# City Garden Montessori School

Strategic Plan

2018-2023

Executive summary: the case for expanding our impact

- City Garden is a public PK-8 Montessori charter school committed to academic excellence and anti-biased, anti-racist practices

- Over the next ten years we will focus on four priorities:
  - Codify our program model and support our guides, maximizing the rigor and results of ABAR Montessori education

  - Launch training institute to prepare adults to lead anti-biased, anti-racist (ABAR) Montessori classrooms in our schools and beyond

  - Grow current school and open three new schools, ultimately serving over 2,300 students across St. Louis

  - Build a center to house efforts around community organizing, policy advocacy, and coalition building in our communities

- Growth across these dimensions makes it possible to achieve a sustainable model while providing more support and an even higher quality education for our students

- To realize this plan, we must raise $10.8M over 5 years

- We will lay the foundation for continued local growth and enable a model of anti-biased, anti-racist public Montessori education to share nationally
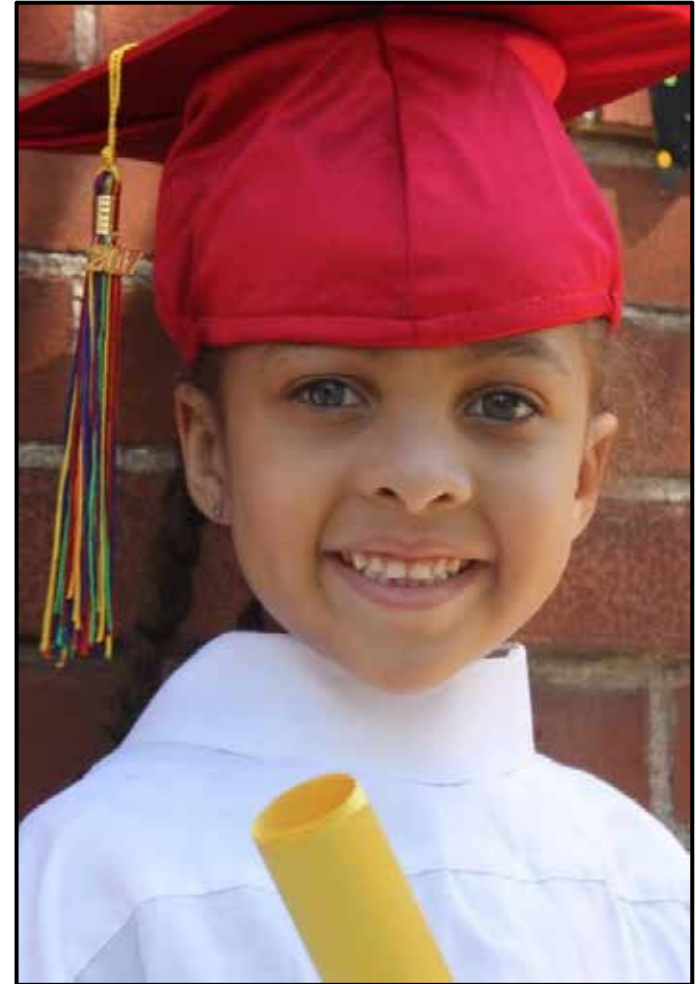
Contents

- City Garden model and results

- Market dynamics and growth plan

- Organization design: school, network, & staffing models

- Financial projections and fundraising

- Readiness to grow, key initiatives, and risks & mitigation strategies

- Implementation plans

City Garden model and results

City Garden is a public PK-8 Montessori school committed to academic excellence and anti-biased, anti-racist practices

Quick Facts

Preschool founded

1995

Elementary school founded

2008

Grades served

Preschool – 8th

Students enrolled

278

Teaching staff

34

Did you know?

✓ City Garden is the first charter school in Missouri to receive a 10-year charter renewal, due to high performance.

✓ The school is in high demand: there are currently 2 applicants per seat

✓ Graduates go on to top high schools throughout the St. Louis

Core Values

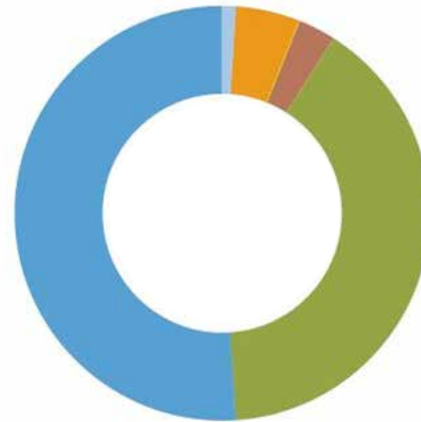Academic Rigor

Inclusive Excellence

Connection through Community

Racial Equity & Social Justice

We are an intentionally diverse neighborhood school located in the heart of St. Louis City

2018-19 Student Demographics

- 49% White
- 41% Black
- 4% Multi Racial / Other
- 5% Hispanic
- 1% Asian

Our flagship school serves the Botanical Heights, Forest Park Southeast, Shaw, Southwest Garden, and Tiffany neighborhoods in central St. Louis City

City Garden exists to *redefine education* by developing the whole child in an excellent, inclusive, Montessori school; to *reimagine community* by creating spaces and systems that help to restore our collective humanity; and to *reinvigorate our world* by creating a culture in which individuals and communities thrive without disparities or barriers to success.

Our school has purposefully and consistently served a highly diverse student population since its inception

City Garden student enrollment by race / ethnicity (2009-17)

Legend:
- Hispanic
- Multi Racial / Other
- African American / Black
- White
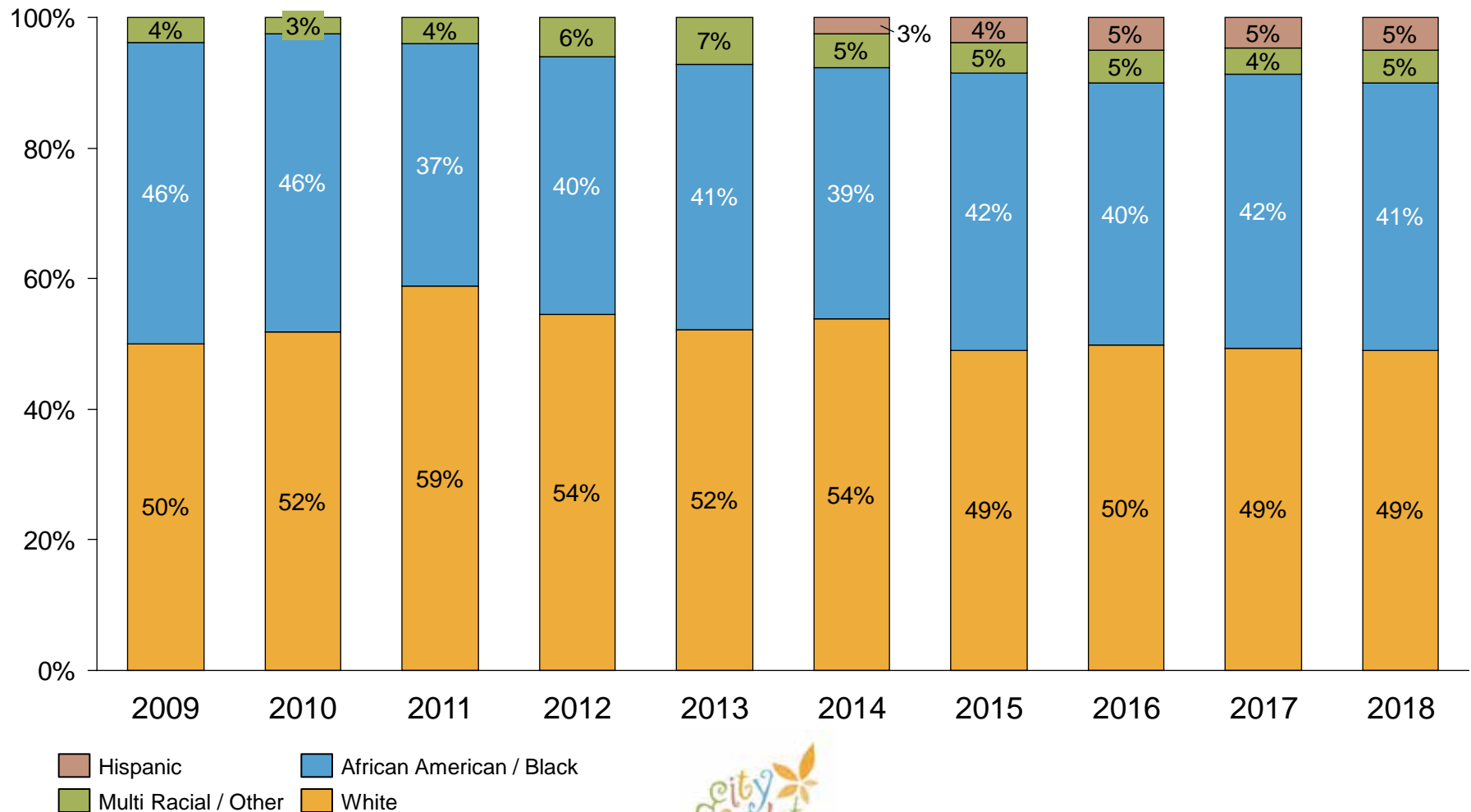
City Garden's ELA scores are routinely above state and SLPS averages, while math scores are near state average

Percent total students passing state **math** exam (2010-17)

Percent total students passing state **ELA** exam (2010-17)

Legend: State, SLPS, City Garden
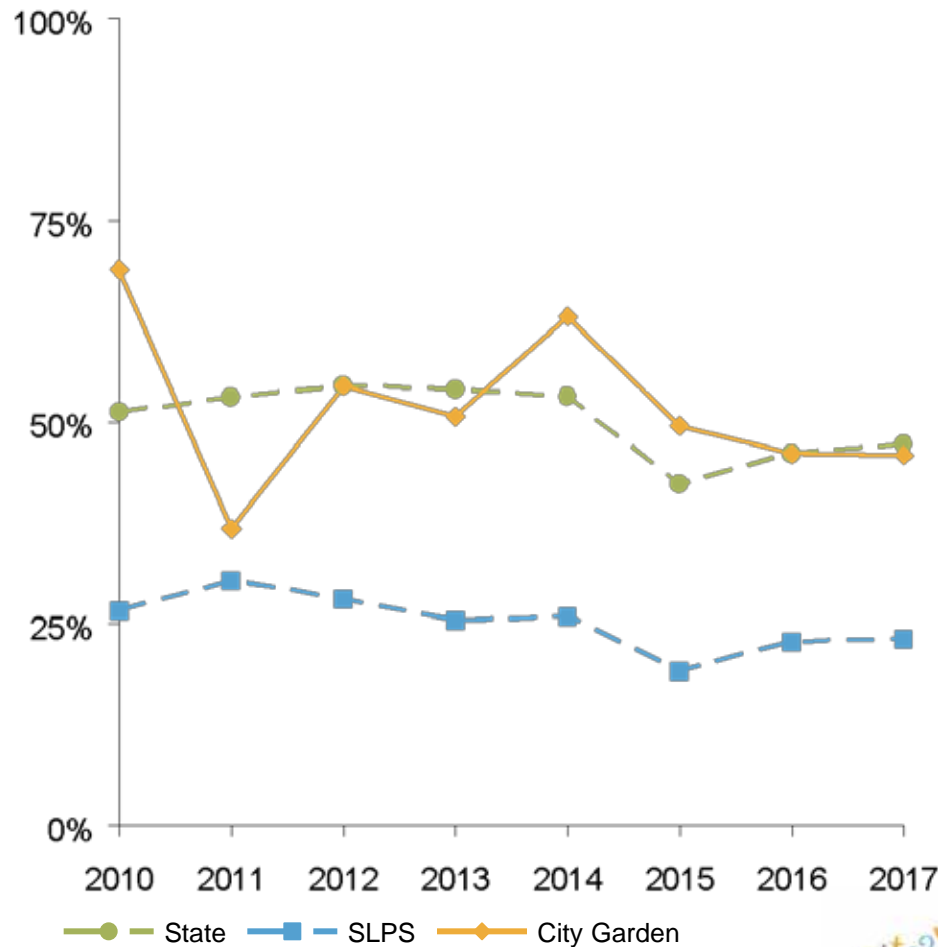
City Garden has invested significant resources to strengthen our academic programming in recent years

Time
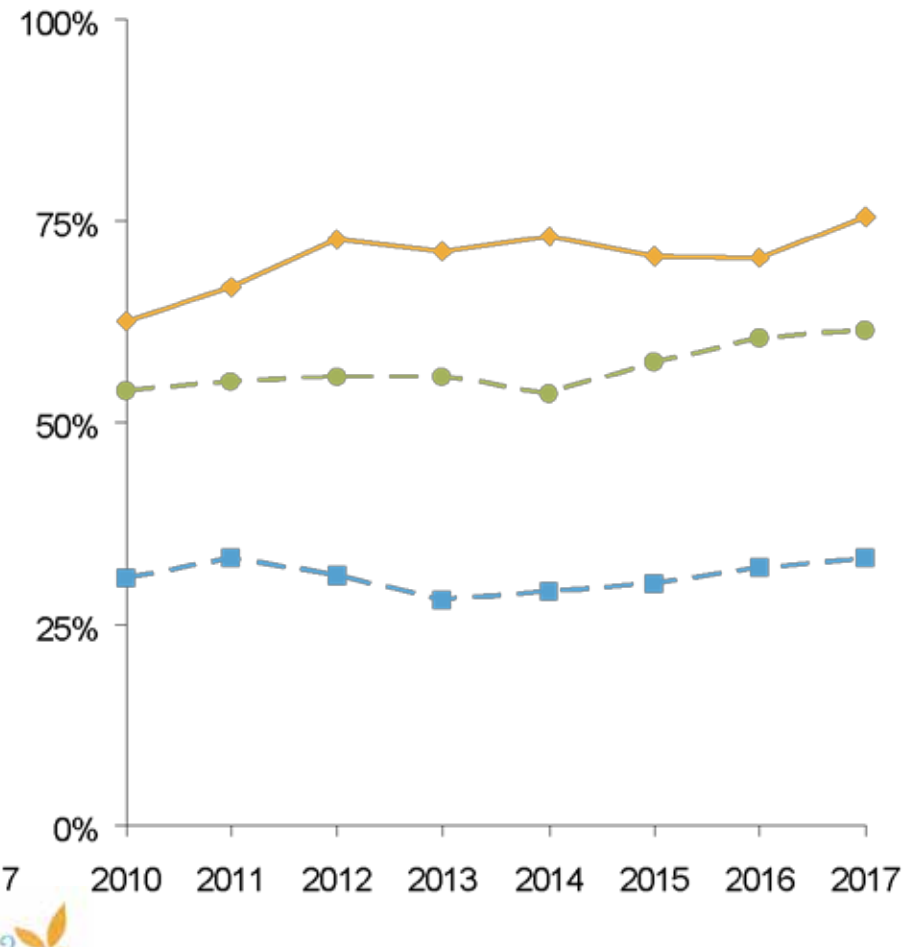- Increased uninterrupted instructional time within school day
- Created after school tutoring program for all students achieving below grade level
- Added bi-weekly PD time for instructional teams to reflect and problem solve
- Reduced time barriers for Lead Guides by eliminating all non-essential meetings

Tools
- Acquired Chromebooks to reduce testing time and increase instructional time
- Outlined scope and sequence to align curriculum from pre-K through 8th grade
- Implemented online Montessori record-keeping program as part of larger data initiative
- Began investigating paths to revitalize physical space through renovations

Training
- Developed comprehensive orientation for new, non-Montessori-trained staff
- Support Montessori training and state certification for guides and aspiring guides
- Ongoing professional development in anti-bias, anti-racism teaching practices
- Began investigating options for opening a Montessori training center

Trust & Team
- Revamped feedback, coaching, and accountability systems across the organization
- Increased transparency and consistency of communication from admin staff
- Revitalized parent engagement structure to facilitate feedback and volunteerism
- Began investigating network-level staff roles to support academic excellence

Market dynamics & growth plan

To determine our growth plan, we first identified four of the greatest needs in our school and surrounding community

Student Success
- We will strengthen our model to ensure that all students develop strong academic and social-emotional skills, eliminating racial and socioeconomic disparities

Teachers
- We will prepare excellent teachers that are publically-certified and Montessori-trained, to drive high achievement for all students

Schools
- We will provide more world class educational experiences, to meet student need and parent demand in St. Louis

Equity
- We will leverage our diverse community to create more equitable access to excellent anti-biased, anti-racist, Montessori education

Student Success: while City Garden's overall results are strong, gaps remain between white and non-white students

City Garden students passing state **math** exam (2014-16)
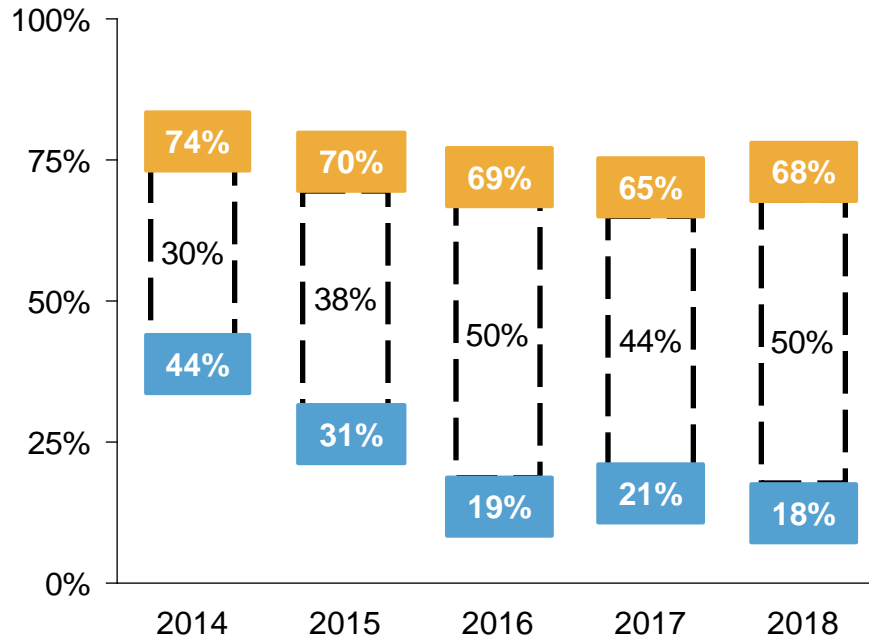
City Garden students passing state **ELA** exam (2014-16)
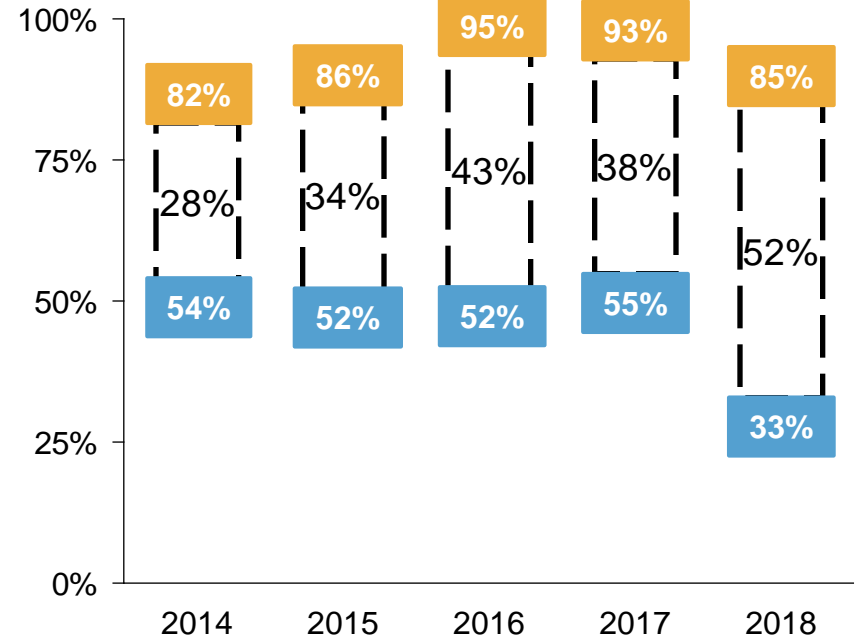
The top priority at City Garden is to maintain high student achievement, while simultaneously closing racial and socioeconomic gaps in our school. To this end, we have invested significant time and resources to better understand the root causes of these disparities, and have begun implementing solutions to ensure equitable outcomes for our students.

■ African America / Black   ■ White   ⌐⌐ Gap

Teachers: there are over 2,500 Montessori programs in the US, and a growing number of public providers

Nationally, there at least **518 public** Montessori programs and **2,058** private programs*

 Public Program

 Private Program

 Program Clusters
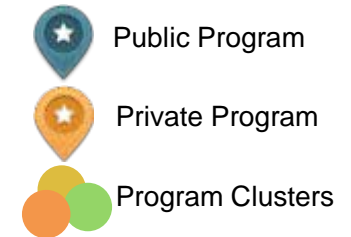
Midwest

St. Louis

Kansas City

Within Missouri, the majority of programs are located in St. Louis and Kansas City. There are also a handful of programs in Columbia, and single sites in Jefferson City and Springfield.

*These are the latest figures provided by the Montessori Census, which relies on self-reported program data. As such, these numbers almost certainly understate the number of Montessori programs in the US

Teachers: we see a clear demand for Montessori teacher training and certification, particularly in upper elementary

"We need Montessori-trained teachers if we believe Montessori is the way."

"Finding state-certified, Montessori-trained upper elementary teachers is incredibly challenging."

"The biggest obstacle to growth is finding teachers."

"Opening the training center is a necessity if we are going to grow to new schools."

"Montessori in the Public Sector is growing. I think there will be lots of competition, lots of pop-up training centers."

"Getting a training institute off the ground will be crucial due to the shortage of trained Montessori teachers in the public space."

"[City Garden] is going to be overwhelmed with demand; there are so many people who want a values-aligned teacher training program."

Schools: we also see an opportunity for City Garden schools to play a role in lifting student achievement in St. Louis

Percent total students passing state exams (2017)
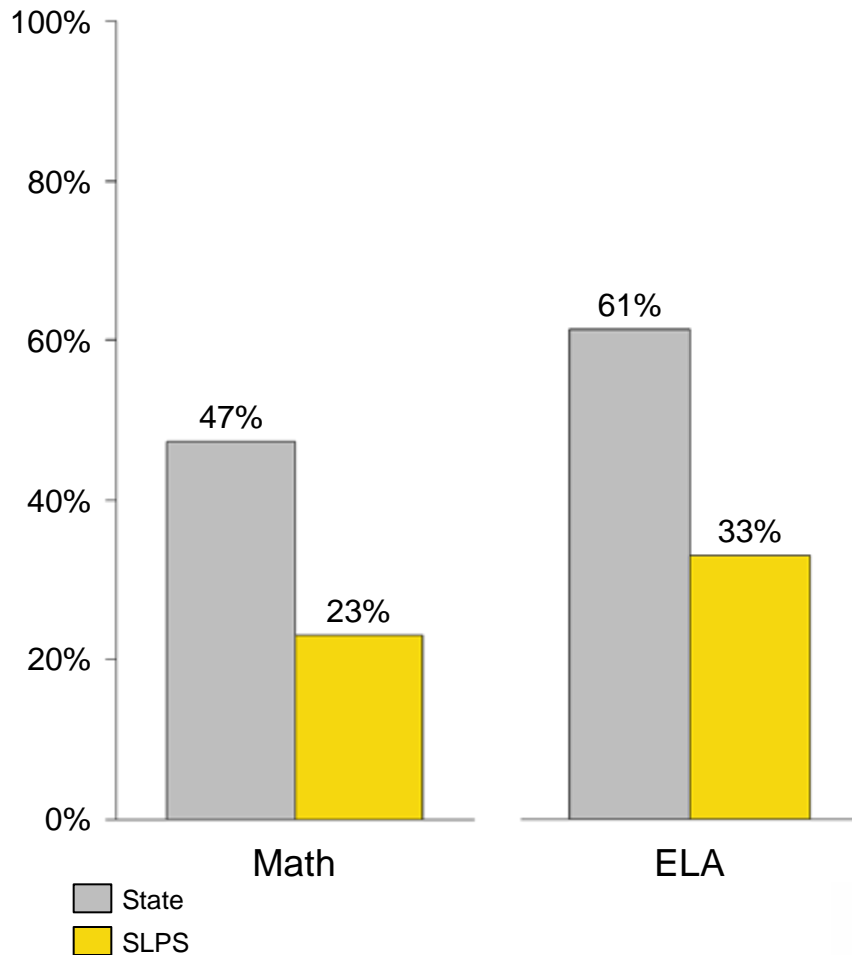
Percent total student eligible for free and reduced price lunch*

Non-F
2%

88%

FRL,8
8%
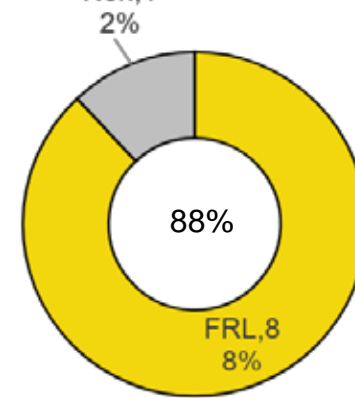
SLPS student enrollment by race / ethnicity (2017)

81%   13%   3%
              4%

Demographics

State
SLPS

African American / Black
White

Multi Racial / Other
Hispanic
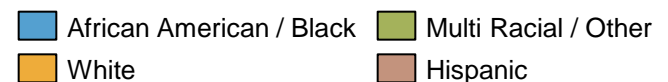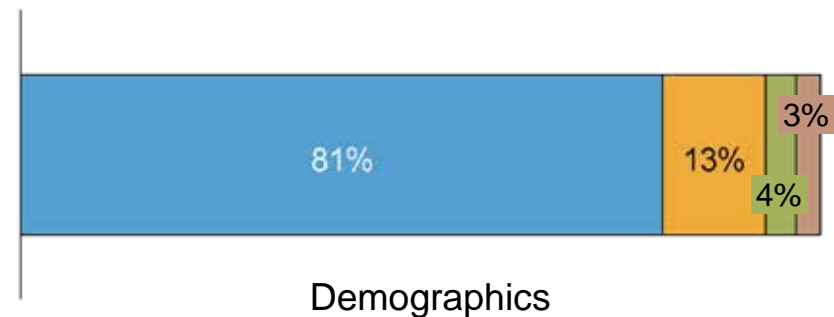
Schools: we have conducted preliminary analysis on three potential neighborhoods in which to open a new school site
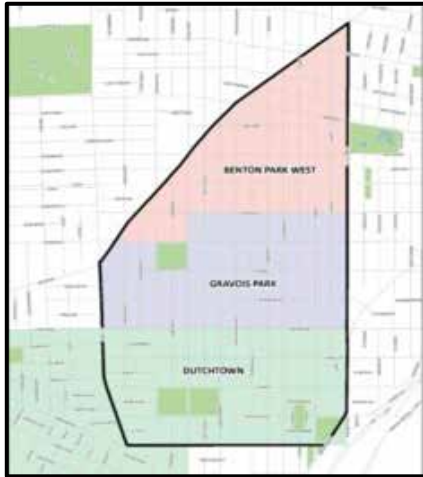
South Side

West End

The Ville

One of our principle activities over the next 1-2 years will be to identify the highest likelihood neighborhood for a new school and begin building relationships with key community leaders. City Garden's network staff will manage this initiative, with the Director for Center for Equity taking lead on community outreach stakeholder management.

