

**SUBJECT**

Idaho Connects Online Proposed Charter Amendments

**APPLICABLE STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY**

I.C. §33-5206(8)  
IDAPA 08.02.04.302

**BACKGROUND**

Idaho Connects Online (ICON) is a virtual public charter school authorized by the Public Charter School Commission (PCSC). Headquartered in Boise, and serving students statewide, ICON recently completed its fourth year of operations. In 2011, the school changed curriculum providers from Kaplan to Odysseyware. ICON served approximately 200 students in FY13.

**DISCUSSION**

ICON has submitted a written proposal for amendments to several sections of the charter.

The proposed amendments affect Tabs 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7, and are focused on updating and adding language to include an alternative school program within ICON's charter. ICON has provided a cover letter that provides an overview of the key revisions in each of these sections.

The most significant proposed revisions are those pertaining to the school's educational program described in Tab 3. ICON has added and revised language to encompass and differentiate the components of both their general and alternative school programs.

ICON was initially approved by the SDE to operate a Summer Alternative School Program in 2010 and a regular Alternative School program for school year 2010-2011. ICON has operated Alternative School programs consistently since initial approval, and has a 2013-2014 application pending based on the PCSC's decision regarding these proposed amendments to the school's charter.

**IMPACT**

If the PCSC approves the proposed amendments, ICON will immediately begin operating under the amended charter. If the PCSC denies the amendments, ICON could appeal this decision to the State Board of Education, or could decide not to proceed any further.

**STAFF COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Staff recommends approval of the proposed charter amendments as submitted by Idaho Connects Online (ICON).

**COMMISSION ACTION**

A motion to approve the proposed charter amendments as submitted by Idaho Connects Online (ICON).

OR

A motion to deny the proposed charter amendments as submitted by Idaho Connects Online (ICON) on the following grounds: \_\_\_\_\_.

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_ Seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ Carried Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

**August 15, 2013**

Idaho Virtual Education Partners  
Vickie McCullough

Idaho Connects Online School  
12639 W. Explorer Drive Suite 185  
Boise, Idaho 83713

July 22, 2013

Idaho Public Charter School Commission  
650 W. State Street  
Boise, Idaho 83702

Hello,

Please find attached a copy of the requested changes that IVEP/ICON is currently proposing for our Charter. During the 12-13 school year, approximately 50% of the school's population met the definition of At-Risk Youth as defined by IDAPA for Alternative Secondary Programs. In order to further support the instruction of these students we propose that ICON be allowed to operate an Alternative School in addition to the school that we currently provide for our general population. You will find in the following proposals in our charter:

- A Tab 2 addition under Facilities that details operation of the school for the general school population and the school for the at-risk population.
- A Tab 3 drill down in the areas of Program Support, Staffing and Student-Teacher Interaction, Plan for Low Achieving Students, High School Graduation Requirements, Standard E to include Professional Technical Courses, Plan for Special Education Services, and Participation in Dual Enrollment
- A Tab 4 addition for course enrollment offerings in the MSES to include the additional of professional technical education courses and additional accreditation information for the alternative school,
- A Tab 6 addition for staffing,
- A Tab 7 addition for the enrollment and identification for the at-risk students.

You will also note that there a couple of instances where old Kaplan language had not been cleared up and we are requesting changes to revert from KAID/IVEP to ICON/IVEP and/or Odysseyware. The format is in legislative format with any proposed changed in red font for ease of viewing.

It is important to note that we anticipate further updates to the charter as it relates to Measurable Student Education Standards to work in compliance with the Star Rating System and our Performance Certificates. Due to the time frame for Alternative School Status that is being requested for the 13-14 school year, we did not undertake the MSES at this time. We do believe that it will need additional time and due diligence to bring forth the best proposed changes.

Sincerely,

  
Vickie McCullough

## TAB 2 PROPOSED OPERATION AND POTENTIAL EFFECTS OF THE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

IVEP anticipates a number of effects arising from ICON that serve to benefit Idaho's students and educational landscape. The uneven geography of school funding is overcome by virtual delivery of courses to remote areas where students have no local access to certain courses they need or prefer. These can be high-level academic courses, foreign language courses, or elective courses that match a student's interests and aptitudes.

Members of Idaho's certified teaching corps will benefit from a new and very marketable skill set they will acquire in their ICON training to become online instructors. We discuss this comprehensive training regimen in Tab 3, Section D.

IVEP believes that in offering to student's instruction that is more individualized and flexibly paced than what they previously experienced; ICON can re-engage learners who have become resigned to low performance based on patterns of past setbacks. This is just one example of how the school offers a fresh alternative to students who have struggled in the regular classroom. The virtual environment is uniquely conducive to learning in that it creates just enough anonymity to mask superficial differences, for example in appearance, lifestyle, demeanor, and real or perceived socioeconomic status. The virtual school does not become an incubator for petty social alliances and conflicts based on in-groups/out-groups, prejudices, or peer pressure. Being largely free of such distractions, the virtual student can better focus on academic tasks, and the virtual school can better attend to its academic mission. In this environment, students can learn and teachers can instruct free from the biases of their past educational experiences. This learning climate sets the stage for ICON to deliver standards-based curriculum and assessment regime while also building a networked community of learners focused on 21st century skills.

