

## 1. Executive Summary

Afya Public Charter School (APCS), which is operated by Afya Baltimore Inc. (ABI), comes to the renewal process with a strong case for a full five-year renewal. This application will thoroughly discuss our areas of strength, candidly discuss the areas that we think we need to improve upon, and look forward to the next five years with a comprehensive plan that will help Afya PCS emerge from its highly successful start-up phase and continue to develop into an outstanding middle school option for the students and families of Baltimore City.

Over the last four years, APCS has had many notable academic successes. On the MSA, the school has consistently outperformed the district in reading and mathematics at all grade levels. In grade six, over the course of this contract term, our sixth graders outperformed the district average by 10.2 percentage points in reading and 9.2 percentage points in mathematics. In grade seven, APCS outperformed the district average by 12 percentage points in reading and 7.2 in mathematics. In grade eight, APCS outperformed the district average by 15.4 percentage points in reading and 23.3 in mathematics (See Appendix 1). Another notable achievement by the school on the MSA came two years ago, when our 8<sup>th</sup> graders performed above the state average in grade eighth mathematics and had the third highest achievement rate on this assessment in the city.

This kind of performance has helped our students get accepted to the best high schools in our city. Last year, for example, 26 of our students were accepted to Poly, Western, and Dunbar. Twenty-one (second in city to only Roland Park) were accepted to City College. We've also developed an excellent relationship with Cristo Rey and currently we have 15 Afya graduates enrolled there, including three receiving a full scholarship.

We are well aware that our performance in mathematics was not as strong this past year on the MSA as it was during the first three years of our contract term. We are not pleased with these most recent results. At the same time, we think there are specific reasons for them. Understanding these reasons, we believe, ultimately strengthens the case for a full five-year renewal for APCS.

Last year was a transitional year for our school for several reasons. First, last year we were replacing two excellent mathematics teachers who left Afya PCS the previous year (one took a position with the district working on the implementation of the new teachers' contract, the other began a doctoral program at the University of MD in mathematics). Second, we made a conscious decision to shift to the Common Core. We believe that preparing and implementing this new curriculum is an

enormous challenge, particularly in mathematics. We anticipated that the transition would take longer than a year or even two. We started to fully commit to that work last year, which meant that we emphasized the Maryland State Curriculum, the foundation for the MSA, less than in the past and invested instructional time addressing skill and knowledge gaps so our students would be better prepared for the content ahead.

The biggest transition our school and Board undertook last year was changing its leadership structure. Afya PCS started five years ago. Two years into that start-up, ABI opened a second school, Tunbridge Public Charter School. Founders from Afya PCS, especially Will McKenna, the principal, were very involved in the work at Tunbridge PCS. The ABI Board soon realized that it was not sustainable to manage its schools in a highly effective way having the principal at Afya PCS also be heavily involved in the Tunbridge start and in the continued development of the overall organization. Working with a Goldseker Foundation grant, the Board hired TransitionGuides, a consulting firm that specializes in organizational leadership and sustainability planning. Over a six month period of time, the Board did a full organizational assessment, evaluating strengths and challenges and considering a number of options for the best way to manage its schools.

Ultimately, the Board decided to change its leadership structure, hiring Mr. McKenna as the Executive Director (ED) of Afya Baltimore and selecting Katie Marts as the new principal of Afya PCS. Ms. Marts, a founder, understands the mission of Afya and is able to focus exclusively on the work of building on the school's successes and implementing plans for the next five years.

We think the way the ABI Board assessed the needs of its two schools and the organization and planned for effective change is strong evidence of its capacity to manage and oversee its schools. We are confident that this new organizational structure will allow school leaders at Afya PCS to solely focus on the challenges the school faces and implement plans, which are discussed in this application, to help students perform at high levels of achievement. Foremost among these is an intensive professional development plan emphasizing Common Core implementation and unit planning—across our curriculum and especially in mathematics— focusing on higher-level thinking and conceptual understanding. Having an ED will also allow ABI to further develop its mission and vision and build an organization that is strong and sustainable.

This renewal application will also focus on other areas of our organization's excellence. We have a strong Board and good committee structures in place to oversee the school and provide support.

The Board effectively oversees the management of resources and actively engages in monitoring academic performance. Additionally, as evidenced by the Board's decision to reorganize its leadership structures to better prepare for the future, the Board thinks strategically to help its school leaders prepare for the future.

The application will also feature extensive discussions of our mission, which focuses on the physical/nutritional and social/emotional health of our students—in addition to their intellectual health and academic growth. In these areas we've been especially innovative. Over the last two years we've fully implemented the Fitnessgram program and are able to track our students' progress as they work to become more physically fit. We've made strides in our health curriculum to support our students as they grow and change emotionally through the middle grades years. And we've fully developed our advisory program and our approach to school culture and climate so that our school is a safe place for students to learn and grow.

Another core part of our mission is our Life Skills program. During this contract term the program has doubled in size and we continue to have a good, collaborative relationship with the district in all aspects of the program's implementation. We've had many successes in our program. For example, this past year 16 students in the program took the Alt-MSA and all 16 earned proficient. Eighty-three percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders earned proficient on the science Alt-MSA.

The success of the program goes well beyond the test and includes many examples of innovation. At every opportunity we work to include the Life Skills students into our regular program. This past year we collaborated with the Maryland Coalition for Inclusive Education to include two Life Skills students in our regular program. This work required intensive training and commitment by our teachers. We plan to transition additional students in the future.

Another area of strength in our school is the way we engage our parents. There are a number of data points indicating that our family and community involvement is a strong. Over the course of our contract, 89.3 percent of parents expressed satisfaction with Afya PCS, according the City Schools Climate Survey. On the SER (Appendix 3), our school was Highly Effective in all three of the rated categories. In this application, we'll discuss the work that we've done to engage parents over the past four years and set forth ambitious plans to enhance this work in our next five years.

There are a number of other data points in this application that show the strength of our school and our overall organization. Data related to a positive climate for students is very good. Our attendance

rate has consistently been ranked among the highest in the district. Throughout our contract the student suspension rate has been low. In our original charter application we talked at length about our commitment to retain cohorts of students from sixth through eighth grade. In 2011 80 percent (88 out of 110) of the first cohort Afya students completed our program. Last year, that number rose to 87 percent (89 out of 103). As of this writing, 92 percent (102 out of 112) of our current 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were with us in the beginning of sixth grade. In our charter we said that we would recruit and retain our students. We have done that.

We believe this application demonstrates is a picture of our school that coincides in many ways with the SER report. Afya PCS and Afya Baltimore, Inc. have many strengths. In many areas our school and our organization are doing innovative, highly effective work. Clearly there are challenges ahead, none greater than how successfully we can transition to the Common Core and support our students as they ready for high school. Just as clear is the fact that our school and our organization have ambitious, capable leaders who are poised and ready to this work over the next five years.

## **2. Is the School an Academic Success?**

a. Please refer to Data Tables 2(a)(i) and 2(a)(ii) provided by City Schools addressing the school's absolute performance and trend in performance on the Maryland State Assessment (MSA).

Throughout the contract term there have been many highlights in our absolute performance. Based on the data provided by City Schools, the percentage of Afya PCS students achieving proficient/advanced during the term was 79.6 in reading and 67.7 in mathematics. During the same time, the district average was 66.8 in reading and 53.9 in mathematics.

In our first year our performance was outstanding: 88.3 in reading and 81.6 in mathematics. Throughout the term, our reading performance has remained high, especially when compared to district averages. In mathematics, an obvious highlight in absolute performance was 8<sup>th</sup> grade performance in 2011. As mentioned in the Executive Summary, that year's performance was among the very best in the city and was better than the state average. In math we performed well above the district average throughout the contract term in all grades, save for sixth and seventh grade last year. We did remain well above the district's average in grade eight math last year.

Especially given the decline in mathematics performance we experienced in 2012, which was discussed in the Executive Summary, we are not satisfied with the trend data from table 2(a)(ii). However, because we are changing curriculum and changing assessments over the next two years,

reversing the MSA data trend is not our highest priority. It's certainly a concern, and we think we can make near-term adjustments to our preparation for the Common Core in both reading and mathematics. In mathematics in particular this means reworking our scope and sequence to again better align with tested standards in the MSA. This careful alignment is something we did during our first three years and then intentionally moved away from last year. The balance for us, of course, is making sure we don't overreact in the short term and thus adversely affect our long-term objectives, which are to fully prepare our teachers and students for the rigor and challenges of the Common Core.

b. Refer to Data Table (b)(i) addressing the school's record of progress on MSA over the course of the contract term.

During the contract term Afya PCS clearly has been one of Baltimore City's highest performing middle schools. We scored Highly Effective on the renewal rubric in this area. According to the data table our progress over time was 79.4 (12.4 percentage points above the cutoff point between Effective and Highly Effective) in reading and 67.7 (5.7 above the cutoff) in math. We presume that this progress is well above that of the district's during the same time (the data was not provided).

c. Please refer to Data Table 2(c)(i) provided by City Schools addressing the school's record of disaggregated and subgroup performance on the MSA or the HSA over the course of the contract term.

There are a couple important considerations to note about the data. First, there is little gap between FARM and non-FARM students throughout the contract. Second, the data for white students are not significant. For our first two years we had only one white student. The last two years we had two.

There are things for us to learn from the special education data. Before discussing these things, we'd like to make two points: First, the data table provided does not include the performance of our Life Skills students (who take the alt-MSA), which was outstanding last year: All 18 students were proficient in reading and math. Second, our special education enrollment has increased dramatically since our first year, when only 14 percent of our students were receiving services, five of whom were in our Life Skills program. Last year 23 percent of our students were receiving special services. This year the number is 24 percent. Thus, it is difficult to compare first year numbers to last year's numbers.

Having said this, we know we have a lot of work to do in our special education instructional program. Much of this work will coincide with the work described elsewhere to shift to the

Common Core. In terms of staffing, we have made one significant move: We've created a coordinator position with our school to provide instructional support to our teachers in the area of inclusive practice and accommodations to better differentiate instruction for struggling students. Aileen Mercado, a model teacher, will lead this work.

d. For Schools Using NWEA data to measure student progress: N/A

e. Discuss how the school has performed against the performance measures and expectations specified in its contract and against City Schools' performance during the same period.

As we have stated, we have consistently outperformed the district on the MSA, which is the central performance measure in the contract, throughout the term. Perhaps the best indicator of this is the comparison of the absolute performance over time. Afya PCS outperformed the district by 12.8 percentage points in reading and 13.8 percentage points in math during the term.

Obviously there are other measures of school performance and success, many which are included and discussed as part of this application (see 2.h. and 2.i.) and the rubric. The core to our argument for a full renewal lies here, however, in the fact that we have outperformed the district over time, that we have proven to be highly effective or effective in all other areas used to evaluate school success, and that both the school and its Board are well positioned for future high performance.

f. Discuss how the school uses data to inform decisions regarding instruction, curriculum, school programs, professional development and/or other school components.

i. What systems, if any, does the school use to review and analyze data? AND

ii. Which pieces of data do school leaders and teachers analyze?

