

## EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Pursuant to Applicable Law and the Terms and Conditions of this Contract, including Article VI, Section 6.3, the Academy shall implement, deliver and support the educational programs identified in this schedule.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Island City Academy (“Academy”) is to improve pupil achievement through a shared vision between talented teachers, parents and students whose primary goal is academic excellence coupled with moral standards and expectations. We believe we can achieve this goal by providing the best curriculum in seven “core” subjects of: mathematics, science, history, geography, foreign language, language arts, fine arts, along with a moral education accomplished through standards of conduct and curriculum.

To improve pupil achievement, the Academy provides a positive learning environment that articulates clear academic goals and behavior expectations for all students. Academic progress and behavior expectations are monitored on a weekly basis through data gathered from behavior referrals and multiple tests and test sessions including but not limited to, the Northwest Evaluation Association™ (“NWEA™”) Measures of Academic Progress® (“MAP®”) Growth™ assessment, state assessment, and authentic assessments.

In addition, the educational programs fulfill the Academy’s mission statement by providing the “best curriculum in seven ‘core’ subjects.” The Academy assures the “best curriculum” for students through constant revision, analysis and review of curriculum materials. Curriculum materials are reviewed for differentiation, alignment to standards and various other factors related to the staff’s ability to utilize the materials for all students. The educational programs are delivered by a pool of highly qualified, talented teachers. Staff members bring innovative strategies and techniques to a small classroom learning environment to ensure the academic excellence of all students. Furthermore, the mission statement’s call for a “moral education” is met through the inclusion of literary trade books and supplementary materials that embrace themes directly correlated to standards of conduct or character traits that support a moral education. Academy-wide morning announcements and the flag ceremony aim to promote strong morals through citizenship, patriotism and a shared civic responsibility. Moral education is also provided through the Academy’s service learning projects in which middle school students participate.

### **Research-Based Strategies**

Multiple research-based methodologies are in place at the Academy. Academy staff utilize Marzano’s nine high-yielding instructional strategies to deliver instruction. Classroom instruction finds students involved in a variety of activities such as summarizing, using nonlinguistic representations to compare and contrast, and engaging in small group, cooperative learning experiences (Marzano, 2001).

Additional strategies the Academy employs to deliver instruction are problem-based learning (“PBL”) and project-based learning. PBL and project-based learning are student-centered. Within groups, students conduct research to investigate a real-world problem and

examine outcomes. Project-based learning and PBL activities encompass cross-disciplinary teaching and provide hands-on learning experiences. The inclusion of “project based work in the curriculum promotes children’s intellectual development by engaging their minds in observation and investigation...” (Katz, 2000).

## **Curriculum**

The Academy utilizes the Curriculum Crafter<sup>®</sup> Tool (“CCT”) as the basic foundation of its curriculum. The curriculum is comprehensive and content specific and builds upon concepts grade by grade. The CCT system acts as a basis from which Academy teachers continue to build, organize and align the curriculum to the Michigan Academic Standards (“MAS”).

### *Math*

The Academy’s math series connects well to the Academy’s original “back-to-basics” focus and has consistently provided unparalleled results in impacting math scores. The math program spirals in that content is introduced and revisited. In addition to providing a spiraling curriculum, the math series provides a balanced approach with opportunities for hands-on learning and real-world application. Classroom instruction of mathematics content assists students in developing both computational and problem-solving skills along with higher order thinking skills. To reinforce instruction, teachers incorporate nonlinguistic representations (e.g. graphic organizers, drawings, Venn diagrams, KWL and charts), cooperative learning and cues and questions to activate prior knowledge and stimulate analytical thinking (Marzano, 2001).

### *English Language Arts (“ELA”)*

The Academy’s reading program is rooted in developing foundational reading skills through phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary development. To develop these skills, reading strategies (pre-reading, during reading and after reading) are taught and students create constructed responses to reading selections.

Guided reading and center-based instruction are essential to the Academy’s reading program. Teachers use guided reading to further assist students in developing reading strategies (e.g. retelling, visualizing and word attack strategies) to become stronger individual readers. Through the guided reading program, students apply strategies such as making predictions and summarizing to determine connections (e.g. text-to-text, text-to-world and text-to-self). Further engagement in reading is enhanced with activities such as Reader’s Theatre. Reader’s Theatre provides active participation as students practice oral communication skills, review vocabulary and improve comprehension and fluency.

### *Writing*

The Academy uses a combination of Lucy Calkins’ Writer’s Workshop and the Collaborative Classroom<sup>™</sup> *Being a Writer* to deliver writing instruction. The Academy incorporates shared writing and partner writing throughout the academic year. Writing is integrated across the curriculum and students compose narrative, expository, journal and poetry selections to express ideas and concepts. The *Becoming a Writer* techniques are used in kindergarten through fifth grades and learned skills are enhanced in sixth through

eighth grades. Elements of Calkins' Writer's Workshop strategies are also used to build upon previously learned skills and enhance peer-editing and revision skills. Furthermore, students are taught the use of rubrics to self- and peer-evaluate writing.

