

Application Cover Sheet

Name of proposed school: Uncommon Camden (final name TBD)

Anticipated physical address of school: 1227 Kenwood Avenue, Camden, NJ

County of residence: Camden

District of residence: Camden

Primary contact. Identify the **primary contact** for your prospective renaissance school project. This individual will serve as the contact for all communications, scheduling, and notices regarding your application.

Note: As with all aspects of your application, names and contact information of the primary contact will become public information.

Primary application contact: Michael Ambriz

District of residence: Newark

Mailing address: North Star Academy, 10 Washington Place

Street/ PO Box

Newark, NJ 07102

City

State

Zip

Phone: (day) 973 642 0101 **(evening)** 973 642 0101

Email address: mambriz@uncommonschoools.org **Fax:** 973 642 5800

I. Introduction

Uncommon Schools is pleased to submit this Part 2 application to the New Jersey Department of Education for Uncommon Schools | Camden Prep (“Camden Prep”). We look forward to the opportunity to become part of the Camden community, to learn more firsthand about the needs of students and families in Camden, and to build community enthusiasm for our work. The following application is provided in response to the submission requirements outlined in a letter from the New Jersey Department of Education’s, Deputy Chief Innovation Officer, Amy Ruck Kagan, dated May 15, 2014.

II. Education Program, Mission and Vision

School Name: Uncommon Schools | Camden Prep (“Camden Prep”)

Mission and Vision: The mission of Camden Prep will be to prepare each student to enter, succeed in, and graduate from college.

Goals and Objectives: Camden Prep will be committed to nurturing the growth and development of students of high character while maintaining a rigorous academic program that prepares them to graduate from a four-year college. Camden Prep, like all Uncommon Schools, will exhibit the following core characteristics and objectives:

- A College Preparatory Mission;
- High Standards for Academics and Character;
- A Highly Structured Learning Environment;
- A Longer School Day and a Longer School Year;
- A Focus on Accountability and Data-Driven Instruction; and
- A Faculty of Committed and Talented Leaders and Teachers.

III. Renaissance Project Overview, Description and Address

Camden Prep plans to open a network of five schools in Camden in multiple phases, serving up to 2,260 students, with a particular emphasis on the Whitman Park neighborhood.

Phase I of the project will encompass two schools, serving up to 810 students in K-4th and 5th -8th grades. The proposed Phase I project will involve the new construction of a K-8 facility in the Whitman Park neighborhood. The Phase I project location will be located at 1800 Copewood Street, also identified as Block 1388, Lot 7. Camden Prep plans to open the initial elementary (K-4) school for the 2014-2015 school year, and a middle (5-8) school in the 2015-2016 school year. Both schools would follow a scaled growth model, adding one grade level per year until they reach full capacity.

Phase II of the project will likely begin concurrently with Phase I, and will be for three additional schools, serving up to 1450 additional students. Pending facility readiness and the ability to identify high quality school leaders, a second elementary and middle school will be opened in 2015-2016, and a high school in 2019. Each of the remaining three schools to be opened during Phase 2 will be opened within eligible distances from the initial Phase I building, as required under the Urban Hope Act for a Renaissance urban campus area.

Camden Prep plans to open its initial elementary school at the former Parkside Elementary School building during development of the Phase I project. Camden Prep seeks to open this school concurrent with the project’s construction period so that it can offer an immediate high quality academic option for Whitman Park families.

IV. Additional Project Description, Acquisition, Timeline, Budget and Financing Plans

Acquisition: For the Phase I project referenced above, Camden Prep, in partnership with the Mayor's Office of the City of Camden plans to acquire the land located at 1800 Copewood Street in the Whitman Park neighborhood in order to construct a new state of the art 76,615 SF K-8 facility. **Exhibit 1** provides the necessary evidence of the planned acquisition of the 1800 Copewood site (also known as Block 1388, Lot 7), pending final Renaissance project approval.

Additional Site Description: The site located at 1800 Copewood Street consists of roughly 4.5 acres of land and derelict buildings, which are located across the street from Brimm Medical Arts High School (HS) and Whitman Park. The site is bounded on the east side by Copewood Street, by Thorn Street to the north, by Davis Street to the south and by an operating business to the west which runs along Chase Street. The site is currently under private ownership. Given the existing and deteriorated condition of this site, development of this site will be complementary to citywide redevelopment efforts already underway in and around the Whitman Park neighborhood. These efforts include the City's CHOICE neighborhood plan for Whitman Park and the surrounding Mt. Ephraim corridor communities. For a site plan overview of the Phase I project, please refer to **Exhibit 5**.