Equity: diverse community stakeholders agree that addressing issues of equity is a deep need in St. Louis

An expert roundtable of community leaders shared insights that provide important context as City Garden considers its path forward (select key takeaways):

- **Segregation today exists between entire districts** (85% of segregation in public schools is between districts) and race relations are a decade or two behind

- **Gentrification is driving lower income people from their homes** and neighborhoods – maintaining diversity in neighborhoods is becoming more and more rare. People want to do something about it but don't know what needs to be done

- There is **declining enrollment in public schools**; SLPS is fully accredited but has some of the worst schools in the state (30% reading on grade level, significant achievement gap) – the **district is eager to support and partner with schools like City Garden** that are doing something different and effective

- The work of the Ferguson Commission and Forward through Ferguson has illuminated the **lack of infrastructure to help institutions do work with an ABAR lens** and the **importance of networks of institutions** working together to tackle intractable issues

With this context in mind, we asked ourselves how City Garden is best positioned to meet these needs

The Montessori method requires the preparation of 3 essential components for learning: the environment, child, and adult

Following the <u>child</u>

Serving the <u>child</u>

Preparing the <u>adult</u>

Preparing the <u>environment</u>
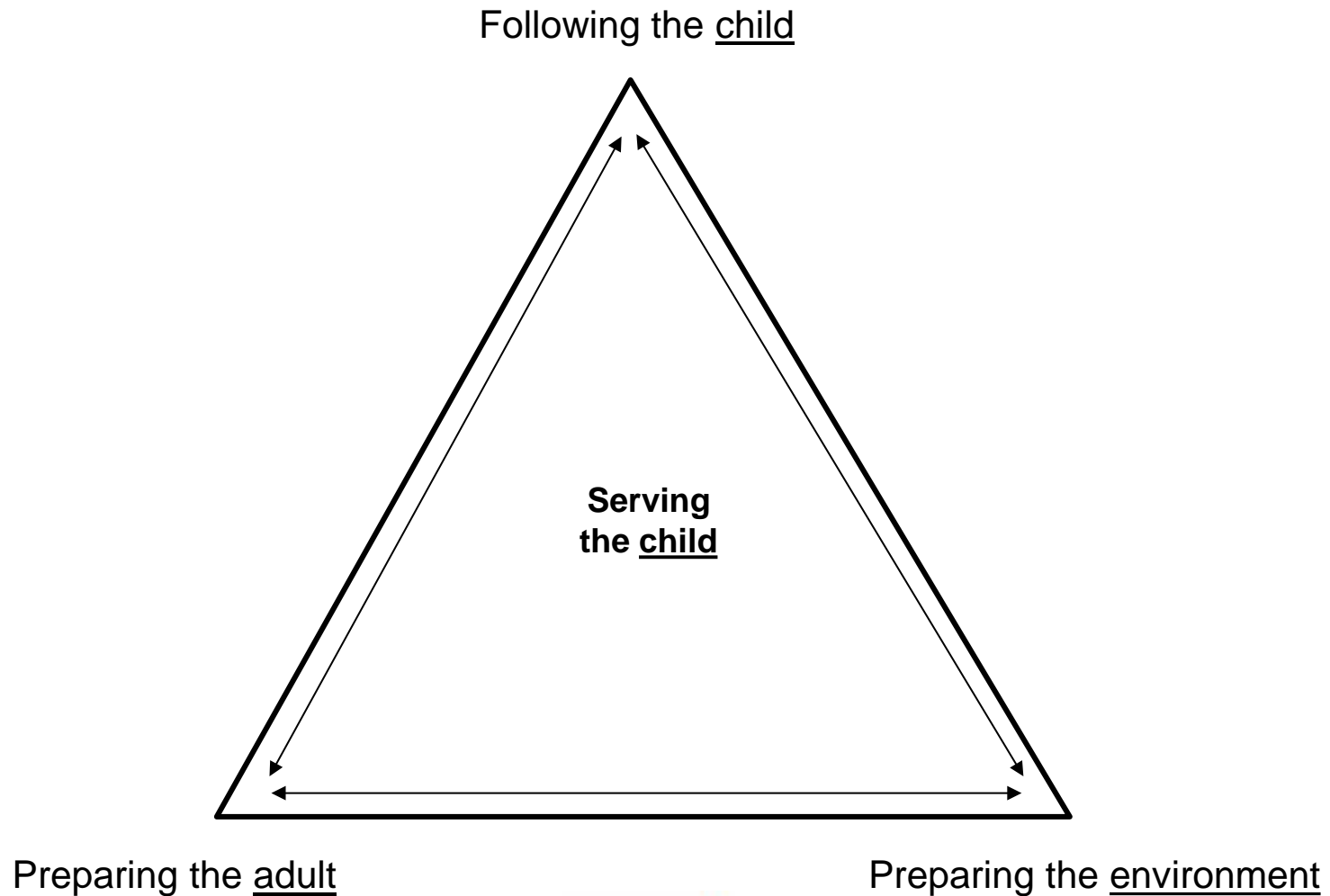
All plan elements - opening schools, a training institute, and Center for Equity - will support rigorous Montessori education

Following the <u>child</u>

Schools

Student Success

Institute

Center for Equity
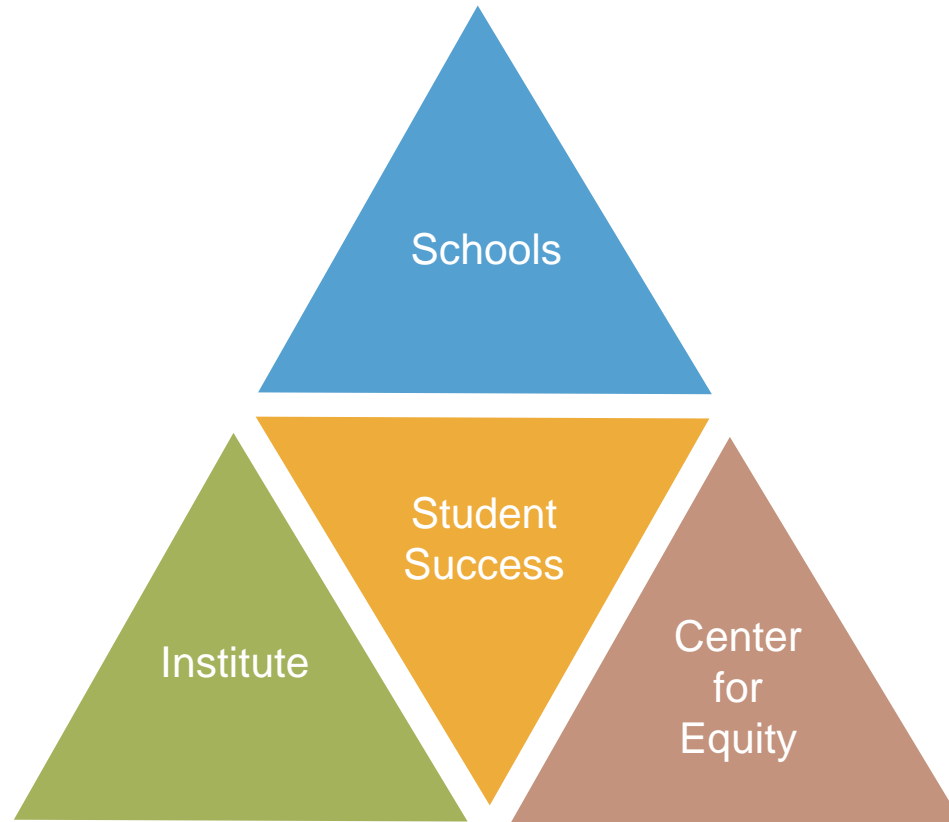
Preparing the <u>adult</u>

Preparing the <u>environment</u>

Each component of our plan will enable us to more deeply serve our students and surrounding community

Student Success
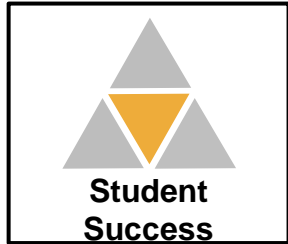
We will invest in support to codify our program model and support our teachers to continuously increase their effectiveness

→ We will eliminate racial and socioeconomic disparities in our school and will eventually share the City Garden model nationally

Institute

We will launch a training institute to prepare adults to lead anti-biased, anti-racist Montessori classrooms in a public setting

→ We will build a pipeline of excellent, equity-focused public Montessori teachers, dramatically increasing the number of Montessori teachers of color in St. Louis and the United States
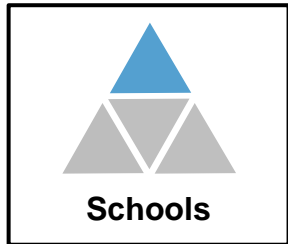
Schools

Over the next 10 years we will grow our flagship school and open 3 new schools in St. Louis

→ Our network of schools will increase from 278 students to over 2,300 students across St. Louis, and will become sustainable on public dollars

Center for Equity

We will build a center to lead efforts around community organizing, policy advocacy, and coalition building in our communities

→ We will see increased access to public Montessori in Missouri, increased access to affordable housing in our neighborhoods, and empowered parents advocating for educational equity

Our growth will come in phases, with a focus on strengthening our foundation in preparation for replication

Model Codification

Hire Chief Academic Officer

Deep Dive into Curric & Instr

Grow PK-K at Flagship

Launch New School 1

Launch New School 2

Launch New School 3

Sep 2018 — Sep 2019 — Sep 2020 — Sep 2021 — Sep 2022 — Sep 2023 — Sep 2024

Training Cohort 1 Launch

Training Cohort 2 Launch

Training Cohort 3 Launch

NS1 Community Engagement

NS2/3 Community Engagement

Hire Center for Equity Director

We are investing in support to codify our program model and support our teachers

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

Continue and deepen work already underway to strengthen program

Enhance coaching/instructional leadership capacity

Academic improvements, deep dive into C & I

Detailed codification

Ongoing refinement of the model

★ Deep dive into curriculum & instruction

★ Hire CAO

★ Codification support

- City Garden is currently working with a partner who is helping to assess our current approach and to develop a plan to improve academic outcomes

- An important hire next year will be a Chief Academic Officer who will be a key leader at City Garden, both for our schools and for the training institute, and who will drive increased investment in training and coaching City Garden teachers.

- We have articulated our "North Star" - the outcomes we seek for graduates and the core beliefs and principles underlying our model. Next we will embark on deep work to codify and develop the details of our model and approach to improve our practice and set us up for successful growth.

To strengthen our current schools and prepare for quality growth, we want to solidify and codify our approach

Student Success

Phase	Goal	Activities
1 Prove	• Assess whether your school model is ready to share • Demonstrate sustained history of student outcomes & impact • Communicate rationale for growth/sharing	❑ Readiness to Expand Impact Assessment ❑ Data Deep Dive
2 Design	• Articulate target graduate outcomes • Articulate beliefs and principles that enable school model • Outline core elements for students	❑ Graduate Outcomes ❑ Beliefs & Principles ❑ Core elements
3 Codify	• Map the standards (learning goals) used by the school • Define approach to curriculum, assessment, and instruction • Develop recruitment and talent philosophy • Identify elements of culture / school structure that enable model	❑ Standards ❑ Instructional Approach ❑ Talent Approach ❑ School Culture/System
4 Pilot	• Refine elements of school model required for fidelity • Plan communication structures across school sites • Implement feedback loop to drive continuous improvement	❑ Model Refinement ❑ Network Comms ❑ Learning Agenda
5 Scale	• Identify additional investments required to achieve scale • Manage growth-related changes within organization • Consider other areas important to scaling successfully	❑ Financial Model ❑ Systems, processes, tools needed to scale

We will focus on the key elements of our model design as well as deeper codification over the next year

1 Prove	
2 Design	
3 Codify	
4 Pilot	
5 Scale	

q **Graduate Outcomes.** In this module, you specify what students will have achieved upon graduating from your school. What is the profile of a successful graduate? What knowledge, skills, and mindsets will your graduates display? How will you know if you have been successful?

q **Beliefs & Principles.** In this module, you will articulate the core elements of your mission that will guide school design. What set of beliefs and principles are central to your philosophy of education?

q **Core elements:** In this module, you will describe the key components of the student experience. What does a day or year at your school look like for students? for staff? What are the key non-negotiables for the model?

Focus of next phase of work

q **Instructional Approach.** In this module, you will identify the standards, curricula, assessments, and instructional methods you will use in your school. How do you ensure standards alignment? How will you support vertical and horizontal alignment?

q **Talent Approach.** In this module, you will define the talent philosophy of your school, including your approach to recruiting talent, onboarding new employees, developing staff, and retaining team members. What are your plans for maintaining a 'talent-ready' workplace that attracts, supports, and sustains great people?

q **School Systems / Culture.** In this module, you will describe your approach to building and maintaining school culture. Given your target graduate outcomes and school model defined above, what are the key cultural elements needed to enable those outcomes? What are the school systems/processes that support that culture? Here we place particular emphasis on the systems and processes that drive success given the specifics of your school model.

We are also deep in the planning for piloting our Montessori Teacher Training Program

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

Institute design team

MACTE accreditation process

Pilot standalone offerings

Training cohort #1

Training cohort #2

★ Hire Training Director

★ Launch pilot cohort

★ Launch 2nd cohort
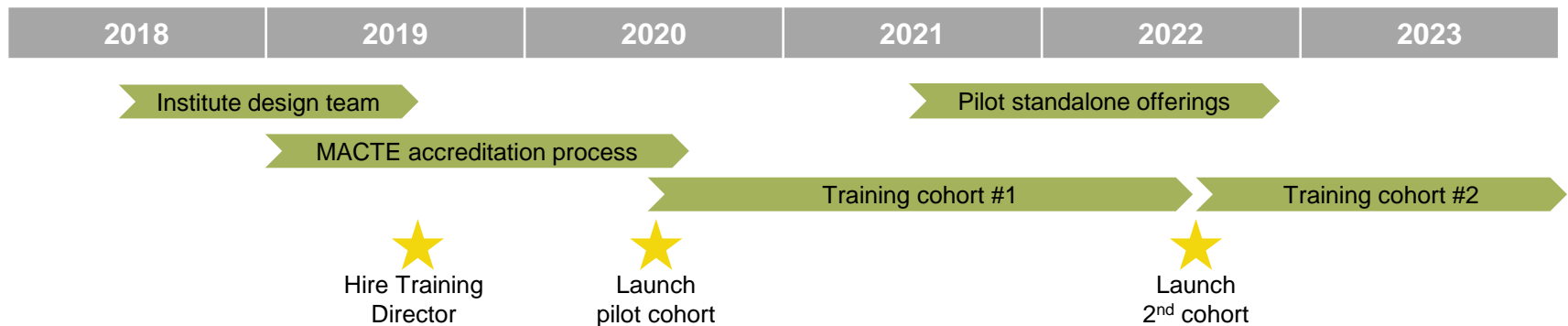
- During the fall of 2018 we engaged the Institute Design Team, a group of external thought partners to provide input into the philosophy and design of the training program

- We have begun the multi-year process of applying for MACTE accreditation for the training center

- We will hire a Training Center Director next year in preparation for our pilot cohort starting in summer 2020

- In summer of 2020 we will launch our pilot cohort of ~15-25 participants (some of whom will be City Garden teachers, some STL district teachers, some teachers from outside of STL). The training will span 3 summers and 2 school years and include in-person sessions, a self-guided teaching practicum, coaching and PD, and virtual weekend seminars

The Institute will launch with the Elementary Training Program - other programs will be added over time

City Garden Institute

| **Elementary Training Program** | **Primary Training Program** | **Adolescent Training Program** | **Standalone ABAR Training Program** |

2020 pilot

To be developed over time
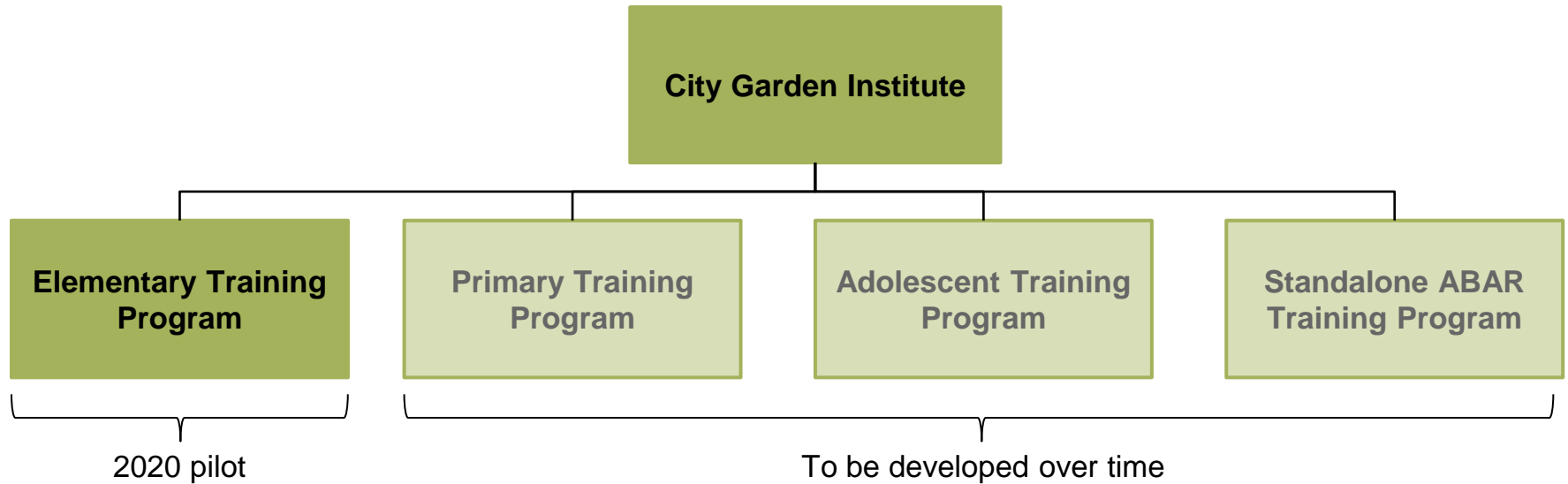
City Garden Institute Mission Statement:

The mission of the City Garden Institute is to provide learning opportunities that prepare adults to implement an anti-biased, anti-racist, Montessori school model.

We have defined a mission statement and intended outcomes for the elementary training program

Mission

The mission of City Garden Institute's Montessori teacher education program is to prepare anti-biased, anti-racist (ABAR) Montessori educators in public school environments; to increase access to Montessori training among People of Color and other historically marginalized groups; and thereby to offer relevant, rigorous Montessori education to children and their families.
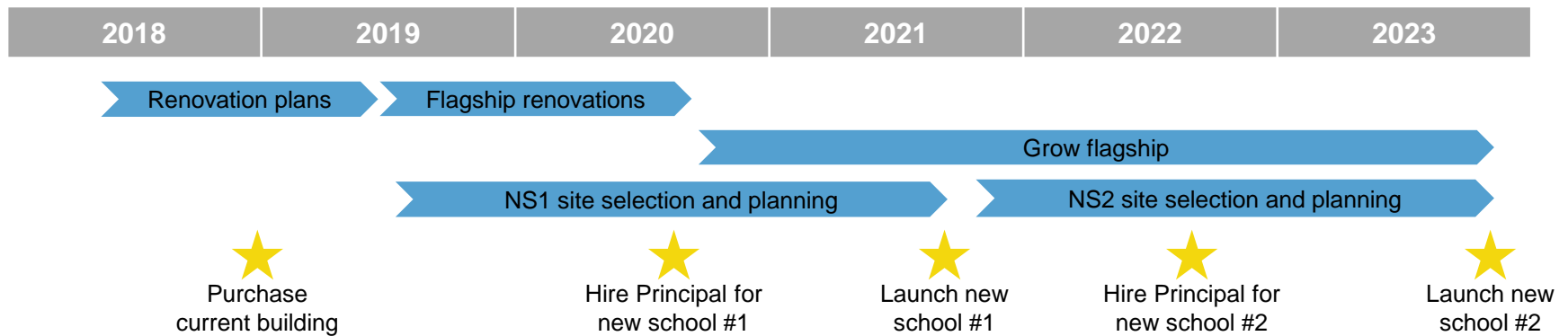
Outcomes

Upon completion of the training program, Elementary Guides will be able to:

- Maintain a culturally responsive prepared environment appropriate to the Developmental needs of Second-Plane children, ages 6 to 12.

- Foster courageous, supportive, compassionate relationships with their students and the community of adults in their environment.

- Systematically and empirically observe students to track key strengths, needs, developmental milestones, and academic growth.

- Plan and facilitate lessons, and assessments in all subject areas using Montessori materials and aligned supplementary, or complementary materials.

- Individualize student learning by leveraging didactic materials and subject matter that match with their multiple intelligences.

- Develop and maintain systems that support student ownership of their learning

- Interpret assessment data to inform the facilitation of experiences that are conducive to learning, and that will diminish academic disparities and achieve equitable outcomes.

- Conduct action research to solve a challenge presented in their environment, or to attempt to answer a lingering question in the broader Montessori sector.

