

**APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL
THE SALT LAKE CITY OPEN CLASSROOM
CHARTER SCHOOL**

May 2022

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A. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of proposed charter school: Open Classroom Charter School (“Open Classroom”)

Address of proposed charter school: 134 D St. Salt Lake City, UT 84103

Date application submitted to District: May 2022

Applicant name: The Open Classroom Steering Body of the Salt Lake City Open Classroom.

The primary contacts for this renewal and application are Mindy Lokey, Joe Gibbs, and Christine Marriott

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Description of governing board: The Board of Education for Salt Lake City Schools serves as the governing board for the Open Classroom. There are seven elected board members and their terms of office and election are governed by Utah Code §20A-14-201 et seq.

The Open Classroom is directed by the Steering Body. The Steering Body is composed of parents and faculty of the Open Classroom and is further described in Part C.1.c of this application.

Website address: The website for the Open Classroom is www.ocslc.org.

Charter school authorizer: Board of Education – Salt Lake City Schools

Original opening date: August 1977

Original charter granted: August 2006

Grade levels or student ages to be served: K-8

Maximum number of students to be served: Each school year, we serve approximately 300 students. The timing and grade levels for these students is described in the appendices. The maximum number of students to be served by the Open Classroom is 400.

B. INTRODUCTION

The Open Classroom has operated for 45 years as an optional education program with Salt Lake City School District (“SLCSD” or “District”). Sixteen years ago, the Open Classroom transitioned to a district-supported charter school within SLCSD.

The Open Classroom’s Mission Statement reads:

The Open Classroom is a parent-cooperative learning community in which teachers and parents collaborate to educate the whole child and empower lifelong learners.

The Open Classroom’s Vision Statement reads:

The Open Classroom inspires authentic learning by engaging everyone in dynamic and evolving practices in a welcoming environment.

At the heart of the school are the following principles which have been the foundation of our success:

- Every person in the learning community plays a role in creating and maintaining a meaningful, purposeful learning environment.
- We use small-group collaborative learning that builds on students’ interests.
- Parents assist (“co-op”) in the classroom, which gives students more individualized attention from both parents and teachers.
- Multi-age classrooms encourage students to learn from each other.
- Every child is treated as an individual.
- Every child is treated as a whole child, with their social, emotional, creative, cognitive, and physical growth and development being considered and nurtured, while state academic expectations are being met.

The Open Classroom philosophy is that students learn most effectively when they are immersed in authentic learning experiences where they can:

- Practice self-reliance

- Assume responsibility for their own learning
- Develop positive self-esteem and confidence
- Experience decision-making opportunities
- Learn cooperatively in multi-aged settings
- Receive guidance and support from caring, licensed teachers
- Receive guidance and support from parents who actively participate in classroom activities and school operation

The Open Classroom is a kindergarten through eighth grade school. We have specified procedures and policies in this application that are reviewed and changed from time to time.

Parent participation is an essential feature of the Open Classroom. Families are asked to:

1. Attend monthly parent meetings (required), and
2. Offer their support and assistance through co-oping and/or school committees (recommended)

Parent meetings (required) occur five or six times throughout the year. These meetings are organized and facilitated by each teacher or teaching team. These meetings give parents an opportunity to discuss children, whole child learning and curriculum, policies, and procedures. Part of each parent meeting is devoted to discussing current school, steering, and community matters and seeking feedback and input from parents. Other suggestions and/or concerns raised in the parent meetings are brought to the Open Classroom Steering Body through the class Steering Representative for consideration. This information helps guide discussions for our yearly Student Success Plan.

Co-oping is probably the most distinctive feature of the Open Classroom. It creates a learning community where inclusiveness and lifelong friendships are fostered among students and families. Parent participation contributes to whole child development and provides important resources to the school. It also keeps the parents informed about their child's education. We have also found that students thrive on having a parent or other adult they know in the classroom helping them and their friends. **Flexible co-oping** allows parents to co-op for one or more hours weekly to meet the instructional needs of the class. Students are supported by co-ops in small group work, independent work, and friendships. Parents gain a deep knowledge of the learning methods and objectives and offer their own unique experiences to the class or grade level. Teachers gain a greater ability to provide small group and individual support to enhance personal development and learning outcomes. **Alternative Co-oping** allows parents to participate by assisting the teacher or the school with

assignments that are performed outside of the classroom. **While flexible or alternative co-oping is recommended, it is not required.**

Committees (recommended) help us build a meaningful learning environment, support our learning, and help our teachers and staff run our school. OC families can support our school by serving on a variety of committees. These committees are fluid and can change according to the current needs of the school. Examples of committees are Cafeteria, Garden, Traffic, Fundraising, Publicity, Community Connections, Philosophy, Yearbook, Library, and Visual and Performing Arts. Parents are always invited and encouraged to attend Open Classroom Steering Body meetings where policies, procedures, curriculum, and instruction are regularly discussed.

C. SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

1. **Administrative Structure: Describe the governance and administrative structures of the school, including representation of the governing board.**

- a. Overview – Open Classroom governance and administration
The Open Classroom is currently a charter school within the SLCSO. It is governed by all the laws, rules, and policies that apply to any other public school, except those from which we are seeking a waiver as requested in this application.

The Open Classroom is directed through its Steering Body, which includes staff and parent representatives as further described below. A quorum of the membership of the Steering Body must be present to make a decision, and decisions are made through the process of consensus. A quorum is defined as 66% of the membership. The School Improvement Council (SIC) shall assign teacher representatives to attend steering meetings. When consensus cannot be reached, decisions are made according to the concepts outlined in the written agreement and SLCSO board policy.

- b. Board of Education – Salt Lake City Schools and Superintendent of Schools

As a District-dependent charter school, the Open Classroom shall be governed by the Board of Education – Salt Lake City Schools (“Board”). The Board shall have the authority to decide matters related to the operation of the Charter School and shall have final responsibility for the academic and operational performance of the Charter School. Nothing herein shall prevent the Board from delegating decision-making authority for policy and operational

decisions to officers, employees, and agents of the Open Classroom, but ultimate responsibility for and oversight of any such delegated authority shall remain at all times with the Board.

c. The Open Classroom Steering Body

The Steering Body is responsible for management of the Open Classroom school. In coordination with and subject to the approval of SLCSD and/or the Board, the Steering Body will:

- Develop, approve, and implement policy
- Approve and implement a budget
- Make hiring recommendations to the Board in instances where hiring authority resides with SLCSD (but see Part C.1.e)
 - On any formal hiring committees, at least one member of the Steering Body shall be included, preferably a parent member
- Hire Open Classroom staff in circumstances where hiring authority does not rest with the District and/or Board (but see Part C.1.e)
- Gather feedback and concerns from each classroom and serve as an advisory committee to the Steering Executive Committee (SEC), and
- Manage other aspects of the school.

The Steering Body will consist of the Principal, faculty representatives, the SEC, and classroom Steering representatives. The SIC shall determine how teachers share representation on the Steering Body each year to assure there are two fewer staff members than parents. Membership in the Steering Body will include two or more parent/guardian members than the number of school employee members.

