

# The Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom PCS



Strategic Plan 2017-2023

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# Executive Summary



# Executive Summary

- Located in Washington, DC, The Elsie Whitlow Stokes Community Freedom Public Charter School (**Stokes School**) is a single-site language immersion charter school that **serves ~350 PK-5 students** and a diverse group of families.
- We prepare culturally diverse elementary school students to be **leaders, scholars, and responsible citizens who are committed to social justice**. Stokes school accomplishes this by creating an environment of achievement, respect, and non-violence.
- **Our model has proven successful and sustainable**: Stokes School has operated since 1998, and our students outperform their peers in Washington, DC traditional and public charter schools.
- There is a **shortage of high-quality seats in Washington, DC public schools**, particularly in areas “east of the river.”
- Our goal is to **broaden Stokes School’s impact** by increasing the number of students, families, and communities we serve.
- **We plan grow into a network** that will serve **750 students in Washington, DC** on two PK-5 campuses.
- We are **approaching growth strategically**, with a focus on **quality**, enabled by strong school leadership and support from families and the larger community.



# Who We Are



# Our school honors educator Elsie Whitlow Stokes

Linda Moore founded our school in September 1998 and named the school after her mother, Elsie Whitlow Stokes, an elementary teacher in Arkansas for 36 years. Erika Bryant, the granddaughter of Mrs. Stokes, is the current Executive Director.

During her career, Elsie Whitlow Stokes applied three basic principles:

- Every student can succeed academically and become a responsible citizen.
- Every student needs a solid foundation in reading, mathematics, social studies, science, and the arts.
- Every student can contribute to the community through service activities that prepare that student to become a caring neighbor and responsible citizen.



# Our school anchors on our mission, vision, and core values

## Our mission

To prepare culturally diverse elementary school students to be **leaders, scholars, and responsible citizens who are committed to social justice**. Stokes School teaches students to **think, speak, read, write, and learn in two languages**: English and French and English and Spanish. With a dual focus on **academic excellence and community service**, Stokes School accomplishes this mission by creating an environment of achievement, respect, and non-violence.

## Our vision

To be recognized, respected, and emulated as a **premier model of urban education in the United States**.

## Our core values

- Integrity
- Diversity
- Creativity
- Service
- Community
- Respect
- Enthusiasm for Learning
- Compassionate Leadership

