Aurora Public Schools
Pilot Schools Manual

UPDATED JULY 2014
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I. Introduction and Overview

A. Purpose of the Manual

In 2007, Aurora Education Association and Aurora Public Schools Board of Education agreed that APS should become a Pilot School district as an effective means to generate school reform.

Both AEA and the school district board and leadership believe the innovations in the Pilot School structure are a perfect match for the goals outlined in the Aurora Public Schools strategic plan. The Pilot model embodies teacher and community empowerment.

- The purpose of Pilot Schools is to promote educational innovation and increase student success and achievement while offering a choice to teachers and parents.

- The goal of Pilot Schools is to provide schools with autonomy and maximum control over their resources in exchange for increased accountability. The anticipated outcome is increased student achievement. Pilot Schools are given more freedom but, in return, their students are expected to attain higher levels of student achievement that exceed district averages when they are compared to schools with similar demographics. Pilot Schools are free from many constraints in order to be more innovative, empower teachers and engage the community. Pilot Schools are exempt from most district policies (except those mandated by law or regulation) and are exempt from many teacher contract work rules defined by the negotiated agreement. (Teachers are entitled to the same salary and benefits of other teachers in the district and retain their seniority and transfer rights.) Pilot Schools have collaborative cultures that support staff and administration working together to best meet the needs of students and families of their school.

- Pilot Schools can be at any grade level: pre-school, elementary, middle, K-8 or high. The only expectation is that no Pilot School be no larger than 600 students. For larger schools, this means creating separate schools within an existing facility. Each school in an existing facility would have its own staff and budget with different programmatic focus.

The intent of this manual is to detail the expectations, practices, and responsibilities that govern Pilot Schools, as agreed upon by the Aurora Public Schools Board of Education and the Aurora Education Association in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (Article 44). This is a living document and as current agreements get updated or revised as necessary, this manual will reflect those agreements and changes as Pilot Schools continue to evolve as their numbers increase over time.

This manual should be utilized by:

- APS central office staff as they work with Pilot Schools
• Leaders of any Pilot Schools to assist in understanding the full scope of autonomies and responsibilities of Pilot Schools
• Design teams of prospective Pilot Schools, to assist them in understanding what Pilot status means and entails
• Pilot Schools Governing Board members
• Others connected with or interested in becoming a Pilot School

Pilot Schools are part of the larger district but share common features that make them unique. Pilot Schools are expected to promote educational innovation and increase student success and achievement while offering empowerment to staff and parents. Pilot Schools are granted the flexibility to be free from most district policies, such as calendar configuration, schedule, textbook selection, instructional guidelines and district professional learning. This manual provides guidelines for principals and teachers working in Pilot Schools and is based on Article 44 – Pilot Schools that is part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

In fall of the fourth year of operations, following three full years of implementation, each Pilot School’s state scores are expected to exceed the academic achievement of schools within the district with similar student demographics as the Pilot School. The goal is to have a maximum of eight Pilot Schools by 2017 unless otherwise agreed to by the Pilot Schools Joint Steering Committee.

B. Types of Pilot Schools

There are three types of Pilot Schools:

1. Conversion schools: These are existing APS schools, including existing charter schools, which may choose to become Pilot Schools. The interest to convert must be discussed with staff to provide awareness, gauge interest and collect input. Then the school must conduct a confidential written survey of all licensed staff members, including administration, who work 50 percent or more of their assignment at the school. If the survey demonstrates support, a design team will be formed and should be representative of various areas of expertise and experience. Design team members make a commitment of their intent to be on the staff of the Pilot School should it be approved. Then the design team will develop a proposal to present to all staff. APS schools can move forward to request a recommendation for Pilot School status through a two-thirds majority vote of licensed staff (teachers and administrators). All licensed staff members who work 50 percent or more of their assignment at the school will be eligible to vote by secret ballot. The proposal must include the proposed Annual Election-to-Work Agreement. (Once the Board of Education grants pilot status, the Governing Board of the Pilot School will be responsible for ensuring that every licensed staff member signs a final Annual Election-to-Work Agreement.) The school should also seek support for conversion from both the school’s accountability committee and classified staff.
At the time of application, the conversion school may not exceed 500 students based on projections for the following year. The design team’s proposal will be submitted to the Joint Steering Committee for review. The JSC then issues a recommendation to the design team for revision or to the Board of Education for approval. The JSC is responsible for carefully monitoring proposals for projected enrollments. There are no extra operating funds provided to conversion schools from the district.

2. **New, start-up schools:** New schools may form a design team that includes APS staff to submit a proposal to the Joint Steering Committee. Start-up schools developed through the pilot process must have appropriate, district-approved facilities and would receive the same allocation for furniture, computers, supplies as any new school within the district and for the first year would receive a district start-up budget based on a per pupil formula. The design team becomes the de-facto Governing Board until the staff is hired and it is reasonable to hold an election for the Governing Board. Therefore, it is imperative that the design team include Aurora Education Association members in order to meet the expectations of membership for governing boards.

The proposal must include the *proposed* Annual Election-to-Work Agreement. (Once the Board of Education grants pilot status, the Governing Board of the Pilot School will be responsible for ensuring that every licensed staff member signs a final Annual Election-to-Work Agreement.) The proposal will be submitted to the Joint Steering Committee for review who issues a recommendation to the Board of Education for approval. The JSC is responsible for carefully monitoring proposals for projected enrollments.

3. **Conversion of a separate school within the same facility:** If a large school has a significant number of staff interested in becoming a Pilot School, they may be able to convert part of an existing facility to a Pilot School. The interest to convert within the school will be presented to all staff at the school for discussion and input. Then the school must conduct a confidential written survey of all licensed staff members, including administration, who work 50 percent or more of their assignment at the school. If the survey demonstrates support, the design team will be formed and should be representative of various areas of expertise and experience. Design team members make a commitment of their intent to be on the staff of the Pilot School should it be approved. Then the design team will develop a proposal to present to all staff. APS schools can move forward to request a recommendation for Pilot School status through a two-thirds majority vote of licensed staff (teachers and administrators). All licensed staff members who work 50 percent or more of their assignment at the school will be eligible to vote by secret ballot. The proposal must include the *proposed* Annual Election-to-Work Agreement. The school should also seek support for conversion from both the school's accountability committee and classified staff.
This conversion allows existing schools who do not fit within the small size guidelines of 500 students to create a Pilot School at the site. This would create another school within the same facility. Each school would have its own principal and faculty and budget with different programmatic focus. There could be two or more distinct schools sharing a facility and each school would be assigned its own school code by CDE. There are no extra operating funds provided to conversion schools from the district. The design team becomes the de-facto governing board until the staff is hired and it is reasonable to hold an election for the governing board. Therefore, it is imperative that the design team include Aurora Education Association members in order to meet the expectations of membership for governing boards.

C. Guidelines for Submitting Letters of Intent

1. Persons considering Pilot School status should meet to determine interest and once interest is confirmed, they should prepare a presentation for staff to explain and ensure understanding of the Pilot School structure and process.

2. Conversion schools and separate schools within the same facility must have support from licensed staff to form a design team to develop a proposal for the entire staff.

3. Using a confidential, written survey, all licensed staff that works 50 percent or more of their assignment at the school must be asked whether there is conceptual support to form a design team. The results of the anonymous written survey will ensure there is sufficient support to move forward.

4. Start-up schools must identify that the site being considered for the school complies with appropriate, district-approved facility guidelines and meets all legal requirements for public schools. The design team must include APS staff with appropriate AEA membership for becoming the de facto Governing Board once the proposal is approved.

5. Once the school can demonstrate support for a design team to develop a proposal, the letter of intent should be sent to the Pilot Schools Joint Steering Committee in care of the Deputy Superintendent. The letter of intent must include the following:
   - Type of Pilot School requested (conversion, start-up or separate school within the same facility)
   - Results of the confidential, written survey of staff to determine interest to proceed if a conversion school or separate school within the same facility
   - Confirmation of who is originating the request
6. The person(s) who first presented the idea will ensure that a design team is formed that is open to all interested staff and determine final membership that best represents the school. Since this is a voluntary initiative, there is no requirement to pay persons interested in pursuing Pilot School status. Recertification credit may be offered instead of compensation. It is the responsibility of the school to determine if there will be compensation for the design team work. If members are paid, the school whose budget is affected may limit the number of representatives on the design team.

7. Once the design team completes the proposal, including the proposed Annual Election-to-Work Agreement, the proposal must be voted on using a secret ballot by all licensed staff, including administrators, who work 50 percent or more of their assignment at the school. The Aurora Education Association representative at the school must conduct the secret ballot vote. The vote on the proposal and the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement must pass by a two-thirds majority in order to submit the proposal to the Joint Steering Committee (JSC). Although not part of the vote, classified staff and the school accountability committee should have an opportunity for input prior to submitting the proposal. New, start-up schools do not have a constituency to present to for a vote, but the proposal must contain a proposed Annual Election-to-Work Agreement. (Once Pilot School status is granted to any type of Pilot School, the final Annual Election-to-Work Agreement must be voted on by the licensed teaching staff that will work at the Pilot School and must pass by two-thirds and be voted on annually.) Staff at new start-up schools would accept the initial Annual Election-to-Work Agreement as submitted in the RFP as a condition of hire upon acceptance of a job offer.

8. Once, the written proposal is submitted to the Joint Steering Committee, a discussion on the proposal is scheduled with the JSC and the design team as an opportunity for questions and clarifications. In addition to the proposal, the design team must submit a PowerPoint that summarizes the proposal. The Joint Steering Committee reviews the final proposal and: (a) forwards to Board of Education for approval, or (b) returns to the design team with feedback and recommendations for re-submitting at another date for another review and vote. The JSC must approve an application by a two-thirds majority.

9. The Board of Education makes the final decision on allowing the school to become a Pilot School.

D. Aurora Education Association Contract Language on Pilot Schools

NOTE: This is the actual contract language for APS Pilot Schools contained within the Collective Bargaining Agreement.
The Aurora Education Association and the APS Board support the establishment of Pilot Schools in APS. The purpose of establishing Pilot Schools is to provide additional models of educational excellence that will help to foster innovation throughout APS. Pilot Schools must reflect the four essential features of 1) small size, 2) accountability, 3) governing autonomy, and 4) equity. The Pilot Schools model of teacher empowerment, parent engagement, and student achievement is a voluntary model that brings decision making and accountability closest to those who directly engage students in the school. The parties hope to encourage creativity and innovation among school staff and community members and thereby improve student performance. The Association and Board agree that bargaining unit employees in Pilot Schools shall be governed as follows.

**A. Scope**

During the term of this contract, the parties agree to the goal of a maximum of eight Pilot Schools by 2017 unless otherwise agreed to by the Joint Steering Committee.

New Pilot Schools may result from conversions (including creation of a separate school within the same facility) and newly created schools.

**B. Association Responsibilities and Participation**

Pilot Schools staff are expected to participate in the ongoing activities of the Association, including election of an AEA Building Representative who will be responsible for conducting the following: (1) Association elections; (2) elections to convert a traditional school to a pilot school; (3) elections to approve the annual Election to Work Agreement and (4) elections of teachers to the Governing Board. Pilot Schools are expected to maintain AEA membership levels similar to the district-wide percentage of Association membership. The Association shall be responsible for Association member recruitment and retention efforts within Pilot Schools to ensure association responsibilities are met at each site. Meeting time will be provided at each site for Association leadership to fulfill this responsibility. The Association President will assign Association members to serve on the Joint Steering Committee.

**C. Status of APS Employees Who Work in Pilot Schools**

All AEA bargaining unit members who elect to work in Pilot Schools shall maintain their full status as members of the AEA Bargaining unit and as employees of the District.

1. These employees shall continue to receive, at a minimum, their salary and all benefits (including but not limited to all leave and insurance benefits) set forth
in the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the District and AEA ("Master Agreement"), as well as all PERA benefits.

2. These employees shall continue to be subject to the rights, protections, obligations and duties applicable to licensed employees under Colorado law, including, but not limited to, the membership in the Public Employee Retirement Association.

3. These employees shall continue to accrue seniority as provided in the Master Agreement.

4. These employees shall continue to attain and maintain status as set forth in Colorado law and the Master Agreement (e.g., temporary, probationary, non-probationary, etc.).

D. Working Conditions in Pilot Schools

All employees shall work in Pilot Schools on a voluntary basis. Such employees may request a voluntary transfer to another district school by March 2, and if such request is made by a non-probationary teacher it shall be granted. If a teacher is released involuntarily from a Pilot School during the term of this agreement, the teacher shall be transferred to a vacancy for which that teacher is qualified. “Good cause” under Article 18, section C of the Master Agreement shall be deemed to be established in cases of involuntary transfers from Pilot Schools. In addition, “Good cause” must also be established as it relates to the functioning of a Pilot School, including, but not limited to, not aligning with the school’s vision and mission or not supporting the work and/or purpose of Pilot School operations.