Data informs our decision-making around school priorities, professional development, and ongoing instructional planning. Specific data systems we have used and relied upon are discussed below. Teachers and school leaders meet quarterly by grade level content groups for Student Academic Performance Meetings. Data analysis is at the heart of these meetings. At these meetings, teams of mathematics, language arts, science, social studies, and physical education/health teachers bring recent data to the table for discussions about student progress since the last meeting. This might include both summative and formative assessments that have been used in the classroom.

In mathematics, we have used MSA data and our own baseline assessments to assign students to their instructional groups. This has enabled us to more effectively focus instructional content and pacing. Teachers use unit data trackers to record and analyze student mastery of key standards and

skills. These data trackers capture standards and the assessments (exit tickets, quizzes, tests) that indicate mastery. Teams of teachers and leadership team members routinely analyze these data trackers and discuss how teachers will make immediate adjustments to instruction. Additionally, we use the data to create re-teaching groups and set goals and timelines for the intervention. We then gather again as a team to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

In language arts, we have used the Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark System and the Scholastic Reading Inventory to gather data about the reading skills of our students. These data are essential to an effective workshop model in which students apply new learning to texts at their independent level and teachers target small group instruction for all students at their instructional levels. Our ongoing tracking and analysis of student progress in terms of their Lexile measures in reading informs our decisions about planning and reflecting upon the effectiveness of small group reading comprehension and word study interventions. These groups have included those facilitated by general education classroom teachers, special educators, and reading support teachers.

In 2011-2012, Afya PCS adopted the NWEA MAP assessments for the first time. This national assessment gave us valuable baseline data for all our students and a reliable way to measure growth. This assessment provides us another means to identify areas of strength as well as gaps in our students' knowledge and skills. During our first year of implementation, we used the data primarily to create small group interventions in reading, strengthen teachers' ability to match students with texts appropriately, and measure growth. The data also enabled us to have focused conversations with students and their parents about reading skills, growth, and goals. As we use this tool for the second year, we are positioned to make more sophisticated use of the data to inform practice. We will dig deeper into the data with more comprehensive analysis of the data within each assessment.

iii. How does individual student achievement data inform student interventions and differentiation?

The analysis of student achievement data informs the interventions and differentiation that characterize our approach to everyday teaching and learning. Additionally, our reflection upon data and student progress has led to adjustments and changes. The analysis and discussion during a seventh grade math academic performance meeting led to a restructured approach to the teaching of an instructional group. As discussed above, we group students homogeneously for mathematics. What we've long found, and the data confirms, is that there remains a wide range of abilities in our groups. For this group in particular, we decided the best way to support the needs of all students in

the class was for the special educator and general educator to team teach so they could group the students and adjust the instruction and pacing so some students had opportunities for additional practice while others could move ahead.

Another change that resulted from data analysis has been our efforts to provide enrichment opportunities for our strongest students. Last year, we used MAP data and teacher recommendations to identify high-performing students for an extra science enrichment course in seventh and eighth grade. This year, we have expanded the number of students identified for this course. All of our eighth graders now take a course we call Workshop. Some students take a workshop course taught by a literacy teacher for intensive work on strengthening reading skills. Other students take a science workshop course taught by a science teacher for a course that integrates science literacy instruction with hands-on science learning.

Lastly, this summer, we did careful analysis of growth data we gathered from the NWEA MAP data. The analysis clearly indicates the challenges we face with our students who are significantly below grade level. Our analysis found that this set of students do not progress at the same rate as their peers. While we were not surprised by the data, it has added a sense of urgency to our work. As a result, we are focused intently on our instruction, exploring the need for additional instructional time (after school, summer), and strengthening professional support for teachers. For example, a veteran math teacher is working as an instructional coach with our two sixth grade teachers. An eighth grade math class is piloting a blended learning model in which students rotate between small group instruction with the teacher and independent learning and practice using a web-based math program.

g. Describe any changes made to the curriculum since your last renewal and provide the rationale for these changes.

As described in our original charter application, the curriculum at Afya PCS is grounded in national and state standards. This continues to be the case as we revise our curriculum to reflect Maryland's transition to the increased rigor of the Common Core Curriculum. Our approach to this is discussed in detail in Section 3b. Prior to this, part of our professional practice has been to reflect upon and adapt units of study to ensure our curriculum meets standards and addresses the needs of our students. For example, in Science, we have modified our curriculum from our initial application so it now aligns more closely with the City Schools science curriculum. We are always looking for ways to integrate health and wellness into our curriculum across the school so this component of our curriculum has evolved from our early plans as presented in our initial application.

h. How has the school maintained fidelity to its contract and to the school's implementation of key design elements?

A core component of Afya's program design is the school's commitment to health and wellness. Here is an example of the outcomes related to this element of our program: Based on our 2011 assessment of students at the beginning and the end of the year, using cardiovascular endurance tests (which included mile run times and PACER test scores) and body composition (height, weight, and skin fold analysis), the percentage of male students in the Healthy Fitness Zone for cardiovascular endurance increased from 77% to 85%. The percentage of female students in the Healthy Fitness Zone for body composition increased from 53% at the beginning of the year to 63% at the end. This past year was definitely our strongest implementation of this part of our mission. Our PE staff was well trained, our curriculum was organized, and our data systems were in place. We plan to continue this implementation over the next five years, with further emphasis on counseling and interventions for at-risk kids, something we discuss in the last section of this application. Other ways that we've remained true to our contract are discussed in the next section.

i. What is the school's mission and how has it been realized?

The mission of our school remains essentially the same, though it has been adapted to include Tunbridge. Our mission is:

At our schools, Afya Public Charter School and Tunbridge Public Charter School, health is the main thing we do. We believe that students in the elementary and middle grades need regular opportunities to think critically, be physically active and interact constructively with peers. As they participate in this work and play, students at our schools will create and learn the habits of mind and body that will lead to their intellectual, physical, social, and emotional health. The responsibility of all those connected with our schools—parents, teachers, administrators, Board members—is to provide an effective learning environment in which students can develop a strong sense of self, academic proficiency, and awareness of others. Our students will study rigorously throughout their elementary and middle grades years and ultimately become graduates who are articulate, literate young people proud to engage in the complexities of today's world. The graduates of our schools, Afya Public Charter School and Tunbridge Public Charter School, will be ready for the high school of their choice and ready to live healthy, purposeful lives.

In our SER, we were rated Highly Effective in all areas related to school culture and climate. A big reason for that is because we have closely adhered to the vision of the school and incorporated our mission into all aspects of our day. We talk a lot in this application about developing our students intellectually. The primary purpose for this, of course, is to prepare our students for the high school of their choice, something we've achieved with great success (see Executive Summary).

In this section, we'd like to highlight several programs and partnerships that embody the commitment we have to our mission. The first is work we have done with fitness, health and food.

The Afya Mile is an event we do each year that celebrates our mission. All students, and many parents and teachers, run. Students set goals from year to year and try and beat their times. There is also a competition among our fastest runners. Our winning time last year was a 5:39 for our top male runner and a 6:50 for our top female. One of our teachers ran the race in an impressive 5:20!

Leading up to the race, sixth graders focus on the run itself, learning how to train physically and prepare for a demanding event. The seventh graders focus on food and nutrition—what it takes to eat well so you feel fit on race day—and develop the menu for the breakfast and snacks that day. Our eighth graders prepare projects for a health fair, which takes place after the race.

All of this work happens during advisory time, which is a key component to our mission. In advisory, kids learn about themselves, about others, and about their community. They also prepare for the high school choice process. Advisors eat breakfast and lunch with their students and also work with them individually to set goals for the year. These goals are then tracked throughout the year and discussed in detail during our student-led midyear conferences.

Another innovative part of our mission is our commitment to SPARK lessons. Many of our core classes are over 100 minutes long. We take a break midway through for fitness activities. These ten-minute activities are designed to get the kids' moving and increase their heart rates. When the activities are over, it's back to work and kids are better able to concentrate and focus.

Afya also has many partnerships that link to the mission of the school. One, with Park School, features a summer program with intense academic learning and time for play and fun. Another, with Johns Hopkins (the JHUMP program), gives Afya students the opportunity to visit the campus, watch a varsity practice and play sports, and then talk with Hopkins students about college life.

### **3. Does The School Have A Strong School Climate?**

a. Does the school have a positive school culture?

i. Does the school provide a safe, supportive learning environment for students, families, teachers and staff?

The SER noted that the work Afya PCS does in the area of creating a safe and supportive learning environment is Highly Effective. See the comments from the SER team in the report in Appendix 3.

ii. Does the school culture reflect and embrace student, staff and community diversity? Please describe.

We are committed to having a diverse staff with a range of experiences. We also enrich our curriculum with units of study that celebrate cultural diversity and history. The SER noted that Afya PCS is Highly Effective in this area. Please see the report in Appendix 3 for comments in this area.

iii. Please discuss any school rituals or routines that contribute to the creation of a positive school culture.

There are a number of rituals and routines that we have at Afya PCS that contribute to our positive school culture. Some of them include:

- Pictures of graduates in the main hall—Grads are featured in a banner, holding a poster with the name of the high school they will attend.
- Hopes and Dreams Pictures—Each year students write about their hopes and dreams for the future. This writing, along with a picture of the student, is displayed around the school.
- Friday play and celebration time—Each Friday teachers and students meet in the cafeteria to give one another “shout-outs.” Everyone then goes outside for an organized, and often very intense, play.
- Playing music in the halls during transition time—We play jazz and classical music during transition times, setting the tone for a calm and peaceful atmosphere. Adults are in the halls with students and greet them as they come in to class with a handshake or fist-bump.
- Kickball competitions between advisories.
- Club time—We enrich our program by offering clubs several times a year. Offerings include things like cooking, creative writing, dance, music, different athletics and art.
- Student-led midyear conferences—These are held in January of each year. Students write a letter to their parents about their performance academically, socially/emotionally, and in fitness and health. Students read the letter to their parents, review report cards, set goals for the remainder of the year, and in seventh and eighth grade plan for high school. Over 90 percent of Afya families participate.
- Having breakfast in the classroom and eating lunch together—Something we all do everyday, this sets the tone for the day creates a calm and peaceful climate.
- Summer Conversations—Afya teachers meet with families of incoming sixth-graders for a conversation about the hopes and dreams they have for their time at Afya PCS.

b. Are the school’s teachers highly effective at instruction?

i. Please describe the school’s approach to highly effective instruction and the elements that characterize how the school seeks to implement it.

Instruction at Afya PCS is characterized by our approach to curricular development and teacher planning, as well as how we design, reflect upon, and adjust our practice based on our assessment of student learning.

The curriculum at Afya PCS has been grounded in national standards and the Maryland State Curriculum from the outset. Across the content areas, we are actively revising and strengthening our curriculum to respond to the shifts in the Common Core Curriculum.

