
Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy

Founded 1999

Petition for Change of Authorizer for 2014

District Location:	Coeur d'Alene District 271
Physical Location:	4904 N Duncan Drive Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815 Residing in the Coeur d'Alene School District (271)
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Opening Date:	August 1999
Grade Levels:	6-12
Enrollment Goals:	812
Districts Affected:	Coeur d'Alene (271), Post Falls (273), Lakeland (272)
Date Submitted for Review:	September 9, 2014

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Tab 1: Vision, Mission, and Legal Status

Executive Summary:

The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy ("The Academy," hereafter), was founded in 1999, by Dr. William Proser, a long-time teacher in the Coeur d'Alene School District. Dr. Proser had found himself increasingly frustrated by the education establishment and its seeming disregard for hard-working, high-achieving students. When Idaho adopted charter school legislation, several parents of his former students approached him with the proposal that he be the figurehead and founder of a new charter school, dedicated to providing a rigorous, college-preparatory education for these long-neglected students. He accepted their proposal and set to work with his supporters to form The Academy.

The school Proser and his backers designed had a decidedly "retro" feel, with several nods to the traditional education model. These included required classes in Latin and Civics, as well as a Western Civilization emphasis—Ancient History and Ancient Literature, European History and European Literature, American History and American Literature, World Literature and US Government for grades 9-12, respectively. One goal was for every student to have read 100 of the world's greatest novels by graduation. In addition, there was to be school-wide emphasis on discussion, exploration, and debate of ideas.

Philosophy:

However different the experiences of men, they are connected by a common link. They are animated by an inner drive that contends against the outside world for meaning. They share a common destiny called by the French philosophers the human condition. The mutuality of this condition forms on all our lips the same great questions of life; universal questions about the existence and nature of truth, the essence of beauty, or the search for justice. Education, at its best, informs us of the history of that search for answers by our fellow men, examines their current status, and inspires us to set out once again on the road to that place where answers can be found. According to Elie Wiesel, it is the questions that unite us and it is the answers that divide us. The answers or ideas that we find have the power to shape the very reality we experience. Ideas form the Zeitgeist of our times because ideas have consequences. Who will argue that the ideas of Darwin or Marx, Freud or Einstein have had little effect on the twentieth century?

The answers to the great questions of life do more than just color the world, they establish it. If this is true, those who teach take upon themselves the obligation of historical awareness. Each discipline in the academic world is built upon the ideas of those who asked the same old questions in a new way or replied to those questions with answers that disturbed their fellow creatures to such an extent, that a dialog was required. For the western world, that dialog can be characterized by the conflict of opinion in debate. The educational philosophy of Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy centers on attempting to stimulate in our student body a respect for that debate. The conflict is what Walter Lippmann called the "Indispensable Opposition." To respect another human being involves taking his or her ideas seriously enough to argue the point. Implied in this debate are most of the academic qualities inherent in the tradition of scholarship stretching back to the ancients. It is a tradition that values a thorough and detailed knowledge of the best that has been thought and said on a subject, a discernment of the crucial tenets of a position, honesty, craftsmanship and precision with language. These abilities are the necessary tools of the would-be scholar. Students who emerge from our classes with these skills are ready to take their place at the banquet table of ideas that is set by a free society.

Education seeks to enlarge, enrich and complicate our understanding of things. Good education is much more an art than a science; it mysteriously transmits a love of the subject being taught. A natural passion for understanding some aspect of human experience or imagination is the rightful inheritance of our

students. That academic inheritance is a legacy of thought that is passed from one generation to another by dedicated teachers. Most of us have had the good fortune to sit under such teachers. The intellectual excitement of learning corresponds to the difficulty of the question being considered. Easy answers will not do; as challenge is inherently linked to achievement. A campus where ideas are truly valued and the conflict of opinion in debate is not only encouraged but celebrated invigorates people. A school that can frame the forum for the debate of ideas without the animosity that so easily shuts off the dialog has captured the idea of the British Parliament or the American Senate. Such a school ascends to its proper place in the long human tradition of academic scholarship. Such a tradition is the unique privilege of free men; men who are united in their pursuit of truth, perhaps divided by their conclusions, yet committed to the process of understanding their own diversity.—Dr. William Proser, Founder

It was the feeling of Dr. Proser and the founding group that there existed in the Coeur d'Alene area a population of families who deserved and would respond positively to a school dedicated to rigorous coursework, college preparation, and high standards. In 1999, the school opened with approximately 200 students in grades 7-10; in the ensuing years, grades 11, 12, and then 6 were added, and today the school serves more than 700 students and has substantial waiting lists in several grades. Clearly the demand for the Academy's style of education is sufficient to ensure its continued success.

Because this petition is a transfer of an existing charter, the "petitioning group" is the current board and administration. The Principal has held his position since 2006, and he has been employed by the Academy since 2000—first as a teacher, and then as Vice Principal. The Business Manager was the Academy's first official employee, and has been employed since 1999. One Board member remains from the founding group; the other current members have been appointed over the last several years. All board members have been vetted according to their qualifications and their buy-in to the Academy's mission.

The Academy's success will be defined by its ability to attract and retain students, and prepare them for admission to, and success in, post-secondary institutions. Some of the indicators include student numbers sufficient to maintain a fiscally sound operation, standardized test scores, graduation rates, post-secondary placement, and completion of degree programs.

In order to demonstrate value-added, Academy students must consistently outperform their public school counterparts on all of these indicators.

Mission Statement:

The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy is dedicated to providing a rigorous, content-rich, college-preparatory education for any students who are willing to accept the challenge.

This mission statement is the focus of everything we do. You will find it posted prominently in several of our classrooms, on our website, on our stationery, and on the side of our building. It was adopted by the original board of directors, with cooperation of the founder. It is viewed as the starting point and guiding principle of the school.

The Academy's beliefs are codified in a document entitled *Foundational Values*, which was composed and approved by the faculty, staff, and administration, and added to the official charter when renewed in 2004.

Vision Statement:

Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy exists in order to promote and implement academic excellence in our student body. Further, we seek to ensure that our graduates are knowledgeable and proficient users of

language so that they may: succeed in school, participate in our democracy, find challenging and rewarding work, appreciate and contribute to our culture, and pursue their own goals and interests as independent learners throughout their lives. Included in this vision are the following broad educational goals and objectives:

- To refine our students' academic skills including reading, writing, speaking, and thinking, and to advance their knowledge of the major disciplines of language arts, mathematics, science, and history.
- To learn the traditions and values of past and present civilizations.
- To gain an appreciation of the fine arts of music, art and drama.

Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws:

See Appendices A, “Articles of Incorporation,” and B, “Bylaws”

Nonprofit Status:

See Appendix E, “Non-Profit Verification”

Tab 2: Proposed Operations**Operations:**

The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy is an educational institution organized and managed under the Idaho nonprofit corporation act. The Board of Directors of Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy shall be deemed public agents authorized by the Idaho Charter School Commission to control the charter school.

Beginning in 2014, the Academy will function as an LEA, and will be responsible for providing all related services for its students.

The Academy has resided on the same location since its founding in 1999, 4904 N. Duncan Dr., right in the middle of Coeur d'Alene. In 2009, we purchased an adjoining lot and expanded our facility. We have no plans to move. We reside within the Coeur d'Alene School District, and specifically, within the Lake City High School and Woodland Middle School attendance areas.

The Academy serves students in grades 6-12. As a “school of choice,” the Academy may attract students from any of the area schools; therefore, there exists no accurate method of predicting future demographics. Historically, the demographic composition of the student body would appear to approximate that of the community. According to the 2013 census, Coeur d'Alene’s population is 93.8% white, with a median household income of approximately \$41,000 (<http://quickfacts.census.gov>).

The Academy’s Special Education population has typically represented less than 5% of its total student population. There are no factors in the application or enrollment procedures that would either limit or augment that number.

Until becoming its own LEA in 2014, the Academy did not accept federal funding, and therefore had no reliable means of obtaining specific demographic information. Since becoming an LEA, the Academy has begun accepting federal funds and will make use of the related federal data collection and reporting methods to obtain that information.

The educational method employed by the Academy is a traditional model that emphasizes direct instruction by master teachers. Additional emphases are maximizing student contact time, providing challenging instruction, and combating grade inflation. Students are held to a high, objective standard, and will not be promoted based on effort or for social reasons.

