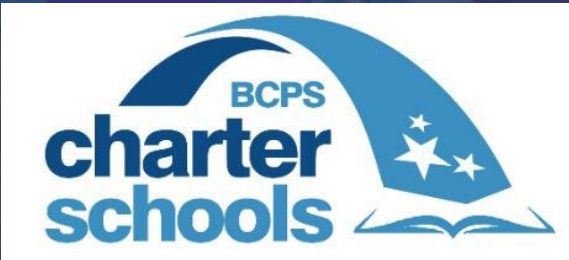




New Charter Application Report & Recommendation Puzzle Pieces Learning Academy Public Charter School

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Introduction & Purpose (BCPS Rule 1600)

- **January 2, 2025 – Formal application submitted to BCPS from PPLA PCS.**
- **January 30, 2025 – BCPS notified PPLA PCS that the application passed the technical review (30 days after application submission).**
- **BCPS Qualitative Review Team convened.**
- **February 20, 2025 – One hour interview (recorded) with founding group.**
- **March 17, 2025 – Revised budget and missing documents submitted.**



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Qualitative Review Process

- BCPS Qualitative Review Team - BCPS subject matter experts (26 members)
- *BCPS Qualitative Scoring Tool for Charter Applications (BCPS Rule 1600, Appendix D)*
- 4 main sections and 28 subsections
 - Section A - Overview (3 subsections)
 - Section B - Educational Plans (10 subsections)
 - Section C - Organizational Plan (9 subsections)
 - Section D - Business Plan (6 subsections)



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Findings – Overview (Section A)

- School proposed to start with 201 students in grades PK4 – grade 3. Add one grade per year through 5th grade (316 students).
- **Current structures would require the charter to fund any PK seats and related programming.**
- Some required documents for founding members were not included.
- **Staff and board member profiles were included.**



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Findings – Educational Plan (Section B)

- Project-Based Learning (PBL), Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) are foundational to school programming.
- **Every student receives a *Personalized Learning Plan*.**
- Curriculum choices include *Creative Curriculum Pre-K, EL Education K-5 Language Arts, Illustrative Math, Collaborative Classroom, Impact Social Studies, and Amplify Science.*
- **Many community partnerships already established.**



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Findings – Educational Plan (Section B)

- Application outlines how needs of Multilingual Learners will be addressed effectively.
- PPLA PCS, in the interview, expressed intent to follow required BCPS processes, including special education identification, evaluation, and service of students.
- Recruitment plan is robust and includes strategies for reaching diverse populations.
- Flyers are already created and presented in multiple languages.



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Findings – Educational Plan (Section B)

- Lottery system is aligned with current BCPS practices. However, "giving priority to students residing within a 10-mile radius of the school" does not.
- Extensive plans for creating a positive culture.
- PPLA PCS intends to adopt the BCPS Student Handbook and Code of Conduct.
- More thorough emergency plan is required.
- PPLA PCS intends to meet requirements of all BCPS Health and Wellness policies and procedures.



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Findings – Educational Plan (Section B)

- The interview provided clarification on daily schedules and the calendar, which were not adequate within the application.
- The application references incorrect BCPS policies for assessment. A review of Policy 6500 is needed.
- There are significant and meaningful plans to engage families.
- Waivers related to "priority enrollment zones," modified calendar, and management of funds will need further examination.



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Findings – Organizational Plan (Section C)

- Original application missing Articles of Incorporation, Certification of Standing, recent audit report, and some board members' résumés.
- **Governing board components include detailed job descriptions, orientation and evaluation processes, and future plans.**
- The interview clarified some misaligned staffing, certification, and employee evaluation information in the application.
- **The employee roster does not align with the roster in the budget.**
- PPLA PCS intends to align its payroll processes with BCPS.



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Findings – Business Plan (Section D)

- Per pupil amount used in application is significantly lower than what can realistically be expected.
- **Principal & AP not budgeted & teacher salaries too low in original application.**
- There is no mention of an accounting or procurement system that will be used in original application.

** Responsive Opportunities: PPLA met with the Office of Budget & Reporting in Spring 2024 and submitted revisions as requested (3) to satisfactorily address concerns noted above.*

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Findings – Business Plan (Section D)

- PPLA PCS intends to adhere to BCPS guidelines for food and nutrition services.
- Families are generally responsible for their own transportation.
- The insurance description is broad and does not mention limits or retention.
- Various insurance coverages not discussed – Workers' Comp, errors and omissions coverage, & business auto liability.



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Responsive Submission Opportunities

- 1/28/25 - Technical Review budget feedback**
- 1/30/25 – PPLA budget feedback response**
- 3/11/25 – PPLA notified of areas not meeting standards w/ related feedback (C1, D1, & D2).**
- 3/17/25 – PPLA missing document submission(C1 & D2) and revised budget (D1).**
- 3/18/25 – Additional budget feedback to PPLA**
- 3/20/25 – PPLA budget feedback submission (D1).**

Recommendation

Based on the review of the application, using the designated rubric (BCPS Rule 1600, Appendix D), related interview, and responsive submission opportunities, the BCPS Charter Application Review Team recommends that PPLA PCS be approved to operate a charter school in BCPS with the following contingencies:

- PK and/or PK3 seats are funded by PPLA PCS – not BCPS.**
- PPLA agrees to refine and revise the operating budget based on fiscal realities, including but not limited to, receipt of projected grant funding, and guidance from the BCPS Office of Budget & Reporting.**

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THANK YOU

