

**Petition for the Establishment  
of the  
DaVINCI CHARTER SCHOOL  
An Idaho Public Charter School**

**Revised for Presentation to the  
Idaho Charter School Commission**

*February 27, 2012*

**DaVinci Charter School**

**5655 N. Glenwood, Boise, Idaho 83714**

**Contact: Laurel Odell, President**

**(208) 859-8271**

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## SUMMARY

DaVinci Charter School, Inc. 5655 N. Glenwood, Boise, Idaho 83714

Contact:

Laurel Odell (President) (208) 859-8271

*The mission of DaVinci Charter School is to express the aspirations of Garden City residents for their present and their future by providing the best possible educational experience for their children. We place the learner at the center, we serve a broad range of community needs, and we continually seek our purpose in a changing world. Through democratic principles and experience-proven practices, our school will foster responsibility, responsiveness, respect, and resourcefulness among all learners.*

DaVinci Charter School will be a new public charter school designed to initially serve kindergarten through grade 8, expanding thereafter to eventually serve K-12. Projected initial enrollment is 125 to 180 students.

The proposed school would be the first public school within Garden City, filling the need for a center of community that a school is in an exceptional position to provide. The educational program was created utilizing the Participatory Educational Design process initially developed by Bela H. Banathy and refined by Matthew Shapiro of the Mary Parker Follett Foundation.

The educational program of DaVinci Charter School can be characterized as (a) learner-centered, (b) democratic, and (c) community-integrated. It combines ideas unique to the local design team with effective approaches demonstrated by other schools across the United States and across the world.

DaVinci Charter School will have many innovative features, including the following:

- *A negotiated curriculum model:* Students will participate in the design of their own learning program both individually and with others, so that their educational experience fits their actual abilities, their learning style, and their interests and initiatives, as well as state requirements.
- *A continuously-accessible authentic & performance-based assessment system* which, combined with work sampling and portfolios, will provide a clear picture of what students are capable of.
- *Student-run studios and labs* that allow in-depth, self-guided projects and unlimited potential for student initiative and responsibility.
- Other innovative features include *multiage classrooms, arts integration, service learning*, and use of the 4R and Adlerian Positive Discipline approach to discipline and counseling.

DaVinci Charter School plans to operate on a traditional year and may in the future overlay a year-round calendar.

The DaVinci staff will be comprised of experienced, highly qualified, and dedicated individuals. Core teaching staff will meet Idaho certification requirements and will be recruited for their skill and for their compatibility with the DaVinci model. Administrative staff will be selected on the same basis.

The board of directors of the Garden City Community School is composed of educators, parents, and other community members who represent a range of experiences and skills. All are dedicated to a compelling and effective vision of education and the creation of the best possible school. Current members of the board include:

NOTE: These changes have been sent to the Idaho Charter Commission each year, but this will update this electronic version of the charter.

Laurel York Odell

Tim Richey

Michael Tetrault

Matthew Shapiro

Andrea Dearden Holmes

The school will initially be housed at a temporary location in Garden City. The school will eventually be housed at a new or renovated permanent facility in Garden City. The attendance area will encompass the City of Garden City.

Funding sources for the school's operation include state support, federal title support, federal grants, private grants, and donations. Bus transportation for students will be available with support under the provisions of the charter school law. Food service will be provided at free, reduced, or full-price rates, depending on eligibility.

DaVinci anticipates the need for contracted services in the area of special education, including but not limited to screening and testing, speech-language, physical therapy, and occupational therapy.

The total amount budgeted for our first year of operation is \$1.1 million.

## OVERVIEW

### **A. Proposed Operation**

DaVinci Charter School proposes to operate an innovative educational program that is learner-centered, individualized, democratic, and community-based. We will initially serve children in the K-8 range, with plans to expand to a full K-12 program. Through its responsiveness both to stakeholder aspirations for community and society, and to the best available knowledge about how people learn, the school will demonstrate the best of what public education can offer today and into the future.

The school will operate in accordance with a Participatory Educational Design process, which (a) produces an Image of Education from the core values and core ideas about learning that stakeholders express through an ongoing dialogue, (b) builds specifications for the educational system from that Image, and (c) incorporates and implements design solutions that exhibit both soundness and best fit with the Image. This process is inherently democratic and collaborative, and thus the operation of the school will involve shared leadership and decision-making. Transparency, continuous communication, reflection, outreach, and representation will all be hallmarks of the operation of the DaVinci. Potential effects of operation of the school include dramatic improvements in student motivation and learning, the involvement of entire families in the educational process, improved cohesiveness in the Garden City community, a heterogeneous mix of children from different backgrounds and income levels within the same school, enhanced social services to Garden City residents, and the successful modeling of a participatory design process for other educational institutions in the Treasure Valley and beyond.

### **B. Community Support**

Refer to Appendix A – Elector Petition Form.

There is broad community support for DaVinci Charter School. In addition to the signatories of the petition, we refer to the results of the Garden City Charter School Survey sent to more than 4,000 Garden City residents and businesses in the spring of 2004. Of those who responded to the survey, 82% said that a charter school could be of benefit to Garden City. Of those respondents with school-age children (nearly half of the total), 81% said that they would consider sending their children to a charter school in Garden City if its programs were satisfactory. The highest educational priorities indicated in this survey were character education, hands-on learning, individualized learning, academic basics, integrated curriculum, and cooperative learning.

The program developed after this survey was collected responds thoroughly to all of these priorities.

In addition to these, support is indicated in the letters attached as Appendices to the Charter Petition. The Mayor of Garden City has expressed support for a school in Garden City, and has cooperated with our efforts to reach out to the city's residents (see Letters of Support, Appendix D). We have had discussions with a range of agencies and organizations, including the Garden City Public Library, Head Start, the Garden City Senior Center, the Boys & Girls Club, the Learning Lab, the Ada County Extension Office 4H program, The Actors Guild, and the Agency for New Americans about potential cooperative relationships. These are detailed below in the section on Community Integration. Members of all of the above organizations have indicated support for the direction we have taken with the school.

## I. EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND COMMITMENT

### A. Educational Philosophy

The following principles summarize our philosophy of education:

We believe that the best preparation for healthy living and full citizenship in the future is wholesome living and full engagement in the present.

We believe that learning cannot be coerced. We believe that children are ultimately responsible for their own learning, and that this responsibility should be made explicit.

We believe that the purpose of education is not only to prepare learners to play an effective role in society in the future, but that education should also empower learners to decide what that society of the future should be like.

We believe that learning how to learn is as important, if not more important, than learning specific things. The means in learning are as important as the ends.

We believe that people learn best when they understand the reasons for their learning and can apply what they are learning.

We believe that people learn in different ways, and that education should adapt to these different ways.

We believe that education should be hands-on and minds-on in order to be meaningful to the learner.

We believe that education should be presented in a holistic framework.

We believe that education must be free of fear and full of exploration, risk-taking, and discovery.

We believe that knowledge is constructed and cannot be given, only fostered.

We believe that educational issues cannot be separated from community issues, and that schools should be centers of community.

We believe that education is a lifelong process.

We believe that families are a cornerstone of learning.

The educational philosophy of DaVinci Charter School is expressed in complete form as the Image of Education, Appendix C.

## **B. Public School Status**

DaVinci Charter School is not a religious school, nor is it the result of the conversion of a private school, nor is it to be operated as a for-profit school

# **II. BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND GOVERNANCE**

## **A. Board of Directors**

Governance of the DaVinci Charter School will be the legal responsibility of the Board of Directors of the Garden City Charter School, Inc, an Idaho non-profit corporation.

The following individuals are currently serving as directors:

### **Garden City Community School**

#### **Board of Directors**

**Updated November 16, 2010 (this was already updated and sent to the IPCSC manager)**

#### **Laurel York Odell, President/ organizational development consultant**

3253 Scenic Drive

Boise, ID 83703

859-8271 (c)

343-8692 (h)

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(Term Ends 08-2011)

**Tim Richey, Treasurer/ accountant**

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(Term Ends 08-2012)

**Anneleissa Balk/ psychology, helath, special education, the arts**

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**Matthew Shapiro, Secretary/educational philosophy, business entrepreneur**

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(Term Ends 08-2011)

Andrea Dearden Holmes

10301 W. Hecteta Dr

Garden City, ID 83714

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(Term Ends 08-2014)

**Michael Tetrault, Parent Rep/middle school teacher**

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Meridian, ID 83646

761-1317 (c)

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(Term Ends 08-2012)

## **B. Other Organizing Committee Members**

The organization's corporate directors are members of the school's Organizing Committee. Other members of this committee include the following persons:

Jill Atkinson – Parent; former kindergarten teacher; founder.

Richard Childress – Parent; architect; owner, Point Architects; member, Garden City Planning & Zoning Commission; ACHD Advisory Committee member.

Amanda Corleone – Parent; Master Gardener, founder.

Deborah Every – Parent; founder.

Chris Francovich, Ed.D. – Educator; organizational consultant and trainer. Chris was co-founder of Boise's Foothills School of Arts & Sciences. Chris was also teacher and academic head of the Lower School of St. George's School, Spokane, Washington from 1982-1989.

Gail Lebow, M.Ed. – Garden City resident; educator; small business owner; former trustee, Vallivue School District.

Elizabeth Paul – Garden City resident; parent; community organizer; founder.

Teresa Sanchez-Lopez – Parent; nurse; member, Hispanic Committee, St. Mary's Church.

Matthew Shapiro – Teacher; Doctoral candidate in education, Boise State University; Process Expert, Participatory Educational Design.

## **C. Community Council**

Once the school is established, it will form a Community Council to be comprised of members of the board of directors, parent representatives, teachers and other staff, student representatives, and community members who are not parents of children enrolled in the school. The Community Council will be the chief source of initiatives and ideas related to school policy and decisions that affect the entire school and the surrounding community.

The Community Council will refer to the school's Design Documentation – including the Garden City Image and the Image of Education – as its basis for general policy and operation of the school, and it will serve as the forum in which the Design Documentation is discussed and revised. However, all decisions related to budget, hiring, personnel, and legal affairs will be made by the Board of Directors. The role of the Community Council in these areas is advisory.

Parents will select or elect representatives, via mail or at an annual meeting of parents for this purpose, to serve for a one-year term. Students will elect representatives at an annual convention for this purpose to serve for a one-year term.