Potential Effects:

Our effect on the local district has been almost entirely positive, if measured by the programs they have added to serve their students. The district has increased the number of programs it offers for advanced and college-bound students, and has also begun offering numerous “choices”—several magnet schools, for instance.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the Academy’s success has also provided a boon to the community. Parents indicate that they have moved to Coeur d’Alene (sometimes from across the country) to allow their children the opportunity to attend the Academy.

In addition, our opening likely saved the local school district from having to run bond elections for expanding facilities. Our student population is largely comprised of District 271 students, who, if they were still on district rolls, would necessitate extensive building improvements. It should be noted that the Academy accomplished this without access to local taxes, but with only base state funding. The Academy does not have plans for any further expansion.

Target Market:

The primary attendance area of the Academy is Kootenai County, Idaho.

Demand for the Academy's program is demonstrated by the school's considerable growth, as well as the lengthy waiting lists.

Facilities:

The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy views school facility and maintenance issues as an integral part of the quality of education component of the school. However, we do not believe that it is necessary to build special purpose monoliths that have no value outside the world of education. These types of structures (common in education) are very difficult to sell and have little value to other entities. Often you find empty or poorly used and aged buildings that school districts have a hard time disposing of or putting to good use.

The Academy will continue to provide quality facilities that meet the educational programming needs of our mission and the safety of our students and staff while protecting the public trust through wise investment in facilities and maintenance.

Building and Land Statistics:**LAND****NORTH PARKING LOT (.575 ACRES)**

Fully developed in 2006

Serves as our main parking lot for visitors, upperclassmen, and some staff

EAST PARKING LOT (.63 ACRES)

Completed 2010

Serves as parking for underclassmen and special events

NORTH ANNEX LOTS (1.028 ACRES)

Developed site includes HS annex, 2 modular buildings and green space

60% of the site is building space, the remainder green space

PRIMARY SITE (4.2 ACRES)

Developed site includes main building, 3 modular buildings, parking, green space and playground

The site is approximately 50% buildings and parking, 50% green space and playground

TOTAL ACREAGE- 6.43**BUILDINGS****MAIN BUILDING (25,700 SF)**

- Built in 1994 (17,000sf) as retail space, was remodeled in 1999 for the school
- Remodeled 8 of the first 10 years due to enrollment growth and programming needs
- 14 classrooms including choir, band, and art rooms
- 4 administrative offices, 2 custodial spaces and misc. storage

-
- 4 student bathrooms and 3 staff bathrooms
 - Staff lounge, media room, common space and multi-purpose room

**Replacement cost \$2,830,000*

NORTH ANNEX (15,302 SF)

- Built in 1997 as light industrial space, was purchased and occupied in 2008-09
- 7 classrooms, 4 offices, 2 staff prep spaces, conference room and misc. storage
- Multi-purpose room, 2 student bathrooms and 2 staff bathrooms

**Replacement cost \$1,680,000*

MODULAR M1-M2 (1,792 SF)

- Built approx. 1971, most recent remodel was 2006.
- 2 classrooms, prep and storage area
- Due to be replaced within the next 5 years

**Replacement cost \$200,000*

MODULAR M3-M4 (1,680 SF)

- Built approx. 1971, most recent remodel was 2006
- 2 classrooms
- Due to be replaced within the next 5 years

**Replacement cost \$190,000*

MODULAR M5-M6 (1,792 SF)

- Built in 2003
- 2 classrooms, prep area and library

**Replacement cost \$200,000*

MODULAR M7-M8 (1,792 SF)

- Built in 2006
- 2 classrooms

**Replacement cost \$200,000*

MODULAR M9-M10 (1,792 SF)

- Built in 2006
- 2 classrooms

**Replacement cost \$200,000*

TOTAL BUILDING SQUARE FOOTAGE- 49,850

**TOTAL BUILDING REPLACEMENT COSTS \$5,500,000*

**Replacement costs based on \$110 per square foot rounded to the nearest \$10,000*

MORTGAGE INFORMATION**FIVE NOTES HELD BY BANKCDA**

BALANCE ON JUNE 30TH, 2014: \$2,132,343

Annual payments are \$238,941.

Terms of all 5 notes are the same, 3.85%, amortized over 30years with a due date in 2021.

The following addresses make up the campus of the Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy:

4904 N. Duncan Drive

4916 N. Duncan Drive

4921 N. Duncan Drive

Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815

The Academy's facility has undergone numerous improvements over the years. The main buildings, formerly a plant nursery (the original building) and a warehouse (the annex), have been modified to accommodate the unique demands of a school. Although the facility will never be described as "state of the art," we do not subscribe to the philosophy that "state of the art" buildings are necessary for excellent education to occur.

Through the years, the Academy has managed its budget in a way that has allowed for additions to, and expansions of the facility. Without the ability that a school district has to levy local taxpayers, charter schools must exercise responsibility in their financial dealings. The Academy maintains a debt load that is manageable and responsible.

The Academy is centrally located in Coeur d'Alene, and is easily accessed from all parts of the service area. The Academy undergoes a facility safety inspection annually, and addresses any areas of concern. The facility complies with all applicable safety and accessibility requirements. **(See Appendix F, "Facilities Inspection")**

Administrative Services:

Administrative services shall be provided by the principal, a vice-principal and a business manager.

Both the Principal and the Business Manager are under the supervision of the Board of Directors; the Vice Principal reports to the Principal.

The Principal is primarily in charge of managing the academic programs, including teacher evaluations, curriculum development, and teacher assignments. In addition, he or she is charged with representing the school to the public and ensuring compliance with Idaho code.

The Vice Principal assists the Principal in supervision of all staff, including teacher evaluations. He or she also functions as the Activities Director.

The Business Manager is in charge of all aspects of the school's financial dealings, as well as facilities maintenance. **(See Appendix K, "Organizational Chart")**

Each of these administrators has an assistant whose duties, along with those of other office staff, cover such necessities as registrar, receivables and payables, attendance, and school calendar maintenance.

Civil Liability:

The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy may sue or be sued, purchase, receive, hold and convey real and personal property for school purposes, and borrow money for such purposes as deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors. Its employees, directors and officers shall enjoy the same immunities as employees, directors and officers of a public school. Neither School District #271 nor the Charter School Commission shall have any liability for the acts, omissions, debts, or other obligations of Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy, except as may be provided in an agreement or contract with Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy.

Insurance:

Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy will secure insurance for liability and property loss. Provision for liability and property loss shall be made for general liability, auto liability, professional liability, and directors' and officers' liability in the annual budget. The Commission shall be given a sixty-day notice of cancellation or non-renewal of said insurance.

Tab 3: Educational Program and School Goals (33-5205(3))

Educational Philosophy

The Academy will fulfill the thoroughness standards identified in Idaho Code 33-1612. It has been established that a thorough system of public schools in Idaho is one in which the following standards are met:

- 1) A safe environment conducive to learning is provided.

The Administration ensures a safe learning environment by maintaining and annually updating its safety and emergency response plans. In addition, regular “teach-to” lessons about school safety and responsibility are built into classroom lessons. Our counseling staff practices proactive classroom outreach events to ensure that students are aware of services and the availability of counselors. Further details may be found under “How Learning Best Occurs,” below.

- 2) Educators are empowered to maintain classroom discipline.

One of the tenets of the Academy is that no student has the right to interfere with the teaching and learning process for their peers and teachers. Classroom teachers, office staff, and custodians are empowered and encouraged to identify and address discipline issues. A major point of emphasis is that our students belong to all of us, we have them in our classrooms or not. Further details may be found under “How Learning Best Occurs,” below.

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

From the first parent and student orientations, we emphasize the importance of self-discipline and character, as manifested in student behavior, attitudes, and work ethic. Many parents bring their children to the Academy specifically for the safe, positive, supportive environment, and we consider it our responsibility to them to ensure that the environment is all of those things. Further details may be found under “How Learning Best Occurs,” below.

- 4) The skills necessary to communicate effectively are taught.

Communication skills are at the heart of the Academy curriculum. All classes require students to demonstrate engagement by participating in classroom discussions and at all times being able to justify their answers. Anecdotal evidence from area colleges and universities indicates that Academy students stand out by their ability to participate actively in discussions. Further details may be found under “Educational Program,” below.