Students of City Garden-trained Montessori Elementary Guides will:

- Be on track for mastery of both Montessori curriculum and assessed state standards

- Demonstrate age-appropriate executive functioning skills

- Develop positive personal and social identities

- Demonstrate self-awareness and self-esteem in their own racial and ethnic identity

- Demonstrate awareness of intersectionality

- Demonstrate ability to apply power analyses and articulate inequities

- Take action as an advocate and ally

- Demonstrate ability to identify and pursue interests with confidence and persistence

- Analyze literature, media, and cultural events and news with an ABAR lens, focusing on the experiences and perspectives of people of color within and beyond the United States

We will grow our current school first and then plan for the opening of 2 additional schools, phased over time

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

Renovation plans → Flagship renovations

Grow flagship

NS1 site selection and planning

NS2 site selection and planning

★ Purchase current building

★ Hire Principal for new school #1

★ Launch new school #1

★ Hire Principal for new school #2

★ Launch new school #2

- City Garden is in discussions to purchase the current building; we would then embark on renovations to expand the building to prepare for increased enrollment

- Starting in the 20-21 school year we will begin to increase enrollment at the flagship school, which will support both increased financial sustainability and enhanced offerings and support for our students

- We hope to open the doors of a second City Garden school in the 21-22 school year, growing enrollment gradually over time; we would then launch the third school two years later. Our elementary training program will provide a strong foundation of trained Montessori teachers for our new schools

- We have developed a clear "greenlighting" approach to guide decision-making about new school openings and ensure the existing schools and organization are thriving before embarking on growth

Over time, the scale and ambition of our plan to impact student outcomes is far-reaching

City Garden projected student enrollment (2018-29)

- ■ Flagship (yellow)
- ■ New School 1 (blue)
- ■ New School 2 (green)
- ■ New School 3 (brown)

Values: 285, 280, 330, 615, 750, 1,100, 1,520, 1,765, 1,970, 2,155, 2,320, 2,410, 2,495, 2,540

Years: 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25, 2025-26, 2026-27, 2027-28, 2028-29, 2029-30, 2030-31, 2031-32
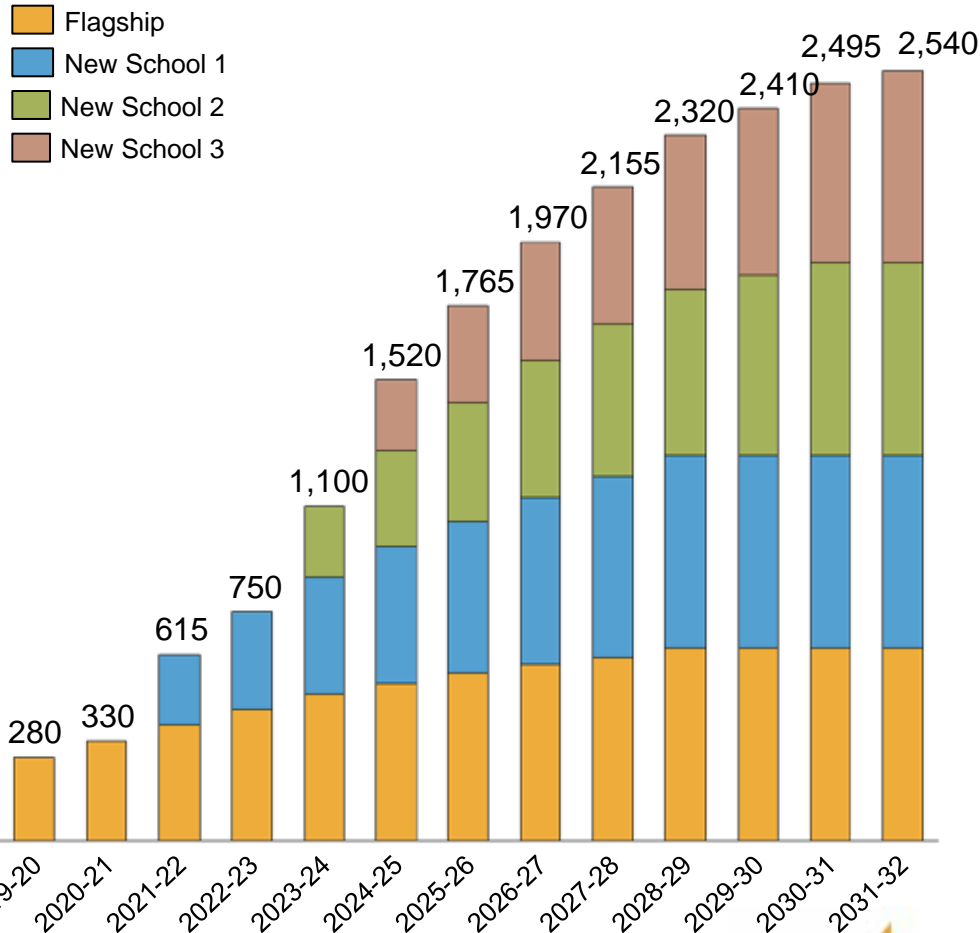
➢ 10% of all public elementary school children in STL will have access to a free, public Montessori education with an anti-bias, anti-racism mission

➢ The Montessori training institute will prepare teachers locally and nationally to power and spread the City Garden model

➢ A diverse coalition of parents and educators will tackle issues of inequity across St. Louis

We will develop a Center for Equity to drive community organizing, policy advocacy, and coalition building

2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

Pursue key policy items (e.g., weighted lottery, Montessori certification, early childhood)

Continue community engagement and housing work in current neighborhood

Neighborhood engagement for NS1

Neighborhood engagement for NS2

Long-term CfE planning

Hire CfE Director
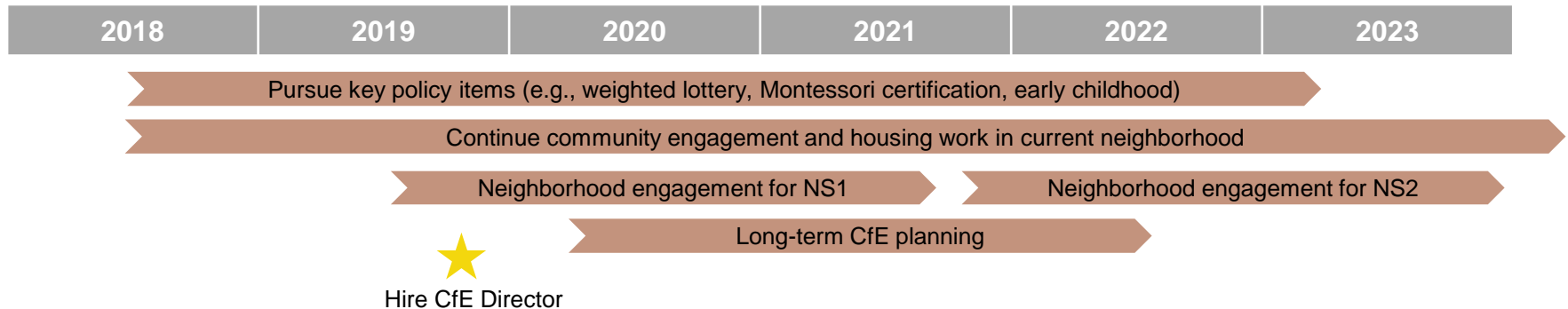
- City Garden will continue to participate in advocacy about key policy areas that impact our schools and engage our community on important issues

- As we explore neighborhoods for potential new school openings, we will engage deeply with communities to understand needs and plan collaboratively for the new school

- By the end of 2019 we will hire a Center for Equity Director who will do the deeper work of designing the vision for the Center and drive forward our work on community organizing, policy advocacy, and coalition building

CfE

- Over the next 3-5 years, the City Garden Center for Equity will:

    - **Build knowledge and capacity in City Garden's communities** to organize and advocate for themselves and their communities (e.g., re: housing and development, maintaining economic and racial diversity, financial literacy, political power). This would include direct programming for parents and community members.

    - **Leverage City Garden connections in housing and development** and act as a convener of like minded individuals in the sector.

    - **Act as a hub or convener to advance policies** necessary for City Garden to thrive, connecting with existing organizations like MPPI, MACTE, and CDCS to build coalitions and capacity in St. Louis and Missouri to remove obstacles to student success and to support families' wellbeing. Policy advocacy will include issues like teacher certification, weighted lottery, early childhood funding, etc.

> This will be the Center for Equity's only direct work, focused on the communities where there are City Garden schools

> The Center for Equity will not play a direct role in housing and development

> The Center for Equity will not be a lobbying organization

Staffing the near term will be 1 Director to drive the work above and set a more detailed vision for the Center for Equity's future. The Director's first priority will be to build relationships and partnerships in the neighborhoods of City Garden New School #1.

The Center for Equity's activities will be focused on what will directly help City Garden students and families thrive - preparing the environment for City Garden's students.

Organization design: school, network, & staffing models

We benchmarked several high performing CMOs to inform City Garden's long term network model and org structure

Less centralized → More centralized

NOBLE   BCS Brooke CHARTER SCHOOLS   CITY on·a HILL   R REPUBLIC SCHOOLS

While there is no "right model," **alignment within a network on key elements is critical to success**

We benchmarked City Garden against these and other organizations on three design elements:

1 Organizational Structure

2 Staffing Levels

3 Degree of centralized control

While benchmarks provide useful data points, City Garden employs a unique model that requires more nuanced thinking about how the network will be structured, staffed, and managed to support the schools

City Garden will operate a relatively tight network to ensure consistency and achieve economies of scale

Some site-based community engagement with support and coordination from the network

Data management largely centralized – collaboration with schools on setting student goals

Centralized academic program – some variation in enrichment and schedules

- Alumni engagement
- Community outreach
- Parent engagement

- Student goals
- Data collection, analysis, reporting

- Curriculum, instruction, assessments
- Mission, values
- Behavior approach
- Core subjects

Less centralized

More centralized

- Recruiting, hiring
- PD and support
- Staffing model

- Facilities management
- Food and health services
- Fundraising and fund management
- IT
- Purchasing
- Branding and marketing
- Student recruitment and enrollment

Human Resources and Talent will be centralized – compensation and policies will be unified across the network

Ops, Finance, Marketing, and enrollment will be centralized

Individual schools will provide a portion of their revenues to the network office, which will provide support in return
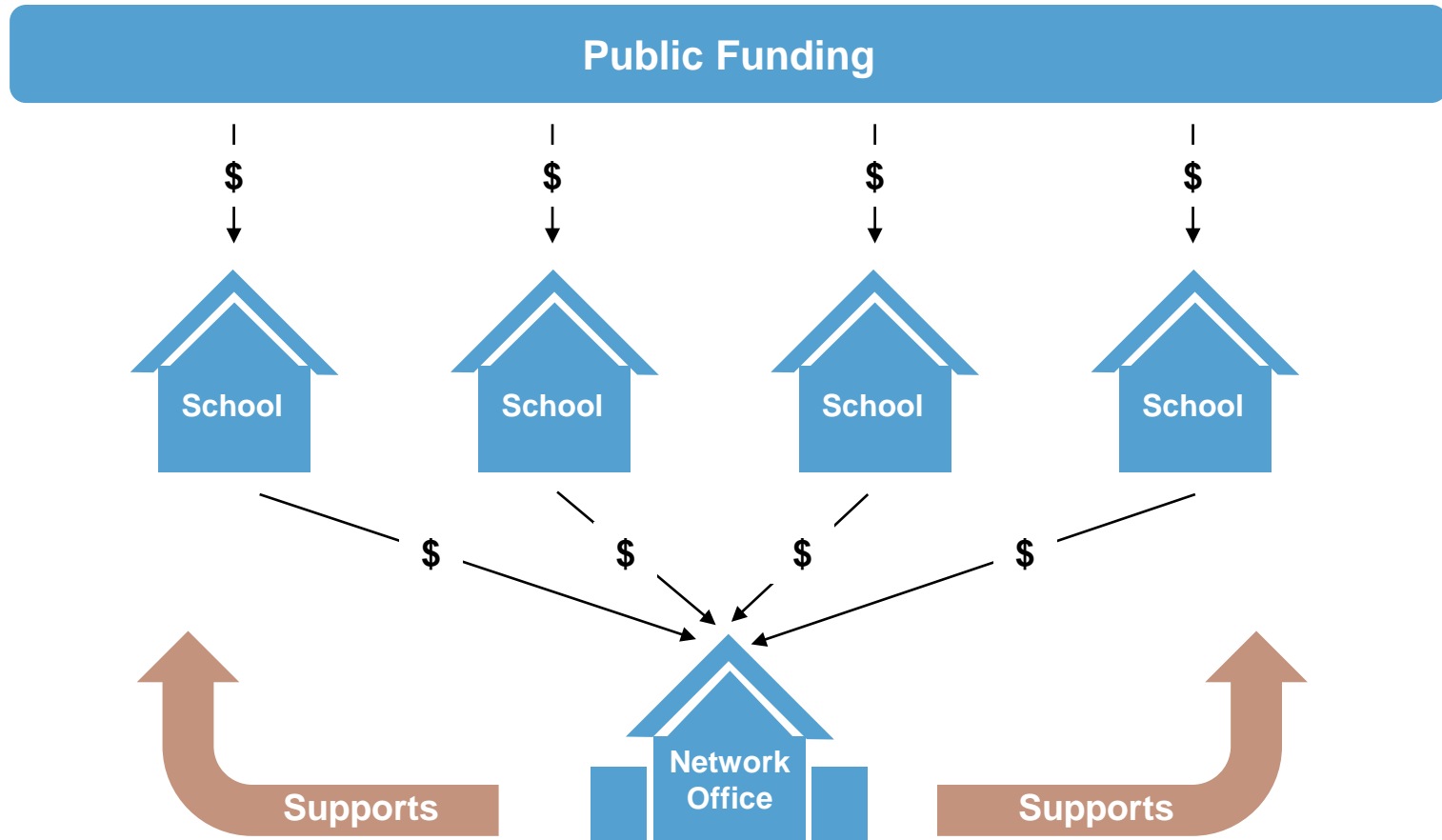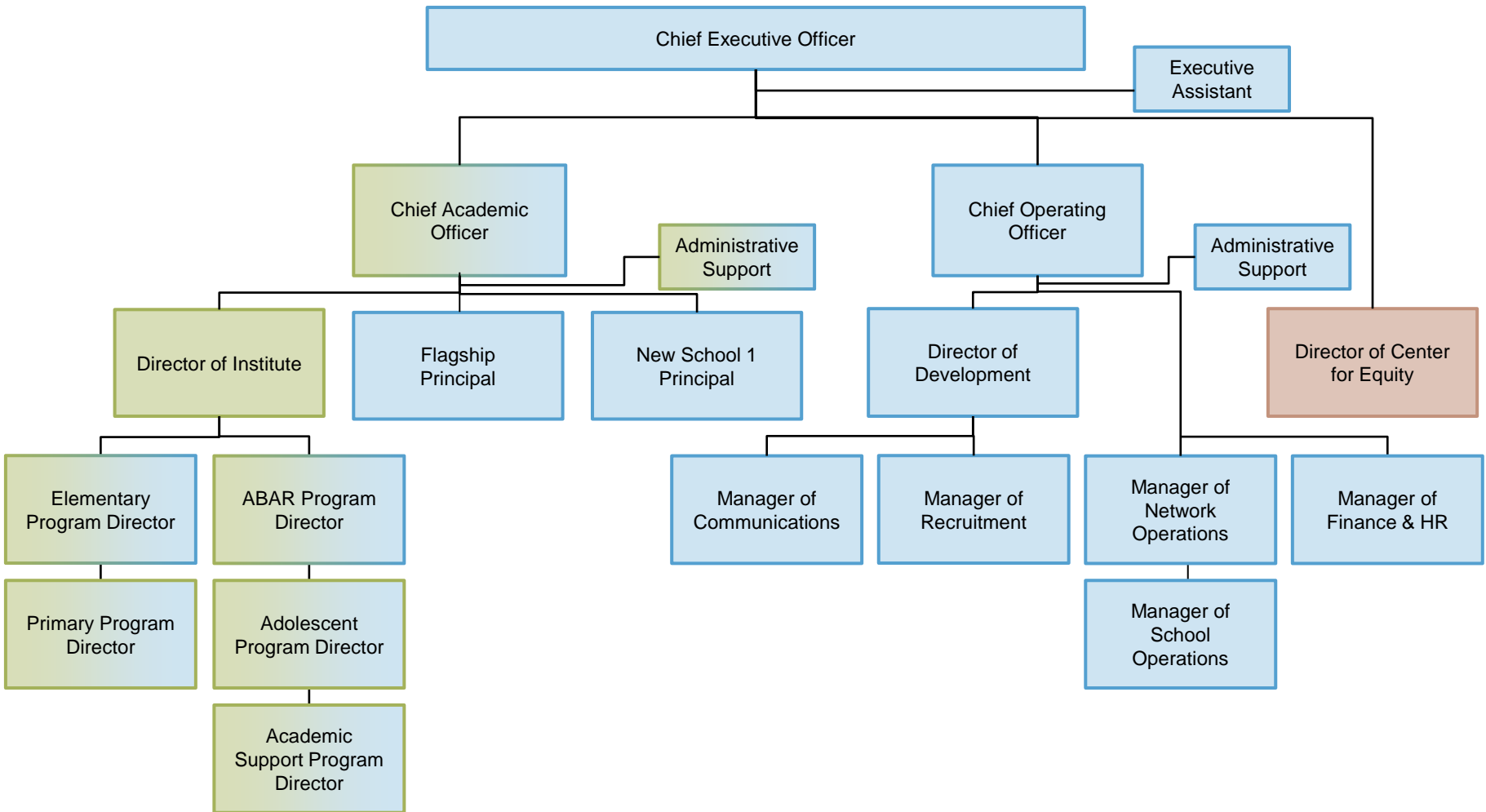
At scale, a single City Garden school will employ 78 FTEs to support 635 students across grades PK-8
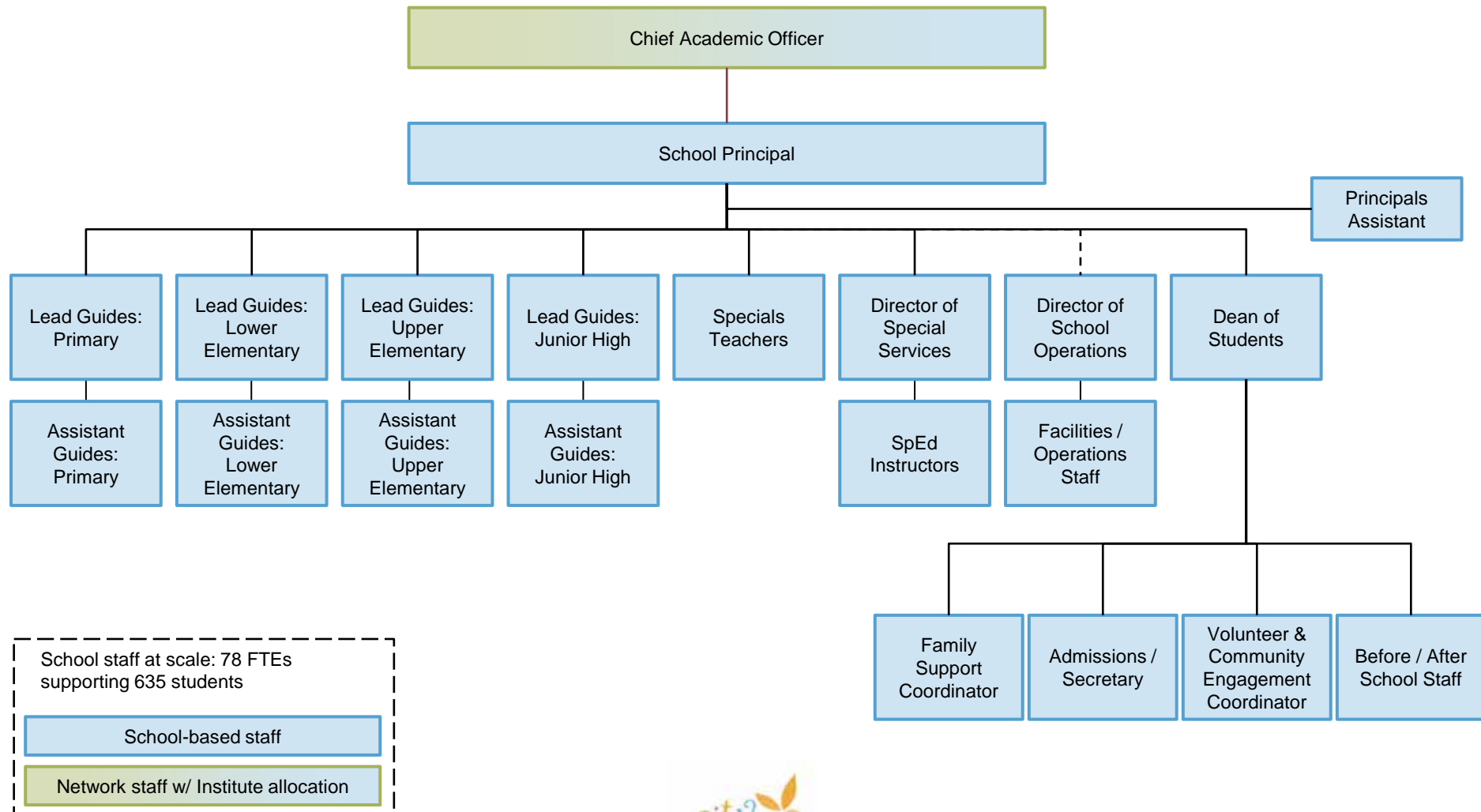
Note: Facilities Managers report to Network Director of Finance and Operations, with a dotted line to principals

# At scale, City Garden network staff will include 21 FTEs supporting 2,500 students across ~4 school sites

Organizational chart:

- Chief Executive Officer
  - Executive Assistant
  - Chief Academic Officer
    - Administrative Support
    - Director of Institute
      - Elementary Program Director
        - Primary Program Director
      - ABAR Program Director
        - Adolescent Program Director
          - Academic Support Program Director
    - Flagship Principal
    - New School 1 Principal
  - Chief Operating Officer
    - Administrative Support
    - Director of Development
      - Manager of Communications
      - Manager of Recruitment
    - Manager of Network Operations
      - Manager of School Operations
    - Manager of Finance & HR
  - Director of Center for Equity

We will focus on building out our network team in the coming years to support our growth


2018-19

- 8 FTEs supporting 280 students in 1 school

- No new hires; using this year to launch CAO search and plan for opening of training institute

- Focus: codify school model, **launch CAO search**, **and lay the groundwork to pilot the elementary training program** in the summer of 2020; early investment in creating pipeline of excellent lead guides will help fuel school growth in later years
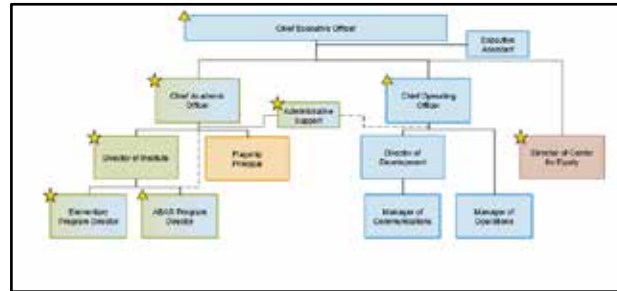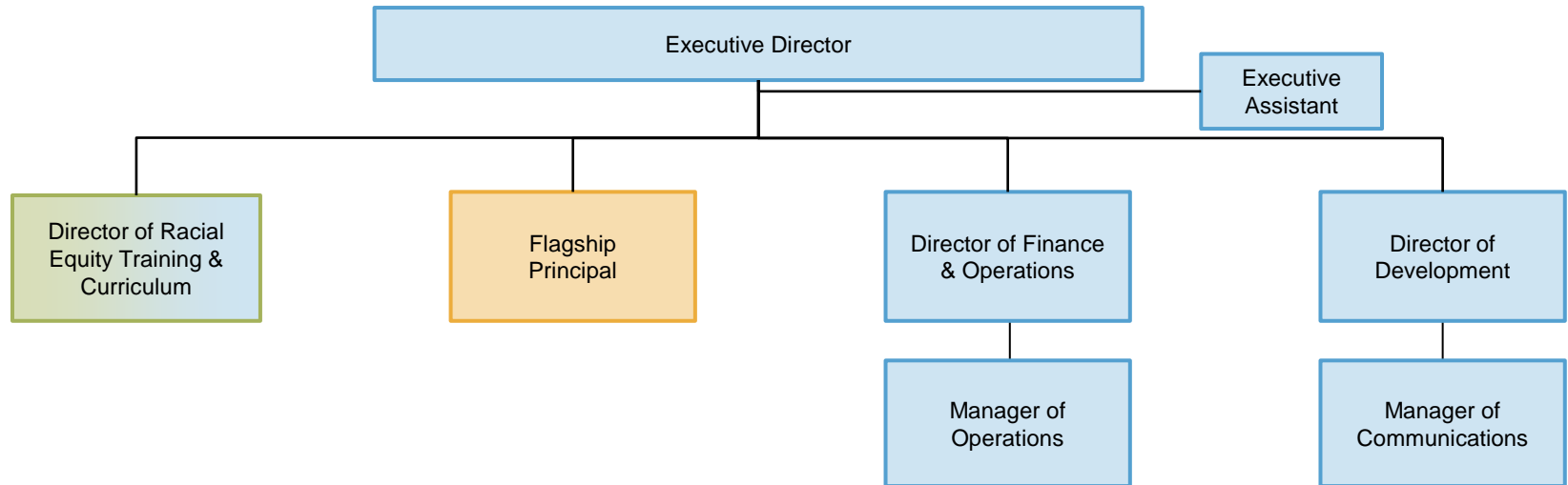
2019-20

- 13 FTEs supporting 280 students in 1 school

- 6 new hires: Chief Academic Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Director of Institute, Elementary Program Director, Director of Center for Equity, Administrative Support staff

- Focus: **solidify senior leadership team** with the critical hire of CAO and transitions of CEO and COO roles. Bring on the Directors of Institute and CFE; additional admin support to be shared across school & institute teams.
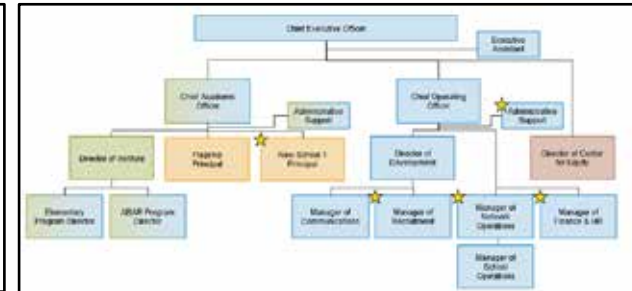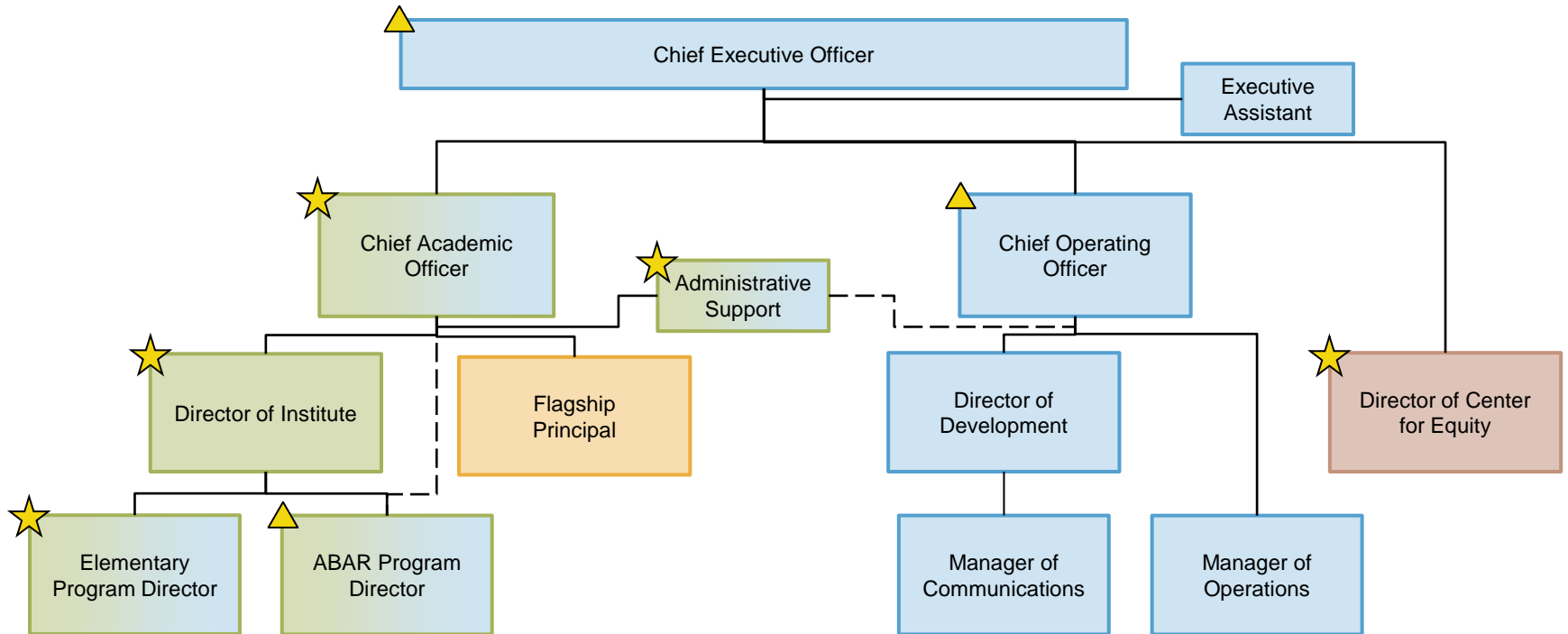
2020-21