### *Science*

Mystery Science provides a hands-on, inquiry-based and problem-based learning approach for science instruction. This problem-based, student-centered approach has increased science experiences for all students and is continued for the Academy's seventh and eighth grade students through the use of the problem-based text *EarthCom*.

Through the program, students apply the scientific method of developing a hypothesis, conducting research, analyzing data and determining results. Students are actively engaged in problem-based learning while working collaboratively in small groups with the role of the teacher as a facilitator of learning. Students work on complex, realistic problems and construct new knowledge to find solutions to the initial problem. "During the PBL process learners should discuss problems, define what they know, generate hypotheses, derive learning goals and organize further work" (Hmelo, 2004).

### *Social Studies*

The Academy has adopted and implemented the Michigan Citizenship Collaborative Curriculum ("MC3") in kindergarten through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. The program provides real world experiences while teaching about communities, the country and the world. The program includes instructional strategies such as journaling, role playing, literature references, mapping and graphing, oral and written presentations, developing critical thinking skills, inferring, drawing conclusions, predicting and incorporating the writing processes. The program uses multiple intelligences to address varying student learning styles. MC3 builds a strong knowledge of economic principles so that students understand the impact of economic forces internationally as well as in the surrounding community. Social studies instruction aligns to the MAS for ELA and literacy and utilizes a variety of assessments, including but not limited to, teacher generated tests, authentic assessments and preparation for the state assessment.

The Academy uses a traditional approach for social studies in 3<sup>rd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The CCT outlines supply the scope and sequence, coupled with the MAS. The Academy incorporates real-world applications of economic principles, classroom simulations, primary source review and integrated classroom activities to enhance social studies instruction.

### *Fine Arts*

The Academy's fine arts class is based on students modeling the "Masters" and their styles. Younger students begin with simple forms and colors coupled with simple media. Art instruction expands to include more progressive foundations and principles of art with advanced media and mixed media for older students.

### *Hybrid Courses*

At the middle school level, hybrid-coursework was piloted in the subject areas of science, history and language arts. The hybrid courses consist of portions of the curriculum delivered “in-seat” and portions of the curriculum delivered “online” via classroom worksites such as Moodle™. The worksites create a modern work environment to prepare students for future success in college, work and life.

### **Success in College, Work and Life**

The educational programs seek to engage students in learning through the inclusion of student-centered programs and PBL components. The PBL components assist in expanding students’ thinking and provide application of real world concepts. PBL elements also assist students in developing organizational skills and finding solutions to problems, as well as the ability to work as members of a team – all skills which are conducive to the world of work.

Furthermore, the education of all students is enhanced significantly with the integration of technology in the classroom. First, all grade levels are equipped with an interactive whiteboard used to engage students directly in the learning. Second, the middle school level is immersed in technological integration with the piloting of and continuation of the hybrid-courses, which bring together in-seat instruction with online learning environments for communication, interaction and research. The technology opportunities provided and the ability to reflect on personal learning experiences prepare students for future successes. The students’ future successes in college, work and life can be easily tied to the ability to integrate technology, time restraints and organization into daily lives. These program components teach the skills necessary for students to work in a modern work place, continue education in a hybrid-course environment and live within a world that exists more and more online.

Another way the Academy promotes success in college, work and life is through community service opportunities. The Academy offers middle school students a unique opportunity to strengthen character development and to personally grow through community-based learning and community involvement. Students may provide ten hours of community service through bi-monthly participation in the local Red Cross Blood Drive set-up, monthly character trait focus activities (e.g. literature based character education units), recognizing and celebrating local community members for their service and participating in peer mentoring programs. By participating in community service, students benefit through enhanced civic activism and experience an increase in self-efficacy in that the students’ confidence grows through helping others and feeling they had an impact on social challenges or problems. Community service opportunities assist students in becoming successful members of the community.

### *Educational Development Plans (“EDP”)*

The Academy will meet the career planning needs of students through shared use of Career Cruising and various other Eaton Regional Educational Services Agency (“RESA”) materials. Additionally, middle school teachers have annually taught units on life and career planning in conjunction with high school visitation dates to local high schools. Per

the revised school code, the Academy also implements EDPs. The EDPs are developed utilizing the Career Cruising program provided by the RESA. The EDPs include the completion of written plans of study, career planning and goals for high school and post-secondary education and digital portfolios and resumes. To support career goals within the EDP, the Academy invites community speakers from differing career fields to speak with students and provide insights to various careers.

