

The Bryan Allen Stevenson School of Excellence

Section 8 - Start-Up Plan and Operations

1.8 Start-up and Operations

14 *Del. C.* §§ 512(1), (8)-(10), and (12)-(13)

1. **Start-Up Plan.** Provide, as **Attachment 18**, a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals, which is aligned with a sound Start-Up Budget. The plan must include such milestones as:
 - Identifying and hiring key personnel;
 - Creating and/or finalizing curriculum, including purchasing assessment and materials;
 - Creating discipline, attendance, promotion, and grading policies approved by your school's Board of Directors and the Department;
 - Hiring instructional staff;
 - Having in place the major contracts necessary for the school to open on schedule. Major contracts shall include, without limitation, the school's contracts for equipment, services (including bus and food services, and related services for special education), leases of real and personal property, the purchase of real property, the construction or renovation of improvements to real property, and insurance. (**Note!** Contracts for bus and food services must be in place no later than August 1st of the year in which the school proposes to open and August 1st of each year thereafter.)
 - Engaging the community and recruiting students; and
 - Other planning activities.
2. Describe what you anticipate will be the challenges of starting a new school and how you expect to address these challenges.

The first challenge that we anticipate is facilities. Due to our location in Sussex County, we know that there are more steps in acquiring land and building our school. We have taken several steps in order to alleviate this challenge. First, we have facilitated a relationship with the Lee-Ann Wilkinson Group to find a suitable land site for our school. The Wilkinson Group team has found us three possible sites, each within proximity of water and sewage hook up. Secondly, we are also looking for existing sites that we could refurbish in order to open our school within an existing space. We were successful in entering a partnership with Delaware Technical Community College, Owens Campus, to lease the current Howard T. Ennis property once Indian River School District has moved in the fall of 2022. This space will be able to hold BASSE in our first three years of opening as we continue to work towards building our own campus. Third, we have entered another partnership with the National Development Council (NDC), the Community Education Building Corporation (CEB), Montessori Works (MW), and the Community Services, Education, and Economic Development Center (CSEEDC) to build the Sussex County Solutions Center (SCSC). The SCSC will encompass approximately 110,000 square feet of developed space and house BASSE, MW, and CSEEDC. More details about the proposed campus are included in Section 1.9. Finally, we have received quotes from construction companies to accurately prepare for the costs that we will incur in refitting a space and building a new school. Additionally, we have facilitated a relationship with Moonlight Architecture, who has agreed to support our process by creating blueprints and budget estimates as BASSE reviews properties.

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Another challenge that we have recognized is teacher recruitment. This problem is twofold for us. First, we are concerned with hiring high-quality and strong teachers. In order to remedy this challenge, we have already built partnerships with the Relay Graduate School of Education (Relay), the University of Delaware Alternative Routes to Certification program (UDARTC), Teach For America (TFA), and Delaware State University (DSU) to provide several pathways to hiring teachers and other staff. DSU has agreed to enter a draft MOU with us where we could have student teachers working in our building that would transition into full-time teachers as we grow our staff in years three, four, and beyond. Both the UDARTC program and TFA will provide our school with full-time teachers interested in innovation and social justice with experience outside of the realm of traditional education, which will be beneficial to our student body. Finally, our partnership with Relay will provide our teaching staff with access to master's level coursework and provide us with a mechanism to offer a year-long residency program for pre-service teachers in our building. This will add sustainability to our teaching pathway moving forward as these future teachers will have a unique relationship with our building, students, and model. Secondly, we are also deeply invested in having a diverse teaching faculty. We know that teacher diversity is a national and statewide problem, and we want to be a part of the solution. This is why we are intentionally partnering with education preparation programs that are likely to bring us a more diverse applicant pool in addition to the traditional pathways to teaching, such as Teach For America and Delaware State University (a Historically Black University). BASSE recognizes that there is a national teacher shortage, but we are confident that our innovative school model which embodies a commitment to developing teacher-leaders and student-centered learning will attract a number of qualified and motivated teachers to staff our school.

