

Type 1 Charter Contract entered into by HELIX NETWORK OF EDUCATIONAL  
CHOICES a/k/a HELIX MENTORSHIP STEAM ACADEMY, and the East Baton Rouge  
Parish School Board

Effective February 1, 2021

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CHARTER SCHOOL  
CONTRACT FOR TYPE 1  
CHARTER SCHOOLS

THIS AGREEMENT is a Charter School Contract, authorized pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statutes, Title 17, Chapter 42, and executed by and between the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board (“BOARD”) and Helix Network of Educational Choices a/k/a Helix Mentorship Steam Academy, effective this, the 1<sup>st</sup> day of February, 2021.

**RECITALS**

WHEREAS, the “Charter School Demonstration Programs Law,” La. R.S. 17:3971, *et seq.*, authorizes experimentation in the creation of innovative kinds of independent public schools for students; and

WHEREAS, the purposes of the “Charter School Demonstration Programs Law” are to provide opportunities for educators and others interested in educating students to form, operate, or be employed within a charter school designed to accomplish the following objectives, namely: (1) to improve student learning and, in general, the public school system; (2) to increase learning opportunities and access to quality education for students; (3) to encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods and a variety of governance, management, and administrative structures; (4) to require appropriate assessment and measurement of academic learning results; (5) to account better and more thoroughly for educational results; and (6) to create new professional opportunities for teachers and other school employees, including the opportunity to be responsible for learning programs at the Charter School site; and

WHEREAS, the BOARD found that the Charter School’s application for renewal was valid, complete, financially well-structured, educationally sound, and offers potential for fulfilling the purposes of the Charter School Demonstration Programs Law; and

WHEREAS, the BOARD is authorized, pursuant to La. R.S. 17:3971, *et seq.*, to enter into Charter Contracts authorizing the operation of charter schools and the BOARD desires to replace the previous charter agreement between the BOARD and the Charter School with this Agreement; and

WHEREAS, on March 16, 2017, the BOARD approved the renewal application of Helix Network Educational Choices to be a Type 1 charter school.

NOW, THEREFORE, the parties hereto, intending to be legally bound by the terms and conditions set forth herein, enter into the following Agreement:

**AGREEMENT**  
**SECTION 1: ESTABLISHMENT OF**  
**SCHOOL**

1.1 Parties

- 1.1.1 This Charter Contract is entered into between HELIX NETWORK OF EDUCATIONAL CHOICES and the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board (“BOARD”) for the purpose of operating HELIX MENTORSHIP STEAM ACADEMY (the “Charter School”). This contract will be referred to herein as an “Agreement” or a “Charter Contract,” and such terms may be used interchangeably.
- 1.1.2 The person authorized to sign on behalf of the BOARD is the President of the BOARD.
- 1.1.3 The BOARD shall have jurisdiction over the Charter School pursuant to La. R.S. section 17:3983(A)(4)(a).
- 1.1.4 The person authorized to sign this Agreement on behalf of the Charter Operator is Chairman of the Charter Operator’s Board of Directors (“Charter Representative”), who must be an Officer of the Charter Operator’s Board of Directors. The Charter Operator affirms as a condition of this Agreement that the Charter Operator’s Board of Directors has authorized the Charter Representative to execute agreements, including this renewal Charter Contract, on behalf of the Charter Operator.
- 1.1.5 The Charter Operator affirms, as a condition of this Charter Contract, that the nonprofit corporation is duly authorized according to the laws of the State of Louisiana (“State”) and certifies that all contracts obligating the Charter School have been or will be made and undertaken by the Charter Operator as a nonprofit corporation. Failure to act strictly as a nonprofit corporation shall be grounds for rescission of its charter.
- 1.1.6 The Charter Operator affirms, as a condition of this Charter Contract, that the non-profit corporation has a Board of Directors, whose directors receive no compensation other than reimbursement of actual expenses incurred while fulfilling duties as a member of such a board.

1.2 Location

- 1.2.1 The Charter Operator shall provide educational services, including the delivery of instruction, at location(s) to be mutually agreed upon by the parties hereto and located within the geographical boundaries of the BOARD. The school is currently operating at the locations identified in Exhibit A.

1.3 Facility

- 1.3.1 The Charter Operator shall maintain either ownership of, a lease for, or other suitable agreement covering the use of all facilities and shall ensure that the facilities comply with all State and local health and safety standards and other applicable laws, regulations, and rules.
- 1.3.2 The Charter Operator shall provide a copy of the lease, purchase agreement and/or

facility agreement upon request by the BOARD.

- 1.3.3 The Charter Operator shall comply with all applicable local, State, and federal laws and codes regarding school facility maintenance and upkeep.

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## SECTION 2: OPERATION OF SCHOOL

### 2.1 Purpose

2.1.1 The Charter Operator shall provide educational services according to the educational standards established by law and this Agreement; measure student progress toward stated goals; and participate in student assessments required by law, regulation, and written BOARD policy. The Charter Operator shall manage the Charter School in a financially prudent manner and provide the BOARD with timely and accurate reporting.

### 2.2 Governance

2.2.1 The Charter Operator and its Board of Directors are responsible for complying with and carrying out the provisions of this Agreement, including compliance with applicable laws and regulations and all reporting requirements. This provision shall not be construed to give rise to personal liability of individual board directors in instances where the law would not impose such personal liability.

2.2.2 The Board of Directors of the Charter Operator will act in accordance with its duly adopted by-laws. The Board of Directors of the Charter Operator shall meet the director composition requirements in Title 17, Chapter 42 of the Louisiana Revised Statutes, and in BESE Bulletin 126.

2.2.3 Each director of the Charter Operator's Board of Directors shall complete and submit to the BOARD a Disclosure of Financial Interest and Conflict of Interest Form ("Financial Disclosure") and an Affirmation of Eligibility to Serve ("Board Affirmation"). These documents shall be submitted by each new Charter Operator board director within thirty (30) days of appointment. The Financial Disclosure shall be submitted to the Louisiana Board of Ethics by each board director on or before May 15 of each year after initial submission following appointment.

2.2.4 The Charter Operator's by-laws (and any amendments thereto) shall be consistent with the Louisiana Code of Governmental Ethics, including, but not limited to, the adoption of and adherence to a formal conflict of interest policy that is consistent with applicable law.

2.2.5 Meetings of the directors of the board of the Charter Operator and any committee or subcommittee thereof shall be conducted in accordance with the Louisiana Open Meetings Law, La. R.S. 42:4.1, *et seq.*

2.2.6 The Board of Directors is responsible for the sound fiscal management of the Charter School. This provision shall not be construed to give rise to personal liability of individual board directors in instances where the law would not impose such personal liability.

2.2.7 The Charter Operator shall be the final authority in matters affecting the Charter School, including, but not limited to, staffing, financial accountability, and curriculum, except as otherwise provided in this Agreement and as provided by applicable law and by written policies promulgated by the BOARD.

### 2.3 Grade Range; Number of Students

2.3.1 The Charter Operator shall provide instruction to students in such grades and numbers in each year of operation under the Agreement as described in the Charter School's Enrollment Projection Table set forth in **Exhibit C**, incorporated herein by this reference. The Charter School may enroll up to, but no more than, 120% of the total number of students which have been approved (as specified in Exhibit C) without seeking approval in accordance with Louisiana Revised Statute ("La. R.S.") 17:3991(C)(1)(c)(4). Additional school openings and enrollment of students beyond those provided for in **Exhibit C**, and as otherwise allowed by this section, shall be mutually agreed upon by the parties hereto and determined by certain performance factors as outlined in **Exhibit F**.

2.3.2 The Charter Operator may make reasonable modifications within the grade levels approved as set forth in the Charter School's Enrollment Projection Table as to the number of students in any particular grade and number of students within a class to accommodate staffing exigencies and attrition patterns, but may not without written permission eliminate a grade that the Charter School was scheduled to serve or add a grade that the Charter School was not scheduled to serve.