Teachers at Pilot Schools shall retain all the rights under Article 18 (Teacher Transfers) to which teachers in traditional schools are entitled. In addition, teachers who transfer voluntarily from Pilot Schools by March 2 shall have the rights outlined in Article 18.C., sections 3 & 4 (rights which are ordinarily reserved for involuntary transfers). Also, teachers who are transferred involuntarily shall have the rights outlined in Article 18.B., sections 1 through 8 (rights which are ordinarily reserved for voluntary transfers).

Notwithstanding any indication in the foregoing paragraphs to the contrary, probationary teachers in Pilot Schools may be non-renewed according to the same timelines and processes as teachers in traditional schools, and in such cases they will not have the guarantee of another position in a traditional District school by reason of submitting a transfer request.

Pilot Schools shall continue to follow state and federal laws and regulations, but shall still strive for a model of collaboration and shared decision-making at the school site, embodying freedoms from locally imposed constraints. To that end, Pilot Schools shall be exempt from all Board Rules and District policies.
recommended by the Joint Steering Committee and approved by the Board of Education. Note: BOE must approve waiver from district policy -- some policies (like child abuse, sexual harassment, pay for administrator and classified employee etc.) will apply, unless waived by the Joint Steering Committee and approved by the Board of Education, and shall likewise be exempt from the provisions of the Master Agreement specified below. A non-probationary teacher may not be dismissed as a result of the existence of Pilot Schools.

1. As expressly set forth below, most of the provisions of the Master Agreement shall remain in full force and effect in Pilot Schools at all times during this agreement. The following cannot be waived or in any way modified by the Governing Board of a pilot school, and shall continue to apply with full force to unit members who work in Pilot Schools:

The following articles shall apply in their entirety:

- Articles 1 through 10
  - (Article 1–Definitions; Article 2–Recognition; Article 3–Negotiations Procedures; Article 4 –No Strikes; Article 5–Board Rights; Article 6–District Policies; Article 7–Teacher Rights; Article 8–Association Privileges; Article 9–Dues Deductions; Article 10–Association President & Leave Days)
- Article 12 - Educational Advances
- Articles 19 through 34
  - (Article 19–Reduction in Force; Article 20–Conference Release Time; Article 21–Visitation Release Time; Article 22–Leaves of Absence; General; Article 23–Paid Leave; Article 24–Health Leave Bank; Article 25–Parental Leave; Article 26–Bereavement Leave; Article 27–Workers' Compensation Leave; Article 28–Jury Duty & Witness Leave; Article 29–Professional Leave; Article 30–Military Leave; Article 31–Appointive & Elective Office Leave; Article 32–Leave Without Pay; Article 33–Special Leave; Article 34–Medical Examinations)
- Articles 36 through 38
  - (Article 36–Employee Personnel Files; Article 37–Discipline; Article 38–Teacher Protection)
- Articles 42 & 43
  - (Article 42–Admission to School Activities; Article 43–Grievance Procedures)
- Articles 46 through 48
  - (Article 46–Savings; Article 47–Entire Agreement; Article 48–Term of Agreement)

The following articles shall apply to the extent specified below:

- Article 11- Compensation
  - Section 1, the third sentence shall not apply.
  - Section 3 shall not apply.
  - Sections 7 and 8, as they relate to pay for Appendix B and C assignments, shall apply with the understanding that the teacher’s
assignment at the pilot school must be substantially the same as that in other district schools to receive the pay.

- Sections 18, 19, 20 and 21 shall not apply.
- Article 13 – Teacher Duty Day & Teaching Hours, only section 6 will apply.
- Article 14 – Teaching Assignments, only section 1 will apply.
- Article 15 – Teaching & Learning Conditions, only Section F. Miscellaneous, number 1 will apply.
- Article 16 – Department Chairpersons, only sections 1 and 3 will apply.
- Article 18 – Teacher Transfers
- Article 35 – Performance Evaluation, this article will apply with the understanding that a Pilot School could establish additional evaluative processes as long as they are in addition to the district-approved evaluation.

The following articles shall not apply:
- Article 17 - School Paraeducators
- Article 39 – Instructional Advisory Meetings
- Article 40 & 41 - Building Council/Leadership Teams
- Article 45 - Foreign Teachers

2. The foregoing Articles that remain in effect shall continue to be subject to the Grievance provisions of the Master Agreement. All other matters shall not be subject to the contractual Grievance provisions and, instead, are subject to review exclusively through the Internal Appeals Process set forth below.

3. The Provisions of this Pilot Schools Agreement are not intended to narrow or expand the rights of the District or AEA to be less or greater than that provided by law, except as specifically set forth in this Article. If there is a conflict between a specific provision of this Article and legal requirements, all other non-conflicting sections of this Article shall remain in full force and effect.

E. Work Year, Workday

1. The matters set forth in the section “Working Conditions in Pilot Schools” above shall be reduced to writing in an "Election to Work Agreement" that shall be provided to each Pilot School employee at the inception of his/her employment at the Pilot School and no later than March 2 annually thereafter. All employees are required to sign this document as a condition of working or continuing to work at the Pilot School and once signed, these documents must be submitted to Human Resources. This document shall also include the following information:
   a. The length of the instructional day, school day and workday.
   b. The length of the instructional year and work year and school calendars.
c. The amount of time an employee is required to render service beyond the instructional/school/work year or day set forth in the Master Agreement.
d. Any additional required duty time, such as during summers, school breaks, etc.
e. Any additional teacher evaluation measure that enhances the effectiveness of the Pilot School
f. The Internal Appeals Process as outlined in Section J, item 7, or the alternate agreed upon Internal Appeal Process.

Each school must have a Governing Board. The Governing Board creates its own governance structure using shared decision-making. The Governing Board shall establish a process for determining the length of the unit member work year, the length of the instructional and duty day, the school calendar, the amount of professional development to be provided in and outside of school, and summer work.

2. Notwithstanding the provisions of this section, Pilot Schools shall, at a minimum provide at least the number of student instructional hours and the amount of instructional minutes as other District schools at the same level.

3. Bargaining unit employees at Pilot Schools shall have, at a minimum, employee contract hours which are equal to the minimum number of yearly duty contract hours required by the Master Agreement [1,496 hours for continuing teachers and 1,520 for new teachers].

4. The parties agree that the Election to Work Agreement (including length of work year, length of work day, professional development time in and out of school, summer work), shall be created by a process designated by the Governing Board and shall be given to affected staff no later than February 15 of the current school year. (This deadline is waived the year before the pilot school opens). All AEA bargaining unit staff members who work 50% or more of their assignment at the site shall have the right to vote. The Annual Election-to-Work Agreement must be approved by a 66 2/3% secret ballot vote of all AEA Bargaining Unit staff at that site. If it is not approved, it shall be sent back to the Governing Board for possible revision. This election is to be run by the AEA Association Representative. If the Election to Work Agreement for an upcoming school year has not been approved by March 2 the previous year’s Election to Work Agreement shall remain in place.

5. All licensed staff members who work 50% or more of their assignment at the site shall have the right to vote on the decision to convert. The conversion vote must be approved by a 66 2/3% secret ballot vote.

F. Governance of Pilot Schools

Each Pilot School shall be governed by a Governing Board, consisting of a minimum of 10 members, the composition of which shall be as follows. Preferably, the
governing board will have a minimum of 10 members, representing the following stakeholder groups. Pilot Schools will make efforts to assemble these representatives as a Governing Board. The District and the Association will be requested to assist in achieving the composition of the Governing Board as stated. Substitutes may be permissible if efforts fail in this intervention.

- The principal
- Four teachers who are AEA members, elected by all members of the site’s bargaining unit; one of the AEA teacher representatives will be the building association representative; to be eligible for service, teachers must be AEA members at the time of the election and must maintain membership during their term of service.
- At least one classified representative chosen by his/her peers.
- A minimum of three parents selected by parents, and,
- At least one non-parent community members selected by the Governing Board.
- If the Governing Board grows beyond 10, one-third will be AEA members.

The responsibilities of the Governing Board are as follows: set the school vision, approve the annual budget, annually determine the process for revising the election to work agreement, certify adherence to a shared decision making process for the annual Election-to-Work Agreement and other significant decisions of the school, recommend initial selection of the school leader and annually make a recommendation to the Superintendent as to retention of the school leader. The evaluation of the principal shall be completed as required by Colorado law, (including the requirement that the principal be evaluated by a person with a principal or administrator license). However, the Governing Board shall collaborate with the principal’s supervisor to align goals and have significant input into the evaluation. The Governing Board also is responsible for managing the Internal Appeal Process.

G. Establishment of Pilot Schools

1. Establishment of Pilot Schools shall be accomplished through an RFP process.
   - The RFP process will be developed by APS and AEA and administered by the Joint Steering Committee, the composition and operation of which are set forth below.
   - Completed RFPs will be reviewed by the Joint Steering Committee, which shall thereafter determine which proposals are recommended to the Board of Education for approval. A 66 2/3% affirmative vote is necessary to recommend approval to the Board of Education.
   - No Pilot School shall be established without the approval of the Steering Committee and the APS School Board as set forth herein.

2. Modification of RFP: Any substantive modification to the terms and conditions of the approved RFP shall be valid only if approved through the process set forth in section 1, B and C above.
H. Pilot Schools Joint Steering Committee

This Committee is charged with reviewing and recommending approval to the Board of Education of all initial RFPs to establish Pilot Schools, and all proposals to later modify initial RFPs.

The Committee shall be comprised of representatives from the following organizations:
• The AEA President (or designee).
• The UniServ Director (or designee).
• The Superintendent (or designee).
• A district-level representative from the Division of Equity and Learning.
• Three teachers selected by the AEA.
• Three administrators selected by the School Executives of Aurora.
• A parent chosen by the District Accountability Advisory Committee and
• One classified representative selected by the Classified Employee Council.

I. Funding of Pilot Schools

Pilot Schools shall be funded through a lump sum per-pupil budget, as well as central and local discretionary services.

J. Internal Appeals Process

1. The Governing Board of each Pilot School shall develop an Internal Appeals Process (“IAP”) which may be utilized by bargaining unit members at Pilot Schools to address concerns which are capable of being addressed under the terms of the IAP.

2. A complaint under the IAP is limited to allegations that the written terms and conditions governing the Pilot School as specifically set forth in the RFP and/or written decisions of the local Governing Board have been violated or misapplied.

3. Each Pilot School's IAP must be submitted to the Steering Committee for approval.

4. If a Pilot School cannot agree on an IAP, the process set forth in section 7 below shall be deemed to be the IAP at that School. Such IAP shall also apply if the Steering Committee rejects a locally developed IAP and the Pilot School does not agree to a revised procedure, or if the Steering Committee rejects a revised procedure.

5. Every Pilot School employee shall receive a written copy of the IAP.

6. Every locally developed IAP shall provide that if a complaint cannot be satisfactorily resolved at the Pilot School level, a final decision will be made
jointly by the Superintendent of Schools/designee and the President of AEA/designee.

7. This IAP shall be used at Pilot Schools only under the circumstances stated in section 4 above. A "complaint" for purposes of this IAP is defined as set forth in section 2 above. A "day", for purposes of the timelines of this IAP is defined as any day of the calendar year except Saturdays, Sundays, legal or school holidays. The time limits of this IAP are intentionally expedited to achieve early resolution, and are expected to be adhered to by all parties. Time limits may be extended or waived, but only by mutual written agreement.

The Steps of this IAP are as follows:

a. Informal Meeting Between the Grievant and School Leader: Within five (5) days after the aggrieved employee became aware (or should have become aware) of the occurrence of the event(s) upon which the grievance complaint is based, the aggrieved employee must request an informal meeting with the school leader (and the department chair if the matter involves the department chair), to discuss the matter and attempt in good faith to resolve it. That meeting shall be conducted within five (5) days of the request.

b. Second Meeting, with Association Representative Included: If the dispute has not been resolved within five (5) days of the above-described Informal Meeting, the employee shall have up to an additional five (5) days in which to request a second meeting, this one to include the persons from the Informal Meeting, and also the Association Representative for the site, and may also include a designee of the school leader. The purpose of this meeting is for the school leader and the Association Representative to attempt in good faith to resolve the dispute. This meeting shall be conducted within five (5) days of the request. If the matter is not resolved within five (5) days of the Second Meeting, then this step is deemed completed. Provided, however that if the Association Representative may be personally affected by the outcome, and there is no designated co-representative, the matter shall automatically proceed to the next step.

8. Third Meeting: Governing Board: If the dispute has not been resolved within five (5) days of the above-described Second Meeting, the employee shall have up to an additional five (5) days in which to request a meeting with the Governing Board. This meeting shall be conducted within five (5) days of the request. If the dispute has not been resolved within five (5) days of this meeting, the employee may submit the claim to the Superintendent and AEA President as outlined in section 6 above.