### A. Facilities

ICON will operate as a virtual school. Due to the number of at-risk students that are currently enrolled in the school, ICON will also operate an alternative school as identified and outlined in IDAPA Rules for Alternative Secondary Programs. This will be in addition to the school for regular education students that ICON currently operates. As such, minimal facility usage is required. ICON will maintain a central administrative office where important student and personnel records will be maintained. The virtual charter school is designed to operate independently of any facility. Using a secure login and password, students will be able to connect to all aspects of the program from any computer with Internet access. ICON will provide students with a fully configured laptop computer and will provide families with a stipend for standard broadband connectivity expenses.

### B. Administrative Services

ICON will be operated by IVEP and governed by the IVEP Board of Directors as described in this charter petition. ICON's Executive Director will be the IVEP employee having lead responsibility for administering the school under policies and directives issued by the IVEP Board.

IVEP anticipates that it will contract with Odysseyware for the provision of educational services. These include instructional program deployment and development (including curriculum and technology); the specific terms and cost for these services will be the subject of an annual operational agreement or memorandum of understanding between IVEP and Odysseyware.

## TAB 3 EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM AND GOALS

### C. Program Design and Approach

The Odysseyware curriculum aims to inspire students to learn through its course design and rich interactive elements. The virtual courses are conceived and designed by Odysseyware's curriculum specialists. This team is tasked with creating online courses that are research-based in design, leverage full Internet and multimedia technologies, and address the needs of diverse learners, and are aligned to state content standards. The primary goals are to expand learning opportunities, improve student outcomes, and empower students to manage their own learning programs. These goals drive the key objectives that guide content creation, design, and delivery: accessibility for all students; flexible pacing; multiple opportunities to achieve and demonstrate mastery; and development of a student-centered curriculum that is continually improved through research and iterative evaluations that guide refinements to its design and delivery.

Odysseyware's courses, built on research-based online instructional strategies and learning models, use rich interactive and multimedia elements to capture students' attention, keep them engaged in the lesson, and help them grasp difficult concepts and processes. These strategies and elements include:

- Standard lesson elements include an introduction/anticipatory set, objectives, vocabulary, direct instruction, guided practice, closure, and independent practice.
- "Show me" activities to demonstrate concepts.
- Links to other internet resources to build knowledge and bridge understanding across disciplines.
- Enrichment activities to encourage further learning and deeper understanding.
- Videos and simulations: students can see a complex process as it unfolds, with each interaction moving seamlessly into the next, with text explanations and captions/labels, and audio support. This greatly aids students in learning the complex processes often encountered in the sciences (having multiple stages, layers of information, and outcomes) that are difficult to learn when portrayed through narrative and graphics alone. Odysseyware also offer a text-to-speech option that provides each student the ability to control the amount of material to be read, the voice used, and reading speed. Odysseyware also offers a reference tool that allows students to select individual words, names and phrases in the text and receive immediate reference information (i.e. definitions and/or background information).
- Interactive Gizmos where students manipulate parameters of a problem (such as variables in an algebraic function) and see the resulting effects in multiple presentation modes (algebraic, tabular, and graphical).

In addition, core courses will contain Instructional Strategies at the Unit level for teachers to use with Honors, Academic, and Foundations (Remedial), ELL students, and Special Education, as well as assignments tailored to these student groups. ELL strategies will be included in all course versions (Foundations, Academic, and Honors), and will support student learning of unit concepts. ICON will offer courses in accordance with IDAPA Rules for Alternative Secondary Programs for the Alternative School and will offer professional technical programs in Information Technology, Business Management and Administration, Human Services, Health Sciences, and Hospitality and Tourism. In addition, ICON will offer elective courses in Personal and Family Living, Drop Out Prevention, and Introduction to Careers. ICON has access to these online courses through the Odysseyware platform.

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Structurally, courses are divided into modules, units, and lessons. Each module and unit contains an essential idea or “big picture” concept with accompanying performance expectations and a teacher-graded assignment. Modules pose an essential question to the student that connects the content to larger conceptual understandings and to real world application. Units outline a central idea that spans all the lesson objectives for that unit, forming relationships among the lessons and their objectives. The essential question and central idea are introduced to the student at the beginning of the module and unit.

The core courses cover all the essential subject divisions within each of these academic areas: language arts, mathematics, history/social science, physical sciences, and life sciences. The school will also offer an array of electives reflecting a wide range of student interests, including communications and the professions (e.g., journalism, psychology); fine arts studies; liberal arts (including foreign language); computer technology; practical skills (health, personal finance); and career-oriented courses that focus on real-life experiences. Odysseyware’s middle and high school course listings are attached as Exhibit D. The Odysseyware Curriculum also offers placement tests to ensure that students are placed in the right course for their educational needs.

The curriculum will support improved student achievement by providing standards-aligned learning activities, continuous monitoring and feedback on student progress, and frequent assessments. The curriculum is aligned to Idaho content standards, and is designed with differentiated assignment types that afford students varied ways to demonstrate mastery of content.