### 2.4 Student Recruitment and Enrollment

2.4.1 The School Enrollment Policies and Procedures set forth in **Exhibit D**, incorporated herein by this reference, must be used as guidance in the creation and modification of the School Recruitment and Enrollment Plan. Enrollment in the Charter School shall be conducted pursuant to the School Recruitment and Enrollment Plan as developed by the Charter Operator and which must be in compliance with the School Enrollment Policies and Procedures and applicable State law. In all cases, student recruitment and enrollment decisions shall be made in a nondiscriminatory manner and without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or in a foreign language, or academic achievement in admitting students.

2.4.2 In order to be eligible to enroll, a student must live within the geographic boundaries of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System.

2.4.3 To the extent required herein, the Charter Operator exercise reasonable efforts to recruit and enroll the required number of economically disadvantaged and students with exceptionalities as defined in La R.S. 17:1942 and in accordance with La. R.S. 17:3991(B) and as set forth in **Exhibit E**, incorporated herein by this reference.

### 2.5 Attendance

2.5.1 Attendance of students at the Charter School shall be in compliance with the State's applicable Compulsory Attendance Laws, La R.S. 17:221.

### 2.6 Student Handbook

The Charter Operator shall implement a Student Handbook, approved by the Charter Operator, and shall disseminate the Student Handbook to students and parents each

school year. The Charter Operator’s Student Handbook shall include, but not be limited to the Charter School’s Student Code of Conduct, Complaint Policy, and Discipline Management Plan, each of which must be in compliance with applicable federal and State laws and written BESE and district policy. The Charter School’s Student Handbook shall be submitted to the BOARD in accordance with timelines and procedures mutually agreed upon by the parties hereto. The Charter School may be evaluated, as outlined in Bulletin 126, based on compliance with the provisions of the Charter School’s Student Handbook, to the extent that such provisions do not violate federal or State law or written BOARD policy.

## 2.7 Student Code of Conduct and Discipline Management Plan

- 2.7.1 The Charter Operator shall maintain and implement written rules and procedures for student discipline, including clear guidelines for suspension and expulsion. Such rules and procedures must be consistent with all applicable State and federal law. Those provisions regarding suspension and expulsion must meet all requirements for due process, provision of alternative instruction, and federal laws and regulations governing the placement of students with disabilities.
- 2.7.2 The Charter Operator shall provide and/or pay for alternative education services for any student expelled from its school for disciplinary offenses in accordance with applicable State law.

## 2.8 Complaint Policy

- 2.8.1 To the extent required by federal and State law, the Charter Operator shall implement and maintain a complaint policy to receive and handle complaints brought against the Charter School and/or the Charter Operator. The Complaint Policy shall be included in the Charter School’s Student Handbook. The complaints process implemented by the Charter Operator shall be consistent with applicable law and due process. A copy of the Charter Operator’s complaint policy shall be made readily available to all others requesting a copy.

## 2.9 Pupil Progression Plan

- 2.9.1 The Charter Operator shall implement and adhere to a Pupil Progression Plan (“Pupil Progression Plan”) developed in accordance with State laws and written BOARD policy. The Charter Operator may adopt the Pupil Progression Plan of the BOARD or it may utilize a district waiver process to adopt a School-Specific Pupil Progression Plan, which must be in compliance with applicable law and State regulation. The Charter Operator shall annually submit its Pupil Progression Plan to the East Baton Rouge Parish School System.
- 2.9.2 The school’s Pupil Progression Plan will include provisions to ensure that the needs of at-risk students are being met, consistent with applicable law and written BESE policy.

## 2.10 Student Welfare and Safety

- 2.10.1 The Charter School shall comply with all applicable federal and State laws concerning student welfare, safety, and health, including, but not limited to, State laws regarding



the reporting of child abuse, accident prevention and disaster response, fire safety, and any State regulations governing the operation of school facilities.

## 2.11 Nonsectarian Status

- 2.11.1 The Charter School shall be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices, and all other operations.

## 2.12 Evaluation

The Charter Operator's performance shall be evaluated in conformity with the standards set forth in the East Baton Rouge Parish School System's policy for district charter schools. For purposes of contract extension, renewal, and revocation decisions, and other evaluations of the Charter School's performance, the BOARD will rely on the performance standards set forth in EBRPSS's district charter policy.

## 2.13 Curriculum

- 2.13.1 Subject to the conditions of this Agreement, the Charter Operator shall have the authority and responsibility for refining the design and implementation of its educational program, subject to the conditions of this Agreement, in a manner that is consistent with State law, including but not limited to requirements regarding content standards.

## 2.14 Student Records

- 2.14.1 Subject to paragraph 2.14.2 below, the Charter Operator shall comply with any and all written and electronic record-keeping requirements of BESE and State law and regulation, using the district specified student information system as a primary mechanism, and shall provide, upon request by the BOARD, any reports or student records, including, but not limited to, immunization records, class schedules, records of academic performance, disciplinary actions, attendance, standardized test results, and documentation required under federal and State law regarding the education of students with disabilities.
- 2.14.2 The Charter Operator shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C.A §1232g, and La. R.S. 17.3914.
- 2.14.3 If this Charter Contract is terminated, revoked, or surrendered, or the Charter School otherwise ceases to operate, all student records shall be immediately secured and promptly transferred to the BOARD unless prior arrangements have been made between the Charter Operator and the BOARD. The Charter Operator shall supply in a timely manner all reports, test results, and other information that are required under this Agreement, State law, and written BESE policy and regulations in accordance with timelines and processes mutually agreed upon by the parties hereto.
- 2.14.4 To the extent required by federal and State law, the Charter Operator shall provide for the transfer of the education records, including special education records, of any student who was enrolled at the Charter School upon the written request of any authorized person on behalf of an educational facility within or outside of the State, where the student has become enrolled or is seeking enrollment.

2.14.4.1 The transfer of such records, whether by mail or otherwise, shall occur not later than ten (10) business days from the date of receipt of the written request.

2.14.4.2 If a student has been expelled, the transferred records shall include the dates of the expulsion and the reasons for which the student was expelled.

2.14.5 The Charter Operator shall maintain records of all students transferring into the Charter School and withdrawing from the Charter School as required by BESE Bulletin 126.

## 2.15 Reporting

2.15.1 Inclusive of electronic data stored in the district's specified student information system, the Charter Operator shall supply in a timely manner all reports, data, test results and other information required under this Agreement, State and federal law or written BESE and district charter policy and regulations, or reasonably requested by the BOARD in writing, in accordance with written timelines and processes established by the BOARD.

2.15.2 The Charter Operator agrees to submit all reports and other information in the manner reasonably prescribed in writing by the BOARD, which may include the use of a document-storage and management system and an oversight and compliance management system.

## 2.16 Assessment of Student Performance and Procedures for Corrective Action

2.16.1 The Charter Operator shall implement the plan for assessment of student performance, administration of State-wide assessments, and procedures for corrective action as required by State law, written BESE policy, and written BOARD policy. The Charter Operator shall perform all student testing required by State and federal law and written BESE policy and regulations.

## 2.17 Education of Students with Exceptionalities

2.17.1 The Charter Operator will comply with the applicable requirements of federal and State law and written BESE policy concerning the education of children with exceptionalities, including the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act ("IDEA"), 20 U.S.C. §1401, *et seq.*, and related provisions of the School Enrollment Policies and Procedures set forth in **Exhibit D**. Pursuant to La. R.S. 17:3995, the Charter School shall be considered an approved public school of the BOARD, and the BOARD shall serve as the local educational agency ("LEA") for purposes of the IDEA, and the BOARD is responsible for ensuring that all federal and State guidelines regarding special education, including (but not limited to) IDEA, are met. The Charter Operator shall assist the BOARD in meeting such guidelines for students enrolled in the Charter School.