Non-parent community members will be invited from organizations that represent or work with various constituencies in the community, including but not limited to Garden City's City Council, the Garden City Senior Center, the Hispanic committee affiliated with St. Mary's Church, and the business community.

Members of the Community Council will be responsible for attending meetings, formally opening discussions on issues of interest, drafting and voting on initiatives, communicating with constituents, and forming and operating committees.

The Community Council will meet every one to two months. Every student, every staff member, and every parent will have the right to address the Community Council.

### III. INSTRUCTION

#### A. Educational Program

##### 1. Introduction

The educational program of DaVinci Charter School is the result of a comprehensive, participatory design process that begins with a thorough set of assumptions and values about learning and about the purpose of education. These assumptions and values are represented in the Image of Education (Appendix C). The Image of Education has 22 categories or “dimensions” addressing everything from diversity to assessment to school culture, community integration, and resources.

The dimension that best identifies our view of what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is Goals & Outcomes for Learning. It is reproduced here:

“The educational experience will support the learning and development of the whole person, moving learners from dependence to independence.

Our learners will be able to explore and 'bring about worlds' through the languages of the spoken word, the written word, mathematics, scientific inquiry, and the arts. They will become critical thinkers, able to see things from multiple perspectives, to test out new ideas, to apply values and to make judgments. Learners will be empowered by becoming aware of how they learn.

Learners will be able to express themselves creatively through all kinds of aesthetic forms, and they will become confident speakers in both formal and informal settings. Children will leave our system equipped to handle both cooperative and competitive situations in life. Learners will come to appreciate the past in their present as it becomes the future, taking responsibility through realizing that history continues to unfold through them.

The educational experience will cultivate more than knowledge and skills. It will foster the development of wisdom. It will foster development of a sense of connection to the universe in a manner that is participatory and free from dogma. It will wean learners away from affordances in the home life that inhibit learning and development and the richness of experience. We will foster positive self-images in all learners, and enhance self-esteem through the achievement of goals. Our children will learn to be proud but gracious when they are successful in their efforts, as well as gracious when they are not successful. Our learners will continue to learn throughout their lifetimes.

Our educational system will be so effective that learners could leave the system at any time and have a great chance of thriving in the world."

Our beliefs about how learning best occurs are represented in this and in other dimensions of the image (Appendix C). These were inspired by, among other sources, a compilation of the most widely accepted, research-supported conclusions about learning that was developed specifically for the design process that we employed. This compilation, Facts About Learning, is available upon request or from the GCCS website.

## **2. The 4R or "Individual Education" System**

The DaVinci Charter School adopts as part of its school culture the "Four R's" of the Individual Education model developed by Raymond Corsini and based on principles of Adlerian psychology. The Four R's are Respect, Resourcefulness, Responsibility, and Responsiveness. The Four R's are not just goals for children but are also goals for parents and all school personnel as well.

**Respect:** A student is treated with respect and thus learns to respect self and others. We learn to be respectful to others by being treated with respect ourselves.

**Resourcefulness:** A student develops an awareness and greater ability to become a successful problem solver. We become resourceful when permitted to solve our own problems.

**Responsibility:** A student must take an active role in his educational process. We learn responsibility by being given responsibility.

**Responsiveness:** A student is provided with opportunities that assist him in learning how to develop strong, effective interpersonal relationships. We become responsive when treated with love, care, and responsiveness.

In brief, the Individual Education (IE) approach, built around all four of these principles, is one that provides a great deal of respect and flexibility to learners, while at the same time expecting a high level of responsibility.

Two public elementary schools that have been using this approach for more than 20 years are the Forest Park IE School in Joliet, Illinois, and Heritage Elementary School in Pueblo, Colorado. We have communicated with the principals from these schools, made visits to several, and we have analyzed school performance data and demographic information.

Over the past five years, the Forest Park IE School has had a low-income student population averaging 51%, versus the Illinois average of 38%. Over the same period, it has performed 2% above the state average on standardized tests, while spending *25% less time on core subjects*. Forest Park has performed an average of 16% above its district, although its low-income population is only 9% lower than the district average. Again, this has been achieved with about *25% less time* spent on core subjects. In addition, Forest Park has had a significantly lower level of chronic truancy and a higher attendance rate than both the district and the state.

Heritage Elementary in Pueblo, Colorado has over the past four years outperformed the state average in reading scores by 6%, writing by 12%, and math by 19%. Over the same time period, it has averaged a free/reduced lunch eligibility of 35%, versus the statewide 29%.

While there are many factors that influence school success, the performance of these schools is evidence of the strength of the IE model.

### **3. Thoroughness Standards**

DaVinci Charter School will fully meet the Educational Thoroughness Standards given in Idaho Code Section 33-1612. The following is an explanation of how we will meet the standards.

**a. A safe environment conducive to learning is provided.**

*The children attending our school love to come to school because it is a safe, fun, and challenging place where they are respected, free to be themselves, and able to make a difference. All children feel accepted as part of the school family, and have a true sense of belonging.*

*We are creating a school culture that is supportive, encouraging learning at every level, and free from fear at any level. Learning professionals, paraprofessionals, and non-professionals in the system regard and treat each other with equal respect. We form a healthy and dynamic community of practice, in which the system itself learns as it fosters learning among individuals. We practice what we preach.*

*Fear and comparison to others are not used to motivate or control behavior. Children in this learning community are not afraid to ask questions about anything, and all learners are willing to ask for help in the pursuit of self-improvement. Initiative and curiosity are supported to the greatest extent. We also recognize that learners cannot be shielded from knowledge about the world, but should be exposed to it in an empowering manner.*

*We maintain that the means in learning are more powerful than the ends. The educational experience will value risk-taking in learning, even if it leads to failure, because that failure is part of fruitful learning in the long run.*

(GCCS Image of Education/DaVinci Charter School)

The “Four R’s” described above – Respect, Resourcefulness, Responsibility, and Responsiveness – will be exemplified at every level of the system. Living in accordance with them will promote a safe environment that is conducive to learning. The DaVinci program also values risk-taking and emphasizes cooperation rather than comparison to others, which also creates an environment conducive to learning.

Adopted along with the “Four R’s” are three simple school rules that students will have to follow. The three rules represent a contract between the child and the school. They are to be made entirely clear to parents and to potential students. If either the parents or the students does not agree to these rules, then the student should not seek to attend the school. These three rules are:

1. Do nothing that could be considered dangerous to yourself, to others, or damaging to property.
2. Be under an adult’s supervision at all times except when going from one supervised place to another.
3. Leave the room immediately and in silence when given a go or stop sign.

The go and stop signs are explained under standard “b” below.

**b. Educators are empowered to maintain classroom discipline.**

*The educational experience will move learners from a reliance upon external sources of discipline to self-discipline. It will cultivate manners, self-respect, and respect for the rights of others. Expectations for behavior, which are co-authored by learners themselves, will be clearly stated and understood by the children. Discipline will thus be easily maintained.*

(GCCS Image of Education)

Behavioral Plan

The educational model of the DaVinci Charter School emphasizes the intrinsic rewards of right behavior and meaningful learning. Discipline is based on voluntary compliance with school rules but also includes measures to protect the school and the people in it. A preventative approach to discipline requires that our school be a place in which every child can learn. Our discipline plan is based on simple, concise rules. All staff members are required to utilize the same procedures that make a consistent, effective discipline program.

Each student is responsible for being respectful of others within the school community. This is accomplished by following a simple system of school rules established through class discussion and the guidance of the teacher. The chief reason for these rules is to foster respect for self, others and the world.

Teachers are expected to discuss natural consequences and to develop logical solutions with their homeroom classes. These may be shared and adopted across the school as part of building and living in a learning community. There are also particular school-wide practices that will be adopted. These include stop and go signs, and consequences for violations of school rules, which are explained below.

Stop and Go Signs

To be used for Classroom Management by staff

1) Teachers and staff use the “**stop**” **signal** if a child interferes in any way with classroom instruction or disturbs another child’s learning. A stop signal is not in response to a violation of a school rule but is simply a reminder to the student that the classroom is a learning environment and they are to discontinue the inappropriate behavior. Written documentation will be made by the teacher.

2) A student who does not change his inappropriate behavior after a stop signal is given a “**go**” **sign**. This signifies that the student is to stop the inappropriate behavior and quietly go to a “designated area” within the classroom or just outside the door to consider his unacceptable behavior and then return quietly to his seat. He is then to resume learning. The student is expected to discuss the situation with the teacher at the next class break

(recess, lunch, after school, etc) to discuss what he needs to do to improve the situation. Written documentation will be made by the teacher.

3) If the student receives a second **go sign**, s/he must then take his work, and go to the designated area inside or outside the classroom. They will need to sit quietly, continue their work and wait for the teacher to counsel them at the next class break. The teacher and student will discuss the situation and determine what the consequence should be for the behavior. A parent/guardian will be contacted and the situation will be documented.

### Referrals

If inappropriate behavior continues or a severe or unsafe situation arises, the teacher has the option to make a written **referral** to administration or designated supervisor. In this case, the teacher will give the student a referral form stating the reason he is being sent to the administration and send the student to the supervised designated area. At this point, the student will be given a form to complete to explain why he was given a referral and how he should change his behavior in the future. S/he will receive counseling by the director or designated supervisor and the consequence will be determined by the action which required his referral. This provides accountability for students leaving and returning to a classroom. The parent/guardian will be contacted regarding the situation and the incident will be documented. If the situation warrants it, a meeting will be held with the student, parent/guardian, teacher, and administrator.

The school's youngest students will not be required to fill out a pink slip but will be given one by the teacher with the time on it. The student will need to orally explain to the receiving supervisor why he was given a referral sign and how he should change his behavior in the future. The remainder of the procedure is the same as with older students.

Suspensions and expulsions will be determined upon the severity of the incident. A DaVinci Charter School handbook and policy manual will be developed to explain details.

### **c. The basic values of honesty, self-discipline, unselfishness, respect for authority and the central importance of work are emphasized.**

This standard is addressed by the school's emphasis on the Four R's of Respect, Resourcefulness, Responsibility, and Responsiveness. The Garden City Community School will provide students with significant freedom along with significant responsibility. Students are also accorded a high level of respect. With the cultivation of self-determination, an atmosphere of mutual respect, and a supportive environment that the student feels ownership in, the basic values identified in the standard will easily be met.