When making decisions, the Steering Body will always try to reach consensus. If consensus is not reached, guidelines in the written agreement and SLCSD board policy will be followed.

The Steering Body delegates many of its authorities and responsibilities to the Principal, the School Improvement Council (SIC), the Student Services Council (SSC), and the Open Classroom SEC. In instances where neither the Steering Body nor the SEC may, as a matter of law, be permitted to review private student, faculty, or staff information, delegation to one of these groups is mandatory.

d. Steering Executive Committee

The SEC fulfills the role of the School Community Council (SCC) and is composed of at least six parent members: one chair, one co-chair,

two vice-chairs, a treasurer, and a secretary, [all elected in accordance with state law](#) for two year terms. Individuals may be re-elected to all positions for as many terms as they are willing to serve. The SEC shall also include two elected teacher representatives (including the head teacher when applicable) and the principal. The SEC shall follow the decision-making process in accordance with the principles of shared governance found in the Written Agreement. The SEC will present the Student Success Plan to the full Steering Body for discussion and a final vote.

The SEC's main responsibilities are: to serve as the Open Classroom's central point of coordination and communication for parents and school operations, to identify and work with others as appropriate to address the needs of the school as a whole, to oversee the functions of committees towards meeting those needs, and to serve as the SCC for the Open Classroom.

Election of members of the SEC begins with ad hoc nominating committees. Mid-year vacancies on SEC will be filled in accordance with state law (see link above).

e. Open Classroom Principal

The principal is the chief administrative officer and is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the Open Classroom. The principal is also the manager and supervisor of the teachers and staff of the Open Classroom. The principal executes policy on behalf of the Open Classroom and will make and interpret policy as needed and authorized.

As for any school, the success of the Open Classroom's charter depends in large part upon the principal and upon their understanding of, and commitment to, the Open Classroom's philosophy. It is also important for SLCS D that the charter school have a principal who is responsive to the District's needs and requirements. It is critical that the District and the Open Classroom mutually agree on the employment of the person who fills this role.

For these reasons, this application requests important specifications regarding the Salt Lake Association of School Administrators' Written Understanding (Written Understanding):

- The "Procedures for Vacancies and Transfers" outlined in Part X, "School Based Vacancies, Part A: Principals" of the Written Understanding will apply with the following steps specified for the Open Classroom:
 - The list of characteristics and qualities desired in a new principal will be compiled by an ad hoc committee appointed by the steering committee, or SEC if

steering is not available.

- The selection team will include representatives of the Steering Body, as designated by the SEC. This team screens applicants from the applicant pool, develops interview questions, conducts interviews, and recommends two finalists to the Superintendent of Schools, under Part X.6 of the Written Understanding.
- This application also acknowledges the authorities the SLCSD will have under Utah Code Ann. § 53G-5-502 to appoint an interim director in specified circumstances. However, the SEC will be involved as early as possible in the selection process of the interim director.

f. Head Teacher

The head teacher is a licensed teacher who serves in a support role for the principal, teachers, parents, and students. The head teacher assists teachers with instructional practices and in supporting struggling students, while also supporting parents, teachers, and students in maintaining the Open Classroom philosophy. In the absence of a head teacher, the SEC and SIC collaborate to assign out head teacher duties on a year-to-year basis.

g. Teachers

The Open Classroom teachers are now, and will continue to be, responsible for instruction in their classrooms. They are responsible for implementing and enhancing the core curriculum, and for directing and coordinating the activities of co-oping parents. They assess student progress and provide information about that progress to parents.

h. School Improvement Council

The SIC will be identical in composition to the School Improvement Councils described in the principles of shared governance found in the Written Agreement.

i. Committees, Chairs, and Members

Much of the work to support the Open Classroom is done by committees of parents and teachers. Although the committees change from time to time depending on current needs and circumstances, we expect that the Open Classroom will continue to use a committee structure to carry on most of the work supporting the school.

Parents are asked to join a committee. Parents are asked to contribute about 30 hours per year to their committee. Committee members elect a committee chair and co-chair annually.

2. Chief Administrative Officer: Provide the name and describe the qualifications of the chief administrative officer.

The chief administrative officer is the principal of the Open Classroom and is recruited using criteria and procedures the SLCSO has established for hiring principals, as described under Paragraph C.1.e above.

3. Communication with Parents: Describe the procedures for notifying parents of their opportunities or obligations for involvement.

Communication with parents regarding their opportunities for involvement is extensive and multilayered. Following are descriptions of some of the more significant methods:

- The application process begins with a family's orientation. Tours and Prospective Parent Information Nights (PPIN) are held to educate and inform families about the Open Classroom. During tours and PPINs, attendees are introduced to agreements to help families understand their opportunities, their obligations for involvement (in the absence of a waiver; see Part L.1), and alternatives available to them.
- Weekly Class Newsletters sent by teachers via email include classroom business, current and upcoming events, and a weekly schedule. Periodic principal emails are also sent to the community.
- Class messaging systems such as Remind and Class Dojo may be used to communicate messages and information to individual classes.
- Regular Parent Meetings allow for discussion of this information.
- Monthly Steering Body meetings provide additional opportunities for communication and decision making.
- Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are utilized to communicate messages and information to connect the community. These are run by school staff and monitored by the SLCSO.
- Bulletin boards provide current information.
- The Open Classroom Handbook is provided online at ocslc.org. The Handbook outlines the general expectations, policies, and procedures of the OC.

4. Complaints: Describe the procedures for receiving and responding to parent complaints.

The Open Classroom's Problem-Solving Procedure is outlined in the

Handbook which is provided online. The Problem-Solving Procedure gives parents a number of options for addressing any concerns. The Procedure suggests taking the following steps in order, but also allows parents to go directly to whomever they need when problem solving. The Problem-Solving Procedure suggests that parents:

- Address the problem directly with the relevant person
- Contact the Community Support Representative
- Depending upon the nature of the concern, contact the Steering Chair(s), the Head Teacher, or the Principal; and
- Address the Steering Body

Finally, parents are urged to bring any concerns, including concerns about personnel and legal matters, to only the principal if there are privacy issues involved.

D. STUDENTS

1. Notification: Describe how potential students and their families will be notified of the opportunity to attend the school, the procedure for applying, and efforts to attract a student population that represents the district as a whole.

a. Notification

The Open Classroom Publicity Committee works in partnership with the SLCSD to prepare, translate, and distribute fliers to places where children and their parents gather, including libraries, recreation centers, preschools (including Head Start), local businesses, multicultural centers, and special events. The Publicity Committee also prepares advertisements for social media and promotes activities happening at school on social media platforms. Word of mouth is our most effective notification tool. As a result, we hold a minimum of two prospective parent night events annually and several tours throughout the school year.

b. Procedure

Applicants for the Open Classroom must fill out an application form. A prospective applicant's guardian is asked to either attend a tour of the Open Classroom or a PPIN in order for their application to be considered in the lottery. During the application process, an effort is made to help families decide if the Open Classroom style of learning is a good fit for the student, and to ensure parents understand the Open

Classroom philosophy and the level of commitment for Open Classroom families.

c. Outreach to Representative Students

The Open Classroom is in the process of reviewing and building on existing outreach efforts in order to reach a diverse audience and attract a student population that represents the SLCS D as a whole.

