

## CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE

This Performance Certificate (“Certificate”) is executed on February 23, 2023, by and between the Idaho Public Charter School Commission (the “Authorizer”) and American Classical Schools of Idaho. (the “Charter Holder”) for the purpose of operating Idaho Novus Classical Academy (the “School”), an independent public school organized as an Idaho nonprofit corporation and established under the Public Charter Schools Act of 1998, Idaho Code section 33-5201 *et seq.*, as amended (the “Charter Schools Act”).

### RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Charter Holder is a non-profit entity incorporated with a board of directors; and

WHEREAS, on December 8, 2022, the Authorizer approved the charter petition (the “Charter”) subject to pre-opening conditions outlined in Appendix A;

NOW THEREFORE in consideration of the foregoing recitals and the mutual understandings contained herein, the Authorizer and Charter Holder agree as follows:

### SECTION 1: TERMS OF AUTHORIZATION

- A. **Establishment of School.** The Charter Holder is hereby authorized to implement at the School the program described in the Charter, attached to this Certificate as Appendix C and incorporated herein by this reference. Any significant changes to any section of the Charter, including the educational program, facilities plan, financial plan, or the management plan, during the School’s pre-operational period or first operational term shall be treated as an amendment in accordance with the Authorizer’s policy.
- B. **Term of Agreement.** The School’s operational term shall be from July 1, 2024 and end on June 30, 2029. Subsequent terms of operation may be issued by the Authorizer in accordance with Idaho Code and Authorizer policy.

### SECTION 2: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

- A. **School Mission.** The mission of the School is as follows:
  - Our mission is to train the minds and improve the hearts of students through a classical, content-rich curriculum that emphasizes virtuous living, traditional learning, and civic responsibility.
- B. **Grades Served.** The School may serve students in grades Kindergarten through 12.
- C. **Design Elements.** The School shall implement and maintain the following essential design elements of its educational program:
  - i. Teach reading and correct spelling through an explicit phonics program that gives children a systematic understanding of English orthography. This shall be verified by classroom observation, curriculum and/or teacher discussions.
  - ii. Require memorization of math facts, practice mental math, and explore the larger

concepts behind mathematical operations. This shall be verified by classroom observation and/or teacher discussions.

- iii. Impart a mastery of language through teaching formal grammar, word origins in order to build vocabulary, and Latin. This shall be verified by classroom observation, curriculum and/or teacher discussions.
- iv. Cultivate citizenship and historical knowledge through an intensive study of our American heritage, often using primary sources. 8<sup>th</sup> grade is a major transition point where students take the full sequence of questions on the U.S. citizenship test. This shall be verified by reviewing test results of 8<sup>th</sup> grade citizenship test.
- v. Build character in young people through explicit training in the moral virtues combined with the study and emulation of good character found in history and literature. This shall be verified by feedback obtained from parents via survey, classroom observation, and/or teacher discussions.

**D. Standardized Testing.** Students of the School shall be tested with the same standardized tests as other Idaho public school students.

**E. Accreditation.** The School shall be accredited as provided by rule of the State Board of Education. The School shall be accredited or appropriately credentialed by Cognia no later than the end of the school's first year serving high school students. All reports issued to the School from the accrediting agency shall be submitted to the Authorizer within five days of receipt.

### SECTION 3: SCHOOL GOVERNANCE

**A. Governing Board.** The School shall be governed by a non-profit board of directors (the "Board") incorporated by the Charter Holder. The Board shall serve as public agents authorized by the Authorizer, in a manner that is consistent with the terms of this Certificate, so long as such provisions are in accordance with state and federal laws, rules and regulations. The Board shall have final authority with respect to the School's operation, and shall have the responsibility of overseeing academic achievement, financial stability, and operational management of the School. The Charter Holder shall also be responsible for maintaining and enforcing a compliant Board and providing overall Board stewardship for the School.

**B. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.** The articles of incorporation and bylaws of the Charter Holder shall provide for governance of the operation of the School as a nonprofit corporation and a public charter school, and shall at all times be consistent with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and this Certificate. The Charter Holder shall notify the Authorizer of any modification to the articles of incorporation or bylaws within five business days of approval by the Charter Holder.

**C. Charter Board Composition.** The composition of the Board shall at all times be determined by and consistent with the articles of incorporation and bylaws, and all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and policies. The Charter Holder shall notify the Authorizer of any changes to its composition and provide an amended School Leadership Roster within five business days of it taking effect.

## SECTION 4: AUTHORIZER ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. Oversight Allowing Autonomy.** The Authorizer’s role shall be to evaluate the School’s performance outcomes according to this Certificate and the Performance Framework, and shall be to provide compliance oversight. The Authorizer shall comply with the provisions of the Charter Schools Act and the terms of this Certificate in a manner that does not unduly inhibit the autonomy of the School.
- B. Charter School Performance Framework.** The Charter School Performance Framework (“Performance Framework”) is attached and incorporated into this agreement as **Appendix B**. The Performance Framework shall be used to annually evaluate the School’s academic achievement, Board stewardship, operational management, and financial stability. The specific terms of the Performance Framework are determined by the Authorizer and shall be binding on the School.
- C. Identified Comparison Group.** For purposes of evaluating the School against the metrics and measures established in the Performance Framework, the School’s comparison group shall be identified as described below and shall be established for the length of the Certificate term.
- i. The comparison group for the School’s K-12 on-site program shall be West Ada School District (Joint School District No. 002), Emmett Independent District 221, Boise Independent District 001, and Horseshoe Bend School District 073.
- D. Authorizer to Monitor School Performance.** The Authorizer shall monitor and report on the School’s progress in relation to the indicators, measures, metrics, and targets set out in the Performance Framework. A formal report of the School’s academic, financial, and operational performance (“Performance Report”) shall be provided to the school and the public by the Authorizer annually. Data necessary to conduct this evaluation will be collected throughout the year. Additional reviews may be necessary if compliance concerns arise.
- E. School Performance.** The School shall meet standard on all measures of the Performance Framework. The Authorizer shall renew any charter in which the School met all the terms of its Certificate, including all appendices, at the time of renewal.
- F. Performance Framework as Basis for Renewal of Charter.** The School’s performance in relation to the Performance Framework shall provide the basis upon which the Authorizer shall decide whether to renew the School’s Charter at the end of the Certificate term.
- G. Required Reports.** The School shall prepare and submit reports as required by the Authorizer’s policy.
- H. Authorizer’s Right to Review.** The Authorizer maintains the right to request and review additional documentation if such becomes necessary in the course of regular oversight duties or to investigate the validity of a compliance concern. The Authorizer shall conduct its reviews in a manner that does not unduly inhibit the autonomy granted to the School.
- I. Site Visits.** The Authorizer may conduct site visits in accordance with the Authorizer’s policy. Reports from any site visit shall be made available to the School and shall be included in the School’s annual Performance Report.

## SECTION 5: SCHOOL OPERATIONS

- A. In General.** The School and the Charter Holder shall operate at all times in accordance with all federal and state laws, rules, regulations, local ordinances, and Authorizer policies applicable to public charter schools.
- B. Maximum Enrollment.** The maximum number of students who may be enrolled in the School, across all programs, shall be 702.
- C. Equitable Enrollment Procedures.** The School shall make student recruitment, admissions, enrollment, and retention decisions in a nondiscriminatory manner and without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, sex, marital status, religion, ancestry, disability or need for special education services. In no event may the School limit admission based on race, ethnicity, national origin, disability, gender, income level, athletic ability, or proficiency in the English language. If there are more applications to enroll in the School than there are spaces available, the School shall select students to attend using a random selection process that shall be publicly noticed and open to the public.
- i. **Calendar.** The School shall operate on a traditional nine-month calendar in which the last day of the regular term shall fall on or before June 30:
  - ii. The School will offer a summer school session for the purpose of acceleration and/or credit recovery.
- D. School Facilities.** The School shall operate at the following location(s): To Be Determined. The School shall provide the Authorizer with facilities documentation, including occupancy permits, fire marshal reports, building inspection reports, and health department reports for any facility newly occupied by the School, and any remodeling or construction project for which such documentation is necessary in accordance with Authorizer policy and in accordance with law, rule, regulations, and authorizer policy.
- E. Attendance Area.** The School's primary attendance area shall be used for the purposes of determining applicability of this enrollment preference category. The school shall have a primary attendance area as follows:
- The boundaries of the primary attendance area at Avimor are defined by an imaginary line beginning at 43.7552/-116.2816 along Highway 55 and extending east to 43.7551/-116.2346, then north until 43.8421/-116.2354, where it reconnects with Highway 55.
  - From Avimor, the primary attendance area continues north along Highway 55 to Horseshoe Bend.
  - Properties up to one mile east of Highway 55 between Avimor and Horseshoe Bend are also within the primary attendance area.
  - At Horseshoe Bend, the boundary continues northeast onto Canyon Street/Pioneer Road. After 4.55 miles the boundary shifts west onto Porter Creek Road for 1.33 miles, then south onto Highway 55, headed out of Horseshoe Bend.
  - The primary attendance area in Horseshoe Bend also includes all properties with primary access to the roads that make up the boundary line.
  - From Horseshoe Bend, the primary attendance area continues west on Highway 52 toward Sweet/Montour.
  - Properties located up to one mile north of Highway 52 between Horseshoe Bend and Sweet/Montour are also within the primary attendance area.

- After approximately 7 miles, the primary attendance zone extends along an imaginary line to encompass the community of Sweet. The line heads north beginning at 43.9365/-116.2994, west at 44.0017/-116.3006, south at 44.0016/-116.3396, west at 43.9701/-116.3399, south at 43.9701/-116.3640, and reconnects with Highway 52 at 43.9502/-116.3641. Properties on the interior of the boundary line are included in the primary attendance zone.
  - The communities of Montour and Sweet are both encompassed by the primary attendance boundary.
  - The boundary continues west along Highway 52 toward Emmett.
  - Properties up to one mile north of Highway 52 between Sweet/Montour and Emmett are also within the primary attendance area.
  - The boundary turns south and follows Highway 52 through Emmett until the junction with Highway 16. It turns east then south at Highway 16. Properties in Emmett that are on the eastern side of the border created by Highways 52 and 16 are in the primary attendance area.
  - The border of the primary attendance area continues along Highway 16 until it meets the junction of Highway 44 in Eagle. It then continues east along Highway 44 until the intersection of Highways 44 and 55. The primary attendance boundary then proceeds north along Highway 55 all the way back to Avimor.
  - Properties east of Highway 16, north of Highway 44, and west of Highway 55 are within the primary attendance area.
- F. Staff.** Instructional staff shall be certified as provided by rule of the State Board of Education. All full-time staff members of the School shall be covered by the Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho, federal social security, unemployment insurance, worker’s compensation insurance, and health insurance.
- G. Alignment with All Applicable Law.** The School shall comply with all applicable federal and state laws, rules, and regulations. In the event any such laws, rules, or regulations are amended, the School shall be bound by any such amendment upon the effective date of said amendment.

## SECTION 6: SCHOOL FINANCE

- A. General.** The School shall comply with all applicable financial and budget laws, rules, regulations, and financial reporting requirements, as well as the requirements contained in the School’s Performance Framework.
- B. Financial Controls.** At all times, the Charter Holder shall ensure that the School maintains appropriate governance, managerial procedures, and financial controls, which shall include, but not be limited to: (1) commonly accepted accounting practices and the capacity to implement them; (2) a checking account; (3) adequate payroll procedures; (4) procedures for the creation and review of monthly and quarterly financial reports, which procedures shall specifically identify the individual who will be responsible for preparing such financial reports in the following fiscal year; (5) internal control procedures for cash receipts, cash disbursements and purchases; and (6) maintenance of asset registers and financial procedures for grants, all in accordance with state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and Authorizer policy.
- C. Financial Audit.** The School shall submit audited financial statements from an independent auditor to the Authorizer no later than November 1 of each year.
- D. Annual Budgets.** The School shall adopt a budget for each fiscal year, prior to the beginning of

the fiscal year. The budget shall be in the Idaho Financial Accounting Reporting Management Systems (IFARMS) format or any other format as may be reasonably requested by the Authorizer.

## SECTION 7: TERMINATION, NON-RENEWAL AND REVOCATION

- A. Relinquishment.** Should the Charter Holder choose to relinquish its Charter before the expiration of this Certificate, it may do so upon written notice to the Authorizer. In such a case, the Authorizer's closure protocol shall begin immediately following written notification.
- B. Nonrenewal.** The Authorizer may non-renew the Charter at the expiration of the Certificate if the School failed to meet one or more of the terms of its Certificate, including the Performance Framework. The Charter Holder may appeal a decision to non-renew directly to the State Board of Education.
- C. Revocation.** The School's Charter may be revoked as provided by Idaho Code section 33-5209C. In such an event, the Authorizer shall consider whether to revoke the School's Charter at a Revocation hearing. The decision shall be made at that time. The Charter Holder may appeal a decision to revoke directly to the State Board of Education.
- D. Closure.** The Authorizer's closure protocol shall begin immediately after a decision to relinquish is made by the Charter Holder, or a decision to revoke or non-renew or is made by the Authorizer. Closure protocol shall begin regardless of whether the Charter Holder appeals the decision. In the event that closure protocol begins, the School shall cease operations no later than the following June 30. Closure protocol shall only cease if the State Board of Education overturns the Authorizer's decision.

## SECTION 8: MISCELLANEOUS

- A. No Employee or Agency Relationship.** None of the provisions of this Certificate will be construed to create a relationship of agency, representation, joint venture, partnership, ownership, or employment between the Authorizer and the School.
- B. Additional Services.** Except as may be expressly provided in this Certificate, as set forth in any subsequent written agreement between the School and the Authorizer, or as may be required by law, neither the School nor the Authorizer shall be entitled to the use of or access to the services, supplies, or facilities of the other.
- C. No Third-Party Beneficiary.** This Certificate shall not create any rights in any third parties, nor shall any third party be entitled to enforce any rights or obligations that may be possessed by either party to this Certificate.
- D. Amendment.** This Certificate may be amended by agreement between the School and the Authorizer in accordance with Authorizer policy. All amendments must be in writing and signed by the School and the Authorizer.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Authorizer and the Charter Holder have executed this Performance Certificate to be effective **February 23, 2023**.

*Alan L Reed*  
Alan L Reed (Mar 9, 2023 13:00 MST)

Mar 9, 2023

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**Chairman**  
**Idaho Public Charter School Commission**

*Marvin Lasnick*  
Marvin Lasnick (Mar 9, 2023 12:27 MST)

Mar 9, 2023

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**Chairman**  
**American Classical Schools of Idaho**

**Appendix A: Conditions**

**Appendix B: Performance Framework**

**Appendix C: Charter**



## Appendix A: Conditions of Authorization

## Conditions of Authorization

On December 8, 2022, the Idaho Public Charter School Commission voted to approve the new charter school application for Idaho Novus Classical Academy with the following pre-opening condition:

1. Charter holder provides the IPCSC with documentation confirming the senior loan (as it is described in the petition included in the IPCSC's December 8, 2022 meeting materials) is fully executed, and that the anticipated grant funds (as they are described in the petition included in the IPCSC's December 8, 2022 meeting materials) are received by the school by June 30, 2023.

## **Appendix B: Performance Framework**

Academic Measures: pages 12-18

Operational Measures: pages 19-24

Financial Measures: pages 25-31

# ACADEMIC MEASURES

## All School Measures

1. Math Proficiency
2. ELA Proficiency
3. Math Growth
4. ELA Growth
5. Literacy Proficiency
6. College and Career Readiness

Comparison Group: The comparison group for Idaho Novus Classical Academy K-12 on-site program shall be West Ada School District (Joint School District No. 002), Emmett Independent District 221, Boise Independent District 001, and Horseshoe Bend School District 073..

# 1. MATH PROFICIENCY

**Proficiency Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Math and ELA Proficiency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school's proficiency rate is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's proficiency average is in 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho schools.
Meets Standard	<b>The school's proficiency rate is equal to the mean or falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's proficiency rate falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's proficiency rate is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> the school has been identified for comprehensive or targeted support for three consecutive years as per the Idaho Consolidated Plan.

## 2. ELA PROFICIENCY

**Proficiency Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Math and ELA Proficiency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school's proficiency rate is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's proficiency average is in 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho schools.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>The school's proficiency rate is equal to the mean OR Falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's proficiency rate falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's proficiency rate is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> the school has been identified for comprehensive or targeted support for three consecutive years as per the Idaho Consolidated Plan.

### 3. MATH GROWTH

**Growth Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Growth Rubric Math	
Exceeds Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's growth rate is in the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho public schools.
Meets Standard	<b>The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency is equal to the mean or falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, OR The growth rate increased by at least 10% over the previous year.</b>
Approaches Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment made adequate growth toward proficiency is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.

## 4. ELA GROWTH

**Growth Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Growth Rubric ELA	
Exceeds Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's growth rate is in the 90 <sup>th</sup> percentile of all Idaho public schools.
Meets Standard	<b>The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency is equal to the mean or falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group, OR The growth rate increased by at least 10% over the previous year.</b>
Approaches Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment but who did make adequate growth toward proficiency falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The percentage of students in grades 3-8 who did not achieve proficiency on the current year's assessment made adequate growth toward proficiency is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.



## 5. LITERACY PROFICIENCY

**Literacy Proficiency Rate:** The IPCSC will use the proficiency rates as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

Literacy Proficiency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	<p>One of the following is true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school's proficiency rate on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment is greater than one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group;</li> <li>• the school's proficiency rate on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment is at or above 90%;</li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The fall to spring change in proficiency rate is 20% or greater.</li> </ul>
Meets Standard	<p><b>The school's proficiency on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment is equal to the mean or within one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group; OR The school's fall to spring change in proficiency rate is between 10%-19%.</b></p>
Approaches Standard	<p>The school's proficiency on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment falls within one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.</p>
Does Not Meet Standard	<p>The school's proficiency rate on the spring administration of the statewide literacy assessment is more than one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.</p>

## 6. COLLEGE AND CAREER READINESS

**Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate (ACGR):** Alternative schools will be evaluated based on their 5-Year ACGR. All other schools will be evaluated based on their 4-Year ACGR.

**Graduation Rate:** The IPCSC will use either the 4-Year ACGR as determined by the Idaho Accountability Framework and reported via the Idaho Report Card.

<b>C&amp;C Readiness Rubric</b>	
Exceeds Standard	The school's 4-Year ACGR is greater than one standard deviation above the identified comparison group, <b>OR</b> The school's ACGR is 90%.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>The school's 4-Year ACGR is equal to the mean OR Falls between the mean and one standard deviation above the mean of the identified comparison group.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's 4-Year ACGR falls between the mean and one standard deviation below the mean of the identified comparison group.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's 4-Year ACGR is more than one standard deviation below the identified comparison group.

# OPERATIONAL MEASURES

## BOARD STEWARDSHIP

1. Governance Structure
2. Governance Oversight
3. Governance Compliance

## OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

4. Student Services
5. Data Security and Information Transparency
6. Facility and Services
7. Operational Compliance

# BOARD GOVERNANCE

## 1. Governance Structure Rubric

**Data Sources:** Board bylaws, articles of incorporation, and any courtesy letters or notifications issued to the school by entities responsible for oversight or enforcement.

Governance Structure Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Board Bylaws are compliant with ID law.</b></li><li>• <b>Articles of Incorporation are current.</b></li><li>• <b>No investigations were conducted into either ethical behavior or conflict of interest regarding any board director.</b></li><li>• <b>The board did not experience an Open Meeting Law violation that needed to be cured this year.</b></li></ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

## 2. Governance Oversight Rubric

**Data Sources:** Board meeting minutes, school policies, continuous improvement plan (or other strategic planning evidence if submitted by the school), and verification of submission of annual administrator evaluation.

Governance Oversight Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The board reviews academic data in a timely and thorough manner.</b></li><li>• <b>The board reviews financial reports in a timely and thorough manner.</b></li><li>• <b>The board maintains compliant policies.</b></li><li>• <b>The board engages in strategic planning.</b></li><li>• <b>The board conducts a compliant annual evaluation of their school leader and/or management organization.</b></li></ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

### 3. Governance Compliance Rubric

**Data Sources:** If applicable, courtesy letters/notifications of concerns, investigation, or findings issued to the school by entities responsible for oversight or enforcement, and any documentation of correction provided by the school.