**d. The skills necessary to communicate effectively are taught.**

DaVinci Charter School will cultivate highly effective communicators. Through the Literacy curriculum, students will explicitly develop the skills needed for written and oral communication. Through group projects students will be required to use communication skills for teamwork and in final projects. Homerooms are dedicated to building social and communication skills, from sharing news and opinions to dialogue about a wide range of ideas and issues, to the ability to engage in reasoned debate for collective decision-making.

Students will learn intercultural as well as interpersonal communication through various curriculum and school-wide activities. Through authentic assessments of learning, students will have access to a range of options – written, oral, audio, and video – to communicate what they know and are able to do. Upper Secondary students will need to prepare and carry out Presentations of Learning to panels in order to demonstrate their learning. Students will also be prepared to take the lead in student-parent-teacher conferences.

**e. A basic curriculum necessary to enable students to enter academic or vocational post secondary educational programs is provided.**

i. The Essential Learnings

*Recognizing that the world is not isolated into separate parts, and that life experience should not be fragmented, subject matter and learning experiences are designed with an integrated, systems view. The interconnected nature of phenomena, issues, and actions is demonstrated. Hand-in-hand with an integrated curriculum is a balanced curriculum. The arts and humanities are recognized for their value alongside any other subject. Physical activity is a daily part of the curriculum, and community service learning is an integral aspect of the curriculum. Bringing it all to life, subject matter and learning experiences are realistic and relevant to learners' lives.*

(GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education)

Rather than breaking content into subject areas, the DaVinci Charter School will work toward integrated units of learning that are based in situations and meaningful contexts, and which address the following five **Essential Learnings Outcomes**:

- Thinking
- Communicating
- Personal Futures
- Social Responsibility

- World Futures

Framing “content” areas in terms of developmental outcomes will encourage integrated unit- and lesson-planning, as well as a better balance of learner development. This framework fits well with the values reflected in the GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education. The Essential Learnings Outcomes and sub-elements are defined as follows:

**Thinking:** Inquiring and reflective thinkers able to reason, question, make decisions and solve complex problems. As reflective thinkers, they will be empathetic and able to make ethical decisions about issues, events, and actions.

Elements: Inquiry; Reflective Thinking.

**Communicating:** Effective communicators able to create, communicate and convey ideas clearly and confidently, using the full range of symbolic systems. They will interact critically with communications created by others, interpreting linguistic, numerical and graphic information with judgment and discernment.

Elements: Being literate; Being numerate; Being information literate; Being arts literate.

**Personal Futures:** Self-directed and ethical people having a positive vision for themselves and their future, acting with moral autonomy and contributing to constructive futures for themselves and others.

Elements: Building and maintaining identity and relationships; Maintaining well-being; Being ethical; Creating and pursuing goals.

**Social Responsibility:** Responsible citizens prepared to participate actively in a democratic community, valuing diversity and acting for a just and equitable society.

Elements: Building social capital; Valuing diversity; Acting democratically.

**World Futures:** World contributors willing to consider the consequences of scientific and technological innovations, make thoughtful decisions about their application, and act to maintain, protect and enhance local and global environments.

Elements: Investigating the natural and constructed world; Understanding systems; Designing and evaluating technological solutions; Creating sustainable futures.

All of these outcomes and elements will be correlated to the Idaho Standards content and skill areas.

The following describes our approach to several key curricular areas:

*a. Literacy*

In the Essential Learnings framework, Literacy is an element in the area of Communicating. The Literacy curriculum will take a balanced and contextual approach to literacy development. We have adopted the Four Blocks framework for literacy instruction, which emphasizes an equal amount of instruction in four areas: guided reading, self-selected reading, writing, and working with words. Phonics and whole-language will be integrated according to current best practices. Literature, storytelling, and writing will be used to provide contexts for literacy development. We will also work with parents to strengthen out-of-school opportunities for literacy development through observations of the everyday environment of the community and the availability of diverse materials in the home.

Another aspect of Literacy that will be addressed is literacy in languages other than English. The school will endeavor to offer instruction in Spanish and/or other languages. Instruction would include cultural content and it would be supported in the school environment (e.g., via signs in the second languages).

*b. Mathematics/Numeracy*

Mathematics instruction will be centered around the idea that mathematics is a language, and that learners reach school age already equipped to grasp math conceptually. It is up to a good program to ensure that this capacity is recognized and built upon. Once the conceptual foundation is established, algorithms and automaticity will be easier to acquire, long-term memory of mathematical processes will be enhanced, and the learner's ability to transfer concepts to new situations will be strengthened.

In all math classes, the emphasis will be on fulfilling five conditions defined by James Hiebert et al as supportive of mathematical thinking. These conditions are:

- The nature of classroom tasks must be truly *problematic* and leave “mathematical residue” – something that is impressed upon the learner and which fuels future mathematical exploration.
- The teacher (a) selects tasks with goals in mind, (b) shares information with learners, and (c) guides the development of a culture that supports mathematical learning.
- The social culture of the classroom is one in which diverse ideas and methods are valued, students choose and share methods, mistakes are considered “sites of learning,” and where correctness resides in strong mathematical arguments as well as in final answers.

- Mathematical tools – be they words, manipulatives, computing devices, or other – are used as learning supports. Students must construct meaning for their tools, and the tools must be used for a purpose. They should be used to record, communicate, and think about mathematics.
- Equity and Accessibility: Tasks must be accessible to all students.

The emphasis will be on Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) as developed by Thomas Carpenter et al, of the University of Wisconsin. CGI, which builds a strong conceptual foundation as a prelude to procedural learning, has been shown to enhance success in mathematics in later years. CGI involves an emphasis on reasoning, multiple strategies, communication, and manipulatives.

In upper age classrooms, more abstract thinking and algorithmic (procedural) activity will take place, but the emphasis will remain on realistic problem solving. There will be no limit on how far learners can go in the breadth and depth of mathematical inquiry.

Curricular integration will also be a guiding factor in lesson design.

### *c. The Natural Sciences*

The natural sciences are related most directly to the Essential Learning Elements of Thinking: Inquiry, World Futures: Investigating the natural and constructed world, and World Futures: Systems. Our natural sciences curriculum will foster a *systems view* of the world: a recognition of and appreciation for the interconnections among all natural systems. Learners will be exposed to the full range of natural sciences – physical, chemical, biological, geological, astronomical – in an integrated fashion. State requirements for learning in science will be supplemented by a foundation in systems thinking.

In order to help develop each learner's potential to engage in disciplined inquiry in pursuit of answers, the emphasis will be on inquiry and discovery-based learning, with content provided as learners are ready to make use of it.

The natural environment will be frequently used as a context for science learning. We will also make use of other resources in the community to support experiential learning.

Another aspect of the science curriculum in the upper age classes will be broader ethical considerations that emerge with technology – for example, issues associated with biomedical ethics, cloning, virtual reality, and the degree of acceptable risk associated with various new technologies.

We will be using commercially available science kits as well as school-prepared units and activities.

*d. The Social Sciences*

History will be pursued in the form of an interpretive inquiry that always ties the subject of inquiry to the learner, to present culture and the present world situation. Primary sources – objects, artwork, photographs, and oral history – will be frequently used to spur questions and reveal answers.

Geography will be brought to life through exploration of the immediate environment and the use of a wide variety of tools for mapping, measuring, and navigating. Studies of American and world regional geography will be related to cultural studies and enriched with multiple media.

Civics exploration will go beyond structures and processes of government. Learners will write letters to the editor, engage in service learning, interact with elected officials and neighborhood associations, and relate opportunities for dialogue and decision-making at the school level with their larger civic self.

*e. Arts and Humanities*

Arts Literacy is an element within the Essential Learnings area of Communicating. The arts will not be treated as a separate subject but rather as a mode of understanding and expressing. As described in the section Arts Integration, the arts will be woven throughout the curriculum and the school. In addition to the integration of the arts within academic content areas, units in musical skills and traditions will be offered beginning in Kindergarten. Other musical learning opportunities may be offered as electives. In upper age groups, learners will be introduced to musical composition so that they may go beyond appreciating the work of others and toward creating their own works. Visual Arts and Music labs (see below) will offer enhanced opportunities for exploration, skill development, and performance in the arts.

*f. Personal and Social Development*

Physical education, health education, and social development are considered as essential Personal Futures outcomes. Learners at DaVinci will be exposed to a rich curriculum in this area. As with other aspects of the DaVinci educational model, this content area will emphasize that one thing cannot be considered in isolation from the other. For example, physical health is related to emotional health, to mental health, and to social life.

The Personal Futures emphasis will include a complete health and physical education curriculum. Health units will spiral throughout age levels and address healthy lifestyles, risk-taking behavior, consumer health, and mental and emotional wellness. Health units will address, in age-appropriate manner, a wide range of topics, including but not necessarily limited to germs and hygiene; exercise; physiology; safety signs and procedures; safe and unsafe behaviors; emotions and healthy ways of dealing with life situations;

medicines and drugs; nutrition, food and diet; poisons; food and medical product labels; peer influences on behavior; growth and development; healthy living habits; shopping wisely; alcohol, tobacco, and other common drugs; first aid and emergency care; conflict and conflict resolution; the nature of pregnancy; avoiding unplanned pregnancy; the nature and prevention of STD's; stress avoidance and stress management; health care services and choices; environmental health; dealing with illness and death; and aging.

All learners will take units in exercise and sport. Learners will be engaged in some form of physical activity on a daily basis, either at the start of the day, during recesses, or at the end of the day, or a combination. Daily options outside of formal units will tentatively include walking, running, calisthenics, dance, yoga, and team sports.

Units in physical education will expose learners to a wide range of activity types, from individual to group activities, from personal training activities to team sports. Learners will experience exercise disciplines and sports from around the world. Learners will be encouraged to find the kinds of physical activity that suit them best, and to work to excel in those areas. Safety, inclusiveness, and enjoyment will be the principles guiding physical education, both explicitly and implicitly, with the long-term goal being a lifetime of healthy lifestyle and recreation for every learner.

Social development will be fostered through frequent experiences in community-building and communication. These will include morning and afternoon meetings in homeroom, the Collaborative Learning Design process, and classroom activities involving dialogue and consensus.