K. Evidence of Improved Student Achievement

Each Pilot School has three years to meet or exceed the academic achievement of schools within the district with similar student demographics, as identified by their
“like-school” group. The School Quality Review will take place in the fall following three full years of operation as a Pilot School as outlined in the Pilot Schools Manual. Pilot Schools can receive extensions of achievement timelines upon recommendation from the Joint Steering Committee and approval by the Board of Education.

E. Pilot Schools Essential Features

*Pilot Schools are driven by a common vision and a set of defining essential features. Each school must have a unifying vision and mission that is reflected in all school practices and structures, including curriculum, policies, schedule, professional learning and family engagement.*

The following four essential features must be in place to ensure success, or **SAGE**: Small Size, Accountability, Governing Autonomy and Equity.

1. Small Size

Small size is a key feature of Pilot Schools. Pilot Schools make the commitment not to exceed 600 students (or fewer, depending upon the program capacity of the school) in order to foster a nurturing environment where staff can meet the learning needs of every student. The schools must have a unifying vision with a clear mission and hold themselves accountable for success. There should be a personalized learning environment for students. The goal is to ensure low student-to-classroom teacher ratios that take into account the actual teacher load. There should be staff collaboration in planning and a collaborative culture that includes staff, families, community and students (when age appropriate).

2. Accountability

In exchange for increased autonomy, Pilot Schools are held to higher levels of accountability. In addition to ongoing assessments, every three years each Pilot School must undertake a School Quality Review process based on a set of common benchmarks for a high-performing school. The accountability requires both internal and external reviews. Pilot Schools are expected to meet or exceed district averages when compared to schools with similar demographics and show continued improvement in areas of attendance, reduction in mobility, fewer discipline concerns, and (for high school) increase in graduation rates as well as an increase in college enrollment or post-secondary career training.

A Joint Steering Committee (JSC) oversees and supports Pilot Schools. JSC membership includes:

- The AEA President (or designee).
- The UniServ Director (or designee).
- The Superintendent (or designee).
- A district-level representative from the Division of Equity and Learning.
• Three teachers selected by the AEA.
• Three administrators selected by the School Executives of Aurora.
• A parent chosen by the District Accountability Advisory Committee and
• One classified representative selected by the Classified Employee Council.

Liaisons may be requested to join on an as-needed basis to provide relevant expertise.

The JSC is responsible for monitoring the application process, reviewing requests and making recommendations to the Board of Education for final approval for a school to become a Pilot School as well as revoke Pilot status. The JSC monitors budget agreements and provides support and serves as a liaison between Pilot Schools and the district. The JSC ensures Pilot Schools are meeting the yearly benchmarks each school has set for increased student performance and is involved in the accountability as part of the School Quality Review in the fall following three full school years of implementation. The JSC oversees any policy waiver requests following initial Board of Education approval of Pilot status.

3. Governing Autonomy

Schools must have maximum control over key areas if they are to create innovative education programs but, in return, must accept increased accountability. Expected results include higher levels of student engagement and academic performance that meet or exceed district averages when compared to schools with similar demographics. All Pilot Schools are granted autonomy for staffing, budget, curriculum and assessment, professional learning, governance and schedule for students and staff. Each of these autonomous areas is interrelated, is critical to the success of Pilot Schools and must be considered as a whole. Pilot Schools utilize shared decision making. Although they must follow state and federal laws, they have the ability to be flexible about how staff is employed and how the daily and yearly calendar and schedule for students and staff are constructed. The schools are expected to follow the required minimum number of teacher contract and student contract time but may organize those days to fit their vision and mission. If staff works more than the number of hours/days set by the district, they do so as outlined in the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement.

4. Equity

Pilot Schools should reflect similar demographics as the neighborhoods they serve. Neighborhood Pilot Schools will enroll all students within their boundaries. When considering open enrollments, effort must be made to enroll students who are representative of the district as a whole. This includes race/ethnicity, free or reduced lunch eligibility, mainstream special education and English language proficiency. Pilot Schools must be committed to ensuring success for all students with a vision and mission that expresses a focus on equity. Pilot Schools may not screen based on student achievement.
F. Operational Guidelines

1. Charge/Areas of Responsibility for Joint Steering Committee:

   a. Monitor the application process for Pilot Schools.
   b. Review completed applications and make recommendations to Board of Education for final approval or return to design team with feedback and recommendations for re-submitting at another date. (Must be approved by a two-thirds majority).
   c. Coordinate implementation.
   d. Monitor budget agreements.
   e. Serve as liaison between Pilot Schools and District.
   f. Oversee accountability process to monitor ongoing success.
   g. Ensure students are being prepared for state mandated tests.
   h. Participate in each school’s annual walk-through to ensure yearly benchmarks set for increased student achievement are met.
   i. Participate in the School Quality Review (SQR) after three full years of implementation.
   j. Recommend if a Pilot School contract needs to be terminated (Board of Education may determine need to terminate contract independently of JSC).
   k. Terms of membership will be for three years, except for members designated by their specific positions.

2. Joint Steering Committee Operating Agreements:

   a. Consistent attendance is expected and notification for absences must be provided.
   b. All voices are equal.
   c. Confidentially will be maintained.
   d. Members will come prepared.
   e. Full and open participation is important.
   f. There should be no pre-mature closer on discussions.
   g. Members will be respectful of one another.
   h. JSC will strive to speak with a unified voice.
   i. Regardless of how people vote, final decisions will be supported by all.
   j. Decisions on applications will be reached by a secret ballot vote and will require a two-thirds “yes” vote for approval and recommendation to the Board of Education for final determination.
   k. A unified message will be given to applying schools that has been agreed upon by the JSC.
   l. When providing feedback or information the JSC will use consensus decision-making.
   m. Applications and other major decisions must be approved by a two-thirds secret ballot vote.
   n. Written notes will be provided after meetings and distributed via email.
   o. All proposals will be sent to JSC via email except as noted below.
p. Teachers and parent(s) serving on the JSC will receive copies of the applications through school mail or by US mail as soon after submission as reasonable.
q. Any written communications from JSC will copy both AEA and the Chief of Equity and Learning.

3. **Pilot Schools shall be allowed to:**

   a. Select their own staff from inside or outside the Aurora Public Schools without regard to seniority, as long as no staff is laid off as a result of a hire.
   b. Have managerial control for all staff members.
      - Determine administrative, teaching, and other school staffing levels and structures.
      - Allocate funds from the school’s budget.
      - Seek outside funding in alignment with Board policies and expectations.

Unless specifically listed in this manual, all APS policies and regulations must be followed. Pilot Schools may petition Division Chiefs and/or the Board of Education for waivers of policies not identified in this Pilot Schools Manual.

Pilot Schools must comply with all federal and state laws and regulations. Their operating agreements will include monitoring provisions and retain for the Superintendent and the Joint Steering Committee the appropriate level of oversight to ensure the quality of education offered, the protection of the rights and interests of students and staff, and the expenditure of public funds in educationally sound ways.

**G. Pilot Schools’ Conditions of Autonomy**

Pilot Schools have certain autonomy from Aurora Public Schools policies and from Aurora Education Association contract provisions as identified in this document. The goal of these autonomies is to enable Pilot Schools to become models of educational excellence that will help to foster widespread educational reform throughout all of the Aurora Public Schools. What follows is a summary of these autonomies. Further sections provide greater detail to each of these five autonomies.

**(1) Governance:** Each school must have a Governing Board that is a representative body and has responsibility for hiring and evaluating the principal (with final approval by the superintendent). The Governing Board approves the annual budget and oversees the educational and operational policies at the school. Using a shared decision making model and guided by the school’s vision and mission, the Governing Board coordinates decisions relating to class size, schedule, length of school day and school year and the amount and type of required professional development for teachers at the school. Each year, the Governing Board will certify adherence to a shared decision making process for the annual Election-to-Work Agreement and other significant decisions of the school. The evaluation of the principal shall be completed
as required by Colorado law, (including the requirement that the principal be evaluated by a person with a Principal or Administrator license). However, the Governing Board will collaborate with the principal's supervisor to align goals and have significant input into the evaluation. The Governing Board also is responsible for managing the Internal Appeal Process.

The Governing Board ensures adherence to agreed-upon working conditions (within the annual Election-to-Work Agreement) that include time worked and rights and responsibilities of staff. This document is known as the Election-to-Work Agreement (ETWA) because staff must “elect” or choose to work at any Pilot School. Assignments are on a year-to-year basis. The ETWA must be collaboratively developed and must be approved by two thirds of teachers. Teachers at an existing school that converts to a Pilot School may choose to transfer out of the school. Others could be asked to transfer if their jobs are eliminated or converted in order to support the vision and mission of the school. In both cases, teachers maintain at least the same transfer rights as any other teacher in the district. Staff receives the same pay and benefits and accrues seniority, as would any district employee.

(2) Budget: The impact of Pilot School status is expected to be cost neutral on the district. Pilot Schools receive the same funding as other comparable schools within the district but also have access to identified discretionary income for district services which the Pilot Schools may or may not decide to access. Pilot Schools receive their funding as a lump sum based on the per pupil budget in accordance with equivalent budgets at other district schools with similar enrollment and grade span. This budget includes salaries and all other specified discretionary funds. The lump sum can be used as dictated by the school’s vision and mission.

Pilots determine how to allocate funds for staffing and scheduling decisions to realize their vision and mission of improved student learning. Discretionary funds might include district allocations to schools for such things as textbooks, instructional coaches, and professional development. Outside sources of funding from grants, partnerships and foundations should be aggressively pursued to supplement the budget.

(3) Staffing: Pilot Schools have the freedom to hire and release their staff (including the principal) annually in order to ensure a unified school community that supports the vision and mission of the school. Teachers at a Pilot School who are not a match to the vision and mission can be required to transfer. The staffing plan is based on student needs and staff must be hired and retained accordingly. Assignment of staff at Pilot Schools is on a year-to-year basis. There is no job security at the site, but teachers retain seniority and transfer rights within the district. The Election-to-Work Agreement outlines working conditions at the school and must be collaboratively developed and approved by two thirds of teachers who work 50 percent or more of their assignment at the school.

(4) Curriculum and Assessment: Pilot Schools have flexibility to determine the school's curriculum and assessment practices. They are held accountable for all
federal and state-mandated tests. Pilot Schools are expected to prepare students to take these mandated assessments.

Pilot Schools do not have to follow the district curriculum requirements so that they may choose what content to cover and how to cover it. Schools are encouraged to create more personalized environments, including small class sizes, small teacher loads, and small learning communities. The school will select professional development to reflect the vision and mission of the school. Pilot Schools must demonstrate sustained growth through years one and two and meet or exceed district averages when compared to schools with similar demographics in the fall following year three. Should the Pilot School not attain the agreed upon goals and Pilot status is revoked, the district will work with the school to transition out of its status as a Pilot School during the fourth year.

(5) Schedule: In order to support school reform and increase student achievement, Pilot Schools must have the right to implement flexible schedules, including different student days than those identified by the district and different calendar constructs for both staff and students. Pilot Schools should organize the schedule to maximize learning time for students and ensure time for staff planning and professional development. They must be in control of their time in order to restructure the day to meet the vision and mission of the school. Pilot Schools are required to meet the Colorado Department of Education accreditation requirements as well as to meet or exceed district expectations for student contact hours.

II. Guidelines for the Pilot School Autonomies

A. Governance Guidelines

Through shared decision-making, schools are given the freedom to best meet the needs of their students within a structure that realizes the agreed upon vision and mission of the school.

