, and to weigh the pro's and con's for each possible alternative. This planning and decision-making process is a core element of the Wellness Curriculum, and students are learning throughout their Lavelle Prep careers to apply this problem-solving process in their education and career planning. The decision about which alternative is best for the individual rests with the student and his/her family. While we would never encourage a family that wanted to remain to leave the school, we also recognize that Lavelle Prep may not be the best fit for every student and that that decision rests solely with the parent or guardian. In the event, that the family chooses an alternative educational option, Lavelle Prep will do everything possible to facilitate the transition. Once enrolled at Lavelle Prep, all students remain enrolled, unless the parent withdraws the student or the student is expelled in accordance with the Lavelle Prep expulsion policy.

### **Unexcused Absences**

School attendance is frequently an issue for Lavelle Prep students. Social and emotional issues may stand in the way of attendance. Sometimes school attendance is interrupted by psychiatric treatment. Many students entering Lavelle Prep may have long histories of school resistance. Lavelle Prep employs a series of steps to address this concern:

- Students are encouraged to share phone numbers so that they can contact each other for homework assignments when they are absent;
- Teachers post homework assignment on the School website;
- Teacher assistants call parents if a student is absent for more than two consecutive days or after the first day if there is a pattern of absence or a suspicion of truancy;
- Homeroom Teacher/Advisor call if indicated following Teacher assistant's call or if requested by parent..
- Homeroom Teacher/Advisor inform Grade Leaders of any attendance issues and a conference involving parent, student, Advisor, and other to be determined by the Principal is arranged.

Every effort is made to develop a plan which will enable each student to attend school on a regular basis.

### **Student Hospitalizations**

In the event that a student needs to be hospitalized or requires home instruction for an extended period of time, the NYC Department of Education provides these services for Lavelle Prep students.<sup>31</sup> Our intention is to reserve the student's place, however, so that they can return to school as quickly as possible. Occasional hospitalization is normal part of the course of illness for young people with serious emotional disorders. We regard it as seriously undermining a student's recovery to discharge the student from school as a result of hospitalization. We will work with the student, the student's family, and the treating team to expedite return to school.

## **2. Board Structure and Operations**

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**See Exhibit K—Bylaws**

**See Exhibit L—Code of Ethics**

### **3. Oversight**

Lavelle Prep utilizes a variety of mechanisms to obtain regular input from staff, students, and parents including a “school leadership team,” a student government, and a Parents’ Association. Focus groups with representatives of key stakeholder groups are utilized as part of the annual program evaluation process.

Annually, the Board of Trustees formally evaluates the President. The Executive Committee of the Board leads the evaluation process and brings its recommendations to the full Board. The President is responsible for the evaluation of the Co-Principals, the Vice President for Advancement and the Directors of Operations and Finance. The Co-Principals are responsible for the evaluation of the faculty.

All staff members participate in a formal evaluation process that includes an annual evaluation that is written and discussed with staff individually. Beginning in 2012-13, teacher and principal evaluations are conducted in accordance with a State-approved APPR plan. Teachers’ evaluations include announced and unannounced classroom observations Lavelle Prep will adapt this structure in order to incorporate Teacher Assistants and Teacher Leaders within the basic design, Faculty evaluations are conducted by a co-principal. All staff have the opportunity to submit written rebuttal to the evaluation. All staff have the opportunity to identify their own professional development needs through an annual self-assessment process. This information is used in conjunction with the formal evaluation to identify a Professional Development Plan for each staff member. The staff evaluation structure and process is approved by the Board of Trustees.

**See Exhibit M—Evaluation Tools**

### **4. Board Capacity:**

In selecting founding members, Lavelle recruited individuals:

1. Strongly committed to the mission of the school;
2. Possessing critical skills and relationships in the community; and
3. Willing to commit the time and energy necessary to fulfill the responsibility of board members.

This initial selection has served the school well. With the exception of one member who resigned at the first meeting to accept a staff position with the school, all founding trustees continue to serve. One additional trustee was added at the first meeting and three more in 2012.

The Lavelle Prep Board of Trustees will maintain a process for ongoing Board development designed to improve the ability of individual Board members and the overall effectiveness of the entire Board. The Nominating/Governance Committee is responsible for guiding this process, as well as the identification of gaps in board capacity, the recruitment and orientation of prospective and new board members, and the annual assessment of board performance. The results of the annual assessment inform planning

and recruitment as well as board training and development. The Board Chair presents a schedule of training opportunities at appropriate Board meetings.

As we sought to build board capacity, we recognized that some individuals may have the potential to make valuable contributions and yet may not be able to assume all the responsibilities of board members. We recognize, in particular, that there are individuals, strongly committed to the mission of Lavelle Prep and possessing extraordinary skills and community relationships, who may not be able to meet the time commitments required of charter school board members. In 2013, the Lavelle Prep By-Laws were amended to provide for Advisory Trustees.

## **IX. Personnel**

### **1. Personnel Policies:**

Lavelle Prep is committed to building a diverse and experienced team. Equally important in achieving this objective is the recruitment and the retention of staff. Our success is largely attributable to our success in recruiting high quality young teachers and providing them with the support, supervision, and training which enables them to succeed as young professionals. In a highly competitive job market, we offer (a) salary levels comparable to those of the DOE; (b) the opportunity to earn annually a salary increase based on performance; (c) the excitement and reward of influencing the practices in an innovative new school; and (d) the extensive professional development program at the school. Besides the normal job vacancy postings and newspaper and electronic ads, we will recruit through professional networks of special education teachers and through parent advocacy groups. If necessary, we will hire teachers certified in either special education or in an academic subject area, who meet our other hiring criteria, and, when possible, partially reimburse them for tuition costs so that they can pursue the certifications they lack. Our strategies for staff retention include attractive competitive salaries and fringe benefits, annual, performance-based salary increases, extensive professional development opportunities, and a collegial culture at all levels that gives staff substantial influence in school decision-making. All special education teachers will be appropriately certified pursuant to applicable state and federal law.

Lavelle Prep is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, gender, disability, age, religion, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin. Within this framework and consistent with our mission, we are committed, whenever possible without sacrificing quality, to provide our students with role models who are living with disabilities, in particular emotional and psychiatric challenges. We will utilize a variety of means to achieve this objective. We will advertise available positions utilizing media that reach people in recovery. We will work with The Verrazano Foundation, South Beach Psychiatric, and the College of Staten Island to recruit and train qualified individuals living with mental illness.<sup>32</sup>

The process for hiring new staff members also includes the posting of vacant positions on web sites and newsletters of organizations that advocate for and support charter schools. The Principal team and representatives of teachers and other staff discuss the school and the vacant positions with potential candidates at the Job Fairs held by these organizations

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<sup>32</sup> The Verrazano Foundation has already received a small grant from the Sara Chait Memorial Foundation, Inc., to support planning for this training program.

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and at Career Days at local colleges and universities that offer teacher training programs for the types of students served by the school.

At the center of the Lavelle Prep hiring process is the 16-week seminar conducted by Lavelle Prep faculty for teacher and teacher assistant candidates. On the basis of participation in the seminar, as well as participant observation in Lavelle Prep classes, and with input from the faculty, the principal selects successful candidates.