For an applicant to the Open Classroom with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 plan, we coordinate with the student's previous school and the SLCS D to ensure that each student's individual needs are met and that appropriate plans are in place and followed.

2. Selection: Describe the admissions selection process, including any preferences given at admission.

a. Non-discrimination

The Open Classroom complies with federal and state law with respect to the selection and admission of students into the Open Classroom. The Open Classroom does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, country of origin, or other protected classes.

b. Selection

Existing Open Classroom students are admitted as they move from one grade to the next. Once a student is in the Open Classroom school, space is made available for a student to continue in the school.

If there is space left, this preferential order will be followed to fill each grade level:

- Students who are descendants of those who have founder status (see Appendix 3)
- Siblings of existing students
- Students whose parents or guardians are employees of the Open Classroom
- A lottery is conducted for any remaining students, who are then offered positions as they arise.

3. Standards: Describe the standards that will govern student conduct, dress, and performance, how and when those standards will be communicated to students and parents, and how they will be enforced.

The conduct standards currently in the Salt Lake City School District

Elementary School Handbook and [Board Policy S-3](#) are applied at the Open Classroom. The Open Classroom Dress Code and Student Behavior Expectations are included in Appendix 4 and Appendix 5. The Handbook is provided digitally to each Open Classroom family at the beginning of the year and includes a description of these standards.

Unless a student's behavior is dangerous, destructive, or raises other very serious issues, it is part of the Open Classroom's philosophy to help students recognize and manage their own conduct problems. Open Classroom teachers are given significant discretion to accomplish this, and act in consideration of the problem being raised and the personality of the children involved.

When a student's behavior is dangerous, destructive, or raises other very serious issues, the matter is referred to the principal for appropriate action.

- 4. Dismissal: Describe the procedures and processes that will be used to suspend, dismiss, or expel students from the charter school. Describe how information is shared with the student's resident district in the event of a suspension, dismissal, or expulsion.**

The Open Classroom uses procedures and processes consistent with SLCS D board policies for suspending, dismissing, or expelling students.

E. STAFF

- 1. Screening and Selection: Describe the procedures used to determine the qualifications and fitness of employees for assignments.**

Open Classroom teachers, principal, and other staff are SLCS D employees. Therefore, the SLCS D's procedures and requirements apply, with the specifications described below and in Part C.1.e of this application.

When there is a vacancy for a teaching position, a selection committee made up of the principal as well as staff and parent representatives will interview the applicants. A final recommendation to extend an employment offer will be made to the Board by the principal via the SLCS D HRS department.

- 2. Qualifications: Describe the minimum acceptable qualifications for professional staff.**

Because the professional staff are SLCS D employees, the SLCS D's and the State's minimum acceptable qualifications generally apply. The Open Classroom may also elect, with the SLCS D's approval, to use teachers with alternative certification as authorized by the Utah Charter School law, Utah

Code Ann. § 53G-5-407.

- 3. Staffing Patterns: Describe the anticipated staffing pattern, including whether students will be in self-contained classes, in multi-age groups, or rotated among different teachers, class sizes, and roles of classified support staff and other pertinent aspects of the staffing pattern.**

Depending on the IEP, children may receive support in a self-contained setting or in their general education classroom.

Classrooms are configured for multi-age classes. Configuration will vary from year to year, depending on student numbers and the needs of the students.

These configurations are determined by the faculty, with parent input. A configuration example is provided in Appendix 6.

Children often rotate among teachers and different classrooms for core and elective classes.

Class sizes for elementary grades will be similar to the class sizes projected for SLCSO schools.

Teachers work with the support of several parent co-ops each day. Classified support staff are also used.

Ordinarily, each classroom has a single teacher, although some teachers work under a job-share arrangement.

- 4. Teaching Schedule: Provide a copy of the anticipated teaching schedule for staff members, including provisions for preparation, consultation with students and parents, and professional development.**

An annual calendar, which includes specific times for professional development, for consultation with students and parents, and for student testing, will be prepared in accordance with SLCSO instructions. A typical yearly calendar is attached in Appendix 7.

The daily schedules for all students K-8 vary depending on curricular needs, access to support personnel, and the needs of the students and teachers for each grade-level blend. Class schedules are developed collaboratively amongst the teachers in an effort to provide the most effective learning environment.

F. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. **Purpose: Explain the school’s purpose, mission, and goals specifying the factors that set it apart from other educational entities currently available in the area.**

The Open Classroom’s Mission and Vision Statements are included in the Introduction. The goals of the school are:

1. To create a child-centered, parent-supported, and teacher-directed public school that emphasizes instruction which builds on students' interests in a collaborative way. Some of the learning activities are planned by children and parents under the guidance of the teacher. Additionally, parents may provide enhancement activities to support a teacher-directed, child-centered curriculum.
2. To educate the whole child, addressing individual students’ academic, social, emotional, creative, cognitive, and physical growth and development.

The following desired performance results are an integral component of the Open Classroom philosophy and goals. The Open Classroom learning environment is constructed to foster students in becoming:

1. Complex thinkers and problem solvers
2. Effective communicators
3. Cooperative group participants and leaders
4. Contributors to the community
5. Producers of quality work
6. Self-directed learners

The Open Classroom provides an excellent environment for self-direction, communication, and co-operation. Our K-8 education plan is included in Appendix 2.

2. **Curriculum: Describe the curricular and instructional program to be used in the school; specify compatibility with the Core Curriculum and graduation requirements.**

The curriculum and instruction at the Open Classroom are set apart not by content—which follows core curriculum—but by the way that content is implemented.

a. Explanation of unique teaching/learning strategies

The Open Classroom is a community of learners. Students, parents, and teachers share the roles of teacher, learner, and leader

The diversity of backgrounds and experiences that students, parents, and teachers bring to the classroom enriches the entire Open Classroom community. Classrooms are not isolated from the learning community. Multi-age classrooms collaborate with each other. Collaboration between students, parents, teachers, and other community partners is an essential element of what makes the Open Classroom school unique and strong.