- 5) A basic curriculum necessary to enable students to enter academic or professional-technical postsecondary educational programs is provided.

This, of course is our primary purpose, and we take it seriously. Literally every class in our curriculum is geared toward the all-encompassing goal of ensuring our students’ success at the next level, whether they choose trade school, a community college, or an elite university. The requisite skills in all of these settings are the ability to think clearly, communicate effectively, utilize acquired knowledge, and solve problems creatively. Underlying all of these skills is the necessity of a solid work ethic. Every class we teach is taught at an accelerated pace, with an emphasis on preparing students for success in the most demanding academic settings. Students soon discover that their willingness to work hard and ask questions is far more important than their natural academic ability. Further details may be found under “Educational Program,” below.

- 6) The skills necessary for students to enter the work force are taught.

Although the Academy does not have programs geared specifically toward job skills, the general skills required by most employers are compatible with the Academy's emphasis on work ethic and critical thinking. A teachable employee with a solid work ethic is highly desirable to businesses, and Academy students meet that description.

7) The students are introduced to current technology.

The Academy emphasizes the use of technology as a tool, rather than as a focal point. Students are required to demonstrate mastery of useful technology in the course of their daily work. Examples include the requirement of applying MLA formatting to all written work beginning in 6th grade, as well as implementing correct use of presentation software. Students in science classes produce water quality reports for state agencies using handheld devices, and the absence of a school library necessitates that students learn responsible research techniques using online resources. Our students do not spend a great deal of time doing "fun" projects on technology, as this would detract from our college-preparatory mission.

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

Good citizenship has been a point of emphasis since the Academy's inception. All eighth-grade students are required to take a Civics class that surpasses the state's standards for high school government. This class serves as a ready vehicle for teaching the importance of civic involvement and personal responsibility. Further details may be found under "Educational Program," below.

The following beliefs and practices comprise the Academy's detailed plan to satisfy the thoroughness standards established by the state of Idaho.

How Learning Best Occurs:

Learning best occurs when students are provided a safe learning environment, highly qualified instructors, and consistently challenging and engaging instruction. The Academy will provide such an environment by meeting the Standards of Thoroughness, as provided in Idaho Code 33-1612. Administration, faculty, staff, and parent volunteers are empowered to maintain discipline in the classroom and the hallways, and are expected to hold students to a high standard, both academically and behaviorally. The Academy's discipline policy is based on the belief that discipline is not something we "do to" students, but something that we hope to instill in them. This is achieved through active teaching of ethical behavior and decision making, coupled with consistent, meaningful sanctions for noncompliance. From the school uniform requirement, to the eligibility policy for field trips and activities, to the work ethic requisite for student success, the Academy promotes citizenship, leadership, determination, and time management. All of these qualities are essential for success after graduation.

Although not a specific course offering, the Academy also instills in its students the tools to successfully compete in post-secondary education or the workplace. By emphasizing the critical skills of written and oral communication, supporting an argument in respectful debate of ideas, and purposeful utilization of technology, we prepare our students for successful integration in whatever post-graduation endeavors they choose to pursue.

An Educated Person:

To be educated in the twenty-first century means to have an informed knowledge of the past and to be able to read and reflect on the best that has been written and said about the most important subjects. It implies the ability to express oneself through the written word with clarity and precision and to manipulate the languages of science and mathematics with reliability and validity. An educated person

can both apply reason to current problems and recognize its limits. An educated person has at his disposal a broad array of important factual and conceptual knowledge as well as the skills to implement that knowledge successfully. Therefore, the Academy will offer a curriculum that includes a clear and specific core of important knowledge, concepts and skills that all students need to learn. This knowledge will facilitate learning in a full range of disciplines, including the humanities, mathematics, science, music, and the arts.

Educational Program:

The Academy's clearly-defined mission of rigorous, content-rich college-preparatory education is complemented by a commitment to teacher autonomy. Our founding documents speak clearly to this commitment, under the heading of "Academic Freedom." Our philosophy is based on the belief that academic excellence is to be found not in a specific curriculum, but in the hiring of qualified experts in their field of study, given the freedom to develop their own curriculum, based on their own strengths and professional judgment.

Although each curricular area assumes the delivery of specific academic expectations, there is significant crossover among the disciplines. The Academy encourages all teachers, for instance, to integrate writing, research, and presentation and to teach and require correct research format. In addition, teachers often work together to develop interdisciplinary lessons, furthering this overlap and reinforcement.

The Academy has a written policy statement concerning the selection of educational materials, which makes it clear that all curricular decisions are made by the individual teacher, as long as the teacher ensures that learning outcomes are achieved, Idaho Core Standards are exceeded, and school standards are met.

The written curriculum exists primarily in the form of individual teacher syllabi. Departments are required to establish essential learnings for each class and grade level, but the design of lessons is left to the professional judgment of the teacher. The standards and scope and sequence are examined several times each year to ensure the minimization of redundancy and the maximization of coverage.

Curricular coordination is fostered by semi-monthly all-staff meetings, which alternate with department or grade-level meetings as needed. In addition, Academy staff return from summer break a full week before students for the specific purpose of planning and designing cooperative lessons. Coordination with sending schools is a difficult feat, as the Academy represents a significant academic leap for most students coming from other area schools. The sixth grade is the only level specifically geared to meet the needs of incoming students, although teachers in all grades take efforts to assimilate new students.

Professional staff have the responsibility of developing, evaluating, and revising curriculum to ensure cohesive and effective instruction for all students. Unfortunately, standardized tests provide little useful information, as Academy students routinely score well beyond established standards. Instead of using standardized testing data, teachers are expected to apply a high degree of professional discretion and collaboration to ensure that students receive quality instruction. Curriculum review, then, is ongoing and based on intimate knowledge of student abilities. The emphasis on teacher autonomy places a high premium on professional judgment, but eliminates much of the need for significant structured time or financial support for curriculum development. When teachers do require financial or other support, administration provides leadership, encouragement, and financial support as necessary.

The overall curriculum, as well as the individual curricula of the different departments and classrooms, is focused on the clear goal of preparing students for success in post-secondary education in the best schools

in the country. To this end, the Academy puts great emphasis on challenging students in every period of every day. At the beginning of each school year, teachers are challenged to ask themselves how their class meets this requirement and how it is significantly better than a similar class in any other school.

Every student is expected to rise to the Academy's challenge, and teachers are expected to work diligently to ensure that every student has the chance to succeed. It is important to note, however, that the Academy's standards are high, and that students are required to meet them; the Academy does not lower standards or expectations to ensure that students pass. Rather than lower the bar, our goal is always to raise the student's performance. Students who do not pass a class are required to re-take it until they demonstrate an acceptable level of mastery. In this way, we give students the best chance of success at the next level. Special Needs students are also held to a high standard, based on learning goals established in a properly-developed IEP. Interventions and modifications occur as necessary, as determined by the IEP team, to ensure that students are provided the best possible chance at success.

The Academy provides an accelerated curriculum that manages to emphasize both breadth and depth. It is our belief that the public education system in our country underestimates the ability of students and asks little of them. We make it a point to challenge students to think, inquire, problem-solve, and develop higher-order thinking from the moment they enter in sixth grade. Testing data indicate that this course of study is very effective at achieving its goals. Anecdotal information from our graduates and their college professors provides strong evidence that, in many cases, we have over-prepared them. A common comment from a graduate is, "College is easy, compared to Charter."

Authentic application of knowledge and skills occurs in all classrooms on a regular basis. Math classes are tasked with "discovering" math concepts through problem-solving, social studies classes work to provide solutions to community and world issues, and other disciplines similarly engage students in "real-world" issues that force them to apply learnings to meaningful problems.

One of the tenets of the Academy is the value of respectful debate of ideas, and the importance of the "indispensable opposition." Students are expected to engage in discussion and debate of big ideas, always with an emphasis on supporting their position. When students are required to not only master coursework, but also to formulate cogent arguments to support their positions, they are demonstrating a depth of understanding that is crucial in post-secondary education and in whatever field of work they may enter.

This very same requirement enables students to achieve a metacognitive understanding of their own work and studies. Students are required to examine their own learning style and beliefs, as well as that of peers. The course of study and the methods generally employed at the Academy might be considered an extended course in epistemology; we encourage students to think, and then to examine why they think the way they do.