## 2.18 Volunteer Requirements.

2.18.1 The charter operator shall not require, nor condition the enrollment, continued enrollment, or receipt of grades on the commitment of the student's parents to provide

any number of volunteer hours or on otherwise donating volunteer hours to the charter school. Any request for parents to commit to volunteer hours shall be accompanied by a statement that such hours are voluntary and not required.

## 2.19 Parental Involvement Plan

2.19.1 The Charter Operator shall implement a plan to encourage and increase parental involvement.

### 2.19.2 Oversight Authority

2.19.3 The BOARD shall have oversight over the Charter School pursuant to this Agreement, and to La. R.S. 17:3982. Such oversight authority shall include the right of the BOARD to require the Charter Operator to undertake and complete corrective action in the event that there is a reasonable basis to believe that the Charter Operator may have violated any federal or State laws, written BESE policy, written BOARD policy or any of the terms or conditions of this Charter Contract.

All records established and maintained in accordance with the provisions of this Agreement, written BESE policies and/or regulations, and federal and State law shall be opened to inspection by the BOARD to the extent allowable by law.

## 2.20 Site Visits

2.20.1 The Charter Operator shall allow representatives from the BOARD, the Louisiana Legislative Auditor evaluators contracted by such parties, or law enforcement officials (to the extent required by law), to visit the Charter School site at any reasonable time to inspect operations and performance and to ensure compliance with all applicable laws and regulations, the terms of this Agreement, and the terms of State and federal grants (if any). During such site visits, to the extent practicable and allowable by law, the Charter Operator shall allow the visiting officials full and immediate access to its financial and educational records, reports, files, and documents of any kind, with such access subject to the restrictions of Federal law, including (but not limited to) the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”), and State Student Data Privacy laws.

## 2.21 Production of Documents

2.21.1 Representatives of the Charter Operator or the administrator of the Charter School shall produce all documentation and information reasonably and lawfully requested by BOARD, the Louisiana Legislative Auditor or evaluators contracted by such parties within three (3) business days of a written request, if not prohibited by FERPA or La. R.S. 17:3914. The production of documents requested pursuant to this provision shall be distinguished from requests for documents made during site visits.

## 2.22 Attendance Required of Charter Operator and/or its Employees

2.22.1 Employees of the Charter Operator and directors on the board of directors of the Charter Operator shall attend all training sessions required in writing by the BOARD.

2.22.2 A representative of the Charter Operator shall attend all meetings in which the BOARD requests its presence in writing. These meetings shall include, but are not limited to, meetings with the BOARD.

### 2.23 Health Services and Protections

2.23.1 The Charter Operator shall provide appropriate health services and safety protections to the extent required by applicable federal and State law, written BESE policy and written BOARD policy.

### 2.24 Transportation Services and Food Services

2.24.1 In accordance with district charter policy, the Charter Operator may contract with the BOARD, a third party or otherwise provide transportation to all students enrolled and residing within the geographic boundaries of the local school district and more than one mile from the Charter School. The Charter Operator shall also provide transportation services to any student requiring transportation as part of his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP). The Charter Operator shall submit a school transportation plan to the BOARD to ensure compliance according to written timelines established by the BOARD. The plan may include alternative options for transportation, including but not limited to buses, vans, carpools or public transportation as permitted by law and written BESE policy.

2.24.2 To the extent required by federal and State law, the Charter Operator shall provide food services to students, taking into consideration the nutritional needs of the students.

### 2.25 Corporate Partnership

2.25.1 This Charter Operator has not entered into a Corporate Partnership pursuant to La. R.S. 17:3991.1.

### 2.26 Non-Discrimination

2.26.1 The Charter Operator agrees to abide by the requirements of the following as applicable:

Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972; Federal Executive Order 11246; the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended; the Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Act of 1975; and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

2.26.2 The Charter Operator agrees not to discriminate in its employment practices and will render services under this Agreement without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, veteran status, political affiliation, or disabilities.

2.26.3 Any intentional act of discrimination, as found by a court of law with jurisdiction, in violation of State or federal law committed or sanctioned by the Charter Operator's Board of Directors and failure by the Charter Operator to take prompt corrective action when put on notice of a finding of discrimination, shall be grounds for revocation of this Agreement.

## 2.27 Notification Requirements

- 2.27.1 The Charter Operator shall notify the BOARD in a timely manner of any material conditions that may cause the Charter School to vary from the terms of this Agreement or from State law, federal law, written BESE policy or written BOARD policy.
- 2.27.2 The Charter Operator shall notify the BOARD in a timely manner of any circumstances requiring the temporary or permanent closure of the Charter School, including, but not limited to, a natural disaster, such as a hurricane, tornado, storm, flood or other weather-related event, other extraordinary emergency, or destruction of or damage to the Charter School facility.
- 2.27.3 The Charter Operator shall notify the BOARD in a timely manner of the arrest of any directors of the Charter's Board of Directors, employees, or any person directly employed by the Charter Operator for a crime listed in La. R.S. 15:587.1(C) or any crime related to the misappropriation of funds or theft.
- 2.27.4 The Charter Operator shall notify the BOARD of its default on any obligation, which shall include uncontested debts for which payments are past due by ninety (90) days or more.
- 2.27.5 The Charter Operator shall remain in good standing with the Office of the Louisiana Secretary of State and shall promptly notify the BOARD of any change in its corporate standing.
- 2.27.6 The Charter Operator shall notify the BOARD if its enrollment decreases by ten percent or more compared to the most recent student count submitted to the BOARD.
- 2.27.7 If the Charter Operator has contracted with a management organization and such contract is terminated or not renewed, the Charter Operator shall provide written notification to the BOARD within two (2) business days of the termination of the relationship.
- Failure to notify the BOARD about loss of the management organization within two (2) business days may be considered a violation of this agreement.
- 2.27.8 The Charter Operator shall notify the BOARD within two (2) business days of any official action of its board of directors which results in the appointment of a new president of the Charter Operator's board of directors.
- 2.27.9 Any notification requirements not included in this contract but required by district policy shall apply.

## 2.28 Compliance with Applicable Law

- 2.28.1 The Charter Operator shall comply with all federal and State laws and regulations applicable to Type 1 charter schools and all requirements imposed on Type 1 charter schools by written BESE and district charter policy and regulations.

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## SECTION 3: SCHOOL FINANCIAL MATTERS

### 3.1 Funding

- 3.1.1 Prior to the beginning of each new fiscal year, the Charter Operator shall follow written procedures required by the BOARD to determine enrollment projections for the upcoming school year.
- 3.1.2 The Charter School shall be considered an approved public school of the BOARD and shall receive a pupil allocation each year pursuant to the most recent legislatively approved minimum foundation program formula resolution, including all levels (MFP), based on the membership counts of the Charter School as set forth in La. R.S. 17:3995.
- 3.1.3 As set forth in La. R.S. 17:3995(A) The local revenue on which the per pupil amount will be based will be from the following sources, excluding any portion which has been specifically dedicated by the legislature or dedicated specifically by voter approval;
- 3.1.3.1 Sales and use taxes, less any collection fee paid by the school district;
  - 3.1.3.2 Ad valorem taxes, less any tax collection fee paid by the school district;
  - 3.1.3.3 Earnings from sixteenth section lands owned by the school district;
- All as further set forth in La. R.S. 17:3995.
- 3.1.4 As set forth in La. R.S. 17:3995(C), The Charter School may solicit, accept, and administer donations or any other financial assistance in the form of money, grants, property, loans, or personal services for educational purposes from any public or private person, corporation, or agency and comply with rules and regulations governing grants from the federal government or from any other person or agency, which are not in contravention of the State constitution and any other applicable law.
- 3.1.5 Monthly Minimum Foundation Program (“MFP”) allocations will be transferred to the Charter Operator within 15 calendar days of receipt by the BOARD each month, and the first MFP allocation shall occur in July of 2017. The Charter School will report student, staff and financial information in the manner prescribed by the BOARD in writing and allocations may be adjusted during the year, as necessary, to reflect the actual student count, staff count and prior year local revenues.
- 3.1.6 The BOARD is permitted to withhold a percentage of each Charter School’s MFP funds for administrative overhead costs incurred by the BOARD for considering the charter application and any amendment thereto, providing monitoring and oversight of the Charter School, collecting and analyzing data of the Charter School, and for reporting on school performance in accordance with La. R.S. 17:3995(A)(4)(a)(i). Such fee shall be no more than the maximum amount specified by La. R.S.