The petitioners believe that in offering this educational program, governed by IVEP and deployed with Odysseyware’s online instructional resources, the charter school will provide an optimal learning environment for:

- Promoting higher levels of engagement through a highly individualized and supportive academic coaching model, and courses designed to capture and maintain student focus (for example by limiting text-per-page and incorporating graphics, embedded video, glossaries, and hyperlinks).
- Motivating students via real-time data and self-pacing guides; quick turnaround on graded assignments; and multiple avenues for interaction between learner/teacher, learner/content, learner/learner, and teacher/parent.
- Using data-driven protocols to ensure that students stay on pace, demonstrate progress, and ultimately achieve mastery of content. This is enabled by the data tracking and reporting functions of the LMS. The LMS collects student data and generates reports in a protocol that is updated daily to track progress and pace. The faculty has the performance data needed to know when to step in with timely inquiries and appropriate interventions (such as a parent conference, or a lesson adjustment to better accommodate the student’s learning style) The Odysseyware Curriculum also offers the teacher the ability to customize the courses. This allows the teacher the ability to create assignments appropriate to student needs. Teachers can also assign, skip, or block assignments within the courses in order to address the needs to individual student s or groups of students as a whole.
- Balancing the unique advantages of traditional and virtual classroom approaches. For example, some courses incorporate traditional writing essays, and the learning platform is unit based, so that courses proceed in unit modules – much as they do in a physical classroom. Courses are gated so that students proceed in an academically structural manner to garner the essential skills for use in future lessons. At the same time, the virtual classroom replaces the textbook-driven curriculum with a “living text” where content and delivery are continuously improved, via ongoing research, to optimize their educational value.

## D. Academic Instruction and Support

### Staffing Structure

ICON will employ a layered instructional approach. Each student receives individualized support from an academic team that ~~includes Academic Department Chairpersons, the ICON School Coach, Instructors and Academic-Advisors Home Based Advisors.~~ Students in the Alternative School will also have access to a certified School Physiologist. The Department Chairperson manages the department and provides leadership in the development of goals and quality instruction within each subject area department. The ICON School Coach guides the student in planning their path through school and beyond. They make sure that students are on the right track toward graduation for both their personal and credit needs. Checking in regularly with students, they provide guidance and resources for exploring life goals and career interests. Instructors work directly with students by answering their questions, explaining concepts and techniques as necessary, adjusting lessons and assignments as needed, and monitoring student pace. ~~Academic-Advisors- Home Based Advisors encourage student achievement through mentoring and support, for example by helping students plan for their academic future and success, navigate the online system, understand school policies and protocols, and plan their class schedules and course sequencing.~~ are the first lines of support from enrollment to graduation. This support is both academic and personal. Home Based Advisors get to know their students and families through weekly phone calls, email, and other communication such as weekly progress reports that shows grade and progress toward end of course completion. They also act as advocates for their students such as working with classroom teachers, and keeping students informed about deadlines, events, and ICON requirements. The School Psychologist assists students with school concerns, such as motivation and goal-setting. They also help students deal with personal or family issues that cause stress or concern, including mental health issues, substance abuse, and grief and loss issues. They can also provide referrals; help connect students with resources in their own communities, and counsel students during times of need. As noted in Tab 6, ICON teachers in all of the core subjects – English/language arts, mathematics, science, and history/social science – will meet NCLB's highly qualified standards.

### Student-Teacher Interaction

The teaching model fosters quality interaction between students and the academic team. Opportunities for one-on-one contact include communication through Instant Message, Skype, email, Odysseyware Messaging, individual student/teacher phone calls, teacher/parent phone conferences, ~~academic advisor phone conferences with parents and/or students; academic team phone conferences (these include parents and student);~~ and individual student/teacher “whiteboard” sessions. These synchronous sessions can also be conducted with groups of students. The at-risk learner in the Alternative School is offered at a minimum an hour per day of direct instruction in the “whiteboard” sessions for their core courses. These are offered at a variety of times to choose from, both within the regular school day and into the evening. Sessions can also be recorded so that students have the opportunity to view the recording if not able to attend. The at-risk student in the Alternative School will also have access to ICON Instructional Support Rooms where students can join an ICON certified teacher who provides “at the elbow” support to students needing extra help or who are having difficulty.

In addition to lesson-related “contact” assignments that are part of every course, students are required to initiate one direct communication with each of their online Instructors on a weekly basis. Direct communication includes phone, email, or instant message. The Odysseyware LMS uses a built in message center that allows for instant help access to the teacher and a built in email system only used for teacher/student interaction.

In addition to the lesson contact and weekly required contact, teachers are required to contact each

student at least twice monthly, via phone call or instant message, for academic review and assistance purposes. For a student taking six classes, this translates to twelve such sessions per month. Instructors are also expected to initiate contact if there are signs of a student falling behind pace, as indicated by the tracking functions of the LMS.

Instructors are required to return e-mail and phone calls within 24 hours; deliver grades for tests and assignments within 48 hours of submission; and take full advantage of the communication tools and protocols described above. The ~~Department Chairperson~~ [Executive Director](#) coordinates the student's academic team to ensure that these communication protocols are being followed and that student's needs are being identified and addressed.