The Academy recognizes that students require a varied delivery and a broad range of choices to maximize their educational experience. To this end, it has allowed students to enroll in approved classes at the local college, and has built its master schedule to accommodate this. Students are self-directed insofar as they are expected to take responsibility for their own learning and seek out learning opportunities. By and large, the Academy's philosophy leans more toward the "sage on the stage" model than the "guide by the side" model; that is, we emphasize the importance of direct instruction and "teacher as expert."

The relatively small size of the Academy's student body fosters a more personalized instructional model than many other schools. Teachers are able to know the strengths and needs of individual learners, and

present lessons appropriately. In addition to in-class adjustments, the daily “study lab” period is provided specifically as a support for students; it is a time when they can get tutoring, work collaboratively on projects, or study. Teachers are available during this time, as well as before and after school to assist students.

The high school curriculum is aligned across disciplines to facilitate cross-curricular connections. This is especially evident in the English and Social Studies disciplines. Ninth-graders study Ancient Literature and History, tenth-graders study European Literature and History, eleventh-graders study American Literature and American History; twelfth graders study the state-mandated U.S. Government and have options for English. Cross-curricular connections happen both by design and by happenstance.

Course of Study: The Academy includes in its requirements a full year of Latin and Civics for all eighth graders. The high school curriculum includes an articulated program of English and Social Studies, as follows:

9 th Grade:	Ancient Literature	Ancient History
10 th Grade	European Literature	European History
11 th Grade	American Literature	United States History
12 th Grade	World (or AP) Literature	United States Government

The Academy’s graduation requirements exceed the state’s graduation requirements; in addition, graduation requirements include two full years of foreign language, beyond the eighth-grade Latin requirement. Elective classes are limited to the arts—Choir, Band, Drama, Visual Arts—and oral communications or debate.

One of the hallmarks of the Academy is the belief in teacher autonomy. Each department, and each teacher within each department, is responsible for setting standards and designing appropriate instruction to reach those standards. As a college-preparatory school, we believe it best to trust our professional staff to make sound academic decisions. Our mission statement is intentionally vague, leaving much to the discretion of the teachers, and allowing each of them to pursue their individual gifts and strengths.

The Academy takes pride in its high expectations for student behavior. We emphasize responsibility and ethical behavior. We enforce these through an aggressive disciplinary policy and teach it in our classes. Student attendance and punctuality are enforced through a clear policy that punishes excessive tardies and absences. Extracurricular activities are not allowed to interfere with the school day. Academic integrity is taught vigorously and enforced from the beginning of sixth grade.

In addition, our academic program includes an eighth-grade Civics requirement, which integrates *Project Citizen*, a large presentation project that requires students to identify a social issue and propose a workable solution. Our high school is the only school in North Idaho that participates in *Model United Nations* in Montana.

The Academy’s mission drives every significant decision in the school. With a constant emphasis on maintaining a high standard, the Academy has created a culture of academic excellence, both in the school halls and in the community. A common problem in charter schools is the phenomenon of “mission drift,” a tendency to lose focus and make compromises in order to please a broad base of

customers and demands. The Academy has proactively fought against this phenomenon, and has succeeded in establishing and maintaining a reputation as the top academic school in the region.

Although the area's other public schools have taken measures to offer more advanced learning opportunities for their students, the Academy remains the only public school in the primary attendance zone dedicated exclusively to this mission.

The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy will develop educational standards that ensure our alumni both obtain and apply the knowledge and skills necessary to compete successfully. The Academy will maintain standards that exceed the Idaho Core Standards at all levels as we seek to graduate literate, responsible citizens who can contribute to their families and communities. Teachers are required to submit a statement annually that they have studied, understand, and are exceeding Idaho Core Standards or state standards (where Core Standards are not yet available) in their curricular area. (**Appendix V, "Standards Statements"**) Students shall advance based on their mastery of the curriculum. Frequent and regular assessment tools will monitor and report progress, and guide and improve instruction. The assessment used will express clearly the quality of student work and certify that students are meeting standards. Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy shall fulfill the requirements of IC 33-1612 by a thorough, consistent, rigorous application of its curriculum. It is the goal of the Academy to provide a college prep education that equals or exceeds the programs of the finest prep schools in the nation.

Program Goals:

Through its program of rigorous coursework and high expectations, the Academy will:

- Prepare students for success in any post-secondary academic pursuit;
- Instill confidence in its student body that will enable graduates to pursue and conquer future challenges, both academic and otherwise;
- Provide a "value added" educational experience, enabling motivated students to realize outstanding achievement;
- Provide a safe learning environment, where students are free to pursue academic excellence, and where academic success is celebrated.

Research-Based:

The Academy's curriculum and instructional models are not, strictly speaking, based on hard research. The charter school movement is intended to encourage experimentation and innovation—that is, our successes and failures are supposed to BE the research. However, our methods are rooted in the model that has existed for hundreds of years (before state or national standards). This model can be described as follows:

- 1) Set high, objective standards for student achievement based on the professional judgment of highly-qualified teachers;
- 2) Allow the teaching staff the freedom to pursue these standards based on their individual strengths, recognizing that there is no "correct" method of teaching;
- 3) Establish high expectations for student behavior and work ethic;
- 4) Hold teachers and students accountable.

The Academy's results are undeniable. The Academy has been recognized as the highest-performing school in Idaho, and among the elite schools in the nation, according to numerous publications that rank public schools. (**See Appendix H, "National Recognition"**)

Our history of success can reasonably be considered an ongoing action research. In the spirit of the charter school philosophy, we actively and intentionally reject many of the conventions of the failing education system and focus on operating better, smarter, and more efficiently. The success of our model has been documented in an independently-conducted, longitudinal study. **(See Appendix Z, “Longitudinal Assessment of Student Progress”)** This study concludes that the longer students attend the Academy, the further they out-perform their peers in other public schools.

Special Education:

The Coeur d’Alene Charter Academy will serve children with disabilities by adopting the mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and use the Idaho Special Education Manual for identifying, evaluating, programming, developing individualized education plans, planning services, developing our discipline policy, budgeting, and providing transportation for special needs students, when included in a student’s IEP. The Academy will provide a free and appropriate public education to all students. The Academy will hire or contract for special education services with Highly Qualified Special Education Teachers who meet Idaho state requirements.

The Academy will serve children with disabilities in accordance with the mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The School Board of the Academy has adopted the Idaho Special Education Manual 2007 and all subsequent revisions. **(See Appendix S, “Special Education Manual Adoption”)**

The Academy will provide special education and related services to eligible students in the Least Restrictive Environment as identified on each student’s IEP.

The Academy will provide a continuum of services for serving students with disabilities, in accordance with the mandates of IDEA. The IEP team will consider the student’s needs and the continuum of alternate placements and related services available to meet those needs.

The Academy will provide supplementary services in accordance with IDEA, as determined by the student’s IEP team.

The Academy will provide the necessary services in accordance with IDEA as determined by the student’s IEP team.

The Academy’s evaluation team will determine eligibility for services according to the mandates of IDEA.

The Academy will use scientifically research-based supplemental and replacement curriculum for students with disabilities, as determined by the IEP team, and in accordance with IDEA.

IDEA includes a set of procedural safeguards designed to protect the rights of children with disabilities and their families. The Academy will protect student and parent rights as described in the Idaho Special Education Manual. A locked file will store special education records and staff will be trained in confidentiality requirements.

Students receiving special education services will be held to high academic and discipline standards, within the scope of applicable federal and state laws. Teachers and administrators will follow the Idaho Special Education Manual to address these issues, including Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPS) for students whose behavior impacts their learning or the learning of others, as determined by administration and the IEP team. When manifestation determinations occur, the Academy will make proactive use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

When the IEP team determines that a student's academic needs cannot be met on site, the Academy will contract with another agency to provide those services. The Academy will continue to monitor such students' progress.

The Academy will provide a formal process for evaluating student response to scientifically research-based interventions, consisting of the core components of problem identification, problem analysis, applying research-based interventions, and progress monitoring. A non-discrimination statement will be included in all advertisements for enrollment.