Lavelle Prep provides a stimulating and challenging work environment. We provide multiple opportunities for professional development, including biweekly school-based professional development workshops, as well as support for staff seeking to upgrade credentials, in particular for teachers acquiring dual certification, including tuition reimbursement at appropriate levels. We also pay competitive salaries and provide mechanisms through which teachers can earn merit raises, based on an annual evaluation of their performance. Administrators and other staff who have school-wide responsibilities can earn merit increases based on their formal evaluations and performance-based bonuses based on the results of all students in the school on the assessments. The amount of merit increases and bonuses may vary from year to year, based on the school's budget.

**See Exhibit N – Job Descriptions**

## **2. Collective Bargaining**

Lavelle Prep is not a conversion of an existing New York City Public School. Lavelle Prep did not enroll more than 250 students on the first day that school commenced student instruction nor did average daily student enrollment exceed two hundred and fifty students at any point during the first year of operation.

### **X. Community Support**

*As an educator of students with special needs for twenty eight years I strongly support the concept of a charter school for High School students who are not successfully achieving to their potential due to serious emotional issues. Traditional high school programs even with added supports are not adequate for many of these students... Although many ... are capable of attending college programs they often drop out from High School.*

-- William J. Fiorelli, Principal  
Public School 37 Richmond<sup>33</sup>

As a Staten Island resident and a Principal of a school for special need students I have found in my career there are many students who could be college bound but drop out along the way. I believe that the newly proposed Charter School planned for Staten Island would address the needs of such students. I approve such a school without reservation.

-- Michael T. Zangwill, Principal  
P373R Robert Randall School<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> For full text of this letter, see Exhibit P – Letters of Support

<sup>34</sup> For full text of this letter, see Exhibit P – Letters of Support



## 1. Community Engagement:

From the earliest stages of the planning process, Lavelle Prep has enjoyed overwhelming community support. This is evident in the letters of support which we received in support of our original charter application (Exhibit P) as well as those received in support of our current application for renewal (Exhibit P additional).

### Outreach to parents

*...As a parent with 4<sup>th</sup> grade child diagnosed with ODD and Mood Disorder, I AM STRONGLY IN FAVOR OF THIS SCHOOL OPENING. I have been through IEPs, therapy, behavioral modification camp, and many other avenues in order to gain appropriate care and help for my child. When it comes to the issue of school placement, there simply is nothing out there for bright children with these disabilities.*

*-- Laura A. Mazzola, Parent<sup>35</sup>*

*I have taken my own son for counseling and can tell you first hand that his school has no idea how to handle him or any other student when an "emotional" issues arises... Unfortunately, their lack of knowledge and skill is damaging to our children, creating more "issues".*

*-- Jose Nieves, Parent<sup>36</sup>*

*"My son came from a 12:1 classroom and is now a 7th grader in his second year at Lavelle Prep. He has an IEP and has been embraced by the entire staff which finds every avenue to help him achieve success. This is a tight knit school with open communication. It is a jewel that shines brighter each year." – Carmen Martinez, 7th grade parent.<sup>37</sup>*

*"I have two students in the school, both with IEP's. My son has dyslexia and came into Lavelle Prep with a 40 modified promotion. He is flourishing at Lavelle where he is given extra academic practice and participates in targeted literacy intervention using Orton Gillingham. He is moving forward using standard promotion criteria to the 7th grade. My daughter has Aspergers . She is quirky and loveable but didn't have any friends before coming to Lavelle. Her teachers have embraced her. She is coming into her own at Lavelle and has developed tons of friends." – Colleen Ladyzhinsky, parent of two Lavelle Prep students.<sup>38</sup>*

*"The small class sizes and the teachers here at Lavelle are fantastic. The staff is welcoming to parents and the curriculum is fantastic and challenging, covering a lot of material. I do wish we could have more sports here, especially a track team." – Marge Kimble, Grandparent of 8th grade student.<sup>39</sup>*

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<sup>35</sup> For full text of this letter, see Exhibit P – Letters of Support

<sup>36</sup> For full text of this letter, see Exhibit P – Letters of Support

<sup>37</sup> From testimony presented at Charter Renewal Public Hearing, Lavelle Prep Charter School, June 19, 2013.

<sup>38</sup> From testimony presented at Charter Renewal Public Hearing, Lavelle Prep Charter School, June 19, 2013.

<sup>39</sup> From testimony presented at Charter Renewal Public Hearing, Lavelle Prep Charter School, June 19, 2013.

Lavelle Prep has developed a two-pronged approach to parent outreach. Our approach to parents of current students, described in Section VII, 6, c above, is multi-faceted and includes regular written, electronic, and telephonic communication, regularly scheduled face-to-face conferences and opportunities for school visits. Our approach to parents of potential students, described in Section XIII, 2, b, includes direct mail and a series of open houses and web-based access to application materials in multiple languages.

In addition, through the participation of our teachers and students in a variety of community activities, and by cultivating positive reporting in local media, Lavelle Prep has successfully cultivated a positive community image. Our annual galas, at which we have honored among others, Senator Andrew Lanza, Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis, Councilwoman Debi Rose, President Richard Guarasci of Wagner College, President Tomas Morales of the College of Staten Island, and New York State Regent Christine Cea have received broad community support. Our Futures of Education Luncheons, initiated in 2012, have brought together education, business, and community leaders at the school for animated discussion. The first two luncheons have featured keynote speakers, Chancellor Merryl Tisch of the NYS Board of Regents and NYS Education Commissioner John King. Collaborative learning initiatives undertaken with the Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden, the Staten Island Zoo, the Staten Island Historical Society (Richmond Town) have sparked interest throughout the community.

Over the longer term, the success of Lavelle Prep students in high school and college will be the decisive factor in changing public perception of Lavelle Prep and hence diminishing any stigma associated with attendance.

### **Outreach to community organizations and institutions**

*More than half of the youngsters we serve are underachieving academically and most are failing to benefit from provision of educational services in traditional settings be they mainstreamed or in special education settings. They are clearly in need of an educational setting that can both challenge them as well as offer them the social, psychological and psychiatric supports they critically need. I am confident that the John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School will be able to fill this need.*

*-- John E. Jannes, Ph.D., Director  
Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services  
Staten Island Office<sup>40</sup>*

*Innovative approaches to the education of young people are critically needed on Staten Island ... where alternative public school options for students with disabilities are lacking. As a former member of the District 31 Community Education Council and as the current Citywide Council on High Schools Representative for Districts 20, 21, and 31, I had the opportunity to observe the need first-hand and hear parents' complaints.*

*-- Martin Krongold, Member  
Citywide Council on High Schools<sup>41</sup>*

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<sup>40</sup> For full text of this letter, see Exhibit P – Letters of Support

<sup>41</sup> For full text of this letter, see Exhibit P – Letters of Support

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*"I am strongly supporting your plans for a Charter Renewal for the John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School. The Staten Island Community needs this educational resource. As mental health professional I am very impressed with the work the school has done for children with special mental health needs."*

*- Mary Guardino, Founder and Executive Director of Freedom From Fear<sup>42</sup>*

Since its inception, Lavelle Prep has built collaborative relationships with a range of community organizations and institutions including Snug Harbor Cultural Center and Botanical Garden, the Staten Island Zoo, the Staten Island Historical Society (Richmond Town), The College of Staten Island, Wagner College, St. John's University, Touro College, the St. Paul's School of Nursing, the Staten Island YMCA, Richmond University Medical Center, the Staten Island District Attorney Office, and the Girl Scouts. Businesses collaborating in the development of career education opportunities include Victory State Bank, the Hilton Garden Inn, and A.F. Bennett's Salon and Spa.