1. The Role of Governing Boards

Because of the importance of a functioning governing board, with representation from administration, staff, parents, community representatives, and, in the case of high schools, students, newly established Pilot Schools should transition from a design team to a duly-elected governing board as soon as possible once the school has been launched.

a. Each school must have a Governing Board. The Governing Board creates its own governance structure using shared decision-making. Until a Governing Board can be formed, the design team assumes responsibility and acts as the de-facto Governing Board until an election
for membership can be conducted. The election for membership should take place as soon as reasonably practicable.

b. The Governing Board must have a minimum of 10 members comprised of the principal (upon selection), four teachers who are AEA members, elected by all members of the site’s bargaining unit (one of the AEA teacher representatives will automatically be the Association Representative), at least one classified representative chosen by peers, a minimum of three parents selected by parents and at least one non-parent community member selected by the Governing Board. This configuration requires maintaining a balance among staff, parents and the community. If the Governing Board grows beyond 10 members, one-third will be AEA members. By ensuring AEA membership on the Governing Board, there is a confirmed link between the Association and the Pilot School. This is important to maintain since Pilot Schools are a result of the collaboration between the Aurora Public Schools and the Aurora Education Association.

c. Staff, parents, and students should be elected to the governing board by their respective constituencies, while the principal/director and the school’s AEA Representative are always governing board members and community members are generally selected by the full board. In electing teachers to fill the other three AEA positions on the Governing Board, only those who are members of AEA may be nominated to fill these seats. Each Pilot School must annually submit their Governing Board roster and contact information for the Board chairperson to the Chief of Equity and Learning as contact person for the Joint Steering Committee. All Pilot governing board members are insured by the Aurora Public Schools for actions taken in their capacities as board members.

d. The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that staff participates in shared decision making around significant decisions of the school.

e. The Governing Board oversees and participates in shared decisions relating to program, school enrollment, class size, schedule, length of school day and school year, and the amount and type of required professional learning for teachers at the school needed to fulfill the vision and mission.

f. The Governing Board sets their own bylaws and makes all final decisions for educational and operational policies at the school within the agreed upon school vision.

g. The Governing Board will use shared decision making to ensure support of the school vision and mission approve the annual budget, certify the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement, manage the annual walkthroughs and the School Quality Review Process, recommend initial selection of
the school leader and annually make a recommendation to the superintendent as to retention of the school leader. (The Superintendent has final authority over hiring, evaluation, and renewal or termination of the principal.) The evaluation of the principal shall be completed as required by Colorado law, (including the requirement that the principal be evaluated by a person with a Principal or Administrator license). However, the Governing Board shall collaborate with the principal’s supervisor to align goals and have significant input into the evaluation.

**h.** The Governing Board determines the process for developing, modifying and maintaining the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement and certifying the adherence to a shared decision making process for the annual Election-to-Work Agreement. The agreement must be in place and signed annually by all returning staff no later than March 2 for the next school year or the current agreement remains in effect. New staff will review and sign the agreement as a condition of their employment at the Pilot School. **The principal will submit a copy of the completed and signed ETWAs to the Chief Personnel Officer, Human Resources.**

**i.** Each ETWA must include the employee’s printed name, location and employee identification number.

**j.** The Governing Board ensures adherence to agreed-upon guidelines for working conditions (within the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement) that include time worked and rights and responsibilities of staff. The school’s Annual Election-to-Work Agreement must be collaboratively developed and must be supported by a two-thirds secret ballot vote of teachers within the school and signed by all licensed staff prior to the beginning of each school year.

**k.** The Governing Board ensures that the school has a written and approved dispute resolution process included in the ETWA if the school does not agree to follow the process included in the Aurora Education Association Memorandum of Understanding.

**l.** The Association representative is responsible for conducting Association elections, elections for the conversion to a Pilot School, elections to approve the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement and elections of teachers to the Governing Board.

**m.** Governing Boards must take into account state requirements, special education, Safe Schools legislation and school accountability requirements.

**n.** The Governing Board will meet the requirements of the state for school accountability committees.
o. Governing Boards will ensure compliance with all laws, regulations, codes, court orders, policies, procedures, and directives that relate to the operation of a school within the Aurora Public Schools, except to the extent that APS has expressly waived such compliance.

p. The Governing Board approves the annual budget.

q. The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring the school has procedures in place to help students be successful by annually reviewing the school’s progress on indicators of student engagement and achievement, and ensure that there is a plan in place to address gaps.

r. The School Governing Board will act as the state-required school accountability committee and must comply with all legal requirements and expectations (SB 09-163 – 22-11-401, 402). These responsibilities include:
   i. Recommend priorities for spending school moneys aligned with performance expectations and strategies.
   ii. Advise the preparation of a school performance or improvement plan.
   iii. Advise the preparation of a school priority improvement or turnaround plan.
   iv. Monitor implementation of said plans intended to raise student
   v. Maintain minimum of seven members as required representatives for membership of staff (1 teacher and principal), parents (3), one adult member of an organization of parents, teachers or students recognized by the school (1), and a community member (1).
   vi. Meet at least quarterly.

2. Expectations for Operations of Governing Boards
   a. The Governing Board Chair and the Principal will meet annually to review work and timeline for meeting Governing Board areas of responsibility.
   b. Governing Board areas of responsibility:
      • Meets the requirements of the state for school accountability committees
      • Charges the principal with ensuring compliance with all laws, regulations, codes, court orders, policies, procedures and directives that relate to the operation of a school with the Aurora Public Schools, except to the extent that APS has expressly waived such compliance
      • Serves as representatives for the staff and ensures staff has input into all significant decisions made by Governing Board
- Agrees on and uses a shared decision making model for operations that honors staff input.
- Maintains appropriate representatives (minimum of 10):
  - Principal
  - Four teachers who are AEA members elected by all members of the site’s bargaining unit (AR is automatically one of the four members)
  - AEA members must be members at time of election and maintain membership throughout their terms of service
  - Election of all teachers to the Governing Board is conducted by the AR
  - At least one classified representative chosen by his/her peers
  - A minimum of three parents selected by parents
  - At least one non-parent community member selected by the Governing Board
  - If the Governing grows beyond 10, one-third will be AEA members
- Develops/oversees budget
- Sets/maintains vision and mission of the school and makes decisions about:
  - Class size
  - Schedule
  - Length of school day and year
  - Amount and type of professional development for teachers
- Annually review’s the school’s progress on indicators of student engagement and achievement and ensures there is a plan in place to address gaps
- Participates in initial hiring of the principal
- Collaborates and confirms annual performance goals for the principal (generally one to three goals based on Unified Improvement Plan and Pilot School proposal/school goals)
- Provides feedback throughout the year to the principal on attainment of goals and/or concerns
- Reviews all evaluation input from Governing Board from previous years
- Provides input to the principal’s district evaluator on the agreed upon annual performance goals (district evaluator or designee must meet annually with the Governing Board to discuss input on evaluation)
- Makes an annual recommendation to the Superintendent as to the retention of the principal (superintendent has final authority over hiring, evaluation and renewal or termination of the principal)
- Determines the process, timelines and steps to be followed for development and approval of the annual Election-To-Work Agreement (ETWA) and ensures the following steps are included:
  - Must be collaboratively developed by teachers
o Must include the teacher work year schedule (including length of work year, length of work day, professional development time in and out of school, and any summer work, rights and responsibilities of staff and copy of school calendar and Internal Appeal Process (IAP)

o Must be reviewed and approved by the Governing Board prior to an election to confirm that the ETWA has all the required components

o Must have the Association Representative (AR) conduct the election

o Must be approved by 2/3 of the bargaining unit who work 50 percent or more of their time at the school

o Input from classified staff may be considered but must be separate from teachers’ vote

o Certify results of the vote and ensure that ETWA is signed within the agreed upon district timelines or the previous year ETWA will be in effect

o Any changes made to the ETWA after the start of the school year must meet the same criteria outlined above

- Charges the principal with monitoring staff adherence to the ETWA
- Submits the annual ETWA to the Chief of Personnel
- Manages accountability, annual walkthroughs and the School Quality Review (SQR) process
- Manages the Internal Appeal Process
- Annually reviews the Governing Board bylaws to confirm or make additions or changes
- Submits bylaws and contact information for the Governing Board Chair to the Chief of Equity and Learning as the contact person for the Pilot Schools Joint Steering Committee (JSC)

c. Principal’s areas of responsibility:
   - Works collaboratively with the Governing Board
   - Responsible for all final hiring decisions
   - Responsible for all staff evaluations
   - Budget authority for school
   - Manages the facility
   - Responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school
   - Ensures compliance with all district policies not waived
   - The School Secretary will be responsible for keeping all written documents and information connected to the work of the Governing Board.

   d. The Governing Board Chair, AR and Principal will schedule quarterly meetings to support and coordinate work of the Governing Board.

3. Recommended timeline for actions by Governing Boards:

**GOVERNING BOARD TIMELINE FOR ACTIONS**

_August_
• Review and confirm process the school will use for shared decision making.
• Review, revise (as needed) and confirm Governing Board bylaws.
• Identify upcoming decisions for the year and the expected timelines and how the decisions will be made.
• Develop plan for preparing the annual walkthrough or the School Quality Review (as required per Pilot School guidelines).

September
• Review with the principal, the principal’s goals for the year based on the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) and the Pilot School proposal/school goals (generally limit to three that will be the basis for the GB input into the principal’s evaluation).
• Provide feedback throughout the year to the principal on attainment of goals and/or concerns.
• Work with the evaluator assigned by the Division of Equity and Learning throughout each school year to provide timely updates on the performance of the principal.
• Monitor progress on school goals as described in the UIP and Pilot School proposal for:
  o Class size
  o Schedule
  o Length of school day and year
  o Amount and type of professional development for teachers
• Submit Governing Board membership roster with contact information to the Chief of Equity and Learning.

October
• Review school data to ensure there is a plan in place to address gaps. Ensure the school monitors its performance as compared to schools with similar demographics.

November
• Discuss any anticipated budget adjustments as enrollment is certified by CDE.
• Determine if any requests will be made for discretionary funds submitted to Budget Office for approval for next school year (due to Budget Office by December 1)
• Determine the steps for how and who will develop the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement (ETWA) in preparation for a staff to receive for review by January 15.
  o The ETWA must include the Pilot School calendar and work day, the school schedule, and the Internal Appeals process the school will use.
  o Each ETWA must include the employee’s printed name, location and employee identification number.
  o Each year between January 15 and March 2, the Governing Board is responsible for making sure that a process is in place for approving the ETWA. A possible process includes:
1. The Governing Board will ensure that a meeting is set for all licensed staff to discuss current ETWA and discuss whether changes, additions or revisions are needed.
2. The Governing Board will determine who leads the process for input and who will receive the information and revise the ETWA.
3. NOTE: If there are no changes to the current ETWA, the Governing Board will set a date for a vote to be taken as indicated in steps 7, 8 and 9 below.
4. The Governing Board (or a committee identified by the Governing Board) will consider any changes, make certain the proposed ETWA is aligned with the mission, goals and focus for the next school year and prepare a draft for staff.
5. The staff will review the draft and reach consensus on moving the ETWA forward for a vote.
6. The AEA representative is responsible for conducting the voting process which must be a written, confidential survey. The ETWA must be supported by at least 2/3 of the staff to be accepted.
7. After the vote, the Governing Board will review the process to confirm that the appropriate steps for discussion and input were followed. The Governing Board will then vote to certify the results to confirm that the ETWA will be in place for the next school year.
8. The Governing Board charges the principal with securing signatures from all licensed staff and monitoring compliance to the tenets outlined in the ETWA.
9. **The principal will submit copies of the completed and signed ETWAs to the Chief Personnel Officer, Human Resources.**

10. **Each ETWA must include the employee’s printed name, location and employee identification number.**

**January**
- Ensure the ETWA is reviewed by staff for input and revisions.
- Ensure the teacher work year schedule for the next school year is available for review as part of the ETWA.

**February**
- Review the process and vote results for the ETWA and certify it is ready for the staff to sign by March 2.
- Any staff to be excessed **must** be submitted by the principal to Human Resources by February 25.

**March**
- **Principal submits copies of the completed and signed ETWAs to the Chief Personnel Officer, Human Resources.**
- **Each ETWA must include the employee’s printed name, location and employee identification number.**
- Discuss school goals for next school year based on the Pilot School proposal and the UIP.
• Review budget for next school year.

April
• Organize and participate in the annual walk-through of the school as requested by the Joint Steering Committee.
• Provide input on the agreed upon goals, established in September, into the evaluation of principal. (It is recommended that staff be surveyed on the agreed upon goals to provide shared feedback.)
• Collect any relevant data relating to the principal’s evaluation, synthesize that data into a written document that contains both commendations and any recommendations for improvement.
• Review the document with the principal prior to submission to the evaluator assigned by the Division of Equity and Learning and include a response from the principal for addressing any recommendations and identifying any additional supports needed.

May
• Recommend retention or termination of the principal and submit to district evaluator no later than May 1 for submission to the Superintendent.
• Governing Board chair reviews evaluation input with the principal.
• Discuss the annual walk-through report provided by the Joint Steering Committee and plan accordingly to meet recommendations.

B. Staffing

1. General Staffing Guidelines

a. Any staff, licensed or classified, must choose to work at a Pilot School. Assignments are on a year-to-year basis. Teachers of the Pilot School continue to be members of the bargaining unit under the Master Agreement between AEA and APS, and retain all rights as specified in Article 44. They have the same rights to fully participate in the functions of the AEA, retain the same right to representation as any member of the bargaining unit and also retain the same opportunity as any other teacher in APS to join the Aurora Education Association.

Schools:
- Clarify the importance of AEA support during the hiring process.
- Maintain an active relationship between the principal and AEA – both the Association representative and the Association president.
- Encouragement from principal to new teachers as to the importance/role of a professional organization.
- Highlight partnership between the district and AEA in promotional materials/activities.

