B.2. School Governing Body

A. Corporate Board

The corporate Board of Directors will serve as the governing body at Synergy Public School. The Board of Directors will be comprised of professionals throughout the Phoenix metropolitan area with backgrounds in education, finance, law, marketing, real estate, public safety and social services.

B. Governing Board Responsibilities

Overview:

Per ARS §15-183(E)(8), the Governing Board, further referred to as "the Board", will provide oversight for all operations and policies pertaining to Synergy Public School. As the charter holder, the Board will be legally and morally responsible for the financial operations, legal obligations, and governance duties outlined below.

The Governing Board will be responsible for overseeing:

Governance, Mission, Policy and Strategic Planning –

- The Board will conduct monthly meetings to monitor the progress of financial, academic, legal, and governing matters of Synergy Public School. All Board decisions must be approved through a majority vote.
- Create, update and approve all policies and policy changes at Synergy Public School.
- Maintain alignment with the school's mission, vision and charter.
- Set the strategic direction by developing a strategic plan and review progress against articulated goals over time.
- Review student achievement data and school operational data. The School Directors will provide monthly reports to the Board on academic achievement, average daily attendance, student attrition/withdrawal, staff attrition, average class size, active weight list, and re-enrollment rates for students, variances, staff openings, staff performance, and stakeholder surveys.

Financial oversight -

- Review and approve the annual budget.
- Ensure the school's financial health by monitoring of the annual budget. The Governing Board will review financial documents to ensure financial sustainability on a regular basis. The School Directors will provide a monthly update at the Board meeting of budget/actual revenue streams, net income, expenses, per pupil expenditures, per pupil revenue, fundraising dollars received, facility cost, and unrestricted days cash.
- Participate in fundraising and help secure external funding sources, as needed including grants and private donations.
- Providing governance of business transactions for Synergy Public School.

Legal and regulatory compliance –

- Ensure compliance with the regulatory and legal obligations. The Governing Board will monitor policy and daily operations to ensure that the laws and regulations outlined by state and federal agencies are adhered to.
- Ensure filing of all legal and regulatory documents
- Adhering to the stipulations of the Open Meeting Law regulations. The Board Meetings will be publicly announced and conducted according to the Open Meeting Law.

Executive Director oversight –

- Manage and support the Executive Director of Business and Operations and the Executive Director of Academics who will be responsible for the school's day-to-day management.
- Evaluate the Executive Directors regularly based on agreed-upon, clearly outlined performance criteria
- Set Executive Director compensation annually, offer guidance and support

Promotion and accountability to the public –

- Promote the school to the public.
- Expand the school's networks and relationships,
- Respond to community and stakeholder concerns.
- Participate actively in the West Central Phoenix neighborhood

Governing Board Logistics/Training:

To ensure maximum efficiency and proficiency, Governing Board at Synergy Public School will have access to the Board On Track Program, a logistics based online program. Each Board Member will become a member of the Board On Track Program. The Board On Track Program provides access to centralized dashboards to communicate, 24/7 on-demand training/coaching, and online assessments/goal setting applications.

Governing Board Officer Positions:

To ensure oversight of each of these specific areas, the Board will elect a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary, and establish standing committees including, but not limited to, Governance, Finance, Academic Achievement, and Development Committees. Any member of the Board can nominate themselves or another board member for an officer position. The Governing Board will then vote on the candidates with the winner being the member with the most votes. All officer positions will have a have a one-year term with the ability to renew for an additional year. The following officer positions will be part of the Synergy Public School Governing Board and outlined below are the duties and responsibilities for Officers of the Board:

Chair-

- Serves as head of the Board.

- Establishes the Board Meeting agenda and ensures members have all the information they need in their packets.
- Maintaining order in all Board meetings.
- Chief liaison to the Executive Directors.
- Presiding over the selection of Committee Chairs.
- Guides the strategic plan for school growth.
- Primary signing agent for official board documents and will be responsible for ensuring the board is in compliance with the charter contract, board manual, and by-laws.