All learners will learn basics in conflict resolution, and a peer mediation process will be established. Learners will be cautioned about the formation of cliques and encouraged to seek alternatives to them. All learners will be assisted in developing an appreciation for diversity, as emphasized in the Valuing Diversity element of the Essential Learning area of Social Responsibility.

**f. The skills necessary for students to enter the work force are taught.**

The work force of tomorrow will require an increasing ability to communicate effectively, to work in teams, to interpret information, to work with complexity, to employ technology, to invent and design, and to adapt to changing tasks and roles. It will also require working with greater diversity and across cultural and national boundaries. Just as industrial economy jobs shifted toward service economy jobs, the future will involve a shift into the effective use of information and the creation of knowledge.

DaVinci Charter School will equip its students with the skills necessary to thrive in this kind of economy. Along with providing a strong and well-rounded foundation in language, mathematics, and the sciences, our curriculum emphasizes cooperative learning, project-based learning, higher order thinking, initiative and creativity. They will be exposed to diversity both on a personal level and in relation to the interaction of cultures. They will be guided to value difference, teamwork, and creativity, and they will learn how local and global economies function. In addition, through participation in the Self-Education Exploration Centers (see below) they will experience what it is like to be responsible for an enterprise.

**g. The students are introduced to current technology.**

Technology will be incorporated into the learning environment at DaVinci Charter School to the extent that it serves a purpose in support of learning. In other words, we will not incorporate technology for the sake of technology, nor will learning goals be designed *around* technology, with the exception of units that are focused on the use of technology (e.g., Searching the Internet, Database Design, etc.).

We tentatively plan to incorporate technology in the following manner:

- Learners in the upper age groups will routinely use personal computers to conduct research, to organize information, to produce documents, and other activities related to unit and routine tasks.
- As resources allow, we will seek ways to incorporate less intrusive computer technologies such as Tablet PC's and PDA's into the classroom.
- We will seek to provide workstations that are customized in terms of hardware and software for particular applications, e.g., Desktop Publishing workstations, Multimedia workstations, Teleconferencing workstations, Arts workstations, and Engineering workstations.
- One of the Self-Education Exploration Centers (see below) that we plan to establish will be dedicated to Information Technology.
- As finances permit, most classrooms will be equipped with data projectors and some classrooms will use Smartboards.
- The school will be equipped with high-speed Internet access.
- Electronic assistive media employed within the Universal Design for Learning framework for special needs will be of benefit to all students.
- An electronic student information system be employed to track student progress, attendance, behavior, etc..
- The use of electronic portfolios for storing and displaying examples of student work will be piloted.

We will continue to look at other technologies that can support the educational model of DaVinci Charter School. DaVinci will develop a policy for Internet safety for minors that includes the operation of a technology protection measure with respect to any of its computers with Internet access.

**h. The importance of students acquiring the skills to enable them to be responsible citizens of their homes, schools and communities is emphasized.**

DaVinci Charter School will provide many opportunities for learners to develop the skills for responsible citizenship. Participating in the creation of codes of behavior in their classrooms and in the school, co-creating their learning plans, and opportunities to participate in the governance of the school through the Community Council will all contribute to the sense of responsibility and empowerment needed for good citizenship. Students will also participate in cleaning and in other ways caring for their school, as part of the responsibility for the place that is truly theirs. They will participate in frequent dialogues about real issues, a skill essential for citizenship. Students will also participate in meaningful service learning projects that connect them with the issues of the world around them, the world that will before long be theirs to guide as adults.

#### **4. Different and Innovative Teaching Methods**

DaVinci will employ a number of different and innovative approaches to teaching. The thinking behind some of these methods is not necessarily new. Even in those cases, however, the approaches may be considered innovative within the current traditional context of public education.

##### **a. Multiage Learning**

The Garden City model will use multiage groupings. Multiage groupings help take into account individual variations in maturity and the pace of learning. They promote greater flexibility, reduce competition, and produce benefits for social development.

##### **b. Individualized Learning Design (ILD)**

Students will learn to identify their personal strengths and weaknesses and how to use these to set goals within their learning and make choices regarding assessment processes.

##### **c. Collaborative Learning Design.**

A variety of individual and group activities will be part of each class curriculum. Students will learn to become important components within the workings of group activities and learn to use their strengths, improve upon their weaknesses and appreciate the diversity of abilities each student brings to the group. The specifics of this process will be determined by the age grouping and specific activity. Learning to become a part of a community is an important aspect of developing citizens of our world.

#### **d. Self-Education Exploration Centers (SEEC)**

A planned aspect of the school's development will be student-run studios and labs. These are a goal once high school ages join GCCS and have been trained and educated to a proper experience level. These labs may include: visual arts, music, theater, technology, publishing, and horticulture. Final topics will be determined by the students and their abilities and interests.

#### **e. Arts Integration**

Artistic activity has been shown to enhance cognitive and emotional development, as well as learning across various content domains. The arts can reach students who are otherwise uninspired by academic subjects. An aesthetic sensibility also improves the general learning environment. DaVinci Charter School will therefore be filled with expressive arts. Arts will be integrated into the curriculum with the assistance of an arts integration coordinator.

#### **f. Upper Secondary (Leaders) Program**

The Upper Secondary or Leaders program at the DaVinci Charter School will prepare learners for advanced work and life as an adult. When learners are approximately two years away from completing their school experience, they will be asked to choose from one of three **Leaders Pathways**: College Preparatory, Vocational, or Independent Inquiry. Learners will continue to take required core units, but the emphasis for each learner will differ depending upon the Pathway:

- The *College Preparatory* pathway will emphasize academic skills required for success in higher education and professions that require at least four-year degrees. Opportunities for those eligible will include co-enrollment at local universities offering this option, so that learners may earn college credit for their coursework.
- The *Vocational* pathway will emphasize training in a set of skills that do not require a college degree for professional employment. Learners in this pathway will serve in apprenticeships relevant to their interests.
- The *Independent Inquiry* pathway will emphasize independent inquiry into areas of the learner's choosing. The inquiry may involve projects in the field of business, the arts, the sciences, writing, public affairs, or any other area.

Learners in the College Preparatory and Vocational pathways who are unsatisfied with their choices will be free to transfer to the Independent Inquiry pathway at any time prior to graduation.

#### **i. Discover Idaho**

*Discover Idaho* is an interdisciplinary school-within-a-school program that was established at Boise's Borah High School. The original program combines classes in American Government, Economics, and Psychology. Its emphasis is project based service learning, in which students choose a public issue to focus on, design an approach to investigating the issue, conduct research and

field work, and collaborate to design solutions. Their culminating activity involves presentation of findings and initiatives to affected parties.

DaVinci Charter School will adapt the Discover Idaho concept for its Upper Secondary program, and all learners will have be encouraged to participate in the program regardless of the Pathway they have chosen.

#### ii. Pre-Graduation Project

All Upper Secondary/Leaders learners will be required to design, complete, and present a Pre-Graduation Project related to their pathway. The project can take any form, but must involve effort, learning, and products that push the learner's capabilities. All projects will require a **Presentation of Learning** before a panel of teachers, parents, and community members, who will provide feedback and decide whether the project is satisfactory or requires additional work.

#### iii. State Graduation Requirements

In addition to DaVinci requirements, students will meet all graduation requirements of the State of Idaho before graduating from the school and receiving a high school diploma

### **g. Community Integration**

*The failure or success of any child affects the entire community, and an educational institution is most successful when it has the support of the community around it. Therefore, our school is a true community center, a hub of neighborhood life. Our education system is integrated with other social services to most effectively serve and provide resources to learners, families, and the community. The Garden City community supports the school and its values, and is an active partner in its ongoing governance.*

*News and information that affects the community is freely shared between the school and the community, and community news and events will be utilized as teaching and learning opportunities. We encourage open forums of dialogue between community members, and social relationships between learners and community members are encouraged and fostered. (GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education)*

#### i. Partnerships

DaVinci Charter School will invite and pursue partnerships with a variety of local service agencies with some presence in Garden City.

#### ii. School as Community Center

Using schools as community centers improves the efficiency of building use, enhances community relationships, and can enhance the educational impact of a

- SEEC studios and labs, once implemented, may be open for use by non-DaVinci students in the afternoons and on weekends.
- Continuing education, GED, and parenting classes are planned in collaboration with other service providers.
- Facilities may be made available for community meetings and social events.

#### iii. Community as School

*We recognize that a child's education does not begin when they arrive at school, and it does not stop when he or she leaves the school setting at the end of the day. We also realize that in order to take advantage of the richness and diversity of life and of the community itself, the school's learning experiences should take place in a variety of settings throughout the community.*

(GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education)

A third aspect of being a community-integrated educational system is to utilize the community as school. The Boise area's cultural, political, and natural resources offer opportunities for direct experience that can bring lessons to life. Field experiences will be used frequently at all age levels.

#### **g. Unit Design and Lesson Planning**

*We recognize that while learning can be guided in part, a healthy learning environment encourages flexibility and creativity. Learning does not always go according to plan, and it occurs in a large variety of ways, forms, and contexts. In our system, learning opportunities will be seized upon, both in terms of developmental windows and in unique moments. Teaching methods will not be bound by or limited to textbooks, and the use of imagination in the design of lesson plans will be encouraged.*

Instructional approaches will reflect the reality that not all learners learn the same way; learners have preferred styles of learning that are dynamic and vary by age, experience and learning setting. Instructional approaches will permit learners to learn as fast as they can master new skills, concepts, and processes. Learning situations will also give children opportunities to provide feedback to each other, thus encouraging cooperation. Lessons and learning activities will be not only geared toward learning a subject, but also as an application to life and aiding in continuation of learning throughout life.(GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education)

Unit design and lesson planning will be carried out by teachers working in teams as well as individually and through the Collaborative Learning Design process with students. Teachers will have weekly opportunities to collaborate on unit design. Individual teachers will have the freedom to apply their own styles and ideas. Integration of curricula across subject areas and Essential Learnings areas will be maximized. The integrated perspective called for during student involved Collaborative Learning Design will also ensure integration.

Lesson planning will include consideration for multiple intelligences and higher order thinking as well as satisfaction of Idaho Standards.