AEA:
- Increase visibility of the Association in the building.
- Attend beginning of the year meetings with staff.
- Consider a dues incentive for Pilot School membership.
- Train AR at Pilot Schools for their enhanced responsibilities/role.

b. Pilot Schools are required to comply with all district policies pertaining to classified employees and must comply with Fair Labor Laws.

c. Pilot Schools have the freedom to hire and release their staff (including the principal) annually in order to ensure a unified school community that supports the vision and mission of the school. Teachers must play a significant role in the staffing process although staffing decisions ultimately rest with the principal who retains the final authority.

d. The Annual Election-to-Work Agreement, outlining working conditions at the school and approved by two-thirds of licensed teachers in a secret ballot, supports timelines for transfers and hiring to allow affected teachers who may not be staying at the school ample opportunity to make an informed decision when deciding where to apply for transfer within the district. They maintain the same transfer rights as any other teacher in the district. (See attached template for the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement.)

e. Certain work rules will be determined by the Pilot School rather than the negotiated agreement. The teacher vote on the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement will be conducted by the AEA building representative. The vote must take place each year between February 2 and March 2.

f. Non-probationary staff at a Pilot School who are not a match to the vision and mission can be required to transfer. Non-probationary staff who elect to transfer because they do not want to be part of the Pilot School, or those who are asked to transfer when a position is converted or eliminated to support the school’s vision and mission, retain the same transfer rights as any other staff in the district.

g. Timelines for transfer and hiring in Pilot Schools will be set by the district. (Any staff to be excessed must be submitted to Human Resources by February 25. Those choosing to be excessed must submit a request to the district by March 26. In addition, the timeline will indicate when teachers will be notified as well as when Human Resources must be notified of who is leaving and who will need to be placed in other positions. If a non-probationary teacher is released involuntarily from a Pilot School, the teacher will be transferred to a vacancy for which that teacher is qualified. A probationary teacher released involuntarily from a Pilot School has no transfer rights.

h. The principal is responsible for evaluating staff using the district-approved process for regular or alternative evaluations. The school could agree to an additional evaluation process as long as it is in addition to the district-approved
evaluation and is identified in the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement. The principal will follow all district policies for evaluating classified staff.

i. All formal disciplinary action is subject to Article 37 in the Master Agreement.

j. Pilot School principals can recommend termination of any employee for unsatisfactory evaluation or just cause but they must use the district approved evaluation process to ensure due process.

k. Assignment of each staff member at Pilot Schools is on a year-to-year basis (there is no job security at the site, but non-probationary staff retain seniority and transfer rights within the district).

l. The staffing plan is based on student needs and staff must be hired and retained to support the vision and mission of the school.

2. Selection and Evaluation of Principal

a. The Governing Board selects the school principal. It is allowed to seek candidates outside of the District hiring pool for principals as long as candidates meet all district qualifications for employment in Aurora Public Schools. The final authority for hiring is with the Superintendent. When the Governing Board recommends a principal for hire, it will submit one name to the superintendent. Should that name not be accepted, the superintendent will, to the extent possible, explain why the candidate was not selected. The Governing Board will submit another name until agreement is reached.

b. The principal must be evaluated annually. The Division of Equity and Learning is responsible for the formal evaluation of all administrators in Pilot Schools. As part of the evaluation, the evaluator assigned by the Division of Equity and Learning will meet with the Governing Board annually and take into account the written evaluation from the Governing Board. The Board of Education retains the final authority to demote or transfer any administrator as authorized by Colorado Revised Statutes.

c. The evaluation of the principal must be completed as required by Colorado law (including the requirement that the principal be evaluated by an administrator), but the Governing Board must have significant input into the evaluation.

d. The Governing Board will annually collaborate with the principal to agree on a set of goals (generally one to three) based on the UIP and the Pilot School proposal/school goals to be accomplished prior to the end of the school year. The Governing Board is responsible for collecting any relevant data, synthesizing that data into a written document. The document should contain both commendations and any
recommendations for improvement. The document should be reviewed with the principal prior to submission to the evaluator assigned by the Division of Equity and Learning and may include a response from the principal for addressing any recommendations and identifying any additional supports needed. Once approved by the entire Governing Board, a recommendation for retention or termination of the contract with the Pilot School will be provided to the evaluator assigned by the Division of Equity and Learning as part of the written document. **This written document must be submitted to the assigned evaluator from the Division of Equity and Research no later than May 1 each year.** The evaluator will forward the recommendation for retention or termination to the Chief of Equity and Learning who will provide the recommendation to the Joint Steering Committee.

e. The Governing Board should work with the evaluator assigned by the Division of Equity and Learning throughout each school year to provide timely updates on the performance of the principal.

3. **Division of Human Resources Guidelines**

a. **Filling Vacancies**

Pilot Schools are required to post all vacant positions for staff and administration through the Office of Human Resources. If a Pilot School wants to advertise a position in the print or online media, it may do so through Human Resources. Pilot Schools are responsible for the cost of these ads.

Pilot Schools may select staff without regard to seniority or AEA membership. Any and all hiring of staff for a Pilot School must be processed and approved through the Division of Human Resources and in compliance with the AEA Master Agreement, Article 44 – Pilot Schools, district policy and regulation, and state and federal laws (reference Policies GCE/GCF and GCE/GCF-R).

The Pilot School principal is the final budget manager and assumes responsibility for ensuring that the budget is available to support staffing requests.

Policies and regulations pertaining to classified employees are in effect and shall govern all classified employees working at Pilot Schools.

b. **New Hires**

All new hires at Pilot Schools must apply for the job through Human Resources and follow regular hiring processes, including interviews,
background checks, reference calls and a recommendation to hire aligned with district procedures.

Pilot governing boards may develop their own internal process for recruitment, creation of a hiring committee, screening and interviewing of candidates, and selection of the finalist candidate so long as the process is congruent with district guidelines and expectations for hiring. Human Resources will determine salary placement and benefit eligibility, officially offer the job and follow up with required paperwork.

As a condition of initial employment, and annually thereafter, each APS Pilot School staff person is required to sign the Pilot School’s Annual Election-to-Work Agreement as described in Article 44 of the Master Agreement and the Pilot School Manual.

All newly hired teachers are required to attend the New Teacher Conference in July or August, and complete induction activities if required by license type.

c. Placement of Overage

Because of the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement, the district will not place overages in Pilot Schools. However, if there is a vacancy at a Pilot School that matches a district overage, and if the overage is interested and willing to accept the work agreement, and if the principal is interested and willing to take the overage, Human Resources will facilitate that placement. Staff who voluntarily chooses to leave a Pilot School or who are excessed will be considered before other overages are placed whenever possible. Pilot Schools will be allowed to post positions at any time as the positions become available.

d. Hiring of Principals

Principal selection may be from outside the Aurora Public Schools principal pool, but any candidate must be in compliance with district policy and regulation and state and federal laws.

When selecting a Pilot School administrator, the Governing Board will make recommendations to the Superintendent regarding filling of the position(s) by forwarding their nominee for the position. Pilot governing boards may develop their own internal process for recruitment, creating of a hiring committee, screening and interviewing of candidates, and selection of the finalist candidate. If the Superintendent does not want to hire the nominee for the position, she/he shall request that the Governing Board submit the name of another nominee for the position, and to the degree possible, explain why the candidate was not approved. The Superintendent shall, in consultation with the Governing
Board, select the school administrator(s) for the school, and, to the extent practicable, will do so from candidates supported by the school’s Governing Board. The Superintendent shall recommend to the Board of Education the appointment of the selected principal. (Reference Policy CFA/CFA-R).

Policy GCLD and GCLD-R are waived for Pilot Schools in relation to Length of Administrative Staff School Year so long as the days worked meet or exceed the district work year calendar. Administrators at Pilot Schools will submit their work year calendar to Human Resources annually prior to the beginning of the school year if different than the district.

e. Anticipated Staffing Needs

Pilot School principals must meet annually with the Division of Human Resources to inform of any planned changes to the school's staff. Pilot School principals must inform the district about job changes and staffing patterns for the subsequent school year by submitting the information to Human Resources no later than February 2. Should it be necessary for the Aurora Public Schools to reduce employee forces, master agreement and applicable district policy will be followed. These processes will apply equally to Pilot and non-Pilot Schools.

f. Staffing Deadlines

Pilot Schools must comply with all budget and staffing deadlines required by the district. The following timeline is in effect for Pilot Schools:

February 2 Submit to HR anticipated staffing pattern for subsequent year (including job changes, transfers, teachers who will be excessed)

February 25 Deadline for principal to declare any person who be excessed from the school

March 2 Deadline for the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement to be in place signed by all staff who will be at the school for the next school year and submitted to Human Resources. (New staff sign at time of hiring.) The Agreement must be signed by all licensed staff prior to the beginning of each school year. The Agreement must identify the Dispute Resolution process. The ETWA must include the employee’s printed name, location and employee identification number.
March 2 Deadline for non-probationary teachers to request to voluntarily excess themselves from the Pilot School (transfer out). Any requests received after this date will be handled the same as any transfer request in the district.

March 30 Pilot Schools begin hiring process from within or outside the district

g. Annual Election-to-Work Agreements

Every Pilot School must have in place by March 2 an Annual Election-to-Work Agreement that details all work conditions that APS employees will be expected to work under for the next school year. Minimally, the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement should contain the following information, as outlined by the AEA contract (refer to template at the end of this manual):

- The employee’s printed name, location and employee ID number.
- The length of the school day and school year (new and returning); The amount of required time beyond the regular school day and/or year;
- Any additional required time during the summer or school vacations;
- Any other duties or obligations beyond the requirements of the AEA contract; and
- A dispute resolution process
- A copy of Master Agreement Article 44 – Pilot Schools (provided to each employee)

All licensed employees who apply for positions at Pilot Schools must receive this information at the time of their application. For new hires, this agreement must be signed at the time of hire (or at the minimum, a signature that the information to Work Agreement must be signed by the end of the preceding school year, so that these staff can decide whether to stay at the school or seek a position at another school for the coming school year.

All Annual Election-to-Work Agreements must include a dispute resolution process for all licensed staff members that has been approved by the school’s governing body. The Pilot School may elect to use the dispute resolution process included in Article 44 of the Master Agreement. The process must clearly state how disputes around work conditions will be resolved. The final step in all dispute resolution processes for every Pilot School should be a determination by the
Superintendent (or his/her designee) and AEA President, with their decision being binding and final.

The Annual Election-to-Work Agreement, which must include the teacher work year schedule (including length of work year, length of work day, professional development time in and out of school, and summer work) must be approved by the Governing Board and given to affected staff no later than January 15 of the previous school year. By a two-third vote, licensed staff who works 50 percent or more of their time at the school may vote to override the proposed schedule, sending it back to the Governing Board for possible re-working. If a schedule for an upcoming school year has not been approved by February 2, the previous year’s schedule shall remain in place. Staff members who decide they want to leave the school must provide notice to the Pilot School and Human Resources no later than March 2. If, after the start of school year, the Governing Board of a Pilot School wants to make any changes to the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement, it must be approved by a two-third vote of the licensed staff that works 50 percent or more of their time at the school.

h. Compensation of Employees

All Pilot School employees will continue to receive, their salary and all benefits (including but not limited to all leave and insurance benefits) set forth in the master agreement and district policy and regulation (reference Policies GCBA, GCBA-R, GCBB/ GCBB-R, GDBA/GDBA-R). Any compensation beyond that assigned by Human Resources is the responsibility of the Pilot School. Pilot Schools may provide additional compensation to employees as stipends, but must do so within their own budget allocations and through the agreed upon guidelines outlined in the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement. Pilot Schools will be held harmless for board approved increases, including salary steps and general salary increases.

i. Job Titles

Pilot Schools must use existing job titles and their corresponding ranges. Any recommendation for new job titles must go through regular district processes for job description development and market survey placement on a range.

j. Performance Evaluations

The principal is responsible for evaluating staff using the district-approved process for regular or alternative evaluations. The school could agree to an additional evaluation process as long as it is in addition to the district-approved evaluation and is identified in the Annual
Election-to-Work Agreement. This applies to both licensed and classified staff.

Any Pilot School who does not choose to use the district evaluation process (including the alternative evaluation) for teachers must have an approved, written process for performance evaluation of staff that meets or exceeds the district evaluation expectations. This document must be submitted to the Chief Personnel Officer for approval and must clearly articulate the process by which staff will be evaluated, how often they will be evaluated, and the criteria by which they will be evaluated, and the support and professional development teachers can expect to receive. The document should also include the process by which the school will work with teachers that need improvement. Provisional teachers must be evaluated annually, while non-provisional teachers must be evaluated at least once every three years. Teacher evaluation policies may be unique to each Pilot School, as long as they meet or exceed the APS approved teacher evaluation process.

The original of all performance evaluations must be submitted to Human Resources so the forms can be included in employees’ personnel files.