17:3995(A)(4). To the extent that such an amount is withheld, the BOARD shall provide thirty (30) days' written notice prior to withholding any such fee, with such notice including the total amount of the fee, and the percentage of the total per pupil amount that it represents.

On or before July 1<sup>st</sup>, or as soon as available, but no later than August 15<sup>th</sup> of each calendar year, the BOARD shall provide Charter Operator a projected budget with line item details of anticipated administrative costs that shall be funded by the administrative fee. An itemized accounting shall be provided by the BOARD to Charter School at the end of each fiscal year in accordance with state law (currently La. R.S. 17:3995(A)(4)(c)).

3.1.7 The Charter Operator acknowledges that each year initial funding will be based on the projected student enrollment and projected per student MFP allocation. The amount of funding will be adjusted throughout the school year to reflect actual student counts, the results of any audits, and the final per student MFP allocation.

3.1.8 The implementation and/or continuation of the provisions of this Charter Contract are contingent upon a State legislative appropriation or allocation of funds necessary to fulfill the requirements of the Charter Contract. If the State legislature fails to appropriate sufficient monies to provide for the implementation and/or continuation of the Charter Contract, or if such appropriation is reduced by the veto of the Governor of the State or by any lawful means provided in the appropriations act to prevent the total appropriation for the year from exceeding revenues for that year, or for any other lawful purpose, and the effect of such reduction is to provide insufficient monies for the implementation and/or continuation of the Charter Contract, the Contract shall terminate on the date of the beginning of the first fiscal year for which funds are not appropriated.

3.1.9 No liability shall accrue to the BOARD should the events described in the preceding paragraph occur. The BOARD shall not be obligated or liable for any future payments or for any damages as a result of termination under the previous paragraph.

### 3.2 Financial Accounting and Reporting

3.2.1 The Charter Operator shall be responsible for the Charter School's operation, including the preparation of a budget.

3.2.2 The Charter Operator shall comply with all rules, guidelines, and regulations adopted by BESE and/or the BOARD prescribing forms and practices for budgeting, accounting, and financial reporting.

3.2.3 The Charter Operator agrees to submit any amended budgets or other requested financial documents according to the guidelines developed and adopted by the BOARD.

3.2.4 The Charter Operator shall maintain records in a manner that reflects compliance with this Charter Contract and generally accepted accounting principles. The Charter Operator is subject to appropriate financial audits in accordance with La. R.S. 24:513 et. seq. and La. R.S. 17:3996(F).

3.2.5 The Charter Operator shall conduct an annual independent audit and submit it to the Louisiana Legislative Auditor, with copy to the BOARD, said audit to be conducted by a certified public accountant in accordance with La. R.S. 24:513, *et seq.*, and La. R.S.17:3996(F), the cost of which shall be borne by the Charter Operator.

### 3.3 Qualified and Competent Business Professional

3.3.1 The Charter Operator shall retain for the duration of this Charter Contract a Qualified and Competent Business Professional who meets or exceeds the minimum requirements and qualification specified in BESE in Bulletin 1929, the *Louisiana Accounting and Uniform Governmental Handbook*, to produce all financial and accounting information and reporting required by this Charter Contract, State law, and written BESE policy and regulation, except the required annual audit, which must be performed by an independent auditor. The Qualified and Competent Business Professional shall affix his or her signature to every document he or she prepares, thereby validating its authenticity as his or her work product and thereby affirming that the information contained therein is true and accurate.

3.3.2 The Charter Operator shall ensure that a Qualified and Competent Business Professional validates all student count reports submitted by the Charter Operator to the BOARD.

3.3.3 The Charter Operator shall ensure that a Qualified and Competent Business Professional is responsible for validating all inventory reports submitted to the BOARD by the Charter Operator in accordance with BESE Bulletin 126, Section 2509.

### 3.4 Tuition and Fees

3.4.1 The Charter Operator shall not charge any student tuition, an attendance fee, or a fine of any kind. Any other fee shall be subject to a waiver process that considers individual family circumstances. The Charter Operator shall not condition the enrollment, registration, earning of credit, or receipt of grades of any student on the payment or nonpayment of fees. This does not prohibit the Charter Operator from requiring fees for extracurricular activities, or a fully refundable books/materials deposit, provided waivers are available for students with financial hardships.

### 3.5 Financial and Operational Records

3.5.1 All records of the Charter School are subject to inspection and production as set forth in this Agreement and to the extent required by the Louisiana Public Records Act. If this Agreement is terminated, the Charter Contract is revoked or surrendered, or the Charter School otherwise ceases to operate, the possession of all records of the Charter School shall be promptly transferred to the BOARD.

### 3.6 Assets

3.6.1 Any assets acquired by the Charter Operator are the property of the Charter School for the duration of this Agreement and any renewal of the Agreement. If this Agreement is terminated, the charter is revoked or surrendered or the Charter School



otherwise ceases to operate, all assets purchased with any public funds, subject to any existing claims of creditors, shall revert to full ownership by the BOARD.

- 3.6.2 If the Charter School fails to open and serve students or closes for any reason, including the revocation of its Charter Contract, the Charter Operator shall return all equipment and cash on hand attributable to State or federal funding, as applicable, to the BOARD or other grantor; shall not pay any debts with such funds without approval of the BOARD, whether incurred before or after the failure to open and serve students or the closure of the Charter School; and shall make no other disposition whatsoever of such funds or equipment without the written approval of the BOARD.
- 3.6.3 In the event of a voluntary surrender of the Charter Contract, the Charter Operator shall comply with the BOARD-approved School Closure and Transfer Process regarding the disposal of property and funds.
- 3.6.4 The Charter Operator shall maintain records of any assets acquired with any private funds or grant funds that remain the property of the Charter Operator. If the Charter Operator's accounting records fail to clearly establish whether a particular asset was purchased with public funds or private funds, subject to the existing claims of creditors, ownership of the asset will revert to the BOARD.
- 3.6.5 The Charter Operator shall maintain a complete and current inventory of all school property and shall audit the Charter School property inventory annually.
- 3.6.6 The Charter Operator shall be responsible for adequately safeguarding all assets purchased with any public funds and shall produce evidence of such upon written request by the BOARD or its designee.

### 3.7 Insurance

- 3.7.1 The Charter Operator shall obtain property insurance for buildings being used by the Charter Operator to fulfill the purposes of this Agreement and any contents purchased by the Charter Operator with State or federal funds. The property insurance obtained by the Charter Operator shall provide the BOARD as an additional insured.
- 3.7.2 As evidence of compliance with the insurance required by this Charter Contract, the Charter Operator shall retain current certificates of insurance signed by an authorized representative of the insurer(s) for inspection by the BOARD upon written request. The certificates shall evidence that policies providing the required coverage, conditions and limits are in full force and effect.

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## SECTION 4: PERSONNEL

### 4.1 Employment Matters

- 4.1.1 The Charter Operator or its CMO shall employ and/or contract with necessary personnel. It shall implement a personnel policy that addresses such issues as hiring of personnel, terms of employment, and compensation consistent with that contained in the Charter Application. The parties hereto agree that teachers and other staff employed by the Charter Operator are not employees of the BOARD.