The Academy will comply with all provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Limited English Proficiency:

The Academy will provide English language development services for eligible LEP students who enroll, and LEP designation may not be a factor in the enrollment lottery procedures. The Academy will contract the provision of LEP services with providers who meet Idaho state requirements.

Gifted and Talented:

The Academy's accelerated curriculum and mission as they exist are perfectly suited to serving the needs of Gifted and Talented students. Special accommodations are made within the context of the individual classroom, allowing for teachers to challenge students according to their unique talents. The Academy will follow all rules and regulations addressing Gifted and Talented in Idaho code, 33-2001, 33-2003, and IDAPA 08.02.03.999.

Dual Enrollment:

According to Idaho Code 33-203(7), dual enrollment shall include the options of enrollment in a regular public school. Students from the Charter Academy shall be allowed to participate in dual enrollment options in the district of their residence provided that student meets eligibility requirements for that program, as specified in 33-203(7), Idaho Code. Opportunities for dual enrollment will be communicated to parents and students through ongoing group and individual conferences with the counseling staff, as well as daily announcements and monthly newsletters.

It is the intent of the Academy to remain true to the mission statement and deliver the curriculum through highly skilled professional instructors. We will maintain a standard of academic excellence so that a diploma earned at the Academy has significant value. Therefore, classes taken through dual enrollment must meet the Academy standards for rigor and content, as determined by the Principal or his/her designee.

Full-time Charter Academy students may take dual enrollment high school courses through another accredited high school during grades 9 through 12.

In most cases, courses taken at another high school while the student is enrolled full time at the Academy, including summer school courses, will not be accepted to meet core graduation requirements and will earn only elective credit at the Charter Academy. At the principal's discretion, the Academy may award credit for a core requirement if the class is needed to graduate and cannot be scheduled at the Academy.

All dual enrollment high school courses must meet the following requirements:

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- a. The course is offered by a provider accredited by the organization that accredits Idaho high schools, or an organization whose accreditation of providers is recognized by the organization that accredits Idaho high schools;
 - b. The state department of education has verified that the teacher is certificated by the state of Idaho and is qualified to teach the course;
 - c. The parent or guardian registers the student for the course through the Charter Academy's normal registration process and the student's parent or guardian makes such enrollment requests no later than 30 days prior to the end of the term immediately previous to the one for which the student is enrolling, or no later than the end of the school year, in the case of a term ending at the end of the school year.

Unless previously approved, all grades earned and credits received for dual enrollment high school courses will be included on the Charter Academy transcript as elective credits.

Concurrent Postsecondary Enrollment:

Idaho Code 33-203(8) specifies that courses may be taken through a postsecondary institution. The parents are responsible for all tuition and fees incurred for dual enrollment courses taken at post-secondary and private secondary schools.

The privilege of concurrent enrollment through an accredited postsecondary institute may be extended to students who have at least junior standing with a weighted cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher.

The student must apply to the principal or designee on the approved form signed by the student and parent one month prior to the required enrollment deadline at the other institution. To assist in completing the master schedule, students will notify the principal by the completion of school (approximately June 15) of their intent to dual enroll the following fall.

All full-time students are required to complete at least one core requirement at the Charter Academy during their junior and senior years (core requirements include any courses in English, social studies, math, or science which meet graduation requirements). All concurrent credit courses must be approved by the principal or counselor with designated dual credits courses required to meet specific Charter Academy graduation requirements.

For every semester credit earned at or through a postsecondary institution, the student will earn half a credit at the Academy (e.g. four college semester credits equal two Academy credits). All classes taken outside the Academy will be designated as such on the student's transcript, and grades received by concurrent enrollment will not be included in the student's grade point average. It is the student's responsibility to provide the registrar with documentation of all earned concurrent enrolled credit in the academic year it is obtained. Seniors must provide this documentation by the end of May to ensure credits are in order for graduation.

Tab 4: Measurable Standards, Accreditation, and Accountability

Attainment of Skills and Knowledge:

Academy students are held to very high academic standards. Proficiency on state-mandated tests is the minimum level of expected achievement. Academy teachers are expected to set a high bar for student performance and construct tests that require students to demonstrate mastery. Students who fail to demonstrate command of the material will not be promoted to the next level. Instruction is designed to exceed all state standards; teachers are required annually to certify that they are knowledgeable of the standards, and that their instruction meets or exceeds the standards.

The Academy has been a five-star school since the inception of the star rating system in Idaho, and has achieved this feat by having not only the highest test scores, but exceptional growth. Teachers are expected and required to collaborate by subject area and grade level to ensure consistency in the application of standards and curriculum. Departments examine results to determine instructional issues and address those issues promptly, as well as on an annual basis.

The effectiveness of this model is evident in the consistently high performance of Academy students on all measures of academic performance. An independent longitudinal study found that Academy students experience exceptional growth, and that this growth is magnified the longer the students attend. (**Appendix Z, “Longitudinal Assessment of Student Progress”**)

What will it take for a student to be successful at Coeur d’Alene Charter Academy?

The answer to the question is the same thing that enables one to become a pianist, poet, or professional athlete. There is no substitute for hard work! Diligence, perseverance, a refusal to quit, the desire to succeed, and an understanding of the necessity and dignity of labor are all qualities of a highly developed work ethic. We intend to encourage this quality in our students when they demonstrate this attitude toward their studies and highlight the need for those who do not. Coeur d’Alene Charter Academy recognizes that primary responsibility for developing the respect for work and willingness to put forth effort lies with the parents. A highly-developed work ethic is internal, a function of character. Academic achievement is easier for some and harder for others.

In our opinion, and that of many educators at the secondary and college levels, one of the most serious deficits in the preparation of students today is their inability to manage time effectively. For those young people who wish to assume responsible positions in business and academics, it is necessary to develop the skills of self-motivation and time management. We intend to teach our students that understanding and knowledge are available to most of us and made accessible by a combination of effort and time. Because of this, excessive hours spent in part-time jobs or play restricts the time at students’ disposal leaving them at a competitive disadvantage with their peers nationwide.

Our intended workload of approximately one to three hours outside the classroom seems stressful only when compared to the eroded standards we have become accustomed to; this is considered routine today in the better public and private schools worldwide. We happen to believe that the first business of a student is learning. Students who see their personal academic preparation as a full-time occupation gain a distinct advantage over those with whom they compete. Coeur d’Alene Charter Academy will develop students by increasing their capacity for work through a demanding curriculum that lays the foundation for future educational and professional success.

Measurable Student Educational Standards:

As mandated by Idaho Code 33-5209A, the Academy administration sets forth the following criteria for demonstrating accomplishment of mission-specific goals. These goals are intended to encourage and require that our program provide “value added.”

Academic Proficiency Goals: Students at the Academy will demonstrate grade-level proficiency as defined by the state of Idaho, and as measured by the state-adopted standardized test(s).

Goal 1: 90% of Academy students will score proficient or higher on state-adopted test(s).

Goal 2: The Academy will perform in the top quartile in the state of Idaho on the state-adopted test(s) as measured by mean score.

Student Academic Growth Goals: Students at the Academy will achieve growth targets as established by the state of Idaho, and as measured by the state-adopted standardized test(s).

Goal 3: 90% of Academy students will meet target growth rates as measured by the state-adopted test(s).

Goal 4: The Academy will demonstrate growth rates in the top 50 percent of all Idaho schools as a percentage of students meeting state-established growth goals on state-adopted test(s)

College and Career Readiness Goals: Academy students will demonstrate college readiness by performing above the state average on college-entrance exams, such as the ACT and SAT.

Goal 5: 70% of Academy twelfth-graders will achieve “college ready” composite scores on college-entrance exams.

Reporting of Standards:

The Academy completes all required reports to the state and its authorizer, including annual reporting of student academic performance, accreditation status, and performance toward Measurable Student Educational Standards. In addition, the school produces a “School Profile” for all stakeholders and interested parties, which includes information on our philosophy, academic programs and standards, test scores, national recognition, and contact information. This profile appears on the school’s website and is available upon request through the school office.

