Loudoun Math and IT Academy Responses to DoE Staff Review Comments

II. Mission Statement

The mission statement of the public charter school is consistent with the principles of the Standards of Quality (SOQ). The following elements are addressed:

1. A description of the public charter school's mission and how it is consistent with the principles of the Virginia SOQ. (Section 22.1-253.13:1, *Code of Virginia*)

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: The narrative states that the program would be aligned with the Standards of Quality. Additional information about how the application aligns with the Standards of Quality would be helpful.

Our mission is aligned with the Virginia Standards of Quality (SOQ) Section 22.1-253.13:1, based on what follows.

LMITA will provide an appropriate working environment for its instructional staff and a learning environment designed to promote student achievement. Moreover, per the Standards of Learning, LMITA will provide its students with the basic skills of communication, computation and critical reasoning, especially proficiency in the use of computers and related technology.

Furthermore, LMITA will follow the program of instruction developed by Loudoun County Public Schools, with a special emphasis on mathematical concepts and computations, use of computers and related technology, and scientific concepts and processes. Besides, LMITA will implement programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation for students who are educationally at risk including, but not limited to, those who fail to achieve a passing score on any Standards of Learning assessment in grades 6-12.

LMITA will provide the knowledge of various technical careers to its students according to a career education program that is spread over years. This program introduces various forms of employment opportunities, which are not limited to salaried full time positions, but also include starting up and owning a small business, as well as apprenticeships and internships. The main target of this program is to give the students the notion that they will have a variety of choices when they complete school if they furnish themselves with marketable skills by the time they graduate. Furthermore, the career education program will provide the students with information

about how they can match the academic outcome of their secondary education in their professional life and what should be the guidelines in building their careers considering the current needs of the market as well as their personal interest. Lastly, the program will introduce job searching skills to the students such as performing online job search, conducting a phone or on-site interview.

LMITA will also provide early identification of students with disabilities, with reading and mathematics problems, with limited English proficiency, as well as gifted students, and enroll such students in appropriately differentiated instructional programs.

Finally, LMITA will also make a program of physical fitness available to all students with a goal of at least 150 minutes per week on average during a regular school year. This program will include an appropriate combination of physical education classes, extracurricular athletics, and other physical activities.

III. Goals and Educational Objectives

The goals and educational objectives to be achieved by the public charter school are stated, and meet or exceed the Standards of Learning. The following elements are addressed:

1. A description of the performance-based goals.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: Loudoun Math and IT Academy (LMITA) will support success in each academic area for students by employing a compelling, hands-on, standards-based curriculum and promoting career and college readiness as well as citizenship. More detail on physical education and health would strengthen this application.

LMITA will provide the necessary physical and health education to its students according to the LCPS middle and high school program of studies. Accordingly, students will be offered numerous challenging activities with an emphasis on fitness for life. In middle school grades, health and physical education classes will be offered every other day. Students will be exposed to a wide variety of activities including cooperative games, individual and dual sports, team sports, rhythmic activities, physical fitness testing, lifetime fitness, and recreational activities.

In health and physical education classes, students will be instructed about
- diet and nutrition; stress and mental health; lifetime fitness and wellness; as well as abstaining from alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs
- relationship of healthy body systems to overall wellness
- first aid and safety; the impact of exercise and diet on the body
- consumer health and health agencies; global health issues; community health
  organ donation, nutrition and wellness planning; risk behaviors; emotional health; peer pressure, and conflict resolution

IV. Evidence of Support

Evidence that an adequate number of parents, teachers, pupils, or any combination thereof, supports the formation of a public charter school is provided. The following elements are addressed:

2. Tangible evidence of support for the public charter school from parents, teachers, students, and residents, or any combination thereof, including but not limited to, information regarding the number of persons and organizations involved in the process and petitions related to the establishment of the charter school.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: The application included a sample of survey responses from more than 40 parents and others in the community who support the charter school. It would have been helpful to have summary information on the total number of responses received, and the percentage of respondents in support of or in opposition to the charter school.

As listed in the table below, a total of 340 valid surveys were collected; 261 people were in favor of a charter school option in Loudoun county, while79 people were against it. 40 of these surveys were added to the application as an appendix.

Breakdown of community survey results		
Classification	Count	%
Support, with children	*134*	39%
Support, without children	*127*	37%
Support, total	261	77%
Not supporting	79	23%
Void	7	2%
Total	**347**	100%

V. Statement of Need

1.   A statement of the need for a public charter school that describes the targeted school population to be served, and the reasons for locating the school within a particular school division.

Does the response meet the criterion?   NO

Comment: The applicant states that the charter school fills the need for: 1) additional space for a growing student population; 2) training for jobs in communication technology; and 3) cost-effective choices in education. However, no research or data substantiates that these needs exist in Loudoun County.

1) Additional space for growing school population
Table 1 shows Loudoun County Public Schools enrollment projection until 2016[1]. On the average, the number of students increases by 2,000 students per year. It was also stated in the Capital Improvement Plan that current capacity use in the middle and high schools in the county is 90% on the average.

Table 2 shows program capacity and actual enrollment district by district. Since prospective students of future LMITA are at elementary school right now and LMITA will start as a middle school, data was presented for elementary and middle schools. Elementary schools and middle schools in Ashburn are clearly overcrowded currently. Dulles north and Central Loudoun elementary schools are overcrowded and middle schools are likely to be overcrowded in the near future.

Note that LCPS is currently working to build more schools in needed areas, and, being a small school, LMITA does not aim to address the school shortage in Loudoun County. Nevertheless, it will take some pressure off of the public school system and it will be a part of the solution.

Table 1. Loudoun County public schools, student population projection

	09/30/11 ACTUAL	2012-13 PROJECTION	2013-14 PROJECTION	2014-15 PROJECTION	2015-16 PROJECTION
LOUDOUN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	65,668	68,170	70,652	72,396	73,789
PRESCHOOL ENROLLMENT	953	999	1,017	1,036	1,055
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (Gr K-5) ENROLLMENT	31,785	32,593	33,270	33,506	33,505
MIDDLE SCHOOL (Gr 6-8) ENROLLMENT	14,824	15,591	16,477	17,110	17,715
HIGH SCHOOL (Gr 9-12) ENROLLMENT	18,106	18,987	19,888	20,744	21,514

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[1] Superintendent's Recommended FY 2013 – FY 2018 Capital Improvement Program, Loudoun County Public Schools, February 7, 2012

Table 2. Loudoun County elementary and middle schools, program capacity versus enrollment

	Elementary School		Middle School	
	2011-12 Program Capacity	09/30/11 Actual Enroll	2011-12 Program Capacity	09/30/11 Actual Enroll
Eastern Loudoun	7,264	6,821	3,444	3,056
Ashburn	6,119	6,427	2,469	2,658
Dulles North	4,119	4,763	2,507	2,233
Dulles South	5,200	4,938	2,506	1,905
Central Loudoun	6,003	6,287	3,468	2,971
Western Loudoun	4,592	3,435	2,337	2,001

2) Cost-effective choices in education

Loudoun County Board of supervisors initially asked Loudoun County School Board to cut $44M from their 2013 budget. Later the budget cut request was decreased to $22M[2]. The school board is still in the process of deciding how to meet the budget reduction requested by the board of supervisors[3]. LCPS slashed the Foreign Language in the Elementary Schools (FLES) Program to reduce budget. Also construction of some planned schools was postponed. Budget constraints combined with the growing student population in Loudoun necessitates alternative solutions. Loudoun Math & IT Academy will open with $0 start-up costs to the county and it will seat 672 students at full capacity. While it will not resolve public school system's challenges, it is a step in the right direction and it will be a part of the solution.