### 4.2 Instructional Providers and Administrators

- 4.2.1 The Charter Operator or its CMO shall employ or otherwise utilize in instructional positions or cause to be employed or otherwise utilized in instructional positions, only those individuals who are credentialed in accordance with applicable federal and State law, rules and regulations.
- 4.2.2 The Charter Operator or its CMO shall evaluate all administrators and instructional providers as required by applicable State law and written BESE and district charter policy.

### 4.3 Paraprofessionals

- 4.3.1 Paraprofessionals employed by the Charter School shall meet all qualification requirements imposed by applicable federal and State law, rules, and regulations.

### 4.4 Criminal History Review

- 4.4.1 The Charter Operator or its CMO shall conduct a criminal history review through the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, Office of State Police, Bureau of Criminal Identification for each individual the Charter Operator intends to hire, and for each independent contractor who may have supervisory or disciplinary authority over children at the Charter School. The criminal history review shall include a fingerprint check and simultaneous Federal Bureau of Investigation check. All costs associated with the criminal history review shall be the responsibility of the Charter Operator, although the Charter Operator may assign the responsibility to those persons undergoing the criminal history review.
- 4.4.2 The Charter Operator or its CMO shall not hire a person who has been convicted of or has pleaded *nolo contendere* to a crime listed in La. R.S. 15:587.1(C) as a teacher, substitute teacher, bus driver, substitute bus driver, janitor, school security personnel, cafeteria personnel, or a school employee who might reasonably be expected to be placed in a position of supervisory or disciplinary authority over school children unless approved in writing by a district judge and the district attorney of the parish.
- 4.4.3 No person employed or otherwise associated with the Charter School, including any contact person listed on the Charter School application or any director of the Charter School board, who has been convicted of or has pleaded *nolo contendere* to a crime related to misappropriation of funds or theft, shall be engaged in direct processing of Charter School funds.

4.4.4 The Charter Operator or its CMO shall adhere to all written policies/procedures adopted by BESE concerning criminal history review for public school employees, as well as other persons associated with the Charter School who are engaged in direct processing of Charter School funds.

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## SECTION 5: CONTRACT TERM, RENEWAL & REVOCATION

### 5.1 Five-Year Term.

5.1.1 This Charter School Contract shall be effective until June 30, 2023 unless extended.

### 5.2 Renewal

5.2.1 The BOARD shall conduct an evaluation of the Charter School based on the evaluation and renewal standards outlined in district charter policy and La. R.S. 17:3998.

5.2.2 The Charter Contract shall be reviewed based on academic, financial, and organizational standards set forth in and district charter policy.

5.2.3 The Charter school must receive a minimum of a School Performance Score of 60 for renewal. If the Charter School fails to meet either an SPS score of 60 or the other extension standards outlined in the district charter policy, the BOARD may, at the East Baton Rouge Parish School System Superintendent's recommendation, terminate the Charter Contract, with such termination taking effect at the end of the Charter School's Contract term.

### 5.3 Paragraph Intentionally Deleted

### 5.4 Revocation.

5.4.1 As provided by State law, and pursuant to the process provided for in district charter policy, the BOARD may terminate or revoke this Agreement at any time upon a determination and affirmative vote by a majority of the total membership of the BOARD that the Charter Operator, its board directors, officers, or employees did any of the following:

5.4.1.1 Committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures provided for in this Agreement or in written district charter policy;

5.4.1.2 Failed to meet or pursue within the agreed timelines any of the academic or other educational results specified in this Agreement or in written district charter policy;

5.4.1.3 Failed to meet generally accepted accounting standards of fiscal management;

5.4.1.4 Violated any provision of law or written policy applicable to a charter school, its officers, or employees; or

5.4.1.5 If the BOARD reasonably determines that the health, safety, or welfare of the students is threatened.

### 5.5 Closure

5.5.1 In the event that the Charter School should cease operations for any reason, including termination of this Agreement, surrender, revocation, or non-renewal of the Charter

Contract, or dissolution of the Charter Operator, the Charter Operator's Board of Directors shall have direct responsibility for carrying out the orderly closure of the Charter School and disposition of assets in accordance with applicable law. The BOARD shall have authority to supervise, oversee, or direct the dissolution of the Charter School and the disposition of assets of the Charter School.

- 5.5.2 Upon the Charter Operator's receipt of written notice of termination, and throughout the period of Charter School operation between the notice of termination and school closure, if any, the Charter Operator shall (i) comply with applicable provisions of law and perform all obligations necessary thereto, (ii) designate a representative of the Charter Operator who shall retain responsibility for the security of and access to all Charter School records, including student records, (iii) provide the means and capability to access Charter School records, including student records, to the BOARD, as designated in writing, and (iv) fully cooperate with the BOARD, who shall have unrestricted and equal access to Charter School records, including student records during the period prior to the closure of the Charter School. Upon termination and closure, the Charter Operator shall secure all Charter School records, including student records, in the possession of the Charter School and shall grant to the BOARD access to records requested by the BOARD. The BOARD may take possession of such records, and upon taking possession of such records shall thereafter fulfill any and all statutory and contractual duties concerning the Charter School records, including the student records that are within the BOARD's possession; provided that in performing the Charter Operator's legal or contractual duties, the Charter Operator shall comply with applicable law. The Charter Operator shall take all reasonable steps necessary to collect and assemble in an orderly manner the educational records of each student who is or has been enrolled in the Charter School so that those records may be transmitted to the BOARD.

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## SECTION 6. OPERATION OF THE CONTRACT

### 6.1 Entire Agreement

6.1.1 The Charter Operator and the BOARD intend this Agreement, including all of the Exhibits, to represent a final and complete expression of their agreements, except that the parties hereto recognize that amendments to this Agreement may be approved by the parties hereto from time to time hereafter. All prior representations, understandings, and discussions are merged herein, and no course of prior dealings between the parties hereto shall supplement or explain any terms used in this Agreement.

### 6.2 Notice

6.2.1 Any notice required or permitted under this Agreement shall be in writing and shall be effective immediately upon personal delivery (subject to verification of service or acknowledgment of receipt) or three (3) days after mailing when sent by United States Postal Service certified mail, postage prepaid, to the following:

In the case of the Charter Operator:

Board Chairman  
Helix Network of Educational Choices  
339 Florida Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70801

With Copy to:

Patty McMurray  
Baker, Donelson, Bearman, Caldwell & Berkowitz, PC  
450 Laurel Street, 21<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70801

In the case of the East Baton Rouge Parish School Board:

School Board President  
East Baton Rouge Parish School Board 1050  
South Foster Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70806

### 6.3 Indemnification and Disclaimer of Liability

6.3.1 The parties hereto acknowledge that the Charter Operator is not acting as the agent of, or under the direction and control of the BOARD, except as required by law or this Agreement and that the BOARD does not assume liability for any loss or injury resulting from the acts or omissions of the Charter Operator, its directors, trustees, agents, or employees.

6.3.2 The Charter Operator acknowledges that it is without authority to extend the faith and credit of the BOARD to any third party. The Charter Operator shall clearly communicate to vendors and other entities and individuals outside the BOARD that the obligations of the Charter Operator under agreement or contract are solely the responsibility of the Charter Operator and are not the responsibility of the BOARD.

To the extent allowable under the Louisiana Constitution and Federal and State law, the Charter Operator shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the BOARD and its officers, directors, officials, agents and employees from any and all claims, demands, suits, actions, proceedings, loss, cost, and damages of every kind and description, including, but not limited to, attorneys' fees and/or litigation expenses which may be brought or made against or incurred by the BOARD on account of any action of the Charter Operator, its employees, agents or assigns. The provisions or limits of insurance required under this Agreement shall not limit the liability of the Charter Operator.