<b>Governance Compliance Rubric</b>	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>The IPCSC did not issue any courtesy letters or notify an external investigative body of compliance concerns this year.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

# OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

## 4. Student Services Rubric

**Data Sources:** If applicable, any notifications or courtesy letters issued by the SDE or SBOE which required corrective action with regard to the school's ELL, SPED, or College and Career Readiness programs, as well as any documentation submitted by the school evidencing correction.

Student Services Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<b>All of the following are true:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The school's English Language Learner program is in good standing;</b></li><li>• <b>The school's Special Education program is in good standing; The school's college and career readiness program is in good standing; and</b></li><li>• <b>The school's federal programs are in good standing.</b></li></ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

## 5. Data Security and Information Transparency Rubric

**Data Sources:** periodic desk audit of school website, and any formal notifications regarding data security or public records compliance.

Data Security and Information Transparency Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The school's website is compliant with I.C. 33-133(7) (data collection, access, and security policy); I.C. 33-320 (continuous improvement plan); and I.C. 33-357 (expenditures updated monthly, contracts, performance reports, and annual budgets).</b></li> <li>• <b>The school did not experience any issues involving data security this year.</b></li> <li>• <b>The school did not experience any compliance issue regarding public records requests this year.</b></li> </ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

## 6. Facility and Services Rubric

**Data Sources:** Verification of meal service program and transportation services via public documents and/or school website, and any notifications of concerns regarding occupancy or safety issued to the school by entities responsible for oversight or enforcement.

Facility and Building Services Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The school's occupancy certificate is current.</b></li> <li>• <b>The school maintains current safety inspections and drills.</b></li> <li>• <b>The school provides daily transportation to students in compliance with Idaho Code. The school provides a compliant lunch program.</b></li> </ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.

## 7. Operational Compliance Rubric

**Data Sources:** Periodic observation of enrollment lottery, and if applicable, any corrective action plans issued by the SDE not related to special education, ELL, or college and career readiness (as these are captured elsewhere), or formal notification of late reports or enrollment violations.

Operational Compliance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Required reports are submitted accurately and on time.</b></li><li>• <b>The school maintains a compliant enrollment process.</b></li><li>• <b>No correct action plans were issued by the SDE this year.</b></li></ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was taken within 30 days.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school was informed of or became aware of non-compliance and action to correct the issue was not taken within 30 days.



# FINANCIAL MEASURES

## NEAR TERM HEALTH

1. Current Ratio
2. Unrestricted Days Cash
3. Default
4. Enrollment Variance

## SUSTAINABLE HEALTH

5. Total Margin and 3Yr Aggregated Total Margin
6. Cash Flow and Multi-Year Cash Flow
7. Debt Service Coverage Ratio
8. Debt to Asset Ratio
9. Financial Compliance Rubric

## NEAR-TERM HEALTH

### 1. Current Ratio

Calculation: Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Current Ratio Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has a current ratio of more than 1.5
Meets Standard	<b>The school has a current ratio of at least 1.1 (or between 1.0 and 1.1 with a 1-year positive trend)</b>
Approaches Standard	The school has a current ratio of between .9 and 1.0 (or between 1.0 and 1.1 with a 1-year negative trend)
Does Not Meet Standard	The school has a current ratio of .9 or less.

### 2. Unrestricted Days Cash

Calculation: Unrestricted Cash and investments divided by ((Total Expenses minus Depreciation Expense) / 365)

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Unrestricted Days Cash Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has more than 60 days cash on hand
Meets Standard	<b>The school has 60 days cash OR Between 30- and 60-days cash and one-year trend is positive.</b>  <b>*Note: Schools in their first or second year of operation must have a minimum of 30 days cash.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school has between 15-30 days cash <b>OR</b> Between 30-60 days cash, but one-year trend is negative.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school has fewer than 15 days cash on hand.

### 3. Default

**Calculation:** No calculation.

**Data Source:** Annual Fiscal Audit Report, Terms of Debt, Other Formal Notifications Received by School.

Default Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for at least 3 consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<b>The school is not in default of any financial obligations and did not experience any instances of default during the fiscal year.</b> <b>Financial obligations include, but are not limited to, making payments to vendors and utility services on time, complying with all loan covenants, filing any reports required for maintenance of grants or philanthropic funds, meeting all tax obligations, and operating without financial judgements or property liens.</b>
Approaches Standard	The school experienced one or more instances of minor default during the fiscal year (such as making late payments); however, the school is not currently in default of any financial obligations.
Does Not Meet Standard	School is currently in default of financial obligations.

### 4. Enrollment Variance

**Calculation:** Actual enrollment as of the first Friday in November (drawn from ISEE) divided by enrollment projections as submitted directly to the IPCSC in July.

**Data Source:** ISEE and direct school report

Enrollment Variance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for at least 3 consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<b>Enrollment variance is equal to or greater than 95%.</b>
Approaches Standard	Enrollment variance was between 90% and 95%, <b>OR</b> The enrollment variance was less than 90% and the school provided a mid-year amended budget evidencing at least a break-even budget based on mid-term enrollment and any resulting revenue adjustments.
Does Not Meet Standard	Enrollment variance was less than 90% and the school did not provide evidence of mid-year budget amendments or operational changes evidencing at least a break-even budget based on mid-term enrollment and any resulting revenue adjustments.

## SUSTAINABLE HEALTH

### 5. Total Margin and 3Yr Aggregated Total Margin

#### Calculation:

Most Recent Year Total Margin: 2019 Net Income divided by 2019 Total Revenue.

3-Year Aggregated Total Margin: (2019 Net Income +2018 Net Income +2017 Net Income) divided by (2019 Total Revenue +2018 Total Revenue +2017 Total Revenue)

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

<b>Total Margin and 3-Yr Aggregated Total Margin</b>	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<b>Aggregated 3-year Total Margin is positive and the most recent year Total Margin is positive</b> <b>OR</b> <b>Aggregated 3-Year Total Margin is greater than -1.5 percent, the trend is positive for the last two years, and the most recent year Total Margin is positive.</b>  <b>*Note: For schools in their first or second year of operation, the cumulative Total Margin must be positive.</b>
Approaches Standard	Aggregated 3-Year Total Margin is greater than -1.5 percent, but trend does not "Meet Standard".
Does Not Meet Standard	Aggregated 3-Year Total Margin is less than or equal to -1.5 percent <b>OR</b> The most recent year Total Margin is less than -10 percent.

## 6. Cash Flow and Multi-Year Cash Flow

Calculation (example years are included as reference):

Most Recent Year Cash Flow: 2020 Cash and Investments minus 2019 Cash and

Investments Previous Year Cash Flow: 2019 Cash and Investments minus 2018

Cash and Investments Multi-Year Cash Flow: 2020 Cash and Investments minus

2018 Cash and Investments

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Cash Flow and Multi-Year Cash Flow	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<p><b>Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is positive, and Cash Flow is positive in the most recent year is positive,</b></p> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><b>Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is negative, but documentation identifies this as a result of a one-time, planned purchase (such as a facility remodel).</b></p> <p><b>*Note: Schools in their first or second year of operation must have positive cash flow.</b></p>
Approaches Standard	Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is positive, but Cash Flow is negative in the most recent year.
Does Not Meet Standard	Multi-Year Cumulative Cash Flow is negative, and no documentation identifies this as a result of a one-time, planned purchase.

## 7. Debt Service Coverage Ratio

### Calculation:

If school owns its facility or if the school leases its facility and the lease is capitalized:  
 (Net Income + Depreciation Expense + Interest Expense) divided by (Principal + Interest + Lease Payments)

If school leases its facility and the lease is not capitalized: (Facility Lease Payments + Net Income + Depreciation Expense + Interest Expense) divided by (Principal + Interest + Lease Payments)

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Debt Service Coverage Ratio Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school's debt service coverage ratio is 1.5 or greater <b>OR</b> The school operates debt-free.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>Debt Service Coverage Ratio is between 1.1 and 1.49</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's debt service coverage ratio is between .9 and 1.09
Does Not Meet Standard	Debt Service Coverage Ratio is less than .9

## 8. Debt to Asset Ratio

Calculation: Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report

Debt to Asset Ratio	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year., <b>OR</b> The school operates debt-free.
<b>Meets Standard</b>	<b>The school's Debt to Asset Ratio is less than 0.9</b>
Approaches Standard	The school's Debt to Asset Ratio is between 0.9. and 1.0
Does Not Meet Standard	The school's Debt to Asset Ratio is greater than 1.0

## 9. Financial Compliance Rubric

Calculation: Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets

Data Source: Annual Fiscal Audit Report, Desk Audit of Policies, Other Formal Notifications Received by School

Financial Compliance Rubric	
Exceeds Standard	The school has met standard for 3 or more consecutive years, including the most recently completed school year.
Meets Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Accounting Practices: finances are managed in compliance with GAAP.</b></li><li>• <b>Financial Transparency: expenditures and contracts are posted on the school's site.</b></li><li>• <b>Internal Controls: the school's internal controls are compliant.</b></li></ul>
Approaches Standard	The school was informed of non-compliance with accounting practices, financial transparency, or internal controls, and prompt action to correct is in evidence.
Does Not Meet Standard	The school is operating under a notification of fiscal concern or a notification of possible or imminent closure <b>OR</b> The school was informed of non-compliance with accounting practices, financial transparency, or internal controls and the issues were not corrected within 30 days.

## **Appendix C: Charter**



# AN AMERICAN CLASSICAL SCHOOLS OF IDAHO PETITION



## IDAHO NOVUS CLASSICAL ACADEMY

K-12  
Opening 2024

Avimor Community Office  
18815 N. Streams Edge Way  
Boise, Idaho 83714

September 8th, 2022

Point of Contact:  
Dr. Vincent Kane  
[vkane@idahonovus.org](mailto:vkane@idahonovus.org)

Board Chair:  
Marvin Lasnick  
[mlasnick@acs-id.org](mailto:mlasnick@acs-id.org)

*Idaho Novus Classical Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability in providing education services, activities, and programs including vocational programs, in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended; Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972; and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Any variance should be brought to the attention of the administration through personal contact, letter, phone, or email.*

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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Petition outlines the plan to open Idaho Novus Classical Academy (INCA) in the Avimor community in time for the 2024-2025 school year. INCA will serve students from the northeastern region of the Treasure Valley, including but not limited to Eagle, Horseshoe Bend, Sweet/Montour, and Emmett. INCA will open as a K-6 school in August 2024 and will add an additional grade each year, growing to serve up to 702 students in grades K-12 by the 2031/2032 school year.

INCA is an American classical school and a Hillsdale K-12 Candidate Member School. American classical education is a variant of classical education that blends an intensive focus on the development of literacy and numeracy in the early years with a rigorous liberal arts and science curriculum that students grow into as they advance in grade level. The American aspect of the model refers to elements that distinguish it from other types of classical education, including a comprehensive civics program that students participate in throughout their K-12 education and an emphasis on character development, informed by the Western philosophical tradition. INCA's curriculum is provided free of cost through its partnership with the Office of K-12 Education at Hillsdale College. In addition to curricular resources, Hillsdale K-12 also provides leadership and instructional training to administrators and faculty at member schools. American classical education has proven successful in Fruitland, Idaho and throughout the United States.

The mission of INCA is to train the minds and improve the hearts of students through a classical, content-rich curriculum that emphasizes virtuous living, traditional learning, and civic responsibility. INCA will be governed by the board of American Classical Schools of Idaho (ACSI). ACSI is a 501c-3 organization and accompanying foundation (for philanthropic purposes). ACSI will also function as a Charter Support Organization (CSO). This CSO is being formed exclusively for the benefit of INCA and Treasure Valley Classical Academy, to create economies of scale for

services such as business management, food service, transportation, and instructional support. Beginning with INCA, these efforts will enable the expansion of American classical education in Idaho.

# INTRODUCTION



Idaho Novus Classical Academy (INCA) is proposed as a tuition-free, open enrollment, public charter school available to families who reside within Ada County, Boise County, and Gem County, Idaho. INCA will provide an American classical education which is based on a disciplined, classical curriculum grounded in the civic traditions and history of the United States.

One aspect of the legislative intent noted in Idaho Code § 33-5202 is to “Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.” The founding group has collected information from families who intend to enroll their children at INCA through the school website and social media. This data (fully described in Section IV) illustrates the interest, support, and desire within the Treasure Valley for expanded choice and access to American classical education.

The founding members of INCA live in Ada County and most have children or grandchildren who attend or have attended the area school districts. The founding members are seeking educational alternatives that would provide a more rigorous and traditional form of education. The founding group has diverse backgrounds, experiences, and training (outlined in Section III). Their efforts are supported by external entities that are recognized as leaders in their respective fields, including BLUUM and Hillsdale College. American Classical Schools of Idaho (ACSI) seeks to meet the demand for greater access to American classical education in the Treasure Valley by opening INCA for the first time at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.

INCA will collaborate with Hillsdale College’s Office of K-12 Education in the design and execution of the educational program, as evidenced by the letter of intent included in Appendix Series H. There is no other school in the proposed attendance area that uses this model. Further, the school will grow to serve students from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. Such a model

reinforces the school’s mission by laying a solid foundation of classical learning in the elementary years, then building on that foundation with robust inquiry into both the human and natural world—with the arts—that exceeds what many colleges and universities accomplish in the liberal arts and sciences. Thus, INCA will provide the parents of Ada, Boise, and Gem Counties with an exceptional option among the educational opportunities available to their children. Hillsdale College has collaborated with dozens of other classical schools in multiple states to implement an American classical curriculum and their model has shown success across a wide variety of student and community backgrounds, regardless of geographic location. This includes the IPCSC-authorized Treasure Valley Classical Academy in Fruitland, Idaho. The curriculum is characterized by a strong emphasis on language, rich content in a core curriculum of traditional subjects, and a focus upon the American historical, literary, and civic inheritance.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

---

*The mission of Idaho Novus Classical Academy is to train the minds and improve the hearts of students through a classical, content-rich curriculum that emphasizes virtuous living, traditional learning, and civic responsibility.*

INCA will partner with families to shepherd their children through the development of character and knowledge. These efforts hinge on both curricular and extracurricular offerings, to nurture the child’s humanity with constant consideration of who they may become. As detailed in Section I of this Petition, INCA will develop within its students the intellectual and personal habits and skills upon which responsible, independent, and flourishing lives are built, in the firm belief that such future citizens are the basis of a free and just society. The time-honored liberal arts and science curriculum and classical pedagogy direct students toward mastery of the fundamentals of

literacy and numeracy, exploration of the arts and sciences, and understanding of the foundational tenets of the American heritage. The curriculum by purpose and design includes a survey of American intellectual and cultural traditions as they have been developed and refined over centuries.

The classical content of the curriculum refers to those traditional works of literature, history, and philosophy that embody perennial truths of the human soul and which remain compelling because they present these truths in memorable or beautiful ways. These classics are admired not because they are old; rather they are admired because they are timeless and the lessons they offer transcend the popular culture of a given generation. The classics provide the most thoughtful reflections on the meaning and potential of human life. The Great Books include students in a conversation which spans millennia and seeks to address the enduring questions of the human heart and mind.

To help implement this mission, INCA will make use of its growing partnership with the Hillsdale Office of K-12 Education. As such, INCA will be able to utilize startup training, ongoing professional development, and curricular materials developed by Hillsdale K-12 staff. Additionally, the partnership with Hillsdale College provides an outlet for professional collaboration with dozens of similar schools in the rapidly growing Hillsdale K-12 network.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

---

*The vision of Idaho Novus Classical Academy is to form future citizens who uphold the ideals of our country's founding and promote the continuation of our American experiment—through a classical, great books curriculum designed to engage the student in the highest matters and the deepest questions of truth, justice, virtue, and beauty.*

INCA will educate students who will be stewards of the American tradition, which established the pillars of a free society. Participation in the Great Conversation is essential for the perpetuation of this tradition. Therefore, the aim of INCA is to provide a classical liberal arts and science education that focuses on the highest matters and the deepest questions of truth, justice, virtue, and beauty. Where possible, we must engage those ideas and principles in the original texts which have both intrinsic value and beauty and are worthy of study and contemplation. We also find a clear expression of this legacy in the founding documents of the United States as an experiment in self-government under law based on the literary and scientific education of the founders themselves. As they sought to avoid the problems of pure democracy as seen in Athens and of a republic that gave way to an empire in Rome and despotism in Europe, we too must engage with those ideas to have a citizenry who understands the perils of each. INCA will provide students the benefit of a content-rich, classical, great books curriculum that assists them in understanding, examining, and fostering an appreciation for America's founding principles.

## **CORE VIRTUES**

---

The American classical education model involves a school culture centered around classical virtues. Core virtues are incorporated into the curriculum and provide the basis for the high expectations students and staff are held to. Additionally, all school and classroom rules are connected to these virtues and students receive explicit and ongoing instruction in the meaning and manifestation of virtue in their education and lives. This emphasis on virtuous living is reflected in the mission and vision statements and is a hallmark of American classical education.

INCA students will be active participants in implementing their learned virtues as part of their character training. Although an appropriate array of virtues will be taught through the

curriculum, faculty and staff will inculcate the following official school virtues in the school's culture and help students become good human beings:

- |              |                 |         |
|--------------|-----------------|---------|
| Courage      | Courtesy        | Honesty |
| Perseverance | Self-government | Service |

INCA's aim is to develop the academic potential and personal character of each of its students, regardless of background, socioeconomic status, or innate ability, and to graduate them fully prepared to participate as informed, responsible, and active citizens in their communities. INCA's vision for its students is not limited solely to their academic achievement and scores on standardized tests. Personal responsibility, virtues, and discipline will be modeled and expected. INCA students will also be endowed with a sense of civic responsibility along with a belief in striving for individual achievement.

**GROWTH PLAN**

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As detailed in Section IV of this Petition, INCA will open as a K-6 school and add one grade per year until the K-12 model is fully implemented. Each grade will enroll 54 students, resulting in an initial enrollment of 378 students and eventually arriving at a maximum capacity of 702 once the school is fully developed.

# **SECTION I: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

The subsections that follow provide a detailed narrative description of the educational program at INCA. Please see Appendix Series H for a succinct overview of the K-12 program.

## **MEANS**

---

To accomplish our mission, INCA will employ the following means: (1) teach reading and correct spelling through an explicit phonics program that gives children a systematic understanding of English orthography; (2) require memorization of math facts, practice mental math, and explore the larger concepts behind mathematical operations; (3) impart a mastery of language through teaching formal grammar, word origins in order to build vocabulary, and Latin; (4) teach students to acquire mastery in writing through frequent writing assignments of varying lengths combined with study and imitation of the great writers of our tradition; (5) likewise teach students to speak purposefully, convincingly, and politely in a variety of settings, as well as to listen to, analyze, and appreciate what others have to say, thus bringing students into an active participation in “the Great Conversation”; (6) study great works of literature through close reading and dynamic Socratic discussion; (7) cultivate citizenship and historical knowledge through an intensive study of our American heritage, often using primary sources; (8) teach both the facts and concepts of the sciences from the earliest grades in order to unveil the story of nature; (9) require daily study of the fine arts in grades K-8 with a focus on the great compositions in music and art, as well as theory and performance; (10) build character in young people through explicit training in the moral virtues combined with the study and emulation of good character found in history and literature; (11) hire subject-matter experts steeped in the liberal arts and sciences to bring this both demanding and inspiring education to young people; and (12) provide a disciplined and dynamic school environment in which students love learning, are active participants in their own education,

make lasting friendships, and learn how to take part in “the Great Conversation.”