#### **h. Parent Involvement**

*We recognize that families exist in a variety of forms today, and that regardless of the form; the family remains a cornerstone of the community. We recognize*

*families as a teacher of their children, and we consider whole families – rather than just individual children – to be the learner. Therefore, the parents of children that we serve are very involved with their children’s education and with supporting the school.*

(GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education)

DaVinci Charter School designates parents and guardians as “First Teacher.” This designation is out of recognition that learning begins in the home and that learning in the school is greatly influenced by what occurs at home.

- Parents will be strongly encouraged to attend various parent education classes in the first year, and one class each year thereafter.
- Parents will be provided with frequent updates on their children’s learning experiences, performance, and behavior.
- Parents will always be made welcome in the school, and an expectation of volunteerism will be made clear.
- Pot-luck meals will provide parents/guardians with opportunities to visit the school and socialize in a comfortable atmosphere that builds community.
- Parents/guardians will be asked to participate in the Individualized Learning Design process.
- Parents/guardians will be equipped with packets that will help them support their child’s learning.
- Parents/guardians will have access to their child’s portfolio at any time they wish to visit the school.
- Class web pages or newsletters will help parents stay informed of activities and units.
- A Family-Oriented Homework program will involve children and their parents together in the design of inquiry projects of mutual interest that may or may not be tied to units being explored at school.
- Parents/guardians will also be asked to attend classes with their students during designated “open house” days, so that they can see and experience what their children are doing and learning.
- Parents will be represented in the school’s Community Council.
- All parents will be invited to participate in the school’s continuous, participatory design process.

#### **i. Teacher as Advisor**

*Teachers should not only be educators, but true mentors for the students and other teachers. Living up to the principle of mentorship, our system provides for continuity of mentor relationships across time.*

(GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education)

Students will work with a single teacher and a home class for the majority of the day. This teacher is their “principal teacher.” The exceptions are for “specials,” for activities in which the

student travels to another team-teacher's class, and for electives and SEEC activities. The principal teacher works one-on-one with students during Individualized Learning Design sessions and in the negotiation of individual units of work and family-oriented homework. Teachers also advise students during the morning and afternoon home room discussions.

Learners benefit from a close working relationship with adults in their school. This remains true well into adolescence. By working with the same students for most of the day, a teacher will come to know their students' abilities, interests, and styles well. This benefit is even stronger when extended over a multi-year period.

The teacher-advisor role is a natural aspect of the teacher-student partnership that characterizes the DaVinci . In order to best meet the needs of the student, the teacher is also a facilitator of the students Individualized Learning Design and Collaborative Learning Design processes. By expanding the role of teacher beyond mere instructional "delivery" to the activity of reflecting upon the school experience and planning curriculum with students, the teacher's effectiveness and the student's learning will be better served.

## 5. Improving Student Learning

*Knowledge is something that is actively constructed by the learner; it cannot be imparted or received. Our learning experiences and instructional methods reflect this understanding of the mind. Inquiry-based and discovery-based methodologies will be used throughout the curriculum to engage learners in authentic and powerful learning. In-depth research and other resources will be available to learners to support their inquiries. Learners will be encouraged to find alternate ways to solve problems, both in the technical disciplines of math and science and throughout the curriculum in general. Dialogue – the practice of extended and in-depth conversation about assumptions, ideas, issues, and solutions – is embraced as essential for learning and fostered from an early age.*

*Our educational system will not serve as an obstacle to the in-born passion for and activity of learning which life in itself would normally support in abundance. Every child has an innate desire to learn, and we must not do anything to inhibit that desire. We recognize that the source of motivation and the ultimate source of responsibility for learning is the learner, not a school or system. To the greatest extent possible, we preserve the intrinsic motivation for learning. Learning is pursued for learning's sake. At the same time, children will understand how learning helps them in their lives.*

(GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education)

The instructional plan of DaVinci Charter School will improve student learning through a variety of paths.

First and foremost, the educational program is as personalized as possible through the negotiated curriculum process. Involving learners in the design of their learning builds in them a greater sense of responsibility and

ownership in education. This not only fosters greater motivation, but it also efficiently assists with tailoring instruction according to challenge level, multiple intelligences and learning styles, and interests. All of these will, in turn, lead to greater student achievement.

Second, our community-based emphasis will help us to serve entire families rather than individual students. Since conditions within the family have a significant impact on learner achievement, we expect positive impact on the learning that goes on within and through the school.

Third, within the school the concept of “community” will be brought to life, as learners learn from an early age to respect, to cooperate, and to create with others. This, combined with the encouragement of exploration and risk-taking in learning that is provided by our pedagogical approach, will create an environment that is safe for learning and development.

Fourth, the integrated nature of our curriculum will foster improved understanding because of reinforcement across disciplinary boundaries. The integrated approach is inherently more realistic and intuitively appealing to learners.

Fifth, arts integration will tap into a greater range of intelligences, thereby reaching more learners cognitively, as well as providing more motivating learning experiences and an improved aesthetic environment for learning.

Sixth, an emphasis on inquiry-based learning provides for hands-on and minds-on learning, which allows learners to construct knowledge for themselves. This is more effective for understanding and more motivating for learners, and engages learners in higher-order thinking. It also encourages the skills and attitudes for lifelong learning, adaptability, creativity, and inventiveness.

Seventh, the “4R’s” approach – a learner-centered disciplinary and instructional model that emphasizes respect, responsibility, responsiveness, and resourcefulness – has contributed significantly to improved performance and atmosphere in other schools. We expect that it will do no less in the DaVinci Charter School

## **6. Academic Freedom, Controversial Issues and Religion**

DaVinci Charter School shall offer an educational program appropriate to the level of learner understanding which:

- allows and/or encourages students to study and discuss controversial issues;
- provides opportunities to examine evidence, facts, and differing viewpoints; and

- teaches the importance of fact, the value of judgment, and the respect of conflicting opinions.

## **B. Assessment**

*The role of assessment and evaluation is to help and encourage the learner. In our system, assessment and evaluation are utilized by learners for empowering feedback rather than being feared as extrinsic and authoritarian judgment. Furthermore, assessment and evaluation are designed to measure and reflect true understanding and application of knowledge rather than memorized facts and rote skills.*

(GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education)

### **1. Measurable Educational Standards**

The measurable educational standards of DaVinci Charter School are defined in terms of the demonstration of working knowledge or deep understanding in classroom-level performances. These performances will be designed to meet Idaho Standards objectives and any additional standards developed within school. Correlation to Idaho Standards will be explicitly demonstrated. Teachers will also use a variety of other formal and informal assessments, such as self-assessment, peer assessment, quizzes, tests, and work sampling, to gauge student progress.

Among the other measurable educational standards we will employ are performance benchmarks on standardized assessments employed by the State of Idaho. These benchmarks are targets that exceed current achievement levels of schools that serve DaVinci students.

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#### Idaho Reading Indicator

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65% of Kindergarten, Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3 equivalent students will be at benchmark on the Idaho Reading Indicator show at least 5% growth from their Fall IRI scores to their Spring scores. As data continues to show growth we will increase this goal as necessary.

#### Idaho Standards Achievement Test

65% of Grade 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 equivalent students will achieve a Proficient or Advanced score on the Reading, Language, and Math Spring ISATs or show a minimum of a 5% growth from the previous year's Spring ISAT tests. As data continues to show growth, we will increase these goals as necessary.

NOTE: Students involved with the Idaho English Language Assessment (IELA) students will be expected to show growth on their assessments, including IRI or ISAT tests, each year in math, reading and language as determined through goals set in the same manner as above – or through any goals set with the schools IELA program or IEP if required. The ultimate goal is to bring them to at least proficient/benchmark levels so goals will be raised as deemed necessary.

If any of these goals are not met, DaVinci will re-examine its instructional practices and make appropriate improvements.

## **2. Measuring Student Progress**

In the DaVinci model, we emphasize assessment that enhances learning. Learners will be encouraged to see assessments as learning experiences and as challenges. They will not be used as extrinsic motivators. The remainder of this section describes the blended modes of assessment that will be employed to monitor learner progress and ensure accountability within the system.

### **a. All-School Assessments**

Data will be gathered through various well-researched assessments. All grades will follow the same time schedule in order to show growth through various assessments as found to be researched based, valid and reliable. Assessments will be used for math, reading and language and will be analyzed to guide instructional needs and interventions. These will be graphed and analyzed on an all-school basis and more intensely on an individual student basis to track growth over the months and years. This information will be used to guide instruction for each learner.

The school will follow a Response to Intervention (RTI) model developed through their School Improvement Team through continuous professional development in the RTI and SLD areas. A Tier process will be established considering students' academics, behavior, and backgrounds to identify student needs and growth as they move towards Tiers showing academic improvement.

### **b Classroom Assessments**

Teachers will routinely employ formal and informal classroom assessments in order to gauge learners' understanding and skills. Some assessments will be drawn from commercially available curricula in use, such as the math texts. Learners will be encouraged to evaluate their own learning as well.

### **c Performance-Based and Authentic Assessment**

Performance-based and authentic assessments will be designed along with classroom units by teachers and by students in collaboration with teachers.. These assessments will be devised with reference to Essential Learnings elements and Idaho Standards goals, and objectives. They will be presented in the form of authentic and realistic situations that challenge learners across different learning areas and multiple intelligences.

Learners will learn to participate in the evaluation of their own performances alongside teachers. Both will be looking for evidence of, at a minimum, working knowledge, and preferably deep understanding. Exemplary work samples will be chosen and recorded in student portfolios.

### **d. Standardized Assessments**

All students are required by Idaho law to take statewide standardized assessments, including the Idaho Reading Indicator, and the ISAT tests. Although the DaVinci does not employ the conventional age-grading system within the school, these tests will be administered to students at the grade level that is equivalent for their age, and according to the schedule required by state laws governing standardized testing.

In addition, administrative law requires that students enrolled in the DaVinci Charter School participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), if the school is selected.

#### **4. Accountability for Meeting Measurable Student Educational Standards**

*A public education system should be always seeking its purpose within the larger context of stakeholder aspirations and the conditions of a changing world. The term “stakeholder” includes everyone that is affected by the education system, which means everyone in the community, children and adults, present and future. We maintain that educational programs and policies should be adapted to the community, the school, the classroom, and the learner. School curriculum should continually be examined and constructed to reflect community ideals. We also seek to foster a system that learns as it fosters learning among individuals. Therefore, the system is built around a living spiral of design that explicitly bridges aspirations, assumptions, values, intentions, plans, actions, and results.*

(GCCS/DaVinci Image of Education)

In DaVinci Charter School, everyone is considered accountable for meeting measurable student educational standards. This includes students, staff, parents, local District and state administrators, and the system itself.