6.3.3 The BOARD acknowledges that it is without authority to extend the faith and credit of the Charter Operator to any third party. The BOARD shall clearly communicate to vendors and other entities and individuals outside the Charter Operator that the obligations of the BOARD under agreement or contract are solely the responsibility of the BOARD and are not the responsibility of the Charter Operator.

6.3.4 This Agreement is not an employment contract. No officer, employee, agent, or subcontractor of the Charter Operator is an officer, employee, or agent of the BOARD and no officer, employee, agent, or subcontractor of the BOARD is an officer, employee, or agent of the Charter Operator.

6.3.5 The parties hereto acknowledge that the BOARD is not liable for the debts or financial obligations of the Charter Operator or the Charter School.

6.3.6 The parties hereto acknowledge that the BOARD and its members individually are immune from civil liability for any damages arising with respect to all activities related to the operation of any type of charter school they may authorize as a chartering authority, including the Charter School.

#### 6.4 Waiver

6.4.1 The parties hereto agree that either party's failure to insist on strict performance of any term or condition of this Charter Contract shall not constitute a waiver of that term or condition, even if the party accepting or acquiescing in the nonconforming performance knows of the nature of the performance and fails to object to it.

#### 6.5 Assignment

6.5.1 No right or interest in this Charter Contract shall be assigned by anyone on behalf of the Charter Operator without prior written approval of the BOARD, and delegation of any contractual duty of the Charter Operator shall not be made without prior written approval of the BOARD, which approval may be given or withheld at the sole discretion of the BOARD. A violation of this provision shall be grounds for immediate termination of this Agreement and revocation of the Charter.

## 6.6 Applicable Law

- 6.6.1 This Charter Contract shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State and all applicable federal laws of the United States of America.
- 6.6.2 The Charter Operator shall comply with all federal and State laws and regulations applicable to Type 1 charter schools, and all requirements imposed by State law, written BESE policy and regulation. The Charter Operator shall conform, in all respects, with the educational standards contained in district charter policy and State law.
- 6.6.3 The parties hereto intend that they be bound by, and that this Charter Contract be subject to, any and all statutes, regulations, written policies and procedures applicable to Type 1 charter schools as written at the time of this Agreement except as set forth herein. The Charter Operator and the BOARD may mutually agree to comply with any future amendments, additions to, or deletions from such laws.

## 6.7 Severability

The provisions of this Charter Contract are severable. Any term or condition deemed illegal or invalid shall not affect any other term or condition, and the remainder of the Charter Contract shall remain in effect unless otherwise terminated by the parties hereto.

## 6.8 No Third-Party Beneficiary

- 6.8.1 The enforcement of the terms and conditions of this Charter Contract, and all rights of action relating to such enforcement, shall be strictly reserved to the BOARD and the Charter Operator. Nothing contained in this Agreement shall give or allow any claim or right of action whatsoever by any other or third person. It is the express intent of the parties to this Agreement that any person receiving services or benefits hereunder shall be deemed an incidental beneficiary only.

## 6.9 Counterparts; Signature by Facsimile

- 6.9.1 This Agreement may be signed in counterparts, which shall together constitute the original Contract. Electronic signatures or signatures received by facsimile or email (in portable document format) by either of the parties hereto shall have the same effect as original signatures.

## 6.10 Material Amendment

- 6.10.1 Any material amendment to this Agreement will be effective only with approval of both the BOARD, or its designee, and the Charter School's Board of Directors. A Material Amendment shall not become effective and the Charter Operator shall not take action or implement the changes requested in the amendment until the amendment is approved by the BOARD or its designee.
- 6.10.2 The Charter Operator will submit any proposed Material Amendment to the BOARD for approval. "Material Amendment" is defined as an amendment that makes substantive changes to Charter School's governance, operational, or academic structure. Material Amendments include:




- changes in legal status or management, including the structure of the board of directors, a corporate partnership, or assignment of or changes in management organization;
- changes in grade levels served;
- changes in student enrollment which result in enrollment in excess of 120 percent of the total number of students set forth in this Agreement, if applicable;
- changes in admission procedures or criteria, if applicable; and
- changes in any option expressed in **Exhibit I** with respect to collective bargaining, if applicable

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IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Contract as of the date below.

**EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH SCHOOL BOARD**

By:   
Board President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**HELIX NETWORK OF EDUCATIONAL CHOICES a/k/a HELIX MENTORSHIP STEAM ACADEMY**

By:   
Chairman of the Board

1/20/2021  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## TABLE OF EXHIBITS

Exhibit A:	Location
Exhibit B:	Intentionally Deleted
Exhibit C:	Enrollment Projection Table
Exhibit D:	School Enrollment Policies and Procedures
Exhibit E:	Required At-Risk Percentage Table
Exhibit F:	Performance Factors
Exhibit G:	Fiscal Oversight Policy
Exhibit H:	Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana Option Form

**CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT: EXHIBIT A**  
**Location**

Name of Charter School: HELIX MENTORSHIP STEAM ACADEMY

The Charter Operator shall provide educational services, including the delivery of instruction, at the location(s) specified below:

The property located at:

325 and 339 Florida Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70801

*Charter Contract of Helix Network of Educational Choices*  
**Exhibit A**

**CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT: EXHIBIT B**  
**Not Applicable**

*Charter Contract of Helix Network of Educational Choices*  
**Exhibit B**

**CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT: EXHIBIT C**  
**Grade Level Enrollment Projection Table**


Name of Charter School: HELIX MENTORSHIP STEAM ACADEMY

Name of Charter Operator: HELIX NETWORK OF EDUCATIONAL CHOICES

<b>Mentorship</b>	<b><u>18-19</u></b>	<b><u>19-20</u></b>	<b><u>20-21</u></b>	<b><u>21-22</u></b>	<b><u>22-23</u></b>
<b>9</b>			150	150	150
<b>10</b>			140	140	140
<b>11</b>			135	130	130
<b>12</b>			125	130	130
<b>Total</b>	528	531	550	550	550

Actual      Actual      Projected      Projected      Projected

**If the minimum enrollment of HELIX MENTORSHIP STEAM ACADEMY for any school year will be below 70% of the anticipated enrollment shown above, the Charter School shall provide written notice to the BOARD.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman, Helix Network of Educational Choices

1/20/2021  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT: EXHIBIT D**  
**TYPE 1 Charter School Student Enrollment Policies and Procedures**

The East Baton Rouge Parish School Board (“EBRPSB”) is committed to ensuring that the student enrollment process in the charter schools it authorizes is **fair, transparent and accessible** to all students and families interested in attending a charter school.

The following describes the student enrollment process, both in terms of policies and procedures, for EBRPSB Type 1 charter schools.

**ENROLLMENT POLICY**

The Board of Directors must adopt a written student enrollment policy. The policy should include:

- Five-year enrollment plan (including expansion plan for additional grades and number of students served);
- A non-discrimination assurance;
- Eligibility and application requirements (including ages/grades at which the Charter School enrolls, or does not enroll, new students);
- Marketing/outreach/recruitment timeline and activities;
- Due dates for application materials;
- Lottery date and process;
- Instructions for accepting admission if chosen in the lottery; and
- Waitlist procedures.

Per district charter policy, EBRPSB staff will review the Charter School’s approved enrollment policy and any application materials (i.e. written application, recruitment flyer) to ensure consistency with the Louisiana charter school law.

**Non-Discrimination Requirement**

Charter schools authorized by EBRPSB are public schools and are open to all students eligible for enrollment in a public school. Charter schools may **not** discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or in a foreign language, or academic achievement in admitting students, nor may charter schools set admissions criteria that are intended to discriminate or that have the effect of discriminating on any of these bases.