In the flexible, student-driven virtual environment, "quality" interaction means skillful and appropriate to individual learner needs, and therefore relies on factors that go beyond lesson planning or required contact policies. It begins with how teachers are trained for interaction in the online environment.

With the Odysseyware Training Package, the school Executive Director (ED) and all faculty undergo three days of training on-site. The format is part instruction and part interactive exercises that enable attendees to learn the concepts and procedures through actual practice. Additional training is also provided through the year for 18 additional hours of webinar training based upon school needs.

In addition to the formal training module that teaches navigation and use of the LMS, all faculty have access to demonstration courses that are very similar to what students experience when they log in and navigate the system. The teacher can experience firsthand what students will see when they are working through and completing ICON courses.

The petitioners wish to emphasize that the ICON "trainees" will be Idaho-certified teachers who already possess more than a baseline level of proficiency and experience. That, combined with the new training they will receive at ICON, will enable them to become the skilled, responsive online teachers we describe under the subheading [Translating Information into Actionable Strategies for Online Teaching](#) in Tab 4, Section E.

## **Plan for Students Who Are Academically Low Achieving**

### **Identifying and Understanding Low Achievers**

ICON's instructional team is prepared to work with a diverse student population, and to focus intensively on those who struggle academically and perform below expectations. [ICON recognizes that a significant component of low achieving or at-risk students may express an interest in and seek out opportunities to participate in professional technical educational opportunities. Students are defined as at-risk through the Enrollment and Orientation process in accordance with IDAPA Rules for Alternative Secondary Programs. Once identified, each at-risk student is assigned a Home Based Advisor, a School Psychologist, as well as, an ICON School Coach.](#)

The petitioners understand that students can find themselves struggling for a variety of reasons. Some have difficulty staying on task; others have become accustomed and resigned to lowered expectations based on a pattern of past setbacks (to give just two examples).

These students will be identified through placement tests, past performance as recorded on transcripts; [rubrics for identifying at-risk students as defined in IDAPA Rules for Alternative Secondary Programs](#), discussions with parents and previous counselors; IEPs; student assessments; writing samples; and ongoing one-on-one communication between teacher and student. ICON teachers will use

this information to proactively support students and address individual needs before more intensive intervention efforts are required.

### **Structural Elements and Strategic Responses for Raising Student Achievement Levels**

To meet the challenges faced by struggling students, instructors will offer placement in appropriate courses based upon student need including core, elective, professional technical and work based courses as appropriate, continuous motivation and support; seek ways to engage students in meaningful learning through multiple delivery methods; and work one-on-one with students and parents in various ways. These include individual student/teacher calls, teacher/parent phone conferences, academic team phone conferences (these include parents and student); and individual student/teacher “whiteboard” sessions. Where needed, instructors or advisors will also provide individual tutoring.

While all students can benefit from the flexible pacing inherent in the school’s virtual program, struggling students in particular will benefit from a curriculum that does not mandate that all students demonstrate their knowledge and skills in identical ways or at identical times. Instruction is designed around a variety of graded assignments that afford students varied ways to demonstrate mastery of content. These include class discussions; worksheets; practice assignments; quizzes; journals; essays; creative writing papers; research projects; group projects; exams; reviews/case studies; and portfolio pieces, in addition to the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT).

Along with this range of assignments, the program provides teachers with varied instructional suggestions to help different students master the material, each created to address different learning styles and levels of challenge. By drawing upon this menu of strategies and assignments to build a student’s individual learning plan, teachers can provide comprehensive learning experiences tailored to each student’s needs.

Modified instructional design and delivery adapted to the needs of low achievers will also emerge from the data-driven changes to instruction that is discussed under Tab 4 below.

Some additional ways in which the virtual classroom is geared to accommodate each student’s singular needs and learning style are:

- individual support from a team of academic professionals: department chairpersons, instructors, and academic advisors;
- multimedia format that accommodates differences in knowledge acquisition by delivering mutually redundant/reinforcing text, visual, and audio content;
- hyperlinks providing immediate web access to reference materials and context sources;
- prompt response and feedback on graded assignments;
- the ability of students to check grades and track their progress (and retrieve all course submissions to read instructor comments) via the Grade book interface described in B.3) below;
- multiple avenues for frequent one-on-one contact between teacher and student, including synchronous whiteboard sessions, but also asynchronous e-text modes that afford the extra time for reflection and revision that helps level the playing field for certain types of learners;
- the ability to balance or choose between highly independent and collaborative modes of working on some assignments;
- the de-coupling of curriculum breadth from district resources derived from local tax revenue. This enables all students, wherever they are situated, to access any course they need ranging from remedial to AP and honors.

**E. School Grading Policy and High School Graduation Requirements**

**High School Graduation Requirements**

ICON graduation requirements shall meet or exceed the new Idaho requirements for students entering the 9th grade in the fall of 2009 and later, as set forth in IDAPA 08.02.03. All graduating students will have:

- completed a minimum of forty-six (46) semester credits [in Academic Subjects, Elective, and approved work-based learning experiences](#);
- achieved a proficient or advanced score on the ISAT;
- sat for the COMPASS, ACT or SAT before the end of 11th grade; and
- completed a senior project (to include a research paper and oral presentation via webcam and other technology tools) by the end of 12th grade.