Observing and asking questions are key elements of how students, parents, and teachers approach teaching and learning. Open-ended questions allow learners the opportunity to actively reflect on their learning or behavior, rather than passively receiving information. Students and parents are encouraged and taught to ask questions, make requests, and propose ideas for learning activities that interest them or that they wish for the whole class. Students and parents are encouraged to be active in their learning and are supported as they learn.

b. Parents as leaders

Parent co-oping helps make the Open Classroom unique. Parents generally commit to spend a specific block of time each week in their child's classroom. Parents in the Open Classroom are not given the responsibilities of professional teachers. They are, however, integral to the learning environment. They supplement and enrich the curriculum under the direction of the classroom teacher. Many parents have vocational or professional knowledge and talents. Bringing this into the classroom contributes to student learning significantly beyond what the teacher alone would be able to accomplish. Volunteers will follow the SLCSD policies for volunteering including any required registration and background checks. Below are some of the activities performed by parents in the classroom:

- Plan and teach mini-courses involving small groups of students based on the interests of the students, the talents of the parents, and the curriculum requirements envisioned and designed by the teacher
- Facilitate small group learning activities in the classroom with the teacher or paraprofessional
- Collaborate with teachers and students to plan, organize, and lead

curriculum in a variety of ways to meet individual student styles and needs

- Share expertise and professional experience through their roles as co-ops, bringing "real life" experience to the classroom.
- Provide support for Canvas (a computer-based assignment platform) assignments, particularly for the upper grades.
- Support curricular enrichment, e.g., drama, music, art, and sports.

c. Students as teachers

Students are also integral to the creation of a unique, child-centered learning environment and often help select the manner in which curriculum is implemented. Under the direction of the teacher and parents, they supplement and enrich the curriculum. Below are some of the activities in which children may be engaged. These activities vary, based on age or grade level.

- "Kid Co-oping": Students plan, prepare, and facilitate small group activities with their peers. They learn what it is like to be a "teacher" and "co-oper."
- Multi-age mentoring: Students have the opportunity to be leaders as the older ones in a multi-aged classroom, and model what they know for the younger students. Younger students have the opportunity to be coached and learn from their peers through the multi-age experience.
- Directing curriculum: Students have a voice in guiding the direction of the curriculum through conversation with the teacher. Teachers learn from the students what their interests and strengths are, and use these to create a student-centered curriculum. Students help to transform classroom learning so it makes sense to them and interests them.

d. Professionals as Open Classroom teachers

Primarily, Open Classroom teachers implement the core curriculum. They do this, however, in the unique learning environment and teaching style of the Open Classroom. The responsibilities of Open Classroom teachers are to:

- Encourage students to practice making responsible choices, with the understanding that they will make mistakes as part of the learning process. Emphasis is placed on supporting students

finding their own way, rather than telling them what their way should be. This teaching style requires a lot of conversation and dialogue.

- Encourage and support students to take responsibility for their learning. All students have requirements that are expected to be completed each week. Students are taught ways of approaching these expectations and requirements with the goals of becoming self-directed in their learning, problem solvers who are responsible with their time, and independent thinkers who can also collaborate with peers and adults.
- Give students the opportunity to help plan and organize parts of their day through the use of daily and weekly planners. These are individual to each classroom and, sometimes, to each student. In grades 7-8, planners become digital and activities are planned using Canvas tools.
- Help students work at their own pace and level through the use of the students' individual planners/Canvas, to meet their weekly requirements. This allows each student to take the time they need on a specific task, and it also provides opportunity to students who need more challenges.
- Plan their curriculum and approach to teaching/learning from a whole child perspective—seeking to address the academic, emotional, social, physical, cognitive, and creative needs of each student
- Address the emotional and social needs of students. This is considered to be as important as time spent on cognitive needs. If students are struggling with a friendship conflict, that is where their attention is focused until the conflict is resolved. Open Classroom teachers spend time problem solving while teaching students these skills to practice on their own. The whole-child approach requires flexibility in daily plans and an understanding that students bring more than their cognitive needs to school with them.
- Have more opportunities to meet with small groups of students and with individual students in order to assess individual needs, and address specific lessons and curriculum components. This happens when parent co-ops take responsibility for leading small groups.
- Consider the developmental needs of students, rather than focusing on strict grade level expectations.
- Play a major role in fostering a sense of community and continuity within the school, supporting new family education within their

classrooms and blend levels. This may involve participation in planning annual activities.

- Prepare students, with the assistance of their parents, in the process of transition from the Open Classroom environment for success throughout their academic career.

3. Calendar: Provide copies of the school calendar and schedule, showing the hours and days that instruction will occur.

The calendar will be prepared in accordance with SLCS D instructions, just as it has been in the past. An example of a typical calendar is attached in Appendix 7.

4. Extracurricular Activities: Describe the plans for extracurricular activities, including whether the school intends to participate in interscholastic competitions and, if so, how that will be done.

Students will have opportunities to participate in after-school extracurricular activities. Some activities will be one-time community events, such as dances and parties. Other activities may consist of ongoing experiences where students make a commitment to be part of a team or group, such as sports teams, rock band, drama, etc.

Any extracurricular activities will be done in coordination SLCS D and in compliance with SLCS D Board policies.

5. Waivers: Name the district policies for which you will seek waivers and the rationale for these requests.

The Open Classroom is seeking waivers from the following policies, to the extent and for the reasons indicated:

- a. [Board Policy G-27](#): Like other activities at the Open Classroom, fundraising is a community activity, and our community includes our students. A student would be allowed to participate in more than two fundraising activities. No student will be required to participate in any fundraising activity.
- b. [Board Policy I-8](#): Academic progress at the Open Classroom is currently monitored through the use of the school district report card in grades K through 4, and the attached report cards for students in grades 5 through 8 (see Appendix 10).

6. Replicability/Sustainability: Describe your plan to inform the Salt Lake City School District Board of Education of the ability of the Charter School to be replicated in other locations and its ability to sustain its program over time.

The Open Classroom was first established in 1977. Given its longevity, the school's sustainability is not in doubt. The Open Classroom will continue to keep the Board and the Superintendent of Schools informed about the status of the Open Classroom's prospective student applications.

Although we are interested in replicating the Open Classroom in the future, we do not anticipate making any such move for several years since it is critical, first, to make sure the expansion can succeed. If the Open Classroom has more applicants than positions for three successive years, we will inform the Board and the Superintendent of Schools in order to initiate a discussion of the need for replication.

Because a large part of the success of the Open Classroom is attributable to its culture, shared community understandings, and traditions, we believe successful replication will require a period of nurturing with the existing program.

G. STUDENT ASSESSMENT

- 1. Instruments and Procedures: In addition to participation in the statewide public education assessment program and end-of-level core curriculum assessments, describe the instruments and procedures for assessing student performance.**

As part of our philosophy, we teach the "whole child," which includes each one's cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and creative development. Our assessments are used to measure individual student progress within those five developmental areas. In addition to district, state, and federal mandated testing, we use the following to assess student progress:

- Math, reading, and spelling inventories
- Anecdotal records
- Teacher observation
- Rubrics and self-assessments
- Project-based learning reflections
- Digital learning platforms and their built-in assessment tools
- Teacher-created performance assessments
- Teacher-created formative and summative assessments

- District summative assessments
 - Student Portfolios
 - Parent/Teacher/Kid Conferences
 - Math and Literacy continuums
2. **Reporting and Use: Describe how information obtained from assessments will be reported to parents and how it will be used in the management of the educational program.**

Assessment information is shared with parents and students at semi-annual Parent/Teacher/Kid conferences. Information about student progress is also shared in the following ways:

- Individual conferences as requested by teachers and/or parents
- Parents' presence in the classroom
- For students in grades 5-8, progress checks available at any time through the Canvas platform

Teachers are continually assessing formally and informally and use this information to provide needed instruction, differentiated on an individual basis for all their students.