Our teachers are actively involved in the development and revisions of our curriculum. For the past two summers, we have concentrated on reworking our language arts and mathematics curricula. In science and social studies we are strengthening the integration of content knowledge with content literacy, student discourse and critical thinking. This work is happening this school year.

Effective teacher planning is essential to highly effective instruction and daily lesson planning is strengthened through opportunities for collaboration. Teaching schedules are designed to allow for common planning time so content teams at each grade level can meet regularly to plan together. The Director of Teaching and Learning supports these weekly meetings and facilitates the collaboration across grade levels and content areas.

Common assessments, created before each unit launch, guide instruction during the unit and allow teachers to collaboratively reflect upon the evidence of student learning and mastery at its conclusion. This reflection informs the need for re-teaching for students who have not achieved mastery or for more significant adjustment to the teaching for a skill or concept.

In 2011 we adopted the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments (see Section 2). Before this, we used the Scholastic Reading Inventory. We use this data to measure and track the reading growth of students. Teachers use this data within our workshop instructional model to carefully match readers with texts and design small group interventions. In mathematics we use MAP data to create instructional groupings and identify gaps in skills and mathematical understanding. Since we administer the assessments in the beginning, middle, and end of the year, we are able to track growth for individual students, instructional groups, and cohorts of students.

In addition to the routines of the weekly content meetings, teams of teachers meet quarterly for academic performance meetings. Afya's principal joins the team for these meetings, during which we examine recent data, discuss student progress, and plan interventions for struggling students.

ii. Please describe the school's approach to highly effective instruction for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment.

Our approach to instruction for students with disabilities remains the same as what we described in detail in our original charter application. We continue to believe in and implement the Schoolwide Application Model (SAM) for inclusive education. This model has six principles, all of which reinforce the belief that the general education classroom is the best place for kids to learn.

Furthermore, all staff members are responsible for all students' performance and well-being and will adapt to meet all of our students needs.

We believe that with this instructional model in place, and with our work related to the shift to the Common Core, we have an effective approach to instruction for students with disabilities. Elsewhere in this application we discuss use of data, differentiation and small-group instruction. These practices are also applicable to our work with students with disabilities.

iii. Please describe the school's teacher and leader recruitment plan, including key qualifications, milestones, and the people involved.

Teacher and school leader recruitment has always been a strength for our organization. Over the course of our contract term, we have attracted and retained high quality people to our schools and organization. Teacher recruitment starts early in the school year and includes an interview process that is rigorous and layered. Our ideal teacher-candidates meet with school leaders for multiple interviews and visit the school for discussions with students and teachers. They must demonstrate that they both understand and have a passion for our mission and that they are experts in their field.

This past year ABI Board developed a principal selection process that includes recruitment and leadership development strategies. The Board also worked with TransitionGuides to create detail roles and responsibilities for all school leaders and emergency backup plans for times when key leaders are away from the school. Having this information is good practice; it also gives us a solid understanding of what our leaders need to know and be able to do on a daily and long-term basis. This helps us with both recruitment and training.

A key to our success is the retention of staff. All of the founders of Afya continue to work at the school. Will McKenna is now the ED of Afya Baltimore and will oversee, along with school principals, the development of leaders at the school level. He'll also work closely with the Board as it continues to recruit new members. The key to this work is giving people opportunities—giving teachers many opportunities to work with others, to collaborate, to lead a Professional Learning Community, to grow professionally; giving Board members a clear understanding of the work we are trying to do, giving them opportunities to support the mission of our schools.

Over the last four years we've lost very few of our many great teachers and Board members, and when people have left they've gone on to work for the district in leadership positions, to sit on the Baltimore City School Board, or to enter doctoral programs.

iv. Please describe the school's professional development plan, including time and resources devoted to it, the schedule creation process, and how the school gauges the effectiveness of the professional development provided.

We believe that the most effective professional development plan has clear, identifiable priorities and imbeds professional development activities into the everyday teaching and learning (See Appendix 2 for our plan). Our design integrates professional development into weekly grade level content meetings, weekly grade level team meetings, and departmental meetings (teachers from all three grades of a content).

We also believe that an effective professional development plan is differentiated by content and personalized. In 2010-2011 we formed a mathematics professional learning community in which math teachers met monthly around best practices and transition to the Common Core. We will launch PLCs in the other content areas this school year. In 2012-2013, a new element of our professional development plan will be two cycles of professional growth. In these cycles, which are also discussed in Section 4, teachers will identify target areas for their own professional learning. Each teacher will work with a member of the instructional leadership team on these target areas through professional reading, observations, classroom visits, and coaching. The principal will oversee and participate in this work, which flows into the teacher's evaluation.

Each year, the instructional leadership team identifies these priorities and designs support around them. We identify priorities for the different aspects of our school life—content instruction, advisory, school-wide climate, student habits, and grade level teams. Our 2012-2013 priorities are included in Appendix 5.

We launch our professional learning during the August professional development days and the focused follow up to this work during what we refer to as "The First 30 Days." The objectives of the First 30 Days have focused on the practices—the organization, routines, and structures—that create effective learning environments. PD sessions in August and weekly content team meetings focus on these objectives. For 2012-2013, the First 30 Day objectives include student talk and evidence of student engagement, evidence of student thinking and process charts, well organized rooms and systems for success, and varied instructional groupings. Professional development

sessions in October, January, and April will also focus on the instructional priorities. These priorities were developed by school leaders through data analysis, discussion with teachers, and through daily observation and monitoring of instruction.

Members of the Afya PCS instructional leadership team share responsibilities for professional development support. Our team includes the Director of Teaching and Learning, the Director of Academic Accountability, and a Coordinator of Special Education. These individuals implement strategic and ongoing support for teachers. In addition, Afya teachers participate in the facilitation of professional development activities. For example, one teacher supports his colleagues' integration of technology into instruction. One of our veteran math teachers serves as an instructional coach for our sixth grade teachers who are in their first and second year of teaching. Through classroom observations, weekly meetings, and ongoing support, this model provides personalized professional development in a key area for our school.

This year, our professional development priorities were also informed by the feedback from our School Effectiveness Review. In particular, we have responded to the feedback specific to instructional delivery by incorporating target areas in our instructional priorities for the 2012-13 year: 1. Implement instructional practices to support active student engagement and participation; 2. Integrate effective questioning into daily lessons; 3. Effective use of student-student talk.

The nature of our work means that the individuals who facilitate professional development are constantly reflecting on the effectiveness of our support and needs for adjustment. The Teaching and Learning Committee of the Afya Baltimore, Inc. Board has also been instrumental in this reflection. In 2011, the committee created a survey for teachers to give feedback about the effectiveness and value of the professional development they had received that year. This is something we want to build upon.

c. Does the school have engaged families and community?

In this area the SER noted that Afya PCS was Highly Effective. Please see the report in Appendix 3.

The school updates its handbook each summer and distributes the handbook to families during summer conversations and orientations. The handbook is also posted on the school's website. Agenda and minutes from ABI Board meetings are included in the Document Request section.

Other things to note in this area: Each fall, school leaders survey parents to find out their volunteer interests. Last year, the school received feedback from 135 parents. School leaders organized this information into a support list, calling for volunteers when needed. Finally, later in Section 4, we'll talk in more detail about how parents formally participate on the ABI Board.

d. Are parents, teachers and students satisfied?

i. Please refer to Data Tables 3(d)(i), 3(d)(ii), 3(d)(iii), and 3(d)(iv) provided by City Schools to gauge satisfaction with the school and its program.

ii. Please summarize the survey results and any considerations relevant to evaluating and understanding the results.

Per the new guidance, we will give the Chicago 5 to teachers and students in September and comment further on the results through an amendment to this renewal application. The data we do have thus far—from the City Schools Climate Survey given throughout our contract term—is very positive: 74.2 percent of students and 92.1 percent of parents are satisfied with Afya PCS. We'd like to note that during our first three years we had a very high rate of return of parent surveys. This is because we featured the survey as part of our student-led conferences. After the conference we gave the parents the survey and asked for them to complete and submit it. Last year there was a change in the timeline for the distribution of the survey so that it didn't coincide with the conference. We did mail the survey home and advisors called home to remind parents about the survey, but there was a drop in our submission rate.

Demand for enrollment at Afya PCS has been high since the beginning of our contract term:

School Year	Applications for Grade Six	Total Seats Available
2010-2011	156	104
2011-2012	272	108
2012-2013	315	108

We have had very little attrition at our school during the term of our contract. Please see below for further discussion of our cohort retention.

e. Has the school's enrollment been consistent with the projections contained in its contract?

Our enrollment has met, or exceeded, expectations since we opened. This year we have 348 students at Afya, our largest enrollment to date.

f. Does the school have a good track record of cohort retention?

Our rate is excellent. The contract term average is 90.2. Last year the district's average was 42.2.

g. Does the school have a good track record for attendance?

i. Please refer to Data Table 3(g)(i) provided by City Schools on attendance.

The average attendance rate for Afya PCS during the contract term has been 97.3. This is well above the city average and ranks among the highest in the city.

ii. How does the school's attendance for students with disabilities compare with City Schools' average?

The average attendance rate for students with disabilities was 96.1 percent. Last year the attendance rate in this subcategory was 94.9, 7.2 points higher than the district's rate in this subcategory.

h. What is the school's track record for chronic absences?

i. Please refer to Data Table 3(h)(i) provided by City Schools on chronic absences.

During the course of our contract term, 3.3 percent of our students were chronically absent. Last year was the highest rate to date: 8.2. The district's rate was 22.5 percent. See below for further discussion of students with chronic absence.

ii. What is the school's chronic absence rate for students with disabilities?

During the contract term, 5.35 percent of Afya PCS special education students were chronically absent. Last year the rate was 8.8 percent, compared to the district's rate of 30.5.

We spend an extraordinary amount of time focusing on attendance at Afya PCS. Advisors emphasize the importance of attendance and are in regular contact with families when there are attendance concerns. Our counselor is also actively involved in this work, calling families of absent students daily and holding conferences with families of students who are chronically tardy or absent. We do have students who have severe health problems and miss school. We move quickly to get them into the CHIP program. Ultimately, we think our attendance rate is high because of the organizational systems we have in place and the strong connections we have with families. One example of how seriously school leaders take this issue happens each morning, when staff walk down Belair Rd., visiting bus stops and breakfast stops to make sure kids get to school on time.

i. For Transformation Schools and High Schools: N/A

j. For Transformation Schools and High Schools: N/A

k. For Middle Schools, Transformation Schools and High Schools only:

Does student choice data indicate that the school is in high demand? This response should indicate how you determine whether your school is in high demand.

This issue was discussed above. Here, again, is a chart showing the demand for our school:

School Year	Applications for Grade Six	Total Seats Available
2010-2011	156	104
2011-2012	272	108
2012-2013	315	108

Because we have a low attrition rate, we do not have many available slots for students in grades seven and eight. There is interest in these slots, however. Here's the data from last year: 34 applications for seven spots in grade 7 and 14 applications for one spot in grade eight.