The following table summarizes ICON's program with respect to course requirements in conformance with IDAPA:

Subject Area	Minimum Credits	Required Configuration
English/Language Arts/Communication	9	To include four year of English instruction and 1 credit in Communications, with both subject constituted to meet the additional requirements of IDAPA 00.02.03.107.03
Mathematics	6	To include 2 semesters Algebra 1 and 2 semesters Geometry or state approved equivalents, plus 2 credits elective math. Two, of the six credits to be taken in the last year of high school.
Science	6	To include instruction in each area: *Biology *Physical Sciences or Chemistry, and Earth, Space, Environment, or approved Applied Science. Four credits shall be laboratory based.
Social Studies	5	To include government ( 2 credits), U.S. History (2 credits), and economics (1 credit). Current world affairs and geography to be integrated into all social studies instruction. Geography, sociology, world affairs, and world history course will not count toward the social studies requirement.
Humanities	2	Can be satisfied by a course in interdisciplinary humanities, visual and performing arts, or world language. Certain other course may satisfy if they meet

		conditions specified in IDAPA 08.02.03.107.07
Health/Wellness	1	
Other Electives	17	To include mandatory Senior Project, Foreign Language is strongly encouraged

**F. Goals in Fulfillment of Educational Thoroughness Standards**

**Standard B: Educators are empowered to maintain classroom discipline.**

Goal: Create a positive teaching and learning environment with an emphasis on high expectations of behavior and performance.

Objectives: ICON will:

- Support teachers by asking prospective students and parents to consider the level of commitment needed to succeed in virtual learning before they make a final decision on school choice. Students and their parents will be asked to sign voluntary commitment agreements upon enrollment. (In no instance will a student be refused admission nor subjected to any form of discipline because of a parent’s failure to sign or comply with the parent commitment agreement.)
- Make students aware that they are not passively situated in a learning climate, but rather they help generate that climate through their engagement, interaction, and commitment. The school will begin on a strong footing due to the high level of commitment required of students who consciously choose the alternative of a virtual charter school.
- Adopt the comprehensive [Kaplan Academy \(KA\) ICON](#) policies and procedures for ensuring academic integrity and ‘netiquette,’ which are written into student and parent handbooks. These terms are clearly defined (for example, the several forms of plagiarism are described), and expectations and penalties are clearly set forth. Penalties are stepped up for each subsequent offense until the student becomes a candidate for expulsion. Educators thus find themselves fully supported, at policy and procedure levels, in their quest to elicit student work that is high in quality and uncompromised in integrity.
- Provide the distinct advantages of a virtual school environment, which is conducive to learning in that it creates just enough anonymity to mask superficial differences, for example in appearance, demeanor, lifestyle, and real or perceived socioeconomic status. This creates a more level playing field and a school unlikely to become an incubator for petty social alliances and conflicts based on in-groups/out-groups, prejudices, or peer pressure. Being largely free of such distractions, the virtual student can better focus on academic tasks, and the virtual school can better attend to its academic mission.
- Administer a student learning styles survey that will help teachers better know and understand their students and also support their overall learning goals.
- Administer regular student and parent satisfaction surveys throughout the school year.
- Not become complacent, even when outcomes are successful, concerning the conditions and practices most conducive to learning in online education practice. ICON believes these factors are still being discovered and developed; therefore, a successful learning climate is one that is constantly monitored and nurtured. This is both exciting and challenging, and ICON pledges to “keep an ear to the ground” and actively listen and respond to what is developing, both in the school and in the larger arena of educational research and reporting. ICON’s focused, sustained

effort in this regard can only result in a dynamic and ever-improving climate for teachers and students.

## **G. Plan for Special Education Services**

### **Provision of Services**

ICON will provide a rigorous and appropriate curriculum for all students. ICON understands that the school will be obligated to serve students with exceptional needs and that the school, pursuant to applicable state and federal law, must ensure that all of its students have access to a free and appropriate public education within the least restrictive environment. Accordingly, ICON will comply with requirements set forth in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as applicable. [Instruction and special services as mandated by IDAPA rules for Alternative Secondary Programs and applicable to any special education students meeting the at-risk definition will be complied with.](#)

ICON will use the Idaho Special Education Manual as guidance for identifying, evaluating, programming, developing individualized education plans, planning services, developing a discipline policy, and budgeting for students with disabilities, as necessary. The ICON budget will include a reserve amount dedicated to covering expenditures in the event of unusual, unforeseen special education services.

IVEP anticipates that it will negotiate contracts with private service providers to fulfill most special education services for ICON students. These contracts will clearly delineate the desired mix of services to be provided.

The services will be delivered in accordance with each student's IEP at regional centers which ICON will set up based on student location and need. The residential demographics of the student populations served will determine the number and locations of such centers. The service schedule and type of facility chosen will be appropriate for the particular services and accommodations needed for each student served, in accordance with the IEP. ICON will either arrange for student transportation to the regional center or will reimburse parents for doing so.

ICON anticipates utilizing such regional centers to deliver services requiring face-to face contact. An example would be to deliver intensive intervention for students whose reading level is too low for them to read and understand lesson materials and other text presentations.