## **CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

---

At a true classical school, content is king. As such, we are very explicit in this Petition about INCA’s planned curriculum. INCA will achieve its mission of providing an American classical education to all its students by adhering to the curriculum below. The elements of this curriculum are time-tested, systematic, coherent with each other, and accessible to all children. Specifically, INCA will teach the following:

- An explicit phonics program developed by Access Literacy, deriving from the research of Orton-Gillingham;
- Curriculum informed by the Core Knowledge Sequence in grades K-8 for literature, history and geography, science, the fine arts, and an overarching cultural literacy;
- Singapore Mathematics (the Dimensions series) from Kindergarten through pre-algebra;
- Art of Problem Solving (for Algebra I/II) and Weeks & Adkins and Euclid (for Geometry);
- Upper-level mathematics courses featuring textbooks such as Precalculus by Michael Sullivan, Trigonometry by I.M. Gelfand and Mark Saul, Calculus: An Intuitive and Physical Approach by Morris Kline, and Calculus by James Stewart.
- Systematic grammar instruction using the Well-Ordered Language curriculum from Classic Academic Press;
- Latin, beginning in grade six, through grade nine;
- The upper school curriculum featured by the Hillsdale College charter school partnership and contained in the Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0*: a comprehensive scope and



sequence;

- A separate but allied sequence of ancient history through the twentieth century drawing heavily on the reading of primary sources;
- Required courses in composition, government, economics, and moral philosophy;
- The writing of a senior thesis.

A school, like any other human endeavor, allows for a variety of styles and personalities, particularly in a K-12 setting. Yet whether teaching through interrogative questioning, Socratic discussion, or having students demonstrate mastery of the material as in poetry recitations, spelling bees, or working math problems at the board, INCA will expect classrooms to be led by teachers who are kind-hearted subject matter experts and who deliver well-structured, content-rich lessons.

## **SOURCES OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

---

The mission of INCA is derived from the history and philosophy of liberal education beginning with the Ancient Greeks and Romans and progressing through the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, and the American Founding. Currently, traditional classical education is experiencing a Renaissance in this country after decades of lack of interest. Within this broader reform, INCA will follow the principles and curriculum of what ought to be called American classical education, whose mission encourages the formation of human beings and citizens who will flourish in life and serve their communities and country as mindful and productive citizens. In order to embrace this mission, the school holds certain essays and texts to be informative of our approach in content and pedagogy. Among those are the following:

- E. D. Hirsch, *Cultural Literacy*

- E. D. Hirsch, *The Schools We Need and Why We Don't Have Them*
- E. D. Hirsch, *The Making of Americans*
- C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*
- William Kilpatrick, *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong*
- Robert Maynard Hutchins, *The Great Conversation*
- John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*
- George Turnbull, *Observations upon Liberal Education*, ed. Terrence O. Moore
- Benjamin Franklin, “*Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pensilvania*” (sic.)
- Thomas Jefferson, *Virginia Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge*
- Benjamin Rush, “*A Plan for the Establishment of Public Schools*”

No school can accomplish its mission while leaving its philosophy on the shelf. As such, an important part of faculty training each year will be a return to first principles through a vigorous discussion of a foundational text as well as a Socratic discussion of a piece of literature taught in the curriculum. The teachers will, no doubt, enjoy and appreciate these conversations. Hence, the school’s own “professional development” will model what will take place in INCA classrooms.

## **DESCRIPTION OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

---

INCA’s curriculum was selected to meet the needs of all students within the planned attendance area, and we expect a population of students from diverse backgrounds and with diverse learning abilities. Our curriculum is time-tested and research-based, and has been successfully implemented for students from academically, socially, and economically varied backgrounds across the United States. It seems worth noting that there are a variety of classical models. One model—which might be termed “high classical”— seeks to duplicate the old world,

often parochial, education of the societal elite. This is not the INCA model, which is more aptly referred to as “American classical.” The term “American classical” implies a more down-to-earth approach. While strongly reliant on the Great Books and a deep examination of the liberal arts and sciences, the objective is to form future citizens who will be great stewards of our republic. As such, this model is more akin to Thomas Jefferson’s “farmers who have read Homer” rather than Plato’s “philosopher king.” The American classical education INCA will offer is a liberal arts and science education intended to equip students for virtuous, knowledgeable, and happy lives. Our students will become engaged citizens and intellectually rigorous contributors, well qualified for future studies in law, medicine, business, engineering, technology, or any other professional or vocational pursuit.

Classical education upholds a standard of excellence and has proven itself over the course of time. INCA’s high standards and research-based curriculum will provide students with a traditional education that will challenge them to excel not only in learning but also in character development. At INCA, high academic achievement, personal discipline, ethics, and responsibility will be consistently reinforced through the study of subjects in the classical tradition. Students will graduate from INCA as highly literate and virtuous citizens who are well prepared to advance into any life endeavor and to inspire others.

INCA will utilize the Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0*, which makes use of aspects of the Core Knowledge Sequence, to meet or exceed all Idaho State Standards and benchmarks. The goal of Core Knowledge is to develop cultural literacy through a systematic curriculum that eliminates gaps and unnecessary repetition. This sequence was developed to provide a comprehensive order to K-8 education with the intention of training students in the art, literature, science, history,

math, and language that form their cultural and intellectual inheritance. The Core Knowledge Sequence was first published in 1988 and has been successfully employed and tested in hundreds of schools throughout the United States.

## **PARTNERSHIP WITH HILLSDALE COLLEGE**

---

Charter schools assisted by the Hillsdale College Office of K-12 Education adhere to, and are consistent with, the following key characteristics and components:

1. The centrality of the Western tradition in the study of history, literature, philosophy, and fine arts.
2. A rich and recurring examination of the American literary, moral, philosophical, political, and historical traditions.
3. The use of explicit phonics instruction leading to reading fluency, and the use of explicit grammar instruction leading to English language mastery.
4. The teaching of Latin.
5. The acknowledgement of objective standards of correctness, logic, beauty, weightiness, and truth intrinsic to the liberal arts and sciences.
6. A school culture demanding moral virtue, decorum, respect, discipline, and studiousness among the students and faculty.
7. A curriculum that is content-rich, balanced and strong across the four core disciplines of math, science, literature, and history.
8. A faculty where well-educated and articulate teachers explicitly convey real knowledge to students using traditional teaching methods.
9. A school that uses technology effectively but without diminishing the faculty leadership that

is crucial to academic achievement.

10. A school with a plan to serve grades K through 12.

In a Hillsdale-supported classical school, teachers must possess knowledge (#8), authority (#9), and compassion (#6). These abilities allow for lessons with real weight, classrooms with order and discipline, and instruction with purpose and focus. Classes are conducted in a professional and focused manner, understanding that every minute counts. Teachers must take preparation seriously and be watchful in the classroom so that the needs of all students are met, because the teachers recognize the grand project they have undertaken. Teachers who teach classically take responsibility for student learning in the classroom. They look for student comprehension during instruction.

Teaching classically treats each classroom activity with an appropriate degree and mixture of richness, dignity, wonder, and love of the subject so that those same qualities are cultivated in the student, enabling them to mature into knowledge and self-government so that, in the words of Thomas Jefferson, “[Each] may...work out his own greatest happiness” (1954).

As an outside, independent institution of higher learning committed to the liberal arts at the college level, and to the flourishing of K-12 education, Hillsdale is uniquely qualified to assist the governing board with board training, the school leader with leadership training, and the faculty with teacher training. Such training draws upon the experiences of charter schools across the nation that now form a strong partnership, yet one that does not impede local self-government.

Hillsdale College’s K-12 initiative is completely funded by donations to the college for that purpose and all support is provided at no cost to charter schools. Hence this partnership is an

important asset for a start-up school both financially and mission-wise since the school does not have to weigh “the cost” when deciding on whether to seek first-rate training and advice.

Source: Jefferson, Thomas. *Notes on the State of Virginia*. Edited by William Peden. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press for the Institute of Early American History and Culture, Williamsburg, Virginia, 1954.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES AND CURRICULUM**

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INCA will provide students with a content-rich, American classical education designed to challenge them to excel in both learning and character. What follows is more detail to elaborate on the academic program outlined above.

In the elementary years, INCA will use three key programs in the curriculum: Literacy Essentials: The Journey from Spelling to Reading, Singapore Math Dimensions Series, and the Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0*. These programs are designed to lay the foundations of knowledge in the elementary years, and thereby enable students to acquire greater knowledge and understanding of the world as they progress in age and advance in their studies. Learning the fundamentals is comparable to being taught to use a map and compass. Being able to “land-navigate,” one can enter into the thickest forests, know where he or she is, appreciate the beauty and complexity of nature, and even reach a precise spot on the map—without fear or confusion but rather with joy and a sense of accomplishment.

In the earliest grades, the curriculum focuses primarily on teaching literacy and numeracy. Both subjects are foundational to a student’s education, so the knowledge and habits of thought formed in each must become permanent. Over time, one may forget some of the details learned in history or science class or even parts of the happy songs sung in youth. Yet no one can afford to

forget how to spell words or to marshal numbers or to speak correctly. To teach these foundational subjects, INCA will use the Literacy Essentials phonics program to teach literacy and the Singapore Math Dimensions sequence to teach numeracy.

Literacy Essentials: The Journey from Spelling to Reading program is a multi-sensory, neuro-linguistic approach for teaching phonics, spelling, reading, handwriting, and parts of grammar. It shares its pedigree with the Orton-Gillingham and Spalding Methods and is similar to the Riggs Institute program. Literacy Essentials teaches the 72 letter-sound (phonogram) combinations used in the English language beginning with the easiest sight-to-sound correspondences, working towards those that are most complex. Syllabication is critical to a proper understanding of letter sound relationships, so syllabication is taught beginning in kindergarten. While learning phonograms and marshalling them into systematic spelling and a growing knowledge of vocabulary, students are formally taught handwriting, to include cursive in the middle elementary years. Further, as students grasp the basics of English literacy, the program lays a foundation in basic grammar and composition using the Well-Ordered Language curriculum from Classical Academic Press.

The Singapore Math Dimensions series provides students with a strong conceptual foundation in basic mathematics. Singapore mathematics is a proven and internationally benchmarked curriculum that teaches students how to move from the concrete to the pictorial to the abstract. From the earliest grades, this program emphasizes concepts and mental math while employing both physical and graphical illustrations of underlying mathematical rules and phenomena. The program presents mathematical skill building and problem solving such that students have a better understanding of not simply when to use a particular equation, but why. In

other words, the program is designed to build conceptual understanding as well as procedural fluency. INCA will use ability grouping for mathematics so students can learn without being overwhelmed and can progress with similarly placed peers. Hence, ability-level groups will be determined at the beginning of each academic year.

The central position of language in the curriculum continues throughout the elementary and middle-school grades. In grades four (4) and five (5), students will learn Latin and Greek roots of English words. In the sixth grade, students will begin to learn formal Latin and will continue with Latin through grade nine (6-9). Latin is introduced and taught alongside English so that students learn the structural underpinnings of their own language, expand their vocabulary, improve their reading comprehension, and build a bridge to modern foreign languages as well.

As students mature in their facility with language, the academic program transitions more of their time and intellectual energy into content-based (as opposed to skill-based) facets of the curriculum. The order and content of these subjects from kindergarten through grade eight (8) is derived from the Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0* and influenced by the work of the Core Knowledge Foundation. INCA will employ the Hillsdale K-12 curriculum to meet or exceed all Idaho State Standards and benchmarks. The goal of the Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0* is to build up knowledge and literacy of the American tradition through a systematic curriculum that eliminates gaps in learning and features “spiraling” wherein students re-encounter subjects they have learned as they reach higher levels of cognition. This sequence was developed to provide comprehensive order to K-8 education in the core subjects of literature, science, history, and the arts that constitute the American intellectual inheritance. The principles of the Hillsdale K-12 curriculum and the school’s philosophy embrace the idea of teachers becoming masters of their



subject and thereby utilizing the scope and sequence to craft their own lessons rather than relying on prefab lesson plans. Treasure Valley Classical Academy (TVCA) uses the same Hillsdale K-12 curriculum in their school to great effect.

Although the rhetoric surrounding a classical school often emphasizes the humanities, the sciences are no less important and will not play a secondary role at INCA. The Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0* focuses on thematically linked science topics and the biographies and discoveries of great scientists. The coherent order of the scope and sequence allows for regular repetition and mastery of the most important facts and concepts in the sciences, such that students are well versed in the fundamentals by the time they reach the demanding high-school science courses.

In the high school years, the students will attain higher levels of thought and inquiry. In high school, INCA will follow the Hillsdale College recommended course sequence, as currently laid out in the Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0* (see Appendix Series H for K-8 curriculum maps). This comprehensive K-12 scope and sequence lays out the entire curriculum along with curricular maps, subject outlines, curricular components, and detailed supporting materials (e.g. cross-curricular references, pedagogical suggestions, and additional online and digital teacher resources). The high school component includes four (4) years of history, literature, mathematics, and science; three (3) years of foreign language; a semester of composition; a full year of American government; and a semester of economics and two years (2.0) of moral and political philosophy. In history, students begin with the Ancient Civilizations and Europe (500-1815) in grades nine and ten (9-10), study American government integrated with the Revolution and Founding period of American history (1607-Present) in grade eleven (11), and finish with a year of modern European

history (1815–Present) in grade twelve (12). In literature, students read great works, usually in their entirety, with an emphasis on ancient and classical literature in grade nine (9), medieval and British literature in grade ten (10), American literature in grade eleven (11), and modern literature in grade twelve (12). The required track for science is biology in ninth (9), chemistry in tenth (10), followed by two additional science classes in grades eleven (usually physics) and twelve (usually astronomy). In mathematics, students will follow a sequence based on their ability levels, beginning with Algebra I (which many students will take in eighth grade). That sequence will be Algebra I, Geometry (including Euclidian proofs), Algebra II, Trigonometry/Pre-Calculus, Calculus I, and in some cases, Calculus II. Students who prefer to take another math course (such as Statistics) in their senior year rather than calculus may do so. In foreign languages, students will be expected to take at least one (1) year of Latin in high school and two (2) additional years of a foreign language, whether advanced Latin or a modern foreign language.

The culmination of this comprehensive education will be the senior thesis. Seniors will be required to write a lengthy thesis based on a book or an aspect of one of the subjects they have studied that attempts to answer a question of their own design—that question somehow being connected in a summative way to their educational experience (broadly, the nature of the human and natural world and the various means of human flourishing). The thesis will be written and then delivered orally to fellow classmates, teachers, and invited guests, including parents, and will thereby serve as a rite of passage to an independent life of informed thought and responsible citizenship.

The schools on which INCA is modelled have all had a full fifty-minute lunch period for the upper school students; INCA plans to follow this model. Thus, INCA students can eat lunch, then

play sports or help in one of the younger grades or just relax and converse (and sometimes study) for a half hour in the middle of the day, a break they very much appreciate. INCA will also provide room in students' schedules for at least one elective per year from ninth grade onward. Students will be able to take electives in Leadership, Agricultural Science, Orchestra, Choral Ensemble, Studio Art, Drama and Theater, or other options that align with the academic model, based on student demand. After school, students will be able and encouraged to participate in extra-curricular clubs (examples include Airplane & Rocketry Club, Drama Club, Strategic Games Club, and Outdoor Pursuits Club), the fine arts, and for 7th grade and up, competitive athletics (initially cross country, basketball, and soccer). INCA teachers will receive training on how to make homework both useful and manageable so that students of all grades will have time for these activities and to pursue other interests outside of school.

It is also important to mention that the Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0* receives regular updates based on availability of resources and teacher feedback. INCA will review and update aspects of the educational program as appropriate when new curricular resources are made available.

## **EXPECTED STUDENT OUTCOMES**

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The board, school leaders, teachers, parents, and the students themselves will know INCA is achieving our mission when high standards of academic achievement and civic virtue provide optimal learning opportunities for all students, maintain a high consistent level of discipline, achieve high acceptance rates into post-secondary educational institutions, and when students demonstrate virtuous behavior through schoolwork as well as school and community behavior.

Strong student academic performance is central to a school's existence. Student

performance expectations must be aligned with the mission and the educational plan. The student performance expectations will provide student-centered goals that are SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Ambitious and attainable
- Reflective of the school's mission
- Time-specific with target dates

Those goals are:

- By the end of INCA's fifth year of operation, 80% of continuously enrolled students assessed will score proficient or higher on the ISAT ELA and Math sections.
- In years 3-5 of operation, INCA's scores on the ISAT for continuously enrolled students will outperform the identified comparison group, including the Emmett Independent, Horseshoe Bend, and West Ada school districts.
- Once high school grades are established, INCA will have a 100% graduation rate by its 3rd graduation cohort.
- To measure successful training in character development, INCA will administer and review parent satisfaction surveys at the end of each academic year. Most survey questions will utilize a 5-point Likert-type scale. The measure for this character development goal is a question which asks parents to use the 5-point scale (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) to respond to the following prompt: "The school cultivates a sound culture that fosters the virtues and builds good character." INCA will achieve a 90% or higher positive rating on this prompt each year of operation.

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## TESTING

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The following assessments will be used to monitor student progress:

- IRI (K-3)
- ISAT (Mathematics, ELA, and Science as required)
- NWEA MAP
- WIDA Access (ELL students)
- SAT, PSAT, or CLT (as appropriate)
- Teacher-developed pre and post-assessments
- Teacher-developed rubrics

INCA will administer the MAP test within the first month of opening and each subsequent spring thereafter. The MAP math and language exams offer teachers a way to assess how well their students are learning and retaining the material in relation to national norms.

Singapore Math assessments will be used as placement tests and to demonstrate mastery of the material taught at each level.

Starting in grade 8 and repeating as often as necessary in subsequent grades to pass the test, a civics test composed of the one hundred (100) questions used by officers of the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services will be given and a passing grade of 90% expected.

INCA will participate in all state mandated testing. The school will appoint a test coordinator who will oversee the testing program and ensure the testing process is followed with fidelity for all tests. INCA will work with stakeholders to help them understand the importance of the assessments and the information that can be gained from them.

Overall, the school will meet the state standards by teaching the curriculum in a classical

way. Whereas the standards often call for general areas of mastery, such as being able to analyze literary texts in a certain way, the Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0* requires mastery of specific subjects and texts that meets or exceeds state standards. For example, in history and literature from Kindergarten through second grade, students will have learned the basic symbols and songs of American history and culture, the ancient civilizations of Egypt and Greece, the stories of the early American settlers, the history of the American Revolution, the framing of the U.S. Constitution, numerous fables from Aesop, classic fairy tales, tall tales, the nursery rhymes of Mother Goose, and even the nature of schools in our history through the novels of Laura Ingalls Wilder. Nor does the classical approach simply look at a particular work for a moment, then set it aside, but rather insists upon mastery and often memorization of it so that students may carry that learning with them as a treasure throughout their lives and thereby compare what they learn in their early education to new things they learn in school and in their own experience. Thus, our students in these early grades will memorize traditional sayings, jingles, children's verses, poetry, songs, the opening lines of the Declaration of Independence, the Preamble to the Constitution, American and world geography, and so on. Further, many of these lessons will quite naturally take the form of building character through mastering virtues. For example, reading the tale of John Henry is not simply an exercise in cultural literacy but an invitation to acquire the virtues of self-reliance and perseverance.

If the curriculum does not meet or address a specific standard at a given grade, time will be allotted over the course of the year to give that standard proper coverage. Instruction to this end will be provided by the school leader to the faculty as a part of the annual professional development.

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## UTILIZING STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND PERFORMANCE DATA

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Student assessment and performance data will be regularly assessed by teachers and administration to guarantee that all students are receiving the support and instruction necessary for their academic growth. INCA will rely heavily upon well-trained teachers to be constantly aware of individual needs within their classrooms. Teachers and administrators will apply the data gathered to drive the intervention strategies and progress monitoring methods, making sure that each is an efficient use of time and resources.

Teachers and administration will hold routine team meetings to discuss the growth and progress of individual students (faculty-wide and grade-band team meetings will alternate every week). The curriculum allows for differentiation, so teachers will be able to accelerate or reinforce a student's learning. At our middle school levels, by offering accelerated and remedial course work, the school will be able to pace students according to their instructional needs. In middle school, designated staff members will work closely with students to ensure proper class placement and promotion.

For students who are not at least proficient in reading, writing, mathematics, and/or science, the school, in consultation with the student's parent(s), will develop and implement progress monitoring to assist the student in meeting expectations for proficiency. Strategies may include, but are not limited to academic year tiered interventions, before and after-school tutoring, summer-time tutoring, reading instruction, and other extended services including intensive skills development programs.