3) Training for jobs in communication technology

Northern Virginia Community College contracted Career Builder to determine current and projected job market in Northern Virginia[4]. The top 5 jobs in demand were all IT jobs. IT job demand exceeded all other occupations combined.

In a regional job analysis report published by George Mason University[5], 9 of the top 20 jobs in the next 10 years will be in IT industry. Table 3 shows the forecasted growth of these jobs.

A significant number of these jobs will either be in Loudoun County or somewhere close to Loudoun County. Loudoun County students who receive appropriate education for these jobs will be at an advantage against their peers.

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[2] http://www.loudountimes.com/index.php/news/article/school_board_needs_to_cut_22_million_from_budget123/
[3] http://www.loudountimes.com/index.php/news/article/school_board_pushes_budget_decisions_to_after_spring_break123/
[4] Browning B., Kosanovich B., "IT Workforce Needs in Northern Virginia", Northern Virginia Community College, October 7, 2011
[5] Fuller S. and Harpel E., "Northern Virginia Workforce Trends", George Mason University Center, for Regional Analysis, June 2011

Table 3. Job Growth in the IT industry (by Net New Jobs)in Northern Virginia

SOC Code	Description	2010 Jobs	2020 Jobs	Net New Jobs	% Change	Education Level
15-1051	Computer systems analysts	18,473	25,175	6,702	36%	Bachelor's degree
15-1031	Computer software engineers, applications	17,742	26,788	9,046	51%	Bachelor's degree
15-1032	Computer software engineers, systems software	16,680	25,144	8,464	51%	Bachelor's degree
15-1081	Network systems and data communications analysts	8,188	13,853	5,665	69%	Bachelor's degree
15-1071	Network and computer systems administrators	7,812	12,541	4,729	61%	Bachelor's degree
15-1021	Computer programmers	7,656	8,375	719	9%	Bachelor's degree
15-1041	Computer support specialists	7,322	10,764	3,442	47%	Associate's degree
15-1099	Computer specialists, all other	6,534	7,841	1,307	20%	Associate's degree
11-3021	Computer and information systems managers	6,458	8,868	2,410	37%	Degree plus work experience

2. An explanation of why the public charter school is being formed. (Is the school being formed at the request of parents or community organizations? How was the need determined? What data were examined as part of the needs assessment? Briefly describe the need and include a summary of the quantitative data.)

Does the response meet the criterion?   NO

Comment: The applicant provides data to suggest that Loudoun County's communication technology needs will grow in the coming years and states that Loudoun County's C.S. Monroe Tech Center and Loudoun Academy of Science are unable to support the anticipated need. No additional evidence is provided regarding the genesis of interest in the school or support from community stakeholders.

As an engineer, Loudoun parent Ali Gokce was aware of the importance of IT technologies. He observed the high number of IT companies in the county and the influx of IT employees from all over the world. He has a daughter at fifth grade and a son at third grade. His daughter Dalia is an outstanding student enrolled in FUTURA program. This gifted and talented program seeks to enhance and to develop the intellect of fourth and fifth grade students who have been formally identified as generally intellectually gifted. His son Aydin, on the other hand, was having some attention issues at school.

He wanted his children to get educated in high-income fields so they will be competitive in future job markets. While Dalia had a good chance of getting into advanced programs such as Loudoun Academy of Science or Thomas Jefferson High School, Aydin needed some alternative setups.

After some research, he identified charter schools as an economical and viable solution for his kids, and other kids in similar situation in the county. He was sharing his concerns with his circle of friends throughout the process. Mustafa Emin Sahin, Sharon Inetas, Sinan Yildirim and later in the process, Nataliya Blyznyuk got on board with him. After the group was convinced that a charter school is a doable option, they formed Northern Virginia Education Foundation and started their outreach efforts. By word of mouth, they reached Ali Bicak, who has successfully founded a charter school, Chesapeake Science Point (CSP) in MD, which turned out to be an exceptionally successful school. Ali Bicak agreed to join the founding board and the group decided to take CSP as a model school. Later in the process, former principal of CSP, Fatih Kandil, moved to Loudoun for family-related reasons. He decided to join the effort as well. Meanwhile, group contracted with Public Access Point for PR purposes for a nominal fee and was able to reach out to political and business leaders, and community stakeholders of Loudoun. Also local volunteers distributed survey sheets to the Loudoun parents to gage their interest in a school like LMITA.

3.   An explanation of why a public charter school is the appropriate vehicle to address the identified need.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: The applicant states that charter schools are experimental laboratories where innovative programs can be modified quickly to meet the needs of students, and points to another charter school as an example of this advantage. More information about the ways the example school was able to respond to the needs of students in ways other public schools were unable to accomplish would strengthen this section.

LMITA will be an open-enrollment public school choice of all Loudoun students with Math and IT focus. Any Loudoun student may choose to apply to LMITA. LCPS does not have such an option currently. Any student enrolled in the public school system has to go to his\her base school which is determined by his\her address. Admission to magnet programs such Loudoun Academy of Science or Thomas Jefferson is very competitive.

Charter schools traditionally boast increased ownership among parents and the community. Parents tend to spend more time at charter schools and local community supports it more.

LMITA will be a small school with 288 students at the middle school and 384 students at the high school at full capacity. These school sizes are not economical for public school system due to its building and staffing standards. Being a small school, LMITA will provide personalized education, individualized attention and timely interference.

VI. Educational Program

A description of the public charter school's educational program is provided. The following elements are addressed:

1.   A synopsis of the public charter school's educational program.

Does the response meet the criterion?   NO

Comment: The application provides adequate rationale and community support for a school dedicated to supporting students in a real-world application, hands-on oriented curriculum focused on IT and mathematics. However, there are a number of elements cited below that should be strengthened or elaborated upon.