The third challenge that we are most concerned with is fundraising. Education is an expensive endeavor, and we recognize that it will take significant funding to successfully implement our plans and create sustainability for BASSE. We are approaching this challenge from several angles. We have named our school after Bryan Stevenson because of his ties to Delaware and his legacy, but with Mr. Stevenson's name also comes national recognition. We have been able to engage with national funders interested in our vision and mission and our relationship with Mr. Stevenson. Secondly, we have engaged various local funders who have a vested interest in the future of the students in Delaware and Sussex County. Finally, we have created a detailed development plan that includes engaging our funders in several ways, such as campaigns, dinners, and events, applying for grants, and board stewardship. In December 2021, BASSE hired a full-time Director of Development, Crystal Timmons-Bryant, to lead this work. See our dynamic development plan [here](#).

Lastly, the final challenge we are planning for is transportation. Sussex County is rural, and transportation distances and times will require a thoughtful and strategic bus plan to ensure our students' equity and safety. We have already engaged with several bus providers in this area to begin planning the best options for our students.

3. Complete the Start-Up (Year 0) Budget in the Budget Sheets. Complete all pages in the Budget Sheets, and provide as **Attachment 19** (see link in Section 1.10 Budget and Finance).

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4. **Transportation.** Describe how students will be transported to the school pursuant to 14 *Del. C.* § 508, including any provisions that the school will provide; how students who reside outside the district in which the school will be located will be transported to the school; and how students with special needs will be transported if specialized transportation is required by the student's IEP.

Describe the plan for oversight of transportation operations (e.g., whether the school will provide its own transportation, contract out for transportation, request that a district provide transportation, or a combination thereof) and who on the school staff will provide this daily oversight.

Students will be transported to BASSE within the regulations of 14 *Del. C.* § 508. We will contract with a bus company that will pick up our students who reside outside of the district first (at "hub spots") and pick up the students who live in the district as the final stops. A more detailed description of this plan, as well as potential routes, are included [here](#). The school's Executive Director will be in charge of the daily oversight of transportation for our students.

BASSE will contract a bus transportation service that is an insured firm that specializes in student transportation. Based on the enrollment reported each April to the DDOE, the Executive Director will discuss and design bus routes monitored by a subcommittee of the operating Board.

The Executive Director and transportation company will establish hub configurations that prioritize equity and efficiency for all BASSE students and families. Parents or guardians of students living outside of the district the school is located on will be responsible for transporting their child to and from the hub stop.

BASSE will make appropriate accommodations based on students' Individual Education Plans (IEP) to ensure equity and safety. As special transportation needs are identified, the school will work with the students' parents and the transportation services company to ensure compliance with specialized transportation needs. Any field trips and other planned events will be made through the school's contracted transportation services provider.

Additionally, the BASSE Executive Director and appropriate staff will oversee student transportation services through regularly scheduled quarterly meetings and ad hoc meetings, as needed. To ensure safety and preparedness, these quarterly meetings will prioritize, but are not limited to, and will annually report plans publicly:

- Creating a BASSE transportation contingency plan to address emergencies or any unforeseen circumstances
- Training for all staff and bus drivers in accordance with all state and federal regulations
- Schedule for training for transportation training for safety and emergency drills
- An accident support and on-site chain of command plan, including a communications plan for parents, DDOE, and the general public
- Plan for coverage at bus arrival and departure times

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5. Safety and Security.

- a. Describe your plan for safety and security for students, staff, guests, and property.
- b. Explain the types of safety and security personnel, technology, equipment, and policies that the school will employ to provide a safe and healthy environment in accordance with 14 *Del. C.* § 512(12) and the safety provisions included in the Compliance Certification Statement.
- c. Explain your process to create and maintain the required emergency preparedness plan that is in compliance with the Emergency Preparedness Guidelines established by 29 *Del. C.* § 8237 and 14 DE Admin. Code § 621, and approved by the Department of Safety and Homeland Security (DSHS). Identify which position will have primary responsibility for this plan.