# Our students, staff, and community live out our three school rules

**I Will Take Care  
of Myself**

**Je Prends Soin de  
Moi-Même**

**Me cuidaré**

**I Will Take Care  
of Others**

**Je Prends Soin  
des Autres**

**Cuidaré  
a otros**

**I Will Take Care  
of My Community**

**Je Prends Soin de  
Ma Communauté**

**Cuidaré  
de Mi Comunidad**



# Over the past 19 years, we have grown to serve 350 students with quality

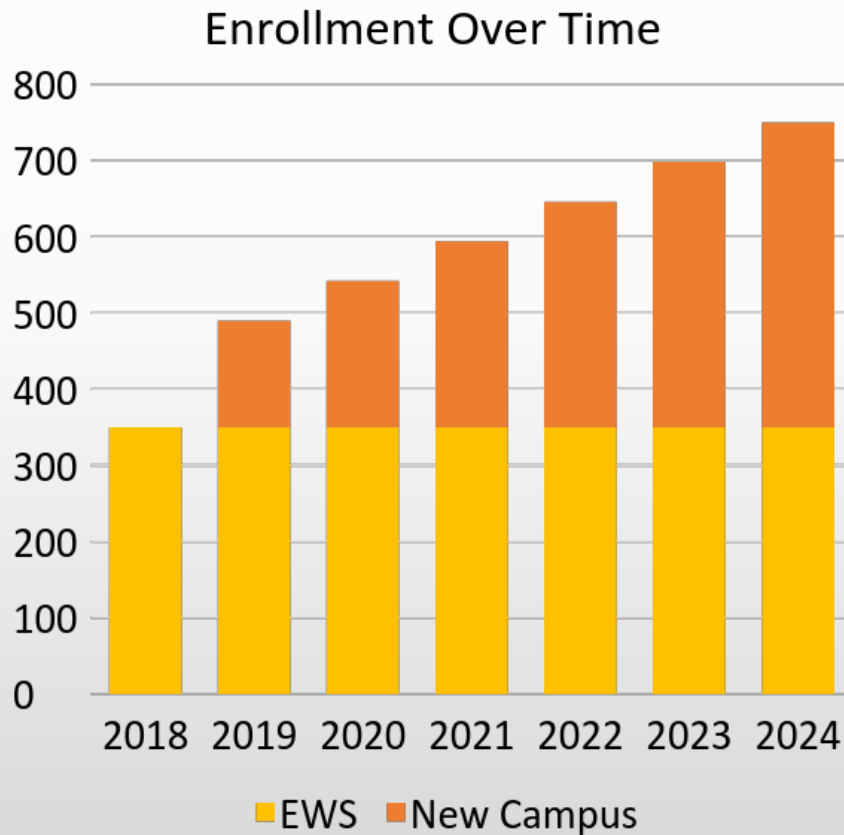
1998	Stokes opens to serve <b>35 kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade students</b> in the <b>basement of St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church (NW)</b>
2002	At <b>250 students</b> , Stokes has outgrown its original location and <b>moves to 16th and Park (NW)</b>
2008	Stokes purchases its <b>current building in Brookland (NE)</b> , gaining access to a music and art room, library, turf field, two playgrounds, and a garden while also allowing for <b>expanded enrollment of 350</b>
2014	Stokes joins four other language immersion charters to <b>create the District of Columbia International School (DCIS)</b> , providing 1400 6-12 <sup>th</sup> grade students with a rigorous academic program that incorporates language and cultural immersion experiences
2016	The history of excellence at Stokes continues as the school is <b>designated a Tier 1 school by the DC Public Charter School Board</b> , the board's highest designation

**Stokes School is the only French and Spanish language immersion charter school in the District and was one of the first charter schools overall**

# Plans for Growth



# We plan to scale our strong model and outcomes to serve more students



**In 2018-19, Stokes will open a second school with 140 Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten students**

**By 2024, Stokes will more than double the number of students served and will bring its vibrant, successful academic model to DC's most high-need communities**

# Our decision to replicate has clear purpose and community support

## DRIVERS OF GROWTH

- **Higher demand for Stokes School** than we can accommodate
- **Higher demand for language immersion programs and high-performing seats** than DCPS / DC PCS provides
- Desire to provide **career and growth opportunities** for staff and faculty
- Desire to demonstrate **replicability of our unique model**