LMITA educational program will differentiate mainly in its instructional methods; the content will be different only in specialized programs offered mostly at the high school grades. For all the required courses, LMITA follow the LCPS Middle and High School Programs of Studies. Course names listed in the tables on pages 37-41 of the application were taken from CSP, the model charter school in MD. Please find the corrections for a number of errors and omissions in the following subsections.

2.   A description of the pupil performance standards and curriculum, which must meet or exceed any applicable Virginia SOQ. (Sections 22.1-253.13:1 through 22.1-253.13:9, *Code of Virginia*)

Does the response meet the criterion?   NO

Comment: The narrative described performance standards and curriculum for technology, but not for other subject areas. Overall, more detailed course titles and descriptions are needed. Strong congruence between LMITA course titles and Virginia Board of Education (VBOE) approved course titles in the following areas is recommended to ensure that students receive all required credits for graduation and various diploma types.

- Science course titles in the table do not align with the VBOE-approved science course titles. LMITA will also want to take into consideration the lab science students take in the senior year. It should allow for students to earn four science credits, in three different disciplines of science, while earning two verified science credits.
- Information pertaining to foreign language instruction is vague and does not list a foreign language option for middle school as required in the Standards of Accreditation (SOA). Diploma requirements do not accurately reflect required foreign language credits.
- Descriptions of social studies grades 6 through 8 are vague; specific course titles would be helpful. It is also necessary to clarify the difference between U.S. history in the 11th and 12th grades.

- Corrections or clarifications on the mathematics course sequence are needed. For the highest pathway in mathematics, beginning with pre-calculus in grade 9, the 10th and 11th grade course is AP calculus BC. It would not be appropriate to take this course two consecutive years.

The availability of sufficient courses to meet the requirement for students to complete two sequential electives as stated in 8 VAC 20-131-50, for the Standard or Modified Standard Diploma, is not evident. The proposal lists two diploma offerings and corresponding credits, but each diploma credit listing has been modified from the requirements of the Standards of Accreditation.

If warranted, Loudoun County Public Schools must submit any waiver requests to the Standards of Accreditation on behalf of LMITA to the VBOE for approval prior to implementation.

LMITA educational program differentiates in providing personalized education for each child by allowing them to progress in their own learning pace and providing them customized support according to their specific needs. In addition to being a small and structured school, LMITA will utilize well-researched and studied teaching methodologies and innovative technologies to help each student to achieve their maximum potential.

In terms of curriculum, LMITA will differentiate in only the specialized programs offered mostly at the high school grades. For all the required courses, LMITA will follow Virginia Board of Education approved course titles and the LCPS Middle & High School Programs of Studies. [6] [7] Course names listed in the tables on pages 37-41 of the application were taken from CSP, the model charter school in MD. In order to ensure students receive all required credits for graduation and various diploma types, the following course titles are corrected, and those subject areas will be offered under VBOE approved course titles.

- Science course titles: Science at sixth grade, Life Science at seventh grade, and Physical Science at eighth grade will follow LCPS Middle School Program of Study. Similarly, Earth Science, Biology, Physics and Chemistry at the high school grades will follow the LCPS High School Program of Study. LMITA will offer these science courses at the same grades as LCPS, but also will allow students take Biology or other high school courses earlier if they want to pursue an Advanced Diploma. Advanced students will also have an opportunity to enroll in Advanced Placement courses if they choose to do so. In any case, LMITA science program will allow for all students to earn four science credits in three disciplines of science, while earning two verified science credits.

  - Foreign Language courses: LMITA will provide a foreign language option for middle school as required in Standards of Accreditation (SOA). LMITA will offer one or two of the Spanish, French, German and Latin language courses depending on the demand from students. LMITA will also offer one or two of the critical languages as an option again depending on the

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[6] http://www.lcps.org/cms/lib4/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/1/MSProgramofStudy2012.pdf
[7] http://www.lcps.org/cms/lib4/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/1/program%20of%20studies%20English%202012%20corrected%203-2012.pdf

demand from students. Diploma requirements are corrected and aligned with the VBOE approved diploma requirements as shown in the following subsection.

- Social Studies course titles: Social Studies courses will be aligned with the VBOE approved course titles at all grades. Following LCPS Program of studies, at the middles school grades, LMITA will offer US History to 1865, US History 1865 to Present, Civics and Economics. Similarly, at the high school grades LMITA will offer World history (to 1500), World history (1500 to Present) and US & Virginia History.

- Mathematics Course Sequence: LMITA will expose its students to advanced Math topics at earlier grades, but will follow the same course titles and similar sequences as offered at LCPS. Following are sample math course sequence options for LMITA students. Depending on the students progress these sequences might vary.

  Math 6 → Math 7 → Math 8 → Algebra I → Data Analysis → Geometry → Algebra II → Pre-Calculus
  Math 6 → Math 7 → Algebra I → Geometry → Algebra II → Pre-Calculus → AP Calculus AB
  Math 6/ 7 → Algebra I → Geometry → Algebra II/Trigonometry → Mathematical Analysis → AP Calculus AB
  Math 6/ 7 → Algebra I → Geometry → Algebra II/Trigonometry → Mathematical Analysis → AP Calculus BC
  Math 6/ 7 → Algebra I → Geometry → Algebra II → PreCalculus → AP Calculus AB
  Math 6/ 7 → Algebra I → Geometry → Algebra II → PreCalculus → AP Statisctics
  Math 6/ 7 → Algebra I → Geometry → Algebra II → PreCalculus → AP Computer Science

- LMITA students will have enough number of required and elective courses to meet the requirements to complete two sequential electives as stated in 8 VAC 20-131-50, for Standard and Modified Standard Diploma. All course titles to be offered at LMITA are not listed within the application, as most of the electives to be offered will be determined according students' progress and interest areas. At the minimum, students will have enough number of required and elective courses to meet their diploma requirements.

3. A description of how the Virginia SOL and the corresponding SOL Curriculum Framework will be used as the foundation for curricula to be implemented for each grade or course in the public charter school. Include within the description how the goals and objectives of the curricula will meet or exceed the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL), address student performance standards, relate to state and federal assessment standards, and include measurable student outcomes (See http://www.doe.virginia.gov/testing/index.shtml on the Department's Web site for more information about the SOL).

   Does the response meet the criterion?   NO

Comment: Additional details on SOL-related curriculum and courses would strengthen the application. Evidence of how gifted students' academic growth will be measured using the various curriculum components would be helpful. Additionally, a description of how the Virginia Career and Technical Education (CTE) essential competencies will be used as the foundation for the curricula for each CTE course should also be included.