Methods of Measuring Student Progress:

Students at the Academy will continue to take all state-mandated tests, just like all public school students in Idaho. This will include the SBAC and/or the ISAT, as well as any other state-adopted or state-mandated testing instrument. All eleventh-graders take the PSAT/NMSQT, and have for many years, even before the state began paying for it. In addition, the Academy has long made it a practice to test all of its seniors with the SAT. As our mission is college-preparatory, these college-admissions tests are a crucial measure of our success in pursuing our mission. Every effort will be made to ensure maximum participation in mandatory testing. Our testing coordinator will track participation and ensure that those who miss school test days are allowed and provided a make-up test day. The Academy has consistently met and surpassed the state’s requirement for test participation.

Measurement of Student Progress Toward Standards:

The Idaho Core Standards represent the minimum standards all students at the Academy will achieve in order to graduate. Student progress in meeting the state achievement standards will be measured with the SBAC or any other examination officially required by the State or federal government of all other public school students.

The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy reserves the right to measure student progress with other standardized testing instruments.

Academy staff has undergone extensive training in the implementation of the Idaho Core Standards, and has in place a program for ongoing professional development to ensure that our teachers understand and effectively apply the standards. Our program has been used as an exemplar at the state level.

The Academy maintains graduation requirements that exceed state requirements. Requirements include two years of foreign language, four years of math, and four years of history. Academy students must earn a minimum of 46 credits to graduate.

Middle Level Credit Advancement Requirements:

The Academy has developed clear requirements for middle-school students to advance. These requirements address both individual classes and grade-promotion criteria. In short, students will not progress to the next level in a sequence if they fail a class. In addition, students must pass a majority of their core classes in a given grade and be on target to graduate with their class before they will be promoted to the next grade level. This plan was submitted to, and approved by, the State Department of Education.

Accreditation:

The Academy is accredited for grades 9-12 through Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC)/AdvancED. The Board will comply with all accreditation standards established by the state or regional accreditation agency. The Academy completed its five-year accreditation visitation in April of 2012 with high marks and has maintained accreditation requirements since. **(Appendix D, “Accreditation Certificate”)** The Academy will continue to participate in annual accreditation meetings, complete annual updates and ongoing improvement, as well as conduct site visitations as mandated by the state and the current accreditation agency. Both administrators have proven understanding of accreditation requirements by participating in site visits at other schools.

Accountability and School Improvement:

The founders, board, and administration of the Academy firmly believe that an essential element of the charter school movement is the risk of closure for any charter school that fails to demonstrate “value added,” or, at a minimum, “value neutral” results. In the event that the Academy does not meet state achievement goals or progress over time, a team comprised of the principal, staff, Board of Directors, and authorizer representative and any other additional inside/outside technical assistance will meet to determine whether the school should be closed or a plan should be developed to address student achievement.

It will be the responsibility of this team with the assistance of the authorizer, to monitor the implementation of any improvement plan for improved learning and teaching and to continue to provide feedback and recommendations for strengthening ongoing student achievement.

The Academy's administration will attend pertinent State Conferences and subscribe to the SDE weekly e-newsletter to stay apprised of State requirements and policy changes.

If the Academy is required to implement a Turnaround Improvement Plan, the Academy Board will work with an independent consultant to determine the most appropriate staffing model.

Tab 5: Governance Structure, Parental Involvement, Audits

Governance Structure:

Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy, Inc. is a non-profit organization organized and managed under the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act. (**Appendix A, “Articles of Incorporation,” and Appendix B, “Bylaws”**) The Board of Directors will be the public agents who control and govern the charter school. In addition, The Board of Directors shall be responsible and ensure that the school is in compliance with all applicable federal and state education standards, all applicable federal and state laws, rules, regulations, and policies, as well as the terms and conditions of the charter. (**Appendix K, “Organizational Chart”**)

The Board of Directors will entrust the daily operations of the school to the Principal. The principal shall be directly responsible for implementing the school’s academic program, and attaining the stated objectives of academic achievement. The principal shall provide educational leadership designed to nurture a strong relationship among teachers, students, parents, and the community. In addition, the principal shall be responsible for hiring, evaluating and terminating classified staff. The principal will observe, evaluate and recommend action to the board regarding the hiring, evaluation and termination of certified staff. The principal is responsible for managing the facilities and creating and maintaining a school climate that is disciplined, orderly, and conducive to learning.

The Board of Directors meetings will follow open meeting laws, and public records law, keep accurate minutes, and make the minutes available to the public, according to the bylaws of the charter school.

The Academy will comply with all regulations to ensure that the school meets the terms of its charter and complies with applicable laws. The regulations address performance monitoring through annual school accreditation reports and annual reporting on educational goal attainment.

Idaho law requires charter schools to submit to their authorizer an annual report that contains a fiscal audit, a report on student progress based on the school’s identified educational standards, and a copy of the school’s accreditation report. It also requires charter schools to comply with the same financial reporting requirements as school districts.

Governance Capacity:

Academy bylaws dictate that the Board of Directors be comprised of representatives from three groups: educators, members of the public, and Academy parents. Efforts are made to maintain roughly equal representation among these groups. The board is not elected, but self-perpetuating, to ensure continuity and adherence to the school’s mission.

According to the Articles of Incorporation (**Appendix A**), the number of Directors shall be no fewer than three (3) and no more than fifteen (15).

Governance Process:

Board members serve a three-year term, which expires on November 1. There are no term limits. A process is in place to remove a board member. The process for vetting a potential board member involves soliciting community members from the target sub-population (parents, public, educators) and then arranging interviews between the candidates and the school staff, and then between the candidates and the board. Once a candidate is approved by both the staff and the board, the candidate is invited to join the board. A majority vote in open session results in the appointment of a new board member.

Board Training:

Members of the board, in cooperation with administration, have produced a “primer” for new board members to facilitate their assuming of board member duties and procedures. Each member of the board is provided a copy of *Charter School Board University*, published by the National Charter Schools Institute, and is encouraged to pursue further training as made available by the State Department of Education, Idaho School Boards Association, the Idaho Charter School Network or other agency. In addition, the at least one member of the Board is encouraged to attend the annual State Charter School Conference with the Principal.

The Academy’s Board of Directors adheres to “The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy Code of Ethics for Board Members.” All members sign this document upon joining the board, signifying their agreement to uphold the Academy’s ethical standards. **(Appendix Q, “Board Code of Ethics”)**

The board and its members will conduct a self-evaluation at least annually at its “annual meeting” in June, using the adopted evaluation forms. **(Appendix R, “Board Self-Evaluation”)**

Parental Involvement:

The Board will establish policies to encourage parental involvement. The process to ensure parental involvement may include, but not be limited to:

- Parents receive written materials at the beginning of each school year.
- Parents are encouraged to attend parent-teacher conferences each year.
- Parents are asked to complete a survey during the school year, soliciting input on the academic program, school environment, and the school’s progress.
- Parents are encouraged to participate in numerous events and activities.
- The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) offers parents the opportunity to volunteer for school projects, programs, and committees.
- Parents are encouraged to attend and participate in the Board of Directors’ monthly board meetings.
- Parents are encouraged to provide an appropriate learning environment at home for study.
- During new-student orientation, the Principal provides recommendations for establishing home support and fostering student success.

The Academy does not utilize parent volunteers within the classroom, nor for handling of any student records. To do so affects the dynamics of the classroom and compromises the confidentiality of student records.

Parents are encouraged to communicate regularly with the school. In turn, the school and the PTO will regularly communicate with the parents.

Audits and Annual Reporting:

The Academy undergoes a financial audit annually, conducted by a qualified, independent CPA. A copy of the fiscal audit is submitted to the SDE, as well as their authorizing body, which is required by the IC33-701 (6) (as required by Idaho Code 33-5210 (3)).

The Academy will comply with all financial reporting requirements, including those stipulated in Idaho Code 33-701. The Academy will ensure fiscal transparency by maintaining a page on the school website that meets or exceeds all code requirements for public access to financial transactions.

Tab 6: Employee Requirements**Qualifications and Certification:**

Employment practices shall be governed by the relevant laws of the State of Idaho. These laws include, but are not limited to Idaho Code Sections 33-513 through 33-518, and sections 33-130, and 33-5205 (3) (g) as those sections are now enacted and as they may hereinafter be amended, and the current and future rules of the State Board of Education specifically pertaining to public charter schools.

These practices include but are not limited to hiring, dismissal, contracts, grievance procedures, certification, criminal history check, and personnel records.