Lavelle Prep has received major funding support from The Staten Island Foundation, the Richmond County Savings Foundation, the Northfield Bank Foundation, the Sara M. Chair Foundation, Two West Foundation, National Grid, and Conway Towne as well as many individuals and businesses. All this is evidence of growing community support.

### **Lavelle Prep Supported by Elected Officials**

*The Lavelle School will provide rigorous college preparatory instruction to children whose special needs often exclude them from college-prep programs. This is a population that is vastly underserved on Staten Island as no other school addresses the needs of these types of children. I am also very familiar with the credentials of the educators developing the Lavelle School and have much confidence in their abilities...*

*-- Michael E. McMahon, Member  
United States Congress*

*I am writing this letter in support of the Verrazano Foundation, and in support specifically of their development for the John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School. I believe that this school would be extremely valuable to Staten Island, and would provide an excellent opportunity for the at-risk students that this school will serve... I should point out here that I am typically not in support of charter schools. In fact, I am opposed to them. Except for this one.*

*-- Diane J. Savino  
New York State Senator, 23<sup>rd</sup> District<sup>43</sup>*

*"As the first Charter School on Staten Island, Mr. Lanza was very pleased to know that you had integrated classrooms which fully support Special Education Students. Senator Lanza fully believes that the Lavelle model should be replicated throughout the state."*

*- Brian Powers,  
Representing for NYS Senator Andrew Lanza<sup>44</sup>*

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<sup>42</sup> For full text of this letter, see Exhibit P(1) –Additional Letters of Support

<sup>43</sup> For full text of this letter, see Exhibit P – Letters of Support

<sup>44</sup> From testimony presented at Charter Renewal Public Hearing, Lavelle Prep Charter School, June 19, 2013.

Lavelle Prep was named for the late Staten Island Assemblyman John W. Lavelle and has always enjoyed the support of Staten Island's elected officials. Among those endorsing the original application were Congressman Michael McMahon, Borough President James P. Molinaro; Council Members James S. Oddo, Vincent Ignizio and Kenneth Mitchell; State Senators Andrew J. Lanza and Diane Savino; and Assembly members Michael Cusick, Janele Hyer-Spencer, Matthew Titone and Louis Tobacco. We are pleased to enjoy their ongoing support as well as that of Councilwoman Debi Rose, Assemblywoman Nicole Malliotakis, and District Attorney Dan Donovan.

John Lavelle was a tireless advocate for education and mental health and epitomized the ability of the Island's elected officials to coalesce across party lines in support of programs benefiting the community. Although not an advocate of charter schools, Lavelle had committed his support for the school that would bear his name because he was convinced it addressed a critical community need. Only a few hours after making this commitment, he suffered the stroke that eventually took his life.

Concrete evidence of this support is demonstrated not only in the advocacy of Lavelle Prep which these officials have provided but in the supplemental public funding which Lavelle Prep has received through the efforts Councilmembers Oddo and Rose, Senator Lanza, and Borough President Molinaro.

**Exhibit O—Parent Petition of Support: See attached**

**Exhibit P—Letters of Community Support: See attached**

## **XI. Financial Management Plan**

### **1. Financial Management**

Financial management responsibilities rest solely with Lavelle Prep. The President plays a major role in budgeting and revision processes and in communication with the Board of Trustees. An expanding operations team is responsible for financial management and support operations. The Director of Operations is accountable directly to President and is responsible for all school operations other than education functions.

**Financial Plan:** The financial plan for Lavelle Prep is described in detail in Exhibit R: Budget Narrative

#### **a. Policies and procedures:**

Lavelle Prep is committed to providing the highest quality educational program. We recognize that young people with special needs seldom are given the highest quality facilities and resources in which to learn. We are committed to insuring that at Lavelle Prep students are given the optimal opportunity to succeed. We recognize that providing these resources is expensive. We are committed to making every penny count. We are, therefore, determined to insure that all resources are effectively and efficiently employed.

Under the supervision of the President, the Director of Operations is responsible for the administration of all fiscal and accounting functions of Lavelle Prep. The Board of Trustees and President provide fiscal oversight. Various financial reports including, but not limited

to, monthly budget status report, monthly cash reports, and quarterly statements (when appropriate) are provided to the board.

When indicated, Lavelle Prep will contract with an independent accounting firm to provide support in analyzing, reconciling and adjusting account balances, and to ensure the records are maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). The accountants may also assist in developing Lavelle Prep's chart of accounts and implementation of accounting software systems.

**Payroll:** Lavelle Prep maintains a payroll system approved by the Board of Trustees. Lavelle Prep contracts with a provider such as Automatic Data Processing, Inc., for payroll processing and related services. The Director of Operations is responsible for insuring that all aspects of the payroll system are properly implemented.

**Purchasing:** Like all prudent corporations, Lavelle Prep is guided in the purchase of all goods and services by price, quality, and dependability. Consistent with our mission and commitment to serve the Staten Island community, Lavelle Prep will work, whenever it is fiscally responsible to do so, with Staten Island-based vendors and with vendors who employ and otherwise support services for persons living with mental illness. Particular vendors may be chosen for any one or any combination of these factors; however, at all times the selection of a particular good, service, or vendor will be with the intention of maintaining a top-quality school. For purchases in excess of \$2000, every effort is made to obtain multiple bids. Rationales for purchase decisions are documented. Two signatures are required on all purchase orders and on all checks over \$25,000. The execution of contracts and grants is within the scope of Lavelle Prep's mission, goals, and annual plans.

**Accounting and audit requirements:** Lavelle Prep uses accrual basis accounting in accordance with GAAP. All financial statements and any reporting to the IRS or other governmental entities be completed using this method. The book of account is maintained in accordance with GAAP, and includes Budget Reports, General Ledger, and detailed journals for all cash receipts and cash disbursements (including payroll). The Finance Coordinator maintains all books of accounts. An accounting software package, such as *Quick Books*, is utilized to properly record all assets, liabilities, net assets, revenues, expenses and budgets. An accountant is available, as needed, to provide monthly accounting support. A corporate Chart of Accounts in accordance with GAAP has been developed to properly record all accounting activity. Monthly balance sheets and statements of activity are prepared for review by the President, the Finance and Audit Committee and Board of Trustees. Lavelle Prep maintains a **petty cash** fund to be used for reimbursements to employees for minimal out-of-pocket business-related expenses, not to exceed \$100.00. Independent **audits** of the financial statements are conducted annually by a New York State Certified Public Accountant selected by the Board of Trustees. Annual financial audits are conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards. Financial regulatory forms are completed as necessary by Lavelle Prep or an accounting firm selected by the President.