(A) BASSE's plan for the safety and security of all students is a primary focus of the school. Access to the building and other BASSE facilities will be designed. In the interest of safety for students, staff, and visitors, "controlled access" to the school facility will be maintained at all times. A security system will provide visual live feeds of all building entrance locations and other key spaces inside and outside the building. All outside doors will remain locked from the outside, except during student arrival and dismissal times. Visitor access will be restricted to the main entrance – all guests must present proper identification and comply with all 'guest pass' procedures before being allowed to pass beyond the main entrance. All staff will be required to wear photo ID badges while on school premises. Guest sign-in procedures will be established. The Board of Directors will ensure the following at our initial opening site, the current Howard T. Ennis building, and at our future campus:

- Entrances that have double doors, which open out and operate with panic bar latches
- Doors that lock automatically upon closing
- A security camera at the front and back entrances
- A closed-circuit TV access door with a coded alarm system
- A fully inspected, functioning fire alarm system that is linked in with the alarm system
- Fire escapes on every floor of the building, extinguishers in the appropriate places
- Properly functioning sprinkler system

Entry into the school will be secured via state and federal standards for schools and will require electronic badge entry. All visitors will sign in at the front desk with an ID and must carry a visitor pass at all times. All staff and volunteers will need to complete state and federal background checks. All doors and windows will be lockable and monitored.

(B) BASSE staff and Board of Directors will always utilize best practices in managing the health and safety of students, staff, and guests. The Executive Director, Co-Heads of School, and the BASSE Executive and Governance committees will maintain primary responsibility for oversight and management of health, safety, and security policies and practices, in accordance with Federal, CDC, State, and DDOE guidance. BASSE will implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies and practices, which will be communicated to parents, students, and staff as part of enrollment procedures and various orientation programs.

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Electronic equipment and cameras will be used to monitor the school at all times. The BASSE School Leadership Team will coordinate safety monitoring and liaise with local police and emergency response when necessary.

BASSE will use an automated school notification system to improve communications between the school and home to provide important safety notifications to parents and guardians. This communication system will notify students and families about school closings, delays, early dismissals, emergency notifications, attendance calls, bus route notifications, lockdown communications, activity reminders, lunch balance reminders, and parent polls and surveys.

To ensure the security and safety of all students. Staff, personnel, and their families, BASSE will require background checks for all employees, contracted service providers, and volunteers (as required by law) will be required to complete a criminal background check (CBC). In addition, the Child Abuse Registry (CAR) will be checked through the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Families (DSCYF). Both the CAR and CBC will be required of all new board members and submitted to the DDOE Charter Office within 45 days of an election to the board. With support from the Executive Director, the Co-Heads of School will maintain due diligence in following the regulations for CBC's and CAR's for volunteers. Results will be maintained in a secure file, separate from personnel files; and, available for authorized inspection.

BASSE Executive Board and Executive Director will be directly responsible for ensuring that criminal background and child abuse registry checks are initiated, completed, and appropriately documented prior to an individual staff member's employment or board member's appointment.

(C) BASSE's Executive Director and Board of Directors Executive Team will establish a School Safety Committee to serve as a clearinghouse for the discussion of issues, policies, and practices related to the safety of students, parents, and staff. Committee representation will include, but may not be limited to, the school leadership team, teachers, the school nurse, the custodian, and a parent.

BASSE will create a Health and Safety Manual to address, but not limited to, the following:

- Pandemic response and safety plan, including a plan for PPE
- General safety precautions,
- Guest entrance and exit procedures,
- Procedures for fire drills,
- Lock-downs, and other emergencies,
- Emergency plans,
- Drop-off and dismissal routines,
- Medication administration guidelines,
- First aid, infectious disease (pandemic protocols),
- On and off-site service-learning experience protocols, and
- Will monitor and edit the school's Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CCSP).

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BASSE's Executive Team, Executive Director, and Founding School Leader (Dean of Academic Excellence) will reach out to the Department of Safety and Homeland Security (DSHS) to begin developing the CCSP. In accordance with the Omnibus School Safety Act, BASSE will establish a School Safety Committee to work with the DSHS to develop and maintain a comprehensive site-specific safety and emergency preparedness plan in compliance with the National Incident Management System (NIMS). The CCSP will address the situations with the potential to cause injury, loss of life, damage to or destruction of property, or major disruptions of activities, including weather events, crime, or terrorism-related events. BASSE will work with the Department to conduct at least one critical incident or emergency event exercise each year and at least one tabletop exercise every two years. BASSE and DSHS representatives will analyze the performance of these exercises annually and make appropriate adjustments, as needed.