- 18 FTEs supporting 330 students in 1 school

- 5 new hires: Principal for New School #1, Manager of Recruitment, Manager of Network Operations, Manager of Finance & HR, Administrative Support staff

- Focus: **prepare to open new school site** in SY21-22; staffing needed for school leadership, recruitment, and increased operations workload

City Garden network staff: 2018-19

Executive Director

Executive Assistant

Director of Racial Equity Training & Curriculum

Flagship Principal

Director of Finance & Operations

Director of Development

Manager of Operations

Manager of Communications

Network staff in 2019: 8 FTEs supporting 285 students in 1 school

CMO (school support)	6.5 FTEs
Training Institute	0.5 FTEs
School-based Staff	1 FTE
Center for Equity	0 FTE

△ = change in title and/or scope to existing position

City Garden network staff: 2019-20

Organizational chart:

- **Chief Executive Officer** (change in title/scope)
  - **Executive Assistant**
  - **Chief Academic Officer** (new hire)
    - **Administrative Support** (new hire)
    - **Director of Institute** (new hire)
      - **Elementary Program Director** (new hire)
      - **ABAR Program Director** (change in title/scope)
    - **Flagship Principal**
  - **Chief Operating Officer** (change in title/scope)
    - **Director of Development**
      - **Manager of Communications**
      - **Manager of Operations**
  - **Director of Center for Equity** (new hire)

Network staff in 2020: 13 FTEs supporting 285 students in 1 school

Category	FTEs
CMO (school support)	8 FTEs
Training Institute	3 FTEs
School-based Staff	1 FTE
Center for Equity	1 FTE

⭐ = new hire

🔺 = change in title and/or scope to existing position

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City Garden network staff: 2020-21

Organizational chart:

- **Chief Executive Officer**
  - **Executive Assistant**
  - **Chief Academic Officer**
    - **Administrative Support**
    - **Director of Institute**
      - **Elementary Program Director**
      - **ABAR Program Director**
    - **Flagship Principal**
    - **New School 1 Principal** (★ new hire)
  - **Chief Operating Officer**
    - **Administrative Support** (★ new hire)
    - **Director of Development**
      - **Manager of Communications**
      - **Manager of Recruitment** (★ new hire)
      - **Manager of Network Operations** (★ new hire)
        - **Manager of School Operations**
      - **Manager of Finance & HR** (★ new hire)
    - **Director of Center for Equity**

Network staff in 2021: 18 FTEs supporting 330 students in 1 school

Category	FTEs
CMO (school support)	12 FTEs
Training Institute	3 FTEs
School-based Staff	2 FTEs
Center for Equity	1 FTE

★ = new hire

▲ = change in title and/or scope to existing position

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Financial projections & fundraising

City Garden will increase the size of the school to achieve greater financial sustainability

City Garden projected revenue and expenses of a **single school site** at scale (2028-29)
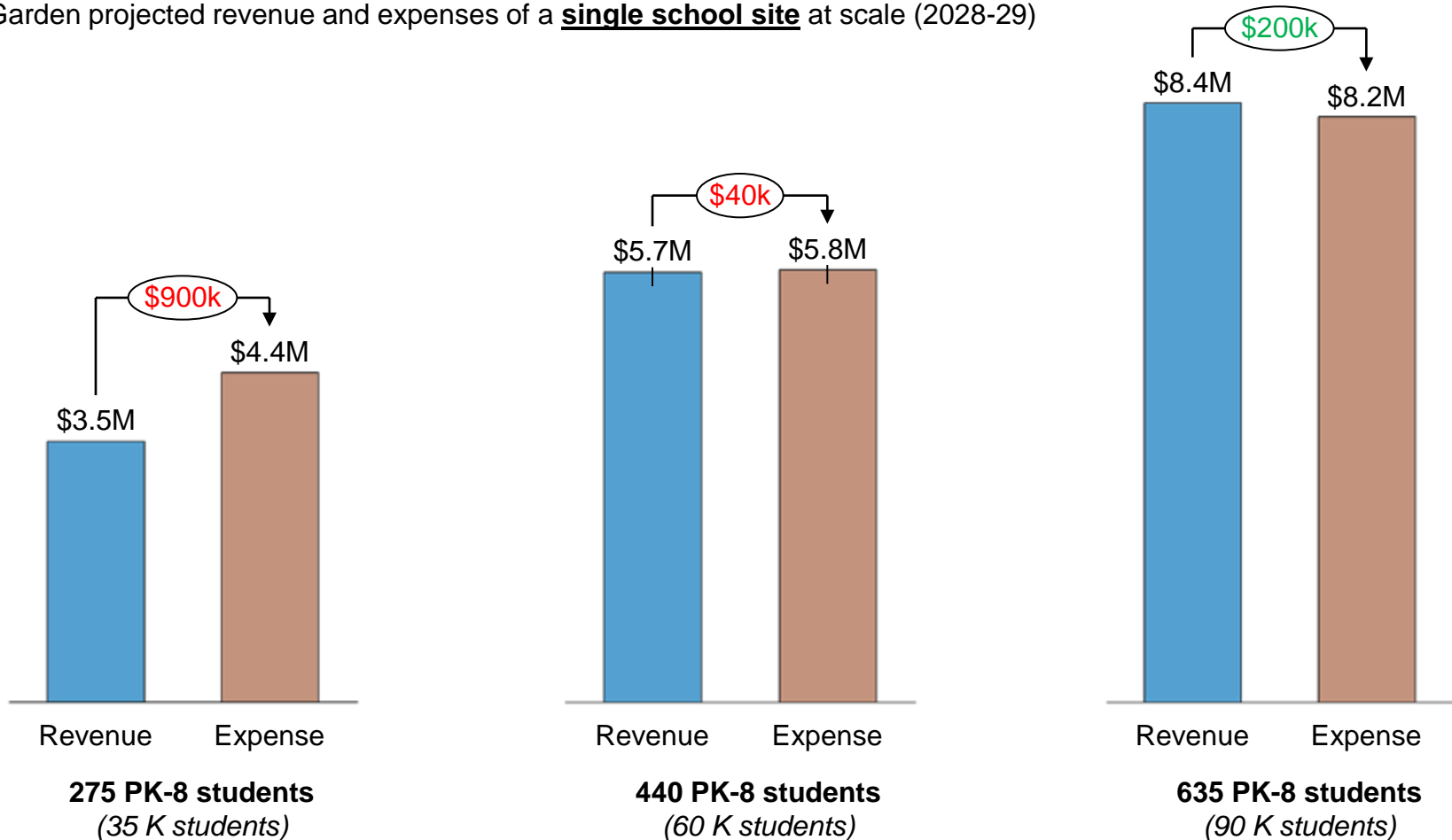
275 PK-8 students
(35 K students)

$900k

$3.5M
$4.4M

Revenue   Expense

440 PK-8 students
(60 K students)

$40k

$5.7M $5.8M

Revenue   Expense

635 PK-8 students
(90 K students)

$200k

$8.4M
$8.2M

Revenue   Expense

Note: these are operating expenses only and do not reflect maintaining a 45-day cash reserve

We have prioritized designing a model that will be sustainable on public dollars

City Garden revenue and expenses across the network (2018-2031)
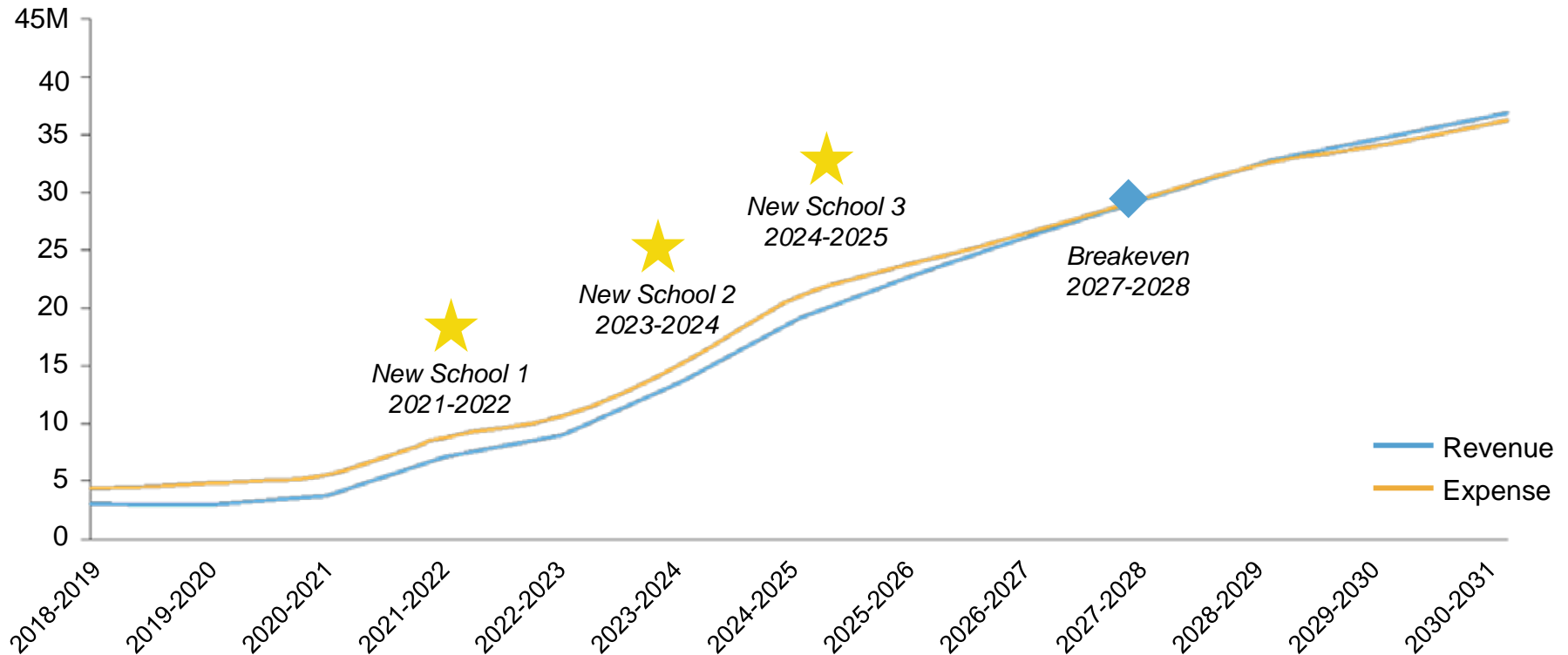
Based on our projections, we expect our network to become sustainable on public dollars after opening our third school

Our goal is to raise $10.8M over the next five years

City Garden required philanthropy (2018-2023)

$2.6M
$0.4M
$2.2M

$1.9M
$0.1M
$1.8M

$2.2M
$0.1M
$2.1M

$2.5M
$0.2M
$2.3M

$1.5M
$0.1M
$1.4M

$10.8M
$0.1M
$1.0M
$9.7M

The lion's share of funds raised will support school growth; we are also seeking $1M to launch the training institute

| 2018-2019 | 2019-2020 | 2020-2021 | 2021-2022 | 2022-2023 | Total Philanthropy |

Legend: ■ Schools ■ Insitute ■ Center for Equity
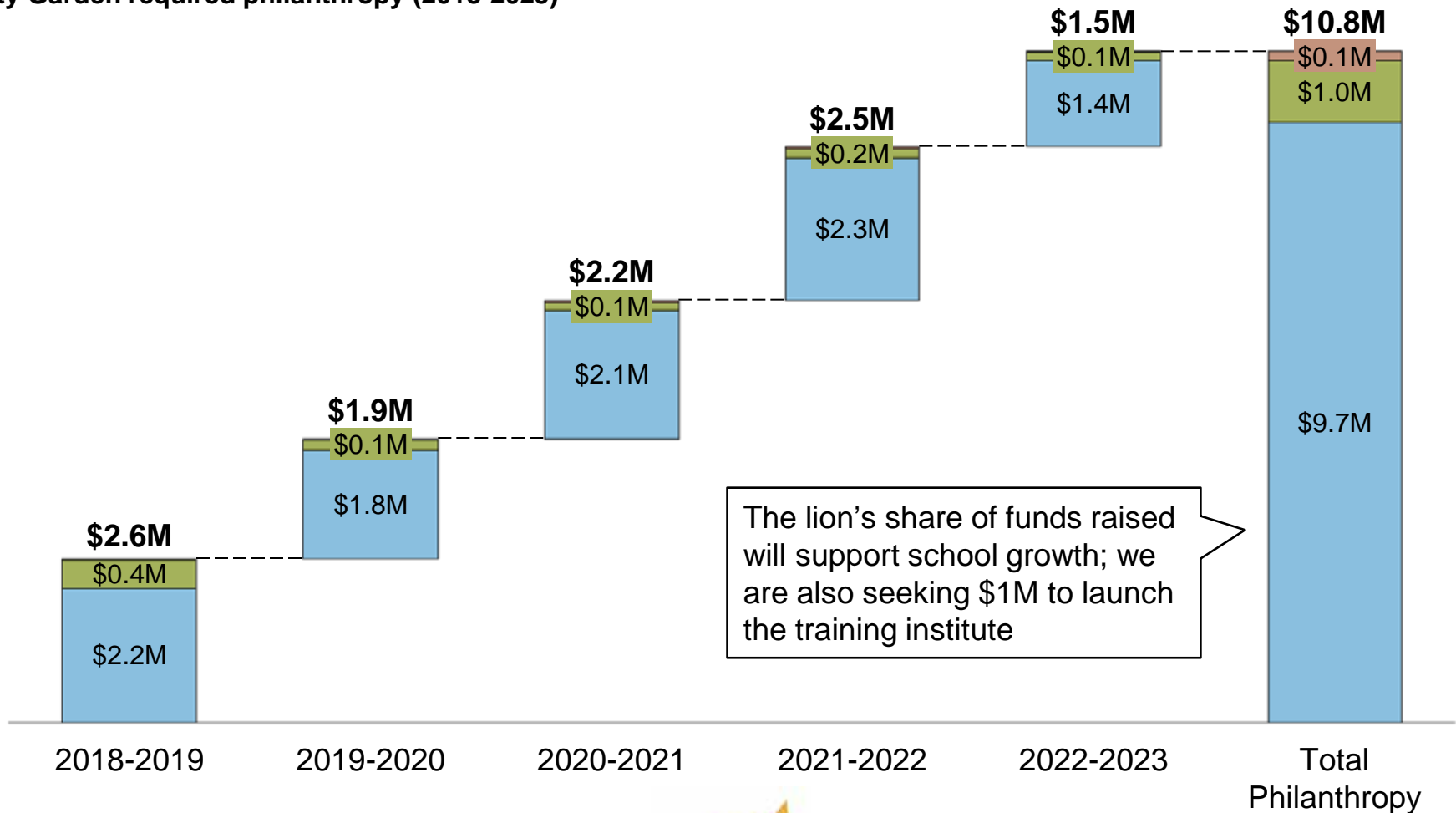
We are currently seeking investors to support phase I of our growth

Gift Opportunity	Gifts Needed	Progress	Notes
$5M	1		Prospects: 3
$2M	1		Prospects: 3
$1M	2		Prospects: 8
$500k	2		Prospects: 5
$250k	3		Prospects: 6
$100k	4		Prospects: 8
$50k	5		Prospects: 10
$25k	6		Prospects: 20

These figures represent cumulative gifts occurring over five years

The fundraising need is determined by enrollment and staffing decisions, particularly these 6 drivers

1. **Per pupil funding growth**
   – How does the state-level per pupil funding change year-over-year?
   – Largest revenue source; approximately 70% of revenue

2. **Pace of enrollment**
   – What grades should City Garden enroll in opening years? How quickly to reach full enrollment?
   – More rapid pace yields smaller cumulative fundraising need driven by fewer school-years of expansion, but more challenging programming driven by need for remediation

3. **Class size**
   – How many students should be in each class?
   – More students per class results in more tuition (without adding additional staff), but more challenges in programming and classroom management

4. **Staffing roles**
   – What roles and how many FTEs are needed to operate the network and schools?
   – More staff results in higher expenses, but more supported org structure

5. **Staffing salary**
   – How quickly should City Garden grow staff salaries? What is the average and starting teacher salary?
   – Higher and growing salaries are costly but could drive talent recruitment and staff retention

6. **Facilities**
   – How much does it cost to rent, purchase, or build school facilities for both flagship and new schools?
   – This is a significant expenditure with many unknowns; annual costs will vary based on space availability

We have made the following assumptions to determine the fundraising need for expansion

Driver	Assumption
1. Tuition growth	2.0% annual growth
2. Pace of enrollment	Begin full enrollment of PK-1 in year 1 of new school
3. Cohort size	Per school: 52 PK, 90 K student, 43 8th graders accounting for attrition
4. Staffing roles	18 network staff, 330 school staff at scale
5. Staffing salary	2.75% annual salary growth, average teacher salary $48,245
6. Facilities	Assumes purchase of flagship site in 2019; leasing new school sites

Our financial analysis evaluates the scenario in which City Garden **adds 3 new PK-8 schools**. At full capacity, by 2031-2032, City Garden will serve 2,500 students in 4 schools

Readiness to grow, key initiatives, and risks & mitigation strategies

City Garden has pronounced strengths and opportunities for improvement across multiple dimensions

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Dimension	Program	Staff and Org Culture	Organization Roles	Human Capital	Community Organizing and External Engagement	Finance	Operations	Governance	Goal Setting
Readiness indicator	Academic performance	Mission, shared goals, commitment	Decision-making and prioritization	Teacher recruitment	Scholar recruitment and family engagement/ organizing	Budgeting	IT	Board structure and composition	Annual planning
	Curriculum and instruction	Community and teamwork	Well-defined school and school support roles	School leadership recruitment/ pipeline	Community engagement/ organizing and political engagement	Forecasting and projections	Data systems	Board oversight and engagement	Systems for transparency and accountability
	School culture and scholar engagement	Diversity and inclusion	Systems for org-wide communication	Teacher training, coaching, support	Fundraising capacity	Financial management	Facilities and real estate		
	Special ed supports and interventions	Sustainability		School leader training, coaching, support	Marketing and communications		Day-to-day school operations		
	System for measuring results						Systems for compliance and reporting		

Key

High readiness

Some progress needed

Significant progress needed

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Program and Human Capital have been identified as particularly crucial growth areas for City Garden

#	Area	Details
1	**Program**	• Compared to other alternatives for St. Louis kids, strong performance over time • Balancing Montessori method with the demands of standardized testing continues to be a challenge; achievement gap across student subgroup persists
2	Staff and Organizational Culture	• Clear alignment and passion for shared mission across all stakeholders • Staff enjoys working at City Garden, though some concerns over work/life balance
3	Organization Roles	• Most staff clear on their own role, but relatively less clear on others' roles within org • Internal communication has improved over time, but gaps remain which will be exacerbated with growth
4	**Human Capital**	• Shallow talent pool for highly specific teacher profile is clear constraint to growth • Opportunity to strengthen onboarding and better differentiate PD opportunities
5	Community and External Engagement	• Consistent family demand evidenced by annual waitlists • Deep ties to diverse community stakeholders locally and across St. Louis • Fundraising can be a challenge; need to build fundraising capacity
6	Finance	• Established oversight processes and regular reporting cadence in place • Thoughtful, detail-oriented finance staff with relevant experience and expertise
7	Operations	• Daily operations run smoothly and consistently • Some hardware and software upgrades needed to support growth
8	Governance	• Core board members, including board chair, are strong; clear need for new recruits • Moving to professionalize board and implement systems for participation & oversight
9	Goal Setting	• History and habit of goal-setting; clear alignment between board and ED goals • Opportunity to strengthen accountability by tracking multiyear progress against goals

Successfully implementing key priorities in our plan will convert growth areas into organizational strengths

Teacher Recruitment

- The Training Institute will be critical to attracting potential recruits and training them in the City Garden model
- Network staff will focus on teacher recruitment, relieving school staff from being solely responsible for teacher recruitment

School leadership recruitment/ pipeline

- Opening new schools and creating a network team will create career pathways that will enable City Garden to retain exceptional team members over the long run
- Training Institute offerings will eventually expand to include modules on leadership development

Teacher training, coaching, support

- Network staff includes both a Chief Academic Officer and four Program Directors who will be focused on providing tailored coaching and support to City Garden teachers
- City Garden will leverage resources from the training institute to continue investing in the development of its own staff

Fundraising capacity

- Increasing enrollment at the flagship site and growing a network of schools will decrease requisite philanthropy per pupil and lead to a financially sustainable model
- Investing in development capacity at the network level should unlock new funding streams and allow school-based leadership to step off the fundraising treadmill

Systems for org-wide comms

- Added capacity at the network level will enable more bandwidth dedicated to ensuring smooth and consistent communication in schools and across the network
- Improvements in progress and ongoing commitment to being responsive to staff feedback will continue to bear fruit

City Garden will use a greenlighting framework as we consider growth (18 months prior to charter opening)

Category	Metric	Description	Go	Discuss	No-go
Program	Current academic performance	Meeting MAP targets set in SLU Performance Contract	Yes	No	
Human capital	Teacher recruitment	Recruitment performance against hiring goals for next school year	>80%	<80%	
	Teacher preparation	Founding teachers for new school identified and enrolled in Institute (or already certified)	Yes	No	
	Leader pipeline	One or more potential principal candidates identified	Yes	No	
	Board	On track with board development plan	Yes	No	
Finance/ Operations/ Systems	Financial health	Meeting Finance Standards set in SLU Performance Contract	Yes	No	
	Enrollment	School(s) meeting enrollment goals in last year	Yes	No	
	Greenlighting	Has met financial goals per financial greenlighting	Yes	No	
External	Stakeholders/ political landscape	No red flags re: charter law, authorizer approval, public funding	Yes	No	
	Charter Authorizer	Strong support from authorizer	Yes	No	

City Garden will use a greenlighting framework as we consider growth (12 months prior to charter opening)

Category	Metric	Description	Go	Discuss	No-go
Program	Current academic performance	Meeting MAP targets set in SLU Performance Contract	Yes	Missed by 5%	Missed by > 5%
	New school acad performance	New schools opened (beyond flagship) are performing within xx% of state averages	Yes	No	
	Culture	Staff turnover rate	<XX%	XX%+	
Human capital	Principal	High potential candidates identified	Yes	No	
	Teacher recruitment	% positions filled for current school(s) by June 30	95%	80-95%	<80%
	Teacher retention	Percentage of effective teachers retained across school(s) in previous year	80%+	<80%	
	Network support	Critical network office roles filled to support new school (CAO and Institute for first school opening)	Yes	No	
	Board	On track with board development plan	Yes	No	
Finance/ Operations/ Systems	Funding availability	Public funding available for per pupil revenue as in the past; philanthropy secured to support start-up	Yes		No
	Pre-K funding	Viable plan to fund 3-4 year olds	Yes	No	
	Facilities availability/ cost	Viable facilities plan	Yes	No	
	Systems/ priorities	Strategic plan priorities/initiatives on track	75%-100%	50%-75%	<50%
	Greenlighting	Has met financial goals per financial greenlighting	Yes	No	
External	Stakeholders/ political landscape	No red flags re: charter law, authorizer approval, political support, and/or community support	Yes	No	
	Community support	Strong support from community leaders and orgs for the opening of a new school	Yes	Moderate	No

City Garden will use a greenlighting framework as we consider growth (6 months prior to charter opening)

Category	Metric	Description	Go	Discuss	No-go
Human capital	Principal	Principal hired (or close to hired)	Yes	No	No viable options
Finance/ Operations/ Systems	Facilities availability/ cost	Facility is secured (ensure other elements are not "no-gos" before securing facility)	Yes	No	
	Funding is secured	% of funding for start-up and facility improvements secured	80%	<80%	
External	Political	No imminent threat to charter school viability	Yes	No	

There are several risks associated with this growth plan – we have developed strategies to mitigate those risks

Category	Risk	How the plan addresses this risk
Teacher/ leader retention and recruitment	Ability to recruit (and retain) enough Montessori and state certified high quality teachers to support the growth plan	• Training Institute is specifically designed to provide a pipeline of qualified, certified teachers for City Garden • Teacher coaching and development is a key priority identified in the strategic plan, which will contribute to retention of high quality teachers • Growth will provide career pathways for teachers, which could help attract and retain high performers
Academic achievement and results	Increased scale of students served and campuses in a network can bring a dilution of student achievement results	• Concentrated effort to strengthen and codify the academic program in the next 1-2 years before growth • CAO hire will bring leadership and expertise to support the academic program • Institute will ensure that more teachers are well-trained, which will lead to stronger results in the classroom
Organizational scaling and capacity	Not executing effectively on building the network, including Institute and Center for Equity leadership, and not clearly defining roles and decision rights	• Clearly defined network model philosophy across dimensions in the strategic plan • Investment in key leadership roles in advance of growth (e.g., CAO, Institute and Center for Equity directors)
Internal and external stakeholder support	There may be resistance to growth, especially replication, from staff, parents, and other community members	• Developing a proactive stakeholder engagement and change management plan to reveal growth plans and share rationale with stakeholder groups • Center for Equity will allow for more dedicated resources to focus on City Garden communities

We will pursue six key priorities coming out of the strategic planning process

Student Success

1 Strengthen and **codify the academic program** to integrate the best of Montessori and rigorous state standards to ensure success for all students

2 Double down on **teacher coaching & development** to more effectively support and retain talented staff

Institute

3 **Launch the Institute** to create a pipeline of Montessori-trained, state-certified, culturally competent teachers from diverse backgrounds

Schools

4 Grow flagship site while building central capacity to **create a sustainable network model** with dedicated staff providing essential support to allow schools to focus on students

Center for Equity

5 **Build the Center for Equity** and develop a more detailed vision for its growth and intended impact on students, schools, and communities

6 Develop a plan to support the **financial needs of the organization**, including pursuing growth of schools to achieve economies of scale and building greater fundraising capacity to raise the funds necessary to support and sustain all aspects of growth
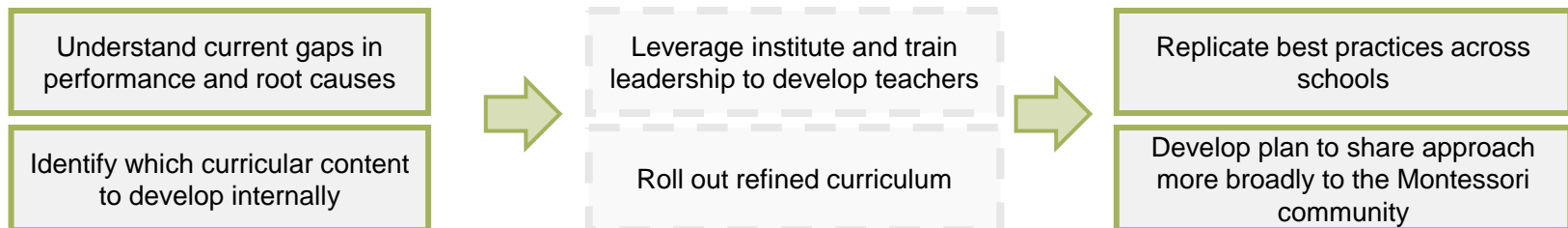
Implementation plans

Rationale and Goal

- **Rationale**: While City Garden has demonstrated academic success, exemplified by state test scores regularly exceeding those of the local district, results are not as high as they should be, and a persistent gap across racial and socioeconomic lines persists. Further inconsistency exists in the quality and reliability of curriculum across grade levels. Initiatives to strengthen academics and curriculum will include: (1) streamline and codify curriculum; determine appropriate balance between Montessori method and demands of state testing and provide tight unit plans to teachers; (2) improve new teacher onboarding and supports through institute; (3) refine upper elementary curriculum, and (4) strengthen math school-wide

- **Goal:** Ultimately, City Garden's academic results will continue to meet or exceed those of the surrounding district and state schools. Racial and socioeconomic gaps will shrink over time until all students achieve high outcomes regardless of background or ethnicity. To achieve this, City Garden will need to develop a rigorous, coherent curriculum that balances Montessori methods; anti-biased, anti-racist practices; and the demands of state testing. Over time, City Garden will refine and codify its academic model to be replicated with fidelity across schools.