Vice-Chair-

- When the Board Chair is absent, the Vice Chair assumes the responsibilities of the Board Chair.

Treasurer-

- Provide financial oversight.
- Chair the Finance Committee.
- Collaborate with the Executive Director of Business and Operations and the Governing Board to set the annual budget and update monthly financial dashboards.
- Ensuring that Synergy Public School complies with federal, state, and district reporting requirements.
- Auditing monthly, quarterly, and annual finances.
- Collaborate with the Executive Director of Business and Operations and Governing Board to institute school procedures and policies that provide financial stability/sustainability.

Secretary-

- Documents official Board minutes of all meetings and any standing committees (complies with Open Meeting Law).
- Certify and maintain both electronic and hard copies of the most up to date bylaws.
- Maintaining meeting agendas and minutes.
- Providing all notices and documents of meetings, as required by law. (Including Committee meetings explained below)
- Be the custodian of the corporate seal and shall determine when to affix it to any proper instrument
- Have charge of all the books and records of the Corporation except the books of account.
- Shall attest by signature to all instruments duly authorized and requiring the same.

Committee Appointments:

The Board will set up standing committees to aide in the start-up operations for Synergy Public School. The standing committees that will aide in the start-up process at Synergy Public School will be the Governance Committee, Finance Committee, Academic Committee, and Development

Committee.

The Governance Committee: The Governance Committee will preferably be composed of members with professional expertise in human resources, school board operations, strategic planning, and law. The Governance Committee will be tasked with constructing, evaluating, and adjusting the strategic planning for Synergy Public School. In addition, this committee will oversee the selection and training of new Board members.

The Finance Committee: The Finance Committee will preferably be composed of professionals with a background in accounting, business operations, and finance. The Finance Committee is chiefly responsible for overseeing the financial health of Synergy Public School and it will be chaired by the Board Treasurer. This committee will work closely with the Executive Director of Business and Operations to monitor budgetary concerns and financial solvency of Synergy Public School.

The Academic Committee: The Academic Committee will preferably be composed of professionals with a background in achievement oriented education and technology. The Academic Committee will be lead by the Executive Director of Academics, who will provide student achievement data to determine if the school is meeting the strategic goals.

The Development Committee: The Development Committee will preferably be composed of professionals with a background in fundraising, marketing, politics, and public relations. The Development Committee will construct expansion strategic plans to increase student enrollment, school size, and/or secure funding through grants or donations.

The Governing Board will be accountable for all items related to the governance of Synergy Public School. The school leadership team comprised of the Executive Director of Academics and Executive Director of Business and Operations will be accountable for the daily operations of the school. The Board will oversee student achievement and financial matters through monthly board meeting reports presented by the Executive Director of Business and Operations and Executive Director of Academics. These reports will post publicly through the board-approved data dashboards and board reports.

C. Governing Board Composition

The Governing Board will consist of a minimum of three (3) and no more than thirteen (13) members. The Board will maintain an odd number for voting purposes. The Governing Board will be comprised of competent individuals drawn from diverse fields and experiences and have an understanding of the needs in the target community. Synergy Public School will look for the following skill sets in recruiting board members.

1. Financial/Accounting- An Accountant or Financial Advisor/Analyst who can guide the budget and has experience with nonprofit corporations. Preferably this person would also have fundraising experience.
2. Academics- An experienced educator, specifically in the area of academic planning and educational outcome growth.
3. Legal/Regulatory- Ideally, an attorney to serve as a legal consultant who is familiar with educational and/or nonprofit law to ensure school compliance and who is passionate about education.

4. Public Relations/Marketing- A professional with experience in marketing and communications for nonprofits and education.
5. Fundraising- An individual with proven fundraising ability and connections to benefit Synergy Public School.
6. Real Estate/ Facilities- An individual with real estate and/or facilities experience to assist in site-selection and site-maintenance process.
7. Public Safety- A local police officer, firefighter, or law enforcement professional who can provide guidance about school safety procedures and develop relationships with local police and fire precincts.
8. Social Services- An experienced professional in the social services field that can provide guidance on family resources, mental and emotional health for students and families and leverage community agencies.