### **Curriculum Flexibility**

The educational programs are constructed to meet the requirements of the MAS. Even as the MDE and legislature continuously work to revise and better the State's expectations, the Academy strives to stay in step with those changes and adjusts the curriculum and educational programs to meet those needs.

#### *Exceptional Students*

The educational programs allow for the achievement of all students. A common class schedule is created by the administrator to allow for as many shared, core class hours as possible. For example, seven of nine grade levels meet for mathematics at the same time to allow excelling students to make classroom changes when needed. Thus, students have the flexibility to move across grade levels to receive more advanced instruction tailored to individual needs.

Students who excel in reading and literature are offered advanced courses in the middle school levels, when appropriate. These courses include materials at an accelerated and advanced level. Students in kindergarten through second grade receive guided reading group instruction at advanced levels when appropriate. Appropriate levels are determined from running records of individual performance. Moreover, Accelerated Reading programs are used to encourage greater development of reading skills in all students but especially talented students.

#### *Below Grade Level Students*

Teachers are provided with professional development in differentiating instruction to assist students performing below grade level. In addition to differentiating instruction, the Academy also allows struggling students to move across grade levels (to receive further supports or remediation) and employs a reading specialist. The reading specialist supports instruction through modified materials and methodologies and works with individual students or small groups. Student needs are also addressed in the Academy's implementation of a Response to Intervention ("RtI") model. Through the tiered levels, the Academy monitors and adjusts interventions as needed.

To ensure students succeed, the Academy routinely offers a two-week summer school program for all students needing assistance with reading and mathematics skills. Students are recommended for the summer program by the classroom teacher.

#### *Special Education*

When making educational placement decisions for students with disabilities, the Academy will ensure that parents are contributing members of the Individualized Educational

Program (“IEP”) team and together the team will make decisions that are subject to requirements regarding provision of the least restrictive environment. When determining how services will be delivered to students with disabilities, the Academy will follow all Special Education Rules as issued by the MDE. If a child with a current IEP enrolls in the Academy, the Academy will implement the existing IEP to the extent possible or will provide an interim IEP agreed upon by parents until a new IEP can be developed. IEPs will be developed, revised and implemented in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (“IDEIA”) and state law and regulations.

The Academy will fully comply with federal laws and regulations governing children with disabilities as follows:

1. The Academy is responsible for providing a free, appropriate public education to children with disabilities enrolled in the Academy that have been determined through an IEP to require Special Education programs and services.
2. The Academy will ensure that children who are suspected of having disabilities are properly evaluated by a multidisciplinary team, as defined in the Michigan Special Education Rules and that children who have already been identified are re-evaluated by the multidisciplinary team at least every three years.
3. When a multidisciplinary team determines that a special education student requires Special Education programs and services, the Academy will ensure that the IEP is fully implemented in accordance with IDEIA and reviewed on an annual basis or more frequently as determined by the IEP team.

### **Assessment**

Assessments are a key component in determining progress toward Contract goals, as well as determining the effectiveness of classroom instruction at periodic intervals. The Academy administers formative and summative assessments, including the state assessment and NWEA assessment.

Classroom teachers in kindergarten through eighth grades use the NWEA assessment to gauge, assess and modify instruction for all students. The data assessment is carried out on an institutional level and by individual teachers. Teachers use data to reflect upon instructional practices and to address any instructional delivery changes.

Furthermore, state assessment test results are used annually to drive instructional decisions for the Academy and for each cohort. Similarly, the state assessment’s third through eighth grade results are annually reviewed for successes and areas of need. The Academy continuously examines cohort data to determine if previously instituted changes have been successful.

Reading specific, Star Early Literacy™ is used in kindergarten through second grades as one determinant for additional assistance from the reading specialist. These data are reviewed by the reading specialist and classroom teacher(s) to determine need and further instructional strategies.

### **Program Evaluation**

The educational programs are regularly reviewed by the instructional staff following the end of each academic year. This review includes the grouping of staff into grade-level clusters of three or more to review standardized and norm-referenced test scores (state assessment and NWEA), discuss possible changes and strategies for implementation of determined changes and a plan for the ensuing academic year. Moreover, professional development for the whole-staff is selected from the needs derived from these discussions; (e.g. differentiated instruction, RtI with differentiated interventions, reading fluency strategies for all students and writing instruction and MAS alignment).

In addition, the administrator conducts a review to include a summary of staff findings and any recommended changes for review by the Academy's Board of Directors. The Board of Directors reviews the classroom educational program components by inviting a different classroom teacher to speak at a regularly scheduled Board of Directors meeting every month. These monthly reviews are meant to provide direct review of elements of the educational programs to the Board of Directors.