It is the intention of INCA to use progress monitoring (based on an in-house academic dashboard as well as NWEA MAP data), unless the student has a disability and receives services

through an IEP that would more appropriately address the identified deficiencies. INCA may request that struggling students attend remediation programs held before or after regular school hours or during summer.

If upon subsequent evaluation the documented deficiency has not been remediated, the student may be retained. Each student who does not meet minimum performance expectations for the statewide assessment tests in reading, writing, science, and mathematics will continue remedial instruction or supplemental instruction until expectations are met. Progress monitoring will stay active until a student has made sufficient learning gains to illustrate proficiency.

The framework used to identify student learning deficiencies, develop hypotheses, formulate a plan, monitor progress, and analyze results will follow a Response to Intervention (RTI) model. The school will set up systems and methodologies to address student needs that may include data-based goals, reflection and review of instruction and methodology, differentiation of the instruction and other targeted interventions, as well as formative and summative assessments. RTI seeks to prevent academic failure through early intervention, frequent progress measurement, and increasingly intensive research-based instructional interventions for children who continue to have difficulty. The RTI model aligns with best practices in Response to Intervention as follows:

- Tier 1 (core instruction and universal supports available to all students): Tier 1 consists of the general academic and behavioral instruction and support that is designed and differentiated for all students in all settings. School-wide progress monitoring and screenings are used to ensure that core instruction is effective and to identify students who may need additional support to be successful.



- Tier 2 (supplemental instruction or intervention provided to targeted groups of students):  
Tier 2 consists of more focused, targeted instruction or intervention and supplemental supports in addition to and aligned with the core instruction provided through Tier 1. For instance, an additional 30 minutes per day may be devoted to reading in a small group (3–6 students), with a focus on building phonemic awareness and proficiency in key linguistic skills such as syllabication, decoding and encoding. Adjustments can be made within Tier 2 to increase time on task or decrease student/teacher ratio.
- Tier 3 (intensive individualized intervention and supports provided to individual students):  
Tier 3 consists of the most intense (increased time, narrowed focus, very small group or individual) instruction and intervention based upon individual student need. Tier 3 supports are provided in addition to and aligned with the core (Tier 1) and supplemental (Tier 2) academic and behavioral instruction, interventions, and supports.

The tiers are not a “set” series of interventions or activities that all students move through. Rather, they are fluid and flexible; students may move from a lower to a higher tier and back again, based on documented need. A student may be successful with Tier 1 supports for behavior and mathematics, require supplemental Tier 2 instruction for reading, and need intensive Tier 3 interventions for writing. As the student progresses and the performance gap with grade level and classroom peers closes, the student may no longer need anything beyond Tier 1 (universal instruction). The RTI framework is designed for all students, including general education students and those receiving special services. “All students” includes those who struggle, those who excel and demonstrate needs beyond the core, and those who are English language learners. If the school’s student services support team determines that a student is not making adequate progress

after the provision of effective Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 intervention and supports for an appropriate amount of time, or that the services are effective but may require substantial and sustained effort that may include special education and related services in order to maintain progress, the team will refer the student for evaluation for exceptional student education.

### **PLAN FOR SERVING ALL STUDENTS**

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A public charter school, as with any public school, by law, must offer a continuum of services for all students. Hillsdale College has a long, documented history of serving all segments of the population without reserve. INCA will continue to follow that tradition in the K-12 setting. INCA’s aim is to develop the academic potential and personal character of each of its students regardless of socio-economic status, race, religion, color, national origin, sex, or disability and to graduate them fully prepared to participate as informed, responsible, and active members of their community. INCA’s vision for its students is not limited solely to their academic achievement and scores on standardized tests. INCA will effectively serve all students.

#### *Student Demographics in Planned Attendance Area*

School District	Economically Disadvantaged Students	Students with Disabilities	Hispanic Students	English Language Learners
<b>Idaho</b>	47%	10%	18.3%	7%
Boise Independent School District	50%	12%	12.8%	10%
Emmett Independence School District	52%	11%	14.4%	4%
West Ada School District	25%	10%	10.5%	4%
Horseshoe Bend School District	51%	13%	8%	<3%

Sections of Ada County, Boise County, and Gem County are within INCA's primary attendance area, which will minimally impact four school districts: Boise Independent School District, Emmett Independent School District, West Ada School District, and Horseshoe Bend School District. The school districts of Boise, Emmett, and Horseshoe Bend have 50% of their students qualified for the free and reduced lunch program compared to 47% statewide. The table above shows some of the demographics of students in the planned attendance area.

One of the time-tested instructional approaches of the classical model, ability groupings (i.e., the RTI framework), provides an example of identifying and supporting any student's needs. Instructional supports and strategies are most effective with flexible ability groupings in the core subjects of reading and math in the elementary grades. To best differentiate instruction, providing individualized support for all learners while maintaining the same expectations of outcome, ability groups will enable INCA to tailor instructional techniques and class time to meet the needs of all students. Students may be placed into ability groups upon admission using initial assessments that indicate strengths and weaknesses. Students will move across groups as additional assessments suggest. Students are responsible for mastery of the same skills and concepts and are required to take the same assessments regardless of grouping. Using differentiated instructional strategies will enable teachers to optimize the learning of all students.

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## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

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INCA will adopt and comply with the current Idaho Special Education Manual from the Idaho State Department of Education. The school will use the forms for special education as outlined in the Special Education Manual. INCA will also ensure that all facilities are appropriately accessible for students with disabilities. On the school enrollment form, there will be a question

asking, “Does your child have an IEP, 504, or any other support plan?” Until special education personnel are hired, the school leader will answer any questions parents may have about services provided by the school and will have access to expertise in this area through Idaho State Department of Education.

Certified special education teachers will be hired to implement special education programs. Classified teaching assistants will be hired and trained to assist the special education teacher with the teaching and support of students with disabilities. With oversight by the special education coordinator and school leader, child find activities and evaluations will be completed within the appropriate time frame.

A continuum of services will be provided at INCA. IEP (Individualized Education Program) teams will be established as set forth by IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and will, for a given student, include the student’s general education teacher, a special education teacher, an administrative representative, the parents, other team members as appropriate, and the student himself or herself whenever appropriate, particularly when the student is older.

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#### Special Education/Student Services Coordinator/Director

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INCA’s staffing plan and budget include hiring a special education coordinator as early as possible so that incoming existing IEPs can be reviewed. What follows is a sample job description for the special education coordinator and a blueprint for what will eventually become the director of student services as the size of the school and student services department increases.

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#### *General*

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The special education coordinator shall:

- Ensure the academic integrity of the school by overseeing the modifications and

accommodations for students in specialized programming;

- Oversee the education of students with IEPs or 504 (Rehabilitation Act of 1973, for students that do not qualify for special education) Plans
- Assist general education teachers to meet individualized educational goals for students with IEPs, 504 Plans, and ALPs;
- Supervise and evaluate classified student services staff; and
- Set budget priorities for Student Services and have general knowledge of the department's fiscal status.

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*Ensure the Academic Integrity of the School for Students with Specialized Programming*

To maintain the academic integrity of the school, the Student Services Coordinator shall:

- Oversee school-wide practices to ensure they are aligned with the requirements of the Idaho Special Education Manual
- Remain faithful to the academic curriculum and character education in the school
- Understand the importance of the defined curriculum
- Ensure that modifications and accommodations are consistent with students' individualized needs relative to the school's mission and philosophy
- Stress the importance of continued student progress both academically and in character development
- Demonstrate mastery as a teacher to students
- Develop the intellect of each student to the utmost of his or her ability
- Develop the personal character of every student
- Participate in annual professional development

- Oversee mandated educational processes

To ensure the proper services and support for students who need accommodations or additional supports, as well as to ensure that the school complies with state and federal laws, the special education coordinator is expected to develop and/or oversee:

- Special Education support and services
- RTI framework
- English learner program
- Section 504 Plans
- Assistance for general education teachers with implementing specialized programming

To ensure the proper services and support for students who need supplemental programming, the special education coordinator shall:

- Educate school faculty and staff regarding students with disabilities
- Disseminate information regarding IDEA and ADA (American with Disabilities Act), and any changes or updates to these laws
- Collaborate with teachers to maintain consistent communication regarding student needs
- Oversee the effectiveness of modifications and accommodations

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#### *Management of Student Services Department*

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Management of student services includes the following to ensure appropriate direction to supplemental teaching staff and ensure progress for INCA's students:

- Direct supervision of student services staff
- Collaborative work with the school leader to recruit and hire the best paraprofessionals, special education teachers, and other personnel for positions that will meet the individual

needs of students

- Definition and coordination of contracts for wrap around services (e.g., psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist) with the school leader
- Oversight of the effectiveness of wrap around services
- Coordination of services and support to align with student needs
- Management and monitoring of progress-tracking
- Management and keeping appropriate confidentiality of all student records and school reports
- Close coordination with the enrollment coordinator regarding services for incoming students
- Protecting the confidentiality and professionalism of the faculty and staff with regards to students in supplemental programs
- Coordination of summer school programming.

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*Minimum Job Requirements*

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- Master's degree in a brain-based field (e.g., special education, occupational therapy, speech therapy, or school psychology) or an equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Bachelor's degree in a relevant and appropriate field as it pertains to student learning and development
- Familiarity with special education laws and regulations regarding IDEA
- A special education license approved by Idaho Department of Education or the willingness and ability to obtain licensure
- Experience with students who need additional supports and services

- Management/supervision experience
- Ability to speak and write clearly
- Ability to oversee specialized programming
- Experience in educational management or administration
- Previous K-12 education classroom experience
- Ability to adjust to the needs of the changing student population

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### Special Education Evaluation Process

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The special education coordinator and the IEP team will review and, if necessary, revise current IEPs and consider the students' needs and continuum of placements and related services in order to meet educational needs as soon as possible.

Whether for students with existing or revised IEPs, or new students entering the school who are identified as needing support, individualized plans will be developed to maximize the students' time with peers in the least restrictive environment. Nonetheless, a variety of means of support may be made available according to the needs of each student and as outlined in the IEP.

Outside personnel may be contracted to provide the following services based on need: speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and school psychologist services. Special transportation may be provided for those students whose IEP requires that service. The need for an extended school year, paraprofessional assistance, adaptive technology, and assistive technology may be considered and provided if deemed necessary in line with the student's IEP.

When a student is suspected of having a disability that requires specially designed instruction, INCA will form a support team comprised of members consistent with the



requirements of the Idaho Special Education Manual to consider a student's eligibility for special education. The team reviews information from various sources including, but not limited to, RTI data, state standardized tests, classroom grades, formal and/or standardized assessments, curriculum-based measurements, and general progress in the grade level or subject. After reviewing all the data, the team will determine if a referral and subsequent consent for evaluation to determine eligibility for special education services is appropriate. If the student meets eligibility criteria, the team then will seek parental consent for the student to receive special education services.

Whenever students do not clearly meet SPED criteria, the team may refer students to other avenues of support, such as the 504 process.

Behavior intervention plans will be utilized if a student has a disability-related behavior that impacts his or her learning and/or the learning of others.

The IEP team will determine the best avenue and least restrictive environment regarding each student's needs. INCA will utilize an RTI team meeting format to evaluate student response to such intervention, consisting of problem identification, analysis of the problem, appropriate research-based interventions, and progress monitoring.

In its recruiting efforts, INCA will ensure that prospective parents understand that the school is a public school that intends to meet the needs of all students, to include those with learning disabilities. The school will also work to ensure that parent and student rights are protected, to include in the handling of personally identifiable information in student special education records. All records will be kept confidential and secure.

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## Discipline and IEPs

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The guidelines provided by the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and the Idaho Special Education Manual will be followed with regard to disciplining students with disabilities. If a student currently has a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP), the plan will be reviewed to determine if intervention and response steps were implemented appropriately in a given disciplinary situation. If a BIP is not in place, the IEP team will meet to determine whether a Functional Behavior Assessment is appropriate. A BIP may be implemented if the special education team determines that the behavior of the student impacts his or her learning and/or the learning of others. This intervention, if deemed necessary, would be included in the IEP.

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## ENGLISH LEARNERS

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To meet the needs of bilingual and/or students who have limited English proficiency, INCA will follow the guidelines in the State EL Guidance for Idaho Districts manual. English Learners (EL) fall into three categories: (1) students whose primary home language is other than English, (2) students from heritage language groups needing enrichment and further development of English while maintaining fluency in their heritage language, and (3) any other students needing enrichment and further development of academic English. INCA will use the required procedures to appropriately serve the language needs of EL students. These procedures may include the following:

- Identification of the primary or home language other than English by administering the Home Language Survey when students are enrolled.
- If the Home Language Survey indicates a language other than English, administer the WIDA Access Placement Test (W-APT) to determine whether the student is proficient or non-

proficient in all language domains and will be placed in an appropriate program within 30 days.

- Student progress will be assessed annually until proficiency is attained.

For EL students, the school may contract with an appropriately certified EL or bilingual teacher who could provide aid within the classroom to the student(s) if needed. Within the classroom, the EL teacher may provide support to the classroom teacher in the area of scaffolding, which is providing layered instruction to aid in student comprehension of content and objectives. This includes strategies such as adjusting speech or providing appropriate background information and experiences to assist the students to grasp the content. In addition, other appropriate strategies will be used to transcend language barriers including the use of visuals and demonstrations to communicate content and develop language skills with EL students. The objective will be to enable the EL student to achieve a mastery of English as soon as feasible.

Depending on the demographics, needs, and resources, one or more program models may be implemented (as per State EL Guidance for Idaho Districts manual):

- In the classroom in a “push-in” setting - teachers assist English language learners with differentiated instruction within the classroom so that students may access the curriculum presented; or
- In a “pull-out” setting - students would be pulled out of the general classroom during non-core instructional time to receive intensive English instruction. In the early grades in particular, these pull-out sessions may reinforce, further explain, or offer more practice in the classroom lessons, particularly in the areas of phonics, grammar, and reading.

The curriculum itself is designed to give students a mastery of the fundamentals. As such, a

classical school may prove to be the best setting for EL students. Both the phonics program of Literacy Essentials and the conceptual nature of Singapore Math are designed to meet the individual needs of all students. Since most students will not have been taught to read or spell using an explicit phonics method, all students in the elementary school will initially require intensive phonemic training. This includes extensive orthography practice, which could be called the science of correct spelling. The advantage of orthography is that it systematically shows how phonograms work in each word rather than depending on students to simply memorize the word or intuit “the code” of the English language itself with no instruction to that end. As has been revealed in many studies, about a third of children do not intuitively understand English spelling in the way that some of us “are just not good in math.” As such, the phonemic patterns found in the Orton-Gillingham family of research have been used for students who struggle with reading, whether having a different native language, being dyslexic, having suffered physical injury affecting the brain, or simply not having a normal grasp of English spelling.

Our phonics program is a multi-sensory approach. That is, students hear the explicit sounds of the phonograms spoken by the teacher, say the sounds themselves in a choral response, see the teacher writing the phonograms on the board to form words, continue to say the phonograms as they write the words on paper, then see their own written words, marked with a code that enables them to understand what each phonogram is doing in the word (as when the letter O says its third sound, or the letters CH say their second sound). This multi-sensory way of teaching helps all students master and commit to memory what they are learning. Thus, students hear, say, see, and write words whose spelling patterns are explained to them, thereby taking “ownership” of correct spelling.

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## GIFTED AND TALENTED

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Classical education, by its very nature, upholds time-tested standards of excellence and is challenging and academically rigorous at its core. Students first encounter Shakespeare in the fifth grade. They first learn about Socrates in the second grade. They will start learning Greek and Latin roots in fourth grade. As such, experience shows that students deemed gifted and talented are genuinely challenged by the demands of classical learning. The classical curriculum is by its nature a gifted and talented program for all students.

Obviously, certain students will excel more than others. Should a student wish to pursue a more demanding level of instruction, the teachers will work to provide such a challenge within the curriculum itself rather than creating an alternative curriculum or program. For example, when second-grade classes are memorizing the Preamble to the Constitution, a more talented or ambitious student could “keep going” and memorize as much of the Constitution as he or she can, or perhaps attempt the Bill of Rights. In the fourth grade, the students read an adapted version of *Robinson Crusoe*. A student wishing to excel further could read Daniel Defoe’s original text, which is written in eighteenth-century prose. In the sixth grade, students encounter philosophy through their study of the Greeks and Romans, followed by the Enlightenment. Students wishing to go beyond the teacher’s lectures introducing the philosophical concepts of “the Cave,” the *vita activa* versus the *vita contemplative*, the “state of nature,” the division of labor, and so on, could be given actual passages taken from Plato, Cicero, John Locke, Adam Smith, *et alia* to read and report on.

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## NEEDS IN MATHEMATICS

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A classical school seeks to provide students with a mastery of numbers no less than a

mastery of words. Realizing how and why students struggle with math shapes both our teaching and our program as we work with students of widely varying abilities.

In the same way phonics offers explicit instruction in the way words work, Singapore Math offers a conceptual approach to mathematics that explains how numbers work. The Singapore Mathematics curriculum comes originally from the country of Singapore, whose students have ranked at the top of international exams for decades (for example, as reflected in the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study). Its design addresses one of the flagrant shortcomings of much math teaching in America. Plainly, many students have trouble “seeing” exactly what numbers are and how numbers relate to each other, even when counting beyond a certain number. The Singapore program explicitly teaches students in three stages of math instruction: from the concrete to the pictorial to the abstract. Students in the early grades work with small “manipulatives” (such as popsicle sticks) that allow them to feel what numbers mean and to build number sense. Soon, they move to the pictorial, that is, symbols or bars to represent numbers as they interact, which the students may have to draw themselves. Then they are prepared to use numbers in the abstract and understand how they relate to each other in various operations.

Use of the pictorial to represent numbers does not stop in the elementary grades, however. Particularly with fractions, and then moving into pre-algebra, students must draw on bar modeling to understand how mathematical equations actually work in concept. For example, with bar modeling students can see visually what a fourth of a half is—as it becomes one-eighth—rather than just following a rote, abstract procedure (multiply the tops of the fractions, multiply the bottoms) which does not explain why that method works conceptually.

Such a method of teaching math supports students with varying needs. Whenever a student does not understand a particular operation, the teacher can always go back to the concrete or the pictorial representation rather than just stalling on an equation that makes no sense to the student(s).

The school will also differentiate math instruction by ability grouping in all grades beyond the initial years of elementary school (K and 1). Students, particularly those entering a charter school in the first few years, will vary widely in their number sense and mathematical skills. When all students are kept at grade level, the teacher is forced to teach to an artificial middle, which usually leaves at least a third of the students bored and a third confused. After initial evaluation and review, students will be placed according to their ability levels during a common math block in the elementary grades while the upper school will offer a schedule allowing students to take their ability-levelled courses. The purpose of ability-grouping is not to “hold students back” in math, but rather to give them a solid foundation, remove anxiety, and foster a joy in mathematical thinking. If students do not master the basic operations, then their mathematical reasoning at follow-on levels will be difficult and discouraging.

The school will explain the rationale for ability grouping to the parents and provide a culture in which students go to different teachers during “math time” but are not being demoted or put in “second-grade math” as third graders, for example. Schools that have used this approach have been able to bring students who struggle with math up to their grade level more quickly and to build students’ confidence in their own math abilities as they learn to enjoy the puzzles, patterns, and mysteries of numerical relations. Treasure Valley Classical Academy has shown strong academic results (as evidenced in the most recent ISAT) in mathematics using this approach

to ability grouping.

Ability grouping in math will also be the school's approach to challenge students deemed gifted and talented in mathematics. The upper school schedule will be made to ensure classes in pre-algebra, Algebra I, and possibly geometry will be offered during the math block in the elementary school for students who need that level of instruction.