Investments and Sequencing

| Understand current gaps in performance and root causes | Leverage institute and train leadership to develop teachers | Replicate best practices across schools |
| Identify which curricular content to develop internally | Roll out refined curriculum | Develop plan to share approach more broadly to the Montessori community |

Highly complex   Quicker wins

Priority #1: next steps and owners

Next step	Owner	Timing
Review and finalize elements of City Garden's North Star school model	Christie/ILT	Jan-Mar 2019
Develop plan and sequencing for hiring a Chief Academic Officer and retaining the services of an outside consultant to support codification work	Christie/Board	Dec 2018
Conduct a deeper current state analysis and needs assessment of curriculum across the flagship school (all levels and subjects), collecting input from teachers and school leaders	Evan Rudall/Nicole	Oct - Dec 2018
Develop 3 year plan to improve academic outcomes and to address curriculum gaps identified and/or purchase curriculum to fill in gaps identified in the needs assessment	Evan Rudall/Nicole	Dec 2018 - Apr 2019
Codify City Garden's current academic approach and curriculum, focusing on alignment to the defined vision	CAO	Fall 2019 – Spring 2020
Develop a robust training plan for teachers and leaders (in conjunction w/ Institute)	CAO	Fall 2019 – Spring 2020
Develop a plan for ongoing feedback and continuous improvement of the curriculum for all subjects and levels that deeply involves school staff	CAO & Nicole	Fall 2019 – Spring 2020

Priority #2: double down on teacher coaching and development to more effectively support and retain staff

Rationale and Goal

- **Rationale**: In order to meet City Garden's goal of high achievement for all students, teachers must be highly effective and have the coaching and development they need to improve their practice. The training institute will ensure City Garden has a pipeline of Montessori-certified teachers and will provide the baseline training they need to enter the classroom prepared. But teachers need ongoing support and development to improve and enhance their practice over time. In addition, providing that support is a critical lever for teacher retention, which leads to stability/continuity for students and a reduced recruiting burden for the City Garden team.

- **Goal:** City Garden will increase the number of highly effective teachers in the classroom as measured through student outcomes and the teacher evaluation process. City Garden staff will report high levels of satisfaction with coaching and development on annual staff surveys. In addition, City Garden's retention of effective teachers will increase.

Investments and Sequencing

Identify current strengths and gaps of coaching and development and define go-forward vision and plan	→	Obtain staff feedback on vision and refine	→	Implement new systems and structures for coaching and development

Highly complex	Quicker wins

Priority #2: next steps and owners

Next step	Owner	Timing
Assess current coaching and development activities: define the current approach and activities, solicit additional feedback from staff, identify strengths and gaps	CAO/Nicole	Jul-Aug 2019
Develop a vision for coaching and development at City Garden, including approach/roles (e.g., role of lead guides, role of level leaders, intersection with Institute), frequency of coaching/PD, and substance/content	CAO/Nicole	Jul-Dec 2019
Implement "quick wins" as possible to enhance coaching and development in the immediate term	CAO/Nicole	Sep-Nov 2019
Train existing staff on their roles and the go-forward approach to coaching and development	CAO/Nicole	Jan-Mar 2020
Closely monitor consistency of execution of the new approach as well as effectiveness – make adjustments to the approach or training on the approach as needed	CAO/Nicole	Apr-Jun 2020

Priority #3: launch the training institute to create a pipeline of excellent teachers

Rationale and Goal

- **Rationale**: Effective teaching lies at the core of a high quality school. City Garden faces the particular challenge of finding teachers who are both state- and Montessori-certified and who come to the work with the ABAR lens that is core to City Garden's model. As City Garden looks to grow, this challenge will only increase. In addition, there are other public Montessori schools facing the same challenge – there is a shortage of training opportunities in the US with the focus on Montessori in the public sector, especially with the ABAR lens layered on.

- **Goal:** City Garden will train enough teachers to support the growth of the flagship school and replication of schools in St. Louis. In addition, City Garden will train other public Montessori teachers across the country, building the capacity of Montessori in the public sector in the US.

Investments and Sequencing

✓ Assemble a "design team" for the Institute

✓ Define key design questions to be answered

→ Conduct research and make decisions about the design of the 2020 pilot

→ Hire Institute Director

→ Conduct pilot Institute cohort summer 2020
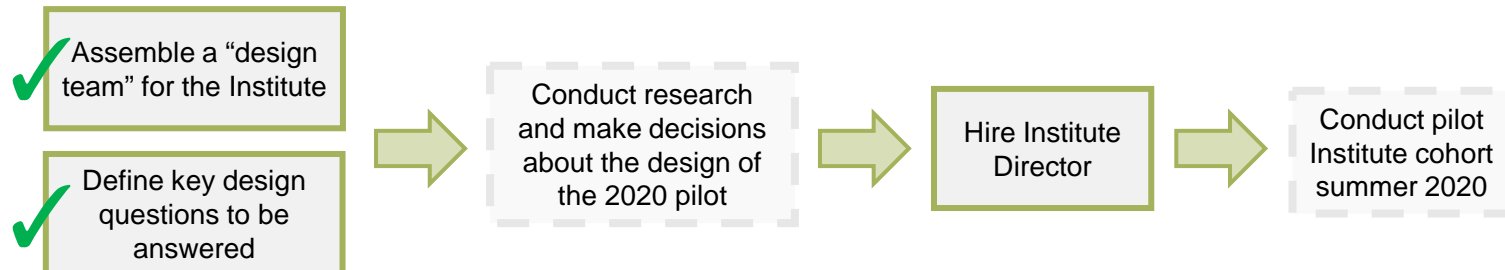
Highly complex   Quicker wins

Priority #3: next steps and owners

Next step	Owner	Timing
Submit MACTE application and fees	Inst Director/CAO	Sept 2019
Finalize job descriptions for Institute Director and Elementary Training Program Director	CAO	July-Aug 2019
Decide go/ no-go on hiring key training center positions; initiate search process	CAO	July-Aug 2019
Finalize pilot summer schedule (dates, location, sessions)	Inst Director/CAO	Dec 2019
Begin drafting MACTE self-study	Inst Director	Sept-Nov 2019
Actively manage interview/ hiring process; make key staff hires and secure commitments for additional training staff	Inst Director	Winter-Spring 2020
Make key institute hires and secure requisite space/ materials for institute pilot launch	Inst Director	Spring 2020
Launch Institute pilot	Inst Director	Summer 2020

Rationale and Goal

- **Rationale**: As City Garden grows from a standalone one-building school to a micro-network, the leadership team must identify how "tight" or "loose" systems, processes, structures, and practices are across multiple schools. Explicitly articulating the network model allows for clear ownership/decision rights, consistent expectations, and ultimately informs the organizational structure. Roles within the new organization structure should align with City Garden's vision and allocate leaders to both support City Garden's strategic priorities and create leverage for school leaders by establishing "back-office" functions. Network staff will need work in conjunction with the Center for Equity to identify new school sites, and thoughtfully design new school launch plans. Crucially, the organizational structure should be constructed with an eye toward long-term financial sustainability.

- **Goal:** A well-defined network model and org structure will support growth with quality and improve clarity of decisions and roles. Success can be measured via staff survey to ensure that staff member have sufficient supports and there is clear understanding of rationale behind network decisions.

Investments and Sequencing

Introduce network model concept ✔ → Apply network model to network org structure; reassess and refine ✔ → Obtain feedback from LT / Board and refine → Layer in financial projections ⟳ Iterate based on updated assumptions
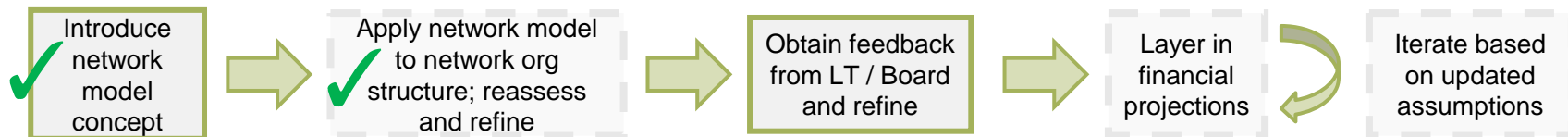
Highly complex   Quicker wins

Priority #4: next steps and owners

Next step	Owner	Timing
Finish cataloging new roles & responsibilities and define clear ownership among leadership team	Christie	Nov-Dec 2018
Communicate any major changes in roles & responsibilities to affected staff	Christie	Jan 2019
Finalize high-level roles, goals, & accountability across the organization; communicate to key stakeholder groups	Christie	Jan-Mar 2019
Take frequent decision-making pulse checks, including City Garden Staff surveys, to ensure CG remains aligned	Christie	Winter/Spring 2019
Hire key network staff as decided in the strategic plan (or as needed as circumstances change) to prepare for replication	Christie	Ongoing
Conduct additional refreshes on RAPID for leaders as needed to ensure practices are embedded	Christie	Ongoing
Revisit roles & responsibilities and ownership of decisions as the network grows	Christie	Ongoing

Priority #5: build the center for equity and develop a vision for its growth and intended impact

Rationale and Goal

- **Rationale**: City Garden understands the unique role a quality school can and should play in local communities. Through the Center for Equity, City Garden will seek to ensure a civic environment that empowers the community and affords equitable access to a quality education. The Center will build the knowledge and capacity of City Garden's communities to organize and advocate for themselves and their communities (e.g., re: housing and development, maintaining economic and racial diversity, financial literacy, political power).

- **Goal:** In the immediate term, City Garden will continue to refine its vision for the activities and success metrics for the Center for Equity. Hiring a director-level staff person to lead this work will be a critical next step, as this person will help set the vision for City Garden's Center for Equity work moving forward. In the longer term, the goal of the Center for Equity will be to meaningfully engage communities, particularly communities of color, that have a stake in the success of each school, and organize community members to advocate for change.

Investments and Sequencing

Launch parent & staff committee focused on Center for Equity work → Brainstorm and define City Garden's vision and approach to equity work → Identify and hire director to lead Center for Equity → Launch Center for Equity and begin work to support launch of new school #1

Pursue key policy items (e.g., weighted lottery, Montessori certification, early childhood) and continue community engagement and housing work in current neighborhood

Highly complex   Quicker wins

Priority #5: next steps and owners

Next step	Owner	Timing
Refine and share rationale for Center for Equity and launch committee to help set initial vision	Christie	Spring 2019
Draft job description and begin recruiting process for Center Director	Christie	Summer 2019
Hire Center Director	Christie + Board	Fall 2019
Engage in long term planning and vision-setting for Center for Equity work	CfE Director	Fall 2019
Refine portfolio of work, policy initiatives, and success metrics for Center for Equity	CfE Director	Fall 2019
Begin engagement of community stakeholders in advance of new school launch	CfE Director	Spring 2020
Continue to collaborate with community groups and stakeholders to pursue policy initiatives	CfE Director	Ongoing
Reflect upon first 12 months of work and re-assess vision and portfolio of work for Center for Equity based upon learnings	CfE Director + Christie	Winter 2021

Rationale and Goal

- **Rationale**: For any charter organization—particularly for one operating in a relatively low per-pupil revenue state such as Missouri—growth requires a significant amount of philanthropy. To date, City Garden has successfully fundraised to support a single school site, growing total philanthropic dollars raised year after year. As City Garden looks to open new schools and invest across the other major initiatives of its strategic plan, the team will need increased financial support to cover startup costs. These costs will include: hiring a network staff, launching the training Institute, and hiring a director to build out the Center for Equity portfolio of work and do the groundwork to support a successful new school launch.

- **Goal:** City Garden will be able to meet all of its fundraising targets at both the school- and network-level by developing a robust fundraising plan, enlisting the support of a broad and diverse funder base, and continuing to seek out grant opportunities and institutional funders.

Investments and Sequencing

✔ Finalize five year growth plan across each initiative

➡

✔ Develop realistic fundraising targets for each component of the five year plan

Craft a development strategy to cultivate support both regionally and nationally

➡

Implement and execute fundraising strategy

Highly complex | Quicker wins

Priority #6: next steps and owners

Next step	Owner	Timing
Finalize five year strategic plan, including scope and sequence of activities aligned to each major initiative	Christie, Board	Dec 2019
Engage IFF to develop more detailed plan for facilities for flagship and new schools	David	Dec 2019
Based on strategic plan, develop and refine annual fundraising targets over next five years	Christie/ David	Jan 2019
Develop plans for meeting fundraising targets in next SY	Christie	Jan-Feb 2019
Vet development plans both internally and externally	Christie	Jan-Feb 2019
Plan developed for new board member cultivation and structures	Christie	Jan-Feb 2019
Develop regular process for keeping track of development progress, from funder identification, cultivation, solicitation, and stewardship	Christie/ Bob	Ongoing
Implement development efforts, both regionally and nationally	Christie/ Bob	Ongoing
Implement progress monitoring plan / cashflow monitoring	Christie/ David	Ongoing
Based on success-to-date, determine what additional investments, if any, are needed to build fundraising capacity to support plan	Christie/ David	May 2019
3 new board members identified and plan for board development	Christie	June 2019
New board structures implemented	Christie	June 2019
Plan for legal structure	Christie	June 2019

Appendix

Our 5-year roadmap includes purchasing our current school site, piloting a training institute, and hiring key senior staff

| 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |

Student Success

Continue and deepen work already underway to strengthen program

Enhance coaching/instructional leadership capacity

Assess current state; codify ABAR

Detailed codification

Ongoing refinement of the model

★ Current state assessment support
★ Hire CAO
★ Codification support

Institute

Institute design team

Pilot standalone offerings

MACTE accreditation process

Elementary Training cohort #1

Elementary Training cohort #2

★ Hire Training Director
★ Launch pilot cohort
★ Launch 2nd cohort

Schools

Renovation plans

Flagship renovations

Grow flagship

NS1 site selection and planning

NS2 site selection and planning

★ Purchase current building
★ Hire Principal for new school #1
★ Launch new school #1
★ Hire Principal for new school #2
★ Launch new school #2

Center for Equity

Pursue key policy items (e.g., weighted lottery, Montessori certification, early childhood)

Continue community engagement and housing work in current neighborhood

Neighborhood engagement for NS1

Neighborhood engagement for NS2

Long-term CfE planning

★ Hire CfE Director

74

Student Success

Institute

Schools

Center for Equity

City Garden **math** scores by grade level compared to state average (2011-17)
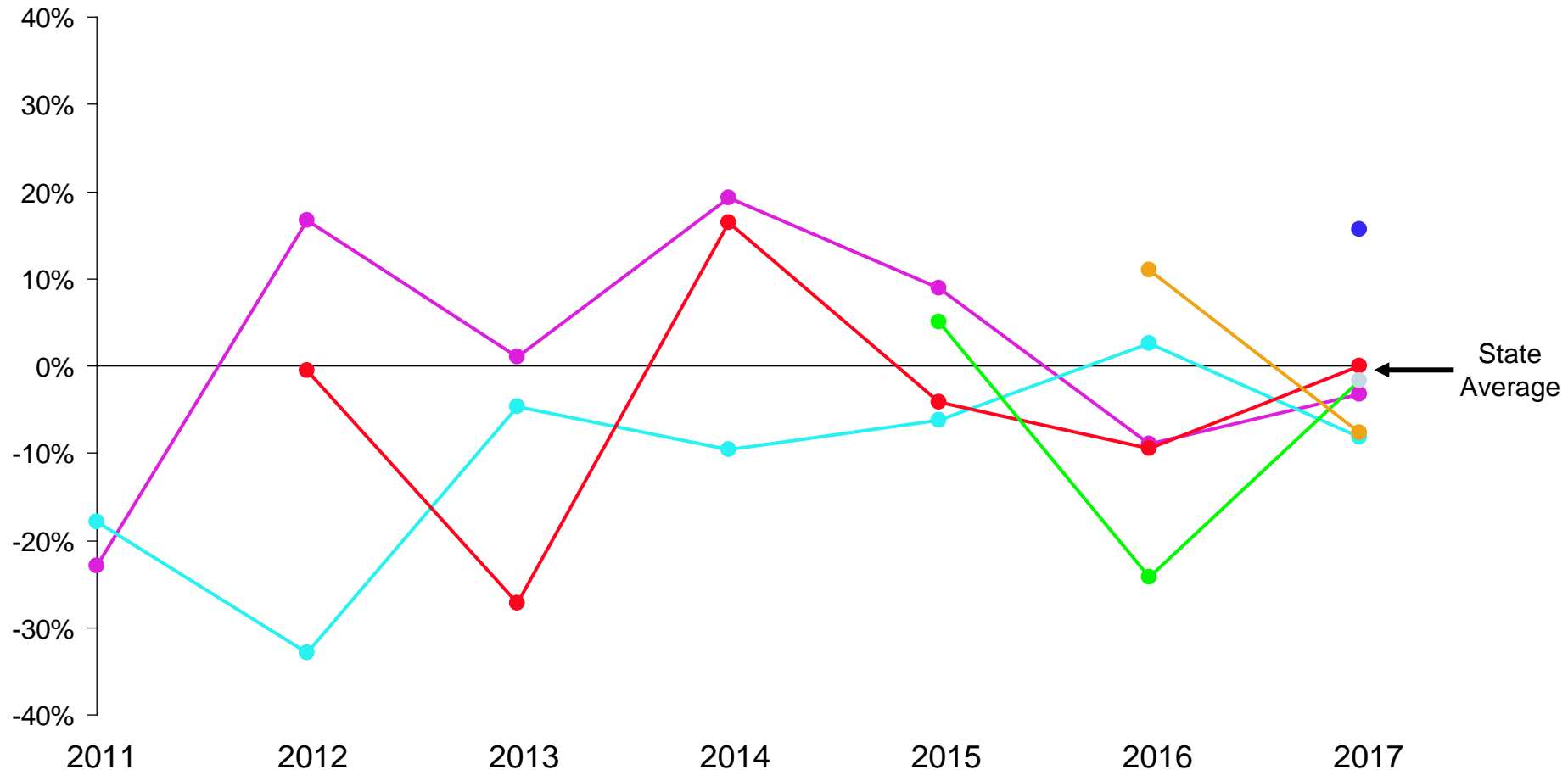
State Average

Legend:
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th
- 6th
- 7th
- 8th

City Garden **ELA** scores by grade level compared to state average (2011-17)

State Average

Legend:
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th
- 6th
- 7th
- 8th
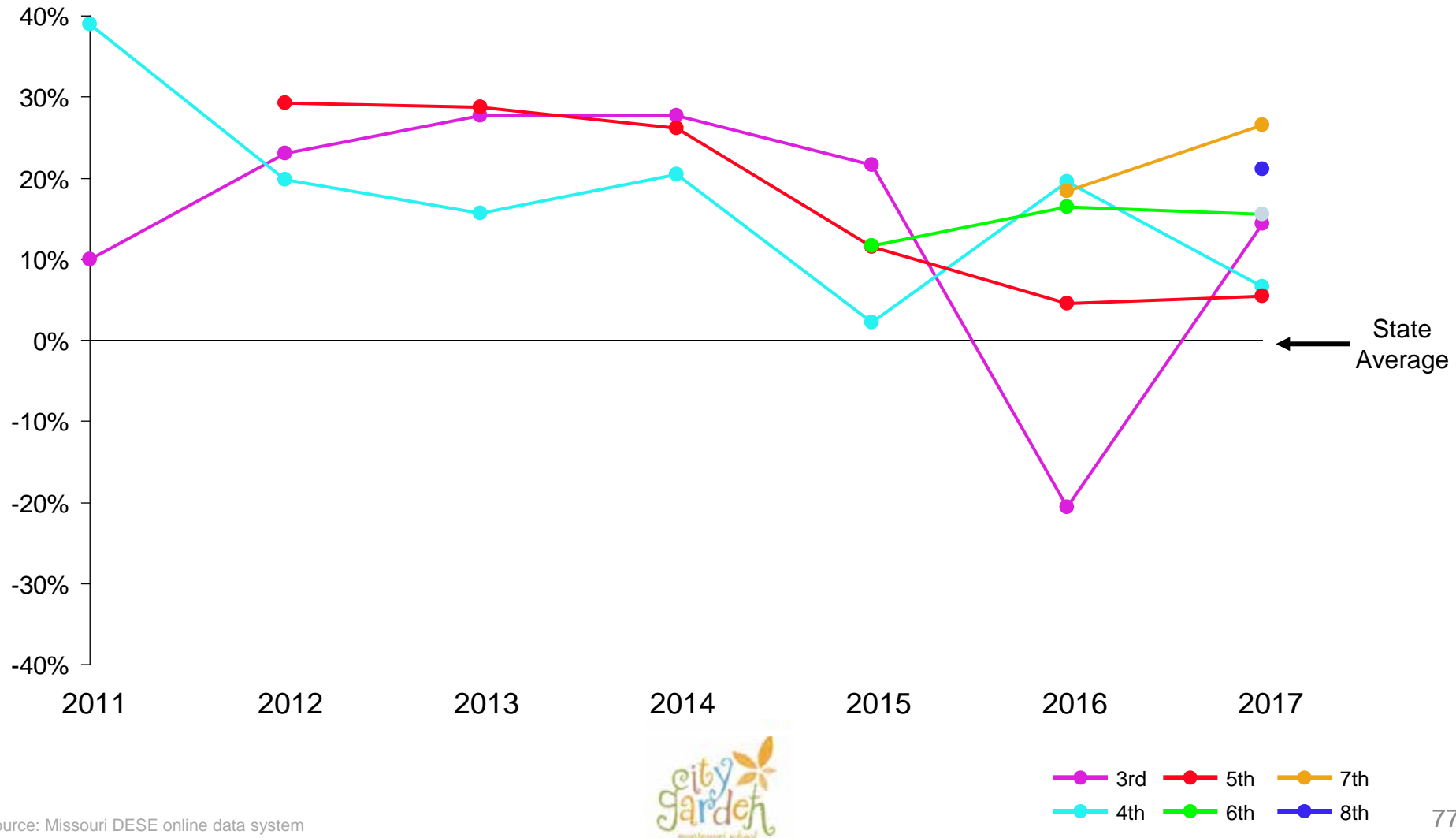
Program: Effective instruction, particularly for high-needs students, is the foundation for a strong organization (1 of 2)

Readiness indicator

Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
Academic performance	Some progress needed	How does the school compare with districts, peers, and state in state assessments?	• Test scores strong relative to alternatives, but could be stronger, particularly in math: *"Composite proficiency rates have historically been high…but they need to be better given the organization's aspirations."* • Acknowledged achievement gap among student subgroups, with plans in place to address; *"there is an achievement gap, but low-income kids are still doing better here than elsewhere."* • Some challenges differentiating instruction for high achievers: "*We have a harder time in our school educating the students who are very gifted."* *"I wish we'd talk about 'high-achieving' students more."*
Curriculum and instruction	Some progress needed	Is there a quality curriculum, with shared lesson plans and assessments, in place? Do struggling teachers receive support from instructional coaches? Do observers carry out classroom observations, and provide feedback based on a validated rubric?	• Strong adherence to Montessori teaching philosophy and embedded ABAR practices, but balancing those methods with the demands of standardized testing continues to be a challenge: *"I don't think we have found our balance yet."* • Some inherent misalignment *"Math materials in Montessori are very hands-on, but the tests don't look anything like that. Our challenge is raising scores while not watering down the Montessori approach"* • *"It's not typical for Montessori schools to have a single curriculum, but we've observed that it's really helpful to have a curriculum and clear goals…teachers need a planning manual to [achieve ambitious goals]. This doesn't exist yet."*
School culture and student engagement	Some progress needed	Are scholars mission-driven and excited for school? Do scholars understand and meet high behavioral expectations? Is the "joy-factor" evident among scholars and their families?	• Strong student culture: *"We don't accept students after 2nd grade, so most of our students are accustomed to our culture and our values."* • Conscious discipline policy: *"We don't believe in punitive discipline, so we do a lot of talking, a lot of restorative justice."* • Some lack of clarity around behavior: *"Our discipline model is our weakest area I believe. It is not clearly stated and is different in every classroom."*

