

**New Century High Schools Initiative**  
**PART E – New Visions Application Requirement**

**Partnership Memorandum of Understanding Guidelines**

**Background**

The New Century High School Initiative has created an unprecedented opportunity for schools and partner organizations to combine their collective resources, commitment, and expertise to support the academic and social development and success of students served. New Century schools are premised on the implementation of the 10 Principles of Effective School and work towards the achievement of initiative goals - a minimum 4 year graduation rate of 80% and maintenance of a 92% average daily attendance rate. Partnerships share responsibility with the school leader in achievement of these outcomes and partnerships are a way of actualizing the 10 Principles.

The New Visions school application requires that partnerships be formalized through memorandums of agreements that provide a description of explicit understandings about the nature of the partnership between the school and the lead partner. This memorandum is intended to outline the specifics about the planned collaboration around areas of school programming, collaboration, accountability, shared governance, grants management and sustainability of the partnership relationships developed. The MOU should be written with an understanding that it will be modified as the partnership evolves and should therefore be viewed as a work in progress. We ask that you develop a process for reviewing and revising the MOU on a regular basis to reflect the changing needs of the partnership. Note that references to “partnership” throughout this document refer to the relationship between the school and the lead partner organization.

**The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should include:**

**STATEMENT OF PARTNERSHIP PURPOSE**

Sample: “ *In order to advance student achievement, school success and sustainability, the XXX high school and XXX organization, AGREE to collaborate as follows:*

*(Bullet general areas of collaboration – Note: specifics regarding these activities will be included in the attached Partnership Operational Workplan Template.) Common examples include:*

- *Curriculum Development*
- *Teacher professional development*
- *Creation of Extended Learning Opportunities*
- *Student and Parent Outreach*
- *Other*

## **WHAT ARE THE AREAS & PROCESSES FOR JOINT RESPONSIBILITY & JOINT DECISION-MAKING?**

- **PROGRAMMING AREAS (Refer to above Statement of Purpose)**
- **STAFFING: Collaborative discussion and consultation regarding all aspects of staffing at the school.** (Consider your plans for recruitment, selection and hiring of partner liaison staff and teaching staff. How will the team reach clarity about the roles of various staff members and how will issues of staffing supervision and accountability be addressed by the partnership?)
- **DISAGREEMENTS: Describe how differences will be handled when disagreements about aspects of the partnership arise**(Consider the areas of the school implementation plan that will involve joint decision making such as teacher recruitment and selection, thematic programming, grading & discipline policies, budget development, etc. that can lead to disagreements. The partnership should outline a plan for resolving conflicts that may emerge around issues of budget, staffing, and programming and student progress.
- **NCHSI GRANT MANAGEMENT & FISCAL ACCOUNTABILITY -** Describe the mechanism by which the principal and lead partner will share responsibility for the management of New Century grants (including reporting of expenditures, assessment of expenses and emerging school needs and processes that will be instituted for accessing and distributing grant funds).

## **PROCESS FOR SUSTAINABILITY OF THE PARTNERSHIP RELATIONSHIP**

- **COMMUNICATION (EXECUTIVE): Description of how the CEO and school leader will communicate with each other as well as the frequency of direct contact.** (Consider developing a mechanism for working towards the sustainability of the partnership relationship via ongoing communication and visits by the leadership of the partner organization (including its board of directors) to maintain awareness, involvement and institutional support for school progress and implementation.
- **COMMUNICATION (PROGRAMMATIC) Nature of the communication process and frequency between partner liaison and school staff regarding programmatic, financial and personnel issues among others.** (Consider informal and formal committee structures and meetings you plan to institute to foster mutual cooperation, respect and effective communication and coordination of the partnership's work. How will these align with other governance and coordinating structures such as SLT, Parent Association and School Committees

so as to not be duplicative? Consider how the partnership will address issues of daily programming and alignment to school needs, oversight and support of partnership staff and budget/grants management issues. etc.)

- **FINANCIAL AND PROGRAMMATIC SUSTAINABILITY:** How will the partnership work to secure funding to pay or expand the services of the partner(s) where applicable? If grant funds, pay for partnership services, consider your vision for the partnership once grant funds end and how will school capacity be built to sustain the work of the partnership? What legacy does the partnership want to leave behind that will inform the pedagogy or “way of doing things” at the school in the event that the relationship ends or changes.
- **PROCESS FOR ANNUAL REVIEW, REVISION, OR AFFIRMATION OF MOU AND WORKPLAN-** Describe the process that will be used to review, revise, and/or affirm the MOU and work plan. Consider who will be involved, when this will occur and how the mutual benefits of an ongoing partnership will be ascertained.

#### **OVERSIGHT & EVALUATION OF PROGRESS TOWARD PARTNERSHIP GOALS AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE 10 PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE SCHOOLS.**

- **DATA DRIVEN DECISION MAKING: Participation of the partner in ongoing examination and use of data to improve decision-making, service delivery and student achievement.** Describe the role of the partner in ongoing examination and use of school and student data (e.g. attendance, credit accumulation, course passage rates) to improve decision-making, service delivery and student achievement to inform the work of the partnership. Consider how and what type of data will be made accessible to the members of the partnership and the process the team will use to review and use this data to inform school decision making in support of student achievement. How will the partnership know if the relationship is working and leading towards the desired goals?
- **ALIGNMENT WITH THE 10 PRINCIPLES: Demonstrated integration and application of the 10 Principles of Effective Schools in the work of the partnership.** (Consider how the work of the partnership supports rigor, personalization, teacher embedded professional development, etc. You may excerpt references from your lead partner application to demonstrate how the proposed work of the partnership contributes to the 10 Principles of Effective School. )

*Note:* The Operational Work Plan is an attachment to this document that further elaborates the proposed goals, contributions and commitments between the Lead Partner and the School.

The Lead Partner Application is an attachment to this document that further elaborates the proposed goals, contributions and commitments between the Lead Partner and the Principal of the School.

## **NCHSI Partnership Plan Signature Page**

**This MOU is to be dated and co-signed by Lead Partner and School Leader.**

School Leader:

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Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature & Date

Lead Partner:

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature & Date