If there is indication that a teacher is going to receive an overall unsatisfactory evaluation, the Pilot School must use the APS approved teacher evaluation form. This ensures that there will be adequate documentation in the event that the district moves to dismiss a teacher. Any teacher that is involuntarily transferred from a Pilot School must have documentation on an APS approved teacher evaluation form of an overall satisfactory evaluation; otherwise, the Pilot School must retain the teacher the subsequent school year with the salary paid for from the Pilot School’s budget.

Policy GCOC/GCOC-R will remain in effect for Evaluation of Administrative Staff.

k. Staff Overages

APS Pilot School employees work at their respective Pilot School voluntarily. Therefore, non-probationary teachers must give notice if they choose to voluntarily excess themselves by February 25 of a given school year. Likewise, a Pilot School may also choose to excess an employee at the end of any school year (the deadline for notification of a permanent employee to be excessed is February 25 of each year). In this case, a non-probationary employee does not lose his/her right to employment within the Aurora Public Schools. He/she is placed on the district-wide overage list (this does not apply to probationary teachers). Policy GCK, GCK-R will be followed once the overage is declared.
Each Pilot School is required to follow the approved appeals process in the Schools Annual Election-to-Work Agreement or follow the process outlined in Article 44 of the Master Agreement to allow any staff member to raise issues, problems, or concerns.

Non-probationary teachers in Pilot Schools who choose to leave the school in the following school year must request to be an overage no later than February 25 of a given school year. Pilot School principals/directors must declare teachers who will be exceded as an overage to Human Resources by February 25 of a given school year. This allows Pilot Schools to post and hire positions in advance of the district placement of overages.

I. Substitute Reporting

Pilot Schools must use the district automated substitute system to report any absences and request substitutes (Reference Policy GCC/GCC-R). If a Pilot School wants to provide coverage in another way, absences must still be reported and recorded through the automated substitute system. Pilot Schools have district substitute accounts outside of bottom line budget for all regular leave categories. Consultation with the Chief Personnel Officer is required to confirm a plan that will arrange for coverage other than that provided through the district substitute system.

m. Staff/Student Identification Procedures

Pilot Schools will follow district Policy ECABA/ECABA-R for photo identification badges and sign in/out procedures to ensure safety on district property or at district events.

n. Reductions in Force

Should it be necessary for the Aurora Public Schools to reduce employee forces, master agreement and applicable district policy will be followed (Reference Policy GCQB/GCQB-R). These processes will apply equally to Pilot and non-Pilot Schools.

C. Budget Guidelines

1. All of the budget guidelines outlined below have been approved by the APS Budget Office.

a. Budget Autonomy Language

Pilot Schools have a lump sum per pupil budget, the sum of which is equivalent to other Aurora schools within that grade span or like-kind school. A lump sum per pupil budget allows the school to decide on spending that provides the best programs and services to students and
their families. Though the budget will be organized by categories, this is a bottom-line budget. Certain funds, such as special education and English language acquisition staffing will remain below the line and may not be used by the Pilot School for any other purposes than those designated.

- Schools have a lump sum per pupil budget, the sum of which is equivalent to other district schools within that grade span and includes salaries and all identified discretionary funds.

- Once discretionary district services have been identified, Pilot Schools may choose either to purchase these services or to not purchase them from the district and include them in the school’s lump sum per pupil budget. Requests for discretionary funds must be submitted to the Budget Office by December 1 each year for approval for the following school year.

- Pilot Schools are required to spend within their budget.

b. Lump Sum Per Pupil Budget

- All Pilot Schools will receive a lump sum per pupil budget that is equivalent to the district average per pupil expenditure for the grade level of elementary, middle, K-8, high, or alternative high school. This average per pupil expenditure is calculated based on current year budgets divided by the number of FTE counted in the most recent October student count.

- Each principal and Governing Board will have the autonomy to use its budget to provide for the vision and mission identified in the Pilot School’s approved RFP or subsequent budget requests.

- Pilot Schools currently do not have a budget formula for extended day programs.

- Annually, the Budget Office will publish the initial list of central office discretionary services and the per pupil amount for the services. Pilot Schools will be able to choose either to purchase the discretionary district services or to not purchase them and include the resources associated with them in the school’s lump sum per pupil amount. Commitments are made by January 31 during the budget development process and are in place for twelve months from July to June each year.

- Allocation for district Fifth Block funds to Pilot Schools is part of the discretionary funding for each school.
The discretionary funding list for 2014-2015 and budget actions are available from the Division of Finance Budget Manager.

c. Extraordinary Costs

There are several categories of students who shall be considered in need of extraordinary costs above and beyond the lump sum average per pupil budget. Students with special education needs and English language learner needs will be provided services by the district at the same level as they are being provided throughout the district.

d. Salaries and Benefits

- Pilot Schools will be held harmless for board-approved increases in salary, including general salary increases and steps on the salary schedule. If necessary, adjustments will be made for new, approved Aurora Education Association contracts and district agreements for those fiscal years that the new contract covers in which the Budget Office has already negotiated budgets with Pilot Schools. Employee Benefits for all employees at Pilot Schools will remain a district provided service.

- Pilot School staff qualifies and will be compensated per District Policy for Appendix B and C, club sponsorship and coaching responsibilities. The compensation for agreement for services (beyond TOSAs) needs to be standardized for rate of pay in alignment with the district salary scale.

e. Title I and other Grants

Pilot Schools will be eligible to receive Title I funds by meeting current criteria established by the district’s grants management department. All grant applications and grant activity must be coordinated with the district’s grants management department. An amount of 25% must be deducted from salaries at the beginning for benefits. The Title worksheet remains separate – the funds are not discretionary—and the use is determined by the grant mandates and guidelines.

f. Start-up Funds

There are no start-up funds budgeted at this time for Pilot Schools. Start-up schools developed through the pilot process must have appropriate, district-approved facilities and would receive the same allocation for furniture, computers, supplies as any new school within the district and for the first year would receive a district start-up budget based on a per
pupil formula. Small schools occupying temporary facilities will receive additional funding for multiple years.

g. Budget Adjustments

Pilot Schools are expected to enroll within 5 percent plus or minus of their projected enrollment. Any budget adjustments will be made based on enrollment figures certified to CDE by November 10 each year. For Pilot Schools that are under 5 percent of their projected enrollment, the Pilot School will be charged the per pupil amount for each student below the 5 percent over/under limit. Similarly, if a Pilot School is over 5 percent of its projected enrollment, the Pilot School will receive additional per pupil funds for each student above the 5 percent over/under limit. Budget Adjustments, if any, will be calculated and applied in December each year.

h. Budget Reductions and Spending Caps

Pilot Schools will equitably participate in all district budget reduction and spending cap programs.

i. Carry Forward

Pilot Schools will not be able to carry forward unspent funds from one fiscal year to the next unless specifically identified and approved.

j. Spending Funds

- Pilot Schools will follow all district policies, regulations, and procedures related to procurement, obligating and spending of funds.

- Maintenance and Operations and other areas not included will initially be fixed costs but, in the future, the school could petition the Joint Steering Committee for services they would like added to the discretionary list.

- Instruction funds 644 are provided at start-up in three-year allocation. The funds will be increased to match increased enrollment and adjusted one-year’s worth for additional student population for following two years.

- Pilot Schools receive their fair portion of district grants if they agree to adopt the funded initiative.
• Outside sources of funding from grants, partnerships and foundations should be aggressively pursued to supplement the budget.

• Pilot Schools must follow all policies relevant to donations, grants management, leases and contract agreements (reference Policies KCD/KCD-R, DD/DD-R)

• Board policy JQ/JQ-R Student Fees, Fines and Tuition are waived as long as the Pilot School complies with state statutes.

D. Curriculum and Assessment Guidelines

1. General overview

a. Pilot Schools must have freedom to structure their curriculum and assessment practices to meet the learning needs of their students. Schools have the flexibility to determine the school’s curriculum and assessment practices but they are held accountable for all federal and state mandated tests (e.g., CSAP, CELA and ACT). Pilot Schools are expected to determine how to best prepare students to take these mandated assessments.

b. Pilot Schools do not have to follow the district curriculum requirements so that they may choose what content to cover and how to cover it. Pilot Schools are, however, required to deliver mandated state curriculum (e.g., U. S. History).

c. Pilot Schools can create or modify curriculum to fulfill each school’s mission but there must be a core curriculum for all students.

d. Teachers have autonomy to work creatively on curriculum design.

e. Students must demonstrate competency in a defined set of skills and content knowledge through a series of assessments as identified by the school.

f. Schools are encouraged to create more personalized environments, including small class sizes, small teaching loads and/or small learning communities.

g. Pilot Schools may set their own promotion and graduation credit requirements as long as they are equal to or more rigorous than the district’s requirements.
h. The measurement emphasis should be on standards-based assessments.

i. Pilot Schools must demonstrate sustained growth through years one and two and exceed district averages by year three. If a Pilot School has not met agreed upon achievement goals after three years, the district will work with the school to transition out of Pilot School status during year four.

j. The school will select professional learning to reflect the vision and mission of the school.

E. Division of Equity and Learning Guidelines

1. In accordance with District Policy ID schools must meet or exceed the following length of time that schools of the district must be in session during a school year:
   - Half-day kindergarten: 450 hours per school year
   - Full-day kindergarten: 900 hours per school year
   - Grades one through five: 990 hours per school year
   - Grades six through twelve: 1080 hours per school year

2. Pilot high schools are expected to meet or exceed district graduation requirements (Reference Policies IKF/IKF-R).

3. Testing Programs must be aligned with district Policy II/IL-R

4. Policies relating to students, Section J, will in force unless specific waivers are referenced in this document or requested by the Pilot School.

5. The following policies are waived for Pilot Schools:
   - GCLD/GCLD-R Length of Administrative School Year
   - IC/ICA, IC-R/ICA-R School Year and School Calendar
   - ID/ID-R School Day
   - IJJ/IJK,IJJ-R,IJK-R Textbook Selection and Adoption
   - IJL/IJL-R Library Materials Selection and Adoption

6. Pilot Schools may request waivers from specific instructional policies by contacting the Chief Academic Officer who will coordinate submission, if needed, to the Board of Education for approval, or to the JSC if the waiver request is made after the initial approval of Pilot status.

7. Pilot Schools licensed staff, including teachers and administration, are not required to attend district meetings unless they determine that the meetings are relevant to the goals and functioning of the school. It is the responsibility of all staff at Pilot Schools to be up-to-date and knowledgeable about district, state and
federal expectations that relate to their school. Teachers new to the district are required to attend beginning of the year orientation meetings.

8. New teachers or teachers new to the district who are hired at Pilot Schools are not required to receive district coaching support in their first year of employment.

9. Pilot Schools are not waived from reporting requirements for discipline, safety, attendance, and grades and are expected to maintain applicable records on Infinite Campus (or other district-directed format). Pilot Schools are expected to report grades in the same format but may modify the reporting to align with their schools curriculum (e.g. elementary reports cards may have different pull-down menus). Modifications for reporting should be coordinated with the Chief of Accountability and Research.

F. Accountability Requirements

Pilot Schools are held to higher levels of accountability in exchange for increased autonomy. The accountability requires both internal and external reviews. Pilot Schools are expected to exceed district averages in achievement and show growth toward higher levels of student engagement in areas of attendance, reduction in mobility, fewer discipline concerns, and (for high school) increase in graduation rates as well as an increase in college enrollment or postsecondary career training. All Pilot Schools are required to prepare their students for and to administer all tests required by state statute. Pilot Schools may opt out of any district-required assessments if they can demonstrate they have commensurate assessments for tracking student progress. *Pilot Schools must adopt standards-based assessments*. Policies IKA/IKAB and IKA/IKAB-R for Grading Systems are waived for Pilot Schools. However, Pilot Schools should have summative reports at the end of each quarter to monitor progress that can demonstrate progress toward exceeding district averages.

**Annual Walk-Through of Benchmark Progress (preceding third year SQR)**

The purpose of the annual walk-through each spring is to support the school in its continual growth toward excellence. The review team will spend no more than one day at the school and will focus on the school’s progress in meeting set benchmarks in key areas for high-performing Pilot Schools.

The goals of the walk-through will be:

- To assess progress of the school
- To provide the school feedback on strengths and challenges and, if necessary, recommendations for improvement
- To confirm data and provide feedback to the district on the Pilot School process

The walk-through is not intended as an evaluation. It is an opportunity for members of the Pilot Schools Joint Steering Committee and the Pilot School to engage in a
dialogue about the progress of the school. The stated outcome is to ensure that there is support and feedback to help ensure the Pilot School is able to reach its stated goals for the School Quality Review at the end of its third year of implementation.