1. What is the school's data on student suspension and expulsions and what goals has the school set for a future term?

i. Please refer to Data Table 3(l)(i) provided by City Schools on the number of short-term suspensions, extended/long-term suspensions and expulsions broken down by years in the most recent term of your school contract.

During our first year our suspension rate was 21 percent. Last year our overall suspension rate was 7 percent. This was the lowest rate that we had during our contract term. We also had no expulsions last school year and just one during the term of the contract.

During the contract term APCS has averaged 1.5 extended suspensions per year for general education students and .5 percent per year among special education students.

Our rate of suspension is directly linked to the culture and climate that we have in the school, which was rated Highly Effective in the SER. The following interventions and strategies help reduce suspensions: Walking students out to the bus stop at the end of the day; having teachers and school leaders eat breakfast and lunch with students; implementing an advisory program that emphasizes problem-solving and social skills; playing music during highly organized hall transitions; holding midyear conferences that focus on academic and behavioral performance; having counselors to help students cope with and resolve problems; implementing what we call a BOOST program for identified students to work on skills related to problem-solving and positive decision making.

Our goal for the next contract term is to reduce our suspension rate even further. We think through continued training of our staff, through additional resources to supporting student needs, and

through the continued development of our overall program we can reach the point where we have fewer than 15 suspensions per year. That's our goal.

- ii. What is the percentage of students with disabilities that receive a short-term suspension, long-term suspension or expulsion and how does this compare with rates in the school's total population of students?

In our first two years, only 1 of 16 special education students and 2 of 37 special education students were suspended. Last year 14 of 78 special education students were suspended, compared to 18 out of 257 students. None were expelled. During the term of our contract, the suspension rate for regular education students was 9 percent, compared to 17 percent for special education.

We do have a high rate of special education students: 23 percent last year. Last year we also had five students in our program with an emotionally disturbed disability. Our interventions for students follow the Response to Intervention model. Central to the implementation of this model are the Tier I behavior interventions, which focus on school-wide and classroom-level interventions that address the needs of most of the students in the school. The goal is that these interventions effectively reach 80 percent of the students on a daily basis.

We define students with chronic issues of any kind—attendance, behavior, academic performance—as Tier II students—those in need additional supports to be successful. In terms of behavior, we make sure these students get additional check-ins by an advisor each day; carry behavior sheets, with student-created goals, which are signed by teachers, parents, and administrators, each day; and meet with mentors or counselors weekly to reflect on behaviors, talk through problems, and work on coping skills. This past year, for the first time, we contracted with an outside agency to work with about ten students and families in both group and family counseling.

#### **4. Has the School Followed Sufficient Financial Management and Governance Practices?**

- a. Has the school been operated in a fiscally sound manner?

- i. Please describe the school's history regarding its internal controls and the sound use of financial resources and its record in acting as a custodian of public funds.

APCS is operated by ABI, which also oversees a second school, Tunbridge Public Charter School (TPCS). ABI's management practices are excellent. Included with this application are detailed policies and procedures related to management of financial resources and internal controls. These policies were developed in the first year of APCS. During the last two years, the ABI Budget and Finance Committee reviewed and updated the policies to include TPCS. This summer the Board

again updated the policies to include oversight by the Executive Director. The policies include a process flow for purchasing; a procurement policy; financial controls; and the budget approval process. There have been no fiscal issues or concerns that have arisen during the contract term.

ii. Please describe the school's record in each of the following areas:

1. Audit submission:

Each of our audits has been turned in on time with no unqualified opinions.

2. Audit content, establishing and maintaining appropriate internal controls:

ABI has clear financial controls in place. Please see documents included with this application.

3. Handling of state/federal grant money:

We have effectively managed state/federal money. During our contract term we've had a Single Audit completed with the determination that ABI met the requirements of the federal government.

4. Budget submission and monitoring:

Our budgets are approved by the ABI Board each May. Please see our budget approval process in the included documents. Also included in these documents are the controls that we have in place to monitor budget expenditures.

5. Budgeting and long-range planning

Because of the lease agreements we have and the partnership we have with the Abell Foundation which guarantees our loans, we are required to do extensive short-and long-term budgeting. APCS creates five-year budgets and Tunbridge PCS creates ten-year budgets. As we create these budgets we follow our Board policy, which allows for feedback from school leadership and from families.

We also do other research to help inform our decision-making. This past year, for example, we consulted with TransitionGuides, a company that helps organizations assess leadership structures and plan for the future, to assess our organization's management structure. This analysis, which was overseen by the ABI Board, had many budget implications. We also consulted with a firm, EMG, to assess our facilities and make recommendations for both short- and long-term maintenance and upkeep of our school buildings. Based on this work, our Board has created maintenance plans that focus on the work needed to take care of our schools. These plans are linked to our budgeting.

A final example of the long-term thinking in which our Board engages is our commitment to creating and implementing operating and capital reserve policies to ensure that our schools can handle unforeseen financial challenges. Additionally, the ABI Board is working to identify and find resources, via grant writing and fundraising, to support initiatives like leadership and curriculum development and program enrichment.

#### 6. Financial reporting

Our reporting systems are detailed in full in the included documents related to controls.

#### 7. Financial condition

Afya Public Charter School is in excellent financial health.

iii. Please note that in assessing the school's record of fiscal performance, City Schools will look in part to information already on file that the school has submitted throughout the contract period, including annual budgets, quarterly financial statements and annual audited financial statements. However, if an audited financial statement for the most recent year is not yet available at the time of this application, the school must submit a preliminary summary of functional expenses for that year. Please attach any such information as an appendix.

ABI will submit this year's audit on time. We've also submitted our annual budgets and quarterly financial statements in a timely manner throughout our contract term.

#### b. Is the school led by effective, strategic leaders?

i. Please describe the school leader's vision for an effective learning environment and the steps the school leader takes to cultivate this environment in the school.

The leadership of the school, and of the organization, is exceptionally strong. This was noted extensively in the SER. This past year the ABI Board took steps to create a sustainable and highly effective organizational leadership structure and ensure leadership strength and stability for years to come. The immediate result of this work was hiring Will McKenna as the Executive Director of ABI and selecting Katie Marts, a founder of the school, as the new principal.

Ms. Marts knows the mission and the vision of the school well. She leads an outstanding team of educators in the work of creating a great school. Included in this group are Karen Hughes, Pat Njenga and Mike Morgan, all founders, and Aileen Mercado, an outstanding special educator who was named a model teacher by the district last year. The vision for the work focuses on three areas: teacher training, development and supervision (which will be discussed more below); parent involvement and participation; and student engagement and performance. The SER was clear: the conditions are set for Afya PCS teachers to engage in rich and intense professional development that

will lead to better instruction. Our teachers are committed to the school and they plan effectively. The work ahead is for our teachers to engage students in more sophisticated study—thinking that is more directly aligned with the Common Core—and delve into higher-level thinking and more complex work. Ms. Marts and her team are actively working on implementing professional training in these areas. Please see the school’s instructional priorities in Appendix 5.

New work that Ms. Marts will lead this year will focus on an extensive plan to develop and train teachers through what we refer to as cycles of learning (See Appendix 4), which will happen twice during the school year. This collaborative approach to teacher training offers teachers opportunities to set goals for instructional improvement, work with peers to collaborate on and observe best practices, and meet in small professional learning communities to reflect upon and evaluate practice. Ms. Marts will guide staff in this work, meeting with them to set goals, evaluate performance, and choose topics for study and review. Undertaking this work will require tremendous organization and focus, the specifics of which are discussed below in the section about school operations. We believe strongly, however, that in order for our school to improve and grow we must have our best school leaders be focused on instructional practice. Ms. Marts is set to lead this work.

The second area Ms. Marts and her team will focus on is family engagement. The SER noted that this is an area of strength for the school. The ABI Board wants to build on this strength in specific ways. Through Ms. Marts’ leadership, Afya PCS will bring together parent leaders who will focus on six areas of support and engagement. They are:

- Excellent parent participation in our orientations at the beginning of the year. Over 95 percent of our incoming parents participate in the orientations and summer conversations. Over 40 percent of our returning parents participate. We want parent leaders from the school to organize to have a higher level of involvement in the planning of these activities. Additionally, we would like the participation rate for returning parents to rise to 60 percent.
- Excellent parent participation in American Education Week Activities. We want our parents to take an active part in all of the activities, including hosting a luncheon for parents and teachers.
- Excellent participation in our student-led midyear conferences. Over 90 percent of our parents participate in these conferences. We want to maintain this rate. At the same time, we want our parents to organize around the event to do more outreach and education during the conference times.
- Excellent parent participation in our budget process. We have a budget process that seeks input from school leadership and from Afya PCS families. We’d like our parent leaders to better organize in this area to increase participation and education.
- Excellent parent participation and support of our Afya Mile Run. This is a great event for our school when all students run a mile. Parents have always supported this event in the past. We’d like to maintain this support.

- Excellent parent participation in our eighth grade closing ceremony. We want parents to organize around the event, helping to create a ceremony that celebrates the students' performance and the schools mission and vision.

This parent work will be embedded into the daily life of the school. ABI also has structures and policies in place assuring and promoting parent involvement. There are two parent representatives on the ABI Board from Afya PCS. Parents are also invited to participate on the ABI committees.

The final area that Ms. Marts and her team will focus on is student engagement. The school's climate and culture have always been a strength, something the SER discusses in detail. Ms. Marts has plans to build on this foundation, creating an SGA for the first time, working with students to choose school colors and a mascot, and strengthening our advisory program, which emphasizes service learning, preparation for high school, and lots of healthy competitions.

Student engagement in the classroom is also a renewed focus this year. We want our students to participate more actively in their learning through good, smart academic talk. We want teachers to work to truly differentiate their instruction so that all students can access the work and engage in the learning. We want teachers to create lessons where students are actively involved in creating products of learning that show rigorous thinking.

This engagement will require new thinking by teachers. Our training is focused on this work. Our goals (Appendix 5) are aligned to it. Our cycles of learning, overseen by Ms. Marts, will support it.

- ii. Please describe how your staffing enables the school to provide supervisory support to all staff, and provide evidence that the leadership structure as constituted serves both the instructional and operational needs of the school.

Without question the most important thing the ABI Board has done in the past year to ensure the instructional and operational needs of the school was to move Will McKenna from the principalship of Afya PCS to the ED role. For the past two years, Mr. McKenna has been working as the principal of Afya PCS but has also been actively involved in the start-up of Tunbridge PCS. With Ms. Marts as the principal, Afya PCS now has a school leader who will focus exclusively on Afya PCS. Ms. Marts has a highly skilled team supporting her with the supervision of staff and the development of the instructional program. As noted previously, the school is implementing a teacher development and evaluation program this year that is intensely collaborative and rigorous. Ms. Marts will lead this process. We have a number of school leaders who will support the work, including two model

teachers—Aileen Mercado (mentioned earlier) and Campbell McLean—and Pat Njenga and Karen Hughes, all of whom will work directly with teachers on professional training and intensive training related to the Common Core. We also have an experienced team in place to support our student services, including special education, behavior interventions, mentoring, and counseling.