**Cash management and investing:** Lavelle Prep's funds will be invested in money market funds, certificates of deposit, or other instruments as directed by the Board. The President will identify excess funds available for investment, and approve the transfer of such funds to be made by the Director of Operations. Investments of excess funds will be made in money-market vehicles in the most highly rated categories of debt.

**Fundraising:** Such initiatives as undertaken directly by the school are overseen by the Vice President for Advancement who shall also be responsible for grant compliance. Non-restricted bequests and contributions are used for operations or special projects as designated and approved by the President and/or the Board of Trustees of Lavelle Prep, consistent with conditions set forth in the charter and by the Board of Trustees. Bequests and contributions that are donor-restricted are used for the purpose articulated by the donor, except that in no case will the school accept any such bequest or contribution for which the donor restriction violates any federal or New York state law.

**Exhibit P—Five-year Operating Budget: See attached**

**Exhibit Q—Budget Narrative: See attached**

**PART 4: WILL YOUR SCHOOL COMPLY WITH ALL APPLICABLE RULES AND REGULATIONS?**

**XII. School**

**1. Location:**

Lavelle Prep has concluded a long-term lease at Corporate Commons in the Teleport, on South Avenue, Staten Island, NY 10311.

**2. Description and Use:**

**a. Required space for the proposed school**

When fully operational, Lavelle Prep will serve up to 510 students in classes averaging 15 to 17 students. Lavelle Prep has completed build out of a suitable facility including 30 instructional spaces including performance spaces, a science lab, and a cafeteria as well as meeting rooms, nursing and social work offices, and administrative office space.

**b. Growth plan for school**

By September 2013, Lavelle Prep will complete occupancy of its permanent leased facility at Corporate Commons One and Two, 1 Teleport Drive, Staten Island, NY 10311.

**c. Rehabilitation work necessary for this site to meet building codes**

The existing elevator(s), mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire protection, security, telecommunications, data and fire staircases meet ANSI A117.1 for ADA accessibility and NYC Building Code compliance. ADA accessible parking spaces and access route into and out of the building are available and properly identified with way finding signage.

**i. The scope of the work to be completed and proposed funding mechanism to cover these costs**

The cost of renovation, approximately \$1 million of this facility has been achieved through a combination of fund-raising and long-term financing.

**ii. The person(s) who will manage the project and their qualifications;**

In developing this facility, Lavelle Prep was represented by the President and the Directors of Operations. Under the supervision of the Lavelle Prep Trustees, they worked with a team of brokers, architects, and contractors to complete the project

**iii. A project timeline**

Construction on the project began in the Spring of 2011. The first phase was occupied in September 2011 with additional space added by September 2012 and September 2013.

**d. Whether the facility space to be occupied will require a permit from the New York City Department of Health**

Lavelle Prep is located on the Teleport campus, house a Nurse’s office, and has obtained necessary authorizations from the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The facility includes a heating kitchen for the distribution of meals cooked off campus, and the storage of refrigerated beverages.

Total space occupied is 54,311 SF.

**3. Cost Estimates:**

**a. The percentage of your total budget expected to be spent on rent/lease**

The following table is based on signed lease and estimate of per pupil revenue.

Year	Rent	Operating Budget	Rent/operating Budget
1-FY15	\$1,068,210	\$8,253,011	13%
2-FY16	\$1,314,720	\$8,798,257	15%
3-FY17	\$1,369,500	\$9,320,184	15%
4-FY18	\$1,479,060	\$9,620,658	15%
5-FY19	\$1,533,840	\$9,774,110	16%
Total	\$6,765,330	\$45,766,220	15%

**b. If your school will be housed in a leased or rented facility, provide evidence that you have researched comparable rents in the marketplace, within and outside of your desired geographic location.**

Lavelle Prep worked with a real estate brokerage firm, Conway Towne, to explore facility options on Staten Island. There are very few buildings which could meet the school’s space requirement. The facility which we leased at Corporate Commons provided the only affordable, centrally located option, This location was important because of Lavelle Prep’s commitment to serve students from the entire district (Staten Island).

Amended Charter approved by the Board of Regents on March 7, 2014

**c. Provide any information that you have gathered about leasehold improvements.**

Leasehold improvements will be completed by September 2013.

**d. The basis on which you have determined that this facility complies with New York City's Zoning Resolution**

Lavelle Prep complies with NYC zoning, land use and building code regulations extended to non-public schools as well as regulations of the Port Authority of NY and NJ..

**4. DOE Space**

Lavelle Prep occupied transitional space in a DOE facility for its first two years of operation..

**XIII. Operations and Policies**

**1. Required Programs and Policies**

**a. Health Programs**

Health Education is a crucial component of the Lavelle Prep program. The importance of health maintenance to optimal functioning for all students is emphasized. We do everything we can to encourage appropriate prevention and early treatment services. Lavelle Prep comply with all health services requirements applicable to public schools, including Education Law § § 901-914 and §136.2(d)(2) of the Commissioner's Regulations. Lavelle Prep provides on-site health care services similar to those services available to children attending District Public Schools. A full-time nurse is provided to Lavelle Prep in accordance with §2853(4)(a) and §912 of the Education Law.<sup>45</sup>

Lavelle Prep staff works with the local health providers, the local school district, and other appropriate resources to provide health services including:

- 1) Annual vision screening testing for all students. Per § 905 of New York Education Law, the components of vision testing shall include distance acuity, color perception, and near vision.
- 2) Maintenance of cumulative health records.
- 3) Emergency care of ill or injured students.
- 4) Compliance with and enforcement of mandatory immunization requirements.
- 5) Access to automated external defibrillator (AED) equipment to ensure ready and appropriate access for use during emergencies. The Nurse as well security staff are trained in the operation and use of this equipment.

**Maintenance and Storage of Cumulative Health Records**

Lavelle Prep safely stores and secures all health records for enrolled students. Cumulative student health records will be held until the student is 27 years old. Immunization records will be held for 10 years after the immunizations were administered.

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<sup>45</sup>. Health text adapted from, The New York Charter School Resource Center, 2005 Guidebook



### **Immunization Requirements**

New York State law requires that each student entering kindergarten or a new school district in grades 1-12 have a certificate of immunization at the time of registration or not later than the first day of school. A review of student immunizations requirements and the proper supporting documents are completed for all new students. New York State immunization requirements include:

- Diphtheria: Toxoid Containing Vaccine (DTP, DtaP) 3 doses;
- Polio: (IPV)/(OPV3 OPV or 4 IPV);
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR): 2 doses of measles containing vaccine and 1 dose each of mumps and rubella (preferably as MMR);
- Hepatitis B: 3 doses to all students born on or after 1/1/93;
- Varicella: 1 dose.

Before a child can be permitted to attend Lavelle Prep, parents or guardians must present documentation that their child has received all required doses of vaccines or that their child has received at least one dose of each of the required vaccines and is waiting to receive the subsequent doses at the appropriate time intervals. Parents may waive immunization in accordance with Public Health Law and exceptions to immunizations will be granted if a licensed physician or nurse practitioner certifies such immunization may be detrimental to the student's health, or if the student's parent or guardian holds genuine and sincere beliefs, which may include religious beliefs, contrary to such immunization. [See § 2164 (8) and (9) of the Public Health Law.]