Project Design & Construction: Camden Prep has hired KSS Architects to support the design process for the 1800 Copewood Street site. KSS Architects is a New Jersey based firm with offices in Princeton, NJ, as well as offices in Philadelphia, PA. KSS was selected for this project due to their extensive experience in the K-12 facility space, as well as their track record of designing and completing successful projects for other Uncommon schools in Newark, NJ. A sample of KSS' educational facility portfolio is included in **Exhibit 2**. When design documentation has been completed, Camden Prep will run a competitive RFP process to select a Construction Management company to construct the facility. Specifications for Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (FF&E), as required for the Renaissance project facility, will be included as part of the design process and will be purchased as part of the overall construction project.

Project Timeline: A project timeline for the acquisition, development and construction of the initial K-8 facility can be found in **Exhibit 3**. The timeline anticipates that acquisition of the site will be completed by November 2014. Construction design and documentation will be completed by late March 2015, and construction will commence in late May 2015. The project will be completed in time for commencement of the 2017-2018 school year.

Project Budget: A preliminary budget for the project is provided in **Exhibit 4**. This budget contemplates the construction of a new 76, 615 SF building as shown in **Exhibit 5 and 6**. Uncommon Camden anticipates that the total project cost, including acquisition, financing, hard and soft costs will total \$31.8M.

Project Financing: The long-term financial projections for the school assume an annual rent cost of \$1,500 per pupil at full enrollment. Camden Prep is working closely with its management partner, Uncommon Schools, to arrange financing and development for the construction of this project. Uncommon Schools has supported its schools to secure the most competitive and affordable financing possible, always aiming to ensure that facility expenditures on rent/debt service do not exceed more than 12% of public revenues. Uncommon Schools has successfully completed the following types of financing for its schools:

- Over \$41M in New Markets Tax Credit financing in partnership with US Bank, the Low Income Investment Fund, The Reinvestment Fund, PNC Bank and JP Morgan Chase Bank (includes projects in Brooklyn, NY, Troy, NY and Newark, NJ)
- Over \$51M in Qualified School Construction Bond Financing with Capital One Bank, Goldman Sachs Bank and Prudential Insurance Company (includes projects in Newark, NJ)
- Over \$14M in Qualified Zone Academy Bond Financing with Goldman Sachs Bank and Prudential Insurance Company (includes projects in Newark, NJ)

- Credit enhancement loans and grants with the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) through the USDOE charter school financing credit enhancement program
- Other traditional commercial mortgage loans with M&T Bank and the Low Income Investment Fund for projects in Rochester, NY

In New Jersey, Uncommon Schools has extensive experience issuing and deploying Qualified School Construction Bonds (QSCBs) for new school construction and renovation projects and has successfully participated in past RFPs from the New Jersey Economic Development Authority to access these bonds.

Uncommon Schools expects to raise from philanthropic sources at least 10% (\$3.18M) of the project costs and up to 20% (\$6.36M) of the project costs as required by financing partners. To achieve this goal, Uncommon Schools is cultivating relationships with existing national and local funding partners. As a portfolio member of the Charter School Growth Fund (CSGF), Uncommon Schools will be eligible for funding from CSGF's facility financing fund. The New Schools Venture Fund is also a potential funding partner. In addition to this philanthropic equity, Uncommon Schools will also raise debt financing for the project through the use of Qualified School Construction Bonds. Preliminary outreach and due diligence on these financing tools is already underway, in partnership with Two9Three Consulting, a facility financing consultant with extensive expertise in this field. Simultaneously, Uncommon Schools will also be pursuing a New Markets Tax Credit (NMTIC) allocation and tax-exempt bond financing if the other lower cost products do not prove to be available in the quantities required. To this end, Uncommon Schools has already begun to engage longstanding financing partners, including a number of Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and other larger commercial banks, in pursuit of appropriate financing for the Whitman Park project. Specific financing terms will be dictated by the market at the time of the financial closing, but are expected to be similar to the results of the other financings described above.

V. Comprehensive School Facilities Plan

This section contains the comprehensive school facilities plan documenting the planned compliance of Camden Prep's Phase I Renaissance project with all aspects of N.J.A.C. 6A:26 that are relevant to the Renaissance project.

Camden Prep has hired KSS Architects to support the design process for the 1800 Copewood Street site. KSS has provided schematic plans for the Phase I project which are in accordance with all requirements of N.J.A.C. 6A:26 with the exception of all facilities efficiency standards from which the Renaissance project has been exempted.