*The Governing Board is responsible for coordinating the annual walk-through and the School Quality Review.*

The walk-through will follow the following guidelines: A common set of benchmarks will be used to assess the school’s progress:

1. School vision and mission
2. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment
3. Professional Development
4. Family and Community Engagement
5. Student Support
6. Leadership and Governance

The team of six (6) reviewers will conduct the walk-through with the principal and other key school leaders. In the first walk-through, the focus will be 1-3 and areas 4-6 will be the focus for the second year. The school will provide any helpful resources to support the team in its work.

In addition, as part of the walk-through process, the Pilot Schools Joint Steering Committee would like each school to consider and respond to the following as part of the walk-through dialogue (*Developed By JSC January 6, 2014*):

1. What autonomies are you using that are having the greatest impact on increasing student achievement? For example:
   - Bottom-line budgeting
   - Instructional model
   - Calendar (staff/students)
   - Daily schedule
   - Staffing
   - Curriculum
   - Assessment
   - Professional development
   - Governance
2. What do you think those impacts have been so far?
3. Do you anticipate using any other autonomies to increase student achievement?
4. How are you monitoring and measuring progress toward your goals?
   - Walk-through #1 (Pilot School Manual pages 48-50): School Vision and Mission: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment; Professional Development
   - Walk-through #2 (Pilot School Manual pages 48-50): Family and Community Engagement; Student Support; Leadership and Governance
5. Are there other supports you need to be successful?
This walk-through should not require the school to spend extensive time compiling information or preparing documents.

The school will be expected to use the feedback from the JSC to include in its annual action plan.

**The Walk-Through Process**

1. JSC will schedule a 3-4 hour time slot for the reviewers to visit the school.
2. The principal, Governing Board representatives and key school leaders provide an overview of the school’s stated goals and student achievement targets from the original application.
3. The JSC team will observe classes, interview staff and students for approximately 2-3 hours.
4. Score the target areas using the following rubric:
   - **4 - Sustainable** – demonstrates evidence of creating a high performing school
   - **3 - Moving Toward Sustainability** – demonstrates evidence of creating a high performance school, but more evidence is needed
   - **2 - Initial Steps Toward Sustainability** – demonstrates beginning steps toward creating a high performing school
   - **1 - Area of Concern** – demonstrates insufficient evidence of creating a high performing school
   - **U - Unable to determine**
5. The JSC will provide a written report to submit to the school principal, the Pilot Schools Joint Steering Committee and the Board of Education within two weeks of the walk-through.
6. The principal must share the report with the Governing Board and school staff.
7. The report will highlight for the school any areas that require focus to ensure the school will be able to meet the stated goals following the end of its third year of implementation.

**Early Intervention for Support and Assistance**

Because Pilot Schools remain a part of the entire district, it is important to ensure that needed support and assistance is available. As stated, the Pilot Schools are required to perform at or above the district averages across a range of student engagement and achievement indicators when compared to schools with similar demographics.

The data monitoring and the annual walk-through are in place as an early warning system for those schools with signs of performing below expectations. Additional support and assistance can be recommended or provided to schools with lower than expected outcomes. The Joint Steering Committee can ensure pro-active assistance
is provided instead of waiting until a school has multiple years of less than satisfactory performance.

Areas of early warning include the following (but are not limited to):

- Data that two or more student engagement and achievement indicators are less than the district average
- A school with an overall rating (see scoring guidelines above) of less than 2 or has a preponderance of “U”s in either the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment OR Professional Development categories from the annual walk-through
- A school with a non-functioning Governing Board

Each Pilot School will identify yearly benchmarks to review to demonstrate progress. After three years, commencing in the fall of the fourth year, the school participates in a School Quality Review (SQR) that has common benchmarks for all Pilot Schools.

**Pilot Schools – School Quality Review Process**

Following three full years of operations, a Pilot School is required to participate in a School Quality Review (SQR). The SQR process is managed by the school’s Governing Board. Prominent benchmarks in every SQR should be (1) having in place a strong system of assessment of student learning and achievement that demonstrates the school has met or exceed district averages when compared to schools with similar demographics, (2) progress in attaining high performance in multiple indicators of student engagement (e.g., transfers, suspensions, attendance) and achievement (e.g., end-of-year assessments, and graduation and college-going rates, course grades), and (3) how well the Governing Board and leadership communicates the school’s vision and goals on student engagement and achievement to staff, students, parents, and community.

The school develops a self-study portfolio to demonstrate implementation and progress on the required six areas:

- vision
- student outcomes
- leadership/governance
- teaching/learning
- professional development
- family/community engagement

The self-study must explain and include evidence of how the school has fulfilled the objectives identified in its proposal. The school must provide data that supports that the school has made increases in student achievement and academic growth over the previous three years. Student performance on state tests must exceed the district averages as compared to schools with similar demographics.
In preparing the self-study, the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) must be the basis for reporting. For areas not addressed in the UIP, the school must provide evidence of successful implementation.

Required attachments to self-study:
- Pilot School Proposal
- UIP
- Pilot Schools reporting data from previous three years (developed by Office of Accountability and Research)

**ACTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE SQR:**

1. Self-study portfolio submitted to the Joint Steering Committee (JSC).
2. Team, comprised of APS staff, AEA representatives and community partner(s), visits school for one full day to develop a report that outlines areas of success and recommendations.
   
   **Membership of team (10):**
   - Superintendent’s designee
   - Chief of Equity and Leadership
   - President Aurora Education Association
   - Principal from JSC
   - Two teachers from JSC
   - Parent or classified representative from JSC
   - Chief of Accountability and Research
   - Two representative partners identified by the school

3. Completed SQR report submitted to school.
4. School submits its response to the SQR report to the JSC if needed.
5. JSC reviews report at its meeting and develops response/feedback to school.
6. School must include JSC feedback into its action plans for the next school year.
7. JSC also makes a recommendation to the Board of Education as to whether the Pilot status should be continued.
8. If the school has not met its targets, the JSC will recommend the Board of Education review and determine if school should have its Pilot status revoked at its meeting in January. This will allow time for the school to revert from Pilot School status and prepare for upcoming school year.

**Assessment Plan for Tracking Student Progress**

In cooperation with the Aurora Public Schools Office of Assessment and Research, each Pilot School will use district data to track progress of students enrolled in its school in the areas identified below in order to compare their progress with student outcomes in other schools with similar demographics in the district. The report will be
provided to the JSC in the fall for the SQR and include the data from the preceding three years.

**Student Demographics**

- Student Enrollment
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Free/reduced lunch
- English Language Acquisition (ELA)
- Special education status
- Aurora Gifted and Talented (AGATE) status

**Student Engagement**

- Attendance
- Student discipline (referrals, suspensions, expulsions, community concerns)
- Student retention rate

**Student Performance**

- Grades
- State test rates, scores and growth in identified areas (Reading/Writing, Science/Math)
- All other required assessments as applicable
- For high schools: concurrent enrollment and dual credit
- For high schools: on track to graduate
- For high schools: graduation and completion rates
- For high schools: college-going rate

**Budget**

- Revenue resources (PPA, grants, donations)
- Monetary losses
- Spending within budgeted resources

**Partnerships**

- Grants
- Community
- Educational
- Businesses

**Surveys**

- Parent
- Student
- Staff

Each indicator will be calculated by whole school averages.

**G. School Calendar Guidelines**

1. Agreements about Schedules

   a. Pilot Schools have control of their time in order to restructure the day and calendar to meet the vision and mission of the school.

   b. Pilot Schools must provide, at a minimum, the same number of student instructional hours and the same amount of instructional minutes as other district schools at the same level.

   c. In order to support school reform and increase student achievement, Pilot Schools have the right to implement flexible schedules including different student days than those identified by the district and different calendar constructs for both staff and students. (Pilot Schools are expected to meet the minimum for teacher contract and student contact time as required by the district.)

   d. If bell times or student contact days are different than those set by the district, the Pilot School must work with the Transportation Department to see if the changes can be accommodated. Otherwise, the school could be charged for the associated cost of special bell times or different days.

   e. Pilot Schools may want to consider longer instructional periods, more core academic time, significant amounts of collaborative planning time for staff and/or increased time for professional learning.

   f. Pilot Schools should ensure time for staff planning and professional learning and organizing the school schedule to maximize learning time for students. There should be flexibility within the school year for student learning and staff planning.

   g. Pilot Schools may have shorter or longer school days or a shorter or longer school year than the district only if the school meets the minimum teacher contract and student contact time and if agreed to in the school’s Annual Election-to-Work Agreement.

   h. Pilot Schools will follow district Policy EBCE/EBCE-R for any school closings or cancellations.
**PILOT SCHOOL TIMELINES**

**September 29**  
Governing Board submits roster and contact to Chief of Equity and Learning

**November 7**  
Budget adjustments determined as enrollment is certified by CDE

**December**  
Budget adjustments, if needed, will be applied

**December**  
Confirm enrollment projections based on prior year for next year’s budgeting

**December 3**  
Requests for discretionary funds submitted to Budget Office for approval for following year

**January 15**  
Staff provided with Annual Election-to-Work-Agreement

**February 2**  
Teacher work year schedule must be provided or the previous year’s schedule will be in effect

**February 2**  
Submit to HR anticipated staffing pattern for following year

**February 26**  
Deadline for principal to declare any person who is excessed from school

**March 2**  
Deadline for Annual Election-Work-Agreement to be signed by all staff who will be at school next year and submitted to HR

**March 2**  
Deadline for teachers to request to voluntarily excess themselves from Pilot School (transfer out)

**March 30**  
Pilot Schools begin hiring process within or outside district

**May 1**  
Governing Board submits review of principal and recommendation for retention or termination of principal to evaluator assigned by the Division of Equity and Learning (who will ensure that the Superintendent is informed of the recommendation for retention or termination and inform JSC)
Pilot Schools Responsibilities

- **BOE**: Approves, Denies, Revokes Pilot Status
- **AEA**: Manages/Supports MOU
- **JSC**: Manages/Supports
- **Design Team**
  - Confirms Staff Interest for Pilot Schools
  - Develops Proposal
  - Ensures 2/3 Teacher Support
  - Submits Proposal to JSC
  - Oversees Initial Implementations
  - Acts as Governing Board until Election
- **Governing Board**
  - Monitors Application Process
  - Recommends Pilot Status
  - Provides support / oversight to Pilot Schools
  - Oversees Walk-throughs and SQR Process
  - Monitors Budget Agreements
  - Reviews/ Budget
  - Sets/Monitors School Goals
  - Participates in hiring/evaluation of principal
  - Certifies Annual Election-to-Work Agreement
  - Manages Accountability/Walk-through/SQR
- **Principal**
  - Manages Budget
  - Hires/Evaluates Staff
  - Oversees Facility
  - Maintains District Coordination
## Pilot Schools
### Areas of Responsibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Design Team</th>
<th>Governing Board</th>
<th>Principal</th>
<th>JSC</th>
<th>BOE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Seeks staff support  
• Develops proposal  
• Seeks staff approval for proposal  
• Presents to JSC/BOE  
• Acts as defacto Governing Board in startup schools, separate school within the same facility until a Governing Board can be formed. | • Maintains vision and mission  
• Sets goals and monitors progress  
• Oversees budget  
• Provides input to hiring and evaluation of principal  
• Manages Walk-through and SQR process to ensure accountability for student performance  
• Ensures SDM process and certifies that Annual Election to Work Agreement is in place | • Works collaboratively with Governing Board  
• Responsible for all staff hiring  
• Responsible for all staff evaluations  
• Budget authority for school  
• Manages the facility  
• Ensures compliance with all district policies  
• Provides ongoing communication to Division Chiefs | • Oversees the RFP process  
• Recommends approval for Pilot School status  
• Monitors Walk-throughs and SQR process  
• Acts as liaison for Pilot Schools and district  
• Oversees any policy waiver requests following initial BOE approval of Pilot School status | • Grants final approval for Pilot School status/revokes status if necessary  
• Oversees district support for Pilot Schools |
III. Pilot School Responsibilities

1. Students Enrolled at Pilot Schools

Neighborhood Pilot Schools will enroll all students within their boundaries. At the time of application, the conversion school may not exceed 500 students based on projections for the following year.

2. Eligible Design Team Members

Design Teams must include, but are not limited to, members who are part of the educators, parents, students and or community representatives within the attendance area for the requested Pilot School. They may also include individuals and organizations outside of Aurora Public Schools. Teachers who choose to be on design teams make a commitment of intent to become part of the staff should the Pilot School proposal be approved.

3. Compliance with State and Federal Laws

Every approved Pilot School must comply with all federal and state laws and regulations and court orders. Their operating agreement must acknowledge Aurora Public Schools responsibilities to ensure quality of education offered, protect the rights and interests of students and staff, and oversee the expenditure of public funds. Pilot Schools will comply with all Safe Schools policies and laws.

4. Accreditation

Approved Pilot Schools must maintain accreditation status as required by the Colorado Department of Education within state statute.