### **Students Who Require Daily Medication**

Lavelle Prep has established a secure, easy to understand, and safe medication delivery system. The School Nurse, with support from the Principal, communicates to parents, students and staff the requirements for the administration of medications in the school. Lavelle Prep avoids misunderstandings by widely circulating the requirements. These requirements for the administration of medication in school include are communicated in the student-parent handbook; school publications/calendars; inserts with report cards; mailings to physicians and/or local medical societies; and individual parent/student counseling.

#### **Pharmacies**

- Only those medications necessary to maintain the student in school and which must be given during school hours will be administered in school. Any student who is required to take medication during the regular school day or while participating in school-sponsored activities (e.g., field trips, athletics) should comply with all procedures.
- Any prescribed medication that requires administration through a subcutaneous, intramuscular, intravenous or rectal route; or prescribed medications being administered through pumps, tubes or nebulizers; or oral, topical or inhalant medication needed by non-self-directed students *will be given by the School nurse or licensed practical nurses under the direction of the school nurse. Administration of such prescribed medications will not be performed by the other members of Lavelle Prep staff.*
- Designated staff in the school setting, following assignment and in conjunction with approval by the school nurse, may assist *self-directed students* with the taking of their own oral, topical and inhalant medication. The School nurse as well as the school administration will assure that the staff person receives the training and supervision needed to perform these tasks in a safe and effective manner.

### Physician Orders

Lavelle Prep requires a written order from a duly licensed prescriber and written parental permission to administer the medication. All medications, including nonprescription over the counter (OTC) drugs, given in school shall be prescribed by a licensed prescriber on an individual basis as determined by the student's health status.

- Written orders for prescription and nonprescription OTC medications should minimally include:
  - Student's name and date of birth
  - Name of medication
  - Dosage and route of administration
  - Frequency and time of administration
  - For prn (as necessary) medications, conditions under which medication should be administered
  - Date written
  - Prescriber's name, title, and signature
  - Prescriber's phone number
- The school nurse may request additional information, such as self-administration orders, diagnosis and/or potential adverse reactions, however, medication delivery should not be delayed pending this information, unless such information is essential to the safe administration of the medication.
- Special considerations
  - Medication orders must be renewed annually or when there is a change in medication or dosage.
  - The pharmacy label **does not** constitute a written order and **cannot** be used in lieu of a written order from a licensed prescriber.
  - When a properly labeled medication comes to the health office accompanied by a written request from the parent for administration of the medication, but without a written order from a licensed prescriber, the following procedure will be followed:
    - Contact parent regarding need for written order from a licensed prescriber.
    - Contact licensed prescriber to obtain verbal permission to administer medication.
    - Request fax or written orders to be received within 48 hours.
    - Contact parent and discontinue medication if written orders are not received in 48 hours.
    - Document above steps.

### *Parental Responsibility*

- A written statement from the parent or guardian requesting administration of the medication in school as ordered by the licensed prescriber is required.
- It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to have the medication delivered directly to the health office in a properly labeled original container.

### *Prescription medications.*

- The pharmacy label must display:
  - Student name
  - Name and phone number of pharmacy
  - Licensed prescriber's name
  - Date and number of refills

- Name of medication/dosage
- Frequency of administration
- Route of administration and/or other directions

#### *OTC Medications*

- Must be in the original manufacturer's container/package with the student's name affixed to the container. The same applies to drug samples.
- For certain medications, especially **controlled substances**, standards of best practice include counting the medication upon receipt and periodically thereafter. This is not a legal requirement but constitutes a sound practice when handling controlled substances. Discrepancies should be reported to the parent immediately. The school administration should be informed of any discrepancies when such discoveries occur. Best practice includes close supervision of medication taking.
- Medications will not be transported daily to and from school. Parents will be advised to ask the pharmacist for two containers, one to remain at home and one at school.
- Instructions will be left for substitute nurses that are clear and concise on the handling of all aspects of medication acceptance, handling, delivery and storage.
- Education of families regarding the Lavelle Prep medication protocols is an ongoing responsibility of Lavelle Prep.

#### *Medication Administration*

- All medications will be administered as close to the prescribed time as possible. Given student schedules and compliance with coming to the health office in a timely fashion, medications accepted for school administration generally may be given up to one hour before and no later than one hour after the prescribed time. However, parents and licensed prescribers will be advised, so that they can advise LAVELLE PREP if there is a time-specific concern regarding administration of the medication. Parents, students, and the school nurse will work together to ensure the student receives his/her medication at the appropriate time.
- If a student fails to come for a dose, the administration will provide support to health office personnel, such as security personnel, administrative or clerical staff to locate the student. If the medication has not been given for any reason within the prescribed time frame, Lavelle Prep will make all reasonable efforts to notify the family that day, as the family may need to adjust a home dose accordingly.
- If students chronically fail to come for medications, the school nurse will contact the parent to address the problem. The licensed prescriber will be informed of the poor compliance, so that the medication protocol can be reviewed and possible adjustments made, i.e., home administration, extended release medication.
- Ongoing communication and collaboration between Lavelle Prep and parents will occur to assist students in assuming personal responsibility for their health behaviors.
- A medication may be changed or discontinued by a written order of the licensed prescriber at any time. If a parent requests discontinuation of a prescribed medication without the prescriber's order to do the same, Lavelle Prep will send a confirmation to the parent with a copy to the prescriber of Lavelle Prep intention to discontinue the medication on the parent's request.
- When the dose of a medication is changed by a licensed prescriber's written order and a parent request, and the old pharmacy bottle label has not been corrected, the nurse may label the bottle with the correct dose until the new pharmacy labeled prescription bottle is received. The importance of parent compliance with sending in a new bottle quickly will be conveyed.

### *Storage of Medication*

- No medication will be brought into school without knowledge of the health office. Publicized procedures that facilitate this practice so that parents and students do not feel the need to hide medication or to circumvent cumbersome procedures will be publicized.
- All medications, except as otherwise arranged, will be properly stored and secured within a health office cabinet, drawer or refrigerator designated for medications only. The site must include a lock for the cabinet, drawer and refrigerator, as well as a lock to the outside health office door. Controlled substances will always be secured and will never be left open or accessible to the public at any time. Even self-directed students will not be given unsupervised access to controlled substances under the care of Lavelle Prep. Whenever possible, medication storage units will be secured to the wall or floor, and will not have breakable glass doors. If possible, all medications will be stored in a health office. However, there may be instances when requests are made by a parent and physician for a student to carry and self-administer medications because of the emerging nature of the health problem or the severity of the health condition.