If the volume or scale of activities related to assessment, individualized education plan (IEP) development, and/or delivery of the special education and related services is such that IVEP believes these services can be provided by appropriately credentialed and qualified ICON staff, the school may assume responsibility for directly providing and managing some or all of these functions with its own staff.

### **Individualized Education Plans and Service Delivery**

ICON staff will participate actively and as appropriate in planning and conducting the IEP team meetings and processes, even if primary responsibility for such services is contracted with a private provider. The school will commit to implementing all special education and related services called for by the IEP. ICON understands that student progress toward the goals specified in the IEP will be monitored regularly, and formally reviewed by the IEP team on at least a triennial basis. Resource specialists will help ICON teachers tailor their instruction to ensure that the needs of all special education students are being met.

To accommodate students who require assistive technologies to overcome an impairment or disability, ICON will arrange for such students to be supplied with the needed technology enhancements. Such technologies include for example screen readers, on-screen keyboards, grammatical support tools, Braille embosser and text-to-Braille conversion, animated signing characters (avatars), switches, alternative mouse systems, word prediction capability, accessible online learning tools, alternative keyboards, and voice recognition systems.

[KVE's Odysseyware's](#) online courses meet the Rehabilitation Act accessibility standards specified under Section 508, are aligned with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 1, and were developed following W3C/WAI standards.

ICON faculty and staff, working with the entire IEP team (including the student), will establish measurable student post-secondary goals, will identify the transition services needed to assist the student in reaching those goals, and will conduct the post-secondary monitoring of the student necessary to determine if the goals are being accomplished. In deliberating upon and designing the transition components for secondary-level IEPs, ICON will follow the results- oriented process described in the Idaho Special Education Manual.

ICON's mid-term and end-of-term grade reports will include IEP progress reports as applicable.

The IEP team will develop and document alternate graduation requirements to be met by students who are not able to meet the proficient standard on the ISAT.

ICON will ensure that faculty and staff participate in special education training programs and technical assistance opportunities provided by SDE.

### **Program Design**

Key guiding principles and strategies informing ICON's approach include:

- Curriculum content is organized around "essential ideas"

As described in Section C above, [KVE's Odysseyware's](#) courses divide the content into modules, units, and lessons. Each module and unit contains an essential idea or "big picture" concept with accompanying performance expectations. Modules pose an essential question to the student that connects the content to larger conceptual understandings and to real world application. Units outline a central idea that spans all the lesson objectives for that unit, forming relationships among the lessons and their objectives. The essential question and central idea are introduced to the student at the beginning of the module and unit, supported by audio. From an instructional perspective, each performance expectation is accompanied by an assignment that provides instructional strategies for the ELL student and scoring support in the form of an analytic rubric and scoring guidelines.

- Expectations for ELL students are based on academic achievement.

ELL students identified via the Idaho English Language Placement Test will enter the program and will be placed in accordance with their academic achievement, not their language proficiency. Students entering high school are placed in the grade level appropriate to their level of academic achievement. A language proficiency assessment is used to determine the level of ESL support provided to the student throughout the academic school year and placement in specific language learning support programs. The Odysseyware Program also has the ability to translate all material into nine different languages.

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- Odysseyware's online curriculum and ICON's instructional approaches use technology to support learning and facilitate interaction with the teacher.

Audio is built into the online content to support understanding of module and unit concepts, keywords and vocabulary, and to support summarization of lesson learning. ICON's instructors will use chat, white board, discussion board, and speak directly with students via telephone to provide instructional guidance, demonstrate concepts, work with students on their development of vocabulary and content knowledge, and to summarize what they have learned.

- ICON's instructional program assists students with developing strategies to learn English.

Teachers will provide assistance to ELL students to develop their academic vocabulary through specific language learning strategies early in the program, relying on ELL trained teachers to provide individualized support.

- Teachers will provide assistance to ELL students to develop their academic vocabulary through specific language learning strategies early in the program, relying on ELL trained teachers to provide individualized support.

Teachers interacting with ELL students will encourage them to bring into their online course experience examples of work created outside the classroom, to collaborate with other students via guided synchronous and asynchronous discussions, and to develop their communication and collaboration skills while working through the online curriculum.

### **I. Student Participation in Dual Enrollment and Concurrent Enrollment**

Subject to the requirements for demonstrated academic proficiency, district residency, and other eligibility requirements set forth in § 33-203, Idaho Code, and IDAPA 08.02.03.111, ICON will work with families and school districts to enable student participation in extra-curricular activities of the home school district, to the extent practical. Dual enrollment may be necessary and will be allowed (pending approval from the other school of choice) for those students wishing to enroll in those professional technical programs that may be best supplemented through a component involved hands on education.

Concurrently enrolled students who earn credits from an accredited post-secondary institution will receive corresponding credit toward Idaho high school graduation requirements.

**TAB 4 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS**

Whether students are low achieving, high achieving, special education, or require English language development, a student’s progress toward expected outcomes depends on a continual monitoring of individual student growth. ICON will pursue the pupil outcome goals, as measured by multiple and varied benchmark assessments (as detailed below), that are aligned to state content standards and matched with the state and federal accountability systems.