5. Curriculum

Pilot Schools are given the autonomy to develop their own curriculum and instructional delivery. They are expected to identify a core curriculum that all students at the school will receive. Curriculum that is state mandated (e.g., U. S. History) must be delivered in Pilot Schools. High schools must meet or exceed district requirements for graduation.

6. Student Assessment

All Pilot Schools are required to prepare their students for and to administer all tests required by state statute. Pilot Schools may opt out of any district-required assessments if they can demonstrate they have commensurate assessments for
tracking student progress. Pilot Schools are strongly encouraged to adopt standards-based assessments.

7. School Accountability and Quality Reviews

In exchange for increased autonomy, Pilot Schools are held to higher levels of accountability. In addition to ongoing assessments, every three years, each Pilot School must undertake a School Quality Review process based on a set of common benchmarks for a high-performing school. The accountability requires both internal and external reviews. Pilot Schools are expected to exceed district averages in achievement and show growth toward higher levels of student engagement in areas of attendance, reduction in mobility, fewer discipline concerns, and (for high schools) an increase in graduation rates as well as an increase in college enrollment or post-secondary career training.

Each report of findings and recommendations must be written and delivered to the respective Pilot School within six weeks of the SQR visit. The Pilot School has up to one month to note factual errors in the report to the SQR team chairperson and to write a letter addressed to the Pilot Schools Joint Steering Committee that describes the school’s general response to the report and outlines the steps the school will take to address the report’s finding and recommendations. The SQR report and the school’s response will then be submitted to the JSC for review, comment and recommendations, which will be communicated back in writing to the Pilot School. If a Pilot School has not met all expectations, the JSC may decide that a school has made significant progress toward meeting the stated goals and assessment expectations and may be placed on a one-year probation. At the end of that one-year probation, the Pilot School must have met all accountability requirements to maintain its status as a Pilot School.

The JSC will make a recommendation to the Board of Education for continuing status as a Pilot School.

8. Budget and Funding

Pilot Schools receive the same funding as other comparable schools within the district. Within that funding they have access to identified discretionary income for district services which the Pilot Schools may or may not decide to access. Requests for discretionary funds must be submitted to the Budget Office by December 1 each year for approval for the following school year.

Pilot Schools receive their funding as a lump sum based on the per pupil budget in accordance with equivalent budgets as other district schools with similar enrollment and grade span. This budget includes salaries and all other specified discretionary funds. The lump sum can be used as dictated by the school’s vision and mission. Funds for staff are based upon the district average teacher salary, but the school spends on the actual salary of each teacher. Benefits are non-discretionary.
Outside sources of funding from grants, partnerships and foundations should be aggressively pursued to supplement the budget.

9. Salaries and Working Conditions

Any staff, licensed or classified, must choose (elect) to work at a Pilot School. Employees at Pilot Schools will receive the same salary, benefits and leave of any other employee of the district. Assignments are on a year-to-year basis. The Annual Election-to-Work Agreement, outlining working conditions at the school and approved by two-thirds of teachers, identifies time lines for transfers and hiring to allow affected teachers who may not be staying at the school ample opportunity to make an informed decision when deciding where to apply for transfer within the district. There is no job security at the site, but non-probationary staff retains seniority and transfer rights within the district. Non-probationary staff who elect to transfer because they do not want to be part of the Pilot School, or those who are asked to transfer when a position is converted or eliminated to support the school’s vision and mission, retain the same transfer rights as any other staff in the district. (See template for Annual Election-to-Work Agreement in AEA Memorandum of Understanding.)

10. Transportation

If bell times or student contact days are different than those set by the district, the Pilot School must work with the Transportation Department to see if the changes can be accommodated. Otherwise, the school could be charged for the associated cost of special bell times or different days. Policy EEAC/EEAC-R for Bus Scheduling and Routing will be followed.

11. Facilities

a. Before a proposal is submitted to the Joint Steering Committee, the Pilot School design team must identify anticipated facility needs and expenses and provide that information to the Chief of Support Services for a cost analysis. The school must meet all federal and state requirements for public schools, including ADA compliance.

The submission must include what will be assumed as a school cost, requested district costs and possible grant supports. (In the case of separate schools within the same facility, there should be an inventory of rooms that will be the exclusive use of the Pilot School and what areas will be for shared use.) The school will provide information on grants that may be available for funds for facility requirements to meet instructional vision of Pilot School. Grants should be considered to meet facility requirements that are above or beyond general practice within the district.

The district will provide resources to the extent possible for cosmetic changes (e.g. signage, marquees) and minor renovations (e.g., reconfiguration for office
or administrative space). Any other expenses must be assumed by the Pilot School.

The Division of Support Services will review the facility needs and expenses and respond in writing as quickly as practicable to confirm agreements on school and district projected costs and recommend the most cost-effective utilization.

b. When a Pilot Schools requests and is granted a name change by the Board of Education, the Division of Support Services will replace all necessary signage. Per Policy FF/FF-R, the Board of Education retains the right to name schools. The Pilot Schools may submit a name for the Board of Education to consider, but the final decision remains with the Board of Education.

12. Revocation of Pilot School Status

The Aurora Public Schools retains the right to close a Pilot School at any time if the Board of Education determines that the Pilot School is not fulfilling agreed upon obligations outlined in the application. This includes but is not limited to failure to increase student achievement, malfeasance, fiscal irregularities or violation of state or federal laws or as recommended by the Joint Steering Committee.

Pilot Schools will have three years to meet academic achievement goals. If after three years a Pilot School has not met agreed upon goals, a plan to transition out of Pilot status will be developed during the fourth year.

IV. State and Federal Requirements

A. State Requirements

1. Unified Improvement Plans

Each Pilot School is expected to meet all state and district requirements for developing and submitting a Unified Improvement Plan (UIP).

2. Highly Qualified Teacher Requirements

All teachers and paraprofessionals at Pilot Schools must meet the “Highly Qualified” requirements for certification and subject matter competency. Pilot Schools are required to participate in the annual Highly Qualified survey to document the status of every teacher and paraprofessional in the school.

3. English Language Acquisition
District-support for English Language Acquisition will be provided to Pilot Schools as comparable to any other school in Aurora Public Schools and must be used per district guidelines.

B. Federal Requirements

Pilot Schools are responsible for complying with all state and federal requirements. This includes Title I, Title III, IDEA, and Perkins at the federal level, among others.

**Special Education Responsibilities**

Federal requirements and Policy IHBA and all regulations and exhibits remain in effect for Pilot Schools. All Pilot Schools are expected to enroll a student body that is representative of the district.

If appropriate, students may be directed to center-based programs and others will be individually assessed to determine appropriate placement in the Pilot School based upon their Individualized Educational Plan (IEP).

Following enrollment of a student, all reasonable efforts shall be made by the school district to determine whether the student has been identified as a child with disabilities. If a child has been identified as one with disabilities, the school shall obtain a copy of the student’s IEP or 504 Plan. A properly constituted IEP team (or for 504 students, a Building Intervention team) shall be convened to determine whether the Pilot School is an appropriate placement for the student, and, if so, what service must be provided in order to provide the student with a free, appropriate public education.

**ELECTION-TO-WORK AGREEMENT (ETWA) TEMPLATE**

When hired, and annually thereafter, each Pilot School licensed staff person is required to sign an Annual Election-to-Work Agreement. This agreement must include the areas included in the following template. Since teachers elect or choose to teach at a Pilot School and certain work rules are determined by the Pilot School rather than the Master Agreement, it is essential that each school clearly outline the working conditions, terms and expectations for employment. *The Master Agreement is in effect except for those areas specifically stipulated in Article 44 of the Master Agreement.*

The teacher vote on the Annual Election-to-Work Agreement will be by secret ballot and conducted by the AEA Building Representative. The vote must take place between February 1 and March 1 each year.
ANNUAL ELECTION-TO-WORK AGREEMENT

NAME OF SCHOOL_______________________________________________

NAME OF EMPLOYEE (Please print) __________________________________

EMPLOYEE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER _______________________________

SCHOOL NAME:
YEAR CONTRACT IS IN EFFECT: 2014-2015

(1) Introduction

I understand that teachers of the Pilot School continue to be members of the bargaining unit under the Master Agreement between AEA and APS, and retain all rights as specified in Article 44 (attached).

I, FIRST AND LAST NAME, am voluntarily electing to work at NAME OF SCHOOL. I am signing this Annual Election-to-Work Agreement to indicate I understand and agree to the following terms and conditions of my employment. I further understand that my assignment at the Pilot School is on a yearly basis, subject to my re-assignment at the Pilot School.

NAME OF SCHOOL operates under the Pilot Schools guidelines described in the AEA-APS Master Agreement, Article 44 and the Pilot School Manual (updated annually). Teachers of Pilot Schools are to receive wages and all benefits as they would at any other Aurora Public School, as specified in Article 11 and Articles 24-33. Other terms and conditions of employment will be determined by NAME OF PILOT SCHOOL and the NAME OF SCHOOL’S Governing Board, rather than by the APS-AEA Master Agreement. While not attempting to be exhaustive, this election states the more important terms and conditions. These terms and conditions will be reviewed annually and may be subject to change as determined by the Governing Board.

(2) Salary, benefits, seniority, and membership in the Aurora Education Association

I will continue to accrue seniority as I would if I were working elsewhere in Aurora Public Schools. If I am hired as a teacher, I will receive the salary and benefits as specified in Article 11 and Articles 24-33. Teachers at NAME OF SCHOOL have the right to fully participate in the functions of the Aurora Education Association, retain the same right to representation as any member of the bargaining unit, and also retain the same opportunity as any other teacher in APS to join the Aurora Education Association.
(3) **Terms of employment**

Outline work day and work year (work year is inclusive of all duties that occur prior to students’ school day and year, during the school day and year and following the students’ school day and year):

(3) **Terms of employment**

- **Work Day and Work Year:**
  (Attach school schedule and calendar)

(4) **Responsibilities**

- **Outline of job responsibilities:**

(4) **Performance Evaluation**

The principal will evaluate staff using the district-approved process for regular or alternative evaluations.

(5) **Dispute resolution**

The school’s dispute resolution process will follow the process outlined below from the Master Agreement, Article 44:

**Internal Appeals Process**

- Every Pilot School employee shall receive a written copy of the IAP.
- A complaint under the IAP is limited to allegations that the written terms and conditions governing the Pilot School as specifically set forth in the RFP and/or written decisions of the local Governing Board have been violated or misapplied.
- This IAP shall be used at Pilot Schools only under the circumstances stated in section above. A "complaint" for purposes of this IAP is defined as set forth above. A "day", for purposes of the timelines of this IAP is defined as any day of the calendar year except Saturdays, Sundays, legal or school holidays. The time limits of this IAP are intentionally expedited to achieve early resolution, and are expected to be adhered to by all parties. Time limits may be extended or waived, but only by mutual written agreement.

**The Steps of this IAP are as follows:**
1. **Informal Meeting Between the Grievant and School Leader:** Within five (5) days after the aggrieved employee became aware (or should have become aware) of the occurrence of the event(s) upon which the grievance complaint is based, the aggrieved employee must request an informal meeting with the school leader (and the department chair if the matter involves the department chair), to discuss the matter and attempt in good faith to resolve it. That meeting shall be conducted within five (5) days of the request.

2. **Second Meeting, With Association Representative Included:** If the dispute has not been resolved within five (5) days of the above-described Informal Meeting, the employee shall have up to an additional five (5) days in which to request a second meeting, this one to include the persons from the Informal Meeting, and also the Association Representative for the site, and may also include a designee of the school leader. The purpose of this meeting is for the school leader and the Association Representative to attempt in good faith to resolve the dispute. This meeting shall be conducted within five (5) days of the request. If the matter is not resolved within five (5) days of the Second Meeting, then this step is deemed completed. Provided, however that if the Association Representative may be personally affected by the outcome, and there is no designated co-representative, the matter shall automatically proceed to the next step.

3. **Third Meeting: Governing Board:** If the dispute has not been resolved within five (5) days of the above-described Second Meeting, the employee shall have up to an additional five (5) days in which to request a meeting with the Governing Board. This meeting shall be conducted within five (5) days of the request. If the dispute has not been resolved within five (5) days of this meeting, the employee may submit the claim to the Superintendent and AEA President as outlined in above.

(6) **Transfers**

The following language must be included:

If a position at NAME OF Pilot School is converted or eliminated, if the teacher is involuntarily transferred or if a teacher chooses to transfer from the Pilot School, the process outlined in Article 44 will be followed.

(7) **Termination**
I understand that I will be subject to termination from Aurora Public Schools in accordance with existing law and Articles 35 and 37.

(8) Signatures

By signing this document, I acknowledge that I have read all the provisions of this Annual Election-to-Work Agreement and that I agree to all its terms.

_______________________________
Employee Signature            Date

_______________________________
Principal Signature            Date

Please send a copy of the completed document to the Chief of Personnel in Human Resources