Mr. McKenna's work with APCS will have three areas of focus. First, he will be actively involved in coaching Ms. Marts. An experienced instructional leader, Mr. McKenna will work closely with Ms. Marts as she supports and supervises teachers. We know our plan for collaborative work with teachers is ambitious. The second cycle of learning, for example, is scheduled to take place just before the MSA. We are committed to the work, however, because we believe that imbedded, reflective practice is the key to better instruction and student performance. Mr. McKenna will work closely with Ms. Marts to help her manage her time and resources so she can focus on instruction.

Mr. McKenna's second area of focus with respect to the school is to help manage some of the daily operations, especially related to building management. We want our principals out in the halls and in the classrooms, engaging with students, teachers, and families—not burdened by daily operational maintenance concerns. Mr. McKenna will ensure that this happens (both at Afya and at Tunbridge).

The final area of Mr. McKenna's work that will directly affect APCS is the development and expansion of the organization's strategic planning. This work, which is discussed in more detail in the section below about the next five years, will allow the Board to more fully support Afya PCS's programming and operational needs and help it grow and continue to improve.

The primary operational concern that Ms. Marts and her team will focus on is making sure our organizational systems are in place so that our culture and climate can continue to thrive. This is enormously important work with intense focus on things like scheduling for the best use of academic time, organizing our cafeteria time so it's calm and can be focused on food and friendship, creating opportunities for kids to play, and making sure our hallways are quiet and friendly places.

iii. Please describe the school's leader evaluation process, including the individuals involved, the schedule, criteria for evaluation and any follow up.

In the past, the ABI Board was actively involved in the evaluation process. The Board president would meet with the principal and the Teaching and Learning Committee chairperson to review and discuss goals for the year. This meeting happened after the leadership team developed the School Performance Plan. This group would then meet with Executive Director from City Schools to

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review the priorities for the year. The Teaching and Learning Committee would then monitor progress toward the goals throughout the year, discussing and evaluating progress on assessments (NWEA for example) and other data points. The Board president would meet with the principal biweekly for discussion and check-in meetings. Additional conferences were held with the principal, the Teaching and Learning chair, and the president at the middle and end of the year, when the president would formally complete the evaluation with input from the Teaching and Learning chair and Executive Committee members. The evaluation was then shared with City Schools.

This process will now be guided by Will McKenna. Again, Mr. McKenna will collaborate with the ED from City Schools throughout the process, per the contract agreement. The focus on instruction will be more intense. Mr. McKenna has met with the principal and the leadership team to set the priorities for the school in five different areas: schoolwide instruction; schoolwide climate; advisory time; family engagement; and specific plans for the first 30 days of school. Ms. Marts and Mr. McKenna will evaluate progress toward these goals on a weekly basis, during coaching sessions. Mr. McKenna will also work closely with Ms. Marts as she works with teachers. As we've mentioned, this is a lot of work, requiring time and energy. Mr. McKenna will work to assist Ms. Marts as she does this work, guiding her practice and helping her both collaborate with and challenge teachers as they work to improve their craft.

Mr. McKenna will meet with Ms. Marts formally in the middle and end of the year to evaluate progress toward the goals that have been set for. Mr. McKenna will work closely with the Board, apprising it of progress towards the goals and leading committee and board-level discussions about areas of need and things the Board can do to better support the success of the school.

The final evaluation of the principal will be done by Mr. McKenna, in collaboration with City Schools' staff, and overseen and ultimately approved by the ABI Board.

c. Has the school been effectively and responsibly governed?

i. Please describe how the school's Board monitors the academic performance, financial considerations, operational soundness and overall compliance record of the school. What metrics does the Board review and how frequently?

The ABI Board was rated Effective in the SER this past spring. We think the work of the Board over the past year to 18 months has been to position our two schools and our Board for long-term excellence. This work will be discussed fully below in the section related our plan for the next five years. The work described here is the foundational work that will lead to that future excellence.

The Board monitors academic performance in multiple ways. First, the president and the Teaching and Learning chair meet with the principal three times per-year as part of the formal evaluation process. Goals are discussed and formally created. Progress is assessed. Performance is formally evaluated and approved by the Board.

The Teaching and Learning Committee is also actively involved in monitoring performance. This past year, the committee met monthly to review data from each of our school's assessment programs—Tunbridge PCS uses Wireless and Afya PCS uses NWEA. Staff from each school presented baseline, midyear, and end-of-the-year data and progress goals were set and monitored. This was the first year that each of our schools used these assessments, so we feel that we have good benchmarking data on all of our students for future analysis.

This past year the Teaching and Learning Committee also conducted site visits and walk-throughs on two different occasions. Board members and parents participated in the reviews. The first one included a walk-through of the school and time for the principals to talk with the committee about priorities and goals. During the second visit, the committee reviewed portfolios of eight randomly selected students and discussed each student's progress and how the school addressed each student's needs. Jeanine Hildreth, the chair of the committee led these discussions. We anticipate that this oversight by the Board will be replicated this year and in years to come.

Yet another way academic progress is reported is through reports that our principals give at Executive Committee Meetings and at Board meetings. These detailed reports include updates on instructional performance and operational issues.

With respect to monitoring operational soundness and financial considerations the flow of work includes collaboration between school leaders, Board committees, and the full Board. As our documents related to financial controls (see Requested Documents) show, ABI has detailed controls and process flows in place that allow for segregation of responsibilities, and monitoring and oversight by several individuals and groups, including our accountant, school leaders, the Executive Director, the Budget and Finance Committee, and ultimately by the full Board.

During this contract term Afya PCS has had no compliance related issues. Were anything ever to arise, the Executive Director would first work with school leaders to address the concern.

Depending on the situation, the issue would then be referred to the Executive Committee of the Board for review and assessment.

ii. Please indicate how often the Board meets, describe its committee structure and indicate how often committees meet.

The full Board meets four times per year. The Executive Committee, which consists of officers and committee chairs, meets monthly, as do the committees. During its summer retreat, the ABI Board created goals for itself and for each of the committees. These goals are included in Appendix 6.

iii. Please describe the process to recruit and nominate new Board members.

The ABI policy for recruitment of new members is included in Appendix 7.

iv. If the school has encountered any academic, fiscal, operations or compliance challenges requiring Board intervention over the course of the contract term, please describe. N/A

v. Does the school partners with an educational service provider for the management of the school? N/A

d. Does the school have a sufficient record of compliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations and policies?

There have been no compliance issues at APCS during the term of this contract.

i. Please describe the school's history with regard to compliance with applicable laws, rules, regulations and policies.

We've had no compliance issues.

ii. Address the school's practices and systems with regard to compliance matters, including measures to track requirements, individuals involved and practices for addressing any significant problems. N/A

iii. Please describe any significant compliance problems that occurred during the current contract term, measures taken to address those problems, to prevent them in the future and the current status of each such situation. N/A

iv. Please discuss the school's efforts during the current contract term to address the regulatory requirements relating to special student populations, including students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

In order to provide appropriate placement and services for the students with disabilities, the first thing that we do when we receive a student with IEP is to do diligent effort to have the child transferred to our Maryland IEP online matrix and request transfer of the confidential folder. The next step is to inform special educators of the new special education student and for them to look through the IEP. We then print and distribute IEPs to all teachers who will be teaching the student as well as the related service providers. The IEP chair and Special Education coordinator review the IEP with the staff involved in implementation. We also have teachers and related service providers sign the initiation of services as evidence that implementation of the child's IEP has started.

v. Please describe the policies and procedures in place at the school to ensure appropriate service provision for students with disabilities (e.g., evaluations, I.E.P. meetings, compliance with mandated timeframes, etc.)

The school runs annual IEP review reports to ensure timely scheduling of each student's IEP meeting. A meeting is scheduled before the due date of the child's IEP. Once the schedule of meetings is determined, it is disseminated so teachers and related service providers can prepare necessary documentation (progress reports, draft of IEP, formal and/or informal assessments, and sample class work). Fifteen days prior to the meeting, an IEP meeting invitation and other documents related to the meeting (progress reports, draft of IEP, formal and/or informal assessments, sample class work) are sent to the parents. Written correspondence is sent through certified mail to the parents/guardians and through the child. A phone call to parents about the coming meeting is also done. Diligent effort is done to contact parents about the meeting. Teachers and related service providers input important information on Maryland IEP online. After the meeting, a printed copy of the meeting is given to the parents, teachers, related service providers and anyone who works with the student. The new IEP is implemented the day after the IEP meeting. The school enforces the nature and appropriate hours of service mandated in the IEP.

Afya monitors data cleansing report regularly to make sure there are no errors in the data for the school. The special education staff members also attend professional development to keep them updated of any changes regarding special education policies and regulations.

## **5. If Renewed, What are the School's Plans for the Next Contract Term?**

a. What is the school's vision in the next five years?

As mentioned earlier in the application, the ABI Board decided a critical change needed for the future sustainability of the organization, and for Afya PCS in particular, was hiring an Executive Director. In Afya PCS's original charter starting a second school, Tunbridge PCS, in the second year was not anticipated. Starting that school was obviously a good decision but it certainly presented challenges for the ABI Board and for school leaders. The ABI Board responded to these challenges through restructuring its organizational leadership, adding the ED position, and selecting a new principal of Afya PCS (Katie Marts) who knows the school well and can focus solely on the school's growth and successful performance. ABI is now a stable organization with outstanding leadership in place. For Afya PCS this will have positive ramifications in the short- and long-term. Clearly the number one challenge for Afya PCS over the next five years will be how the school

addresses the transition to Common Core. In this application, we've talked at length about the how our school leaders will implement these transition plans. To prepare for this work, we've restructured so our ED can support and coach our principals and school leaders. We'll build on the excellent culture we have with our staff to create formal professional learning communities in each of the content areas to develop new curriculum and new assessments that are rigorous and challenging. Ultimately, we'll completely overhaul our curriculum and our approach to the professional training of our teachers so that our work is aligned with the new Core standards and assessments. As we do this work, we'll focus our attention on growth assessments like NWEA and school-based assessments modeled after sample items released by PARCC. The work is currently underway and is described in detail in Section 2.

The second challenge our organization faces is related to the development of our Board. As the SER noted, we currently have an effective Board. The challenge, quite simply, is for our Board to transition into a highly effective body that can support our schools as they emerge from their start-up phases. What does this mean? During our first few years, the ABI Board was primarily focused on the policies and procedures of the schools and the Board itself. As a new organization, we developed and implemented policies around financial controls, principal evaluations, bylaws, committee structures, parent engagement, governance, and best practices for assessing student performance. In all these areas, we've made great progress and having these policies in place gives our organization a strong foundation on which to build and evolve.

The work will get more difficult over the next five years. The specific challenge here, in the face of recent declines in and future uncertainty of the per-pupil funding, is to sustain a financial model that assures the maintenance of our school buildings and provides for the financial stability of our organization while at the same time supports the achievement of our mission and our commitment to student achievement, especially as we transition to the Common Core.