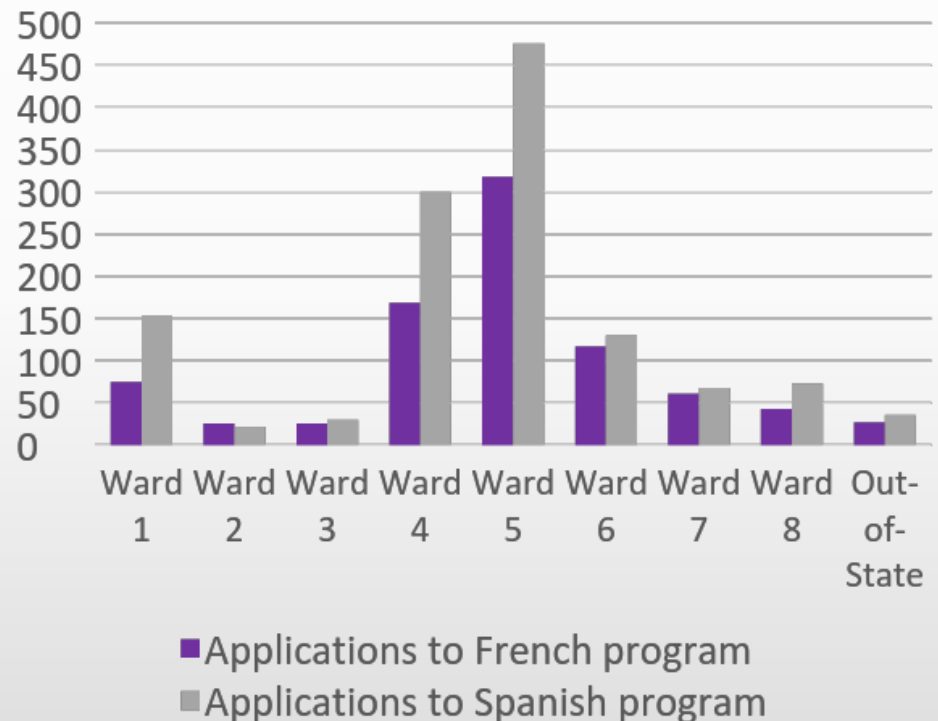
## OUR GOAL

To prepare **significantly more students** to be leaders, scholars, and responsible citizens who are committed to social justice **through an additional school and through the example we set for others**

# There is clear demand for the Stokes School model from families

- **246 Pre-K students were placed on a waitlist in 2016** after listing Stokes as their first-choice school.
- **Open houses and tours are consistently full**, despite the low likelihood of acceptance without one of the legal preferences.

Applications to Stokes via DC Lottery  
as of March 2017



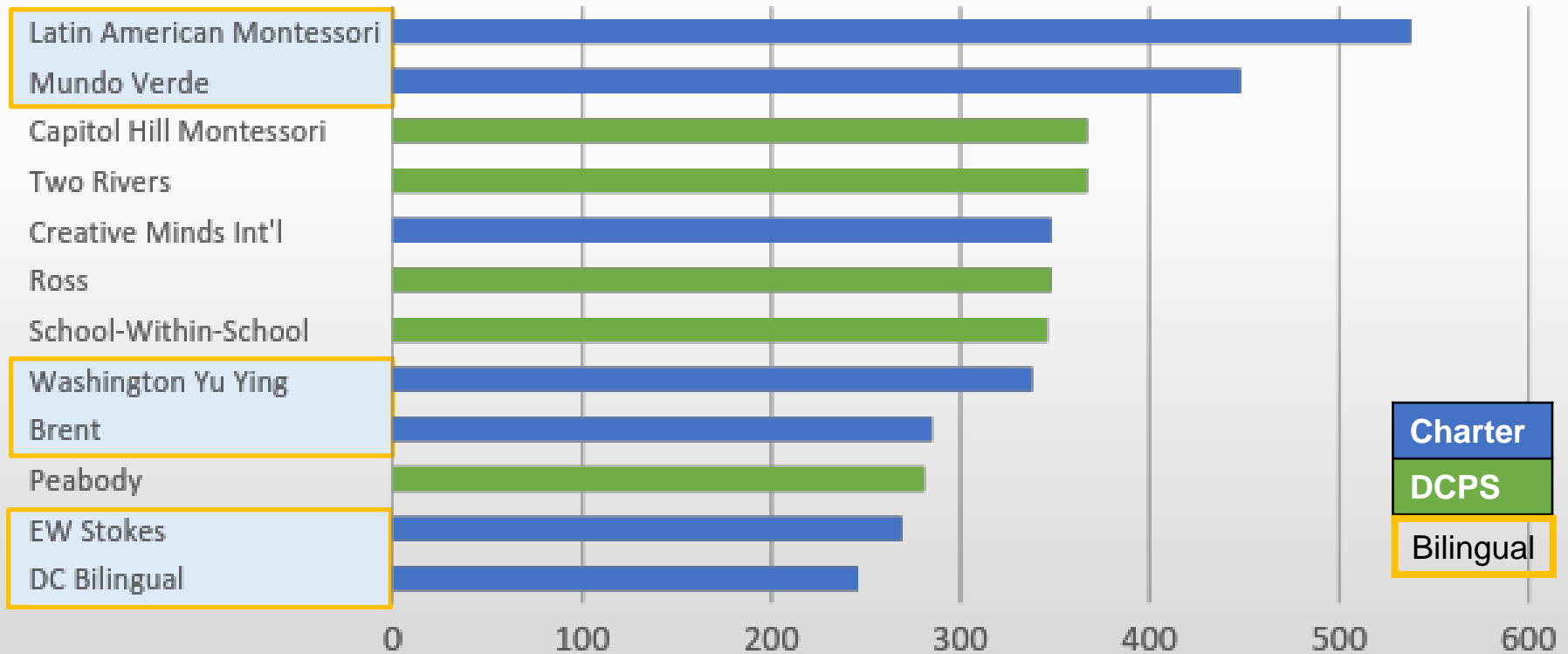
**Demand for Stokes spikes near its current location (Ward 5), but demand spans the city**