H. FINANCES AND REPORTING

Revenues and Expenditures: Submit a financial plan for the school including sources of revenue and anticipated expenditures by category (salaries, benefits, facilities, utilities, materials, etc.) and sources of ongoing revenue.

- The Open Classroom complies with all federal, state and District financial requirements and procedures. The Open Classroom is subject to an independent financial audit on a yearly basis and submits all required reports to the applicable entity.
- Funding for the Open Classroom is made available through the Utah State Board of Education based on the current allocation formulas. Funds will be transferred on a monthly basis from the Utah State Board of Education and reported on the Monthly Allotment Memo.
- While the budget does vary from year to year due to enrollment and program and staffing needs, an example of the estimated Annual Operational Costs is

included in Appendix 8.

I. SUPPORT SERVICES

1. Transportation: Describe provisions, if any, for student transportation.

Families of Open Classroom students are responsible for providing all student transportation to and from school. Transportation for field trips is usually provided by District buses, and on occasion family volunteers with background checks are also used on walking trips or to provide transportation in private vehicles. In those circumstances, we will follow [Section IV. E. in Board Policy G-8.](#)

2. Food Services: Describe provisions, if any, for food services.

The Open Classroom contracts with SLCSO to provide food services. The program is fee-based, and free and reduced-cost lunch is available to families who qualify.

3. Health and Safety: Describe provisions for ensuring that health and safety requirements are met and that facilities are maintained in a clean and safe condition.

The Open Classroom complies with Board Policy G-10. The Principal and head custodian are responsible for continuous monitoring of the condition of the building and grounds to maintain them as free from hazards as possible to prevent accidents. The Open Classroom's facility is subject to the guidelines outlined in the Facility Services Procedure Manual for the purpose of providing a physical environment that is safe, clean, sanitary, and conducive to learning.

4. Contracted Services: Describe the contracted services you will request from the district. If this is a conversion of an existing school, describe the services that you expect the district to provide.

The Open Classroom contracts with SLCSO to provide ongoing maintenance.

5. Emergencies: Describe provisions for dealing with emergencies, such as student injury or illness, fire, and natural disasters.

The Open Classroom Emergency Procedures are included in Appendix 9.

J. FACILITY PLAN

1. **Facilities: Describe the location of the facility, classroom space, and other pertinent information regarding the facilities used for students.**

The Open Classroom is housed at 134 D Street under our current lease agreement with SLCSO.

2. **Provide playground space or the equivalent open space for physical education.**

The current facility has two sets of playground equipment, located in opposite corners of the playground space. There is also a paved area with markings for races and Four-Square games, and open lawn for recreational purposes.

K. EVALUATION

1. **Describe the methods by which the school's progress toward achieving its goals, as set forth in the charter, will be assessed. The evaluation should include but is not limited to an assessment of student outcomes, school governance, staffing, curriculum and instruction, and support services.**

The Steering Body is responsible for tracking the implementation of the Student Success Plan. The Student Success Plan may be modified at any time based on new needs or information.

Sources used to inform the Student Success Plan process include:

- Teacher, parent, and student surveys associated with the mid-year evaluation created by the school's philosophy committee
- Student assessment, as described above
- Parent/Teacher/Kid conferences and parent meetings
- Interviews with families that voluntarily choose to leave the school

L. OTHER

1. **Teacher contracts**

All Open Classroom teachers remain under contract with the District and all Open Classroom teachers accrue seniority and all other benefits available to teachers at District schools.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Estimate of Student Numbers by Academic Year

Open Classroom Charter – Current and Estimated Future Enrollment

The average K-8 enrollment of 325 students fits both the building capacity and minimum school program budget projections to support our FTEs and other staff. We are looking to maintain a similar enrollment number for the foreseeable future.

Appendix 2

Open Classroom K-8 Education Plan

The education of the whole child remains a cornerstone of who we are and what we do. By providing students the opportunity to learn in a variety of ways, with a variety of teachers using a variety of approaches, we are able to address the students' academic, social, emotional, creative, cognitive, and physical growth and development. Classroom teachers, parent co-ops, and cross-grade groups provide our students with numerous perspectives and opportunities to learn from a variety of individuals. Through whole- group, small-group, and individual instruction, students are given the opportunity to experience the many facets of group and individual learning. Curriculum is offered through a variety of different modes including, but not limited to, mini-courses/Explores, short- and long-term projects, direct instruction, and inquiry experiences.

The Open Classroom K-8 model continues to grow and evolve. What started with a rather distinct division between the lower grades and upper grades has evolved into a more connected and collaborative model of instruction across all grade levels. Our goal is to provide a consistent and comprehensive academic, social, emotional, and physical learning environment across all grade levels.

Through a collaborative effort between our teachers, counselor, and local high schools, students will have the opportunity to learn about options for high school. Students in grades 7 and 8 have the opportunity to choose certain classes and work with the school counselor to learn about and explore future educational paths and career opportunities.

Appendix 3

Definition of a Founder

Founder: Any person who actively participated in the development of the Open Classroom by (1) co-oping at the Open Classroom or (2) participating on a committee at the Open Classroom prior to the creation of the Open Classroom, and any person who did the same during the first year of the charter. [2011] These persons actively participated in the creation of the Open Classroom culture, policies, and learning environment.

Appendix 4 Dress Code

The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and parents or guardians. The school district and individual schools are responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student.

For all genders, clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, and nipples are covered with opaque material. Cleavage does not require coverage. All items listed in the "must wear" and "may wear" categories below must meet this basic principle.

Adults are also expected to adhere to this dress code when in the building.

1. Students Must Wear:*

- Shirt/Top
- Bottom: pants/sweatpants/shorts/skirt/dress/leggings
- Shoes: Activity-specific shoe requirements are permitted (for example, for sports)

*Courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, and job readiness) may include assignment-specific dress, but should not focus on covering girls' bodies or promoting culturally-specific attire.

2. Students May Wear:

- Hats, including religious headwear
- Hoodie sweatshirts (wearing hood over the head is allowed)
- Fitted pants, including leggings, yoga pants, and "skinny jeans"
- Midriff-baring shirts
- Pajamas
- Ripped jeans, as long as underwear is not exposed
- Tank tops, including spaghetti straps, halter tops, and "tube" (strapless) tops
- Athletic attire
- Clothing with commercial or athletic logos, provided they do not violate Section 3 below

3. Students Cannot Wear:

- Violent language or images.
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol, or any illegal item or activity, nor use of the same
- Hate speech, profanity, or sexual acts
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any of the categories listed in the Salt Lake City School District's non-discrimination statement (i.e., age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, genetic information, national origin, pregnancy, race, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status)
- Visible underwear*

- Helmets or headgear that obscure the face (except as a religious observance or for a medical need)
- Anything that signifies affiliation with, participation in, or approval of a gang.

*Visible waistbands, straps, or seams on undergarments worn under other clothing are not a violation.