The Academy will hire teachers who possess appropriate certification and meet the highly qualified standards as set by the State of Idaho for both new teachers and teachers who are not new to the profession. All teachers of core academic subjects, including special education teachers, must additionally demonstrate subject matter competence in each core academic subject taught.

The administration will make recommendations to the Board of Directors for approval of instructional staff. Each professional staff member (teachers and administrators) will be on a written contract approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction according to 33-5206(4).

All employees and volunteers will undergo background checks according to statute.

The Academy will not discriminate on the basis of any criteria prohibited in federal and state mandates.

All substitute teachers must submit to a criminal history check before substituting at the Academy.

Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy's Principal will ensure that the school's employees understand and are able to implement the school's vision upon hiring and through in-service training. All employees will undergo annual performance reviews according to state code.

All employees will receive orientation to, and be responsible for upholding, the Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators. Suspected violations will be reported to the Professional Standards Commission.

Teacher Evaluation:

The Principal and Vice Principal conduct a minimum of two classroom evaluations of each teacher every year, as required in code. Administrators have had or will have received training in the Danielson Framework for Teaching Excellence. The evaluation instrument is aligned with the Danielson model. **(Appendix T, "Teacher Evaluation Instrument")**

The Academy follows all requirements for working with underperforming teachers, as well as ensuring due process rights as appropriate.

Professional Development:

The Academy provides in-house training on curricular issues, using its own staff. An example would be the teacher-led workshops on autism-spectrum students, use of online resources like Moodle and Blackboard, or writing rubrics. With a vast array of expertise within the school walls, outside training is rarely accessed; it is, however, encouraged for those who wish it. The Academy has adopted a comprehensive Professional Development Plan that integrates technology, best practices, and Core Standards. **(Appendix U, "Professional Development Plan")**

Administrative Evaluation:

The Administration is evaluated annually by staff, parents, students, and supervisors, using a state-approved process (**Pending**)

Health and Safety:

The Academy's Board and administration are dedicated to maintaining a school climate where students, teachers, and visitors feel safe, nurtured, and confident. This culture is achieved by maintenance of facilities, ongoing discussion and training of professional and classified staff, consistent enforcement of discipline policy.

The Charter Academy buildings will be inspected as provided in the Idaho Uniform School Safety Codes (ref. IC Title 39 chapter 80). Following an annual inspection, the charter school shall within 30 days, (1) correct any deficiencies in the inspection report, or (2), if the corrective action requires structural modification, file a written plan with the inspecting agency for the correction at the beginning of the following school year. Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy will comply with all applicable provisions and procedures as outlined in Idaho Code for the health and safety of its staff and student body. The general safety and health standards as outlined under the provisions of the educational occupancies guidelines furnished by the State Department of Education shall apply. (**Appendix F, "Facilities Inspection"**) The school shall ensure services are provided for adequate record keeping of immunization and health-related services.

To ensure the safety of our employees and students, the Academy will comply with the following health and safety procedures.

1. Conduct criminal history checks for all employees in compliance with Idaho Code 33-130. This requirement is a condition of employment.
2. Require that all students have proof of immunization or have a written parental waiver and have a birth certificate or other identification before being enrolled
3. Require that all visitors sign in at the office and receive and wear a visitor's pass when visiting the school buildings.
4. Provide for inspection of the facility in compliance with Section 39-4130 of Idaho Code. Adopt policies to meet all required city, state, and federal health, accessibility, safety, fire, and building codes for public schools. Fire and safety officials using the same guidelines for all public schools will inspect the facility.
5. Adopt and implement, where appropriate, policies regarding health, safety and risk management policies, unless otherwise written and adopted by the Board of Directors.
6. Contact law enforcement in the event of suspected use or possession of controlled substances or weapons.

Policies will be incorporated as appropriate into the school's student and staff handbooks and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in the schools' staff development efforts.

The Academy will follow all the Idaho Content Standards for health and physical education.

School Discipline:

All teachers are empowered to maintain discipline in their classrooms. Protocols include establishing clear expectations for student behavior and consistent sanctions for noncompliance. Students will not be allowed to practice behavior that endangers others or causes a disruption to the teaching or learning process. Violations will result in penalties ranging from refocus to referral to administration. Any issues sufficient to merit a detention or referral will result in the teacher or administrator contacting the student's parent.

The discipline model employed by the Academy is built on respecting the ability and rights of the individual classroom teacher; just as there are many different teaching and learning styles, different parenting styles, and different management styles, there are many ways to maintain classroom discipline. To enforce uniform practices across a diverse teaching staff is to deny these obvious differences and violate the Academy's tenet of respecting professional practices. Therefore, the Academy does not have a school-wide "system" in place, save for the expectation that teachers will manage their classrooms and remove disruptive students to the Principal or Vice Principal's office. The threshold for removing a student from the classroom is as varied as the backgrounds and personalities of the teachers employed at the Academy.

Disciplinary Consequences:

Discipline actions and consequences for violations of school rules, regulations, and procedures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Student conference with principal
- Loss of privileges
- Detention
- Phone call to parent
- Letter sent to parent
- Student and parent conference with Principal
- Suspension from extracurricular activities
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Referral to Counselor or Student Specialist
- Recommendation to Board for Expulsion

The Principal and Vice Principal determine appropriate consequences for infractions

Suspension Policy

Students will be suspended for one to three days as deemed appropriate by the school administration for offenses that interfere with the learning of other students.

Students will be re-admitted to class once a parental conference with the Principal has been conducted. The Principal, with the administrative team, will design a program for the student to follow upon re-admittance. With each discipline referral thereafter, days of suspension will be increased by one day, until a maximum of five days has been reached. At that time, the student will be referred to the Board for consideration of permanent expulsion since the student is demonstrating a lack of commitment

to the values of the established learning community and/or is habitually disrupting the learning of others.

Expulsion Policy

Board may deny attendance at the Academy by expulsion of any student who is a habitual truant, or who is incorrigible, or whose conduct, in the judgment of the Principal or Board, is such as to be continuously a discipline problem, or who may be harmful to the other students. The Governing Board shall have the right to permanently expel students for disciplinary or attendance reasons. In the event of an expulsion, the Board and administration will conform to all requirements regarding notification, representation, hearings, and documentation.

Any disciplinary issue that results in administrative action will, at a minimum, result in parental contact. If the issue involves possible illegal activities, administration will contact law enforcement.

Suicide Prevention:

The Academy's staff receives a refresher course annually in identifying and reporting of suicidal tendencies among the student body, as well as methods of talking with students in crisis. The online resource "SPAN Idaho" is used in these trainings to facilitate presentation and to ensure that those who deal with students most closely (the teachers) are familiar with the resource. Two trained counselors serve as the primary resource for teachers and students regarding suicide-related issues, and are responsible for facilitating intervention and postvention.

Internet Use Policy:

The Academy has developed and adopted a comprehensive internet use policy, to which students and their parents must agree before being allowed access to school technology. (**Appendix X, "Student Acceptable Use"**)

Employee Benefits:

All qualified Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy personnel will be covered by and subject to the Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho, health insurance, Federal Social Security and Medicare, federal and state employment taxes, unemployment insurance and worker's compensation insurance in accordance with applicable Idaho Codes.

Transfer Rights:

Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy is its own Local Education Agency (LEA). No employee transfer rights apply between The Academy and any other school district.

Collective Bargaining:

The Academy's staff and employees will be a separate unit for purposes of collective bargaining.

Written Contract:

All teachers and administrators will be on a written contract as approved by the state superintendent of public instruction. All employees will undergo performance reviews according to state requirements.

Tab 7: Admissions, Discipline, Student Policies

Enrollment Capacity:

The Academy's beginning enrollment in 1999 was approximately 200 in grades 7-10. In subsequent years, grades 11 and 12 were added, and then grade 6. Enrollment capacity is 812 in the current facility, with no expectation that the school will expand or relocate. For purposes of the enrollment lottery, the Academy's board of directors will establish overall and per-grade enrollment caps on an annual basis. The board will set these caps no later than two (2) months before the school's lottery application deadline and will post them on the school's website within five (5) days of the vote that establishes the annual caps.

Admission Procedures:

The Academy does not discriminate against students of a particular race, color, national origin, sex or disability* and will abide by the following admission guidelines.