# Families across DC have demonstrated demand for dual-language programs

7 of the 12 most in-demand PK3 programs are charters, and 5 of the 12 are dual-language programs

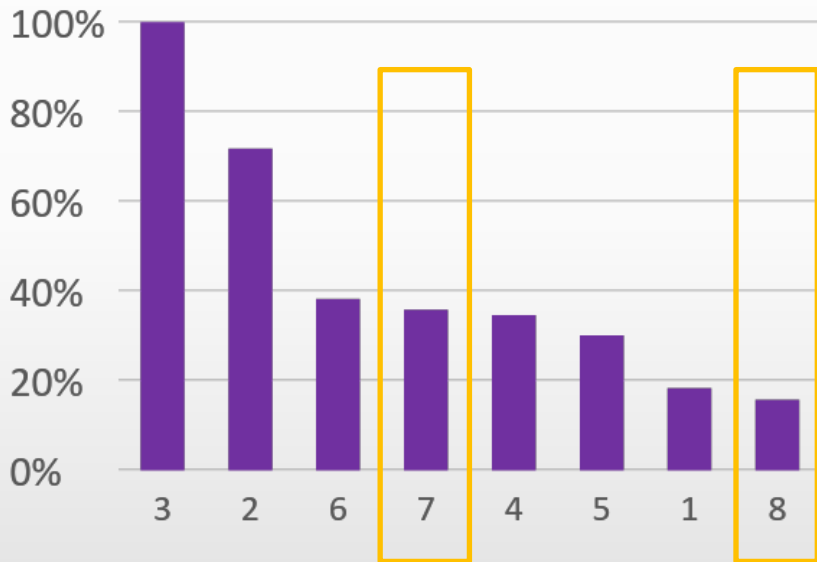
Longest PK3 wait lists, 2016



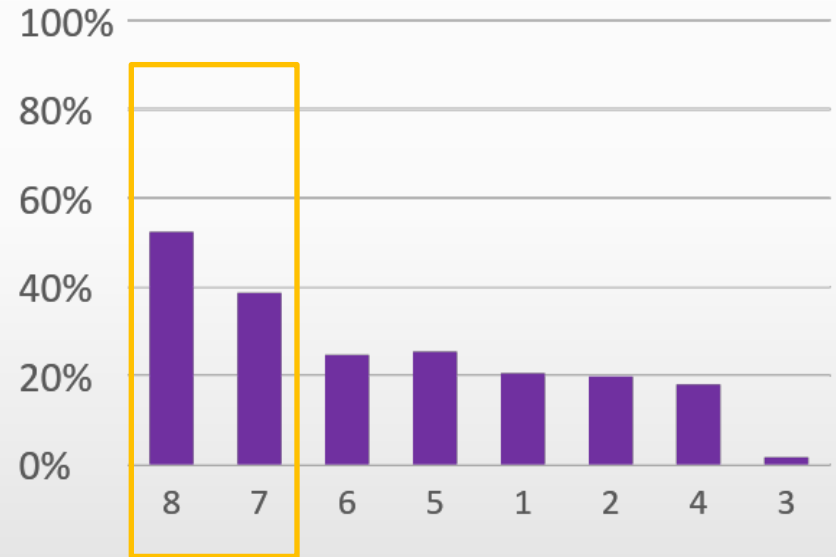
Source: <https://ggwash.org/view/38406/education-in-multiple-languages-gives-kids-a-big-boost-which-means-high-demand-for-dcs-programs>