4. Enforcement

School-directed changes to a student's attire or grooming will be the least restrictive and disruptive to the student's school day as possible. Any school dress code enforcement actions should minimize the potential loss of educational time. Administration and enforcement of the dress code shall be gender-neutral and consistent with the District's non-discrimination statement.

When a teacher, school staff member, or school administrator discusses a dress or grooming violation with a student, it is recommended that another adult be present and at least one of the two adults be the same sex or gender as the student. Unless there is an immediate safety concern, a student will not be spoken to about a dress code violation in front of other students.

- Teachers or staff discussing a dress code violation with a student will work with the student to find options for obtaining appropriate clothing.
- Where possible, students will not be required to wear school-owned replacement garments and will never be required to wear specific garments as a disciplinary measure.
- Discipline for dress or grooming violations will be consistent with the discipline policies for comparable violations.

Appendix 5

Student Behavior Expectations

SLCSD Student Discipline Procedures and Guidelines

Each spring the principal will review the school discipline policies with the School Improvement Council (SIC), students, and the School Community Council (SCC). Copies of the school discipline policies shall be distributed to parents, students, and teachers each year prior to or during the first two weeks of school. Any new student registering after general distribution shall be given copies during registration. Copies also shall be placed each year in the office of the Superintendent of Schools.

Teachers or principals in elementary schools are not permitted to retain students in school during recess or noon lunch periods for any purpose unless the health or educational needs or interests of students warrant such retention.

Parents shall be notified if a student is being kept after school. Students may be detained after school for a short period to complete work missed or to participate in special activities with the consent of the principal and notification of the parents.

Disciplinary action, which may be used by the teacher, includes isolating, ignoring, detaining after school (with principal consent and parent notification), and removing privileges. School employees may not inflict or cause the infliction of corporal punishment upon a student.

The principal, SIC, SEC, and the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) team will develop a school discipline policy that contains expected behavior standards for students while in the classroom as well as on the school grounds.

Schoolwide Student Behavior Expectations

In order to encourage students to become responsible citizens in our learning community, we have established schoolwide student expectations. A positive behavioral management approach assists students in developing their ability to make good behavioral choices. The needs of individual students are supported through the collaborative efforts of the Student Services Council—a team involving teachers, support personnel, and administration. Respecting our personal space and respecting the rights of others is important in any school situation. We want all students to feel comfortable, respected, and able to achieve academically and socially. Anything that can be demeaning, lessen self-respect and esteem, or can limit a student's ability to achieve will be considered a violation of personal rights.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

- You have the right to personal respect and a safe environment in this school and on its grounds.
- You have the right to be protected from offensive, demeaning comments or behavior.
- You have the right to report any type of harassment immediately to school authorities.
- You have the right to learn in a quiet, co-operative place where you can work and think.
- You have the responsibility to treat others in a kind, understanding and caring way.
- You have the responsibility to conduct yourself in a way that will enable others to learn.



Open Classroom Discipline Decision Tree

Annoying Behavior

- Off Topic/Off Task
- Not listening
- Not following directions
- Calling out
- Distracting others

Minor Incidents

- Coming in late from recess Not in assigned place/leaving class without permission Running in the halls Not respecting school property Unkind words/actions
- Using electronic devices (phones, tablets, computers, etc.) w/out explicit permission
- Play fighting/horseplay/throwing objects w/ no injury
- Swearing
- Teasing (recognizing others' feelings)
- **Chronic annoying behaviors**

Immediate Office Referral

- *Physical/verbal (swearing) aggression toward others
- *Threaten or intimidate
- Stealing
- Serious property destruction (repaired or replaced)
- Aggression/harassment (verbal, physical, emotional) to self/others (G-19)
- Running away/hiding/sluffing
- *Weapon/weapon-like toy
- *Illegal substances
- Spitting (directed toward others)
- Bullying/Cyberbullying (on purpose, repeated, imbalance of power)
- Academic integrity
- Chronic minor incidents

Step 1

Remind/Relocate

- Re-direct/Remind
- Restate expectation/clarify how behavior does not meet expectation
- Relocate within classroom
- No documentation required

Intervention Effective?

YES

Reinforce Behavior Expectation

NO

Step 2

Teacher/Student Conference/ Remove

- Re-teach directions/expectations
- Set limits
- Remove to another classroom
- Give choices
- Clarify how behavior does not meet expectation
- **Record in Power School**

Intervention Effective?

YES

Reinforce Behavior Expectation

NO

Step 3

Reflect/Parent Contact

- Remove and reflect during inconvenient time for student
- Clarify how behavior does not meet expectations
- Contact parent
- **Record in Power School**

Intervention Effective?

YES

Reinforce Behavior Expectation

NO

Step 4

Report/Office Referral

- **Record in Power School**
- Refer to Christine

Severe Behavior

The Open Classroom – as a District-Supported Charter School - will follow the SLCSO guidelines and behavior policies to insure the appropriate handling of any situation that would place students, staff, or parents in danger. Any student removed from school for a reason or condition that threatens their welfare or the welfare of others shall be released to the parent, the parent's representative, or other proper authority, including, but not limited to, law enforcement officers and medical personnel. The school shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent prior to removing a student from school premises. If the parent cannot be notified prior to the removal, the parent shall be notified as soon as possible after the removal and informed of the reasons for it.

Disciplinary records shall be made available to parents or the student, whichever is appropriate, pursuant to District student records policy. Suspension and expulsion records are part of the student's record and shall be transferred with student records when the student transfers within or outside SLCSO.

Salt Lake City School District Student Discipline Policies Summary: [Board Policy S-3](#)

Purpose

The purpose of policies under S-3 and any other related discipline policies is to foster a safe, positive environment for learning. Please refer to specific policy for detailed student discipline information.

Appendix 6 Configuration of The Open Classroom

The Open Classroom configuration is determined on a yearly basis, with grade blends consistent as much as possible. The classes are generally called by the first name of the teacher leading them. The 2021-2022 configuration is below:

Current as of: 9/7/2021

Joey 1/2	5	16		O'Lynn 3	12	22		Grade	Totals
Joey Full	9			O'Lynn 4	10				
Joey Online	2							Pre K	16
				Chantelle 5	13	23			
Amber	K (1/2)	17		Chantelle 6	10			K	39
Jamie	K (full)	22		Kirsten 5	13	27		1st	40
				Kirsten 6	14				
Amanda 1	11	20						2nd	39
Amanda 2	9			Hillary 7	7	18			
				Hillary 8	11			3rd	38
Sheltin 1	11	20							
Sheltin 2	9			Julian 7	9	21		4th	28
				Julian 8	12				
Tina B 1	10	19						5th	26
Tina B 2	9			Lena 7	9	21			
				Lena 8	12			6th	24
Tina M 1	8	20							
Tina M 2	12							7th	25
James 3	14	23						8th	35
James 4	9								
Mia 3	12	21						K-8 Students	294
Mia 4	9								

	Students	Average
K	39	19.50
1/2	79	19.75
3/4	66	22.00
5/6	50	25.00
7/8	60	20.00
Total	294.00	21.00