Students are held accountable through the choices they make in the design of units, the effort that they put in, and the strategies that they employ to improve their progress. Feedback on performance will be very clear to them through the multi-faceted assessment approach used by the school. If students do not make adequate progress in progressing through standards and Essential Learnings, they consequently are guided to invest more time in those areas until they are making adequate progress.

Teachers and school administration are accountable for meeting measurable student educational standards through the progress that their students make through standards and Essential Learnings, as well as via classroom assessments, work sampling and portfolios, and standardized exams. Teachers must also consistently uphold the “5R’s” principles and the school discipline policy, which is important to the atmosphere of the school as a learning community.

Parents are held accountable by being expected to attend parenting education classes and by being asked to be an active participant in the life of the school, by which they may better understand what is happening in the classroom and in the lives of their children.

District and state administrators are held accountable for adequate funding, for open communication, and for making cooperation and coordination of support services as simple and effective as possible.

***The DaVinci system itself is accountable through its core design. If the design is not adequately equipping learners for success, then the entire design spiral – from Image of Education to Design Solutions that have been implemented – will be examined by the school stakeholders for areas of weakness in adapting to the realities of how students learn, to the needs of the community, or to available resources. The Image of Education can be altered, new Design Solutions can be generated, and policies and methodologies can be changed to strengthen the school and its learners. \****

## C. Special Education Services

### 1. Special Education Overview

DaVinci Charter School supports the idea that all people have a right to equal access to educational opportunity, regardless of physical or mental conditions that may create challenges for them in typical learning environments. We believe that the Participatory Educational Design framework employed in our system, coupled with the Individualized Learning Design and Collaborative Learning Design processes that are an extension of participatory design, lends itself in powerful ways to serving the needs of individuals with disabilities in education.

In addition to conforming procedurally to the requirements of the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) and other federal laws, DaVinci embraces the following principles that serve to guarantee equity:

Universal Design for Learning: Our comprehensive design process is uniquely open to design solutions that serve the needs of all learners, even when those solutions are originally intended to provide equity for learners qualified for special services under IDEA. This happens to be the basis for the Universal Design for Learning model advanced by David H. Rose et al in the context of special education. In short, the brain research-based UDL framework proposes that educators strive for three kinds of flexibility:

- To represent information in multiple formats and media.
- To provide multiple pathways for students’ action and expression.
- To provide multiple ways to engage students’ interest and motivation.

The three UDL principles, implemented with new media, can help educators improve how they set goals, individualize instruction, and assess students’ progress.

Individualized Learning Design: The responsibility extended to learners for evaluating and reflecting upon their own learning program will also be afforded to learners with special needs to the greatest extent possible.

Inclusion: When provided with a viable choice between isolating learners with special needs and including them in regular classes, we will opt for inclusion. This is in accordance with the spirit of the legal requirement for Least Restrictive Environments.

Parental Involvement: Parents will be involved in every step taken by the school in regard to their children with special needs. This applies even in cases where there is only a perception among staff that special needs may exist and may potentially be best served under an IEP (Individual Education Plan) or 504 plan.

Cooperative Teaching: Regular teachers and special education staff will work closely together in the classroom to best serve their learners with special needs.

## **2. DaVinci Protocol for Identifying and Serving Learners with Special Needs**

### **1. Pre-Referral**

Pre-Referral is an initial step that may be prompted by observations by teachers or other staff and/or parents. Records from previous schools may indicate special needs as well. The Pre-Referral Team will consist of the school's administrative director, one or more of the child's classroom teachers, the school counselor, the school's special education teacher, and other specialized staff. Parental involvement will be sought at this stage. The task of the Pre-Referral Team is to assess the situation and determine the actions to be taken to meet the needs of the child.

The ideal outcome of pre-referral is prompt action that enables the learner to both participate fully and learn fully without the need for additional resources. Regular teachers and special education staff will cooperate both within and outside of the classroom to exhaust all feasible responses to an emergent special need. Interventions might include changes in the presentation of information, changes in classroom tasks or organization, changes in assessment, or changes in technology. However, if best efforts at intervention at this level are not successful, testing for disability will be sought.

### **2. Testing and the Child Study Team**

If pre-referral interventions are unsuccessful, a Child Study Team will be prepared to test the child for disabilities. The permission of parents or guardians must be obtained for testing to occur. The Child Study Team will consist of specialists from among GCCS and those contracted privately or through the Boise School District, who have expertise in evaluating the range of possible disabilities that a child may have. If parental permission for testing is not obtained, the Pre-Referral Team will, with the greatest possible cooperation of parents/guardians, attempt to explore other options for meeting the needs of the child.

### **3. Conclusive Results of Testing and the Individual Education Plan**

If testing concludes that the child has a disability defined within IDEA, then an Individual Education Plan (IEP) will be developed for meeting the needs of the child in a Least Restrictive Environment. The student's Individualized Learning Design will integrate the content and prescriptions of the IEP. The IEP will be re-evaluated annually to reflect the results of child behavior and performance, follow-up testing, the effectiveness of various interventions, and

the recommendations of those involved in the IEP's creation (staff, parents, and student).

It is the long-term goal of the school to eliminate the need for an IEP and special services through enabling the learner to advance physically, cognitively, and emotionally to the point of equity in the general environment of both the school and the community.

### **3. Section 504**

Students who do not qualify under IDEA may qualify for special services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This eligibility will be assessed during the Pre-Referral and Testing stages. Rather than an IEP, qualification under 504 will result in an Accommodation Plan.

## **4. Special Education Services and Facilities**

### **a. Continuum of Services**

DaVinci Charter School will assume primary responsibility for assessments conducted in accordance with IDEA, if deemed advisable by the DaVinci Pre-Referral Team as indicated above, and approved by parents. DaVinci will also assume primary responsibility for the continuum of special education services for which qualified students are entitled. This continuum includes:

- i. instruction in general education classrooms
- ii. special classes
- iii. special schools outside of the DaVinci
- iv. home instruction
- v. instruction in hospitals and institutions.

i. The majority of students with disabilities in Idaho are served in the general education classroom. This is expected to hold true for DaVinci Charter School as well. General education teachers will be trained to provide suitable adaptations and modifications, and will cooperate closely with the special education teacher and assistants to meet the needs of all students within their classrooms.

ii. If the Least Restrictive Environment requirement is not satisfied through instruction in the general classroom, students may receive a portion of their instruction in a special classroom staffed by the special education teacher and assistants. Specialized personnel – including but not limited to a psychologist, a speech/language pathologist, a physical therapist, an

occupational therapist, and a vision specialist – will be contracted for from either private agencies or neighboring school districts if required.

iii. If DaVinci is unable to provide specialized services within the context of the school, it may seek the services of special schools, which may include receiving services at those schools, while continuing the DaVinci educational program for the student.

iv. If home care is required, DaVinci will contract with specialized personnel as necessary, in the same manner as for services provided within the school setting, to provide services while continuing the DaVinci educational program for the student.

v. If institutionalization or hospitalization is required, DaVinci will contract with specialized personnel as necessary, in the same manner as for services provided within the school setting, to provide services while continuing the DaVinci educational program for the student.

In addition to contracting with private agencies, the school may seek to contract with the Boise School District to provide specialized services. The Board of Trustees of the District has verbally indicated a willingness to provide such services.

## **5. Professional Development**

Professional development for DaVinci staff will begin prior to the opening of the school. This process will include the study of written materials, electronic communication, and in-person training sessions. Training will focus on the school's discipline system, curriculum, methodologies, methods, and tools. Training will be provided by DaVinci personnel, consultants, or providers of products that the school will be utilizing. Professional development will continue during the school year, primarily afterschool and on weekends. In-service days may be planned as well.

DaVinci staff will also participate in professional development activities sponsored by local school districts, including those related to meeting the needs of students with special needs. Other professional development opportunities will be utilized as appropriate.

## **6. Special Education Facilities**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), DaVinci Charter School ensures that its facilities and programs are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. DaVinci facilities will meet the standards specified in Title II of the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

In the event that general classroom inclusion is not feasible as a Least Restrictive Environment for a qualified student or students with special

needs, instruction in the context of a self-contained classroom may be an option depending on the school's capacity to provide the best service. Otherwise, alternatives in the Boise School District or the Meridian School District, or elsewhere, will be identified for fulfilling the LRE requirement.

## **7. Discipline Policy**

DaVinci will fully conform to guidelines for discipline provided in the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) for students receiving special education services. To the extent that IDEA guidelines are not violated, students receiving special education services will be subject to the same "4R's" discipline policy as all other students.

## **8. Transportation**

DaVinci will seek to contract with the Boise School District, or with a private contractor, to provide transportation for any student with a disability who is enrolled at the school and who may, because of the nature of their disabilities, be entitled to specialized transportation as a related service.

## **9. DaVinci Special Education Staff**

DaVinci Charter School will be prepared to have on staff a certified Special Education Teacher and, if necessary, one or more Special Education Assistants. Other staff may be contracted privately or through the Boise School District, as indicated above.

## **10. Special Education Budget**

The school has allocated in its budget salary for one full-time special education teacher. The school will receive Title VI-B funds proportionate to the number of students on the current school year's December 1 child count. The amount of these funds is not known at this time. The school will also receive special education funding from the State of Idaho in accordance with the unit funding formula. These funds will be used for the provision of special education services within the school. The school will also claim reimbursement for a portion of the costs of approved contracts with private agencies that meet state standards or with one or more school districts from whom services are contracted. State special education funding is expected to comprise at least \$35,000 to \$50,000 of total funding annually, based on federal formulas and a comparison to nine small Idaho school districts with sizes that approximate that of DaVinci Charter School

## **11. Gifted and Talented Learners**

DaVinci will utilize eligibility criteria developed by the Idaho Department of Education as stipulated in Idaho Code 33-2003 to identify students who possess demonstrated or potential abilities that give evidence of high

performing capabilities in intellectual, creative, specific academic or leadership areas, or ability in the performing or visual arts.