# Stokes seeks to expand to Ward 7/8, bringing high-quality seats to an area in need

% High-Quality PK-8 Seats by Ward, 2016



% Children in Poverty by Ward



**Wards 7 and 8 have among the lowest percentages of high-quality seats and the highest percentages of children in poverty**

Sources: PK seat quality based on PMF, ESEA and occupancy data. Children in poverty data from: [datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/6748-child-poverty-by-ward?loc=10&loct=3#detailed/21/1852-1859/false/573,869,36,868,867/any/13834](https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/6748-child-poverty-by-ward?loc=10&loct=3#detailed/21/1852-1859/false/573,869,36,868,867/any/13834)

# Despite a complex charter landscape in Wards 7 and 8, we see evidence of interest in Stokes

	Ward 7		Ward 8		
	DCPS	Charter	DCPS	Charter	
% K-12 share	57%	43%	50%	50%	Charters have a <b>significant share...</b>
% PK-8 high-quality enrollment*	0%	36%	4%	12%	...and provide <b>greater percentage of high-quality seats</b> (though overall quality is low)...

EW Stokes navigates this complex landscape by:

- Bringing high-quality seats to Wards where quality is lacking
- Providing language immersion in Wards where this is not currently widely available
- Engaging parents and community members to build relationships and gauge demand

# Strategies for Success & Implementation Plans



# Our Theory of Action will guide our focus over the next several years

## *Current Situation*

Stokes operates a 19 year old single-site language immersion elementary school that has a well established academic and financial track record.

Stokes has a unique community and culture that is highly regarded throughout DC and the nation.

Admission to Stokes is in very high demand yet available spaces are extremely limited.

Families, education and community leaders in DC have expressed interest in bringing language immersion schools to areas “East of the River.”

## **Theory of Action: Impact Drivers**

1

Broaden impact by increasing the number of students, families and communities who are served by Stokes School

2

Establish an operational model that allows for replication and adherence to the school the mission while maintaining the culture

3

Engage appropriate stakeholders in support of both campuses

4

Broaden the faculty/staff pipeline and professional development programs

5

Monitor and evaluate performance outcomes to ensure continuous improvement

## *Intended Impact*

Stokes will provide high-quality language immersion education and global citizenship preparation for diverse PreK- 5th grade students.

Beginning SY2018-19, Stokes will serve students on two campuses in DC, growing to 750 students by 2023

100% of Scholars will speak, read, write and learn in two languages: English and French or Spanish in a learning environment of achievement, respect and non-violence.



# Our strategic priorities reinforce our three school rules



**1. We will take care of ourselves**

**1A** *Support Success of Our Learners*

**1B** *Build Pathways and Supports for Our Educators*



**2. We will take care of others**

**2A** *Build Beautiful Plumbing For a Growing Network*



**3. We will take care of our community**

**3A** *Engage Our Neighbors*

# Support Success of Our Learners

In service to our mission, Stokes School prioritizes the ongoing support of our learning community that develops all of its members in justice and wellness.

## Core initiatives

- Replicate to support the success of additional learners
- Secure IB authorization
- Maintain exemplary status in all academic accountability categories
- Build out and codify service learning approach
- Nurture strong school culture on each campus

## Metrics

- Full IB authorization
- Growth and performance on standardized tests, DCPS, OSSE performance frameworks for school quality
- Parent Satisfaction surveys
- School Culture surveys

# Build Pathways and Supports for Our Educators

Growing our model requires the support of strong educators and staff who drive student learning, build school culture, and nurture community.