1

Readiness indicator

Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
Special Ed supports and interventions	Some progress needed	Does the school's curricular approach include SPED scholars? Do staff have the resources and support to effectively implement SPED interventions that meet the individual needs of scholars?	• 80% of staff respondents agree that "as a school, we effectively support students with disabilities." • General consensus that SPED supports are good. *"We have a strong SPED dept." "We have done a great service to kids coming in with difficulties. We have SPED team in house. IEPs, working closely with families."* • Some specific examples of lack of clarity for students receiving SPED supports: *"MAP testing has been difficult to understand in the area of special education because expectations are blurry as to who special ed. instructors take care of."*
System for measuring results	Some progress needed	Is there a formal data system in place to track student progress in school?	• Emerging data-driven culture: *"We've started doing monthly data meetings for all grades, not just testing grades. That's a shift in culture: looking at data and analyzing it in a deeper way to inform and improve practice."* • *"We are getting better at looking at our data."* • Internal push to continue refining student success measures: *"We need to get clear on outcomes, get a dashboard, determine formative and summative measures. We need to get clear on impact."* • Some concern that student progress in the classroom is not translating to higher test scores: *"our staff is feeling discouraged. They see really great outcomes in their students that are not captured by the test scores, so they are discouraged."*

Staff and Org Culture: Shared commitment to mission and culture ensures strength through times of transition

	Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
Readiness indicator	Mission, alignment, commitment	High readiness	Is commitment to the school's mission demonstrated at all levels, including teachers, leaders, and network staff? Do all exhibit a strong sense of responsibility for the success of all scholars?	• 95% of staff respondents agree that "City Garden has clearly articulated core values" and "values are reflected in the way we approach our work." • Staff emphasize the depth of the core values at City Garden: *"We live into our mission – it is more than just conceptual"* • *"There is an energy about us, when you walk into the building. A level of passion and enthusiasm from all stakeholders"* • *"If you are a fit with the mission here you can't see yourself anywhere else"*
	Community and teamwork	Significant progress needed	Do supportive relationships exist within the school(s)? Are there concerted and consistent efforts to build the community and team culture?	• 93% of staff respondents agree that "our culture makes work enjoyable." • General positivity about working at CG: *"City Garden is an amazing place to work." "This is a home, a place where people feel comfortable"* • Some internal trust issues may need to be addressed: only 50% of staff agree "there is a high level of trust among staff."
	Diversity and inclusion	High readiness	Does the organizational culture value diversity? Is there an intentional strategy that shapes how the org thinks about staff diversity? Does an inclusive culture enable staff of all backgrounds to advance?	• 93% of staff respondents agree "our organization is diverse, equitable, and inclusive." *"I can confidently say that everyone who works here believes in our mission and our commitment to being an anti-bias, anti-racist school"* • *"We have no integrated schools in St. Louis; I think we will never move forward as a community until we have more schools like this"* • Majority of stakeholders see ABAR as foundational: *"ABAR is the plate that everything else sits on"*
	Sustainability	Some progress needed	Does the school climate foster staff longevity and sustainability? Has the org developed formal parental leave policies? Do staff have opportunities to provide input to inform sustainability?	• *"[Sustainability] is an issue. We ask people to think about self-care."* • *"When I first came we had lots of after school meetings. We had to think about how to limit those. How do we give people time to be with their families?"* • *"The very nature of this work does not allow for a healthy work/life mix."*

Organization roles: Clarity regarding roles and responsibilities enhances organizational effectiveness

Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
Decision-making and prioritization	Some progress needed	Are there clear roles for org decision-making? Is there a plan to define the appropriate amount of autonomy for the school leader?	• Only 56% of staff agree that "City Garden has an effective approach to decision-making." • Some staff would value having more input: *"I have been somewhat surprised by the lack of input staff have in decision-making."*
Well-defined school and school support roles	Some progress needed	Are responsibilities and expectations for roles clearly defined?	• Most staff members are clear on their own role in the school; 90% agree that "I know what I am responsible for and have clear objectives." • Staff is relatively less clear on others' roles: 78% agree that "roles and responsibilities are clear across the organization." • *"Roles and responsibilities are not always clearly defined."* • *"I get very confused about who is in charge of what."*
Systems for org-wide communication	Significant progress needed	Are there effective school and org-level communication practices (e.g., Morning Email) in place? Are important messages communicated to relevant stakeholders in a timely fashion? Do school leaders hold regular meetings with staff?	• Less than 60% of teachers agree that "City Garden practices effective communication." • Some evidence of progress here: *"communication has improved over the years, and this year it started off strong and has since dwindled."* • Staff seeks greater clarity and proactivity: *"We don't have super clear, proactive communication. We are working on that, but different people want to communicate in different ways."* • Cross-team collaboration could be better facilitated: *"We need to be strategic in communications between the administrative side and the ILT."* • Breadth of mission creates some confusion: *"There are so many moving parts within this organization. Are we a school? Are we a social justice organization? Are we a neighborhood nonprofit? Are we an advertising agency? It seems like we are all of them, but it is hard navigating them."*

Readiness indicator

Human capital: Recruitment and development pathways must be in place to support ambitious team members

Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
Teacher recruitment	Significant progress needed	Are there multiple and diverse candidate pools? Has the org developed target profiles for teacher candidates? Is there a rigorous selection process that utilizes criteria linked to teacher effectiveness? Is there high consistency in the selection process across candidates and schools? Are leaders engaged in the hiring and placement process?	• Limited candidate pool for highly specific fit: *"Finding state-certified, Montessori-trained, upper elementary teachers is incredibly tough, and then you throw in the ABAR focus and the venn is incredibly small."* • Teacher turnover has been a visible issue: *"Teacher turnover is what we get the most feedback on from families. It's hard on parents and kids that we haven't been able to recruit and keep awesome teachers."* • *"It does not seem like the Montessori part of our work is sustainable We are unable to find candidates (qualified or unqualified) to fill our positions."*
Leadership recruitment	Significant progress needed	Does the evaluation process for school leaders align to school needs? Is there a clear strategy for identifying and supporting strong internal and/or external candidates?	• Limitations in broader teacher candidate pool reflected here: difficult to find candidates with requisite experience and skills to fill leadership roles within the organization. More work could be done to better identify and support internal prospects.
Teacher training, coaching, support	Significant progress needed	Do teachers receive consistent coaching and PD? Do they have individual performance goals? Does the org have a teacher evaluation framework and compensation structure in place?	• Clear investment in training and support: *"We work really hard to try to support our people." "I have had wonderful PD experiences." "The ILT and admin team support has been very important to professional development."* • 1 in 5 staff disagree that *"Leaders at City Garden coach and mentor effectively."* • Onboarding could be stronger: only 58% of staff agree that "our onboarding process effectively oriented me" • Opportunity to better differentiate PD: "*It is frustrating sitting through professional development that does not apply to your age group and simply never will.*"
Leader training, coaching, support	Some progress needed	Do leaders receive consistent coaching and PD? Is there a strategy to identify, train, and develop rising leaders within the org? Is there a succession plan for key leaders?	• Leader training currently reliant on mentorship model, which requires significant bandwidth

Readiness indicator

Advancement and external relations: Engaging the broader field will generate external support

Readiness indicator

Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
Student recruitment and family engagement	High readiness	Does the network have a deliberate plan to engage families of prospective and current scholars? Is the role of school leaders, teachers, and other staff in scholar recruitment clear?	• Long waitlist - "three applications for every seat." • Pronounced efforts to educate parents and the community about Montessori and ABAR work
Community and/or political engagement	High readiness	Is there consistent community outreach to solicit feedback on the school model and progress? Does the org seek to understand the state/local political climate re: charters, and to engage with political stakeholders as necessary?	• Strong relationships with diverse stakeholders in both local and broader STL communities • *"We have been effective from the start in how we engage with community. We are out there, everyone knows who we are, we all live in this area, we are in touch with the issues affecting St. Louis"* • Opportunity to continue building relationships: *"I think we are still working on gaining trust in the lower income and primarily PoC communities that we serve."*
Fundraising capacity	Significant progress needed	Does the org have a diverse funding base? Has it achieved consistent fundraising success for school startup and ongoing needs? Does it have a tracking system for fundraising (e.g., Salesforce)?	• Evidence of proactive fundraising and grant writing, with some struggles to convert big opportunities (i3, CSGF) • Recruitment practices limit state dollars: *"We don't admit kids after 2nd grade; there is natural attrition and we lose money when kids leave"* • Large philanthropic lift required: *"We have to raise 25% ($800k) of the budget this year, and we are struggling to do that"* • Some anxiety around funding: *"It's hard to run a school when you don't know where the next dollar is coming from"*
Marketing and communication	Some progress needed	Does the org utilize multiple marketing channels to promote its work and share updates? Does it have a proactive, rather than reactive, comms approach?	• Frequent family communications and generally strong relationships • Opportunity to continue educating public about City Garden: *"there is still come confusion over how it works; is it tuition-based? Do I have to apply? Charter + Montessori = mystery."*

Finance: Thoughtful fiscal management and stability is an important foundation for supporting organizational changes

Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
Budgeting	Some progress needed	Is there a well-planned budgeting and cash flow process?	• Established process in place with some protocols for budget modifications • Movement toward zero-based budgeting • Thoughtful, detail-oriented finance leadership with relevant experience and expertise
Forecasting and projections	Some progress needed	Does the organization have a multi-year financial model that projects funding need? Does org leadership remain abreast of the state and local funding environment for charter schools?	• Realistic and accurate financial forecasts • Lacking nuanced multi-year projections beyond grant applications, but established interest and capacity for financial modelling: *"long-term planning is a challenge"*
Financial management	Some progress needed	Are there metrics to accurately track revenues and expenses for the school(s) and network? Are there clear cash reserve requirements?	• Monthly finance meetings and standardized board reporting package • Established board oversight processes and awareness of financial control best practices

Readiness indicator

Operations: Robust internal systems and processes allow schools to serve families more effectively

Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
IT	Some progress needed	Does the org deploy common hardware and software across the school(s)? Is there clarity around the situations in which hardware and software needs will be customized by school? Do staff have high-quality IT support?	• Patchwork of Apple/PC and purchased/donated hardware; moving to consolidate • Strong outsourced IT support • Active awareness and commitment to ongoing improvements in this realm
Data systems	Some progress needed	Are there centralized data systems for payroll, benefits, and other staff resources?	• Current systems are functional and adequate for single school site • Recognition of needed upgrades to support growth (ex: fund accounting software)
Facilities and real estate	Some progress needed	Is there a strategy to acquire and prepare facilities in a timely manner (if needed)? Are there facilities maintenance practices in place?	• Maintenance of facility is adequate, with minor communication challenges • Initial steps taken to convene working group to explore real estate acquisition
Day-to-day school operations	Some progress needed	Are school operations (food service, transportation, maintenance, cleaning, etc.) stable and well-run? Are interruptions/distractions due to operations limited?	• City Garden does not offer transportation services • Daily operations run smoothly and consistently; some evidence of effective troubleshooting as needed
System for compliance and reporting	Some progress needed	Is there a clear staff "owner" for managing compliance and reporting? Does the org have standard reporting process and tools?	• Adequate compliance and reporting protocols in place; could be further codified

Readiness indicator

Governance: A healthy relationship between the board and school(s) will help in pursuit of deepened impact

Readiness indicator

Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
Board structure and composition	Some progress needed	Do board members have diverse backgrounds and skillsets? Is there an ongoing assessment process to identify any skill or knowledge gaps? Do board members have clear roles and responsibilities, potentially through the use of a committee structure? Is there a board training and development approach?	• Board in transition, with movement toward greater fundraising capacity: *"We need to shore some things up, strengthen the board. We are transitioning from a stalwart board of 15 - we are now down to 9. One left dissatisfied - everyone else was moving or didn't have the time. We have work to do to get the right people in the seats - we need a fundraising board"* • *"The board has evolved over time. It was very parent-driven. We have decided to professionalize it. We will probably stop having parents on it at this point"* • Some need for board to change in order to support growth: *"City Garden will need a different board at a larger scale"*
Board oversight and engagement	Some progress needed	Are there regular board meetings and touch points with the school leader(s)? Does the board help develop, and review, measurable performance targets? Is there a formal process for the board to evaluate the school leader? Does the board use data consistently to inform decision-making? Do board members engage with the broader community?	• Regular board meetings and engaged board members from diverse backgrounds • Strong leadership in place: *"We have a really good board chair who is always prepared; she is very impressive"* • Movement to professionalize board: *"from an org development perspective, I think we are coming out of the toddler stage. We are in that awkward phase where we are trying to professionalize and add some processes and structures."* • *"I think at times Christie would like more formal feedback on her performance."*

Goal Setting: Consistent annual performance goals will lay the groundwork for multi-year strategic planning

Readiness indicator

Strand	Readiness	Questions to consider	Rationale for rating
Annual planning	Some progress needed	Does the org have clear annual targets related to performance? Are annual priorities shaped by each school's specific needs and context?	• History and habit of annual goal setting • Clear, deliberate alignment between ED and board goals; shared goals reflect actual priorities and context of the school based on data and thoughtful reflection • Some work needed to operationalize plans throughout the year
Systems for transparency and accountability	Some progress needed	Are there systems in place to allow for real-time tracking of progress toward goals? Are the school(s) and board held accountable for meeting goals? Do they provide regular updates on their progress toward annual goals to internal and external stakeholders?	• Annual dashboard could help clarify success metrics and track progress over time • Opportunity to strengthen accountability across leadership

Student Success

Institute

Schools

Center for Equity

City Garden's Training Institute will exist within the context of the current teacher accreditation market & requirements

- Each state sets its **own standards** for what aspiring educators must do in order to teach. Most states require applicants to complete an **approved teacher preparation program** at an **accredited institution**.

- Like schools, **teacher preparation programs** must be accredited by certain **oversight bodies**.

- Every state has a **teacher preparation program approval process** to formally approve programs to **prepare future teachers** in the state.

- **Institutional accreditation** is done through multi-state accrediting agencies.

- Many Montessori teachers must have a **state-issued license –** but most complete **training programs** that do not meet the **approval or accreditation requirements** to secure them a state-issued license

- Most teachers – particularly new teachers – have **either** a state license **or** Montessori training

- Montessori-trained hires cannot **legally be teacher of record** until they get their state license

- Hires with only a state license do not have the **skill or training** to lead an authentic Montessori classroom

Accreditation: MACTE is currently the only recognized accreditor of Montessori programs in the US

U.S. Department of Education

City Garden will most likely either affiliate with AMS or seek accreditation directly through MACTE as an independent program
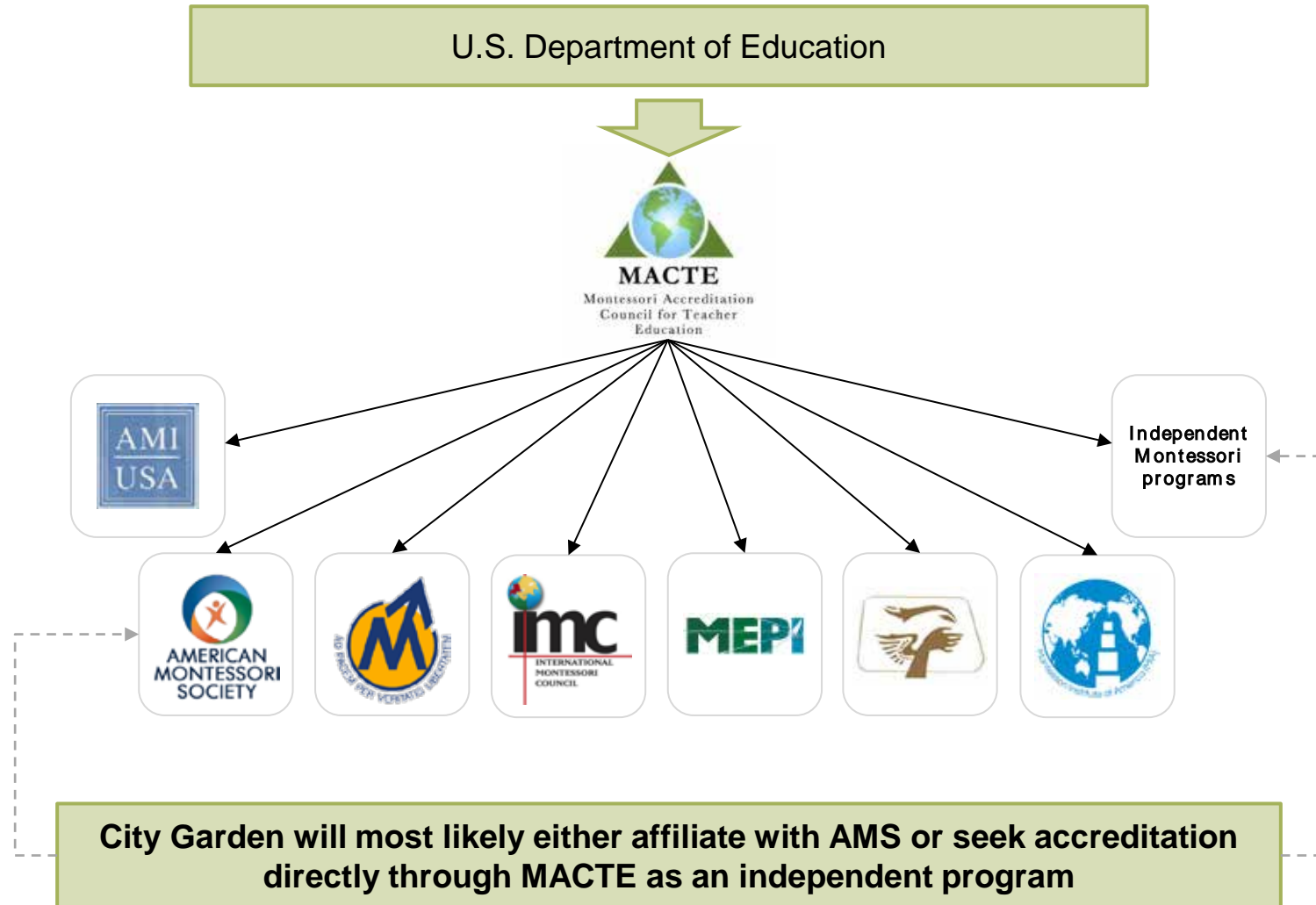
Accreditation: MACTE outlines a ten step accreditation process for aspiring teacher training programs

Step	Description
1	**Download the Guide and Accreditation Application:** Download the most current MACTE Guide to Accreditation and Accreditation Application from the MACTE website.
2	**Contact the MACTE office:** Schedule a consultation meeting with MACTE's Vice President for Accreditation to establish a realistic timeline for the accreditation process.
3	**Sign up for information sessions:** MACTE offers a free Accreditation Overview Webinar. It is highly recommended that initial applicants participate in this webinar that is offered bi-monthly.
4	**Contact the affiliating organization:** All MACTE accredited programs must affiliate with a MACTE recognized affiliate. Exception: programs can choose to affiliate directly through MACTE
5	**Establish a realistic timeline:** The accreditation process can take anywhere from one to three years. Once application process started, MACTE will aid in establishing a realistic timeline.
6	**Register for a Self-Study Writing Workshop Webinar:** Free webinar recommended after a timeline has been established and the program has contacted the affiliating organization.
7	**Submit MACTE's Accreditation Application, Application Fee and Self-Study:** After submitting Application and Fees, program has 24 months to submit Self-Study. Self-Study documentation must be submitted 12 months prior to the program's prospective On-Site Verification Visit.
8	**Advertise your program correctly:** After Accreditation Application and Fees have been submitted and it been approved, the program may advertise as an "Applicant in Good Standing".
9	**Complete the MACTE review Process:** Once the Self-Study has been submitted, reviewed and approved by MACTE and the affiliating organization an On-Site Verification Visit is scheduled.
10	**Approval:** Once the On-Site Verification Visit has taken place the program will be placed on the next quarterly MACTE Board Meeting Agenda

To help City Garden make decisions around Institute design, we have made several initial assumptions and modeled two growth scenarios for consideration.

Audience	• Targeting a pilot cohort size of **12-15 participants**, roughly half of whom will be City Garden staff • Training will be free to City Garden staff and **$10k** to outside participants
Duration and format	**Overview:** Elementary (ages 6-12) training consisting of 2 intensive summers and 2 academic years of in-school teaching (residency), lasting 26 months in total. • *Summer 1:* 2 weeks in-person; 6 weeks virtual coursework • *Academic Year 1:* Full-time self-guided practicum; 4-6 virtual weekend seminars • *Summer 2:* 2 weeks in-person; 6 weeks virtual coursework • *Academic Year 2:* Full-time self-guided practicum; 4-6 virtual weekend seminars • *Standalone Offerings:* Separate from certification track, ABAR training offered as school PD option
Staffing	• *Director of Training:* 1 FTE to lead planning and execution of training center; hired in year 0 • *Training Admin:* 1 FTE to support admin; timing of hire dependent on scale • *Course Trainers:* staff contracted to lead course modules; $15k per trainer, 5 trainers per course • *Coaches:* multiple staff stipends for 1:1 mentoring and support of trainees; 1 coach per 5 participants
Start-up costs	Major planning year (Y0) costs include: Training Director (**$80k**), curricular development (**$75k**), contractor fees for website, off-the-shelf online learning platform, and initial video production (**$42k**), MACTE accreditation fees (**$1.5k**)

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2
Size and pacing	**Scenario 1:** Gradual Growth (Sequential Cohorts) CG would pilot training with single cohort in summer 2019 and would *add a second cohort upon successful completion of the pilot cohort in summer 2021.*	**Scenario 2:** Rapid Growth (Overlapping Cohorts) Under this scenario, CG would pilot training with single cohort in summer 2019 and would *add additional, larger cohorts in 2020 and each summer thereafter.*
Tradeoffs	**(+):** Additional time to learn from full pilot and tweak offering before scaling to more cohorts **(-):** Forego early revenue opportunities	**(+):** Increase early revenue opportunities to reinvest in program development **(-):** Additional complexity / execution risk in overlapping cohorts during summer 2

Enrollment and staffing levels are the main ongoing financial drivers for the institute

Scenario 1: Gradual Growth Assumptions

Enrollment: assumes second cohort will start after completion of pilot; cohorts capped at 23 participants

	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
CG participants	-	6	6	6	6
Outside participants	-	9	9	17	17
Total participants	-	**15**	**15**	**23**	**23**

Scenario 2: Rapid Growth Assumptions

Enrollment: assumes additional cohort starts every summer; cohorts grow to 40 participants

	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
CG participants	-	6	14	18	22
Outside participants	-	9	26	42	53
Total participants	-	**15**	**40**	**60**	**75**

Staffing: In addition to an Institute Director and administrator, each course will be staffed with 5 instructors paid $15k per course and 1 coach per every 5 participants, paid $6k per course. These staffing assumptions are the same in each scenario

	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
Institute Director	1	1	1	1	1
Administrator	-	-	1	1	1
Lead Trainers	-	5	5	5	5
Coaches	-	3	3	4	4
Fully-loaded cost	**$81k**	**$138k**	**$224k**	**$233k**	**$236k**

	Y0	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4
Institute Director	1	1	1	1	1
Administrator	-	-	1	1	1
Lead Trainers	-	5	10	10	10
Coaches	-	3	8	12	15
Fully-loaded cost	**$81k**	**$138k**	**$292k**	**$356k**	**$377k**

Note that lead trainers would be paid, per course, over two years

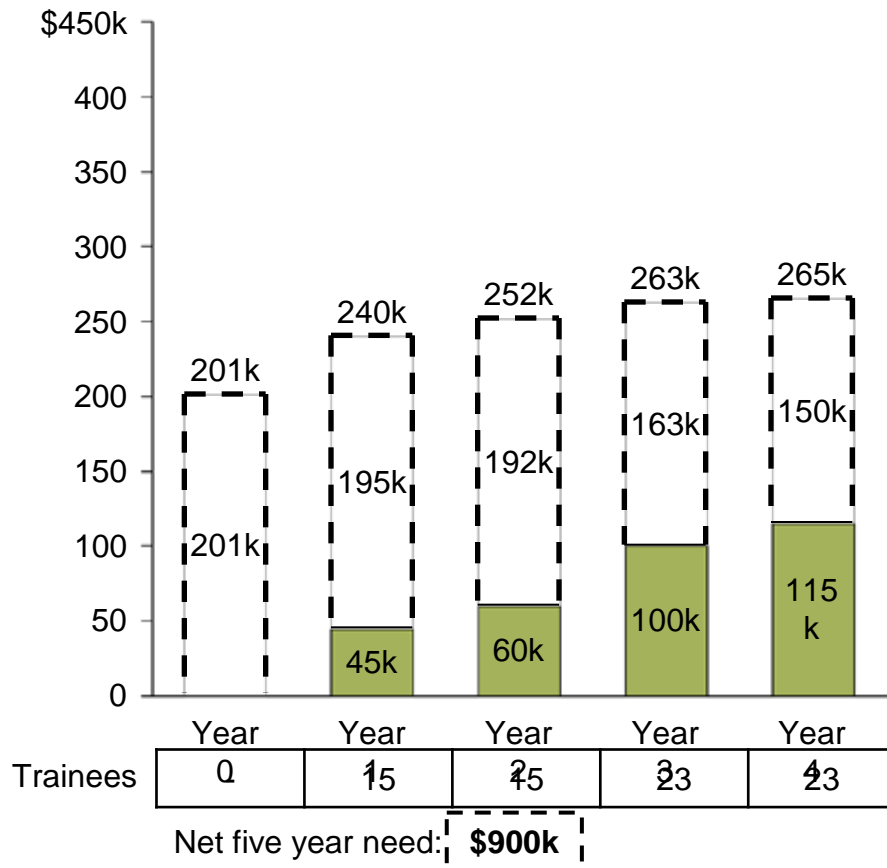# Design: Both growth scenarios would require an initial philanthropic investment to cover costs in the early years
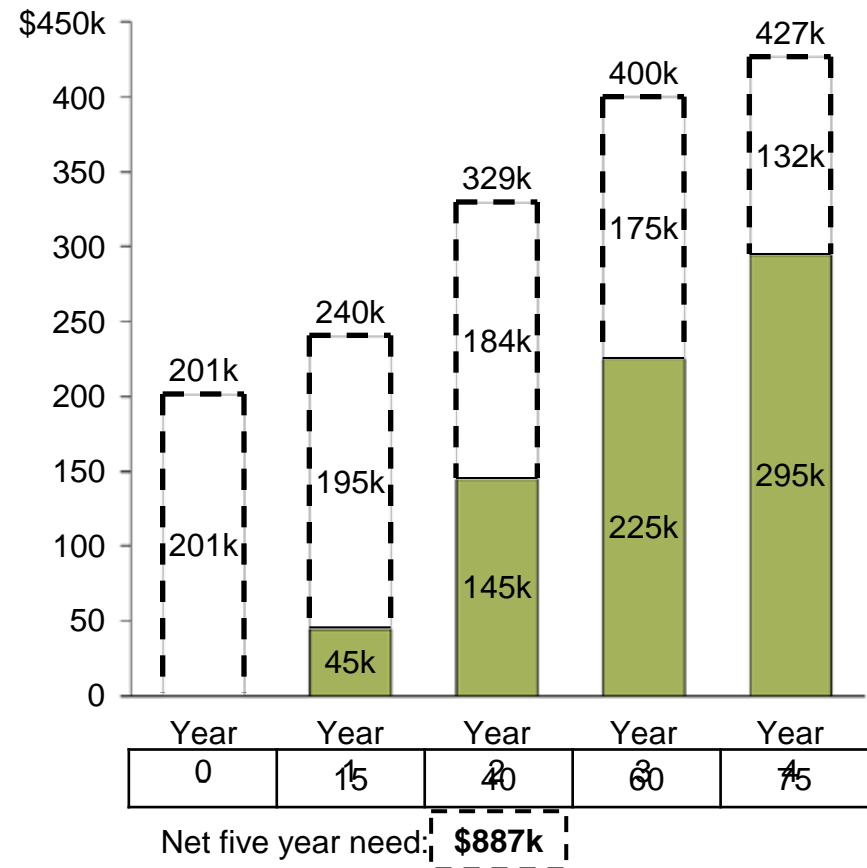
Scenario 1: Gradual Growth Projected Expenses

Scenario 2: Rapid Growth Projected Expenses

Net five year need: **$900k**

Net five year need: **$887k**

Funding Need
Revenue

Design: We recommend CG start with a pilot cohort next summer; build the detailed business plan over this year

After kicking off a pilot cohort in summer 2019, City Garden can decide whether to plan for a second cohort in summer 2020 (rapid growth) or wait to start a new cohort until the pilot is complete (gradual growth). **Our recommendation is that gradual growth be the default plan.**

Rationale for gradual growth (sequential cohorts):

- **Impact:** while you will not reach as many teachers as quickly, you may be able to provide a higher quality experience to a smaller number of participants – including City Garden staff - as you work to develop the program (depth versus breadth).