The DaVinci program is designed to provide virtually unlimited opportunity for learning. The concept of enrichment for learners who are gifted in particular areas, or have a higher rate of learning in general, is not expected to be necessary because learners will have a role in designing their learning and will have opportunities to negotiate individualized challenges. They will also be challenged to work in multiple intelligence areas and at higher levels of thinking in the normal course of school work.

## **12. Limited English Proficiency / English Language Learners**

DaVinci Charter School will identify English Language Learners at registration by providing a home language survey. Until a state test is implemented, English Language Learners will be given the IPT test produced by Ballard and Tighe or the Woodcock-Muñoz Language Survey (WMLS) to determine language level. The results will be incorporated into those students' Individualized Learning Design process.

DaVinci Charter School will take a balanced approach to children for whom English is a learning language. We will regard such students as assets, rather than liabilities. To be limited in English proficiency due to recent emigration from another country brings with it the strength in a non-English proficiency. This strength must be built upon, rather than lost. The approach taken in DaVinci, therefore, is – wherever possible – partial instruction in the native language until sufficient strength in English establishes a condition of equity in the classroom. We may also employ the SIOP (Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol) method of sheltered instruction in English until sufficient strength in English is established in the context of various curricular areas. Several staff members will be familiar with ESL/ELL methodologies and will be able to provide support in this area.

ELL students will be required to attend all-English classrooms for significant parts of the day. Teachers in these classes will be equipped with material and technology to adapt tasks and instruction linguistically. In addition, the project-based nature of the DaVinci model, as well as arts integration, will assist ELL students in learning and in demonstrating their learning, in spite of language barriers. Furthermore, because all learners will be required to take both Spanish and American Sign Language, communication gaps for some learners will be eased significantly.

## **D. Annual Audit**

An annual educational program and financial audit will be conducted after the completion of each charter school year. DaVinci Charter School will

conduct a programmatic audit through information obtained via its own instruments, timeline, and processes. Among the points of reference for this audit will be the degree to which the school's actual structure and processes are in accordance with our Image of Education, and whether the Image should be revised. Also reviewed, among other elements, will be our responsiveness to student needs, the adequacy of resources for sustaining our educational mission, and the progress of students through Idaho Standards and DaVinci standards.

An annual financial audit will be performed by an independent auditing firm. The Idaho Charter School Commission may choose to do an independent audit at their own expense.

Results of the operational audit and the financial audit will be provided to the Idaho Charter School Commission annually in the form of an Annual Report. This report shall also provide for an annual student profile including: socioeconomic data; mobility rates; enrollment and departures; number of special education students and types of disabilities; programs for and dollars spent on special needs students; number of minority students; student achievement and progress; and attendance rates.

## **E. Accreditation**

DaVinci Charter School will comply with all accreditations standards and procedures of the State of Idaho (Idaho Code 33-5205(3)(e); 33-5210 (4)(b)) and will obtain accreditation through operation in accordance with Idaho Code 33-1612 and Administrative Rule 08.02.02.140. The school will be state accredited. The school will submit accreditation reports to the State Department of Education as requested. The process that we use for accreditation will be selected from among the options that include the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools, an informal local School Improvement Plan (SIP), the Idaho School Accreditation School Improvement (SASI) model, or an alternative model. The Board of Directors will establish a committee to select the most appropriate alternative and oversee the accreditation process. DaVinci will also seek accreditation through the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools once the equivalent of grades 9-12 is added.

# **IV. STUDENTS**

## **A. Admission Procedures**

### **1. Public School Attendance Alternatives**

The compact and contiguous attendance area for DaVinci Charter School will be the City of Garden City. Public school attendance alternatives at the elementary level include all schools within the Boise School District (open enrollment policy), but specifically Whittier Elementary, Mountain View Elementary, Pierce Park Elementary, and Shadow Hills Elementary, all of whose attendance areas cover Garden City. In the Meridian district, Garden City children are served by Andrus Elementary. At the junior high level, public school alternatives currently serving Garden City include North Junior High School and Riverglen Junior High School. In the Meridian district, Garden City students attend Eagle Middle School. At the high school level, Garden City students in the Boise district currently attend either Boise High School or Capitol High School. In Meridian, students attend Eagle High School.

## **2. Enrollment Capacity**

The enrollment capacity of the DaVinci will initially be approximately 205. This figure is derived from a grouping of approximately 20 for each of the kindergarten, first, second and third grade levels, and a grouping of 25 for each subsequent grade up to grade 8. This enrollment capacity represents a manageable size that can provide an effective demonstration of the educational model, serve as a base from which the school can grow, and provide service to a sufficiently large and diverse group of children in Garden City to justify the title of “community school.”

## **3. Over Enrollment Provision: Enrollment Lottery**

In order to establish initial enrollment, and to fill any seats that open at any level, a lottery will be held on the third Wednesday of March. The lottery window may be expanded to more than one day, moved to a later date, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, for purposes of increasing opportunities to participate in the lottery. Children enrolled in DaVinci Charter School automatically have a place in the school for the subsequent school year. All families who wish to enroll their children in the Garden City Community School in the next school year will be eligible to enter their children into the lottery in accordance with Idaho Code 33-5205.

The lottery will give preference to children who reside in Garden City. Within this core attendance area, the lottery will randomly establish a ranking for access to available seats in each age-grade level. If there are any seats open after all applicants from Garden City have had a chance to be selected, non-Garden City children who have applied will be added to the random ranking. Once the lottery is drawn and initial openings are filled, parents whose children were not selected may keep their children – in the same ranking – on a temporary waiting list that expires on October 1 of the subsequent

school year. If there are any unexpected openings, their child may be eligible for a seat.

In accordance with Idaho Code 33-5205 (3)(i), children of persons designated by the Board of Directors as founders of DaVinci Charter School will have the first option to enroll their children at DaVinci, such enrollment not to exceed 10% of the total enrollment of the school. In accordance with the same provision of Idaho Code, siblings of students enrolled at DaVinci Charter School will take priority for any openings in enrollment.

If two or more children are equally eligible as siblings for a single seat in a class, a random drawing will be held among the eligible children.

#### **4. No Discrimination in Admissions**

There will be no discrimination in the admissions process. The lottery will be entirely random. A representative from the Idaho Public Charter School Commission will be invited to observe the procedure. Application forms will be written in formats accessible to all parents. Application forms will be made available in paper and on the Internet in forms accessible to the blind. Spanish-language forms will be available.

#### **5. No Student Required to Attend**

No student will be required to attend DaVinci Charter School, either due to geographic location, success in the lottery process, or compulsion from any source.

#### **6. Publicizing the Enrollment Process**

Announcements about the lottery and procedures for participation will be made at least three months in advance, and at least once again one month in advance, in a variety of media, in both English and Spanish. Announcements will be made through The Idaho Statesman, the Garden City utility mailing, and via Spanish-language radio. Flyers will be posted at public locations throughout Garden City, including the Garden City Public Library and the Head Start facility located in Garden City. We will encourage outreach to traditionally under-served populations to maximize broad participation in the lottery.

#### **7. Suspension, Expulsion, and Re-Enrollment**

##### **a. Suspension**

Students may be suspended according to DaVinci behavioral policies as stated in the school handbook. The Board of Directors makes the ultimate decision regarding suspension, upon the recommendation of the Administrative Director. The Administrative Director will be responsible for

ensuring that the due process procedure required by Idaho Code 33-205, described in section (b) below, is followed.

Upon suspension, the student will wait in silence until picked up by his or her parents. The purpose for the suspension procedure will be explained in detail to help the student decide what he or she wants to do, rather than see suspension as punishment. Parents will be advised to shelter the student from distractions such as television, computers, friends, or siblings until the next morning, in order to permit the student to contemplate the reasons for his or her suspension and to decide whether he or she wants to return to the school. After a suspension, the student returns to school the next day.

Suspension of students with disabilities shall not violate the requirements of federal law part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

## **b. Expulsion**

### **i. Violation-Related Expulsion**

According to behavioral policies as stated in the school handbook, recommendations for expulsion may be made. The student's parents are to be present along with the student. The student's counselor is present as his or her advocate. The question addressed will be whether or not to seek expulsion. The student may speak. The administrator will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors for a decision. The Board of Directors makes the decision without additional input from the student or advocate beyond what is required by the due process procedure stated below, in accordance with Idaho Code 33-205.

No student shall be expelled nor denied enrollment without the Board of Directors having first given written notice to the parent or guardian of the student, which notice shall state the grounds for the proposed expulsion or denial of enrollment and the time and place where such parent or guardian may appear to contest the action of the Board to deny school attendance, and which notice shall also state the rights of the student to be represented by counsel, to produce witnesses and submit evidence on his own behalf, and to cross-examine any adult witnesses who may appear against him. Within a reasonable period of time following such notification, the Board of Directors shall grant the student and his parents or guardian a full and fair hearing on the proposed expulsion or denial of enrollment. However, the Board shall allow a reasonable period of time between such notification and the holding of such hearing to allow the student and his parents or guardian to prepare their response to the charge. Any student who is within the age of compulsory attendance, who is expelled or denied enrollment as herein provided, shall come under the purview of the juvenile corrections act, and an authorized representative of the Board shall, within five (5) days, give

written notice of the student's expulsion to the prosecuting attorney of the county of the pupil's residence.

### **c. Re-Admission**

An expelled student may re-apply for admission after a period of one year, unless an exception is made by the Board of Directors. Alone or with parents, he or she can be interviewed by a committee established by the administrator. The committee, which will not include the student's counselor, must make a decision by consensus. A parent may re-enter an expelled student into the lottery in a subsequent school year, but will not be accepted without passing the same committee consensus process.

## **B. Health and Safety**

### **1. Policies**

In order to maintain a safe learning environment that is conducive to learning, DaVinci Charter School will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies. A key element of the Garden City's safety policies and procedures are the school-wide rules and the 4R's system described in III.A.3a and b. These provide a clear and consistently enforced policy that will help to ensure the physical and emotional safety of students. In addition to these, health and safety policies will be developed in consultation with the school's insurance carriers and at a minimum will address the following topics and include the following provisions:

- A requirement that all enrolling students and staff provide records documenting immunizations to the extent required for enrollment in non-charter public schools.
- Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fire, earthquakes, and human threats. Procedures will include regular emergency drills addressing fire, earthquake, and intruder emergencies.
- Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens.
- A policy requiring that full-time instructional and administrative staff receive training in emergency response, including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent.
- Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicines.