At the time of this charter application, Synergy Public School has 3 founding Governing Board Members: Lori Weiss, Melissa McKinsey, and Sandy Kennedy. Once the Charter is approved, Lori Weiss and Melissa McKinsey intend to fill the roles of ex-officio non-voting members of the Board.

Lori Weiss

Lori Weiss serves as an Executive Director on the founding board of Synergy Public School and will serve as Executive Director of Business and Operations. She is an Arizona native and a graduate of Arizona State University with a Bachelors degree in Early Childhood Education. She has spent the past 26 years in the field of education. The first seven years of her career were spent in the classroom teaching kindergarten and 2nd grades. After receiving her Master's degree in Elementary Education with an emphasis in reading from Northern Arizona University, she became a Success for All Facilitator at her school in charge of running a comprehensive reading program out of Johns Hopkins University. In 1999, she also earned her Administrative Leadership Certification from Northern Arizona University. From 2002 – 2005 she worked as an assistant principal and has spent the past 10 years as the principal of a low socioeconomic school in central Phoenix. During this time she has earned two A+ School of Excellence Awards, earned an Excelling School Label from the Department of Education in 2007, 2008, 2009 and 2010. In 2011, the Arizona Business & Education Association named her school an Arizona Higher Performing School. In 2013 her school earned a "B" rating by the Arizona Department of Education and in 2014 her school earned an "A" rating by the Arizona Department of Education. In 2010 Lori was named a RODEL Exemplary principal. She has also spent the past seven years working for, Beat the Odds an initiative of The Center For the Future of Arizona and as a mentor principal supporting other principals across Maricopa County. The education of all children is Lori's passion and it is her goal to do everything in her power to make that a reality.

Melissa McKinsey

Melissa McKinsey serves as an Executive Director on the founding board of Synergy Public School and will serve as Executive Director of Academics. Ms. McKinsey was born and raised in Dallas Texas. She has spent the last fifteen years in the field of education. Ms. McKinsey earned her Bachelor's degree in Elementary Education with an Early Childhood Emphasis from Arizona State University in 2002 and a Master's Degree in Educational Leadership in 2006 and her Administrative Leadership Certification from Northern Arizona University in 2008. She began her teaching career in 2002 in Phoenix, Arizona as a first grade teacher. During her time as a teacher, Ms. McKinsey used best instructional practices to ensure positive student outcomes and achievement in her

classroom. After serving for 4 years in the classroom, Ms. McKinsey became an academic coach and facilitator of the Success for All Reading Program on her campus. In her time as an Academic Coach, she assisted teachers with curriculum, instruction, assessment, cooperative and collaborative learning. She mastered real time coaching and was vital in building a positive school climate and culture that focused on instructional excellence. In 2010 Ms. McKinsey become an Assistant Principal at Westwood Primary School. Westwood Primary is a Title 1 school with 1000 students K-3 and a 98% Free and Reduced lunch rate. During her time as an Assistant Principal she worked collaboratively with the Principal to earn two A+ School of Excellence Awards, an Excelling School Label from the Department of Education in 2010, an Arizona Business & Education Association Higher Performing School In 2013 the school earned a "B" rating by the Arizona Department of Education and in 2014 the school earned an "A" rating by the Arizona Department of Education. In 2014, she became the principal of Westwood Primary School. In her time as Principal, she has become involved with the Beat the Odds initiative of The Center For the Future of Arizona and Grand Canyon University named Mrs. McKinsey STEM principal of the month in January 2016. In 2015, Ms. McKinsey began training her staff on becoming a trauma sensitive school in order to support the high level of needs in her student population. In the spring of 2015, Ms. McKinsey was selected and completed the New Schools for Phoenix Fellowship, a rigorous five-month program that provided her with the necessary skills to be a transformative leader of a highly effective school. During the Fellowship, Ms. McKinsey had the opportunity to visit top performing schools around the country, dialogue with school leaders, and craft a vision for a school of her own, Synergy Public School. Ms. McKinsey is passionate about a high quality education for all and believes that every child deserves a classroom environment with a highly effective teacher that meets their individual needs by challenging and supporting them to grow beyond where they are.