### *Carry and Self-administer Medication*

If the Lavelle Prep nurse receives a request from a parent and licensed prescriber to permit a student to carry and self-administer her/his own prescribed medication, such decisions will be made on an *individual basis and in accordance with the following criteria*:

- Severity of health care problems, particularly asthmatic or allergic conditions.
- Licensed prescriber's order directing that the student be allowed to carry her/his medication and self-administer.
- Parent statement requesting compliance with licensed prescriber's order.
- Student has been instructed in the procedure of self-administration and can assume responsibility for carrying properly labeled medication in original container on her or his person or keeping in school.
- School nursing assessment that student is self-directed to carry and self-administer her/his medication properly.
- Parent contact made to clarify parental responsibility regarding the monitoring of the student on an ongoing/daily basis to insure that the student is carrying and taking the medication as ordered. This contact will be documented.

Any student self-administering medication without proper authorization will be counseled by the school nurse. In addition, the parents will be notified. In all instances, school administration will also be informed. Periodic reevaluation of the effectiveness of the procedure will be instituted.

*Emergency Medication:* The requirements allowing registered professional nurses to administer agents used in the emergency treatment of anaphylaxis include:

- (1) Following non-patient specific standing orders and protocols authorized by a physician or a nurse practitioner; and
- (2) Maintaining or ensuring the maintenance of a copy of the standing order(s) and protocol(s) that authorizes them to administer anaphylactic treatment agents.

*Non-FDA Sanctioned Requests/Herbal Remedies, Dietary Supplements and Natural Products:* Lavelle Prep will not honor requests for use of herbal remedies, dietary supplements and natural products as they are not sanctioned by the FDA. Such matters will be explained to the parent whose cooperation will be sought to have such medications administered outside of school. An appropriate notation should be made on the student's health record.

## **b. Food Services**

Lavelle Prep recognizes that a healthy diet is critical to overall health and well-being. For students whose health has already been compromised, a healthy diet can be a critical component of recovery. This emphasis is an important component of the Wellness Curriculum, which is a central feature of the Lavelle Prep program. The school nutrition program reflects the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other criteria to achieve nutritional integrity. School meal and snack times provide students with a learning laboratory for proper nutrition and health education.

Lavelle Prep makes breakfast and lunch available to students. When school begins after 7:59 am or ends before 12:30 pm, Lavelle Prep reserves the right to determine which meals to serve in compliance with federal guidelines. Lavelle Prep does not plan to cook meals on site but rather to heat meals that are cooked elsewhere and transported to the school

### **Participation in Subsidized Meal Programs:**

Lavelle Prep expects to participate in the Federal Free- and Reduced-Priced breakfast, lunch and snack programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. We adhere to all applicable requirements including, but not limited to: meal pricing, determination of eligibility, nutritional value, and reporting requirements. Any and all food service subsidy revenues received from the Federal and State meal programs are used exclusively for the purpose of providing meals to eligible students, and for no prohibited purpose. Typically, students from households with incomes at or below 130% of the poverty level are eligible for free meals, while students from households with incomes between 130% and 185% of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals.

Lavelle Prep utilizes the following website for the eligibility guidelines for free and reduced-lunch <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/iegs/IEG05-06.pdf> or information can be obtained by calling the NYSED's Child Nutrition Reimbursement at (518) 473-5999.

In order to receive these benefits, the parents of eligible students must complete and return the Family Application for Free and Reduced Price School Meals (SD 1041 form) and Lavelle Prep provide parents with this application upon enrollment. The application, which can be found online at <http://www.opt-osfns.org>, is available in many different languages. As soon as possible, parents or guardians complete this form and return it to Lavelle Prep, it is reviewed by the Director of Operations or his/her designee for approval. Lavelle Prep maintains each student's SD 1041 form on file for review once it has been completed and approved. These forms enable students to receive free and reduced price meals, and also form the basis for determining and distributing additional educational funding from the state and federal governments.

**Contracting:** Lavelle Prep contracts with a private company to provide healthy, attractive meals to our students. Lavelle Prep reviews the Food Programs contract on an annual basis.

**Facilities:** Lavelle Prep provides food services to students directly in the classroom or in other suitable common areas.

## **c. Transportation Services:**

Because Lavelle Prep serves all of Staten Island, an area of 59 square miles, it is anticipated that the majority of students will be statutorily eligible for transportation services under §2853(4)(b) and § 3635 of the Education Law. Many sixth graders will be eligible for General Education Transportation (Yellow School Bus). Since the majority of Lavelle Prep students are likely to be Special Education students, it is possible that many of the older students will also be eligible for General Education Transportation. It is likely that the majority of students will be eligible for full or half-fare MetroCards based on how far they live from the school.<sup>46</sup> The parents or guardians of those students ineligible for transportation will be responsible for making provisions for any additional transportation they desire for their children. A significant number of students may be transported to or from school by their parents.

Lavelle Prep complies with DOE transportation policies and procedures and meets all necessary deadlines. In accordance with standard regulations, Lavelle Prep documents the manner in which students are transported to and from the School. Parents enrolling their children in Lavelle Prep are asked to notify the school district annually of any need for transportation to the school for the following school year, in advance of April 1 deadlines.

Lavelle Prep does not plan on an extended school year and intends to follow the calendar of the NYC DOE with respect to school closings. Lavelle Prep does not anticipate providing additional transportation for students enrolled in the school with the exception of transportation for required field trips.

**d. Student Records:**

Lavelle Prep complies fully with all regulations pertaining to the keeping and monitoring of student records including Education Law [§2854(1)(e)] and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) requiring the protection of student privacy. Lavelle Prep will not disclose any information from the student's permanent records without consent of the parent or legal guardian of a student under 18 years of age, or of a student 18 years of age or older except as authorized pursuant to FERPA, or in response to a subpoena, as required by law. The parent or legal guardian of a student under 18 years of age, or a student 18 years of age or older is entitled to access the student's school records by submitting a written request to the Principal. Lavelle Prep will comply with such requests within a reasonable period of time but, in no case, more than 45 days after it has been received. All student records required to be kept confidential will be kept in a locked file in the school office and electronically in a password protected database. The Director of Operations ensures that up-to-date and accurate student records are maintained, monitors access to those records in accordance with applicable law, and reports attendance and enrollment in compliance with Article 56 of the Education Law.

These records include emergency contact information, promotional status, checklist reports, and legal documents pertaining to custody issues and visitation rights. Lavelle Prep utilizes a system such as *Automate the Schools* or *PowerSchool* to standardize and automate the collection and reporting of data pertaining to attendance, biographical data, enrollment status, grade promotion, and pupil transportation.

All staff receive annual training in policies and procedures related to confidentiality policies and procedures. The Director of Operations is responsible for conducting and documenting this training.

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<sup>46</sup>. Transportation text informed by, The New York Charter School Resource Center, 2005 Guidebook

Further information concerning the disclosure of student information and limitations on such disclosure found in FERPA and in Lavelle Prep policies adopted pursuant thereto are included in the Lavelle Prep Student Manual.

**e. Federal Requirements**

Lavelle Prep will meet all federal requirements including the Child Find, IEP progress report, and data reporting requirements of IDEA as described above in the Special Education section. Lavelle Prep will comply with FERPA and other requirements of federal law.