- Policy for inspection of the facility in compliance with Idaho Code 39-4130. We will meet all required city, state, and federal health, safety, fire, accessibility, and building codes for public schools..
- A policy that the school will be housed in facilities that have received Fire Marshal approval and that have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer.
- A policy establishing that the school functions as a drug, alcohol, tobacco, and firearm free workplace. There will be a zero tolerance policy for firearms, illicit drugs, and alcohol on school grounds. Violations will grounds for suspension and/or expulsion. Law enforcement agencies will be immediately notified if weapons are found on or near school grounds.
- Once a student is reasonably suspected of using or being under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance in violation of section 37-2732C, Idaho Code, regardless of any previous voluntary disclosure, the school administrator or designee shall contact the student's parent, legal guardian or custodian, and report the incident to law enforcement. The fact that a student has previously disclosed use of alcohol or a controlled substance shall not be deemed a factor in determining reasonable suspicion at a later date.
- A policy that each employee of the school submit to a criminal background check and furnish a criminal record summary pursuant to Idaho Code 33-130.
- A policy that all visitors will sign in and receive and wear a visitor's pass when visiting the school building.
- Regulations regarding matters of public health including sanitation, sewage, and a safe water supply.
- Adequate space, equipment, and safety systems provided for all areas of the school building, grounds, and school related activities.
- Student access to public health, mental health, child protective services, vocational rehabilitation, job services, law enforcement and/or juvenile justice liaison.
- Student access to counseling, school psychological services, health and school nursing services, and physical and/or occupational therapy.
- Data collection on student behavior referrals, suspensions, and expulsions that will be used for school improvement strategies.
- Procedures for the supervision and applicable training of employees to ensure a positive school environment.
- A zero-tolerance policy for harassment based on gender, ethnicity, age, and any other characteristics of students or staff.

- A policy that field trips will be supervised by DaVinci staff.
- A policy that internship opportunities, if not directly supervised by DaVinci staff, require parental permission, any necessary waivers, and proof of insurance coverage.

A school safety team will be established with representation from the school and community for development, implementation and monitoring of the safe learning environment.

The policies will be incorporated as appropriate into the school's student and staff handbooks and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in the school's staff development efforts and governing board policies.

### **C. Transportation**

Transportation services will be contracted for at a level depending upon demand. An estimated first-year budget for bus transportation is \$35,000, which covers one route per day, of which 85% of the cost would be compensated for by the State of Idaho under charter school law. The school may acquire its own buses for student transportation. Carpooling will be encouraged for those families who choose not to use transportation provided.

### **D. Dual Enrollment**

In accordance with Idaho Code 33-203, dual enrollment will be an option for all students. It is a particularly likely option for students at the DaVinci Upper Secondary level until DaVinci has the resources and facilities to meet all of the needs of those students. Dual enrollment with Boise or Meridian schools may be arranged for purposes of academic programs, extra-curricular programs, or both.

Arrangements for dual enrollment will be determined on a case-by-case basis in order to ensure that the student meets the requirements of both DaVinci and the classes or programs that they are enrolled in at the second school.

Oversight of academic standards relating to participation in nonacademic public school activities is the responsibility of the primary educational provider for that student. In order for any DaVinci student to participate in nonacademic public school activities for which public school students must demonstrate academic proficiency or eligibility, the student shall demonstrate composite grade-level academic proficiency on any State Board of Education-recognized achievement test, portfolio, or other mechanism as provided for in State Board of Education rules. Additionally, a student shall be eligible if he achieves a minimum composite, core or survey test score with the average or higher than average range as established by the test service utilized on any nationally-normed test. Demonstrated proficiency shall be used to determine eligibility for the current and next following school years.

A DaVinci student who has been unable to maintain academic eligibility is ineligible to participate in nonacademic public school activities as a for the duration of the school year in which the student becomes academically ineligible and for the following academic year.

A DaVincistudent participating in nonacademic public school activities must reside within the attendance boundaries of the school for which the student participates, unless the local school district's open enrollment policies allow for exceptions.

Dual enrollment includes the option of joint enrollment in a regular public school and an alternative public school program. Funding will be allocated in accordance with rules established by the State Board of Education.

Dual enrollment shall include the option of enrollment in a post-secondary institution. Any credits earned from an accredited post-secondary institution shall be credited toward State Board of Education high school graduation requirements. Options will include Boise State University's JumpStart program. Any costs associated with dual enrollment in a post-secondary institution, such as student fees or tuition, will be the responsibility of the student's family.

## V. PERSONNEL

### A. Employment Practices

To be considered for employment, individuals will meet, but not be limited to, the following requirements:

- Teachers and administrators will possess an Idaho teaching certificate, waiver or limited certification option and will comply with the professional codes and standards approved by the State Board of Education, including standards for ethics or conduct.
- Other employees will be required to possess expertise in their field and an ability and interest in working with children of all ages.
- Administrators will possess experience with management and leadership in an educational context.
- Teachers and administrators will be committed to the school's philosophy and to effectively implementing school policies in their classrooms.
- The school's employment procedures will fully comply with Idaho Code, including with respect to criminal record summaries and fingerprinting. All staff members will submit a criminal history check fingerprint card to the Office of Certification at the State Department of Education.

- All employees will be hired by the Board of Directors under “at will” contracts pursuant to written job specifications and all employees will comply with all personnel policies adopted by the Board.

All teachers and administrators will be on a written contract approved by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (Idaho Code 33-5206 (4)).

## **B. Employee Benefits**

All employees will participate in and have access to the following programs and benefits: group health insurance, leave benefits, Public Employee Retirement System (PERSI), Federal Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, and Worker’s Compensation Insurance, to the extent allowed and required by law. All staff members will be covered by unemployment insurance and worker’s compensation insurance funded in the budget.

## **C. Transfer Rights**

Employees of DaVinci Charter School will not have the transfer rights to a District that would apply to District employees or employees of a charter school that has been chartered by a District.

## **D. Accumulated Sick Leave**

Accumulated sick leave of Idaho teachers that may be employed by the school will be credited to newly hired Idaho teachers and transferred to the personnel records of the charter school, as described in Idaho Code 33-1217.

## **E. Experience for Salary Schedule**

Certified teachers in DaVinci Charter School will be considered public school teachers. Educational experience shall accrue for service in a charter school and such experience shall be counted by local school districts when a teacher returns after employment in DaVinci Charter School.

## **F. Health and Safety**

The procedures to ensure the health and safety of staff are the same as those designed to ensure the health and safety of students as described in the Student section of this charter application.

## **G. Collective Bargaining**

Employees of the DaVinci Charter School will be considered a separate unit from any school district for purposes of collective bargaining.

## VI. ADMINISTRATION

### A. Administrative Services

Administrative services will be provided by the DaVinci Charter School Educational Director supplemented by other contracted services as needed. Annual programmatic and financial reports will be presented to the Board of Directors, and to the Charter School Commission in the form of an Annual Report, as outlined in part III.D. of this petition. The Board of Directors, represented by its president, will be the primary liaison between the school and the Idaho Charter School Commission. Financial operations may be contracted out to licensed and bonded entities. Funding sources will include state allocations, federal start-up grants, state grants, private grants, business partnerships, and donations.

In addition to an Educational Director, the school may also establish the position of Business Director to specifically manage report preparation, grant-writing and administration, contracting and staffing details.

## VII. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

### A. Annual Audit and Reporting

DaVinci Charter School will conduct an independent financial audit annually. The Idaho Charter School Commission may also choose to do an independent audit at their own expense. DaVinci Charter School will follow the requirements set forth by Idaho statute regarding audit reporting.

## VIII. NON-INSTRUCTIONAL OPERATIONS

### A. Hold Harmless, Insurance, and Civil Liability

The Idaho Charter School Commission shall have no liability for the acts, omissions, debts or other obligations of this public charter school.

DaVinci Charter School will procure and maintain a policy of general liability insurance and errors and omissions insurance in the amount required by state law. Insurance will be provided by insurance companies who have and maintain a rating of at least "A" according to the A.M. Best Company.

Davinci will have the same role as a public school in matters of civil liability. Liability and property insurance will be similar to the coverage purchased by

local school districts. A copy of the proof of insurance will be given to the Idaho Charter School Commission each time it is renewed to insure continuous coverage.

DaVinci will provide a list of all other types and amounts of insurance required by the Idaho Charter School Commission to the Commission prior to the opening of the school.

## **B. Food Service**

DaVinci Charter School will provide food service. This may be in cooperation with the Boise School District or by separate contract with a private firm. DaVinci will also offer a free and reduced breakfast and lunch program for those students that are eligible. Eligibility will be determined by the Food and Nutrition Service, who set annual income levels for reduced and free lunches.

All families will be sent a Letter to Households regarding the free and reduced national school lunch program/school breakfast program. This letter invites applications from families who meet the eligibility according to the income chart in effect for that year. Verification of eligibility for free and reduced lunch will be established annually by randomly selecting 3% of applications for verification through demonstration of income. Total numbers for eligible students who enroll will be submitted to the Child Nutrition Section of the State Department of Education by November 15 of each year. Applications will be kept on file and utilization will be tracked and recorded each day. Reimbursement for food service is expected each month.

DaVinci will enroll with the Child Nutrition Section of the State Department of Education to receive registration information for mandatory training in food service, reporting, and record keeping.

Food inspections will be carried out in accordance with all applicable health regulations.

## **IX. SCHOOL FACILITIES**

The near-term facility plan for DaVinci Charter School is to house the school in modular classrooms on a leased site in Garden City.

The longer-term goal for facilities is to house DaVinci Charter School at a new, custom-designed facility, or a custom-renovated facility, in Garden City.

DaVinci will initiate a multi-year capital campaign that will help to fund the eventual construction of a new facility.

## **X. RELATIONS WITH THE IDAHO CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**

### **A. Dispute Resolution**

The Idaho Charter School Commission and the Board of Directors of DaVinci Charter School will resolve disputes relating to provisions of this charter by following the procedures set forth in Section 33-5209, Idaho Code, and the applicable rules of the State Board of Education, including a notice of defect and submission of a corrective action plan.

## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix A – Elector Petition Form**

**Appendix B – Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws**

**Appendix C – Image of Education**

**Appendix D – Letters of Support**

**Appendix E – Budget**