## Core initiatives

- Strengthen teacher pipelines by expanding participation in high quality teacher in-service training programs
- Fully align staff professional development opportunities with both staff aspirations and institutional needs
- Develop and implement a comprehensive plan to recruit, support, and maintain excellent teachers and staff
- Develop board and staff leadership succession plans

## Metrics

- Staff retention and attrition
- Staff Satisfaction surveys
- Recruitment yield data

# Build Beautiful Plumbing For a Growing Network

In pursuit of our vision, Stokes School prioritizes the support of the often hidden aspects of sustainable excellence in a school.

## Core initiatives

- Implement student recruitment strategies to attract a diverse pool of applicants across campuses
- Put plans in place to ensure sustainable financial stewardship
- Diversify and fortify funding streams and strategies to fuel growth
- Strengthen IT, maintenance, and food service infrastructure within the context of growth

## Metrics

- Reach 100% of enrollment targets for each year of growth (enrollment ceiling of 750 at both campuses by 2023-24)
- Positive annual financial reports (audits)

# Engage Our Neighbors

In keeping with our focus on community, Stokes School prioritizes the engagement of appropriate stakeholders in support of both campuses and sharing our model.

## Core initiatives

- Continue and expand partnerships with corporate, non-profit and government partner organizations
- Continue and expand partnerships with local schools and universities
- Establish partnerships with community based organizations in neighborhoods “east of the river”
- Codify and demonstrate approaches to language immersion, co-teaching, wellness, etc. to share our model

## Metrics

- Number of new high-quality partnerships
- Number of partnerships renewed year over year



# Our 5-Year Implementation Plan

Strategic Pillar	2017 (Year 1)	2018 (Year 2)	2019 (Year 3)	2020 (Year 4)	2021 (Year 5)
Support success of our learners	Replicate to support the success of additional learners				
		Secure IB authorization			
			Codify service learning approach		
	Maintain exemplary status in all academic accountability categories				
	Nurture strong school culture on each campus				
Build pathways and supports for our educators	Expand participation in teacher training programs				
		Align professional development opportunities			
		Develop recruitment and retention plan			
	Develop board and staff leadership succession plans				
Build Beautiful Plumbing For a Growing Network	Implement student recruitment strategy				
	Diversify funding streams for growth				
	Strengthen infrastructure for growth				
	Plan for financial sustainability and stewardship				
Engage Our Neighbors	Establish community - based partnerships “east of the river”	Continue and expand partnerships with schools and universities			
		Continue and expand corporate and government partnerships			
			Codify and demonstrate immersion, co-teaching and wellness models		