The petitioners believe that both student performance metrics and school performance metrics are indicators of how well students have developed the qualities and abilities the school seeks to instill. These include high levels of engagement, and the student’s ability to take charge of his or her own learning by taking advantage of the program’s flexibility and diverse paths to content mastery.

The petitioners have therefore set measurable goals for both student educational achievement and organizational and management measures, and the charter school will systematically track these metrics to gauge performance and progress

**A. Measurable Student Education Standards**

Student progress and performance will be assessed in multiple ways to ensure that all students meet or exceed proficiency on state academic standards, demonstrate key critical thinking and communication skills, and are prepared to succeed in their postsecondary goals.

To achieve these objectives, ICON will implement and monitor progress toward the following measurable outcomes:

Student Goal	Measurable Goal	Assessment Tool	Baseline Data
Students will meet or exceed Idaho performance standards	Average English Language Arts and Math scores on the Idaho Standards Achievement Test will be equal or higher to the state average within three years.	Annual ISAT scores in grades 3-8, 10	Published Idaho state average scores for the English and math subsets
Students will demonstrate improved content area knowledge and mastery	75% of students will improve their ISAT scores after three years of enrollment at ICON.	Students’ previous ISAT scores and results from the Scantron Performance Series assessment.	Year 1 student test scores
Students will feel that they are an integral and contributing part of the ICON community	Students will demonstrate their satisfaction with the ICON learning experiences by re-enrolling for subsequent years- target re-enrollment rate is 66% after	Year over year student re-enrollment and retention rates combined with qualitative survey results.	Year 1 retention data and survey results
Parents and Guardians will be satisfied with their student’s learning	85% of parents will respond that they are Satisfied or Very	Parent Survey	Year 1 data

experience at ICON	Satisfied on an annual parent survey.		
Students will have increased learning options and opportunities	Year of year, an increasing percentage of students will enroll in honors, AP, Credit Recovery, career, <a href="#">professional technical</a> , elective courses, or GED Prep Courses.	Course enrollment data	Year 1 data
Students will graduate from ICON with a defined post-secondary goal	ICON average graduation rates will equal or exceed the state average within three years and students will take steps toward post-secondary plans.	Graduation rates and senior student survey	Published Idaho graduation average

**F. State Accreditation**

ICON will pursue accreditation by the State Board of Education and the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools (NAAS), as required by Idaho law and provided for under IDAPA 08.02.02.140. As such, ICON will meet Idaho Accreditation Standards I through V by virtue of NAAS accreditation, and shall otherwise submit evidence to Idaho SDE that it has met Standard VI. [ICON will pursue accreditation for the Alternative School.](#)

During the first six months of operation ICON will apply for a three-year provisional accreditation as directed by NAAS, to be followed by full accreditation after the completion of a thorough self-study process.

The school will develop all required planning and reporting elements, including a District/School Strategic Plan (DSP), a DSP monitoring team, and a Continuous School Improvement Plan (CSIP). The CSIP will align structure, resource allocation, and teacher skill sets so as to improve school capacity in these areas and ultimately to increase student achievement.

ICON will meet state-approved accreditation standards and thoroughness elements, and will submit required reports to the Idaho Department of Education and the PCSC.

## TAB 6 EMPLOYEES; HEALTH AND SAFETY

### Faculty and Staff Qualifications

#### Teachers and Instructional Staff

ICON has a highly specified set of qualities it will require of its teaching faculty. ICON will adhere to all "highly qualified" requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) with respect to teachers. ICON will also adhere to highly qualified and properly endorsed personnel for any and all professional technical education courses and electives as required. As career counseling and emotional issues play an important role in dealing with at-risk youth, ICON will assign a Home Based Advisor an ICON School Coach and a certified School Psychologist. ICON currently has staff members in place for the Coach and Psychologist roles. In addition, ICON will also seek low student-teacher support ratios so that students are able to get the support that they need. The recommended ratios are:

1:25 for Home Based Advisors

1:50 for School Coach

1 FTE for School Psychologist

As such, teachers in all of the core subjects – English/language arts, mathematics, science, and history/social science – will meet NCLB's highly qualified standards. Teachers of core, college preparatory subjects (i.e. English language arts, math, science, and history/social science) and special education will be required to hold a certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in a non-charter public school would be required to hold. Applicants to teach in the program will be evaluated based on the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated expertise in subject area and the ability to communicate the appropriate knowledge to each student.
- Possession of an applicable Idaho teaching credential.
- Knowledge and experience with standards-based instruction: ability to align curriculum and standards and willingness to adopt grading practices that can be used in standards-based grading.
- Knowledge of assessment strategies and the desire to use data to drive their teaching and ensure continuous improvement of student learning.
- Ability to effectively use a broad range of instructional strategies, including providing a guaranteed curriculum, challenging goals and effective feedback, differentiated instruction, and back mapping, among others.
- Demonstrated competence using advanced technology as a learning tool: willing and able to integrate technology into teaching and student learning.
- Outstanding classroom management skills.
- Belief in ICON's mission.
- Willingness and ability to work with students and parents on an ongoing basis to ensure student success.
- Desire and ability to engage in continuing education, staff development and skill upgrading
- Positive references from most recent employer and/or college or graduate school.