We know that many students will continue to come to sixth grade at Afya either behind academically or with gaps in their learning. We can do a lot during the school day to address these needs. Our organization also needs to look to other ways to enrich our program to support our students' academic learning. This means looking at offering a summer school program, thinking about extending the school day, and continuing and even expanding our Middle Grades Partnership with The Park School. It also means looking at Afya PCS's ability to add staffing so that it can

differentiate its course offerings to offer both advanced academics opportunities and targeted interventions for struggling students.

Supporting each of these critical areas of need will require more from our Board. We know, therefore, that our Board recruitment will need to change. We'll look to add new members with the skills and expertise in these areas and we'll need to expand our pursuit of grants and additional revenue sources to support the work we have planned. A key component of Will McKenna's work will be to lead this development of the Board in this new direction.

There are challenges ahead for us in several other areas. They include continued development of school leaders; family engagement; food and play; and the development of the resources we have in place to support the social and emotional needs of our students.

The continued development of school leaders is critical to the future success of both Afya and Tunbridge PCS. There are two aspects to this. The first is working with our current principals and leadership teams to develop capacity and expertise. Will McKenna will lead this work. The second part of this work focuses on developing future school leaders. We discussed this in our original charter and continue to believe in the importance of this work.

We are committed to distributed leadership models in our schools that give opportunities for employees to grow and evolve professionally. Every organization deals with the tension of either developing leaders from within or seeking external hires. Our first preference is to develop internal training models that allow teachers to develop into school leaders. This past year, as Ms. Marts replaced Mr. McKenna, was ideal. Ms. Marts had an extended training period and then there was a coordinated plan so the transition from one principal to the next was smooth.

This is the ideal model for our organization. Assuring that this model identifies and produces the most effective leaders and implementing these kinds of transitions will present challenges for ABI leaders. The Board and the Executive Director will need to develop specific guidelines for the recruitment, training, and development of future leaders. The ABI Board will also have to work to create principal selection policies that encourage internal training and development of leaders and assure the best possible leaders while allowing flexibility for other kinds of recruitment if necessary. With respect to family engagement we have many strengths upon which to build. The challenge for us will be to find ways to sustain the work we are doing. We have good structures in place. This year

we again were awarded a grant through the Family League to support our afterschool program and the hiring of a community liaison. We didn't get the grant initially due to a change in the way funds were distributed. It was only later in the summer that found out that were going to be included in the funding. This "back-and-forth" demonstrated a potential vulnerability that we have, a challenge we have, with funding. This is a program that is critical to our school and its funding isn't guaranteed. The ABI Board and Afya PCS leaders will have to focus on securing sustained funding for this program for the future.

The final challenges that we'd like to discuss in this application are the aspects of our mission that relate to the health of our students—both their physical and nutritional health and their emotional health. Again, in each of these areas we've done some good, innovative work, but we don't think we've begun to realize the hopes and dreams we articulated in our charter. In terms of food and nutrition a big challenge for us is that we don't have a kitchen. This has prevented us from being able to serve higher quality food to our students for both lunch and breakfast. We've adapted. We have clubs where kids get a chance to cook. We do a lot of work with healthy snacks. We anticipate having salad bars at both of schools this fall. Still, to truly focus on nutrition we have work to do in developing our curriculum and the infrastructure we have to offer better food for our students.

The same goes for our fitness program. As we've discussed, we do many innovative things in the area of fitness. But we have grander ambitions. We'd like to have a full outdoor exercise area. Perhaps more importantly, we'd like to do better work counseling offering meaningful interventions to our students with more serious health problems like obesity. The challenge to this work is really one of outreach. We need to recruit and establish relationships with organizations that have expertise in this area.

The work we have to do related to the emotional wellness of our students is linked to our implementation of Response to Intervention (RTI). In this model, which we discuss in our charter, Tier II interventions are needed for students who struggle with chronic behaviors of one sort or another: poor attendance, lack of coping skills, lack of study and organizational skills. As noted, we've made a lot of strides in this area. To fully meet the expectations we set for ourselves in our charter, however, we need to do more. Again, we need to seek better partnerships with groups skilled in this kind of work—counseling agencies, mentoring groups. We need to continue to develop our PAX program and alternatives to suspension. An achievable goal for us is to move

from a school that has a low suspension rate to a school that has almost no suspensions. To do that, though, we'll need increased resources, even better training for our staff, and better partnerships. This is an enormous challenge—one, however, that the leaders of Afya PCS are poised to undertake and the leaders of ABI are ready to support.

b. Please discuss any anticipated changes to key elements of the school's program. N/A

i. Please complete below Data Table 5(b)(i) on the proposed enrollment and grade configuration. Please note and discuss any anticipated changes to the school's enrollment structure (either by shrinking or growing in size with the same grades or by adding or eliminating grades).

Please see Document Request section.

ii. Any anticipated changes to the school's calendar. N/A

iii. The process and timeline for making changes to the curriculum in line with the requirements of the common core.

We've addressed this question throughout the application.

iv. Any anticipated changes to core design elements of the school (such as the curriculum, leadership, or staffing structure). N/A

v. Any anticipated changes to the management/operation of the school, either by the removal or addition of an educational service provider, or a change from one such provider to another. N/A

## 6. Document Requests

a. A listing of the current board of trustees along with biographical information for each board member.

### **Afya Baltimore Inc. Board of Directors 2012-13**

**President**, Jeff Hettleman, *Executive Vice-President, The Shelter Group*  
3500 Overbrook Drive  
Baltimore, MD 21208  
410-925-4619  
[jhettleman@sheltergrp.com](mailto:jhettleman@sheltergrp.com)

**Vice President**, Johnette Richardson, *Executive Director, Belair-Edison Neighborhood Inc.*  
3412 Belair Road  
Baltimore, Maryland 21213-1233  
410-485-8422  
[johnette@belair-edison.org](mailto:johnette@belair-edison.org)

**Treasurer**, John Muchai, *Controller, Baltimore Community Foundation*  
2 East Read Street  
Baltimore, MD. 21202  
410-332-4171  
[jmuchai@bcf.org](mailto:jmuchai@bcf.org)

**Secretary**, Demetreus Gregg, *Assistant to the Head of Middle School, Calvert School*  
4300 N. Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21218  
410.243.6054 X101  
[dgregg@calvertschoolmd.org](mailto:dgregg@calvertschoolmd.org)

**ABI Executive Director**, Will McKenna, *ex officio member*  
11 Regester Ave.  
Baltimore, MD 21212  
410-736-8980  
[wmckenna@afyabaltimore.org](mailto:wmckenna@afyabaltimore.org)

Sarah Brennan, *Education Consultant*  
2800 Brendan Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21213  
410-485-2102  
[kingadlank@comcast.net](mailto:kingadlank@comcast.net)

Kevin Davidson, *Attorney, Gallagher, Evelius & Jones, LLP*  
8423 Tally Ho Road  
Lutherville, MD 21093  
410-494-0552  
[kdavidson@gejlaw.com](mailto:kdavidson@gejlaw.com)

Kimberly Dent, *Afya PCS Parent Liaison*  
5103 Saint Georges Avenue  
Baltimore, Maryland 21212  
443-345-7008  
[mrskdd@gmail.com](mailto:mrskdd@gmail.com)

Barbara Farmer, *Afya PCS Parent Liaison*  
Amorion1896@yahoo.com  
142 n kenwood ave 21224  
410-499-9885  
[Amorion1896@yahoo.com](mailto:Amorion1896@yahoo.com)

Jeanine Hildreth, *Managing Director, Policy Studies Associates*  
80 Gwynnswood Road  
Owings Mills, MD 21117  
410-902-7753  
[jeaninehil@msn.com](mailto:jeaninehil@msn.com)

Alexia Lotts-McCain, *Health Education Coordinator, Baltimore City Public Schools*  
200 E. North Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21202  
410-396-8585  
[ALotts@bcps.k12.md.us](mailto:ALotts@bcps.k12.md.us)

Natasha OrtizFortier, *Tunbridge PCS Parent*  
1525 Greenspring Valley Road  
Stevenson, MD 21153  
443-885-2984  
[nortizfortier@stevenson.edu](mailto:nortizfortier@stevenson.edu)

Bill Seymour, *CPA, SB & Company*  
200 International Circle, Suite 5500  
Hunt Valley, Maryland 21030  
410-584-1407  
[wseymour@sbandcompany.com](mailto:wseymour@sbandcompany.com)

Will Smith, *Tunbridge PCS Parent Liaison*  
5004 Alhambra Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21212  
443-739-3712  
[willsmith@ymaryland.org](mailto:willsmith@ymaryland.org)

Sumesh Thomas, *Tunbridge PCS Parent Liaison*  
2350 Sundew Terrace  
Baltimore, MD 21209  
443- 955-2720  
[sthomas@hamiltonpt.org](mailto:sthomas@hamiltonpt.org)

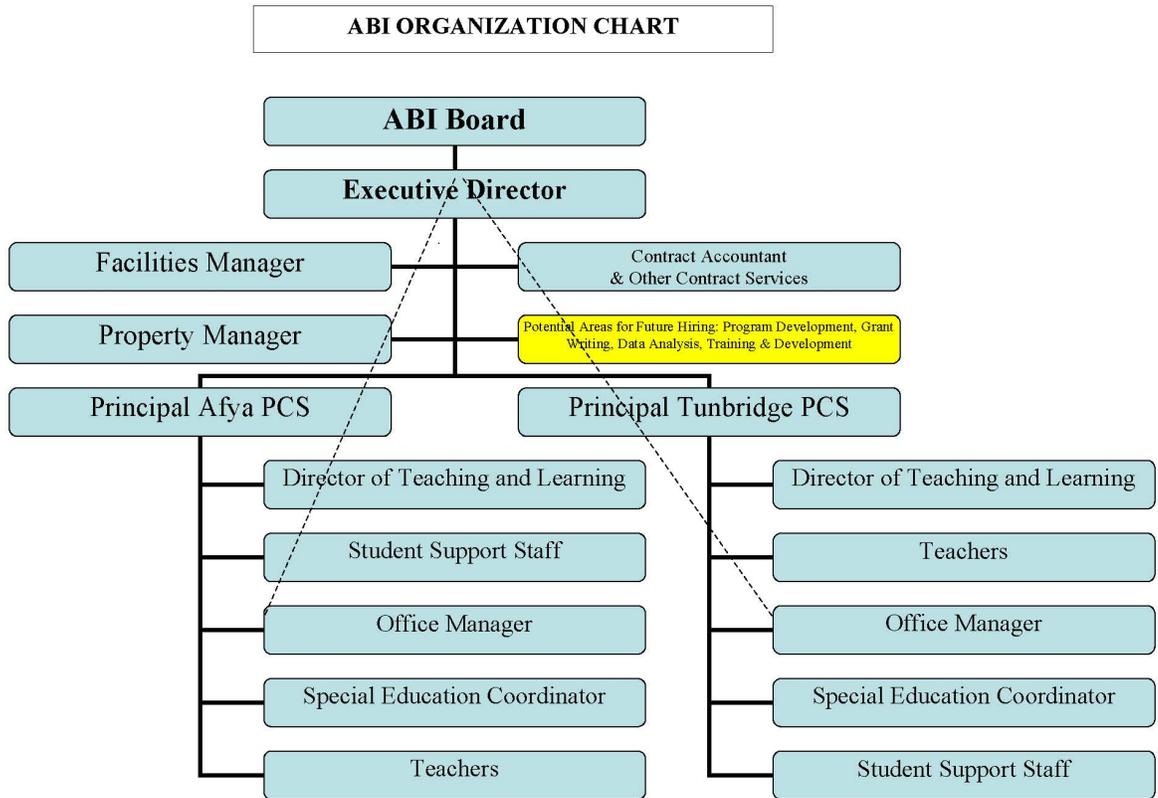
b. Board Minutes and Agenda for Term of Contract

Please see flash drive for Board Minutes and Agenda for Term of Contract.

c. Current by-laws for the Board of Trustees.

d. Data tables prepared by City Schools.

e. A current organizational chart.