Appendix 7

Typical Calendar and Schedule for The Open Classroom

Open Classroom Charter School

2021-2022 Calendar

Kindergarten Testing	August 12-13, 2021 (by appointment)
Teacher Meet & Greet	August 20, 2021 (11:00 AM - 12:30 PM)
Back to School Open House	August 20, 2021 (5:30 PM - 7:00 PM)
First Day of School for K-8	August 24, 2021
First Day of School for PreK	September 7, 2021
Last Day of School	June 3, 2022

Early Release Days	October 28, 2021 (PTK)
	October 29, 2021 (Halloween Celebration)
	December 17, 2021 (Solstice Celebration)
	February 17, 2022 (PTK)
	February 18, 2022
	March 25, 2022
	May 6, 2022 (Art Stroll)
	June 3, 2022

Prospective Parent Information Nights (PPINs):

September 1, 2021
January 6, 2022
February 1, 2022
All PPINs are at 7:00 PM

School is closed on the following dates:

Labor Day	September 6, 2021
Fall Break	October 14-15, 2021
Thanksgiving Break	November 24-26, 2021
Winter Break	December 20-31, 2021
Martin Luther King Day	January 17, 2022
President's Day	February 21, 2021
Spring Break	March 28-April 1, 2022
Memorial Day	May 30, 2022

Non-Student Days: (Set aside for teacher professional development)

September 24, 2021
March 4, 2022
April 29, 2022

Parent Teacher Kid Conferences (PTK):

October 27-28, 2021
February 16-17, 2022

Monday - Friday Bell Schedule:

First Bell 8:40 AM

Tardy Bell 8:45 AM

Ending Bell 3:00 PM

Early Release Bell Schedule:

First Bell 8:40 AM

Tardy Bell 8:45 AM

Ending Bell 1:15 PM

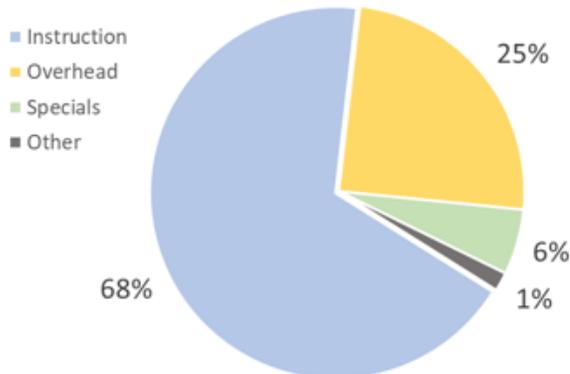
Appendix 8

Open Classroom Charter School Estimated Annual Operational Costs

Open Classroom Budget for most recent complete fiscal year from July1, 2020 to June 30, 2021

2020-2021			
Gen Ed Salary and Benefits			
Teachers		14	\$1,400,000.00
2 half time kinder, 4 littles, 4 middles, 2 muppers, 3 uppers			
Parapros		3.5	\$63,000.00
Special Ed Salary and Benefits			
Tea 2.5 Teachers			\$250,000.00
2 full time Sped, 1 half time speech			
Par 4 @ 29.5 hours			\$72,000.00
Specials			
1 PE teacher (certified)			\$100,000.00
2 Library 19.5 hours each			\$27,000.00
Music - contract instructors			\$22,500.00
Other			
Teacher Supplies (15 classes *\$500) plus sped			\$8,000.00
Computers			\$25,000.00
Field Trips			\$10,000.00
Overhead			
Principal, Office, Counselor, Custodial and Building Costs			\$650,000.00
Total			\$2,627,500.00

2020-2021 Spending



Note:

School Improvement funds provide additional programs including funding to have one full day kindergarten section, half time math specialist, half time literacy specialist, literacy intervention paraprofessional

Appendix 9

Emergency Procedures

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

Emergency drills

As an important safety precaution, fire, earthquake and other emergency drills are held at regular intervals as required by law. Instruction in safety procedures is given in all classrooms by the teacher at the beginning of the school year and reviewed periodically. It is essential that when the signal is given, everyone in the building obeys orders promptly and clears the building by the required routes as quickly as possible.

Closing of School

School closures are determined by the District superintendent. Please do not call the school for closure information. If the school is to be closed due to storms, road conditions, etc., information will be shared via phone call, email, and text message.

Family Plan

It is advisable for each family to have a predetermined plan that children can follow should it be necessary for school to be dismissed early for emergency reasons.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

In case of a major school or city emergency, your child will be kept at school until you come to pick him/her up. Oftentimes parents are unable to be reached when a child becomes ill, injured, or there is an emergency situation. It is important that emergency contact persons other than the parents/guardian are provided, with current phone and address information. For safety reasons, students will only be released to persons so designated on their registration card.

Children are given the following instructions for each of the specified emergencies:

Bomb Threat: Search by personnel for suspicious packages, evacuation if deemed necessary by person in charge.

Earthquake: Drop, cover and hold; evacuate when instructed; once outdoors move to open space away from power lines; drop, cover neck and head.

Fire: Students are to exit orderly via assigned routes and remain at school boundary awaiting further instructions.

Flood: Students take refuge on roof when instructed.

Hazardous Material/Chemical Spills: Close windows, await instructions.

Inclement Weather: This is the superintendent's decision; parents should listen to the radio if they are concerned.

Nuclear: Drop behind the best available heat shield, and then go to the gym or auditorium as assigned.

Evacuation: If a block caption evacuation plan is not in effect, parents are responsible to claim their children according to check out procedures established at the school, as soon as possible. A child's welfare ultimately belongs to their parents.

Appendix 10 Report Cards

Unless noted here, the Open Classroom uses the standard SLCS D report card format. Grades 5-6 use the report card below:

The Open Classroom				
2021-2022 School Year				
Student Name:		Homeroom Teacher:		
Grade:				
Core Present Levels of Performance				
SUBJECT	Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 2
	Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher
HOMEROOM				
Personal Accountability				
Treatment of Others				
Library				
PE w/ Penny				
MATH (PLOA)				
Best Effort				
Participation				
Homework				
READING (PLOA)				
Best Effort				
Participation				
Homework				
WRITING (PLOA)				
Best Effort				
Participation				
Homework				
SCIENCE (PLOA)				
Best Effort				
Participation				
Homework				
SOC ST (PLOA)				
Best Effort				
Participation				
Homework				

Explanation of Grades	On the other side	
	Grade Code	Description
	E	Extension
	M	Mastery
	B	Basic
	NY	Not Yet
PLOA	Present Level of Ability	

The Open Classroom 2021-2022



Explanation of Grades:

Extension

Exceeds expected work/effort. Seeks a higher understanding beyond what is presented in class.
Comprehension exceeds grade level expectations.

Mastery

Meets and exceeds expected work/effort. Regularly seeks better understanding.
Comprehension of core subject is at grade level.

Basic

Does the expected work/effort. Attempts to seek better understanding.
Comprehension of core subject is slightly below expected grade level.