- **Improvement:** it is much easier to pilot and rapid prototype with a smaller program, which will lead to faster progression in the short term and a higher quality program in the long term

- **Finances:** While a bigger program will likely achieve some economies of scale, the overall fundraising need in the first 5 years will not be significantly different. City Garden will also be fundraising for school growth and the Center for Equity over the next few years

- **Feasibility:** It may be hard to fill a bigger cohort for a brand new and unproven institute. Recruiting trainers could also prove to be a challenge. It may make sense to retain the option of more rapid growth, but a completed pilot will allow City Garden to learn more before committing to a second cohort of trainees

- **Capacity:** City Garden is going to experience growth in three directions at once (schools, institute, Center for Equity) – a smaller initial institute will save the organization from being stretched too thin in too many directions

Design: An Institute design team will be convened to consider tradeoffs across various design elements

Enrollment

- **Cohort max.** Will there be a cap on enrollment for individual cohorts?

- **Cohort min.** Conversely, is there an enrollment threshold below which CG would choose to cancel a course?

- **Participant ratios.** What is ideal mix of trainees who are City Garden staff versus recruited from outside? How will that ratio affect revenue?

- **Steady state.** What is the expected annual enrollment once the institute is fully operational? Is it closer to 25, 250, or 25k given the virtual components?

Staffing

- **Director.** When will the Institute Director be hired, and what is the expected pay range and responsibility set for this role?

- **Trainers.** How many trainers per course? Will several trainers lead individual modules for each course, or will a single trainer be solely responsible for instruction?

- **Coaches.** What will be required of coaches and, relatedly, how many trainees can one coach manage?

- **Cross-staff.** How will CG leverage existing staff without distracting from the day-to-day of running schools?

Structure

- **Duration.** Will the certification track require 2 summers + 2 school years, or can it happen in a shorter timeframe?

- **Tracks.** In addition to teacher certification, what other tracks or topic areas will be available?

- **Standalone.** How modular will the content be? What content can be "unbundled" and sold as a set PD to schools and other orgs?

- **Blended.** Which parts of the institute will be virtual, and which will be online? For the online components, what technology will CG need?

Blended: Regardless of growth scenario, City Garden plans to build out blended components to the Institute

Building a quality blended/online approach will be **important** and **challenging**

Rationale for Blended Model

- **Access.** Shifting a large portion of the course content and delivery online will enable participation from practitioners who are unable to commit to a full-time, in-person course. This is particularly important given City Garden's focus on training teachers of color.

- **Flexibility.** Online, modular coursework gives practitioners the flexibility to complete assignments when and where it is most convenient. This goes hand-in-hand with access and will allow City Garden to reach an audience that is traditionally shut out from training programs.

- **Savings.** In the long run, a blended offering should generate cost savings by reducing the need for in-person class time and associated costs (staff, space, supplies, etc.). Online classes can also enable magnitudes of scale that would be impossible in a fully in-person offering.

Expected Challenges

- **Large initial investment.** Technology costs more than might be initially expected, particularly in the initial build out phase. Up front costs may include customization, contractors, and content creation.

- **Technical challenges and support.** Maintaining an online learning platform will require ongoing oversight and expense, from dealing with technical issues to helping individual students access content.

- **Content management.** Ensuring course work is effectively distributed to and collected from students will take thoughtful planning and execution. Early considerations may include mobile-enabled content, virtual gradebooks, and a learning management system.

Blended: Experienced practitioners of online training and PD offered the following advice and words of caution

- **In-person touch points** are important to build trust and create an effective cohort feel between trainees and Institute staff; consider having at least 2 in-person touch points

- **1 person should fully oversee a cohort** through their time in the program; this helps ensure a unified cohort experience and cuts down on cross-team communication needs

- **Ensure that you have a smooth technological foundation**; glitches and issues can cause major disruptions for trainees and headaches for staff

- **Hire staff who have experience leading virtual PD**. There is a tendency to underestimate how different it is to lead a virtual classroom versus a live classroom. Where possible, seek out staff who have experience leading in a virtual setting

- **Leverage technology for collaboration.** Structure online course conversations so they are collaborative and have lots of break-outs—not as much "sit and get" time

- **Preparation is key in blended classrooms.** Find a way to ensure that participants come to calls with pre-work completed so class time is maximized

- **Set clear expectations for participation.** Clarify what active participation means in an online setting; where possible, ensure everyone is on video so you can see faces

Blended: Costs to develop course materials and run the virtual training components could range in cost

Technology products that enable blended learning vary widely in sophistication and cost. As City Garden prepares to launch a pilot cohort, it may be useful to orient around the concept of a Minimum Viable Product:

A Minimum Viable Product (MVP) is a product or service that is developed with sufficient features to satisfy early adopters. It is **the most pared down version of a product that can still meet the business and customer need**.

We can apply this concept when thinking about the technology needs for a blended training institute:

Need	Description	MVP	Steady State
Content Creation	City Garden will need to create ABAR-infused Montessori training content	City Garden can contract a small team of experienced Montessori teachers to create modular lessons	A team of FTEs that includes authors, editors, designers, and production specialists creating new content in 12-week cycles
Video-conferencing	City Garden will need video chats to facilitate discussions throughout the virtual portions of courses	Skype is free; Zoom accounts are available for $14.99/month and enable breakout rooms (among other features)	A video-conferencing feature could be embedded into customized platform and include any number of bells and whistles
Content management	City Garden will need an online repository where they can store content and students can access assignments	An off-the-shelf LMS can cost $5-10K annually after a $15k initial build-out	A fully customized LMS can cost upwards of $500K-$1M to build

Student Success
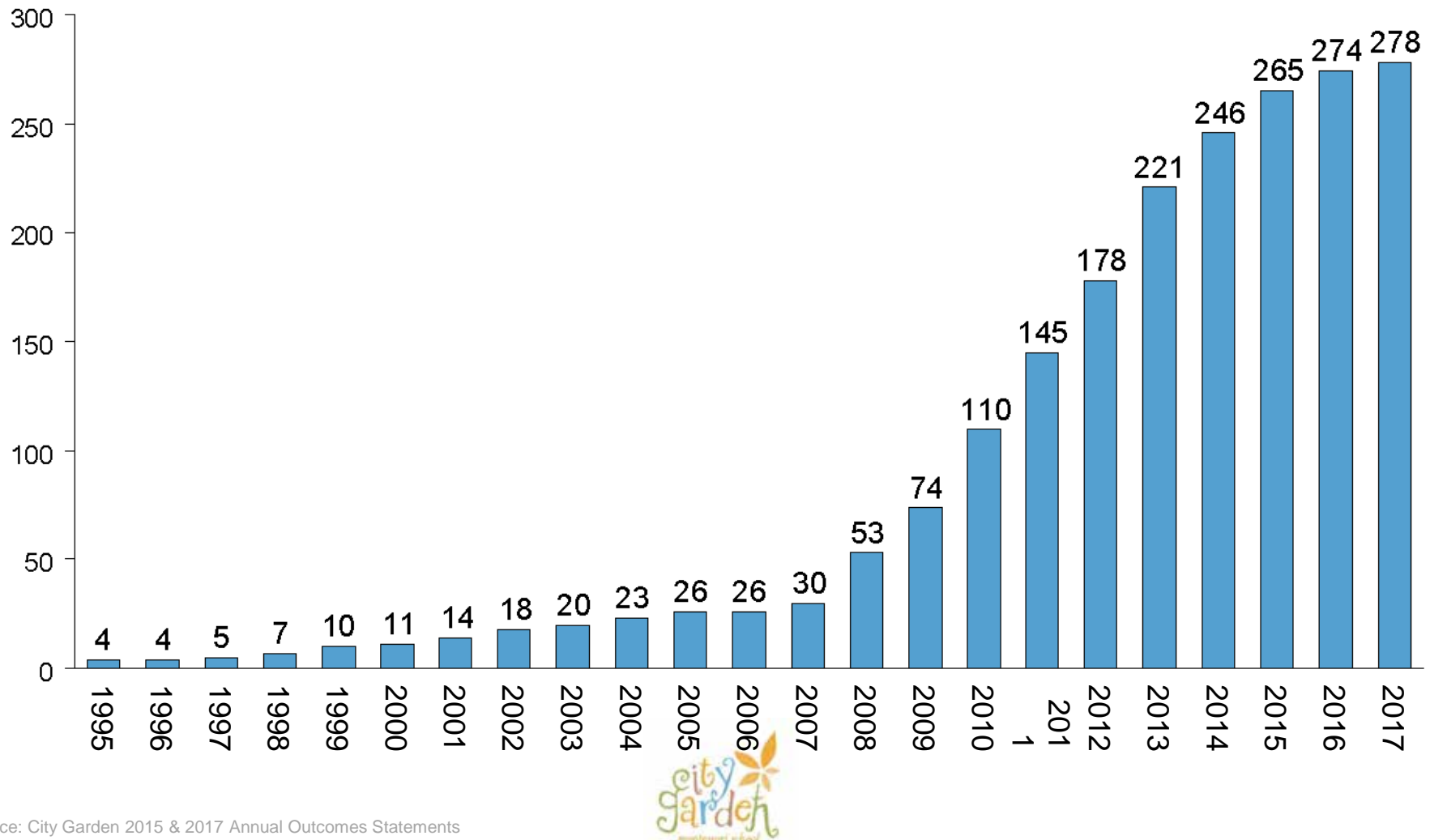
Institute

Schools

Center for Equity

From a few families in a single room, City Garden has grown to serve almost 300 students at full enrollment
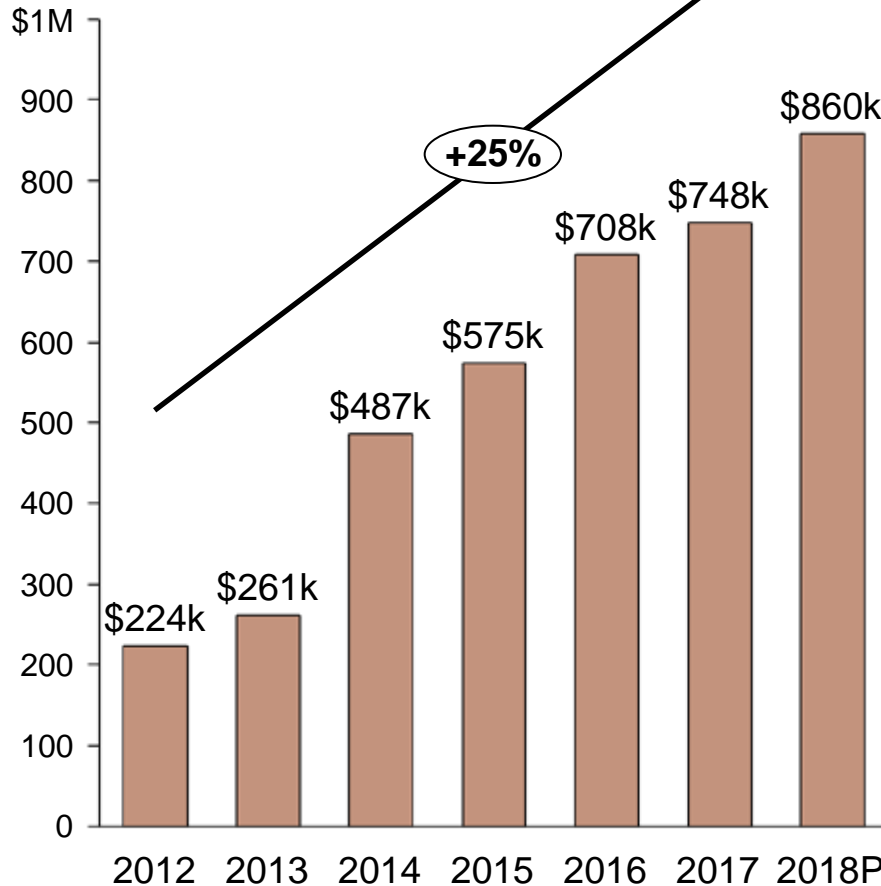
City Garden student enrollment (1995-17)

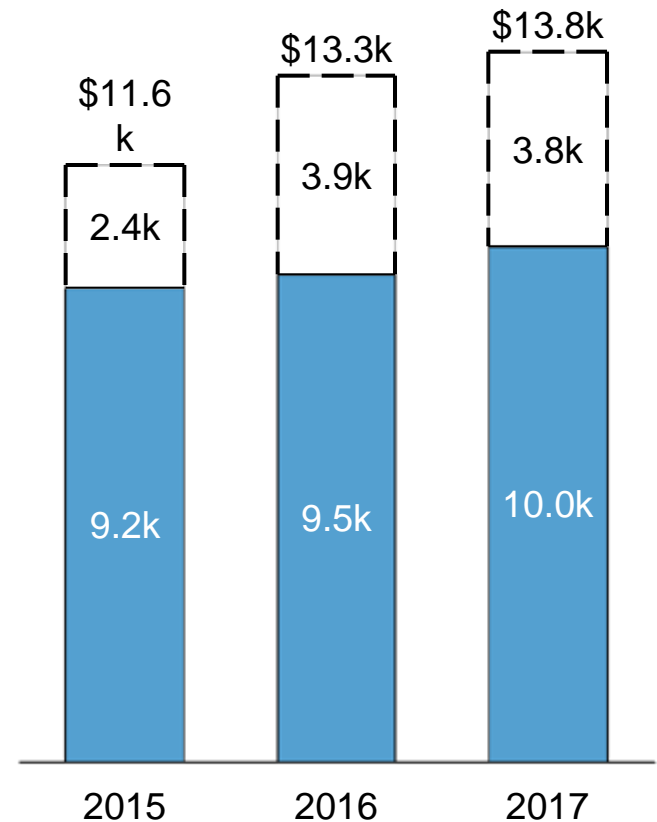Source: City Garden 2015 & 2017 Annual Outcomes Statements

Recent growth of the school and a persistent funding gap has necessitated corresponding increases in fundraising

City Garden annual funds raised (2012-18)

+25%

- 2012: $224k
- 2013: $261k
- 2014: $487k
- 2015: $575k
- 2016: $708k
- 2017: $748k
- 2018P: $860k

Gap between public funding and cost per pupil (2015-17)

Year	Per pupil funding	Per pupil gap	Total
2015	9.2k	2.4k	$11.6k
2016	9.5k	3.9k	$13.3k
2017	10.0k	3.8k	$13.8k

Per pupil gap   Per pupil funding

A larger school will be more financially sustainable, but it will take time and there are challenges

The Bellwether team has been working with Christie and David to align on the design of the schools and key assumptions for the financial model

- With the addition of new schools, City Garden will build a network office to manage the CMO. Schools will pay a management fee (~10% of revenue) to the network to pay for those support services (e.g., leadership, shared back office services)
- Staffing at the school level is the biggest driver of cost – as we refine the key assumptions we'll determine whether and where there is opportunity to add leadership and support roles
- We are working through different scenarios for facilities costs for the growth of the flagship and the opening of new schools

City Garden faces some real challenges in achieving financial sustainability

- City Garden's high touch co-teaching model is expensive in a state with relatively low per-pupil funding
- Per pupil funding will likely not increase as quickly as City Garden would like to increase salaries
- In addition, City Garden has a commitment to supporting students academically, extra-curricularly, and socially, with an emphasis on equity and ABAR. This is core to the model but also drives cost

A larger school model will lead to increased financial sustainability, but not immediately

- With the planning years included and gradual growth of the flagship and new schools, full enrollment is many years out (~10 years for the flagship)
- That said, preliminary numbers show a decline in total philanthropy as the school approaches full enrollment. In addition, the percentage of revenue from philanthropy will decline significantly with a larger school (the philanthropy per pupil will be much smaller) – an important consideration for funders

City Garden parents and staff were recently asked to complete a survey to share insights in a few areas

Staff Question Topics	Parent Question Topics
Core Values	School culture
School Performance & Student Achievement	School Performance & Student Achievement
School Culture & Work/Life Mix	Parent & Community Engagement
Talent & Professional Development	
Decision-making & Communications	

Staff survey results: school performance & student achievement

City Garden staff perspective on school performance & student achievement

% of survey responses

As a school, we set and maintain high expectations for our students' social-emotional development.
| 24% | 61% | 15% |
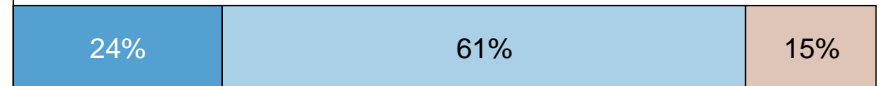
As a school, we set and maintain high expectations for our students' academic achievement.
| 30% | 61% | 3% | 6% |

As a school, we have found the right balance between Montessori methods and test prep.
| 3% | 55% | 16% | 23% | 3% |

As a school, we effectively support students with disabilities.
| 43% | 37% | 3% | 13% | 3% |

As a school, we effectively support ELL students.
| 11% | 39% | 50% |
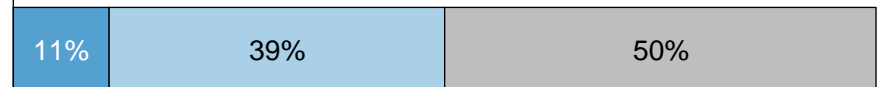
As a school, we effectively support high achieving students.
| 32% | 45% | 3% | 16% | 3% |
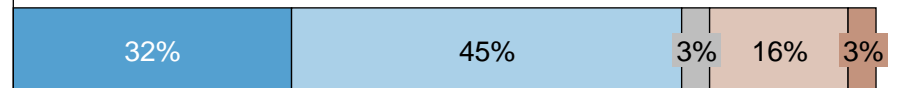
■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

Staff insights: school performance & student achievement

Lead Guides
• I don't think we have found our balance yet. We are actively trying to get concrete plans, **but do not have a strong curriculum to support all students** yet. • **We need lower student teacher ratios** if we have any hope of meeting diverse needs. Our ratios are not conducive to providing quality support to our learners. • I **wish we'd talk about "high achieving students" more**. We could be doing more for these students. • The school **needs a clear standard of what level of socio-emotional development** and academic success students should be working towards and beyond. • Nationally, Montessori Schools in the Public Sector seem to **struggle with the issue of test prep.** I would say that we continue to search for the best approach for City Garden. It is at the top of our list when addressing the achievement gap. • It often 'appears' that student **achievement and social well-being often take a backseat to ABAR**.

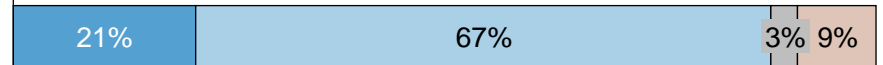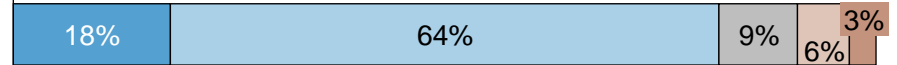| All other staff |
| --- |
| • I know this is an area of growth for CG, the **upper elementary could benefit from a more rigorous curriculum** that's aligned to the state standards.

• I feel that although **we strive to help our students with disabilities, we need to find other resources** that can help them be successful in the classroom.

• Achievement gap. **Math scores school-wide need strengthening.** Nothing in place to fix these issues.

• **Our discipline model is our weakest area I believe**. It is not clearly stated and is different in every classroom, which leaves too much room for prejudice and bias at an individual level for our students of color, in my opinion. |

Staff survey results: school culture & work/life balance

City Garden staff perspective on school culture & work/life balance

% of survey responses

Statement	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
City Garden staff members collaborate effectively.	21%	67%	3%	9%	
City Garden staff members resolve conflicts in a productive way.	18%	64%	9%	6%	3%
There is a high level of trust among staff members.	15%	36%	24%	15%	9%
Our culture makes work enjoyable.	36%	58%		3%	3%
I have a sustainable work/life mix in my job as currently structured.	38%	34%	6%	16%	6%
If I left City Garden, sustainable work/life mix would not be a deciding factor.	38%	28%	6%	19%	9%
Our organization is diverse, equitable, and inclusive.	55%	39%		6%	
I can bring my "whole self" to work.	67%	24%		6%	3%
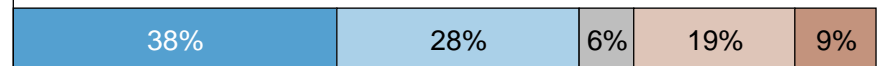
Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

Staff insights: school culture & work-life balance

Lead Guides

- **City Garden is the school I want to work at**…If I leave it would not be because of City Garden, it would be because of the job.

- **City Garden is an amazing place to work.** My grade-level team enjoys planning, working, and overall being together.

- This is the biggest, most challenging work of my career. **It is exhilarating and all consuming**. I have a personal goal to intentionally create a sustainable work/life mix.

- **I spend a lot of my personal time planning and working on work related deliverables**, or working late to complete tasks necessary for daily functioning. This may be due to the process of development of procedures and curriculum at my grade levels.

- Within and between the many important PD opportunities, **I wish there was more time to connect, share stories, and grow with my colleagues.** This change would benefit my teaching and my enjoyment of my profession.

All other staff

- I think my personal work/life balance is maintained from my own setting of boundaries (and the support of my supervisor in setting those boundaries**). I think it would be easy within our current culture to let work overshadow life**, especially given our propensity to take on or finish projects last minute.

- **One thing that I have loved about working with city garden is the staff.** I have found that the staff has always looked for ways to connect and collaborate. I feel that the staff is always there for others in need.

- **The very nature of this work does not really allow for a healthy work/life mix**....In general, schools in failing public school districts are not set up for success. Therefore, the environment demands a great amount of work.

- **Work/life mix can be hard to sustain when communication of expectations is unclear,** such as what Montessori assignments/PDs are meant for SPED (many PD have Montessori work that SPED was not told of, but expected to stay for). This can be frustrating as a SPED teacher.

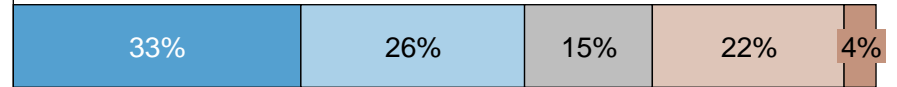# Staff survey results: talent & professional development

City Garden staff perspective on talent & professional development

% of survey responses

Statement	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
City Garden makes a conscious effort to remove bias in our recruiting process.	66%	28%	3%	3%	
Our on-boarding process effectively oriented me to City Garden.	33%	26%	15%	22%	4%
I have adequate opportunities for professional development and growth.	36%	52%	6%	3%	3%
Leaders at city Garden coach and mentor effectively.	28%	41%	9%	9%	13%
I have an appropriate amount of direction and guidance to do my job well.	33%	42%		18%	6%
I have explicit conversations with my administrators about my professional growth and career goals.	44%	16%	22%	9%	9%
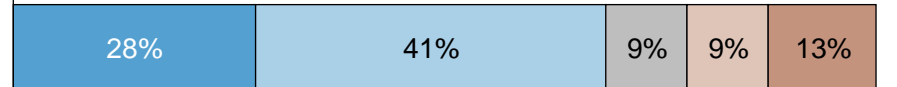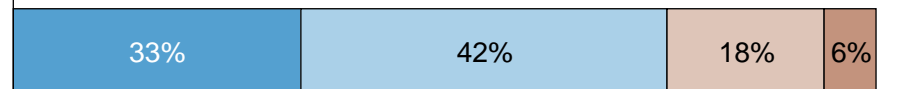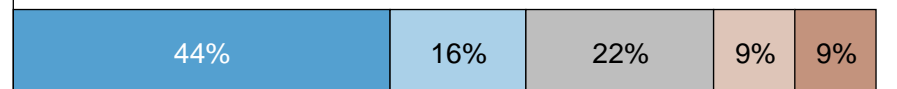
■ Strongly agree   ■ Somewhat agree   ■ Neither agree nor disagree   ■ Somewhat disagree   ■ Strongly disagree

Staff insights: talent & professional development

First and second year at City Garden

- From my direct supervisor, **I overall have been pleased with the guidance and mentorship** I have received. Micro-management is something that I have experienced from leadership. I think that is related to the communication, planning, and trust issues. There has been poor communication vertically up and down the hierarchy at times.