Additionally, BASSE's Executive Director, Co-Heads of School and Board of Directors Executive and Governance committees will create an emergency preparedness plan in compliance with all state and federal guidelines, including a pandemic plan. All appropriate BASSE staff will attend all state and federally mandated emergency preparedness trainings.

6. **Lunch/Breakfast.** Describe the plan for providing meals to students, including homeless students and others students eligible for free or reduced price meals. If the school plans to contract for meals, identify the contractor, if known, and describe the services to be provided.

(Note! Passed In 2013, 14 *Del. C.* §506(f) states that if a child would qualify for a no- or low-cost breakfast or lunch under a federal national school breakfast or lunch program, then the charter school shall provide breakfast and lunch to the child at no or low cost to the child's family, beginning in the 2014-2015 school year. Charter schools shall not consider whether a child would qualify for no- or low-cost breakfast or lunch under a federal national school breakfast or lunch program when making enrollment decisions.)

BASSE will participate in the National School Breakfast/Lunch Program and will contract for meals from a qualified food service vendor. This contract will be established and monitored by the Executive Director. BASSE will make estimations based on the market for enrollment for Sussex County, and we can expect that we will have the required percentage to participate in the universal free and reduced lunch program. Ultimately, the decision will be made when enrollment has been established each year. Meals will be provided to all students, including those eligible for free/reduced easily and students experiencing homelessness. Eligibility for free/reduced meals will be determined annually during the first week of school and in accordance with established state and federal procedures.

Depending on our building locations and square footage requirement, if our final site does not allow for a cafeteria, the teachers and children will have breakfast and lunch delivered to the classrooms.

To ensure equity and food safety for all students, BASSE will:

- Proper sanitation and health standards will be followed in the storage, preparation, and service of food.

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- Work with the foodservice vendor to ensure that all meals are consistent with state and federal guidelines and compliant with USDA regulations.
 - Select a foodservice vendor with the experience and knowledge to comply with the Federal requirements outlined in the Federal nutrition guidelines including, but not limited to providing food that is sodium and cholesterol reduced, limiting the percentage of calories from total fat to 30 percent of the actual number of calories offered; limiting the percent of calories from saturated fat to less than 10 percent of the actual number of calories offered, and increasing the levels of dietary fiber.
 - Ensure that any contracts with food service providers contain a statement to the effect that the “School Food Authority and participating schools under its jurisdiction, shall comply with all provisions of 7 CFR parts 210 and 245.”
 - Ensure that lunches will be priced as a unit, and all children who are determined to be eligible for such meals will be served lunches free or at a reduced price.
 - Ensure that any contracted meal provider shall be responsible for reviewing and analyzing meal counts to ensure accuracy as specified in §210.8 governing claims for reimbursement.
 - Claim reimbursement at the assigned rates are only for reimbursable free, reduced price, and paid lunches served to eligible children.
 - The number of free, reduced price, and paid reimbursable meals served to eligible children will be counted at the point of service.
 - Not discriminate against any child because of their eligibility for free or reduced-price meals in accordance with the approved Free and Reduced Price Policy Statement.
7. **Student Health Services.** Describe the plan to ensure the health of students. Describe how the school will provide health services to all students, including the plan to hire a School Nurse and a description of his/her role in the school. The response must include how the school will promote student health and well-being. The response must also include who at the school will supervise the School Nurse and his/her role in ensuring compliance with health regulations.

BASSE will create a Health and Safety Manual to ensure all students' health and safety at BASSE.

Given the impact of COVID-19, BASSE will prioritize following all guidelines and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control, Federal, State, and DDOE. BASSE will give particular specifications to hand washing as the best-known tactic for preventing illness and stopping the spread of germs. Additionally, BASSE will include a plan and budget for PPE and school cleaning to ensure preparation for any unforeseen virus challenges the school may face in the future. BASSE recognizes that medical issues, best practices, and recommendations change as technology and diseases progress. When new health issues arise, BASSE's policy will be to seek the current recommendations from the CDC and the DDOE and implement procedures accordingly.