Modification and clarification should be included on the following CTE components:
- Virginia course titles and codes
- CTE sequential offerings
- Board-approved CTE credentials
- Microsoft IT Academy
- Co-curricular student organization

LMITA will use the Virginia Career and Technical Education essential competencies as the foundations as described by Virginia's CTE Resource Center. Essential competencies defined and described for the following courses will be used for foundations of IT career tracks at LMITA:[8]

- 6150 Keyboarding (Middle School)

- 6151 Keyboarding (Secondary)

- 6152 Keyboarding Applications

- 6153 Keyboarding Applications

- 6161 Digital Input Technologies

- 6610 Computer Solutions

- 6611 Computer Applications

- 6612 Computer Information Systems

- 6613 Computer Information Systems, Advanced

- 6621 Office Administration

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[8] http://www.cteresource.org/verso2/results?program_area=business_and_information_technology&document_type=all&course_codes=&text=

- 6625 Word Processing

- 6630 Design, Multimedia and Web Technologies

- 6630 Design, Multimedia and Web Technologies, Advanced

- 6640 Programming

- 6641 Programming, Advanced

- 6650 Computer Network Software Operations

- 6651 Computer Network Software Operations, Advanced

- 6660 Database Design and Management

- 6661 Database Design and Management, Advanced

- 6670 Information Technology Fundamentals

LMITA will provide a variety of courses targeting CompTIA, Microsoft and Cisco certifications. In these courses, the tasks/competencies will reinforce the Virginia Computer Technology Standards of Learning correlated with them. Students will start building on their strong foundation with IT Essentials and then pursue a career track of their choice. Students will combine classroom instruction and supervised on-the-job training in an approved position with continuing supervision throughout the school year. Sample course descriptions for CTE electives targeting popular IT certifications:

- **IT Essentials:** The IT Essentials course will be offered at the ninth grade as a one-year, three-credit course. This course covers the fundamentals of IT with exploration of computer technology, networking, and security. Students acquire the skills required to identify hardware, peripherals, networking, and security components. Successful candidates will understand the functionality of operating systems and troubleshooting methodology of hardware, installation, configuration, upgrade and maintenance, practice proper safety procedures and will effectively interact with customers and peers. In addition, individuals will gain real industry experiences through subject matter expert workshops that are designed to address the core skills of information technology for employability in today's careers.

- **CompTIA-A+:** In this course students gain practical experience in assembling a computer system, installing an operating system, troubleshooting computers and peripherals, and using system tools and diagnostic software. They develop skills in computer networking and resource sharing. In addition, students explore the relationships between internal and external computer components. Emphasis is placed on technical proficiency, skill-building, and workplace

readiness. The course prepares students for postsecondary education and training, and a successful career in IT. Upon successful completion of the course, students may qualify to take the A+ certification exam.

- **CompTIA-Network+:** In this course students examines how data gets from one computer to another, including through local area networks (LANs), wide area networks (WANs), and the Internet. Networks are discussed in terms of the Open Systems Interconnect (OSI) seven-layer model. Network operating systems and network middleware are examined. The course is designed to prepare students with the knowledge necessary to pass the CompTia Network+ certification, a prerequisite for preparing for a career in network administration. CompTIA Network+ is vendor neutral and provides students with a fundamental understanding of computer networks, including such topics as Network Media, Topologies, Technologies and Devices, Wireless Networking, Network Protocols and Standards, Network Management, Tools, Monitoring, Security and Troubleshooting.

- **CompTIA-Security+:** This certification is widely recognized as the first level of computer security competence. Students will be introduced to five areas of concentration: IT security concepts (including the wide variety of network attacks), communications security, infrastructure security, the basics of cryptography, and operational organizational security. Specific topics covered include firewalls, host security, cryptography, privacy, application, security, and incident and disaster response. The course is designed to prepare students with the knowledge necessary to pass the CompTia Security+ Certification, a prerequisite for a career in the information security field.

- **System Administration:** System Administration is a comprehensive, hands-on computer course in which students are taught basic administration skills using Windows and Microsoft Server. Topics covered throughout the year include server concepts, installation, configuration, management, and troubleshooting. System Administration is designed to teach many aspects of computer support and system administration. Students learn how to install the operating systems, set up and manage accounts, load software, and set up and implement security plans. Upon successful completion of System Administration, students may elect to obtain industry-recognized professional certification by taking the Microsoft Certified IT Professional (MCITP) exams leading to Systems or Enterprise Administrator careers.

- **Network Administration (CCNA)** Network Administration prepares students to enter employment and/or further education in the computer networking field. Students learn how to design, install, configure, operate, and trouble shoot simple and complex networks. Topics covered include network architecture, industry standards and communication protocols, network devices (such as routers, switches, and hubs), media selection, data transmission, and cabling. Students study installation, configuration and troubleshooting techniques used in computer networks. Network Administration uses the Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) curriculum. This course prepares students to take two Cisco certification tests: Cisco test #ICND1 Cisco Certified Entry Network Technician (CCENT) and the Cisco test ICND#2 (CCNA).

As listed above advanced IT certifications will be available as part of certain courses. Students successfully completing the course will also be eligible to earn a Career and Technical Education diploma seal. Students successfully completing the course in conjunction with another one credit course within the same program area will satisfy the sequential elective requirement for the standard or modified standard diploma. Successful completion of the course in conjunction with a corresponding IT certification may qualify for a student selected verified credit.

In addition to the local colleges and businesses, LMITA will also work with co-curricular student organizations such as:

- **The Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA)** is the career and technical education student organization for all individuals enrolled in business courses. The activities of FBLA are an integral part of the business program and are designed to enhance the business course offerings.
- **VTSA- Virginia Technology Student Association:** VTSA is the only student organization that focuses specifically on students enrolled in technology education. TSA includes educators, parents, students, and business leaders who believe in the need for a technologically literate society and are working hard to achieve that goal. Virginia TSA is composed of more than 16,000 middle and high school students throughout the Commonwealth.

Comment, continued: The footnotes in the middle and high school tables on page 37 need clarification. None of the middle school courses is a "state graduation requirement" as listed. However, credits in U.S. and Virginia history and U.S. and Virginia government are required for graduation. Additionally, there is a foreign language requirement for the Advanced Studies Diploma. It would be helpful if this table mirrored the more detailed program of studies outlined for each grade on pages 39 – 41.

Asterisks in the table "LMITA middle school standard course sequence" are typos, as the course lists were taken from the MD model school (CSP) program of studies. At middle school grades LMITA will follow the same promotion rules as with LCPS.