Note: All school-based staff report to and are supervised by the principals. Office Managers do contractual work with ED but still report to principal.

f. Projected budget

Please see flash drive for detailed FY13 Budget.

g. Current Financial Policies and Procedures Manual where internal controls are addressed.

## 7. Appendices

### Appendix 1. Afya Public Charter School MSA performance 2009-2012

Percent of students Proficient/Advanced on MSA

<b>Grade 6 Reading</b>		2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Average comparison
	Afya PCS	88.3	82.5	70.1	72.8	78.4	+10.2
	Baltimore City	68.4	73.6	65.7	64.9	68.2	

<b>Grade 6 Math</b>		2009	2010	2011	2012	Average	Average comparison Afya to BCPS
	Afya PCS	81.6	79.6	73.8	51.5	71.6	+9.2
	Baltimore City	58.1	65.3	61.7	64.3	62.4	

<b>Grade 7 Reading</b>		2010	2011	2012	Average	Average comparison Afya to BCPS	
	Afya PCS		83.2	75.2	73.6	77.3	+12
	Baltimore City		66.5	67.3	62.0	65.3	

<b>Grade 7 Math</b>		2010	2011	2012	Average	Average comparison Afya to BCPS	
	Afya PCS		63.2	61.0	46.2	56.8	+7.2
	Baltimore City		50.3	49.0	49.6	49.6	

<b>Grade 8 Reading</b>		2011	2012	Average	Average comparison Afya to BCPS	
	Afya PCS		78.6	72.7	75.6	+15.5
	Baltimore City		61.4	58.8	60.1	

<b>Grade 8 Math</b>		2011	2012	Average	Average comparison Afya to BCPS	
	Afya PCS		72.6	48.5	60.6	+23.3
	Baltimore City		35.1	39.5	37.3	

## Appendix 2. Afya Public Charter School Professional Development Plan 2012-13

Dates	The Work
Summer 2012	Establishing priorities for the year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instructional</li> <li>• Advisory</li> <li>• Team</li> <li>• First 30 Days</li> </ul> Development of individual teacher goals for the year
August Professional Development days  <b><i>Defining our Work</i></b>	Content PD sessions: focus on instructional priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Engagement and Participation</li> <li>• Student Talk</li> <li>• Questioning Practices</li> </ul> Grade Level Content Meetings: unit planning, first assessment  Individual meetings—principal meets with individual teachers to discuss individual staff goals
August 27-September 30  <b><i>First 30 Days</i></b>	Grade level team meetings—PD Focus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement structures and systems for classroom success</li> <li>• Develop room to be print-rich, support quality student talk, and allow for small groups</li> <li>• Analysis of baseline MAP data</li> </ul> Individual teacher support  Grade 6 Math Team support—weekly observations/ meetings with mentor teacher
October 18-19 PD Days  <b><i>Revisiting Goals</i></b>	Content PD sessions: focus on instructional priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Engagement and Participation</li> <li>• Student Talk</li> <li>• Questioning Practices</li> </ul>
October 22-January 18  <b><i>Focus on Craft I</i></b>	Individual teachers paired up with member of ILT or mentor teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meetings to develop and refine identified area of growth</li> <li>• Opportunities to observe colleagues</li> <li>• Venue for non-evaluative development of teaching craft</li> </ul>
January 22-23	<b>Midyear Conferences</b>

PD Days	
January 24-April 1 <i>Focus on Craft II</i>	Individual teachers paired up with member of ILT or mentor teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular meetings to develop and refine identified area of growth</li> <li>• Opportunities to observe colleagues</li> <li>• Venue for non-evaluative development of teaching craft</li> </ul>
April 2 PD Day	Content PD sessions: focus on instructional priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Engagement and Participation</li> <li>• Student Talk</li> <li>• Questioning Practices</li> </ul>

### Structures for the work

#### Content Teams

Comprised of all teachers of a content across the grade levels, meet periodically—during PD days

#### Grade Level Content Teams

Consists of teachers of the same content and grade, meet weekly with Director of Teaching and Learning for PD and weekly for collaborative planning

Agenda format for weekly team meetings:

- Instructional Priorities
- Student Performance
- Unit Progress

#### Individual Support

Imbedded coaching and instructional support provided as needed; initiated by teacher and principal/Director of Teaching and Learning

#### Professional Learning Communities

- Established in Mathematics in 2010-2011 school year
- Will launch in Literacy and Science in 2012-2013

**Appendix 3. Afya SER Final Report copy**

## Appendix 4. Afya PCS Cycle of Teacher Development and Evaluation

Evaluation	Date	Focus
Defining our Work	August 22-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Creation of Individual Development Plan</li> <li>✓ Review Individual School Year Goals</li> </ul>
First 30 Days	August 27-September 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Implement structures and systems for classroom success</li> <li>✓ Develop room to be print-rich, support quality student talk, and allow for small groups</li> <li>✓ See First 30 Day Goals</li> </ul>
First Evaluation Cycle	October 1-October 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Presence of First 30 Day Outcomes</li> <li>✓ Room set-up</li> <li>✓ Data from first assessment and baseline assessments</li> <li>✓ Evidence of differentiation</li> <li>✓ Evidence of student talk</li> <li>✓ Attention to professional responsibilities</li> </ul>
Revisiting Goals	October 18 – October 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Develop and review individual professional growth goals</li> <li>✓ Schedule Cycle of Professional Growth</li> </ul>
Focus on Craft	October 22-January 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Regular meetings to develop and refine identified area of growth</li> <li>✓ Opportunities to observe colleagues</li> <li>✓ Venue for non-evaluative development of teaching craft</li> </ul>
Mid-year Evaluations	January 15 – January 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assessment Data</li> <li>✓ Growth toward Individual Professional Goals</li> <li>✓ Attention to professional responsibilities</li> </ul>
Focus on Craft	January 24 – April 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Regular meetings to develop and refine identified area of growth</li> <li>✓ Opportunities to observe colleagues</li> <li>✓ Venue for non-evaluative development of teaching craft</li> </ul>
Second Evaluation Cycle	April 3 – April 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Evidence of success from Cycle of Professional Growth</li> <li>✓ Classroom organized for success</li> <li>✓ Evidence of differentiation</li> <li>✓ Evidence of student talk</li> <li>✓ Attention to professional responsibilities</li> </ul>
End of Year Evaluation	June 1 – June 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Assessment Data</li> <li>✓ Growth toward Individual Professional Goals</li> </ul>

## Appendix 5. School Wide Goals 2012-12

### Afya Public Charter School — Advisory

<b>Priority: Establish positive advisory culture and routines for students to organize for successful learning and performance.</b>	
Actions	Examples
<b>Greeting students each morning at check-in</b>	Hand Shake Fist bump Greeting at Advisory Door Making eye contact
<b>Checking Homework daily during Check-in</b>	Rotating to different students to check completion Conferencing with students about areas of difficulty Designating a few students to post/list homework assignment for classes during check-out
<b>Walking with students out of the building and monitoring dismissal</b>	Traveling as an advisory to dismissal Handshakes, high-fives, eye contact Monitoring yard, street, bus stop until area is clear of all students
<b>Implementing routines for check-in and check-out (visiting lockers, checking homework, getting announcements)</b>	Students dismissed by rows Students go first to locker then to seats One advisor at the lockers while other advisor checking homework
<b>Sitting and talking with students at lunch</b>	Rotating to several tables a day with a quick hello Choosing a table each day to have longer conversations Seating no more than seven students at a table – leaving one seat open for an adult
<b>Monitoring uniforms in check-in</b>	Scanning room each day for uniforms Using the Uniform Guideline
<b>Checking Afya Folders weekly</b>	Culling/Purging Afya folders once a week Afya folder challenges – what do you/do you not have
<b>Varying advisory grouping models to build student relationships</b>	Finding ways to group different students together Moving students around to build relationships
<b>Creating and posting “Afya’s Vision for a Wonderful School”</b>	Listing what you would see, hear, do, feel more of at Afya Listing what you would see, hear, do, feel less of at Afya Posting lists in advisory classroom.
<b>Implementing Team Building Activities</b>	Allowing for students to work together on different assignments/projects Incorporating getting-to-know you activities and trust activities during each advisory lesson
<b>Setting and monitoring meaningful, achievable goals with advisees on a daily/weekly basis</b>	Reflecting with students about their strengths and struggles Writing individual student goals around behavior and academics Monitoring and celebrating student goals and successes

Afy Public Charter School — School Wide Instruction

<b>Priority: Establish positive classroom culture with routines, procedures, and practices that support learning.</b>	
<u>Actions</u>	<u>Examples</u>
<b>Implementing entering and exiting class procedures that build a strong culture and climate</b>	Standing at door to monitor both classroom and hall Intervening if a student seems “hot” Setting the tone for a positive class through body language, eye contact, and verbal communication
<b>Implementing procedures for beginning and ending class</b>	Consistent and clear procedures for getting materials and entering the classroom Consistent and clear procedures for wrapping up an assignment and where finished and unfinished work belong Implementing meaningful “Do Now” activities
<b>Creating a community of learners</b>	Establish systems for quality talk Active student voice Teach listening skills Develop an environment for safe debate and active participation from all students Explore misunderstandings in an open and supportive manner. Promote deeper questioning and reasoning among students
<b>Planning for and managing extended block of time to meet the needs of all learners</b>	Chunking lessons allowing for breaks Allowing opportunities for student movement Differentiating instructional delivery Small Group instruction Independent work with teacher circulation/ conferencing
<b>Grading and displaying meaningful assignments on a monthly basis</b>	Selecting and assigning a meaningful and appropriate assignment to grade and display Assignment hung with explanation and rubric or comments
<b>Establishing systems for tracking student progress</b>	Creating a central location for data and results Monitoring student growth through testing, projects, and conferences
<b>Responding to student assessment data through performance meetings that action plan for growth</b>	Using school based diagnostic testing if appropriate Gathering and recording anecdotal observations Meeting regularly with instructional team to evaluate and respond to student data
<b>Leading students to one academic year of growth</b>	Using data to guide and differentiate instruction Analyzing RIT scores and baseline assessments Goal setting with students and having meaningful conversations about individual growth.