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Staff and children who are sick will be required to stay home from school. Children must be fever-free (without the use of a fever-reducer) for twenty-four hours before returning to school. Any child who becomes ill at school (with a fever) will be sent home.

All staff will be required to have first aid and CPR training. A mandatory review course will be offered during the in-service week prior to school opening each year. Staff will be trained in procedures to ensure children's safety should the school nurse not be available when there is a health-related issue.

BASSE will hire a registered nurse prior to the school opening who will be responsible for operating under the requirements issued by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE). The nurse will maintain diligence in communications to parents, staff, and students about urgent health issues and be responsible for complying with the Nursing Technical Assistance manual's policies and procedures. Specific responsibilities for the nurse will include enforcing policies established BASSE's Health and Safety Manual. These policies will at a minimum address:

- a. Ensuring that students and staff have physical examinations, immunizations, and TB screenings prior to enrollment or starting work;
- b. Proof of a student's recent physical examination and immunizations will be collected at the time of enrollment. In accordance with state regulations, parents will be notified when immunization and other screening requirements are not met, and the student will be excluded from school until the regulation has been met. Properly documented immunization exemptions will be considered by the school leader in consultation with the school nurse.
- c. Monitoring student health and maintaining health records; The school nurse will monitor and maintain student health records in a secure location and forward the required documentation of services to DDOE.
 - i. The school nurse will conduct an active screening program for vision, hearing, orthopedic issues, etc., as prescribed in DDOE's Nursing Technical Assistance Manual and Regulations.
- d. Establishing procedures for administering medications and medical treatments, including first aid at school;
 - i. The school nurse will administer medications and medical treatments in accordance with DDOE's Nursing Technical Assistance Manual and Regulations and any other appropriate governmental regulations or professional guidelines when students are onsite at school.
- e. Ensuring the school nurse will serve on IEP teams, as required when medical treatment is necessary;
 - i. The nurse will serve as a member of IEP teams when medical issues are discussed. The nurse will also provide medical information during the evaluation processes.
- f. Screening for health problems (vision, hearing, orthopedic, etc.);
- g. Establishing procedures for containing and controlling the spread of infectious diseases and procedures will be developed to communicate appropriate

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- precautionary steps for containing and preventing the spread of infectious diseases and other medical conditions.
- h. Ensuring emergency response procedures and training are provided to the staff. Please see the section above about the Comprehensive School Safety plan. These Board-approved policies will be incorporated, as appropriate, into the schools' parent, student, and staff handbooks as they are developed and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Appropriate staff training will be held as part of orientation programs.

All students must receive all vaccinations required by law before starting school. BASSE will have a part-time nurse until we are fully grown, at which point we will staff a full-time nurse. Health Sciences will be taught based on an age-appropriate curriculum. Physical Fitness will also be taught with an age-appropriate curriculum.

8. **Insurance Coverage.** Provide, as **Attachment 20**, a list of the types of insurance coverage that the school will secure, including a description of the levels of coverage in accordance with 14 *Del. C.* § 512(10). Types of insurance should include, without limitation, workers' compensation, liability, property, indemnity, directors and officers, automobile, and other. The Applicant should contact the Insurance Coverage Office at (302) 739-3651 or 877-277-4185 for further information on liability protection for public schools in Delaware.
9. **Student Records.** Describe the plan for the timely transfer of student and school data and records to the Department of Education, pursuant to 14 *Del. C.* § 512(13). (**Note!** eSchool is the electronic system the State uses to enter and count students.)

All student records will be kept confidentially in eSchool. All staff records will be secured in lockable cabinets. Only school administration and the appropriate personnel will have access to staff records. All records that are held digitally will be maintained securely, with password protection.

BASSE will be part of the state's eSchoolPlus pupil accounting system. This system will ensure the timely transfer of student data and records to other schools and the DDOE. All staff members required to use eSchoolPlus will be fully trained on the system.

All BASSE staff will participate in training prior to the school's opening and remain current with staff training and data requirements defined by the DDOE.