Sandy Kennedy

Sandy Kennedy serves as a member of the Synergy Governing Board. Ms. Kennedy has lived in Arizona since 1970. She and her husband of 42 years have made Arizona their home with their four sons. Prior to receiving her degree, she worked as an instructional assistant and stayed home to raise her boys. In 1994, Ms. Kennedy received her Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education K-8, with an ESL endorsement K-12. She received her Master of Arts in Elementary Education with a K-12 Reading endorsement in 1999. Ms. Kennedy has worked in Elementary Education since 1994, teaching a variety of grade levels until 2003 when she became an English Language Acquisition Coordinator. After a year, she returned to school to become an Intervention Specialist prior to becoming a principal in 2005. During her time as a principal, she was named a Rodel Exemplary Principal in 2009 and her school was also named an A+ School of Excellence in 2011. In addition to leading a school, she became a mentor of other principals for Beat the Odds Institute, Center for the Future of Arizona. She is currently serving as lead mentor for Beat the Odds Institute.

D. Filling Board Vacancies

The ability of the Synergy Public School to carry out its mission and vision depend on the strength of its organizational sustainability and foundation. A critical element of this foundation is the Governing Board itself. The board carries the mission of the school into the community and brings the views of the community into the school. Its importance to the health of Synergy Public School is primary.

In the event of a Board vacancy or the desire of the board to increase seats, a special meeting can

be called by the Board members to fill that vacancy. All potential Board candidates must meet with the Executive Director of Business and Operations and the Executive Director of Academics to determine if they are aligned with the vision and mission of Synergy Public School. The Executive Director of Business and Operations and the Executive Director of Academics will then nominate candidates for Board approval. A candidate will then be interviewed by the Governance Committee to assess the following:

- Relentless commitment to student achievement in a school that values a high quality education and meets the needs of the whole child with an unwavering support of the mission and vision of the Synergy Public School
- Selfless passion to serve a primarily low-income, minority urban student population in West Central Phoenix with no personal agenda.
- Ability and willingness to provide the time (5-7 hours monthly) and effort necessary to govern a nonprofit, urban charter school and openly and consistently communicate with the Governing Board and School Executive Directors.
- Able to legally serve on an Arizona Charter School Governing Board.
- Demonstrate specific, needed skills for the success, growth, and sustainability of the school.
- The ability to be an active participant in a collaborative group process.

After the governance committee identifies recommended new board members, each candidate must then be approved through a majority vote (51%) of the Board.

The Board at Synergy Public School is actively searching the community for quality candidates to propel Synergy Public School forward

After the charter is approved, the Board will recommend and approve at least 4 new candidates for a total of seven voting members. Once the total Board count is to 7, the Executive Director of Academics and the Executive Director of Business and Operations will transition to non-voting ex-officio members, by the start of the school year. The Board has already begun the screening process with several strong candidates, each with a different skill set, to serve as advisors to the Board in the meantime. These possible candidates are outlined below:

- Christy Niezgodzki- Certified Public Account (Finance)
- Norm Beasley- Retired Law Enforcement Executive /Sheriffs Office (Public Safety)
- Randon T. Hall M.D.- Pediatric Orthopedics (Health)
- Derrin Ebert- Cincinnati Reds Organization (Education/Athlete)
- Judy Ambling- Retired Educator (Philanthropist)
- Jennifer Cummings – (Commercial Real Estate)
- Cathy Kirk- (Headstart/Early Childhood Expert)
- Brandi Aragon (Youth Minister)
- Sargon Khananisho (Law)