Therefore, the table on page 37 of the LMITA application should be corrected as follows:

LMITA middle school sample course sequence

Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Language Arts 6	Language Arts 7	Language Arts 8
Mathematics (Math 6/PreAlgebra/Algebra I)	Mathematics (Math 7/PreAlgebra/Algebra I)	Mathematics (Math 8/Algebra I/Geometry)
Science	Life Science	Physical Science
US History to 1865	US History 1865 to Present	Civics and Economics
Art/Music	Family and Consumer Science 7	Family and Consumer Science 8

Health and Physical Ed 6	Health and Physical Ed 7	Health and Physical Ed 8
World Language I (Spanish/French/German/Latin)	World Language II (Spanish/French/German/Latin)	World Language III (Spanish/French/German/Latin)
Tech Ed: NETS/ICDL	Tech Ed: NETS/ICDL	Tech Ed: NETS/ICDL

LMITA will follow the LCPS High School Program of Studies for all required courses[9].LMITA will adhere to the same graduation requirements as stated in 8VAC 20-131-50.[10] The tables on page 38 of the LMITA application should be corrected as follows:

For Standard Diploma a student must earn following credits by graduation:

English	4
Mathematics	3
Laboratory Science	3
History and Social Sciences	3
Health and Physical Education	2
Fine Arts, World Language or CTE	2
Economics and Personal Finance	1
Electives	4
TOTAL	22

For Advanced Technical Diploma a student must earn following credits by graduation:

English	4
Mathematics	4
Laboratory Science	4
History and Social Sciences	4
Health and Physical Education	2
World Language	3
Economics and Personal Finance	1
Fine Arts or CTE	1
CTE	3
TOTAL	26

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[9] http://www.lcps.org/cms/lib4/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/1/program%20of%20studies%20English%202012%20corrected%203-2012.pdf
[10] http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+reg+8VAC20-131-5

Similarly, graduation requirements for modified standard diploma, standard technical diploma or advanced studies diploma will be the same as stated in 8VAC 20-131-50 and described in the LCPS High School Program of Studies. The table on page 37 of the LMITA application should be corrected as follows:

LMITA high school sample course sequence for standard diploma

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II or Functions	Pre-Calculus/Math Electives
Earth Science	Biology	Physics or Chemistry	Economics and Personal Finance
World History (to 1500)	World History (1500 to Present)	US & Virginia History	Fine Arts or World Language
Health/Physical Ed 9	Health/Physical Ed 10	Basic Technology (CTE Elective)	Advanced Technology (CTE Elective)
IT in the Modern World and IT Principles (CTE Elective)	Network/Systems Engineering or App Development or Cybersecurity (CTE Elective)	Network/Systems Engineering or App Development or Cybersecurity (CTE Elective)	Network/Systems Engineering or App Development or Cybersecurity (CTE Elective)
Civics & Citizenship and/or Critical Languages (Elective)	Civics & Citizenship and/or Critical Languages (Elective)	Civics & Citizenship and/or Critical Languages (Elective)	Civics & Citizenship and/or Critical Languages (Elective)

The tables on page 39-41 of the LMITA application were sample schedules taken from the CSP High School Program. For Advanced Technical Diploma, LMITA will follow the LCPS High School Program of Studies for all required courses,[11] and adhere to the same graduation requirements as stated in 8VAC 20-131-50.[12] The tables on page 39-41 of the LMITA application should be replaced with the following:

LMITA high school sample course sequence for advanced technical diploma

Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
English 9	English 10	English 11	English 12
Algebra I (7th or 8th grade)/ Algebra II (8th or 9th grade)/ Geometry	Algebra II/Trigonometry Mathematical Analysis PreCalculus	Mathematical Analysis AP Calculus –BC AP Calculus –AB	AP Calculus –BC AP Calculus –AB AP Statistics

[11] http://www.lcps.org/cms/lib4/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/1/program%20of%20studies%20English%202012%20corrected%203-2012.pdf
[12] http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+reg+8VAC20-131-5

Earth Science/ Biology	Biology/ AP Biology Physics or Chemistry	Physics or Chemistry AP Physics AP Chemistry	Economics and Personal Finance/ Fine Arts or World Language
World History (to 1500) / World History (1500 to Present)	AP World History	AP US History	AP US Government
Health/Physical Ed 9	Health/Physical Ed 10	Basic Technology (CTE Elective)	Advanced Technology (CTE Elective)
IT in the Modern World/ IT Principles (CTE Elective)	Network/Systems Engineering/ Application Development/ Cybersecurity (CTE Elective)	Network/Systems Engineering/ Application Development/ Cybersecurity (CTE Elective)	Network/Systems Engineering/ Application Development/ Cybersecurity (CTE Elective)
Civics & Citizenship and/or Critical Languages (Elective)	Civics & Citizenship and/or Critical Languages (Elective)	Civics & Citizenship and/or Critical Languages (Elective)	Civics & Citizenship and/or Critical Languages (Elective)

4. A description of any assessments to be used to measure pupil progress towards achievement of the school's pupil performance standards, in addition to the SOL assessments prescribed by Section 22.1-253.13:3, in the *Code of Virginia.*

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: The applicant should strengthen the proposal by referencing the use of alternative state SOL assessments or accommodations on the regular SOL tests for students with disabilities.

LMITA will work with LCPS Office of Testing Services in order to accommodate the testing needs of students with disabilities. Under the supervision of LCPS Office of Testing, LMITA will provide the SOL assessments, the Virginia Alternate Assessment Program (VAAP), the Virginia Grade Level Alternative (VGLA) assessment, the Virginia Substitute Evaluation Program (VSEP), Virginia Modified Achievement Standards Test (VMAST) and the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners (ACCESS for ELLs) tests.

VAAP is specifically designed to evaluate the performance of students with significant cognitive disabilities who are working on academic standards that have been reduced in complexity and depth. LMITA will follow the Aligned Standards of Learning (ASOL) for the students participating in the VAAP. Applying VAAP participation criteria, LMITA IEP team will examine how students with disabilities accesses content and demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

LMITA will follow LCPS testing schedule for all required SOL tests.

5. A description of the public charter school assessment plan to obtain student performance data, which includes how the data will be used to monitor and improve achievement and how program effectiveness, will be measured over a specified period of time. Also, provide benchmark data on how student achievement will be measured and how these data will be established and documented in the first year of operation and how the data will be measured over each year of the term of the charter as approved by the local school board. The benchmark data should address targets for student improvement to be met in each year.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: The online benchmark assessment system will help students in preparation for the SAT. More detailed information on yearly targets for student improvement based on benchmark data would strengthen the assessment plan.
Loudoun County Public Schools also has an excellent Response to Intervention (RtI) systemic approach, and could provide technical assistance for individual student learning needs.

As for yearly targets for student improvement, LMITA will use the Virginia state accreditation ratings based on the performance of students on SOL tests. School accreditation ratings reflect student achievement on SOL tests and other approved assessments in English, Mathematics, Science and History/Social Studies. LMITA will target to be fully accredited by having all students achieve pass rates of 70 percent or higher in all four content areas. At its full capacity, LMITA will also attain a point value of 85 or greater based on the Graduation and Completion Index (GCI) in order to be fully accredited. [13]

The purpose of Response to Intervention (RtI) initiative at LCPS is "to ensure the effectiveness of instructional interventions and strategies, as determined through ongoing data analysis of student assessments, so that all students meet or exceed growth expectations."[14] This is fully aligned with the mission and vision of LMITA, therefore LMITA will work with LCPS in order to implement RtI and provide high-quality instruction/intervention matching the needs of its students. LMITA will also adjust its educational programs and instructional methods according to students learning and performance levels over time.