- It is **difficult when many leaders do not have Montessori background** or training because it can feel like talking to a brick wall**.** Also, many of our professional development feels useless because it isn't possible to meet the needs of such a huge variety of grade levels and teaching methods.

- The current **amount of in-house professional development feels just right** (monthly half day). I'd appreciate opportunities to do off-site professional development as well.

- It is still **difficult right now to find the time** to be effectively/consistently mentored during reasonable work hours.

Third year+ at City Garden

- I believe that there have been opportunities for growth and advancement, but **guidance, coaching and mentorship weren't available for everyone**. The decision to develop staff members are based on the leader's personal values and not CG core values.

- **I have had wonderful PD experiences based on the group needs of the school.** They really have been exceptional. I would like to find a way to integrate my individual growth needs into our plans as well.

- The **institution of the ILT has made a positive impact on grade level coaching, mentoring and on-boarding new staff.** The coaching model, lesson study and child study together will continue to make an impact on cohesive programmatic planning and expectations as we codify and distill what our strengths are at each level. The ILT and Administrative Team support has been very important to professional development, coaching and mentoring that I have received

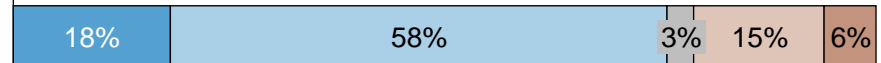# Staff survey results: decision-making & communications

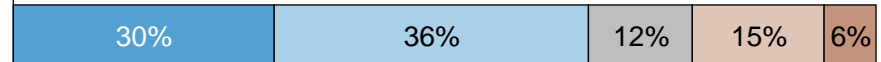## City Garden staff perspective on decision-making & communications

% of survey responses

Statement	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
City Garden practices effective communication.	9%	52%	6%	21%	12%
The leadership team communicates well with the rest of the organization.	18%	58%	3%	15%	6%
I have effective channels to provide organizational feedback.	30%	36%	12%	15%	6%
City Garden has an effective approach to decision-making.	16%	42%	19%	16%	6%
I have an appropriate level of transparency into decisions made by City Garden's leadership team.	32%	48%	3%	16%	
Decision makers seek input from relevant stakeholders before making a final decision.	28%	38%	24%	3%	7%
Roles and responsibilities are clear across the organization.	24%	58%	3%	6%	9%
I know what I am responsible for and have clear objectives.	61%	30%		6%	3%
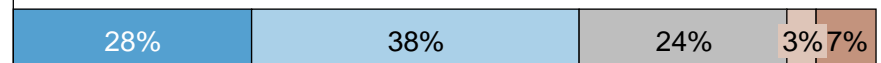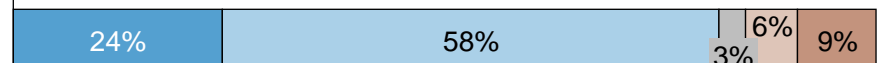
Legend: Strongly agree | Somewhat agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Somewhat disagree | Strongly disagree

Staff insights: decision-making & communication

Lead guides and assistant guides

- I feel that **overall, City Garden has done a great job** of communicating certain things, but there have been times where we will find out things at the last minute.

- **I have such faith, and confidence that we, as a community of stakeholders will make significant headway in these areas going forward**.

- I have been somewhat surprised in my time at City Garden by the **lack of input staff have in decision-making** (I feel City Garden very effectively "markets" a collaborative work environment to recruits), but I have been especially surprised by the lack of support to implement decisions that have been made. Finally, I've found that when I have acted upon opportunities for input, I have had my ideas mischaracterized and/or dismissed.

Student supports and administrative staff

- think leadership could take better advantage of the expertise of staff when making decisions**. Plans and strategies are not well communicated at the project level.** The overall strategy for the organization is well communicated, but when it comes to day-to-day project planning and implementation, it is common for plans made at lower levels to be changed by higher levels at the last minute, whether because leadership did not feel informed about the plans or because there was disagreement or because leadership had a conflicting plan that was not clearly passed down. Roles are mostly clear, but there have been misunderstandings at times.

- MAP testing has been difficult to understand in the area of special education because **expectations are blurry as to who special ed. instructors take care of.** For instance, students with IEPs are priority, but many gen. ed. teachers have communicated the SPED department of gen. ed. student who need accommodations and then staff is run thin because the ratio of students with accommodations becomes too large on the student side.
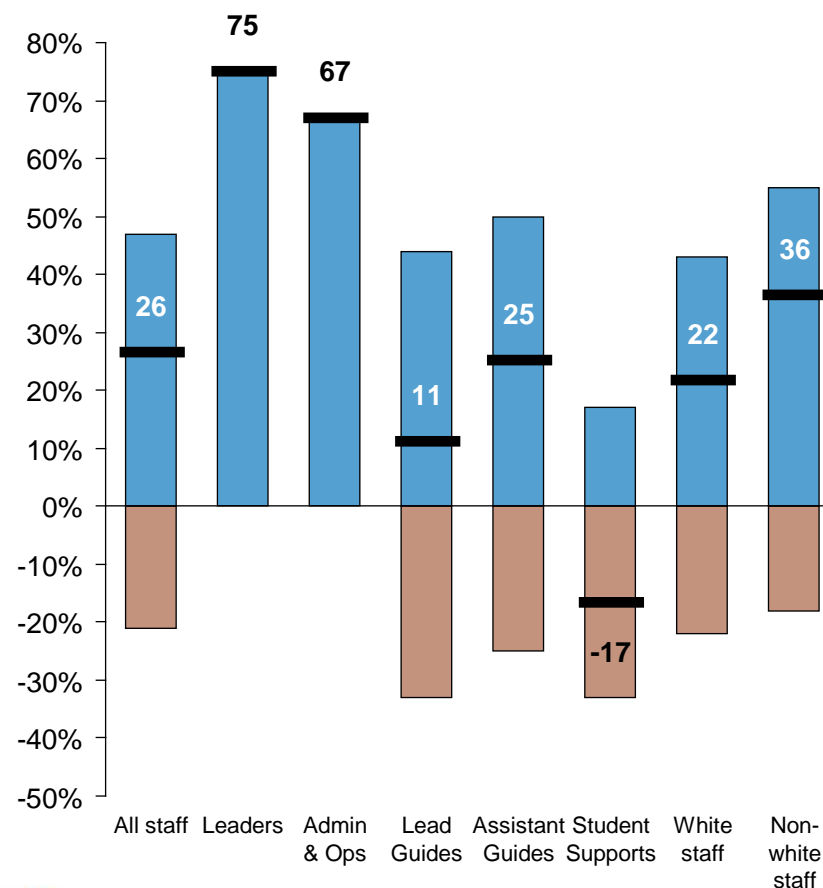
Net Promoter Score - staff

How likely is it that you would recommend City Garden as a **place to work** to a friend or family member?

How likely is it that you would recommend City Garden as a **place to send a child** to a friend or family member?
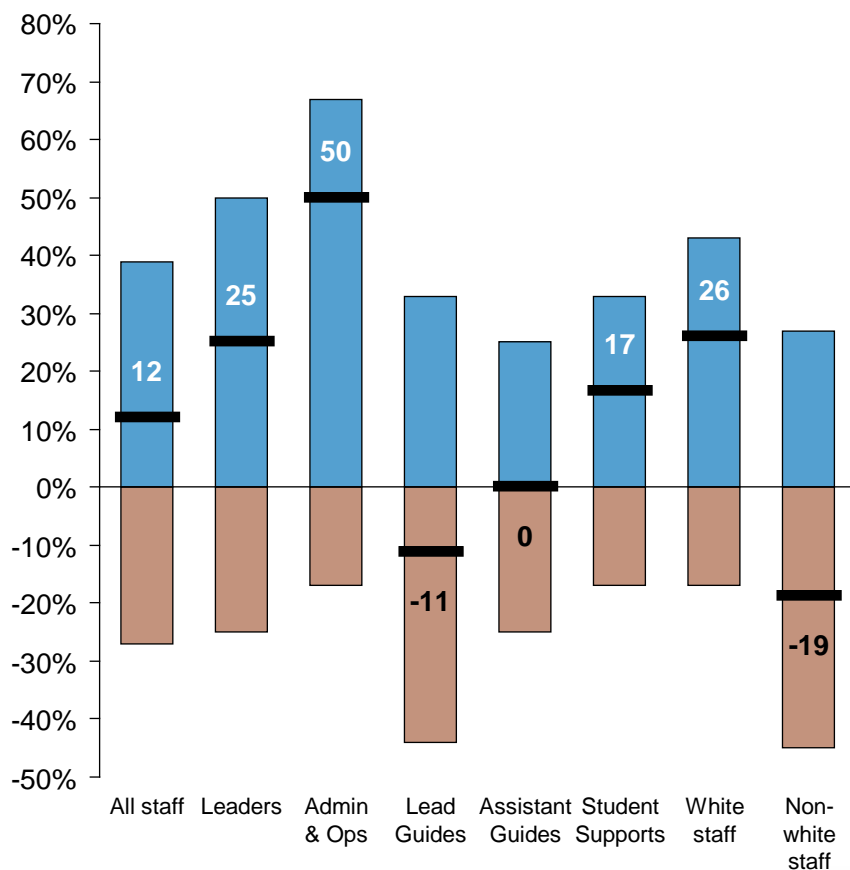
NPS — Promoter — Detractor

Parent survey results: school culture

City Garden parent perspective on school culture

% of survey responses

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel welcome at City Garden.	62%	23%	6%	2%	7%
My child feels welcome at City Garden.	68%	22%	1%	5%	5%
My child is safe at school.	51%	33%	5%	6%	5%
Teachers and staff at City Garden value diversity, equity, and inclusion.	69%	19%	2%	5%	6%

Parent insights: school culture

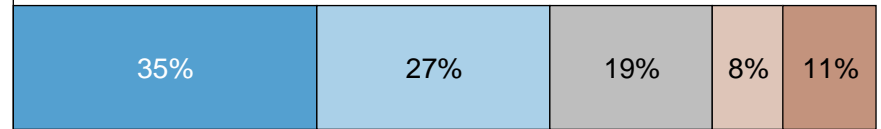| All Parents |
|---|
| • I like how the children are encouraged / required to work with different classmates on various tasks to promote **cooperation and unity** throughout the classroom environment.

• It's a **loving and accepting culture** which I'm proud to be a part of.

• **I feel my child is safe, but I would like to hear more about how that gets done**. And be updated on trainings/policies if a shooter came in.

• Safety, especially as it pertains to intrusion, is very important to me. **I'd like the school to take measures to limit accessibility and increase access control measures to the school and campus**.

• **The welcoming in the morning is something I absolutely LOVE about the scho**ol.

• Sometimes I feel like the school is more focused on ABAR than the kids' education and definitely more than Montessori. **I don't think there's much Montessori left in the school**, and often wonder if it would be better to declare it an ABAR school and go to traditional methods that the teachers are qualified for.

• I definitely noticed the **warmth of the administration and support staff**. The teachers can be a bit less responsive at times, seem to be more responsive when there are problems they want to address but not much balance with the positive.

• The kids need more play at least 2.5 hours a day. Recess should not be taken away as punishment. When issues arise a lack of defensiveness would be appreciated**. The social justice awareness I feel is not age appropriately explained.** The black history month performance too heavy for the little ones although as an adult it was very validating to my wants and desires. |

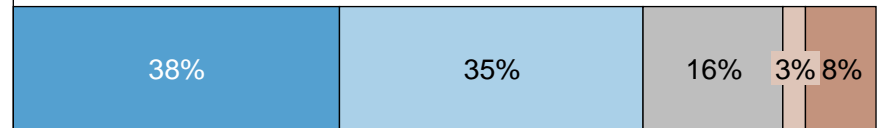# Parent survey results: school performance & student achievement

City Garden parent perspective on school performance & student achievement
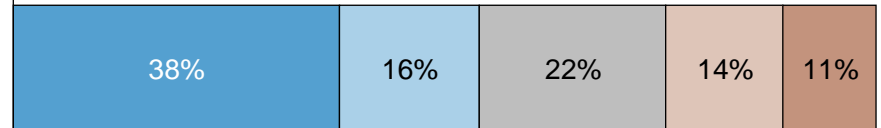
% of survey responses

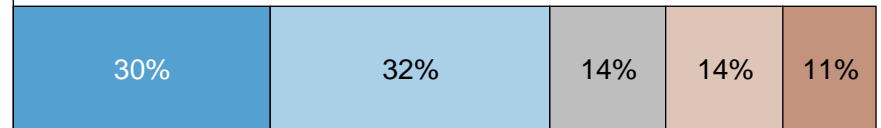| Statement	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Teachers and staff at City Garden share the same high aspirations for my child as I do.	35%	27%	19%	8%	11%
Teachers and staff at City Garden have high expectations for my child's behavior and social-emotional development.	38%	35%	16%	3%	8%
Teachers and staff at City Garden have high expectations for my child's academic development.	38%	16%	22%	14%	11%
I believe my child is receiving an excellent education at City Garden.	30%	32%	14%	14%	11%

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree

Parent insights: school performance & student achievement

| All Parents |
|---|
| • The focus of the school has been shifting away from academic performance and Montessori education towards social justice. Montessori teachers are replaced by non Montessori trained teachers. **Families have been leaving the school out of concern for the education of their children**. Others families are paying for tutoring or after school programs which we cannot afford. More resources and focus should be allocated to education and support teachers.

• My wife and I have **been troubled by the teacher turn over**.

• I'm still on the learning curve, we are new to the school. Apparently, my child's teachers new to the school as well. So there was **a lot of miscommunication in 2017**.

• The teachers are doing a good job but still need to **realize each child is different and learns differently**.

• I **wonder how guides challenge students that don't want to set high goals or do more challenging work.**

• I cannot express how grateful I am that my child is attending a school that **values and puts into practice ABAR initiatives.** I know of no other grade school ever who is doing this. I'm also very excited that the guide in her classroom lets the children work out their differences when they arise.

• I feel like the **teachers have to spend a ton of time handling behavioral issues** and not enough time teaching students. I also don't know that my child is being pushed as much as she could be because of this.

• I feel like the performance and achievement **goals and expectations were much stronger from kindergarten through third grade**. Once my child transitioned into Upper EL the accountability, Expectations and challenges stopped. |

Parent survey results: parent & community engagement

City Garden parent perspective on parent & community engagement

% of survey responses

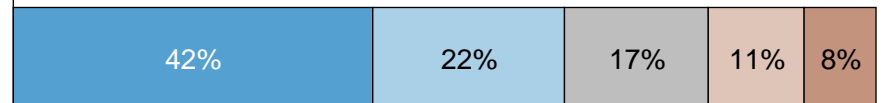There are opportunities for me to be involved in the school.
- 78%
- 11%
- 3%
- 0%
- 8%

My child's teachers keep me regularly informed of my child's progress.
- 33%
- 39%
- 3%
- 14%
- 11%
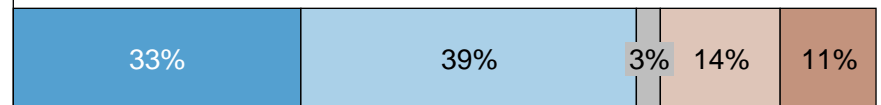
I am effectively communicated with about school events (field trips, Family Teacher conferences, etc.)
- 61%
- 25%
- 3%
- 3%
- 8%

I am comfortable sharing concerns I have with school leadership.
- 42%
- 22%
- 17%
- 11%
- 8%

City Garden effectively engages with the broader community.
- 58%
- 17%
- 17%
- 6%
- 3%

Legend: ■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree
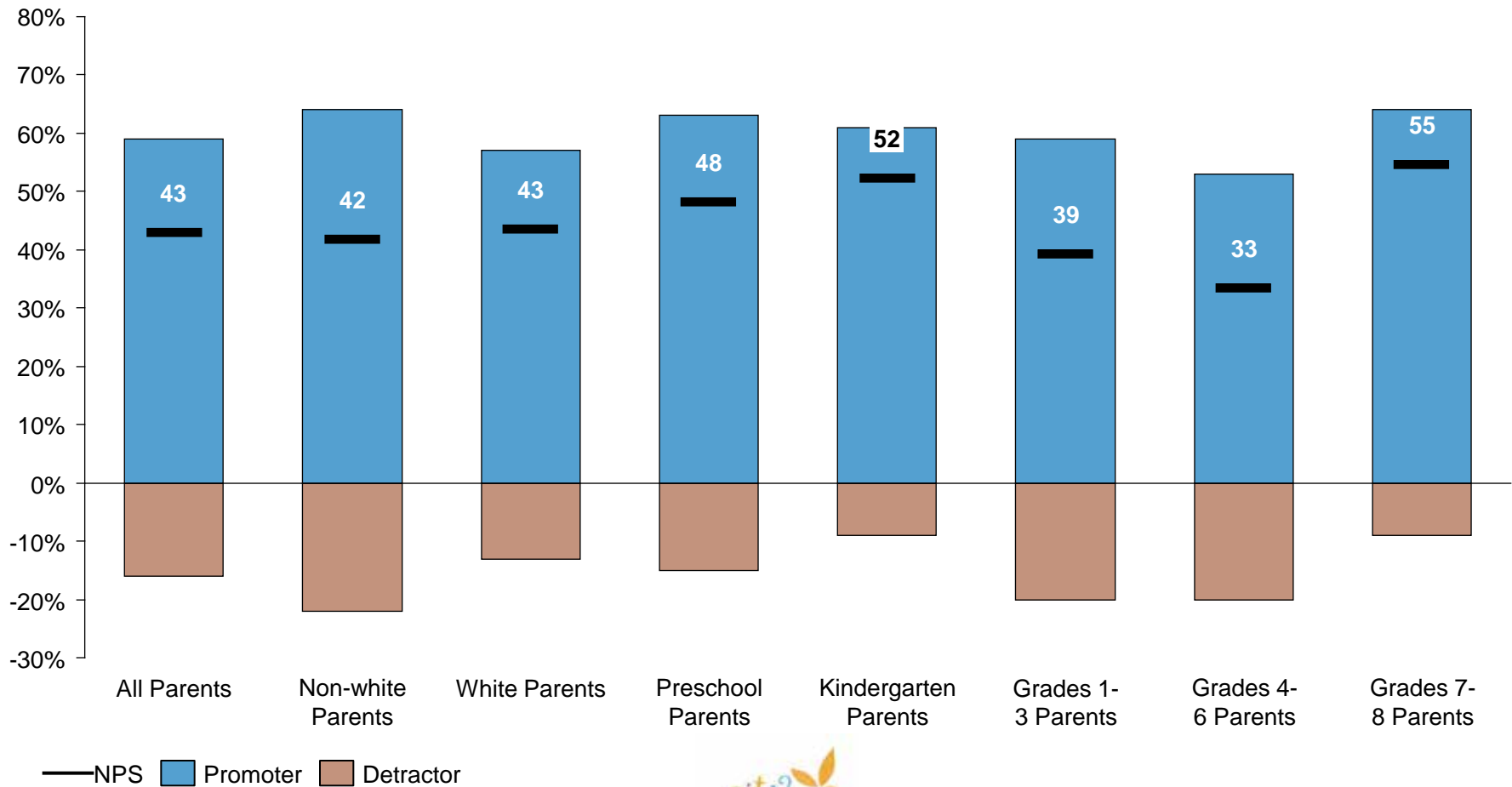
Parent insights: parent & community engagement

All Parents
• We have expressed concerns about academic performance and **I feel that our concerns are not being heard**.
• **Some special events are last minute communicated such as the concerts.** We missed out on the evening performance of Black History month because we didn't know til one day before.
• I fell planning around communications cold be improved. Whether a school event or PAC opportunity, there's an opportunity to improve the awareness process across the board.
• I feel comfortable expressing my concerns with the school. However, I don't feel like they're really considered. I feel like they're pretty much disregarded. I feel like this is true based on my own experiences as well as those of others. I feel **like there's a lot of encouragement to express concerns, but I don't think those concerns have much impact.**
• **City Garden does a great job being an anchor for the community.** City Garden needs to take the same seriousness and energy they put into being community partners into being a good school for kids to learn.
• I feel that the calendar is frequently confusing and when I get a mix of notifications via paper notices, email from teacher and administration, texts and Facebook I feel lost. **I would prefer one consistent method of communication.**
• **I wish city garden engaged more with SLPS** and maybe Washington Montessori especially so we didn't feel like such a bubble.

Net Promoter Score - parents

How likely is it that you would recommend City Garden to a friend or family member?

Legend: NPS (line) | Promoter (blue) | Detractor (tan)

NPS values by group:
- All Parents: 43
- Non-white Parents: 42
- White Parents: 43
- Preschool Parents: 48
- Kindergarten Parents: 52
- Grades 1-3 Parents: 39
- Grades 4-6 Parents: 33
- Grades 7-8 Parents: 55

What does City Garden do well as a school?

Parents	Staff
• You provide **a safe environment and a excellent high level of education** for the students. Awesome healthy lunches and you care for the families well being. • Community, parental, extended family engagement. Welcoming environment. **Caring leadership**. • The **diversity curriculum is amazing**. I've learned about being Black by my kid. ABAR and color brave is so needing in this community. • Talking about and recognizing race, and helping all kids' awareness of this. **Emphasis on social justice**. This is unique and invaluable. • Excellent engagement with diversity and other social issues. **Caring, loving environment in which children feel special.** • **The level of education my daughter receives is outstanding** - her teacher adjusts for her exact needs and continues to challenge her to keep moving to the next level.	• City Garden does an outstanding job of having a **clear vision of core values**, making them clear from the beginning to new staff. • Focuses on an **inclusive, and thriving community** with areas for growth in academics and the individual child. • **Radical hospitality** and being accountable to our children and families. • Explicitly train the staff **on ABAR**. • **They love every child**. A whole community of teachers and staff are responsible for all of the children. • Recognizing oppression in its multiple forms, and then **taking action in the classroom to interrupt the cycles of oppression**. Boosting community. • **Believe in anti racist anti bias education**, not shy away from being political where children's needs are concerned, embracing BLM as an important movement, tackling big social issues.

What is your vision for City Garden's future? What impact do you hope the organization will have?

Parents	Staff
• I hope that the school could provide **quality education to more African-American children** in St. Louis. • Advocating for **affordable housing** in the area. • I love and admire the vision of the school and see the positive impact it's had on the neighborhood. It's a **model for what an amazing, positive force an institution can be.** • **The only impact I really care about is a strong education for my kids**, this is their foundation in life, and any house with a weak foundation can't be built too tall before it topples. • I hope they can find ways to **increase their diversity from the community and offer quality education action to families of color or with lower incomes**. I know the shift of the population in the catchment area has made this difficult • I want CG to **reengage with SLPS** and help provide a successful model for larger systemic change within SLPS. Don't be an island of success.	• I hope the organization will successfully **raise the performance scores of the Black students** in all areas, especially math and to be a beacon for ABAR work in a Montessori school. • I hope to see City Garden continue **to grow and thrive and expand**. I hope it continues to make a difference with its ABAR focus and education. • I hope that City Garden can continue to impact other institutions within our city to work toward **more ABAR focused partnerships**. • My vision is for CG to continue to grow academically and make **educating the students the first priority and ABAR the very close second priority**. • I hope City Garden keeps being a **beacon of hope** and keeps pushing for excellence. I hope we learn from our mistakes and grow stronger as an organization focused on education and equality.

Student Success

Institute

Schools

Center for Equity

A subset of the steering committee landed on a proposed path forward for the Center for Equity

- Over the next 3-5 years, the City Garden Center for Equity will:
    - **Build knowledge and capacity in City Garden's communities** to organize and advocate for themselves and their communities (e.g., re: housing and development, maintaining economic and racial diversity, financial literacy, political power). This would include direct programming for parents and community members
    - **Leverage City Garden connections in housing and development** and act as a convener of like minded individuals in the sector
    - **Act as a hub or convener to advance policies** necessary for City Garden to thrive, bringing together existing organizations like MPPI, MACTE to build the coalitions and capacity in St. Louis and Missouri. Clearly define which issues City Garden will engage in (e.g., certification, weighted lottery, pre-k)

> This will be the Center for Equity's only direct work, focused on the communities where there are City Garden schools

> The Center for Equity will not play a direct role in housing and development

> The Center for Equity will not be a lobbying organization

Staffing the near term would be 1 Director to drive the work above and set a more detailed vision for the Center for Equity's future. The Center for Equity's activities will be focused on what will directly help City Garden students and families thrive - preparing the environment for City Garden's students

Over the past several months we have been working on implementation of some elements of our strategic plan

Description of the work

Program model codification	• Developing and populating a framework to capture the key elements of City Garden's model in order to strengthen our work in the current school, prepare for growth down the road, and potentially share our model with other schools • Developing detailed templates to codify all elements of our program model
Institute design	• Driving to decisions about key design elements of the elementary training center and project managing the initial steps of the application process
Talent approach and org structure	• Developing a talent philosophy and compensation philosophy for the organization going forward • Building on both the talent philosophy and decisions about strategic priorities, developing a go-forward org structure and defining competencies for City Garden network and job descriptions for key leadership roles within the organization
Governance	• Considering options for future legal structures as well as ways to strengthen and evolve governance practices to support growth
Communications	• Communication of the strategic plan to key stakeholders
Fundraising	• Developing a presentation to share with potential funders to support City Garden's growth