ICON will use a rubric in the interview process so candidates are each evaluated against a common set of standards. Teachers will be responsible for overseeing the students' academic progress and for monitoring grading and matriculation decisions as specified in the school's operation policies. ICON may also employ or retain non-certificated instructional support staff in any case where a credential is not required and a prospective staff member has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and the demonstrated capacity to work successfully in an instructional capacity. Instructional support staff will not assign grades or approve student work assignments without the approval of a certificated teacher.

#### **Academic ~~Advisor~~ Advising**

ICON ~~Academic Advisors~~ School Coach, Home Based Advisors, and School Psychologist will be responsible for ensuring that students are obtaining the instructional and motivational support they need

to succeed in our program. Advisors They encourage student achievement through mentoring and guidance, for example by helping students navigate the online system, understand school policies and protocols, and plan their class schedules and course sequencing. The Advisor They will consult with the Executive Director and faculty on student needs and will aid students and parents in resolving personal problems by direct intervention or by referral to appropriate agencies. ICON will seek to employ ~~Advisors~~ Coaches and Home Based Advisors with the following qualifications:

- Ability to meet students' counseling needs in personal and social matters and knowledge of strategies to address student personal, social, and behavioral problems.
- Knowledge and experience in educational planning that will provide normal progress toward graduation, and completion of college admission requirements.
- Familiarity with college admissions requirements, admissions tests, academic achievement tests, aptitude tests, interest inventories, and financial aid.
- Demonstrated ability and willingness to write letters of recommendation.

### **Student Health and Safety**

If required by federal or state law, the school will provide screening for student vision, hearing and scoliosis, and students will show the state-required proof of immunization or exemption. The school will maintain records that verify any legally required tests and immunizations of students and staff. ICON will also have a policy establishing the school as a drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace.

ICON will also institute a policy and practice for identifying and addressing at risk behaviors displayed by students. The student and employee handbooks will include definitions and descriptions of such behaviors, including cyber bullying, and will define a discrete set of referral steps that should be taken by ICON staff and parents upon identification of potential at risk behaviors.

ICON staff will be given training as part of their professional development to teach staff how to identify such behavior or potential behavior and implement the referral practice. Upon identification or disclosure of an at risk behavior, ICON's referral practice will ensure that staff (teachers, advisors, counselors, etc.) document the disclosure and refer it to the Executive Director to address further. The Executive Director will be trained to address the behavior or potential behavior through a notification to the student's parent, where appropriate, and to the pertinent community outreach/support organization.

### **Blood-borne Pathogens**

ICON will implement policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens.

The Executive Director shall ensure that ICON meets state and federal standards for dealing with blood-borne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the workplace. The Executive Director shall establish a written "Exposure Control Plan" designed to protect employees from possible infection due to contact with blood-borne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) and hepatitis B virus (HBV). Whenever exposed to blood or other body fluids through injury or accident, students and staff should follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

### **Internet Safety and Conduct**

The ICON student and parent handbooks will adapt and incorporate Internet safety and conduct policies. ~~that KVE uses successfully in other Kaplan Academies~~. These policies prohibit unlawful, unethical, and unsafe use of the Internet by students, as well as ways students can protect themselves from harmful material, unsolicited contacts, and security breaches. As one example, the ICON

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handbooks will explicitly point out the dangers of file sharing sites, name prominent examples of such sites, describe how they can damage a student's computer system, and advise that a system so compromised is no excuse for falling behind pace.

The program will comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act, and student computers supplied by ICON will be configured for filtered Internet access that allows parents to block adult web content.

The student handbook will use the Internet itself to teach Internet courtesy, by providing a link to Albion.com's The Core Rules of Netiquette, one of the Web's best resources on this topic. The Rules use common-sense examples and analogies, and are written in an engaging style well suited to middle and high school students.

All online accounts are protected from unauthorized access. Every student, parent and faculty member is given a secure password to access his or her account. In order to receive their login ID and password from the Help Desk, students and faculty must answer a series of security-related questions to verify their identity.

## TAB 7 ADMISSIONS

### Student Admission Policies and Procedures

ICON Idaho Connects Online School will actively recruit a diverse student population from within the state. Admission will be open to any qualified state resident, and all students will be considered for admission without regard to race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, social or economic status, disability or special needs. ICON will also seek to recruit those students who meet the definition of an at-risk youth and operate an Alternative School for those that meet the qualifications as outline in IDAPA Rules for Alternative Schools.

ICON seeks to enroll students committed to a rigorous, virtual educational experience. Families who understand and value the school's mission and will commit to the school's instructional and operational philosophy will be actively recruited. Prospective students and their parents or guardians will be briefed regarding the school's instructional and operational philosophy and will be informed of the school's student-related policies.

Other than legal eligibility criteria (such as residency, and the provisions of sections §33-205 and §33-206, Idaho Code) and procedural fulfillments such as completed applications and transcripts, ICON has no requirement for admission and will admit any child that wishes to attend. The school will, however, have parent and student commitment agreements which all parents and students will be asked to sign when a student is enrolled. In no instance will a student be refused admission nor subjected to any form of discipline because of parents' failure to sign or comply with the parent commitment agreement.