*Child Find Requirements:* Lavelle Prep will comply with the federal Child Find requirement (34 CFR €300.125) which requires schools to have in place a process for identifying, locating, and evaluating students with disabilities. Any student entering Lavelle Prep as a first time enrollee in a New York public school is identified for screening by the Office Manager and is screened by a team of teachers (including teachers certified in both special and regular education) to identify any possible indication that the student may need a specialized or intensive education program or referral to the appropriate Committee on Special Education. Other students may be referred to the grade team if they are demonstrating previously unidentified problems in the classroom environment. The grade team designs and implements strategies to address identified student needs. Should problems persist and if disability is suspected, the student is referred to the appropriate Committee on Special Education in accordance with policies described in *Section VII, 5, a. Special Education Students*. The Special Education Coordinator is responsible for this process.

*Data Reporting Requirement:* In compliance with application state and federal law [34 CFR 300.642], [34 CFR 300.750], [8 NYCRR€ 119.3], Lavelle Prep will submit an annual report to the State Education Department and as required to the NYC DOE detailing the number of students with disabilities served, the nature of each student’s disability, and each student’s educational placement and setting. The Principal of Lavelle Prep will be responsible for ensuring the collection, maintenance, and reporting of all data regarding students with disabilities.

*Confidentiality of Records:* The processes to be followed at Lavelle Prep to ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and IDEA regarding confidential student records are described above in Section XIII.1d.

*Informing Parents of Progress in Meeting IEP Goals:* Lavelle Prep will comply fully with all statutes ensuring that parents are kept informed of their child’s progress in meeting his/her IEP goals [34 CFR 300.322, 34 CFR 300.320] at least as often as parents are informed of their non-disabled children’s progress. At Lavelle Prep, students with IEP’s participate in the same classes and coursework as students without IEP’s and receive the same report cards three times per year. In addition, at the same times, parents of students with IEPs are informed regarding progress toward his/her IEP goals and the extent to which that progress is sufficient to enable the student to achieve the goals by the end of the school year.

**f. Safety**

The Board of Trustees has adopted a school safety plan approved by the NYC Department of Education.

### **g. Student Rights and Responsibilities**

#### Participation in School Activities

All students have the right to have the opportunity to take part in all school activities on an equal basis regardless of race, sex, national origin, creed, or disability; and to address the school on the same terms as any citizen. Similarly, all students are bound by the same rules for exclusion from school activities and public address.

#### Records

Charter Schools are subject the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) which requires a school to protect a student's privacy. The school will not disclose any information from the student's permanent records except as authorized pursuant to FERPA, or in response to a subpoena, as required by law. The parent(s) or guardian(s) of a student under 18 years of age, or a student 18 years of age or older, is entitled to access to the student's school records by submitting a written request to the Principal. Further information concerning the disclosure of student information and limitations on such disclosure may be found in FERPA.

#### Freedom of Expression

Students are entitled to express their personal opinions verbally, in writing, or by symbolic speech. The expression of such opinions, however, shall not interfere with the freedom of others to express themselves, and written expression of opinion must be signed by the author. Any form of expression that involves libel, slander, the use of obscenity, or personal attacks, or that otherwise disrupts the educational process, is prohibited. All forms of expression also must be in compliance with the Student Disciplinary Code and the school dress code, violations of which are punishable as stated in the Disciplinary Code.

Student participation in the publication of school sponsored student newsletters, yearbooks, literary magazines and similar publications is encouraged as a learning and educational experience. These publications, if any, shall be supervised by qualified faculty advisors and shall strive to meet high standards of journalism. In order to maintain consistency with the school's basic educational mission, the content of such publications is controlled by school authorities.

No person shall distribute any printed or written materials on school property without the prior permission of the Principal. The Principal may regulate the content of materials to be distributed on school property to the extent necessary to avoid material and substantial interference with the requirements of appropriate discipline in the operation of the school. The Principal may also regulate the time, place, manner and duration of such distribution.

#### Search and Seizure

A student and/or the student's belongings may be searched by a school official if the official has a reasonable suspicion to believe that a search of that student will result in evidence that the student violated the law or a school rule. Items which are prohibited on school property or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from the student by school authorities.



Student lockers and desks remain the property of the school, though the school is not responsible for books, clothing, or valuables left in lockers or desks. A student shall not place or keep in a locker or desk any article or material which is of a non-school nature and may cause or tend to cause the disruption of the mission of the school.

The following rules shall apply to the search of school property assigned to a specific student and the seizure of illegal items found therein:

- School authorities will make an individual search of a student's locker or desk only when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a student is in the possession of an item which is prohibited on school property or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- Searches shall be conducted under the authorization of the school Principal or his/her designee.
- Items which are prohibited on school property, or which may be used to disrupt or interfere with the educational process, may be removed from student lockers or desks by school authorities.

## **2. Admission Policies**

The John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School provides a rigorous college preparatory education that equips and empowers students for success. Lavelle Prep expects all students to graduate with a foundation to attend and succeed in college and in life. Lavelle Prep welcomes all students, including those living with emotional challenges, and integrates all students in its classes and activities. Full integration of students empowers them to break down barriers through the power of their daily academic and social experience, enabling them to develop the academic skill, emotional fluency, and confidence required to be successful students today and thoughtful, open-minded leaders tomorrow.

Lavelle Prep is committed to the idea that diversity is enriching, that appreciation of the differences in ability/disability like differences in race, religion, and national origin enrich our lives, that students without disabilities learn much from their challenged peers about living with and overcoming the obstacles which life places in our paths just as students with disabilities learn that everything is not so rosy for people without obvious handicaps.

The Lavelle Prep Admission Policy is designed to support this mission. Admission to Lavelle Prep is open to all students. New students are admitted each year to Lavelle Prep through a lottery system, without regard to prior measures of achievement or aptitude, disability, ethnicity, race, gender, national origin, religion or athletic ability. In order to ensure the balance of students with disabilities and non-disabled students, a preferential lottery is held for students certified for special education (students with IEP's) as well as a lottery open to all students.

### **a. Application and admission periods and procedures**

Although outreach to the community occurs throughout the year, formal recruitment of incoming students begins in January. To be eligible for the lottery, interested families must submit applications by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Sixth grade is the primary entry point to Lavelle Prep. A small number of students are admitted in 7<sup>th</sup> grade to fill vacancies. Lavelle Prep anticipates admitting only a limited number of students in higher grades. Because the

program we offer and the expectations we hold for students are significantly different from that of traditional schools, it would be increasingly difficult for new students to succeed without the benefit of the preparation that their classmates would have received. While we reserve the right to fill openings in the upper grades to increase, such increases will occur only when they can be done without jeopardizing the educational experience of all students. The number of students accepted for admission to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade each year will take into account the number of seats available as well as anticipated retentions. In the event, that we opt to fill vacancies, replacements will be drawn in order from an existing lottery-generated waiting list or from a new lottery following the procedures outlined above, including the priority for siblings of current students outlined above.

**b. Outreach plan**

Lavelle Prep undertakes a variety of measures to recruit student applicants. Efforts are made to reach directly all eligible Staten Island residents. These include direct mailings through the NYC DOE-sanctioned mailing service, advertising in local media, and informational forums held throughout Staten Island.