A now seminal 2007 study by Dr. Greg Duncan *et alia* of Northwestern University titled School Readiness and Later Achievement concluded that early literacy and math skill acquisition is the greatest predictor of later learning. By choosing sound research-based programs in phonics and mathematics, coupled with a classical curriculum that, by definition, is a literacy focused curriculum, we propose to provide students with these skills early on to ensure a successful academic future.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

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Professional development in the classical model will be an essential feature of INCA's annual program. Though training and evaluation is continuous, most faculty training will come in the form of book ends to the academic year held in the last week or weeks of summer prior to the start of the school year and for two or more days in the early summer at an annual retreat involving similar schools.

Professional development is essential to INCA achieving its mission. Though many teachers will likely have a background in classical education, whether in their own K-12 or college experience or in teaching, others will not. While elementary teachers may be very strong and well-trained in their particular academic disciplines, they may not be as well versed in the classical approach as others. Further, even within the classical community there are different ideas



concerning what is both most classical and most effective. Thus, the school's faculty training will bring together all teachers in all subjects and for all grade levels to create a common conversation about what constitutes the school's mission, vision, pedagogy, and means of promoting good student conduct and progress within a vibrant and cheerful school culture.

Within this framework, the professional development will take several forms. There will be a significant amount of attention given to the mission and philosophy of INCA's American classical approach, to common features of classroom management and school decorum, and to school policies and practices, all discussed as a whole faculty. Further, teachers will participate in intensive pre-opening and follow-up training for individual subjects: phonics (Literacy Essentials), mathematics (Singapore Dimensions), grammar (Well Ordered Language), vocabulary (Wordly Wise), composition (Institute for Excellence in Writing), and comprehensive core curriculum (Hillsdale *K-12 Program Guide 3.0: A comprehensive scope & sequence*). Elementary teachers, who teach multiple subjects, should expect to participate in annual training for phonics, grammar, mathematics, literature, history, and science. While it might seem unnecessary for an experienced teacher to sit alongside a teacher new to the school and to the curriculum (and sometimes experienced teachers will not be required to participate in the introductory phases of training), all these subjects are both rich and complex enough to warrant repeated inquiry. In addition, both the insights and questions of more experienced teachers can be very helpful to newer teachers and to their veteran colleagues.

The largely subject-based training for upper-school teachers will usually be directed only at the teachers who teach those disciplines, with two provisions. First, all teachers will be given at least an introduction to all subjects taught in the school. Knowing what other teachers are doing in

other subjects builds camaraderie, gives teachers a much broader understanding of the school, and promotes cross-curricular instruction. Second, upper-school teachers should be encouraged to attend much of the elementary training in their subject areas, again for several reasons. Doing so builds a strong alliance between upper-school and elementary teachers. It reveals to all teachers what the grade-level expectations of students are, what students will have learned in the earlier grades, and what they should prepare for in the upper grades. In other words, it fosters vertical integration of the curriculum.

Teachers (and school leaders) should practice what they preach. To this end, the faculty and staff will, over time, “read through the curriculum” together to promote summer professional development and discussion during faculty training. Rather than just talking about what “The Great Conversation” should look like, the faculty should participate in or “model” it. Such engagement will give teacher insights into what is expected of them and what they should expect of their students. Here are some examples: Benjamin Franklin’s *Autobiography*; Frederick Douglass’s *Narrative*; Laura Ingalls Wilder’s *Little Town on the Prairie*; Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (not “the model boy” of the village, nor the model student, but like many a young boy who just might end up in your fifth-grade class).

The training detailed above will be provided and orchestrated by the following leaders and institutions:

The Hillsdale College Office of K-12 Education holds an intensive two-week curricular and pedagogical training for new member schools. This training addresses the mission and history of classical education, the teaching of various subjects, and the overarching expectations of a classical school. This initial training is followed up with three to four days of annual training on the

Hillsdale campus for teachers at the various grade levels and subjects taught (i.e. early elementary, upper elementary, upper-school by subject). Further, Hillsdale curricular experts and teaching staff visit each school at least once per year to provide guidance and follow-up training.

At the annual training at Hillsdale, teachers meet and collaborate with other teachers from across the country, many of whom have been in classical schools for some time. Often the training is led by these more experienced teachers. This kind of training conducted by those who “know the ropes” is very beneficial to teachers: both in offering new ideas for best practices but also in reassuring and guiding them when some things are just hard by their very nature.

Over time, both in-house and in-state training will figure prominently in INCA’s professional development opportunities. After a while, some teachers will no doubt have distinguished themselves as masters of their craft. Such teachers are often informally consulted by their colleagues for advice about what works in the classroom. A school with outstanding teachers does well to use their talents to help lead discussions and train other teachers, particularly those new to the school and new to teaching altogether. This is also a good way to train future school leaders, whether of this school or others. These teachers will be given opportunities to serve in two-year faculty chair terms in grade bands such as K-2, 3-4, 5-6, and upper school by subject.

Another feature of the growth of the classical schools movement is an increasing level of collaboration among schools in the same state or region of the country. States with emerging classical charter school networks are capitalizing on collaborative opportunities within those states. As more classical charters open in Idaho, no doubt such joint training will increase.

While the kinds of training needed to achieve the school’s mission varies according to grade level and subject matter, certain common elements transcend age and subject. The school will

work to ensure teachers have these fundamental ideas of good classical teaching on their minds as they prepare and execute their lessons. Such elements or questions are:

- How does a teacher provide teacher-led instruction that nonetheless engages the students individually and enlivens the class as a whole?
- How does a teacher employ the Socratic method? What does Socratic inquiry look like in different subjects and at different grade levels?
- How does the teacher differentiate within the classroom to engage all students?
- How do more lecture-based classes (history and science) tell the story of the human or the natural world and keep students engaged while doing so?
- How do the arts (visual and musical) appeal to certain models of excellence, and can the modern student imitate or be inspired by these models?
- How does a teacher create study questions, quiz and test questions, and essay questions that engage and do justice to the subject as they inspire the students' minds?
- How does a teacher develop memorable assignments and tests, thus producing cultural literacy, a storehouse of knowledge, and genuine, life-long participation in "The Great Conversation"?
- To what extent can/should modern technology be used in a classical school?

Aside from day-to-day student participation in class discussion, what other forms might the rhetorical component of classical education take? These should include memorizing of poetry; brief statements or reports from the front of the class; class debates; mini-lectures on appropriate subjects, such as a work of art, "justifying one's answer" as in a math class, etc. A student's academic journey at INCA will culminate in a senior thesis both written and presented orally to his

or her classmates, teachers, and other invited guests.

What constitutes fair and effective grading? The ideal will be a “Golden Mean” between every student easily making straight A’s, on the one hand, and most of the students barely scraping by, on the other. In general, grade inflation will be discouraged, with grades assigned according to the following guidelines: A (mastery), B (proficiency), C (sufficiency or basic competence), D (insufficiency), and F (failing). Grading is particularly important since most students will enter the school without a classical background, and the material being taught is demanding. Over time we should see greater mastery of the curriculum and therefore significant improvement in grades for all.

In addition to training, the Hillsdale College K-12 Program and the Core Knowledge Foundation have ample resources that help teachers prepare lessons and follow the sequence for any given subject or grade level. Singapore Mathematics and Literacy Essentials likewise offer such resources. Time will be provided during training to show teachers how to use these materials.

The bulk of professional development will be devoted to the curriculum and teaching. Nonetheless, sufficient time will be given to other essential topics: maintaining good discipline and decorum in the classroom; student services (response to intervention, special education, and English language learners); differentiated instruction; effective communication with parents; school policies and procedures, and school information systems (student information system, parent portal, etc.).

Teachers will be instructed in the best techniques and school’s policies and philosophy of what is usually called “classroom management.” The basic strategy is to combine structured

learning wherein students always know what is expected of them with engagement and discussion that keeps students interested and appeals to the best in their nature through an explicit teaching of the moral virtues (of which the school has chosen six “core virtues”). In addition, the school will have a fair and consistent plan of discipline to correct behavior when it is not appropriate or conducive to learning. This plan will vary according to grade level so as to be age-appropriate but will throughout the grades require students to acquire what the school will call “self-government.” Though teachers may have different “styles” or “voices” in implementing discipline, as is the case with teaching, all teachers will embrace the school’s philosophy and practices of promoting good behavior.

## **FACULTY AND STAFF PERFORMANCE EVALUATION**

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One of the school leader’s primary duties will be to clearly explain to teachers the expectations for their teaching, classroom management, various administrative responsibilities (such as taking attendance in a timely manner, grading, etc.) communication with parents, monitoring students outside the classroom, and the various aspects of school safety.

From the first week, the school leader will be a presence in the halls and in the classrooms to ensure the teachers fully understand and are following the expectations of the school: with the school leader’s understanding being that this is a first-year school, some teachers may be in their first year of teaching, and the school has a very unique mission. Thus, much “on-the-job training” is to be expected. Teachers should feel that they can go to the school leader with questions and to get help in a friendly and productive learning environment. It is the school leader’s job to promote a positive culture of self-improvement.

This culture is best created—at least in the classical community—by what is called “The

Conversation.” Teachers should expect the school leader or, eventually, lead teachers to come into their classrooms, to observe, and then to discuss the lesson afterwards. Rather than a highly formal and formulaic evaluation, the school leader or lead teacher should be able to give a teacher advice for improvement as well as comment on the strengths of the lesson—with guidance on the subject itself—through a conversation that includes questions, commentary, and suggestions. Thus, the idea of a conversation which animates the school extends to the evaluation of teaching. The hope is teachers will enjoy the school leader visiting classes and look forward to such feedback rather than dreading a highly formal evaluation. Though this personal approach may seem antiquated, it is most definitely the classical approach to teaching—in this case teaching the teachers. Such observations will be frequent, such that by the end of the year (at the summative appraisal), both the teacher and the school leader will be very familiar with areas of strength and areas that are opportunity for improvement.

Teachers will receive a formal appraisal each year, which includes an interview and a written evaluation to be kept in the teacher’s file. The school leader will follow Idaho’s approved Danielson Framework in providing written feedback for both informal observations as well as the annual summative.

In the case of substandard performance where expected improvement is not forthcoming, the school leader may reassign the teacher to other duties (if such duties exist and if there is a good chance of the teacher’s improving) or terminate the teacher’s at-will agreement. There are, of course, other reasons for terminating an employee, e.g., lack of professionalism, the use of inappropriate language in class, or a failure to perform assigned duties (such as getting grades in or being chronically late for class). Teacher performance and improvement overall, most of the

time follows the adage we teach our early elementary students: “Where there’s a will, there’s a way.”

Members of the office staff or leadership team will be evaluated in a similar manner to teachers, though clearly a different kind of observation will take place. Whereas the faculty will meet regularly to discuss matters related to the classroom, school culture, upcoming events (such as a parents’ night), and the like, the office staff will usually meet as a smaller group or individually with the school leader to discuss various administrative functions (e.g., enrollment, finances, or book orders). Often the staff will need to meet prior to introducing something to the faculty. Staff members may be required to attend faculty meetings when needed. It is likely that staff will be able to meet during the school day, whereas faculty meetings will be held after school on a consistent schedule.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED BY CHARTER COMMISSION STAFF**

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The Charter Commission staff requested additional information about how INCA will find American classical educators during a nationwide staffing shortage.

The governing board and school leadership recognize that the availability of classically trained educators is limited, and that American classical education is an even narrower branch of the classical education movement. It is anticipated that INCA may attract a small number of experienced educators from other schools within the Hillsdale K-12 initiative who are interested in living on the eastern side of Idaho’s Treasure Valley or are seeking opportunities for greater responsibility in an American classical school. However, INCA intends to cultivate its own American classical educators by drawing from the existing pool of new and experienced teachers in Idaho and throughout the region. These efforts will be combined with recruitment of content



experts from across the nation. The common threads that will unite successful candidates are: (a) mission alignment, (b) kind-heartedness, and (c) a love of wisdom and a desire to learn. Each teacher employed by INCA will receive ongoing training in the mission, educational program, and character development practices utilized in an American classical school. Details regarding approaches to teacher professional development are provided earlier in this section. Through those efforts the school leader will create a corps of American classical educators for INCA, with assistance and support from Hillsdale College. This process is unfolding across the United States as the classical education renaissance gains momentum and schools work to form the next generation of classically trained teachers.

Sustainable, long-term recruitment strategies are a top priority for INCA and ACSI. Although our plan is to create a corps of American classical educators, we need access to mission aligned professionals with an interest in learning this model. Currently, the groundwork is being laid to create recruiting pipelines between interested colleges and universities and ACSI schools. These include Baylor University, Hillsdale College, George Fox University, St. Johns College, Templeton Honors College (Eastern University), Torrey Honors College (Biola University), University of Dallas, and Wyoming Catholic College. These relationships are being developed by leveraging connections within the ACSI network and external support for our mission to train the minds and improve the hearts of students. This is only the beginning of our concerted effort to ensure that we can staff not only INCA, but other ACSI schools as they come online in the future.

While many of TVCA's elementary school faculty were recruited from within Idaho, all their upper school faculty are content area experts recruited from across the United States (from New York, Virginia, Texas, Arizona, and California) and 85% of them have either a master's degree, a

doctorate, or both. INCA will pursue similar recruitment patterns, with most elementary school teacher recruitment occurring locally or regionally, combined with a national search for upper school teaching candidates. To support Idaho-based recruitment efforts, in-state pipelines will eventually be developed. However, there is ample evidence that talented educators from around the country desire to work in American classical schools and will relocate for the opportunity.

# **SECTION II: FINANCE AND FACILITIES PLAN**

## **FISCAL PHILOSOPHY AND SPENDING PRIORITIES**

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INCA will function as a nonprofit organization managed under the “Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act.” Charter schools differ from other nonprofit corporations in several ways. In the case of finances and funding, charter schools are largely publicly funded but may seek and receive some funding through philanthropic sources due to the responsibility of fulfilling the obligations of public schools but on a reduced budget. Not only must the charter school choose their spending priorities carefully, but governing boards and school leaders must have a heightened sense of fiscal accountability and make wise financial choices. In alignment with this perspective, charter school boards must practice robust financial oversight of management.

INCA’s fiscal philosophy is focused on the principle that all money will be prioritized to inculcate excellent knowledge and character in our students and that budgetary decisions will be made with long-term financial sustainability in mind. Our goal is to operate with a budget that will gradually build toward a 60-day cash reserve (minimum) within the first 3-5 years of operation and always maintain at least a 1.2 debt service coverage ratio. The budget will follow a realistic projection of future operating revenues and uses of funds. Additionally, the budget will be prepared with thoughtful consideration of the mission of our school, and state, federal, and local requirements.

INCA will make every effort to ensure timely payments of all liabilities. Also, all expenditures will be regulated to make certain that sufficient funds are available to cover all financial obligations.

INCA will operate in a transparent and accountable way in all financial matters. The school will continue to communicate with all persons, groups, or organizations that have an interest or

concern related to our school. The INCA website and other media outlets will be utilized to ensure that our public financial information is easily accessible (per Idaho statute).

INCA will make every effort to pay fair and competitive wages to its employees. Compensation will be reviewed annually. This is an important tool in attracting and retaining a talented workforce.

INCA values its relationships with all vendors in our local community and throughout Idaho. INCA will routinely review fiduciary relationships to ensure the reasonableness of fees paid and that contractual requirements are being met. These relationships may include, but are not limited to attorneys, auditors, elementary or secondary special education service providers, and facility contractors.

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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The budget is prepared by the school leader and approved by the governing board in compliance with Idaho Code § 33-801 and policy of the State Board of Education. It will be presented at a public hearing in May (first reading) and June (second reading) of each year and is delivered to the State Department of Education as required on or before July 15th prior to the beginning of the school year. Income sources will include state allocation per pupil, federal grants, private grants, business partnerships, and donations. Amended budgets will be submitted to the State Department of Education as necessary pursuant to Idaho Code Section § 33-701(9). As mentioned previously, INCA will build and then maintain an operational reserve, to account for any contingencies.

The accounting records will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and standards. The purchasing process will comply with Idaho Code § 33-601. The

school leader will be responsible for financial management with the daily monitoring of revenue and expenses and management of cash flow. Per ACSI's bylaws, the governing board must ensure the financial integrity of the INCA budget; therefore, the INCA governing board exercises fiduciary oversight of the school's finances.

The partnership with Hillsdale College provides critical support in the technical areas of starting a new charter school. Many charter schools are blindsided by a host of issues that are difficult to foresee. The experience, guidance, and rich network that the Hillsdale K-12 Program provides will be essential to INCA's success. Hillsdale College provides a semi-annual two-day training on board governance principles, including financial oversight.

Another important partnership that INCA has in the area of school finance is the team at BLUUM. Through the agreement between INCA and BLUUM, finance training and resources are provided to the governing board and school leader, particularly in the area of Idaho laws, formulas, and best practices. BLUUM's objective in providing this free of cost support is to empower financial and operational decision-making in those responsible for the development of INCA. The agreement between INCA and BLUUM can be found in Appendix Series H.

The school leader and business management service provider will be responsible for monitoring the school's financial position, i.e., the routine spending decisions, maintaining financial records, making deposits, filing payroll taxes, etc. The governing board is responsible for the oversight of the school's financial management. The board's responsibility is to ensure that all management responsibilities are properly executed, and that the school's money is reasonably safeguarded from risk.

Dr. Brian Carpenter (2011), from National Charter Schools Institute, believes the following

are two of the most valuable financial oversight policies a board can have:

- An internal control policy (segregation of duties). Such a policy helps prevent any individual from having unfettered access to the school's money. Failing to have such a policy can cost your school dearly.
- An auditor selection policy through which the board takes the lead in selecting the auditor. Among other things, the board should ensure that the auditor is independent from management

The governing board will also consider adapting financial management policies per the following guidelines from National Charter School Resource Center.

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### **FINANCIAL HEALTH AND SUSTAINABILITY**

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#### Prevention

- Ensure financial literacy
- Proper budgeting and forecasts
- Regular monitoring practices
- Regular risk management

#### Identification – using National Association of Charter School Authorizers Checklist

- Near-term measures
- Sustainability measures
- Additional non-NACSA measures

#### Management

- Determine the severity of the problem
- Create a strategy to address issues

- Additional controls

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## FRAUD AND MISFEASANCE

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### Prevention

- Practice a culture of fiscal accountability
- Set up policies and procedures to ensure transparency and accountability
- Practice proper procurement and contracting
- Limit access to school funds
- Review human resources policies
- Review and maintain accurate records and accounts
- Contract independent financial audits
- Protect and encourage whistleblowing
- Turn on automated controls

### Identification

- Look for warning signs in financial records, such as sudden drops in profit or cash, no receipts, missing documentation, and large increases in payments or salaries
- Look for warning signs in a school's fiscal practices, such as the concentration of authority, no transparency, unqualified financial management, no implementation of policies, weak checks and balances, and unresponsive school leadership

### Management

- Upon initial suspicion, clearly document all decisions and designate the appropriate investigative body
- Conduct a thorough investigation to understand whether the issue should be escalated, or if



a crime has been committed

Source: Carpenter, Brian, L., (2011), BoardWiser™, Navigating the Intersection of Governance and Management Series, 7 of 12. Brian L. Carpenter, Ph.D. & Associates.

## **DESCRIPTION OF FACILITY NEEDS**

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As noted in Section I of this Petition, INCA is based on an orderly, traditional, classical education format utilizing the Hillsdale K-12 curriculum. The guiding principle for most K-12 instruction is that instruction be “teacher-centered.” Most of the time teacher-centered instruction will take the form of a short lecture, story, read-aloud, or teacher-led discussion. Teacher-led discussion will help to model inquiry and analysis for students as a way of preparing them to engage in more open Socratic discussions in the upper school. This traditional instruction requires rooms with individual desks and the ability to deploy a layout that focuses attention on the teacher’s instructional location, commonly the front of the class or circulating amongst student desks. This approach can be effectively accomplished with classrooms of approximately 700 square feet. However, slightly larger classrooms of around 860 square feet will be necessary for the art and music programs.

Once the school is fully developed, it will serve 702 students, which includes 54 students per grade level. INCA plans to have 3 classrooms in grades K-1 to accommodate 18 students per class and 27 students in each classroom in 2<sup>nd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> and beyond. Conceptual financial analysis conducted in partnership with BLUUM suggests school facility construction be split into two phases. The facility plan was developed based upon this parameter.