Afya Public Charter School — School Wide Climate

<b>Priority: Establish positive school culture and routines for students to organize for successful learning and performance.</b>	
<u>Actions</u>	<u>Examples</u>
<b>Establishing routines and expectations for regular celebrations</b>	Weekly celebrations by grade level Creating, posting, and monitoring behavioral norms for participation and attendance Keeping celebrations positive and purposeful
<b>Tracking attendance daily and accurately</b>	Tracking absent or tardy students every morning in advisory Ensuring that the attendance folder gets to the front office in a timely manner Calling home for students that are regularly absent or tardy; documenting attempts
<b>Eliminating physical conflicts between students</b>	Closely monitoring student’s body language and mood to gauge their breaking point. Listening to students’ frustrations, issues, and conversations to pick up on conflicts that may be brewing Mediating emerging conflict between students Monitoring bus stops, dismissal, cafeteria, and the yard
<b>Taking responsibility for all students</b>	Helping and/or intervening when issues are brewing between students – wherever they may be Keeping an eye out for all students – safety, behavior, attendance, academics Starting conversations and actively building relationships with students of other grades and classes.
<b>Playing the PAX Behavior Game throughout the school day</b>	Identifying areas of need during the day that would benefit from the PAX Game Playing a game in the classroom, cafeteria, or hallway Providing immediate and appropriate Wacky Prizes for successful students

Afya Public Charter School — Students

<b>Priority: Getting yourself in the right frame of mind to be successful .</b>	
<u>Actions</u>	<u>Examples</u>
<b>Organizing your materials</b>	Having a common place for all of your homework assignments Keeping your Afya Folder tidy and with you throughout the day Having a place to put returned work
<b>Arriving to school on time, every day</b>	Setting an alarm or getting an adult to help you wake up on time Allowing enough time to get to school Avoiding the corner stores on your way to school
<b>Solving academic and emotional problems in positive ways</b>	Seeking out adult help Listening before reacting Asking questions before making accusations
<b>Continuing to earn zero workouts or reducing the number of workouts earned</b>	Following directions the first time Making good choices, with actions and friends Taking the opportunity to “fix” it before it gets worse.
<b>Actively participating in the classroom</b>	Contribute to discussion Listen to peers Respond appropriately to others answers and thoughts Ask clarifying questions when you don’t understand Share your thinking Disagree respectfully Make eye contact with speaker and audience
<b>Setting and monitoring academic and behavior goals</b>	Setting goals each quarter and mid-quarter Preparing for mid-year conferences with families Asking for help when needed Regularly reflecting on goals and adjusting goals when necessary

Afya Public Charter School — Families

<b>Priority: Helping your child be in the right frame of mind to be successful.</b>	
<u>Actions</u>	<u>Examples</u>
<b>Family participation on Afya Governing Board</b>	Staying current with the decisions of the board Attending board meetings Voting on key issues that impact the school
<b>Attending and participating in orientation and mid-year and 8<sup>th</sup> grade high school choice conferences</b>	Speaking with your child about important dates in the building Communicating with your child’s advisor about dates and times that are good to meet Setting goals with your child around academics, behavior, and healthy habits Actively participating in selecting your child’s high school
<b>Supporting your child and your school</b>	Regularly checking your child’s Afya Folder for important notices, reports, and assignments Providing the school with accurate phone numbers and address Communicating regularly with your child’s advisors and teachers about their progress Participating in school-wide events to celebrate your child’s successes and accomplishments
<b>Organizing and participating in key events through the year</b>	Helping to organize and recruit other families with: American Education Week Mid-year Conferences Afya Mile Afya’s Budget Process 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Closing Ceremony

## Appendix 6. ABI Goals and Priorities

Afya Baltimore Inc. GOVERNING BOARD RETREAT July 26, 2012

### GOVERNING BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide structure for Organization and School to achieve missions
- Evaluate/assess schools' performance against charters
- Oversee finance & facilities
  - Prudent and mission directed spending/stewardship
  - Contingency planning
  - Strategic and long term planning
  - Annual budgets (process; creating budgets; approval; monitoring)
  - Audits
- Principal/ED selection, evaluation and succession planning
- Organizational structure and leadership (Principals & Organization Staff)
- Board development
  - Recruitment, including assuring diversity of background and experience
  - Orientation
  - Engagement
  - Performance assessment
- Tunbridge Expansion
  - Growing staff
  - Program & curriculum development
  - Facilities expansion (how do we pay? How do we implement?)
  - Enrollment
- Communicate with Constituents
  - Parents
  - Communities
  - City Schools
  - Other Charter schools
  - Green School (at Afya PCS)
- PTO/Parent Engagement
  - Assure it is happening in meaningful way
  - Help elevate parent engagement
  - Communication between Board and PTO
    - Define role of PTO Board representatives

- Assure Consistency of Mission for Afya Baltimore, Inc.
  - Two Schools need consistent mission
  - Assure mission is implemented consistently throughout organization/schools
    - Messaging
    - Practical day to day work
- Ambassadorship/Represent School
  - Clarify what gets communicated publicly and how we do it
  - Promote policies and mission
  - Presence at events
  - Going to schools – take initiative to learn what’s going on
- Oversee Contracts
  - Charter and renewals
  - Leases/financing
  - Operating agreements (e.g. after school; cleaning; etc.)
- Charter Network
  - Advocacy
  - Defending charter autonomy
  - Participation and leadership

### **2012-2013 Board Priorities**

- Executive Director support and evaluation
- Improve communication to Board members so that they feel reasonably informed, engaged and able to make good decisions
- Board should have more of a public persona and Board members have more of a presence among the schools, parents and students
- Assure that the Board and Committees are focused on supporting key Organization and School goals
- Become educated about the Charter Coalition agenda and make decisions about what our role and involvement should be
- Improve community and parent involvement/engagement
- Tunbridge Expansion
  - Program development for Middle School
  - Financial planning
  - Construction planning
  - Recruitment and retention of 5<sup>th</sup> graders rising to 6<sup>th</sup> grade
  - Make decision on whether it’s viable to retain pre-K on an ongoing basis
- Charter Accountability – explore options for communication and assessment relative to BCPS and continue to define internal performance goals and assessment
- Internal Board issues
  - Recruit new Board members to address critical needs
  - Develop tools for Board and individual member performance assessment – especially as they relate to Board composition and recruitment
- Financial Planning
  - Internal Financial Controls
  - Continue to refine Budget process, reporting and oversight

- Longer term policies around reserves and capital improvements
- Revenue growth and fundraising goals and strategies
- Evaluate options and timing for a Strategic Plan
- Afya PCS charter renewal
- Support curriculum development and transition to the Common Core

## 2012-2013 Committee Priorities

### Executive Committee

- Board oversight
  - Oversight of Committee work to assure progress against goals
  - Strategies and improvements around communication
  - Evaluate timing and options for Strategic Plan
  - Facilitate greater Board presence among schools, parents & students
- Executive Director support and evaluation
- Tunbridge Expansion
- Afya Charter Renewals
- Financial Planning
- Monitor/evaluate ABI role in Charter Coalition efforts

### Finance and Facilities

- Develop internal controls best policies and best practices
- Adopt budget and implement and improve full process, including communication and transparency aspects
- Long term multi-year planning
  - Policies on surplus, reserves & contingency
  - Tunbridge expansion
  - Building requirements
- Identify revenue needs/concerns and strategies for addressing challenges

### Family, Community & Student Engagement

- Assure active parent engagement at both schools
  - Invite parents to serve on Committees
  - Monitor and assess parent involvement/engagement in other ways – tailored to school-specific strategies
- Explore and define goals for community partnerships
- Research best practices and models for successful engagement at other schools

## Board Governance, Policy and Planning

- Develop orientation and training initiatives, including messaging
- Board recruitment
  - Identify needs
  - Recruitment to meet needs
  - Evaluate and recommend whether to expand Board
- Board appointments/renewals and officer elections
- Assess and create policies/recommendations around Board climate, engagement and satisfaction
- Review and refine Principal Selection process

## Teaching and Learning

- Monitor, support and assess professional development
- Monitor, support and assess program and curriculum development
  - Oversight of transition to the common core
  - Improve consistency/coherence between schools
  - Identify resource needs
- Continue learning walks (and invite all Board members)
- Review assessment goals and performance and improve communication to the Board
- Assure viable plan for Tunbridge Middle School
- Support Afya renewal effort

## **Appendix 7. Afya Baltimore Inc. Board Recruitment and Selection**

### **Board Policy**

The recruitment and selection process for members of the Afya Baltimore, Inc. Board of Directors will be an ongoing process, in response to a candidate's expressed interest in the work of the organization. Candidates may be recommended or referred to the Board's Governance Committee at any point during the Board's fiscal year, which commences on July 1 of every year and ends on June 30 of the following year.

Once a Candidate is recommended or referred to the Board, the process for interviewing the prospective Board member will be as follows:

**Step 1:** The Chair of the Board's Governance Committee (or the Chair of a similar committee responsible for Board Recruitment) and the Principal and/or Executive Director will conduct an initial meeting with the Candidate at one of the schools operated by Afya Baltimore, Inc. This meeting is in response to the Candidate's interest in our work.

**Step 2:** The Chair of the Board’s Governance Committee (or the Chair of a similar committee responsible for Board Recruitment) and the Principal and/or Executive Director will provide feedback to the larger committee. Based on this feedback, the committee may recommend the Candidate pursue one of the following tracks, if they fit the needs of the organization. Whether or not a candidate is recommended for the Board or Committee Track is an internal Board determination.

**Committee Track:** The Candidate will be offered the opportunity to volunteer on one of the Board’s Standing or Ad-Hoc Committees, allowing the Candidate to become more familiar with Afya Baltimore’s work.

**Board Track:** The Committee Chair will ask the candidate to submit a resume or letter of interest for Board consideration. This packet is then disseminated to the entire committee.

**Committee Track**

If a Candidate is recommended for the Committee Track, he or she may be considered again for Board membership at any time during their volunteer work, depending on the needs of the Board and organization.

**Board Track**

Once the Candidate submits his/her resume or letter of intent, at least two (2) additional committee members will agree to meet the Candidate. These members will coordinate this meeting directly with the Candidate. At the conclusion of this meeting, the members will inform the Committee Chair that the meeting has occurred and the Chair will call for a full Governance Committee meeting to be scheduled for discussion of the candidate.

At the conclusion of the full-committee meeting, the Governance Committee (or a similar committee responsible for Board Recruitment) will make a recommendation for action to the full Board of Directors. The full Board will vote on this recommendation at its next business meeting, or via e-mail or phone conference.