Not Yet

Struggles to do expected work/effort. Needs to seek help when not understanding.
Comprehension of core subject is significantly below expected grade level.

Community Member Explanations:

Personal Accountability

Level of consistency in being prepared for class, which includes:
being on time, having proper materials, using planner and schedule.

Treatment of Others

Level of respect for others, self, adults, supplies and environment.

Grades 7-8 use the report card below at the end of each trimester. In addition, the 7-8 teachers use Canvas to provide information, family support, and an initial experience with high school grading procedures. Parents of students in all grades are also provided an assessment record detailing assessment results that will include District, state, and federal assessment.

The Open Classroom									
2021-2022 School Year									
Student Name: Current Grade:									
Homeroom Teacher:									
Core Present Levels of Performance									
SUBJECT	Semester 1	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester2	Attendance	Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Student	Teacher	Student	Teacher		Days Partially Present	Days Absent	Days Total	Comments:
HOMEROOM									
Personal Accountability									
Treatment of Others									
Library									
Wellness Room									
PE									
8th Grade Project									
MATH (PLOA)					Explanation of Grades	On the other side			
Best Effort						Grade Code			
Participation						E	Extension		
Canvas Assignments						M	Mastery		
ELA (PLOA)						B	Basic		
Best Effort						NY	Not Yet		
Participation									
Canvas Assignments						PLOA	Present Level of Ability		
SCIENCE (PLOA)									
Best Effort									
Participation									
Canvas Assignments									

The Open Classroom									
Explanation of Grades:									
Extension									
	Exceeds expected work/effort. Seeks a higher understanding beyond what is presented in class.								
	Comprehension exceeds grade level expectations.								
Mastery									
	Meets and exceeds expected work/effort. Regularly seeks better understanding.								
	Comprehension of core subject is at grade level.								
Basic									
	Does the expected work/effort. Attempts to seek better understanding.								
	Comprehension of core subject is slightly below expected grade level.								
Not Yet									
	Struggles to do expected work/effort. Needs to seek help when not understanding.								
	Comprehension of core subject is significantly below expected grade level.								
Canvas Assignments	Extension: 100% or above and beyond daily assignments								
*Distance Learning	Mastery: 80%-99% of daily assignments								
	*Basic: 60%-79% of daily assignments								
	Not Yet: 59% or below daily assignments								
Best Effort	Showing initiative and perseverance within subject area. Communicates needs.								
Participation	When in class, students: ask questions, answer questions, share ideas, make comments, take academic risks, and follows the agreements we made together as a homeroom community.								

Appendix 11

Description of Educational Environment and Structure

Educating the whole child is the tenet that drives the environment within each classroom and allows for the academic, social, emotional, creative, cognitive, and physical growth and development of each student. The classrooms are similar in a variety of ways. These common threads align the classrooms with the philosophy of the Open Classroom.

Classrooms are, at all times, "kid friendly" and developmentally appropriate. They are warm and welcoming places. Teachers display student artwork, writing, and ongoing as well as completed projects in a variety of disciplines. These student artifacts provide evidence of past, current, and sometimes future learning.

Each classroom has a large, open space for gathering, where the entire learning community (students, parents, teacher, and perhaps support staff) gathers several times each day. Everyone is seated together on the floor, forming a circle, for a wide variety of activities: planning and organizing, business and announcements, sharing, problem solving, curriculum discussions, whole class lessons, read aloud, guest speakers, and presentations by students, parents or guests.

Classrooms each have a space that allows students the opportunity to work alone or with others in a smaller, more intimate work space. Rooms have a variety of tables that support small group learning. In addition, each classroom has independent work spaces for either individual or partner work to occur. Because collaboration is a vital and key element of the Open Classroom philosophy, students move throughout the classroom, working with others and seeking help and support as needed. Each classroom also provides teacher and parent space for announcements, literature, scheduling, curriculum supplies, and community materials.

In tune with the Open Classroom philosophy of being a "community of learners," all classrooms have items that support this sense of community. All students work around shared tables. Supplies (paper, crayons, rulers, scissors, compasses, staplers, etc.) are all located in a shared community space, to be used as needed by anyone. Each student has frequent and easy access to computer technology. In the younger grades, students each have a personal mailbox for messages and notes, as well as an individual "cubby," file box, tote tray, or locker for personal books or learning materials. Upper grade students carry their supplies with them from class to class and use lockers for storage.

Learning also takes place outside of the classrooms. Many times during the school day, small groups of students may be found working outside their own classroom in the hallway: sometimes needing more space to spread out, sometimes needing privacy to produce a play or work on a Readers' Theater Workshop. A teacher may be conversing with a student at a table in the hall to problem solve behavioral issues. A co-op and an employee may be leading student science activities

outside. All shared spaces are considered part of the Open Classroom learning environment.

Many Open Classroom learning opportunities also take place off-campus. This is facilitated by the presence of parents and other community partners who can assist teachers in planning off-campus activities and managing groups of students at a variety of learning venues.

Students produce a variety of projects throughout the school year, as supported by the Open Classroom philosophy that children learn by being actively involved in the learning process. We have a large and extensive children's library, with multiple copies of books for literature studies. This library is used and shared by all Open Classroom classrooms. We also have a parent resource library to support families learning about child development.

Appendix 12

Supporting Research

The Open Classroom philosophy was inspired by the works and theories of John Dewey in *Democracy and Education* (New York: MacMillan, 1916) and Lev Vygotsky in *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978).

The Open Classroom relies on the active involvement of the students, parents and teachers in the Open Classroom learning environment. In this community of learners, the student, parents, support staff, and teacher engage in learning activities in a collaborative way, with varying but coordinated responsibilities. Among researchers, there is growing interest in the “community of learners” philosophy. These researchers observe that in a “community of learners” environment, children are more emotionally stable, improve academically, and are more self-directed.

The Open Classroom also served as the main focus for one of the supporting texts below: *Learning Together: Children and Adults In A School Community*, published in 2002. This text was written by two founders of the school and continues to serve the Open Classroom community as a crucial resource for all families participating in the school.

This research includes the writings of Ernest Boyer (collected by the Carnegie Foundation), as well as the following:

Abbott, M. L., & Fouts, J. T. (2003). *Constructivist teaching and student achievement: The results of a school-level classroom observation study in Washington*.

Braxton, J. M., & Luckey, W. (2010). Ernest Boyer and the scholarship of engagement. *Handbook of engaged scholarship*, pp. 71–91. Retrieved from <https://www.scopus.com/inward/record.uri?eid=2-s2.0-80255125881&partnerID=40&md5=48d5aa0989b9d5df29db4158ba181147>

Brown, A. L. (1997). Transforming schools into communities of thinking and learning about serious matters. *American Psychologist*, 52(4), 399–413.

Capraro, M. M. (2001). Defining constructivism: Its influence on the problem solving skills of students. *Annual Meeting of the Southwest Educational Research Association*.

Chung, I. (2004). A comparative assessment of constructivist and traditionalist approaches to establishing mathematical connections in learning multiplication. *Education*, 125(2), 271–278.

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