## **FACILITY PLAN**

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With the instructional requirements outlined in the previous subsection in mind, INCA

embarked on a building and design partner exploration to support construction of an American classical school. This exploration began by conducting separate meetings with eight other charter school leaders throughout Idaho to document their experiences with individual design, construction, and finance partners used for each of their respective schools. This information was synthesized and discussed at length. Potential design and construction partners were engaged and, along with key engineers, designers and community planners, several possible plans were created for the layout and placement of the building. The next three subsections include information about the location, anticipated cost, facility details, and financing considerations for INCA.

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### FACILITY LOCATION

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In September 2021, the founding community group signed a letter of intent with Avimor Development, LLC and received a letter of support (available for review in Appendix Series H) from Dan Richter, the managing partner for the development, outlining their intent to donate land to be used for the school facility. The donated parcel is situated on the eastern side of Horseshoe Bend Road and north of W. Avimor Drive in Boise, Idaho. Current estimated valuation of this land is between \$2,000,000-3,000,000; a formal appraisal will be conducted prior to facility construction. The donation agreement was finalized in September of 2022 (available for review in Appendix Series B). ACSI is committed to building INCA on the generously donated land in the Avimor community. When the time comes, the builders will use state-of-the-art technology and techniques to minimize impacts on the surrounding environment as INCA is constructed in Avimor.

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## FACILITY NEEDS, COST, AND FUNDING

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Based on the proposed floorplan for a fully constructed, permanent facility, INCA anticipates a total cost slightly under \$15,000,000 split between two phases of construction. Phase one is expected to cost approximately \$8,498,000. Phase two is forecasted to cost an additional \$6,104,000. These estimates are subject to adjustment based on economic conditions (labor and material costs) at the time of construction. Currently, INCA is planning around a cost of \$280 per square foot. Specific financial details for phase one are included in Appendix Series B, along with site and floor plans and other relevant documents. The next several paragraphs provide details regarding what will be included within each phase of the facility project.

Phase one will provide enough space to open as a K-6 school and operate for four years, growing to a K-9 school, prior to additional construction. This phase includes 21 standard classrooms, 2 slightly larger rooms to accommodate music and art, 2 student services rooms, a resource center, a main office, a multi-purpose room, and a kitchen. The total square footage for the phase one facility is 30,350 square feet.

Phase two will expand the school to a K-12 facility and include the addition of 11 standard classrooms, 2 student services rooms, a second art room, a second music room, and an upper school science lab. It will also involve the construction of a dedicated gymnasium. The construction project will occur during year four and be completed prior to the fifth year of operation.

The table below provides a succinct outline of the facility needs in each phase of a two-phase construction project. As with phase one, the art and music rooms added in phase two will be slightly larger than standard classrooms. This is also true of the dedicated science lab that is

intended to accommodate lab sciences as the upper school expands into grades 9–12. Please note that the phase one outline represents the minimum amount of space required for INCA to operate the American classical education model. The current phase two outline provides for one additional classroom beyond the minimum requirements as a contingency plan for unanticipated programmatic or student needs.

*Two-Phase Construction Outline*

Phase One		Phase Two	
Kindergarten	3	Ninth Grade	1
First Grade	3	Tenth Grade	3
Second Grade	2	Eleventh Grade	3
Third Grade	2	Twelfth Grade	3
Fourth Grade	2	Student Services	2
Fifth Grade	2	Art Room	1
Sixth Grade	2	Music Room	1
Seventh Grade	2	Science Lab	1
Eighth Grade	2	Gymnasium	1
Ninth Grade	1	Spare Classroom	1
Student Services	2		
Art Room	1		
Music Room	1		
Resource Center	1		
Multi-Purpose Room	1		
Main Office	1		
Kitchen	1		

Additionally, a note must be made about the outline to provide context for the introduction of one ninth grade classroom in phase one and a second ninth grade classroom in phase two. This is a necessary step to control costs and efficiently utilize space as the student population, academic program, and facility all undergo expansion. In year four, the art room will temporarily be used to teach ninth grade classes and the art teacher will go to the students in their other classrooms rather than the students coming to the art teacher. When phase two is complete and the fifth year of operation begins, ninth grade courses will occur in one of the newly added classrooms and the

art room will be restored to its original purpose.

INCA is also prepared with a contingency plan for deployment if unanticipated factors prevent the construction of the proposed 30,350 square foot facility in advance of the opening year. The contingency plan is a hybrid facility option including a permanent structure of reduced size and an array of modular classrooms. In year one, this would involve the construction of a 12,900 square foot permanent facility with a main office, multi-purpose room, kitchen, resource center, two student services room, three standard classrooms, an art room, and a music room. Since smaller facilities tend to cost more per square foot due to fixed expenses, the contingency plan is built around an assumption of a \$300 per square foot cost. This results in a permanent facility cost of \$3,870,000 for the contingency plan. In addition to a permanent facility of reduced size, seven modular units with two classrooms per unit would be required to fulfill all space requirements in the opening year. Modular units are expected to have an all-inclusive cost of \$296,700 each. One additional modular unit would be required per year during years 2-4 to keep pace with the school expansion plan. Additional information about the contingency plan, with supporting documentation, is provided in Appendix Series B.

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### **FACILITY FINANCE PLAN**

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INCA will work with Building Hope to finance 35% of the phase one construction costs. Another lender will be utilized to secure the remaining funds. It is anticipated that phase one will cost approximately \$8,498,000, resulting in an estimated annual debt service cost of \$596,325. Please note that this is based on a conservative (high) interest rate estimate and that actual costs may be marginally lower.

In order to balance the budget during the initial years of operation and maintain a debt

service coverage ratio of 1.2, INCA will utilize a generous grant from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation. This grant funding will be gradually reduced throughout the early years of operation until financial sustainability is achieved. The INCA budget has been built out through the 2028-2029 school year, by which time the school will serve 576 students. Starting with that school year, INCA will possess the financial capacity to operate on state and federal funding alone and grant support will no longer be required.

See Appendix Series A for the financial summary, pre-operational budget, operational budget, and year three cash flow statement, which reflect phase one construction costs.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED BY CHARTER COMMISSION STAFF**

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The Charter Commission staff requested evidence of the availability of JKAF grant funding and documentation to substantiate facility finance claims.

During the pre-operational phase and first several years of operation, INCA expects to benefit from a JKAF grant up to or exceeding \$2,000,000.00. These funds will enable the school to operate all aspects of the educational program at full capacity beginning in year one, as reflected in the proposed budget. Support from JKAF will be gradually reduced in subsequent years until it is no longer necessary. Please note that JKAF has discontinued the practice of writing letters of support for inclusion in charter petitions because direct support is provided through Bluum. The letter of support from Bluum, which has recently been updated with an addendum (see Appendix Series H), serves as a proxy for JKAF support of this project. These grant funds are available (as documented in the addendum) but cannot be fully committed until INCA is authorized by the Charter Commission.

Additional evidence has also been provided to substantiate school financing options

available to INCA. Appendix B now contains letters from Building Hope, Vectra (Zions Bank), Baird National Charter School Finance Group, and Piper Sandler & Co. that detail their interest in working with us to finance a facility. Preliminary information about terms and conditions are provided within those documents. Please note that as with the grant support that is available through JKAF, all these relationships are contingent upon successful navigation of the authorization process. Once the Charter Commission authorizes INCA, these school financing options can be discussed in greater depth and actualized.

INCA has already begun to develop the relationships necessary to carry out a thorough and fiscally responsible facility design/build process. Paradigm of Idaho, Inc. has been retained as an owner's representative. Ken Fisher and his team at Paradigm have already completed a site walk with the developers at Avimor and are beginning to carry out pre-development, entitlement, and due diligence work so the project can proceed on schedule once authorized. Currently, INCA plans to break ground on our facility in June of 2023.

# **SECTION III: BOARD CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**



## **DESCRIPTION OF GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE**

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INCA will be a legally and operationally independent entity (operating as a 501c-3 LLC with ACSI as the sole member), established by the nonprofit corporation's governing board. The governing board will be legally accountable for the operation of the charter school. There will be no less than 3 and no more than 11 members on the governing board. Board officers will include a president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer. Each will be elected at the annual meeting and serve for one year. See Article 6 of the ACSI Bylaws in Appendix Series C for a complete description of the officers' roles, but in general:

The president of the governing board shall preside at all meetings and shall appoint committees with approval of the governing board, shall have the right, as other members of the governing board, to make or second motions, to discuss questions, to vote, and may not act for or on behalf of the governing board without prior specific authority from the majority of the governing board to do so. It is the president's responsibility to ensure that governing board members uphold their commitments/responsibilities to the school.

The vice president shall perform the duties of the president in the absence of the president or at the request of the president. In the event a vacancy occurs in the presidency, the vice president will act in the capacity of the president until the office has been filled by a vote of the board membership.

During the foundation period of the school the treasurer may, at the request of the board, deposit or disburse the funds of the corporation or render an account of all transactions as treasurer and of the financial condition of the corporation. The treasurer shall present an operating statement and report, since the last preceding regular board meeting, to the board at all

regular meetings. The treasurer shall be familiar with the fiscal affairs of the school and keep the governing board informed if the school's business management service provider is unable to so act and assist the governing board with the oversight of the corporation's financial management as well as assist the Board in the development of financial policies to ensure that performance aligns with policy. The treasurer shall not be a signor on any account nor shall have any authority to approve or authorize transactions or have responsibility for the financial performance of the school.

The secretary shall keep the minutes of the governing board meetings, ensure that all notices are given in accordance with the provisions of the governing board policies and as required by law; shall countersign, when required, all authorized bonds, contracts, deeds, leases, or other legal instruments; and perform all duties incident to the office of secretary. Other duties may be assigned to the secretary by the governing board from time to time until a clerk of the board is hired.

The governing board may create one or more committees and appoint two members of the governing board, one to act as committee chair. Additional members of the committees need not be directors. Each committee may have two or more members, who shall serve at the pleasure of the full governing board. The provisions of the bylaws which govern meetings, action without meetings, and quorum and voting requirements of the governing board, shall apply to committees and their members as well.

ACSI commits to adhering to all federal and state laws and rules and acknowledges its responsibility for identifying essential laws and regulations and complying with them. This includes Idaho's Open Meeting and Public Records laws.

See Article 2 of the ACSI Bylaws in Appendix Series C for additional details on the membership, authority, and powers of the governing board.

See Article 4 of the ACSI Bylaws in Appendix Series C for details on the governing board meetings and open meeting laws.

## **THE GOVERNING BOARD**

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INCA shall be governed by the American Classical Schools of Idaho (ACSI) Board of Directors and managed by a school leader pursuant to the school's charter and duly adopted bylaws. The ACSI organization chart is available for review in Appendix Series E. ACSI is a nonprofit corporation and associated board of directors. In addition, there will be a separate ACSI Foundation (501c-3) and eventually an ACSI Charter Support Organization (a nonprofit external services provider created solely for the benefit of schools governed by the ACSI board). INCA (and subsequent schools) will be set up as separate LLCs with their own charters and will maintain financial independence. There will be absolutely no cross-collateralization between schools; all funding will flow directly to the schools (as outlined in the flow of funds diagram in Appendix Series E). This constitutes a wall of financial separation between the schools, each with its own revenue, financial obligations, and audit processes.

The main purpose of the governing board is to ensure that the school accomplishes the outcome for which the school was chartered within all the pertinent parameters. The governing board will be responsible for adopting policy, overseeing the management of the school, and ensuring financial compliance and responsibility. In addition, the governing board will ensure that the mission and goals of the charter are carried out by engaging in strategic planning. Governing board members will participate in fundraising activities as deemed necessary and appropriate by

the board. Governing board members will put the interests of the school first and will refrain from using the position for personal or partisan gain.

The governing board will not be involved in the daily operations of the school, but will hire a school leader, who will be evaluated annually. The governing board will hire a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of ACSI to act on its behalf. The CEO will manage the school leader and ensure that he/she leads INCA in accordance with the school's mission and vision and in compliance with all state and federal laws and regulations. The governing board will also perform ongoing assessments of the school and its programs and operations, with assistance from the CEO. The governing board and CEO will serve as liaison between INCA and the school's authorizer.

The governing board will also routinely assess its own performance. Governing board members will participate in and develop short and long-range plans for the school(s). The governing board will monitor the effectiveness of the school's programs and implementation to see if the school has met the goals outlined in the plans.

Recommendations of new board candidates and elections of the governing board will be held in accordance with the bylaws. As new governing board members are added, each will be provided an information packet, which contains information about the responsibilities of a board member. The packet will include, but is not limited to, governing board member roles, state statute for charter schools, ethical standards, open meeting laws, policies, financial reports, budgets, and other responsibilities. Each governing board member will have on record a signed copy of the Charter School Board Members Code of Conduct. Throughout the year, as decided by the board, there may be a training schedule including, but not limited to, the roles/responsibilities of a governing board, review of the school's charter, review of Idaho school funding and financial

audits, the governing board's ethical standards, and state statutes. As appropriate, the governing board will include other training such as the charter school board training seminars conducted at Hillsdale College. The governing board will attend the Charter School Boot Camp training offered by the Idaho State Department of Education as necessary.

## **THE SCHOOL LEADER**

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The school leader will report to the governing board at regular meetings about the school's operations and will be required to attend all governing board meetings. He/she is responsible for building a strong academic program, establishing a virtue-centered school culture, implementing the operational commitments made in the Petition, and ensuring that INCA is a high performing school. The top responsibility of the school leader will be overall instructional and cultural leadership of the charter school, including the discipline of students, and the planning, operation, and supervision of the educational program of the school. The school leader shall have the responsibility for all personnel matters including having the authority and responsibility to hire, discipline, and terminate all school employees. School employees will be periodically evaluated by the school leader in accordance with INCA policies. The school leader and governing board will work together on a periodic evaluation of the school leader's performance. Among all administrators at the school, the school leader retains primary responsibility for developing and maintaining effective community relations. The school leader shall uphold and enforce the charter, governing board policies, and local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Additional, specific responsibilities of the school leader and the school leader evaluation process are outlined in Section V of the Petition.

## **BUSINESS MANAGEMENT**

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Business management will initially be provided by a team of specialists at BLUUM, who will assist in preparing, planning for, and presenting an annual school budget to the governing board. A BLUUM representative is also expected to be available for governing board regular meetings to report on the financial status of the school and present pertinent information to the governing board as needed. The BLUUM support staff, in partnership with the ACSI CEO and school leader, will also be expected to keep the governing board apprised of changes in law, regulation, and rules applicable to Idaho public school finances and to ensure that the governing board is made aware of any potential concerns about the school's finances. They will also work cooperatively with the school leader so that both can keep the governing board well informed about the school's long-term financial prospects. Meanwhile, ACSI will actively work on developing a financial management team of its own. During the last fiscal year of business management support from BLUUM, ACSI will assume responsibility for all business management functions and provide those services to INCA indefinitely.

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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The ACSI board currently has five members, who collectively bring extensive school founding and governance experience to INCA. The directors are an exceptional group of leaders with diverse professional backgrounds and experience in charter school governance, classical education, and/or character development. Additional members will be added as more American classical schools come online in Idaho. Brief biographies of the directors are provided in the subsections that follow. Their resumes can be found in Appendix Series D.

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**MARVIN LASNICK**

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The board chair and a founding board member for Treasure Valley Classical Academy. Professionally, he serves as the Chief Technology Officer of Jobu Vetting, LLC, a privately held software company. He has extensive information technology experience in systems and application programming, business analytics, project and portfolio management, and cloud computing. He has led teams and projects to optimize product lifecycle management, modernize enterprise platforms, as well as to increase the pace of innovation. Mr. Lasnick also held positions responsible for global IT operations and IT compliance. Mr. Lasnick is a graduate of Boise State University with a B.A. in computer and information systems technology. He lives in Fruitland, Idaho with his wife Reegan and three of their four children.

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**TERRY RYAN**

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The CEO of the Boise-based education nonprofit BLUUM and Board Chair of the Idaho Charter School Network. Ryan is responsible for leading Idaho's effort to double the number of students in Idaho high-performing public charter schools. Ryan leads Idaho's federal Charter School Program (CSP) grant of \$22 million. Ryan was Vice-President for Ohio Programs and Policy at the Thomas B. Fordham Institute/Foundation from 2001 to 2013. He began his career in education as a teacher in Poland and worked with the Polish Ministry of Education and the Foundation for Education for Democracy on education policy and civic education. In the 1990s, he served as research director for the UK-based 21st Century Learning Initiative.

Ryan also served on Idaho Governor Brad Little's "Our Kids, Idaho's Future" education task force. He is a member of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools Policy Advisory Council. He served as a Commissioner for the CAEP Commission on Standards and Performance. Ryan was a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and was a 2008 Aspen Institute/Pahara Fellow. He has

co-authored two books on education. Ohio's Education Reform Challenges: Lessons from the Frontlines with Chester E. Finn, Jr. and Michael Lafferty of (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), and The Unfinished Revolution with John Abbott (ASCD Press, 2000).

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**RUTH DAVID**

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The parent who originally conceptualized the INCA project, brokered the land donation, and led the founding community group. Previously, she served on the board of directors for Compass Public Charter School in Meridian, where she worked extensively with parents and staff to promote school spirit and culture, to boost staff morale, and to cultivate relationships within the Compass community. She is a registered nurse by trade and spent around seven years working for St. Luke's. Mrs. David completed a B.S.N. at Boise State University and a B.A. in industrial and organizational psychology at San Jose State University. She lives in Meridian with her husband Raymon and three children.

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**STACY SAYLOR**

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Mrs. Saylor is a proud board member for Treasure Valley Classical Academy and an enthusiastic supporter of the Hillsdale K-12 initiative. She lives in Payette with her husband and son along with a German Shepherd, and a Siamese cat. Her daughter is a graduate student at Idaho State in Pocatello. Mrs. Saylor, a retired bank executive, and her husband, a retired fire captain, previously homeschooled their son using the Hillsdale Academy's classical curriculum. As a family, they enjoy winter sports, hiking and exploring. Mrs. Saylor and her husband support the school's mission to train the minds and improve the hearts of students while emphasizing virtuous living,



traditional learning, and civic responsibility, and are thankful their son has been able to attend an outstanding American classical school.

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### **JOHN BASSETTI**

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Mr. Bassetti brings two decades of experience in information technology to the ACSI governing board. He began as a helpdesk engineer, was subsequently promoted to IT manager, and ultimately became a director of information technology. Currently, he works as a technology auditor and organizational risk assessor. Prior to his career in IT, he worked as a geologist for an engineering consulting firm serving airline, railroad, chemical manufacturing, and multinational oil and gas clients. One of his professional interests is organizational growth and development and he has approached his role as a member of the founding community group of INCA with sustainable practices in mind. Mr. Bassetti holds a bachelor of arts in geology from Youngstown State University and a master of sustainable development from Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia. Having seen the positive impact that Treasure Valley Classical Academy has had on his own children, he is eager to support the growth of American classical schools in Idaho.

### **BOARD ADVISORS**

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ACSI has also sought out additional advisors to support the board. These advisors are not directors but are instead individuals selected to provide guidance and recommendations to the board pertaining to their area(s) of expertise. Brief biographies of the current advisors are provided in the subsections that follow. Their resumes can be found alongside the board of director resumes in Appendix Series D.

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### **MAJOR GENERAL MARK DILLON**

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Mr. Dillon, a retired two-star general in the United States Air Force, brings a lifetime of leadership experience to his role as an advisor to the ACSI board. In addition to 33 years of service in the Air Force, he has extensive experience as a leadership consultant and charter school advisor and authorizer. He previously served as a commissioner on the Hawaii Public Charter School Commission and as an advisor to the leadership team of the Hillsdale College Office of K-12 Education. Mr. Dillon is an experienced mentor for school leaders, specializing in leadership, time management, business acumen, organizational culture, fundraising, and human resource management. Currently, he works as the strategic accounts manager of air and space forces for Red Hat, Inc. and operates his own education consulting firm.