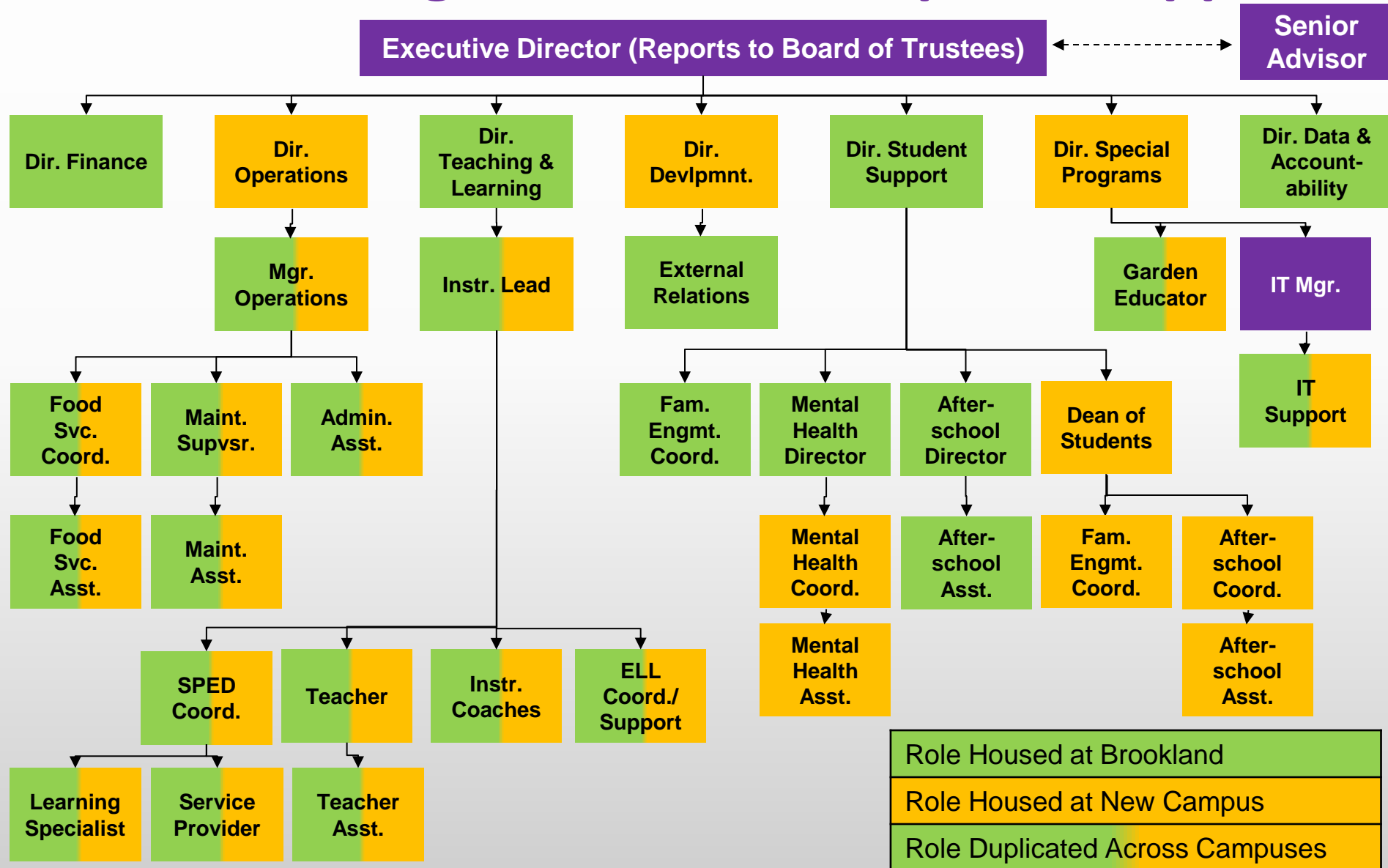
# Our Organizational Structure



# Our organizational design supports collaboration across campuses

- In order to ensure high-quality replication and support culture-building at our new campus, **key network staff will be located across our two campuses.**
- Regardless of their location, **network-level staff will work in a coordinated way** to ensure both campuses run smoothly.
- From the beginning of the plan, a **Campus Director will be the key point of contact for parents and community members**, allowing the Instructional Lead a continued focus on teaching and learning.

# Our 2022 structure equips each campus with on-the-ground leadership and support



# The Stokes School seeks space that will support our unique model

Facility wish list	Rationale
Green space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To continue EWS model's focus on gardening and to provide a safe outdoor space for student recreation</li> </ul>
Commercial kitchen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To continue EWS's current well-received food service program</li> </ul>
Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To cultivate a love of reading and to give students the ability to research topics of interest</li> </ul>
Larger classrooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To accommodate students better and provide space for in-classroom activities</li> </ul>
Accessibility to public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To enable students/ families to easily attend school; this is especially important given the demographics that EWS will be targeting in its expansion</li> </ul>
No major thoroughfares	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that students do not need to cross through major traffic zones in order to attend school, and to promote overall safety</li> </ul>
Gym (incl. showers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide space for physical activity and to promote good hygiene</li> </ul>
Staff lounge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To give staff an exclusive space to relax and rejuvenate in order to be better able to serve students</li> </ul>
Conference space with accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that visit visiting experts, and teachers can attend on-site observations and trainings</li> <li>To make it possible to start a student teacher residence fellowship</li> <li>To provide emergency short-term housing for students/ families and/ or teachers from overseas</li> </ul>
Acreage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To host a science camp open to not just EWS students but also students from other schools</li> </ul>