7. An explanation of the procedures for corrective actions needed in the event that pupil performance at the public charter school falls below the standards outlined in the Virginia Board of Education's *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, (8 VAC 20-131-310).

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

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[13] http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/school_report_card/accountability_guide.shtml
[14] http://www.lcps.org/cms/lib4/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/125/Responsive_Instruction_Program_Evaluation_final_.pdf

Comment: Many necessary components (formation of school improvement team, development of school improvement plan to include goals and objectives, monitoring and evaluating plan, providing targeted professional development for staff, providing extended learning time) are present. This section would be strengthened if the applicant would either be more specific regarding the code requirements (i.e., develop a three-year plan based upon results from academic review, meet nine essential requirements listed in SOA), OR the applicant could affirm that all requirements listed in code would be met.

LMITA affirms that it will meet all the requirements listed in the Virginia Board of Education's Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia, (8 VAC 20-131-310).

8. Information regarding the minimum and maximum enrollment per grade as well as class size and structure for each grade served by the public charter school.

Does the response meet the criterion?   NO

Comment: On page 47, the application states that the class size is expected to be 24 students. On page 85, the application says the student-teacher ratio would be 11.3:1 the first year, and 12:1 the second and third years. It would be helpful to explain why these two measures are so different. Additionally, the class-size restriction for certain CTE courses is not identified, and there is no reference to following the staffing standards in the state special education regulations.

LMITA class size is expected to be 24 as stated on page 47 of the application. The numbers on page 85 were computed by dividing the total number of FTE faculty by total number of students at LMITA. As the staffing plans were updated during the development of the budget, the student-faculty ratio remained miscalculated or inconsistent. The correct ratios for the first three years should be as follows:

- 16.7:1 for the first year,
- 15.6:1 for the second,
- and 15.4:1 for the third year.

LMITA staffing plan for the first three years is laid out in the table below:

Position	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Executive Director	1	1	1
Principal	1	1	1

Dean of Students	0.5	0.5	1
Dean of Academics	0.5	0.5	1
Business Manager	1	1	1
Subject Area Teachers	10	17	22
Special Education Teacher	1	1	2
Guidance Counselor	0.5	0.5	1
Nurse	1	1	1
Secretary	1	2	2
Custodian	1	1	1
Librarian	1	1	1

Our projection for the first year is to operate with 8 full-time and 4 part-time [.5 FTE] teachers, one full-time special education teacher and one half-time Counselor; 4 administrative staff (Executive Director, School Principal, Business Manager, dean of students [.5 FTE], and dean of academics [.5 FTE]); and four other full-time personnel (a nurse, a custodian, a librarian and a secretary). In the second year, 6 FTE additional faculty will be added to the existing staff. In the subsequent years, more full-time faculty will be hired to teach core subject areas and part time faculty to teach elective courses. Upon full enrollment, LMITA will have 39 FTE teachers. The number of special education teachers, counselors, and nurses will be increased as the student population grows.

The class size for CTE courses will vary depending on the demand in specific specializations.

LMITA will follow 8VAC20-81-40 for special education (caseload) staffing requirements.[15] LMITA will comply with FAPE requirements as stated in 8VAC20-81-100.[16] (34 CFR 300.209) Children with disabilities who attend LMITA shall be served by LCPS in the same manner as children with disabilities in its other schools, including the provision of supplementary and related services on site at LMITA to the same extent to which LCPS provides such services on the site to its other public schools.

10. A description of plans for identifying and serving: a) students with disabilities; b) English Language Learners (ELLs); c) academically at-risk students; and d) gifted and talented students. Such plans must indicate the extent of the involvement of the local school board in providing such services and must comply with state and federal laws and regulations.

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[15] http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/regulations/state/regs_speced_disability_va.pdf
[16] http://leg1.state.va.us/cgi-bin/legp504.exe?000+reg+8VAC20-81-100

Does the response meet the criterion?   NO

Comment: Loudoun County Public Schools receives Title III, Part A, funding for English Language Learners (ELLs); therefore, the Loudoun Math and IT Academy charter school should meet with LCPS personnel for guidance to all divisionwide Title III, Part A, policies and procedures. Detailed information related to Title III requirements is available at: http://www.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/pg39.html.

It is necessary for LMITA to adhere to the requirements of the referral and identification criteria for Loudoun County Public Schools as noted in the division's local plan for gifted students. Additional details are needed to support a program of services for gifted students regarding "appropriate and differentiated curriculum" to strengthen the application.

There is no reference to the federal and state regulations governing special education that mandate FAPE-responsibility for children with disabilities attending charter schools being with the local school division. (Virginia Regulations 8 VAC 20-81-100 K; federal regulations 34 CFR §300.209) It would be helpful for LMITA to work with the Loudoun County Public Schools Special Education Department to ensure that the IDEA provisions for evaluation/eligibility of any student suspected of having a disability are met, and to ensure that provisions for Individual Education Programs (not Plans) are also met for all eligible students identified with disabilities. It would also strengthen the application if the correct current terminology is used when referencing disability identifications and services.

Although a safe supportive climate is referenced, there are no references to student/support services such as counseling, social services, mental health, and substance-abuse prevention to address conditions that interfere with student learning.

LMITA will collaborate with LCPS staff for Title III policies, requirements and funding for English Language Learners.

LMITA will also adhere to LCPS requirements of the referral and identification criteria for gifted and talented students.[17]

LMITA will work with the Loudoun County Public Schools Special Education Department to ensure that the IDEA provisions for evaluation/eligibility of any student suspected of having a disability are met, and to ensure that provisions for Individual Education Programs are also met for all eligible students identified with disabilities.

In order to comply with FAPE requirements we will hire one or more licensed special education teachers starting from year one.

We will also have half time counselor for the first two years, but in the following years we will have at least one full time counselor, in order to provide student counseling services.

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[17] http://www.lcps.org/page/625

LMITA will also collaborate with LCPS in student/support services such as counseling, social services, mental health, and substance-abuse prevention to address conditions that interfere with student learning. LMITA already made subsequent queries to discuss the mentioned services and other operational issues with LCPS senior staff, but all the requests so far have been denied by the Superintendent's office.

12. If the public charter school plans to utilize virtual learning in its educational program, identify the virtual learning source, describe how virtual learning will be used and estimate how many students may participate.