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**DR. JON FENNEL**

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Dr. Fennell is a retired professor of education, dean of social sciences, director of teacher education, and chairman of the education department at Hillsdale College. He is an expert on the philosophy of education and a prominent voice in the classical education movement. Prior to his work at Hillsdale College, Dr. Fennell served as a consultant for management information at the Idaho Department of Education for four years then spent two decades in corporate leadership positions, eventually becoming a vice president of operations. Dr. Fennell holds a bachelor of arts in political science and a master of arts in social foundations of education from the University of California: Davis, and a doctor of philosophy in philosophy of education from the University of Illinois: Urbana.

**BOARD TRAINING**

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One of the services provided by the Hillsdale Office of K-12 Education is training for boards. Board members will receive training related to governance, financial oversight, and procedures for

board operation and meetings. This training is provided completely free of cost, and the trainers are available to answer questions or provide advice related to training topics on an ongoing basis.

### **TRANSITION PLAN: FOUNDING COMMUNITY GROUP TO GOVERNING BOARD**

INCA was conceptualized by a founding group of citizens from the target enrollment area. The founding community group serves as the critical locus of support for generating interest in the establishment of a new school, in coordination with the ACSI/INCA board. Their role is to communicate the mission and vision to a broad array of stakeholders, generate a constituency, and foster the development of a school community. Throughout the charter school development process, the founding community group established an identity for the school (including name, logo, and school colors) and will serve as recruiters to help connect families with enrollment opportunities. ACSI will work to support the founding community group throughout this process. The five founding community group members are:

- Ruth David, a trained registered nurse and parent with previous experience in supporting the development of charter schools in the Treasure Valley.
- John Bassetti, an informational technology professional whose own children have benefitted from an American classical education.
- Raymon David, a sales and marketing operations professional with a background in information technology who currently works for LG. He is the architect of the INCA and ACSI websites and led INCA's early digital marketing efforts.
- Alan Hodge, a local real estate agent specializing in waterfront and view properties, acreage, corporate relocation, new construction, and development property, with a career

that has spanned decades in the Eagle area.

- Liz Williams Itterly, a real estate agent with more than two decades of experience who has recently chosen Eagle as her home and looks forward to enrolling her children at INCA.

The role of ACSI, through its board of directors, is to govern INCA. Once the charter is approved, the board will assume its responsibilities as a governing entity. The main purpose of the governing board is to provide oversight and ensure that the school accomplishes the outcome for which it was chartered, within all pertinent parameters. The board is not responsible for management of school operations. The school leader is responsible for working toward accomplishment of the operational, academic, and cultural objectives set for INCA. Once ACSI assumes governance of INCA, the founding community group will continue its work in support of startup efforts. After the school opens, members of the founding community group will be given the option to join the Mission Support Team alongside interested parents so that they can continue to advise the school leader on matters of importance to the community.

Although not directly relevant to this Petition, it should be noted that ACSI will also eventually govern Treasure Valley Classical Academy in Fruitland. Other school development projects throughout the state will be forthcoming.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED BY CHARTER COMMISSION STAFF**

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The Charter Commission staff requested information about the governing board's legal counsel.

The governing board will work with Chris Yorgason when legal advice is needed. Mr. Yorgason is the premiere independent attorney in Idaho on matters pertaining to charter school

law and has already provided valuable advice to ACSI on a variety of topics related to the INCA project.

# **SECTION IV: STUDENT DEMAND AND PRIMARY ATTENDANCE AREA**

**ENROLLMENT CAPACITY**

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INCA plans to open in the Fall of 2024 with grades K-6. One grade will be added each subsequent year as students advance. Full enrollment is forecasted as 702 students if each grade level were filled according to the selected model. Planning and budgeting were conducted based on the assumption that all seats will be filled in grades K-7, and that a minimal amount of student attrition will occur in grades 8-12, as reflected in the table below. Please note that these figures are cautious estimates, and we believe that the likelihood of consistently achieving full enrollment is high.

*INCA Enrollment Expectations by Year*

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>	<b>Year 6</b>	<b>Year 7</b>	<b>Year 8</b>	<b>Year 9</b>	<b>Year 10</b>
K	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
1	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
2	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
3	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
4	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
5	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
6	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
7		54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54	54
8			51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
9				48	48	48	48	48	48	48
10					45	45	45	45	45	45
11						43	43	43	43	43
12							40	40	40	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>483</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>576</b>	<b>619</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>659</b>	<b>659</b>

The model establishes 54 students per grade level as an operational goal. INCA will provide 3 classrooms for kindergarten and first grade students. The remaining grades will be divided into two sections of 27 students. There are several advantages to this approach. A class of 27 students is feasible to teach effectively given several key features of a good classical school: the culture is one

of discipline, decorum, and order; the students are self-motivated or strongly encouraged and guided by the teacher and parents to be diligent in their studies; the teacher is focused on fostering a climate of serious academic accomplishment; and the curriculum is rich, robust, and interesting to the students. Additionally, the class size remains short of the psychological barrier of 30 in the minds of many people. The class size permits the grades to be divided into two sections which will therefore require fewer teachers than would otherwise be needed.

Because of the focus of American classical education on school culture and personal development as well as the planned addition of athletics programs, a growing reputation both academically and culturally within the Treasure Valley, an increasing availability of opportunities at INCA as the school matures, and strict attention to developing the desire of families and students to remain at INCA, the attrition rate should be expected to decrease over time. Decreased attrition rates will enable INCA to exceed the listed enrollment goals. INCA also anticipates an increasing, steady pool of students and families as the school grows in reputation and performance and proves to be an excellent educational choice.

These predictions are based on the experiences of TVCA, which utilizes the same model in Fruitland, Idaho. Based on the track record at TVCA, which is in a significantly less populated region of the Treasure Valley, INCA may not experience significant attrition. Student attrition has remained remarkably low at TVCA and at the same time, their waitlist has gradually increased year after year. Going into the 2022-2023 school year, TVCA had a 96.9% student retention rate. One grade level transition where attrition frequently happens in charter schools is promotion from eighth grade to ninth, which is in other models the shift from middle school to high school. TVCA introduced ninth grade (the third year of upper school in our model) for the first time this year and



96.3% of their eighth-grade students remained enrolled through the transition. From its inception, student attrition has remained remarkably low at TVCA. Due to their extensive waitlist, TVCA has been able to easily fill the limited number of seats that have come open since they began operating. Currently, around 260 students remain on their waitlist.

## **PRIMARY ATTENDANCE AREAS**

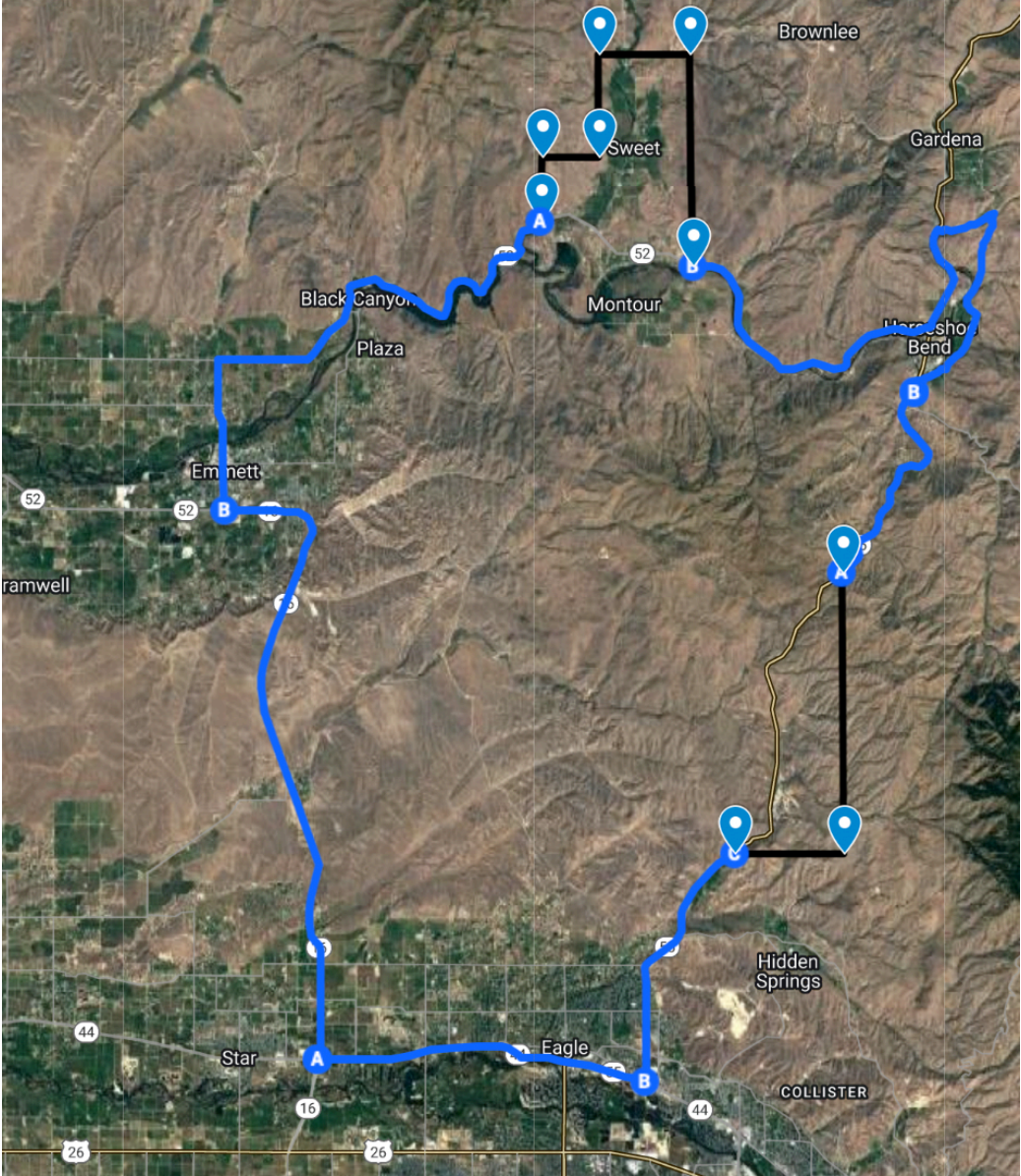
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The primary attendance zone for INCA is in the northeastern region of the Treasure Valley, including the communities of Eagle, Horseshoe Bend, Sweet/Montour, and Emmett. This primary service area crosses into the boundaries of the Horseshoe Bend, Emmett Independent, Boise, and West Ada School Districts. North Star Charter School is also located within the primary attendance zone. However, the primary attendance zones for the two charter schools will only overlap in Eagle. The potential impact of the initial target enrollment of 378 children at INCA on these school districts will be minimal due to the large geographic area included in the primary attendance zone. This assertion of minimal impact is also supported by the rapid population growth within some sections of the primary attendance zone. Letters and copies of the Petition were sent to the appropriate leaders on August 10<sup>th</sup> by email. Copies of the letters are provided in Appendix Series G.

The primary attendance zone is represented in the image below, created using Google Maps. It should be noted that a high level of intentionality was applied to the selection of communities within the primary attendance zone and ultimate designation of boundaries. The designers invested substantial time in learning about educational needs in the region, identifying population centers on Google Earth, and crafting a boundary that will provide an adequate student population to achieve full enrollment while simultaneously creating new educational opportunities

in Avimor, Eagle, and rural Idaho. ACSI is fully committed to serving all students and visited each community multiple times to craft boundaries that enable most residents of Horseshoe Bend, Sweet/Montour, and eastern Emmett to also receive the benefits of residency within the zone. This primary attendance zone provides expanded educational options in Eagle and Emmett, while creating school choice in Horseshoe Bend and Sweet/Montour.

*Primary Attendance Zone*



The boundary follows major roadways where practical, but also includes imaginary lines created using coordinates in locations where roadways are absent or impractical for boundary formation. The blue location markers on the map identify coordinates that define imaginary lines in the boundary. The definition of INCA's primary attendance zone is as follows:

- INCA will be constructed in the Avimor community development off Highway 55. The intent is for the entire Avimor community to be included in the primary attendance area. The boundaries of the primary attendance area at Avimor are defined by an imaginary line beginning at 43.7552/-116.2816 along Highway 55 and extending east to 43.7551/-116.2346, then north until 43.8421/-116.2354, where it reconnects with Highway 55.
- From Avimor, the primary attendance area continues north along Highway 55 to Horseshoe Bend.
- Properties up to one mile east of Highway 55 between Avimor and Horseshoe Bend are also within the primary attendance area.
- At Horseshoe Bend, the boundary continues northeast onto Canyon Street/Pioneer Road. After 4.55 miles the boundary shifts west onto Porter Creek Road for 1.33 miles, then south onto Highway 55, headed out of Horseshoe Bend.
- The primary attendance area in Horseshoe Bend also includes all properties with primary access to the roads that make up the boundary line.
- From Horseshoe Bend, the primary attendance area continues west on Highway 52 toward Sweet/Montour.
- Properties located up to one mile north of Highway 52 between Horseshoe Bend and Sweet/Montour are also within the primary attendance area.

- After approximately 7 miles, the primary attendance zone extends along an imaginary line to encompass the community of Sweet. The line heads north beginning at 43.9365/-116.2994, west at 44.0017/-116.3006, south at 44.0016/-116.3396, west at 43.9701/-116.3399, south at 43.9701/-116.3640, and reconnects with Highway 52 at 43.9502/-116.3641. Properties on the interior of the boundary line are included in the primary attendance zone.
- The communities of Montour and Sweet are both encompassed by the primary attendance boundary.
- The boundary continues west along Highway 52 toward Emmett.
- Properties up to one mile north of Highway 52 between Sweet/Montour and Emmett are also within the primary attendance area.
- The boundary turns south and follows Highway 52 through Emmett until the junction with Highway 16. It turns east then south at Highway 16. Properties in Emmett that are on the eastern side of the border created by Highways 52 and 16 are in the primary attendance area.
- The border of the primary attendance area continues along Highway 16 until it meets the junction of Highway 44 in Eagle. It then continues east along Highway 44 until the intersection of Highways 44 and 55. The primary attendance boundary then proceeds north along Highway 55 all the way back to Avimor. Properties east of Highway 16, north of Highway 44, and west of Highway 55 are within the primary attendance area.

## **ADMISSIONS**

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INCA will abide by the admissions priorities per Idaho Code 33-5206 (11) and the lottery procedure in the case where enrollment demand is greater than the enrollment capacity at each

academic year. The children of full-time staff and the children of founders shall be in the first enrollment preference category, not to exceed 10% of the total student enrollment allowed for each school year. The second enrollment preference category will include the siblings of current students. Students in the primary attendance area will be included in the third preference category.

INCA founder status will be granted at the sole discretion of the board in consideration of individual material contributions toward the establishment of the school. The minimum threshold to be considered for founder status is 100 volunteer hours dedicated toward school founding efforts. However, volunteerism alone may not constitute designation as a founder. No additional founders will be designated after January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

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The following information is a summary of the most recent (2020) population ethnic and financial demographics of the communities that fall within the primary attendance zone.

*Demographics of Communities in Primary Attendance Zone*

<b>City/Town</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Native American</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>Average Income Per Resident</b>
Sweet	620	99.3%	0%	0%	0.7%	\$19,375
Emmett	7,269	82.4%	14.3%	0%	3.3%	\$15,544
Horseshoe Bend	822	85.1%	6.3%	4.7%	3.9%	\$16,470
Eagle	31,699	91.4%	4.9%	0.2%	4.79%	\$39,930

[www.bestplaces.net](http://www.bestplaces.net) (2020)

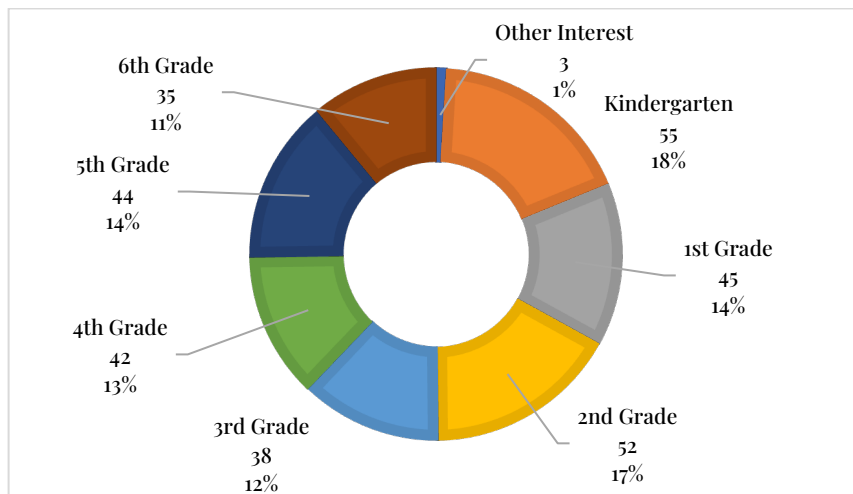
**COMMUNITY NEEDS AND MARKET INTEREST**

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INCA’s first targeted digital interest survey within the planned attendance area received a high response rate. Eighty-six (86) families responded in September 2021, without the benefit of an in-person presentation to learn about the school model or curriculum. The number of participants

who indicated interest in the school accounted for 112 children. This was the first sign that families in the area desire an American classical education for their children. After the first in-person presentation at the Avimor Community Center, an additional 52 children were added to the intent to enroll list by their parents. The founding community group has facilitated several additional information sessions since then and has established a presence at several community events. Additionally, Facebook has been utilized for targeted marketing efforts in communities included in the primary attendance zone. These early efforts have contributed to significant interest in INCA, as displayed in the chart below.

*Current Intent to Enroll Data*



INCA has received intent to enroll documentation for a total of 314 potential students, which is 83% of the way toward the 378 seats that will be available at opening. Since INCA is still two school years away from opening, ACSI is confident that the intent to enroll figure will vastly exceed the initial enrollment capacity of the school. In the coming months, as we continue to reach major milestones, marketing and recruitment efforts will increase significantly to generate additional interest in American classical education throughout the primary attendance zone.

The American classical education model selected for INCA utilizes primary source documents to provide a comprehensive K-12 civics education. Section I of the Petition provides a detailed description of the educational program. This is a compelling aspect of American classical education for many families, and we are unaware of any other model utilized within the primary attendance zone that offers a civics education of comparable scope. Since there is no other school in the proposed attendance area that follows this model, the establishment of INCA will provide families within Ada, Gem, and Boise Counties expanded school choice options.

One of the primary duties of the school leader will, especially in the early years, be marketing and public education programs covering the unique educational and personal development benefits of American classical education. Founding community group members will assist the school leader with various public outreach events in all the communities in the attendance area to introduce and explain how the model, through INCA, will provide an exceptional, classically inspired, traditional education to admitted students. In addition to outreach and educational seminars, the school leader will also be engaged in a media and marketing campaign to share the curriculum and opportunities offered by INCA to underserved families in the primary attendance zone. The marketing plan will include discussions with area preschools, homeschool organizations and co-ops, as well as civic and cultural organizations.

## **TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

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Transportation to any school can be an important factor for attendance. All INCA planning and budgets include offering bus transportation to students beginning with the first year of operation. This commitment to providing transportation is to ensure that distance will not be a barrier to attendance for disadvantaged students. Bus routes and potential localized pickup points

will be determined once enrollment is finalized and modified annually as the student population grows. However, all communities within the primary attendance zone will have access to transportation services. At the appropriate time, INCA will follow the transportation bidding process per Idaho Code § 33-1510 or develop its own transportation infrastructure. It is also important to note that ACSI is currently exploring options to establish and develop a transportation system that would be shared between TVCA, INCA, and subsequent schools.

### **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM**

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Nutrition is an essential part of successful learning. No one can focus on learning on an empty stomach. INCA will offer a federally compliant school lunch program. ACSI is currently exploring options to establish and develop a food service system that would be shared between TVCA, INCA, and subsequent schools. This program will be based on the successful model currently in place at TVCA. See Appendix Series H for a letter from the food services provider utilized by TVCA regarding their intent to expand the program to INCA.

Information to obtain free and reduced lunch will be gathered during the enrollment and registration process. Appropriate documentation will be collected annually to meet the program requirements. Once INCA joins the National School Lunch Program, INCA will adopt all policies required by the program, including a wellness policy and guidelines regarding meals and snacks served at the school or school events.