Schematic Plans: The architectural package for the Camden Prep K-8 building in Whitman Park includes a schematic site plan (**Exhibit 5**), as well as an Architectural Program for the school building and a three (3) story schematic plan of the building shown in **Exhibit 6**.

Educational Specifications: Camden Prep's planned initial building in Whitman Park is being designed in compliance with all relevant aspects of N.J.A.C. 6A:26, with the exception of all facilities efficiency standards from which Renaissance projects have been exempted.

A summary of Educational Specification Guidelines is included below:

1. Program and Project Description
2. Site and Community Objectives
3. General Facilities Consideration
4. Building Space Program
5. Detailed Room Requirements

Each of these parts, 1 through 5, is described below.

1. Program and Project Description

Camden Prep’s initial building in Whitman Park will be designed for grades K through 8. The class size model for this school will be up to 30 students per room for grades K through 8.

Camden Prep’s planned initial building in Whitman Park will be a 76,715 SF elementary and middle school building. Shared specialized program spaces will be conveniently located to both schools and will offer controlled public-access for the community.

The following preliminary spaces will be provided in the classroom area:

• Kindergarten Classrooms	3 rooms
• 1 st – 4 th Grade Classrooms	12 rooms
• 5 th – 8 th Grade Classrooms	14 rooms
• Science Labs	2 rooms
• Flex Rooms for Music, Performing Arts	5 rooms
• Academic Support/Skills Rooms	3 rooms

All of the following specialized program spaces will be grouped to be centrally located to classroom spaces. The shared spaces will include, but are not limited to, the following spaces clustered in the groups noted:

• Cafeteria	1 rooms
• Served (Warming Kitchen) & Storage	1 room each
• Gymnasium/Storage	1 rooms (gym)

2. Site and Community Objectives

- Provide public community use spaces with a connection to other community assets. The gymnasium has been located in order to be easily accessible from other community assets (e.g. Brimm Medical Arts HS and Whitman Park ballfields) and from adjacent parking spaces; the school will utilize the gymnasium to accommodate its instructional, athletic and enrichment programming but will also make the space available for other community uses and celebrations.
- Safe pick-up and drop-off shall be designed to provide safe entrances and egress for students and adults
- There will be clearly marked walkways from the drop-off area into the school facility and entrances to the school facility will be clearly marked
- Play field: Provide large grassy playfield for flexible use
- Service access: Provide service access for cafeteria and gymnasium
- Disabled-accessible pedestrian walkways, roadways and parking areas on which people and vehicles access the building
- Staff/ visitor parking
- A 30-foot-wide access around the entire building for fire emergency access

3. General Facilities Consideration

The following facilities requirements shall be met in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:26, with the exception of any facilities efficiency standards from which Renaissance projects have been exempted.

i. Ceiling Heights

1. Classroom or other instructional space 9'-6"

2. Height of the ceiling or other obstruction in other areas shall provide a minimum clearance as listed below:
 - i. Gymnasium 22'-0"
 - ii. Cafeteria 12'-0"
3. Corridors and all other administrative min. 8'-0"

ii. Egress Widths

1. Minimum clear widths for egress corridors serving more than 100 students in elementary schools (kindergarten through fourth grade) shall be:
 - i. 7'-0" wall to wall without lockers or wardrobes;
 - ii. 8'-0" wall to locker face with lockers or wardrobes on one side; and
 - iii. 9'-6" locker face to locker face with lockers on both sides.
2. Minimum clear widths at any point in middle school, grades fifth through 8, shall be:
 - i. 7'-6" wall to wall without lockers;
 - ii. 8'-6" wall to locker face with lockers or wardrobes on one side;
 - iii. 10'-0" locker face to locker face with lockers.
3. Minimum clear widths for secondary egress corridors serving 100 or fewer occupants shall be + five feet.
4. Doors from all spaces used by students and school staff, excluding lavatories, storage rooms, janitors' closets, instructional spaces under 300 gross square feet, and locker rooms, shall swing into the corridor and shall have a safety vision panel of 1/4 inch glazing which is not less than 100 square inches.

iii. Light Levels

1. Classrooms and instructional areas--study halls, lecture rooms, art rooms, offices, libraries, conference rooms, work rooms, shops, laboratories and secondary school cafeterias - 50 fc
2. Drafting, typing and sewing rooms -70 fc
3. Reception rooms, gymnasiums, auditoriums, primary school cafeterias, cafeteriums, all-purpose rooms, swimming pools - 30 fc
4. Locker rooms, washrooms, toilet rooms, corridors containing lockers, stairways - 10 fc
5. Corridors without lockers and storerooms - 5 fc

iv. Electrical power and communications requirements are as follows:

1. Instructional spaces shall be provided with sufficient electrical power, communication and data outlets to satisfy the Uncommon Camden initial building's program and equipment needs as defined by the school's technology plan or equivalent document and educational specifications for an Uncommon Camden building.
2. Large group areas such as assembly rooms, auditoriums and other large group instructional spaces shall be provided with electrical power, data, and communications outlets at appropriate locations and at the location of portable projectors and at any built-in speaker cables.
3. A communication system shall be installed in each classroom to allow for

emergency communication to local authorities. Such communication system may be in the form of a telephone system capable of placing 9-1-1 calls.

v. Occupancy Requirements for Educational Use

1. The capacity for each room type is defined using the following minimum required floor area, in net square foot per occupant:

i. Classrooms, including SCSE, SGI and Music	20 SF
ii. Science Laboratories, Art Room, Tech Lab	20 SF
iii. Industrial Arts/ Vocational Lab	50 SF
iv. Conference Rooms	15 SF
v. Cafeteria, Assembly, Cafetorium	7 SF
vi. Cafeteria, Food Service	12 SF
vii. Gymnasium, physical education	100 SF
viii. Locker Room	20 SF
ix. Library Reading Room	50 SF
x. Health Care Center, cot area	30 SF
xi. Health Care Center, Exam Room	20 SF
xii. Offices, main occupant (staff member)	60 SF
xiii. Offices, visitors	15 SF

4. Building Space Program

A building-space program that indicates the number and net area in square feet of each instructional, specialized instructional, administrative, and support space in the planned building is included in **Exhibit 6**.

5. Detailed Room Requirements (Sample outline)

Room Name:

A. General Information

1. Type of Space:
2. Type of Construction:

B. Physical Specifics

1. Number of students:
2. Number of instructors/Aids:
3. Number of spaces required:
4. Area:
5. Spatial relationships:

C. Description of Instructional Program

D. Special Features

- Finishes:
- Acoustical:

- Building Systems Requirements:
- Accessibility:
- Climate Control:
- Power/ Lighting/Plumbing:
- Security/Data:
- Structural:
- Storage:
- Display:
- Display Boards:
- Chalk/Marker Boards/Tack Boards:
- Furniture & Equipment:

VI. Enrollment & Proposed Catchment Area

Camden Prep plans to become a network of five schools, eventually serving grades K-12, with the exact opening dates for each campus to be determined pending successful identification of a school leader and a high quality facility for each of them. The proposed catchment area will include the Whitman Park neighborhood, bordered by Mt. Ephraim and Haddon Avenues on the east and west, and Atlantic and Ferry Avenues on the north and south. Camden Prep will also recruit students from the surrounding neighborhoods and communities. A map of the proposed catchment area is provided on the following page.

Table 1. Map of Camden Prep's Proposed Catchment Area



Each Camden Prep school would grow a grade each year until it reaches its full grade span, with each elementary school eventually feeding into a middle school, and each of the middle schools feeding into a shared high school.

Table 2. Camden Prep’s Enrollment Projections by Grade

School	Grades	# of Students per grade	Proposed Opening
Elementary School 1	K-4	75 (target) – 90 (cap) students	2014
Elementary School 2	K-4		2015
Middle School 1	5-8		2015
Middle School 2	5-8		2015
High School	9-12	140 – 160 students	2019

In accordance with the Urban Hope Act, Camden Prep will follow the guidelines outlined in N.J.S.A. 18A:36C-8 and would plan to give first enrollment priority in elementary and middle school to students who live within the catchment area of the schools and who are entering the grades served by each Camden Prep school. In the event that there are more students residing in the catchment area than there are spaces available in a grade level, or if every student who is entering the appropriate grade has enrolled and spaces remain in a given grade, a lottery will be held. Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:31-4.3, Camden Prep will maintain waiting lists for any students not receiving spots in the lottery.

Preference will be given according to:

- 1) Siblings of current students or who share the same legal guardian as a current student
- 2) Students residing in the catchment area
- 3) Students residing in Camden, but outside the catchment area
- 4) Students not residing in, but attending school in Camden

Since all five campuses will be part of one school, students who satisfy Camden Prep’s promotional requirements will be automatically enrolled in the next grade level, regardless of whether that next grade level occurs within the same school or bridges to another Camden Prep school, and regardless of the location of that next school (i.e., if it is in a different catchment area). Additionally, any student who was enrolled in the school as of the last day of the immediately preceding school year can automatically enroll in the school in the appropriate grade the following year.