Does the response meet the criterion?   NO

Comment: The applicant responded to the virtual learning component with "N/A". However, on page 56 the applicant states, "*Blended and virtual learning tools like Khan Academy, Jason Project, e2020, etc. will be utilized according to student needs.*" Based upon this statement, the use of virtual learning is intended. However, insufficient information is provided regarding how virtual learning will be used and how many students may participate.

Blended and virtual learning tools at LMITA will be used only for supplementary purposes. Actual teaching of the content will be provided in person in computer labs. Students who need additional/remedial support will be directed to online resources such as Khan Academy, the Jason Project, e2020. LMITA will also comply with the new legislation requiring each high school student to take at least one virtual course before graduation. In order to realize this regulation, LMITA will work with LCPS to have its students participate in the virtual courses provided at LCPS via e2020.[18]

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[18] http://c2.loudoun.schoolwires.net/cms/lib4/VA01000195/Centricity/Domain/123/Virtual%20Online%20Application-Final%20-%2008-11.pdf

VIII. Economic Soundness:

Evidence that the plan for the public charter school is economically sound for both the public charter school and the school division is provided. The following elements are addressed:

1. A description of the public charter school's financial plan, including financial controls and audit requirements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: More details specific to financial controls and audit processes are needed. It may also be necessary to account for local board approvals as part of budgeting process and timelines.

LMITA's Governing Board will review, revise and approve the budget at their monthly meeting. All audits will be done by independent auditor annually and all audit reports will be shared with both LCPS and BOE.

2. A start-up and three-year budgets with clearly stated assumptions and information regarding projected revenues and expenditures.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: The start-up and three-year budgets pose several questions:

- Is the three months of staff time funded in the pre-operational budget sufficient for activities such as curriculum development and IT?

There are 2 different expenditures on pre-operational budget. One for staff stipends and second for curriculum development. Curriculum development will be outsourced prior to opening, and during this stage, staff will not participate in curriculum development.

- Is the pre-operational IT budget sufficient given the IT focus of the school? It may be necessary to provide more detail on assumptions for revenue amounts shown for federal program funds (i.e., IDEA, Title I, etc.).

All IT needs on pre-operational budget is not for all school. This expenditure only for IT needs for staffs that will work on pre-operational time period. On the other hand, all school's IT needs were already allocated the budget as Classroom IT needs, Science

Labs' needs and Computer Labs' needs (See Appendix F, sheet 2 of 6). All these expenditures are on operational budget not on the pre-operational budget. Also, all these IT needs will be ordered on March before the school opening and they will be paid by either Federal Grant or Operational budget.

- Are annual budgets for IT/computer supplies and repairs and professional development sufficient given projected increasing size of the school?

All computers come with a 3 year warranty in general and additional budget has been allocated per computer for any possible repair services not covered by warranty (See Appendix F, sheet 5 of 6).

- No budgets assumed for school nurses and school food – Are costs for nurses and school food included in the program?

In addition to salary we also budgeted expenses for the school nurse and health room expenditures (See Appendix F, sheet 5 of 6). Food is not included in the budget since its cost will be met from parents and\or agencies. On the other hand LMITA plans to negotiate with LCPS for partnership and contractual services.

- Are some costs under business services such as advertising/dues/memberships duplication under the miscellaneous budget?

The budgets allocated for advertising for two different purposes: one for student enrollment and outreach, and the second for staff recruitment (See Appendix F, sheet 5 of 6).

Comment: Large ending balances shown in the expenditure spreadsheet may change as revenue/expenditure budgets are further refined. Per SOQ staffing requirements, librarian staffing appears to be required along with part-time counselor staffing in initial years. Out-year increases in the Virginia Retirement System rate should be closely monitored. That would result in significant cost increases in this line-item.

Our surplus will be used for such improvements as staff professional development, infrastructural update and educational technology and supporting materials (Please see Appendix F for revised Ending Balance).

To comply with SOQ staffing requirements, a full time Librarian and part time counselor (first two years) are added to the budget. Also state rates will be monitored by financial division and they will be modified as requested.

3. A start-up and three-year cash flow projections with clearly stated assumptions and indications of short- and long-term sources of revenue.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: It may be necessary to refine monthly projections of revenues and expenditures as shown in spreadsheets as local application process proceeds.

As local application process proceeds, we will refine the budget projections as necessary.

4.   A description of anticipated fundraising contributions, if applicable.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment:LMITA should be cautious in taking out a loan for initial operating expenses when future revenues to repay the loan are uncertain. Also note that no fundraising revenue is assumed in projected revenue spreadsheet. It may be necessary to refine assumptions of projected fundraising revenue as local application process proceeds.

Pre operational expenses will be covered by either federal charter school grant or long term loan. Loan repayments will start on third year's budget. As can be seen on the budget worksheet, the per-pupil income is adequate to repay the loan starting from the third year. Also we have added projected fundraising revenues for each year.

X. *Management and Operation:*

A description of the management and operation of the public charter school, including the nature and extent of parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the management and operation of the public charter school is provided. (Section 22.1-212.7, Code of Virginia)   The following elements are addressed:

2. An explanation of how support services will be provided. These services, include, but are not limited to: 1) food services; 2) school health services;   3) custodial services;   4) extracurricular activities; and 5) security services.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: The application would be strengthened by addressing student support services such as counseling, social services, mental health, and substance abuse prevention. It would also be helpful to provide more details about food services: the meals, the cost and the proposed plans to work with the LCPS Food and Nutrition Services.

LMITA will have a school counselor starting from day one in order to provide students support services such as counseling, social services, mental health, and substance abuse prevention. LMITA counselors will work with families and other LMITA staff to provide a safe learning environment and assist all students in achieving their full intellectual, social, and emotional potential.

LMITA will contract with LCPS food and nutrition services in order to provide access to the same level of nutrition, safe, cost effective meals as those available to students attending other LCPS schools.

3. An explanation of any partnerships or contractual relationships (education management organization, food services, school health services, custodial services, security services, etc.) central to the school's operations or mission, including information regarding the relationship of all contractors to the governing board of the public charter school, and information regarding how contractors and the employees of the contractors having direct contact with students will comply with the provisions of Section 22.1-296.1, of the *Code of Virginia*.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: Contracting with the LCPS food and nutrition services would be the preferred method for providing reimbursable meals under the United States Department of Agriculture meal programs. While participation is optional, it is advisable in order to provide access to the same level of nutritious, safe, cost-effective meals as those available to students attending other LCPS schools.

LMITA will contract with LCPS food and nutrition services in order to provide access to the same level of nutrition, safe, cost effective meals as those available to students attending other LCPS schools.

5. A proposed organization chart.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: It was not clear why the school would need both an executive director and a principal or why a school with a maximum enrollment of 672 students would need three administrators serving essentially as assistant principals (dean of academics, dean of students, and projects coordinator). The applicant may also want to discuss with LCPS to determine if a business manager would be necessary, or if the school division could handle some of those responsibilities.