**Enrollment of Students with Disabilities**

It is expected that charters schools will enroll students with disabilities in compliance with all applicable law. EBRPSB will monitor all schools for compliance with the law to ensure equal access for ALL students. In admitting students in compliance with applicable law, it is anticipated that a charter school will use reasonable efforts to enroll a percentage of students that is reflective of the number of students with disabilities being served in public schools within the parish in which the Charter School is located. This is not a quota or cap on the enrollment of students with disabilities. All students must be admitted in compliance with applicable law.

The percentage of students eligible for special education services who are admitted to the Charter School will be reviewed annually based on the percentage of students identified as receiving special education services in schools within the parish in which the Charter School is located. In the event that the Charter School does not enroll a percentage of special education students that is reflective of the percentage of special education students in the parish where the Charter School is located, the provision contained in Exhibit E shall apply.

### **Required Enrollment of Economically Disadvantaged Students for New Start-Up Type 1 Charter Schools**

The charter operator shall comply with the terms of Exhibit E with regard to the enrollment of 'Economically Disadvantaged students. Non-compliance with Exhibits D and E shall be considered a material breach of this agreement.

### **ENROLLMENT PERIOD**

To initiate the enrollment period, the Charter School should:

- Determine the spaces available in each grade based on the Charter School's capacity;
- Set a deadline for accepting student applications. Pursuant to the Louisiana Charter School Law, an application period shall not be less than one month nor more than three months;
- Publicize the application deadline in multiple venues with reasonable notice of at least **one month** before the deadline;
- Set a date for the lottery with reasonable public notice given at least one week prior to the lottery; and
- Set a final date for students to accept enrollment and the actual date of enrollment.

### *Recommended Practice in Recruiting Students*

To meet the requirement of "reasonable notice," the Charter School might:

- Send notification to local non-profits advertising the Charter School and its enrollment process;
- Post notices in various locations across the parish(es);
- Hold well-publicized informational meetings for students and families to learn about the Charter School and its enrollment process; and
- Run advertisements in the city's major commercial and community newspapers.

### **Application Requirements**

As stated above, charter schools may not discriminate in their enrollment practices. At the same time, charter schools have an interest in making sure that prospective students and families understand the mission and focus of the Charter School and that they are interest in being a part of that school community. To that end, charter schools may have application requirements, provided those requirements are not designed, intended, or used to discriminate unlawfully. Meetings with parents/guardians, for example, must be designed to inform them about the Charter School rather than to discourage certain types of students from attending the Charter School.



### *Acceptable Application Requirements*

- Charter school **may** require a written enrollment form that includes basic and general information about the prospective student (i.e. name, address, birth date, last grade completed, prior school attended).
- Charter schools **must** require proof of residency in East Baton Rouge parish charter school (such requirement may **not** be made of homeless students).
- Charter schools **may** require students to successfully complete the grade preceding the grade the student plans to enter.
- Charter schools **may** encourage (not require) parents/guardians to attend informational sessions.

### *Unacceptable Application Requirements*

- Charter schools **may not** require written application is intended to assess the student's aptitude (i.e. essay responses, prior test scores, special education and English language learner identification)
- Charter schools **may not** make statements in meetings that are intended to or have the effect of discouraging parents/guardians of students with disabilities, or English language learners, or any other protected group of students from submitting an application to the Charter School.

### *Eligibility*

In order to be eligible to enroll, a student must live within the geographic boundaries of the East Baton Rouge Parish School System.

### *Recommended Application Materials*

Charter schools should make it as easy as possible for students and families to complete the enrollment application. Toward that end, charter schools should:

- Translate the application in languages spoken by the prospective population to the extent possible.
- Make the application available in multiple locations (i.e. school building, neighboring non-profit organizations, internet/website).

Charter schools are expected to make proactive efforts to reach out to students and families throughout the community in recruiting new students, and to administer their enrollment process in a way that is open, inclusive and fair. Failure to do so may indicate that the Charter School is using its enrollment process to discriminate and may result in sanctions by EBRPSB.

## **CONDUCTING THE LOTTERY**

### **New Type 1 Charter School**

In a new charter school's first year of operation, at the conclusion of the application period, if the applications for students do not exceed the slots available, students applying during the application period shall be admitted. If the total number of eligible applicants exceeds the capacity of a program, class, grade level, or school, admission to the program, class, grade level, or school shall be based on an admissions lottery conducted from among the total number of eligible applicants.

If the percentage of at-risk applicants, as defined herein, does not exceed the required percentage of at-risk students to be enrolled in the charter school, then the BOARD may take action as described in Exhibit E.

#### *Recommended Practice in Conducting Lottery During the First Year of Operation:*

- Separate applications by grade level.
- For each grade level, draw names until all slots have been filled.
- If there are more names for a given grade than slots available, continue to pull names and add such names to the Charter School's waitlist in order as pulled.

It is important to note that in subsequent years (Year 2 and thereafter), all charter schools **must**:

- Provide all previously enrolled students (e.g. students that attended the Charter School during its first year of operation) the right to continue to attend the Charter School, provided that the Charter School serves the grade level in which the student should be enrolled.
- Give lottery preferences to siblings of students already enrolled in the charter school.

## **ENROLLING STUDENTS**

Once the lottery is complete, the Charter School should send notifications to each student that submitted an application the status of their application. Students that were chosen in the lottery should be given explicit instructions on how they accept admission to the Charter School and pertinent information regarding the start of the school year.

### **Acceptance Requirements**

Just like the application requirement, the admission acceptance requirement may not in any way discriminate against students and families.

#### *Recommended Acceptance Requirements*

The charter school should require a parent or guardian to accept admission to the charter school by notifying the school (providing multiple ways and ample time to do so) of his or her intent to attend.

The charter school must notify EBRPSB of the Charter School's anticipated student enrollment by

*Charter Contract of Helix Network of Educational Choices*  
**Exhibit D**

established deadlines. For each student that has accepted enrollment and registered to attend, provide:

- Name
- Address
- Social Security number
- Birthdate
- Grade
- Previous school attended

A school is only required to hold a slot for a child whose parent has not accepted admission for a maximum of two weeks. Seats do not need to be held for students who have not accepted admission and registered to attend at the school. If an admitted student who has registered to attend the school does not attend school for two consecutive weeks, that slot may be released and given to a student on the waitlist.

In such cases, a charter school is required to:

- Notify the parent/guardian of the registered student after five days of missing school to discuss their intent to send their child to the Charter School.
- State that in order for the slot to be held, the student must attend school within the next five days.
- If the student does not attend within those five days, the Charter School may release that particular slot and fill it with a child from the waitlist (if no waitlist exists, the Charter School may receive applications for that slot.)

**CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT: EXHIBIT E**  
**Required Economically Disadvantaged Percentage Table**

- I. **Required At-Risk Percentage:** Pursuant to Louisiana Revised Statute 17:3991(B)(1)(a)(i), the percentage of the total number of students enrolled in a Type 1 charter school based on the October first student membership who are economically disadvantaged and students with exceptionalities as defined in R. S. 17:1942, not including gifted and talented, shall be equal to not less than eighty-five percent of the average percentage of students enrolled in the local public school districts from which the charter school enrolls its students who are economically disadvantaged and shall be equal to not less than eighty-five percent of the average percentage of students enrolled in the local public school districts from which the charter school enrolls its students who have been identified as a student with an exceptionality as defined in R.S. 17:1942, not including gifted and talented. For the purposes of fulfilling the provisions of this Section, the economically disadvantaged and students with exceptionalities percentage for the local public school district shall remain fixed during the term of the approved charter at the percentage which existed during the school year that the charter proposal was approved, or renewed. For the purposes of this contract, including but not limited to Exhibits D and E, the “students with exceptionalities” or “economically disadvantaged” requirements of La. R.S. 17:3991(B)(1)(a)(i) shall apply to and be based upon only students who are not dependent children of permanent employees of the corporate partner.
- II. For the purposes of this contract, including but not limited to Exhibits D and E, the requirements of La. R.S. 17:3991(B)(1)(a)(i) shall apply to and be based upon only students who are not dependent children of permanent employees of the corporate partner, if applicable. Any corrective action will be based on the Charter School’s failure to exercise reasonable efforts to recruit and enroll economically disadvantaged students consistent with the targets contained in the Charter Application. While this language is intended to provide guidance regarding the initiation of corrective action, this does not, and is not intended to limit or impair the Board’s ability to ensure compliance with all applicable laws, policies, and regulations related to the provisions of this Charter contract.