### **STRATEGIES FOR ENROLLING UNDERSERVED FAMILIES**

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INCA intends to reach out to underserved families through information booths at community and local events, targeted advertising on Facebook, community and household presentations, posting at local businesses, preschools, grocers, and banks, as well as radio and/or



television advertisements. Many of these marketing methods are already underway through the efforts of the founding community group. Ongoing promotional efforts will emphasize that INCA offers a free public education that is open to all, with bussing and a nutrition program.

INCA is seeking the volunteer services of Spanish speakers who will assist with translation of social media posts, flyers, and advertising literature into Spanish. We will solicit volunteers to participate in outreach events that will be conducted by the school leader for the local Hispanic communities as well as assisting in filling out any necessary forms or applications as the school moves towards opening.

The 2016 BLUUM report “Hispanic Parents Speak Out,” composed of information compiled from Hispanic parents in eastern and southern Idaho about educational goals for their families, highlighted features valued by the Hispanic community that are perfectly aligned with the structure and goals of INCA. Among those features:

*“The Hispanic parents ... interviewed prized a school that emphasized respect and good behavior. These were values they typically emphasized at home, and they wanted the school environment to reflect those priorities.”*

*“Parents typically responded well to school uniforms or a strict dress code because these communicated that a school was serious about student behavior. To some, there was an additional practical benefit – uniforms simplified the challenge of dressing youngsters.”*

*“Take pride in having good teachers that care about children and in the school’s preparation of students for college. Schools might also highlight specialized courses of study.”*

Each of the features listed directly align with INCA’s educational program, philosophy, and school culture.

One of the primary reasons that INCA has chosen the proven model developed by Hillsdale College is the rich, classically informed, traditional curriculum and methodology. American classical education has the potential to provide a superb education to any child regardless of their

socioeconomic or cultural background. It is an education built on a classical understanding of human nature and therefore timeless and universally applicable. There are some private schools that provide variants of classical education in the Treasure Valley, and broadly, the State of Idaho, but they are not universally accessible. Through the growing opportunity for school choice in Idaho and American classical charter schools specifically, every child who is enrolled at INCA will participate in a model of education that has in recent decades been largely reserved only for those who can afford it. American classical charter schools change that dynamic and ensure that cost is not a barrier to accessing an education built on the tripart foundation of virtuous living, traditional learning, and civic responsibility. We look forward to working alongside our partners to actualize the plans for INCA and increase the availability of an excellent, tuition-free, American form of classical education in the Treasure Valley.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED BY CHARTER COMMISSION STAFF**

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The Charter Commission staff requested that the digital interest survey referenced in this section be provided as an appendix.

The most recent version of the survey results (with all personally identifying information redacted) is now available in Appendix Series H. Please note that the results constitute a running record of all our intent-to-enroll data up to this point. The current number of students on our intent-to-enroll list is 335 as of November 4th, 2022. There is a significant marketing campaign underway in Emmett, Horseshoe Bend, Montour, and Sweet, so we expect that this list will continue to grow prior to the petition hearing on December 8th, 2022. Additional marketing activities will occur throughout the primary attendance area during the next calendar year.

# **SECTION V: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

## LEADERSHIP TEAM

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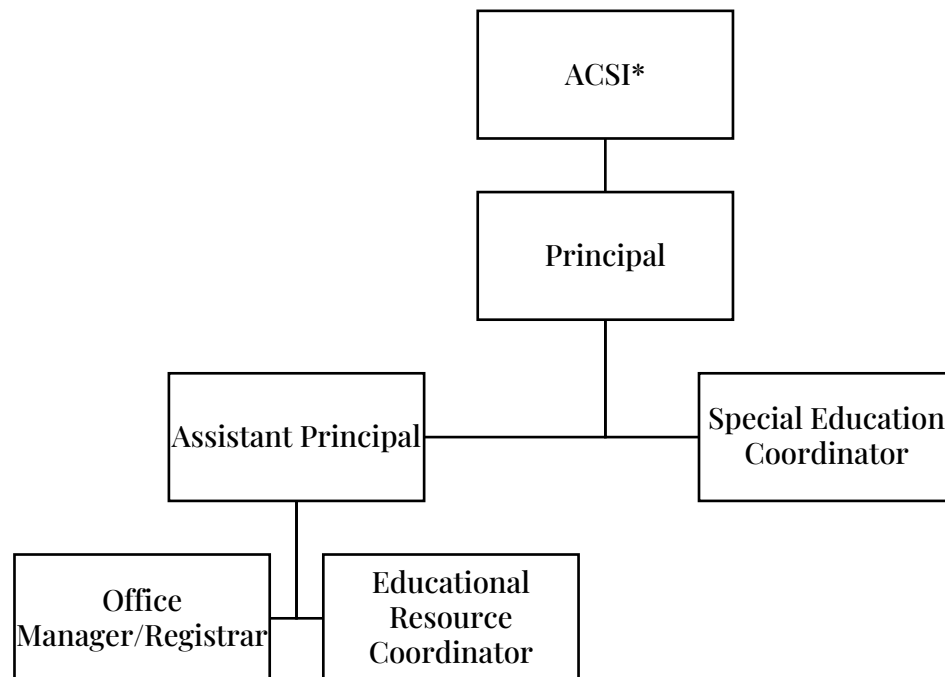
The subsections that follow provide an outline of the administrative structure upon opening as a K-6 school in addition to the anticipated structure once the school is fully developed as a K-12 school. The final administrative structure once all grades are served is subject to change, but the framework provided is a clear representation of the direction that INCA will work toward through the early years of operation.

Please note that business management will initially be provided through the partnership with BLUUM and eventually transition to a permanent support framework whereby ACSI will provide financial, accounting, and payroll services to INCA and other American classical schools.

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### INITIAL LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK (K-6)

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\*ACSI was added to this diagram in response to feedback from the Charter Commission staff.

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## PRINCIPAL

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The principal reports to the governing board at regular meetings about the school's operations and will be required to attend all governing board meetings. The principal is charged with providing high quality leadership in all areas of school function and accomplishing the outcome for which the school was chartered. The principal serves as the head teacher of INCA and will be responsible for overall instructional leadership at the charter school, including character development efforts, and the planning, operation and supervision of the educational program. The principal shall uphold and enforce the charter, INCA governing board policies and local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Additionally, the principal is chiefly responsible for community relationships and will establish and maintain an effective community relations program.

The principal shall have the responsibility for all personnel matters including having the authority to hire, discipline and terminate all school employees. The principal will present for board approval a proposed slate of employees at the July board meeting (in advance of the new academic year). The principal will periodically evaluate INCA employees as provided for by INCA policy. The ACSI Board of Directors will evaluate the principal. Personnel under the immediate supervision of the principal include the assistant principal, special education coordinator, and all teachers.

In the classical tradition, administrators at INCA are expected to preserve a direct connection to the instructional program. After the first year of operation, the principal will maintain an annual course load of one full-year course or two semester courses indefinitely. The principal will not teach a course during the first year so that their focus remains entirely on establishing the school.

Please note that the founding principal for INCA was already selected. Dr. Vincent Kane is present in Idaho on a two-year, fully funded fellowship from BLUUM. The fellowship is designed to provide him with the time and capacity to launch INCA with fidelity to the model and to receive robust training on all aspects of charter school leadership in Idaho. Part of Dr. Kane's fellowship includes observation and collaboration at TVCA for additional training regarding how American classical education has been implemented in Idaho. Dr. Kane's resume is available for review in Appendix Series E.

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#### ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

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The assistant principal reports to the principal. The assistant principal serves as director of operations and dean of students. The assistant principal is responsible for student discipline, supervision of non-academic programs, facilities management, and management and supervision of ancillary staff. Routine duties of the assistant principal include enforcement of school policies and procedures for behavior, dress code, and attendance. Recurring responsibilities include overseeing and administering standardized testing, facilitating extracurricular programs including athletics, and managing the school security and emergency response plans.

The assistant principal will be evaluated by the principal. Personnel under the immediate supervision of the assistant principal include the educational resource coordinator, office manager/registrar, custodians, and all ancillary services staff. The assistant principal will also be responsible for maintenance of relationships and management of contracts with external service providers (such as food service and transportation).

In the classical tradition, administrators at INCA are expected to preserve a direct connection to the instructional program. After the first year of operation, the assistant principal

will maintain an annual course load of one full-year course or two semester courses indefinitely.

Please note that the founding assistant principal for INCA was already selected. Major Bruce Sims is present in Idaho on a two-year, fully funded fellowship from BLUUM. He is currently teaching mathematics and studying classical school operations at TVCA while assisting the founding principal with the launch of INCA. Major Sims' resume is available for review in Appendix Series E.

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#### SPECIAL EDUCATION COORDINATOR

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The special education coordinator reports to the principal. The individual employed in this position will be a teacher who is provided with release time to manage all aspects of the special education program. The anticipated percentage of release time during the first year of operation is 25%. The special education coordinator is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the special education program. Duties associated with this position are described in detail in Section I of this Petition. However, the position is broadly responsible for oversight and management of the special education program to ensure compliance with law and best practice in supporting students with disabilities.

The special education coordinator will be evaluated by the principal. Personnel under the immediate supervision of the special education coordinator include classified teaching assistants/paraprofessionals. The special education coordinator will also be responsible for maintenance of relationships and management of contracts with external special education service providers.

In the classical tradition, administrators at INCA are expected to preserve a direct connection to the instructional program. The coordinator of special education will initially spend

75% of their time supporting students in the classroom setting. This may be reduced to 50% in subsequent years as more special education staff are added and the scope of the special education program necessitates additional leadership (prior to the introduction of a full-time director of student services in the target leadership model).

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#### EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE COORDINATOR

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The educational resource coordinator reports to the assistant principal. This role is designed to be the materials acquisition and distribution engine of the school. The Hillsdale K-12 curriculum requires an enormous amount of print materials. The educational resource coordinator will identify, order, inventory, store, and distribute all curricular materials at INCA. Additionally, this individual will manage the resource center, where all materials, school supplies, and instructional equipment are stored. Other duties associated with this position include light clerical work in support of teachers, management of the copy center, and routine maintenance of copy machines.

The educational resource coordinator is a classified position with no instructional responsibilities.

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#### OFFICE MANAGER/REGISTRAR

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The office manager/registrar reports to the assistant principal. This role includes responsibility for managing the day-to-day operations of the school office, filtering incoming workflow to the appropriate administrator, facilitating the school enrollment process, registering students for classes, tracking and validating student attendance, maintaining updated cumulative files for every student, and management of the PowerSchool information system. From time-to-time, this individual may also assist administrators with light clerical work. Importantly, the office



manager/registrar will meet many students and families and is responsible for serving as a good will ambassador to the school community.

The office manager/registrar is a classified position with no instructional responsibilities.

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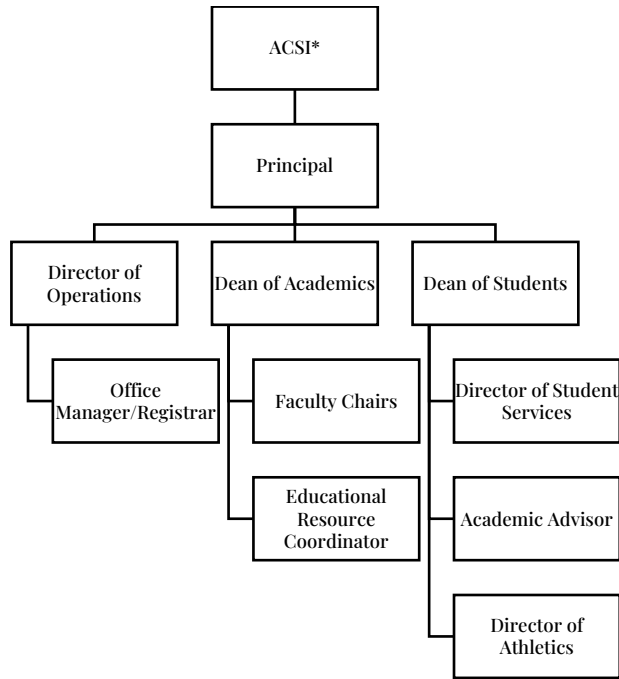
### **TARGET LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK (K-12)**

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Over the first several years of operation, student enrollment at INCA is anticipated to grow rapidly. While student enrollment expands, the administrative structure of the school will change alongside it. Key changes in the administrative structure that will occur gradually between years one and seven include:

- Liquidation of the assistant principal role and the establishment of two separate positions: (a) dean of students, and (b) director of operations.
- The formal transition from a special education coordinator to a director of student services. The key differences that define the director of student services role include: (a) it is a full-time administrative position, (b) it will include a larger scope of support than the special education program, and (c) the role will acquire responsibility for evaluation of special education teachers from the principal.
- Creation of a dean of academics position to support the principal with the growth of the academic program, curricular integrity, onboarding of new staff, professional development, standardized test coordination, oversight of student retention/management, supervision of faculty chairs, and other duties as assigned.
- Addition of an academic advisor to assist students with secondary planning and transition beyond graduation.
- Identification of an athletics director to facilitate growing extracurricular programs.

- Introduction of faculty chairs to provide day-to-day support to colleagues and advise the dean of academics on curricular matters.



\*ACSI was added to this diagram in response to feedback from the Charter Commission staff.

The subsections that follow describe the new positions included in the target leadership framework. Detailed job descriptions will be developed as positions are gradually introduced over the first seven years of operation.

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#### DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

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This position will report to the principal. In a sense, the director of operations is responsible for ensuring that everything occurs on time and as planned. In addition to managing the parameters and pace of day-to-day operations, the director of operations will be responsible for supervision of non-academic programs, facilities management, event planning, communications, financial compliance, human resources, and facilitation of ancillary services. The

director of operations will also be responsible for maintenance of relationships and management of contracts with external service providers (such as food service and transportation) and managing the school security and emergency response plans. Personnel under the immediate supervision of the director of operations include the office manager/registrar, custodians, and all ancillary services staff.

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#### DEAN OF ACADEMICS

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This position will report to the principal. The dean of academics will assist the principal in managing the rollout of the academic program as additional grades are added. This will include shared responsibility for staff training, onboarding of new teachers, instructional support, assistance with implementation of Hillsdale K-12 curriculum, standardized test coordination, oversight of student retention/management, supervision of faculty chairs and the educational resource coordinator, academic projects, and other duties as assigned. As the school continues to grow, the dean of academics and their team will participate in the teacher evaluation process.

In the classical tradition, the dean of academics will maintain a course load indefinitely. Release time will be provided to complete administrative responsibilities.

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#### DEAN OF STUDENTS

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This position will report to the principal. Fundamentally, the dean of students shapes, promotes, and preserves the student culture of the school. The dean of students is responsible for student discipline, supervision of all student support services, enforcement of school policies and procedures for behavior, dress code, and attendance, and oversight of extracurricular programs and post-secondary transition planning. Personnel under the immediate supervision of the dean of students include the director of student services, academic advisor, and director of athletics.

In the classical tradition, the dean of students will maintain a course load indefinitely. Release time will be provided to complete administrative responsibilities.

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#### DIRECTOR OF STUDENT SERVICES

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This position will report to the dean of students. The director of student services is responsible for all duties and parameters associated with the special education coordinator role, in addition to oversight of the RTI process. Once this position is created, responsibility for evaluation of special education teachers will transfer from the principal to the director of student services.

This is envisioned as a full-time administrative position. In the classical tradition, the director of student services will maintain an annual course load of one full-year course or two semester courses indefinitely (or equivalent case management responsibilities).

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#### ACADEMIC ADVISOR

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This position will report to the dean of students. The academic advisor will ensure that every upper school student in grades 10-12 and their family receives support planning for and pursuing their post-secondary transition goals.

The academic advisor is envisioned as a teaching position with release time to provide advisement services to students. Once the first cohort reaches tenth grade, the academic advisor position will be established and provided with 25% release time to begin building the program and develop relationships with students and their families. In future years, the position will expand to 50% release time to ensure adequate availability for post-secondary planning.

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#### FACULTY CHAIRS

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Excellent faculty will be identified to serve as leaders among their colleagues. In this capacity, they will assist the dean of academics with onboarding of new staff, serve as a resource,

participate in academic decision-making processes for their designated area, and contribute curricular and instructional feedback as necessary. Possible chairs include grade bands K-2, 3-4, 5-6, and upper school.

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#### DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS

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Over the first few years of operation, extracurricular programs are expected to grow. Athletics represent a significant component of student activities and necessitates the establishment of a role responsible for ensuring the integrity, effective implementation, and mission alignment of new and expanding programs. The director of athletics will be selected from among the faculty and provided with release time to complete duties associated with oversight of the athletics programs.

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#### **NOTE ABOUT JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

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INCA will maintain a job description for each position in the school. These job descriptions are subject to change as the school grows and improves over time. The school leader may reallocate the responsibilities among available personnel and create new positions as necessary. All employees—faculty, office staff, and administrators—are responsible for the education of students at INCA, which includes setting an example of high moral character and embracing the virtues of a free and just society.

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#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS' EVALUATION OF THE SCHOOL LEADER**

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Throughout the school year, there will be an ongoing conversation about the progress of the school between the board of directors and the school leader. The board will inevitably have questions about how certain practices or policies are being implemented and any challenges the school faces, along with signs of success. At the end of the academic year, the board will conduct a

formal evaluation of the school leader, drawing on several sources: an annual parent survey, an annual employee survey, school visits, as well as observation of faculty training, classes, standardized testing results, enrollment numbers, the school's budget, and the school leader's self-evaluation. The CEO of ACSI will facilitate this process in support of the board's evaluation of the school leader.

In order to evaluate the school leader with the mission of the school chiefly in mind, the following questions will be considered. The school leader will be required to answer these questions in a self-evaluation and given some opportunity to explain answers in a short narrative, rather than just a survey format. The Board should realize that the school leader's evaluation of teachers and staff takes the form of a conversation very much in keeping with the philosophy of the school and, further, that the start-up year is a very demanding and eventful effort wherein not everything will run smoothly.

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### **KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

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- Over the past year, did the school accomplish its mission?
- Are the teachers overall competent (preferably masters) in their disciplines, capable in their teaching and leading of children, committed to the mission of the school, eager to improve, and friendly?
- Did the school leader provide adequate training of and direction to the faculty?
- Did the school leader visibly act as the academic and intellectual leader of the school, both for teachers and for students?
- Have the students made substantial academic progress over the past year?
- Have they improved in character?

- Have they participated in and enjoyed school activities outside the school day?
- Did the school leader visibly act as a leader in promoting the school's virtues and cultivating good character in the students?
- Did the school leader lead the way in shaping school culture and discipline? Is that culture and discipline evident in a simple "walk through the halls"?
- Did the school leader communicate with parents, to include supervising weekly notices of events, holding occasional talks on the mission and nature of the school, act as a presence during carpool, meetings, etc.?
- Is the school's office staff helpful, competent, and friendly? (This responsibility may be given directly to the assistant school leader, though the school leader is always accountable.)
- Does the school leader clearly support the learning of all students? (Including those with disabilities and from disadvantaged backgrounds.)
- Were various "issues" handled with an appropriate amount of prudence and care?
- Is the overall morale of the school high? That is, do students enjoy going to school and the faculty enjoy teaching?
- Is the overall parent satisfaction with the school high? Are parents largely happy with the school, re-enrolling their children for the next year, and telling others about the school?
- Has the school stayed within budget in its operations and met financial goals?
- What is the enrollment projection for the coming year?
- What is the attrition rate of students? If rather high, why?
- What is the attrition rate of faculty and staff? If higher than expected, why?

Considering these and other questions, the board's evaluation should take the form of both a written document and a discussion during the executive session of a board meeting, preferably in the summer. If, however, the board finds the school leader lacking in performance, the board will address all issues as soon as possible rather than waiting for the end of the academic year.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED BY CHARTER COMMISSION STAFF**

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The Charter Commission staff requested that ACSI be included in all leadership diagrams provided within the petition.

The school leadership diagrams on pages 100 and 106 have been updated to reflect the role of ACSI in the organizational structure of INCA.