While there are no educational, aptitude, or achievement standards students must meet for admission, every effort is made to advise all prospective candidates and their families about the opportunities and limitations of Lavelle Prep. Because of the relatively small size of the school and our mission, we offer only a single basic curriculum for all students: a rigorous college-preparatory program, an intensive arts program, and a Wellness Curriculum as well as supportive services.

Lavelle Prep is committed to serving students with limited English proficiency. To reach the non-English speaking sector of the community, Lavelle Prep works with the community-based organizations which serve and represent this sector including the Russian American Council of Staten Island, the South Asian and Indo-Caribbean Americans for Political Progress, the Staten Island Asian Coalition, the Staten Island Latino Civic Association, and the Staten Island Pakistani Civic Association. We will schedule open houses for interested parents in collaboration with these organizations, develop enrollment and application materials in languages other than English, and develop other school materials in the languages of parents, and eventually evolve the Lavelle Prep website to be accessible to non-English readers.

Although every effort is made to insure that parents or guardians are able to make informed choices when applying to Lavelle Prep, participation in meetings or interviews, tours of the school, or any other outreach program are not a condition for admission.

**c. Procedures if student applications for admissions exceed available space, including the following:**

In the event that applications exceed available seats, a formal, public lottery will be conducted. Students will not be admitted prior to the lottery. Priority will be given to siblings of current students. For each grade to which students are to be admitted, two lotteries will be held, one for Special Education students and a second open lottery. Forty percent of available seats will be reserved for the Special Education lottery.

In the event, that Lavelle Prep opts to fill vacancies in higher grades, candidates will be drawn in order from an existing lottery-generated waiting list or through a new lottery for

each grade in which students will be admitted following the procedures outlined above, including the priority for siblings of current students. If vacancies are filled from existing waiting lists, withdrawing special education students will be replaced from the special education waiting list and non-special education students from the open lottery.

**d. Procedures for student withdrawal or transfer**

Lavelle Prep is a public school of choice, both for application and withdrawal. Circumstances may arise where parent or guardian may wish to transfer his or her child to a different school. With parent or guardian permission, students may withdraw from Lavelle Prep at any time. School personnel offer to meet with the family and discuss the reasons for the desired withdrawal from the School, as well as to seek solutions to any problems that arise from these discussions.

If the parents or guardians still wish to transfer their child to another school, the staff at Lavelle Prep make every reasonable effort to help the student find a school that better serves the student's needs. Lavelle Prep will ensure the timely transfer of any necessary school records to the student's new school.

**3 Grievance Policy**

Consistent with the New York Charter Schools Act of 1998 §2855(4):

Any individual or group may bring a complaint to the board of trustees of a charter school alleging a violation of the provisions of this article, the charter, or any other provision of law relating to the management or operation of the charter school. If, after presentation of the complaint to the board of trustees of a charter school, the individual or group determines that such board has not adequately addressed the complaint, they may present that complaint to the charter entity, which shall investigate and respond. If, after presentation of the complaint to the charter entity, the individual or group determines that the charter entity has not adequately addressed the complaint, they may present that complaint to the Board of Regents, which shall investigate and respond. The charter entity and the Board of Regents shall have the power and the duty to issue appropriate remedial orders to charter schools under their jurisdiction to effectuate the provisions of this section.

Lavelle Prep has established a Grievance Procedure to address complaints brought by any individual or organization.

Complaints against staff or students are brought to the Principal and are investigated by her or her designee. All complaints for alleged violations of the law or the school's charter regarding the management and operation of the school shall be brought directly to the Board of Trustees.

Complaints brought to the Principal are investigated and a written finding issued with 30 days. If the complainant is not satisfied with a disposition by the Principal, the decision may be appealed to the Board of Trustees.

Complaints brought to the Board of Trustees are referred in a timely manner to a Grievance Committee, if such a committee has been established, to an *ad hoc* investigatory committee, or to the Executive Committee. This Committee considers the allegations and make non-binding recommendations to the Board of Trustees for a response to the complaint. The Trustees then make a decision about whether to take action in response to the complaint and if so what action should be taken.

Appeals of the Board of Trustees' decision may be made to the New York City Department of Education if they are not satisfied with the handling of their grievance by the school's board of trustees, and, if still unsatisfied, thereafter to the Board of Regents.

## **PART 5: MISCELLANEOUS**

### **XIV. Operational Impact/Dissolution**

#### **a. Operational Impact**

Lavelle Prep estimates of total annual per pupil revenue are based on 2012-13 per pupil revenue rate and an estimated mix of General and Special Education students. The table below displays the fiscal impact of Lavelle Prep on the NYC DOE. We expect Lavelle Prep to have a minimum fiscal impact on Staten Island private and parochial schools. The latter, which play a significant role in Staten Island, under serve youth with disabilities generally and students with emotional challenges in particular.

Lavelle Prep expects, however, to have a far greater programmatic impact. In the short term, by providing a setting where underachieving youth can be effectively served, Lavelle Prep will not only provide a service to the youngsters attending the school but will also, by relieving already over-taxed public schools of some of the most challenging (and potentially draining) students contribute to the overall effectiveness of Staten Island schools. In the longer term, by establishing expectations for high academic achievement and by providing essential supports, Lavelle Prep expects to demonstrate that students living with emotional challenges can achieve on a level equal to their non-disabled peers. In so doing, we will raise expectations for all schools serving this population. By demonstrating an approach that can be effectively employed in public education, Lavelle Prep has the potential for contributing an alternative to increasing public funding of private education.

Potential Fiscal Impact of  
John W. Lavelle Preparatory Charter School  
(New York City CSD 31/Region 7 – Staten Island)

School Year	# Students	Projected Per Pupil Revenue	District Budget	Projected Impact
FY15	415	\$8,253,011	\$24,800,000,000	0.03%
FY16	435	\$8,798,257	\$24,800,000,000	0.04%
FY17	456	\$9,320,184	\$24,800,000,000	0.04%
FY18	466	\$9,620,658	\$24,800,000,000	0.04%
FY19	471	\$9,774,110	\$24,800,000,000	0.04%

**b. Dissolution**

In the event of closure or dissolution of Lavelle Prep, the Board of Trustees shall delegate to the Principal or other responsible party the responsibility to manage the dissolution process in accordance with Education Law § 2851(2)(t). This process shall include notification to parents of children enrolled in Lavelle Prep and public meetings to answer questions about the dissolution process. In accordance with Educational Law, Lavelle Prep shall transfer student records to the New York City Public School District, and the parents of the enrolled students shall be notified of the transfer of records. School officials shall assist in placing students in local schools and local charter schools as appropriate. After satisfaction of outstanding debts pursuant to Education §220, any remaining assets shall be transferred to another Staten Island school. An escrow account shall be established to help defray the costs of any such dissolution. By April 1<sup>st</sup> of year 1 of operation, the balance of the escrow account was \$10,000. By April 1<sup>st</sup> of year 2, the balance of the escrow account was at \$30,000. By April 1<sup>st</sup> of year 3, the balance was \$70,000.

**XV. Institutional Partnership Agreement**

Lavelle Prep has entered into no institutional partnership agreements.