**EXHIBIT F: Academic Performance**

Student performance is the primary measure of school quality. The BOARD shall use the state's assessment and accountability programs as objective and verifiable measures of student achievement and school performance. Student performance is the primary indicator of school quality; therefore, the BOARD will heavily factor all annual evaluations, contract extensions, renewal and revocation decisions on a school's achievement of the student performance standards

As outlined in the chart provided below, the Charter Operator provided academic goals in its charter application. The Charter School's success in meeting such goals shall be considered as one factor in determining whether the charter school shall be extended, renewed or revoked, in addition to those renewal, extension, and revocation criteria established by state law and BOARD policy. Failure to meet a single measure outlined herein at any point during the charter contract term will not be sole grounds for revocation, nonrenewal, or failure to extend. In every respect, the BOARD will evaluate the totality of the school's performance and make revocation, renewal, or extension decisions pursuant to the provisions of Section 5.4 of the charter contract.

<b>INITIAL RENEWALS (FIRST CONTRACT TERM)</b>			
<b>Current Letter Grade</b>	<b>Minimum Term Length</b>	<b>Potential Additional Years (Based on Organizational and Financial Performance Over Current Term – Criteria for Ratings Defined in Section VI of Local Policy)</b>	
A	5 Years	Earns "Does Not Meet Expectations" in any year in any area	No additional years
		Earns "Meets All" and/or "Meets Most" Expectations all years in all areas	1 Year Maximum
		Earns "Meets All Expectations" all years in all areas	2 Years Maximum
B	4 Years	Earns "Does Not Meet Expectations" in any year in any area	No additional years
		Earns "Meets All" and/or "Meets Most" Expectations all years in all areas	1 Year Maximum
		Earns "Meets All Expectations" all years in all areas	2 Year Maximum
C	3 Years	No additional years	
D*, F or no letter grade	0 Years	Non-Renewal	

\*If a D letter grade is earned in the most recent year of the initial contract, the school shall earn a “*Meets Most Expectations*” rating and meet renewal criteria if it earns BOTH of the following:

- C letter grade for at least one of the years during the initial contract term, AND
- A or B progress score received for the year the school earned the D letter grade

This applies to the initial term and first contract renewal. This shall not apply to renewal criteria for subsequent renewals.

The opening and closing of schools, material changes to chartering contracts or new chartering contracts inclusive of renewals, non-renewals and extensions require such items to be placed on the agenda of a public meeting of the local school board in accordance with other East Baton Rouge Parish School Board policies

<b>SUBSEQUENT RENEWALS (ALL RENEWALS AFTER THE FIRST)</b>			
<b>Current Letter Grade</b>	<b>Minimum Term Length</b>	<b>Potential Additional Years (Based on Organizational and Financial Performance Over Current Term – Criteria for Ratings Defined in Section VI of Local Policy)</b>	
		A	5 Years
Earns “Meets All” and/or “Meets Most” Expectations all years in all areas	1 Year Maximum		
Earns “Meets All Expectations” all years in all areas	2 Years Maximum		
B	4 Years	Earns “Does Not Meet Expectations” in any year in any area	No additional years
		Earns “Meets All” and/or “Meets Most” Expectations all years in all areas	1 Year Maximum
		Earns “Meets All Expectations” all years in all areas	2 Year Maximum
C	3 Years	No additional years	
D, F or no letter grade	0 Years	Non-Renewal	

The opening and closing of schools, material changes to chartering contracts or new chartering contracts inclusive of renewals, non-renewals and extensions require such items to be placed on the agenda of a public meeting of the local school board in accordance with other East Baton Rouge Parish School Board policies.

*Charter Contract of Helix Network of Educational Choices*  
**Exhibit F**

**CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT: EXHIBIT G**

**Fiscal Oversight Policy**

The following is taken from East Baton Rouge Parish Schools District Charter School Policy:

Charter schools are required to engage in financial practices, financial reporting, and financial audits as set forth in charter school law, this bulletin, and the charter. The requirements imposed by law, regulation, and contract ensure the proper use of public funds and the successful fiscal operation of the charter school.

Charter schools will be evaluated annually on the timely submission of budgets, audits, annual financial reports, and all other financial reporting and compliance with applicable financial budgeting; accounting; and auditing laws, regulations, and procedures.

The charter school financial performance shall be measured and evaluated according to annual external audit performance, use of state and federal funds in an appropriate fiscally responsible and legal manner as well as no material or significant findings as documented by notices of concern or breach received from the district.

<b>Annual Review Metrics</b>		
<b>Expectation</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Ratings</b>
<b>Financial Performance Expectation Areas</b>		
Schools demonstrate strong financial performance resulting in fiscally viable and responsibly maintained institutions.	Performance on <b>annual audits</b> and documentation of appropriate <b>use of funds in accordance with law and policy.</b>	<p><b>Demonstrates ALL Expected Financial Compliance Indicators*</b> <i>Meets All Expectations</i></p> <p><b>Demonstrates 75%** or Above of Expected Financial Compliance Indicators*</b> <i>Meets Most Expectations***</i></p> <p><b>Demonstrates 74%** or Less of Expected Financial Compliance Indicators*</b> <i>Does Not Meet Expectations</i></p>

\* Financial Compliance Indicators are listed on the chart on page 21 of the charter policy.

\*\* The percentage score for financial indicators shall be calculated by dividing the total number of applicable indicators by the number of applicable indicators met for each year.

\*\*\* Documented failure to comply with local, state or federal law aligned to the financial performance expectation areas automatically receives a “Does Not Meet Expectations Rating” regardless of the percentage of indicators met.

<b>Financial Compliance</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Measurement &amp; Standard Expectation</b>
Schools demonstrate <b>strong financial practices</b> resulting in <b>fiscally viable and responsibly</b> maintained institutions.	Fund Balance	School maintains an acceptable fund balance as measured by the annual external audit within recommended ranges according to state guidance.
	Annual External Audit Performance	No evidence of significant or consecutive material findings in the annual audit.  School receives no Notice(s) of Concern nor Notice(s) of Breach relative to these areas.
	School uses federal and state funds in a fiscally responsible and legal manner.	No evidence of significant, intentional or repeated misuse of funds  School receives no Notice(s) of Concern nor Notice(s) of Breach relative to these areas.
	Timely Submission of Financial Reports	No Evidence of significant, intentional or repeated non-compliance of financial documentation requested by district staff or required by contractual obligations  School receives no Notice(s) of Concern nor Notice(s) of Breach relative to these areas.

*Charter Contract of Helix Network of Educational Choices*  
**Exhibit G**



**CHARTER SCHOOL CONTRACT: EXHIBIT H**  
**Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana Option**

Name of Charter School: HELIX MENTORSHIP STEAM ACADEMY

**TRSL & LSERS Option**

Select one of the options below:

**Option 1**

The Charter Operator intends to participate in the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana and the Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System.


**Option 2**

The Charter Operator intends to participate in the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana only.

**Option 3**

The Charter Operator does not intend to participate in the Teachers' Retirement System of Louisiana and the Louisiana School Employees' Retirement System.

[Not applicable. IRS guidance was never obtained. All employees either participate or none participate]

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Charter Operator's  
Authorized Representative

1/20/2024  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date