Having some level of autonomy as a charter school, LMITA management will have additional responsibilities such as public relations, marketing, recruitment and fundraising. Increased community involvement means increased administrative overhead on LMITA's part. Financial autonomy will require the LMITA to deal with contractors and service providers on its own.

These additional responsibilities necessitate additional administrative support to run the school successfully.

Projects Coordinator is not a standalone position. A teacher will assume this responsibility part-time.

6. Plans for recruiting school leadership and staff.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: The role of the principal in the process of recruiting and hiring is not clear. Performance Standard 3: Human Resource Management of the revised Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Principals encourages principals to play a strong role in the selection of staff.

In accordance with *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Principals*, LMITA principal will play a major role in the selection of staff. He will be a perpetual member of the hiring committee and he will make the final hiring recommendations to the board.

XI. Employment Terms and Conditions:

An explanation of the relationship that will exist between the proposed public charter school and its employees, including evidence that the terms and conditions of employment have been addressed with affected employees is provided. (Sections 22.1-212.13, 22.1-296.1 and 22.1-296.2, *Code of Virginia*) The following elements are addressed:

1. A plan that addresses the qualifications of teachers and administrators at the public charter school, including compliance with state law and regulation regarding Virginia Board of Education licensing endorsements.

   Does the response meet the criterion?   NO

Comment: The plan does not clearly address the following sections of the Code of Virginia 22.1-296.1 or 22.1-296.2. Fingerprinting and conducting a child protective service check needs to be addressed. Also, the qualifications for the criteria for teacher selection need to include the criteria of the teacher holding a valid Virginia license with appropriate endorsement. The principal also needs to hold a valid Virginia teacher license with endorsement in administration and supervision.

At LMITA, the teachers will hold a valid Virginia license with appropriate endorsement. The principal will also hold a valid Virginia teacher license with endorsement in administration and supervision. After selecting the best candidates, LMITA will have each candidate go through the LCPS hiring process including but not limited to fingerprinting and conduct of a background and child protective service check.

2. A plan to provide high-quality professional development plans. (Section 22.1-253.13.5, *Code of Virginia*)

   Does the response meet the criterion? NO

Comment: The plan does not provide details on how professional development will be provided in the use and documentation of teacher and principal performance standards and evaluation criteria. Also, the plan does not provide enough details on how student academic progress will be addressed through professional development.

LMITA will clearly define teacher performance standards following the Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers.[19] The uniform performance standards will be used to collect and present the data to document performance based on clear expectations. The primary goal of this process will always be to support the continuous growth and development of each teacher by giving meaningful feedback based on monitoring, analyzing, and applying pertinent data.

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[19] http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/regulations/2011_guidelines_uniform_performance_standards_evaluation_criteria.pdf

Student academic progress will be one of the main areas that will be used in the formal classroom observation. At LMITA, teacher evaluations will be based on professional knowledge, instructional planning and delivery, assessment of student learning, management of a safe and learning conducive environment, student academic progress, and professionalism. Based on these standard rubrics, teachers will be provided guidance and professional development opportunities for their continuous growth.

During the periodic professional development programs teachers will train on the latest technologies and best practices in setting acceptable, measurable and appropriate student achievement goals based recent benchmark data. Teachers will also learn about the various features of online SIS to track student progress and adjust the assessments levels and formats based on the learning outcomes. Teachers will adjust their instruction based on the student progress and develop interim learning targets

3. Provisions for the evaluation of staff at regular intervals and in accordance with state law and regulation.

> **Does the response meet the criterion?**   **NO**

Comment: It is necessary to use the newly revised *Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers and Principals* and provisions in this section. Information is available at: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/performance_evaluation/index.shtml

At LMITA, the teachers will be evaluated at regular intervals based on the performance standards stated in the Guidelines for Uniform Performance Standards and Evaluation Criteria for Teachers and Principals document.

Accordingly, the teachers will be evaluated based on their:
- professional knowledge in their subject
- ability to perform instructional planning
- efficiency in performing instructional delivery
- ability of assessing student learning
- success in founding a healthy learning environment
- adherence to professionalism
- ability to lead to student academic progress

6. A staffing chart for the school's first year and a staffing plan for the term of the contract.

> **Does the response meet the criterion?**   **NO**

Comment: The staffing chart does not include a librarian or a counselor in years one and two. This does not comport with the staffing requirements and related staff-to-student ratios in the Standards of Quality, in § 22.1-253.13:2 of the *Code of Virginia*.

A librarian and a counselor have been added to LMITA's staffing chart. Also, the necessary funding has been added to annual budget.

XII. Liability and Insurance:

A description of the agreement between the parties regarding their respective legal liability and applicable insurance coverage is provided. (Section 22.1-212.16, *Code of Virginia*) The following elements are addressed:

1. The types of insurance for the public charter school, its property, its employees, the charter school management committee, and the board and the levels of coverage sought. Types of insurance include, but are not limited to: a) general liability; b) health; and c) property.

   Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: The applicant should note that the level of some coverage appears to be low:

- General Liability - $1,000 per occurrence, $2,000 aggregate (Limits at $1,000,000 per occurrence)
- Directors and officers liability - $1,000
- Educators legal liability - $1,000
- Umbrella coverage - $3,000; $5,000 if providing transportation
- Property/lease insurance - 100 percent of replacement cost
- Boiler and machinery insurance - $1,000 (if appropriate actual loss sustained)
- Auto liability insurance - $1,000
- Workers compensation as required by law

Per section Section 22.1-212.16, Code of Virginia, upon approval of its application, LMITA will secure liability insurance and other coverage as follows:

Property and Casualty insurance	$500,000
Directors and Officers insurance	$1,000,000
General Liability insurance	$1,000,000

The insurance for the directors and officers will start upon the approval of the charter application by the Loudoun County Public School Board. The property and liability insurance will take effect on or before signing a lease agreement with the Landlord. LMITA will pay for Workers' Compensation coverage, but we are requesting to be included in the same policy as other LCPS schools.

XIII. Transportation:

A description of how the public charter school plans to meet the transportation needs of its pupils is provided. The following elements are addressed:

2. If transportation services will be provided by the public charter school, explain whether the school will contract for transportation with the local education agency or with another entity or have its own means of transportation and indicate whether transportation will be provided to all students attending the school.

Does the response meet the criterion?   YES

Comment: LMITA needs to review the Regulations Governing Pupil Transportation (http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/transportation/regulations/index.shtml) and work with the Loudoun County Schools Transportation facility to meet transportation requirements.

LMITA will work with LCPS Department of Pupil Transportation to meet the transportation requirements in 8VAC20-70-10.