1. The board establishes enrollment caps for each grade level and an application deadline.
2. If capacity is insufficient to enroll all pupils who submit a timely application for the subsequent term, then preference shall be given in the following order:
 - a. First, for students returning to the Academy;
 - b. Second, children of Academy founders and children of full-time Academy employees(not to exceed 10% of the school's total enrollment);
 - c. Third, to siblings of pupils already enrolled at the Academy;
 - d. Fourth, to applicants residing within the primary attendance area;
 - e. Fifth, by random lottery.

Lottery Process:

At the close of the enrollment period (the second Friday in March), all returning students who have submitted their applications will be readmitted. Where the number of remaining applicants exceeds the number of openings for a particular grade level, all remaining applicants will be entered into a lottery and enrolled according to rules established by the State Board of Education. Those applicants in the lottery who were not admitted will be placed on a waiting list in the order that their names were drawn from the lottery. Thereafter, all students who apply after the second Friday in March will be placed on the waiting list based on the date and time the application is received, regardless of the student's area of residence.

Enrollment:

All applicants will be notified by mail regarding acceptance. Those admitted must accept their spot in writing by the date specified in the acceptance letter or the applicant will lose his/her space, allowing an opening for the next person on the waiting list. If a new student is unable to attend school within five days from the start of the year/semester for which he/she was accepted, admission will be denied and the student will need to reapply for a future opening.

*The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy does not discriminate on the basis of disability in our admission policy, or in providing access to programs or activities. Students receiving special education services through IDEA or section 504 accommodations will be held to the same academic and discipline standards as other students within the scope of the applicable federal and state laws.

Enrollment Opportunities:

Enrollment opportunities at the charter academy will be announced at least 4 weeks in advance of the closing date of an enrollment period. Announcement of opportunities will be published in local newspapers, in the school's newsletter and on the school's web site. In addition, the Academy Board of Directors will publish as part of their monthly meetings any consideration of enrollment opportunities.

Public School Alternative:

Because the Academy is a school of choice located within an established public school attendance zone, the alternative to attending the Academy is for students to attend their default public school.

Denial of Attendance:

Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy is committed to a safe learning environment. Student expectations for appropriate behavior are high and will be communicated to both students and parents through the student handbook and upon enrollment.

The Academy will deny attendance to any students who poses a continuous disruption of school discipline or instructional effectiveness, has a detrimental influence on the health and safety of other students, or who has been expelled from another school, in accordance with Idaho Code 33-205.

Students may be denied attendance to the charter school for any of the following reasons:

- Being a habitual truant
- Being deemed incorrigible by the school Principal
- Being deemed by the Board of Directors to be disruptive to the school for disciplinary reasons
- Being detrimental to the health and/or safety of other students
- Being expelled from another district

The administration and Board will follow all legal requirements of Idaho Code 33-205 related to the process of written notice, terms of denial, hearings, representation, and all other matters.

Student Handbook:

The Academy has developed and continuously updates a student handbook, which is distributed to students and posted on our website to ensure accessibility. (**Appendix W, "Student Handbook"**)

In addition, the Academy makes available a School Profile for prospective students, curious community members, and post-secondary institutions, which includes information on our philosophy, academic programs and standards, test scores, national recognition, and contact information. (**Appendix G, "School Profile"**)

Tab 8: Business Plan, Transportation, School Lunch**Business Plan:****Business Description:**

The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy is an educational institution organized and managed under the Idaho nonprofit corporation act. The Board of Directors of Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy shall be deemed public agents authorized by the Idaho Charter School Commission to control the charter school.

Marketing Plan:

Charter schools exist to meet the needs of underserved populations; the Academy was founded to serve students and families who have found other schools to be wanting, specifically in the areas of advanced coursework and positive learning environment. Our founding group consisted largely of parents whose children felt unchallenged and often marginalized because of their academic successes. Not all of these students were gifted, but all shared the traits of dedication to their studies, willingness to work hard, and the desire to pursue higher education. Our school is intended to serve students of all ability levels who exhibit these traits, and who find other schools to be uncondusive to academic excellence. Our mission statement clearly states that we are here "...for any students who are willing to accept the challenge." We hope to reach all segments of the population through advertising in a variety of media. The Academy will advertise enrollment periods in local newspapers and Chamber of Commerce publications, on our website, and on our street-side reader board. All of these but the newspaper are available free of charge, and are therefore accessible to the general public, including low-income community members. Additional efforts at reaching low-income populations may include postings or distribution of advertising in community centers, youth clubs, or other venues that serve the whole community. All print advertising includes a clear statement that our programs are open to all, and that our admissions policies are non-discriminatory. After many years of successfully serving the community, we do not plan to do extensive marketing, relying more on word-of-mouth advertising. Waiting lists in recent years indicate that the community is aware of the Academy.

Publicizing school successes is also an effective form of marketing. The Academy will maintain a presence on social media, including our school website, facebook, and twitter, ensuring that followers and curious media users have the opportunity to gain an understanding of our programs and keep abreast of Academy news, deadlines, and issues.

Management Plan:

The Academy Board of Directors is comprised of community members, educators, and Academy parents. We take some effort to ensure a variety of background experiences, as well. Our current board is comprised of a lawyer, the manager of a local business, a retired teacher, a stay-at-home mother (formerly an oncology nurse), and an engineer. (**Appendix P, "Board Resumes"**)

The Board is responsible for forming and adopting policy, as well as supervising the Principal and business manager. They are the ultimate authority in the hiring and dismissal of certified staff, generally acting on the recommendation of the Principal.

The Principal answers to the Board and supervises the certified staff, as well as his/her administrative assistant. He or she is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the school, including maintaining the academic program and ensuring a safe learning environment. He or she also bears primary responsibility for school communications with the media, State Department of Education, and the community.

The Business Manager answers to the Board and supervises the support staff and custodial staff. He or she manages the school's finances and the physical plant, making recommendations to the Principal and the Board on wide-ranging issues related to these responsibilities.

The Vice Principal answers to the Principal and supervises his or her administrative assistant. He or she also serves as the Activities Director, planning and managing all extra-curricular and co-curricular activities; in this capacity, he or she supervises all coaches and activity advisors. The Vice Principal assists the Principal in carrying out his or her duties and assumes the role of Principal when the Principal is absent from the building. **(See Appendix K, "Organizational Chart")**

Financial Plan:

The Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy Board of Directors employs a CFO/Business Manager with a BA degree in Accounting/Business Administration to provide appropriate, qualified fiscal management of all Academy business. Policies and procedures are promulgated by the CFO and approved by the Board in an open, monthly meeting, wherein the CFO provides a clear report of all financial matters and answers all questions from the Board. The CFO provides an annual review of legislative action during the legislative session. New policies and procedures are brought to the Board in order to maintain school policy in compliance with any State laws that may require it. All policies necessary for detailed and complete maintenance of financial records are in place and conform to generally accepted accounting principles of the United States of America and the State of Idaho. The CFO will make all records available for an annual independent financial audit report; produce an annual IFARMS report; all other required state supplemental reports; and, the required monthly financial statements to our Board of Directors. All appropriate statements will reflect the standards established by GASB (Governmental Accounting Standards Board). We will continue to maintain this standard of financial reporting in order to inform all stakeholders of our financial condition and provide assurance that we are a financially viable institution.

In our 15 year history, there have been no exceptions, misstatements or other conditions that necessitated disclosure by our independent auditors. We will continue to maintain this standard of financial reporting in order to inform all stakeholders of our financial condition and provide assurance that we are a financially viable institution.

Fundraising and Grant Writing:

The Academy has developed an annual cycle for major fundraising activities to supplement its primary funding source. In addition to in-house fundraising efforts, the Academy has contracted with a professional grant writer in the past, with little success. We continue to seek out grant opportunities as appropriate, and to work through the state's Charter School Network to develop new funding streams.

Transportation:

The Academy does not provide transportation services to its students. As a school of choice, our practices are consistent with those of all other public schools in our primary attendance area that students might choose to attend other than those for which they are zoned. In the event that a special-needs student's IEP require transportation, we will ensure that transportation is provided, according to state and federal law.

At registration time, families are informed of the limited public transportation available. In addition, the PTO assists families in finding workable carpools to assist with transportation difficulties. With a primary attendance area covering over 1300 square miles, providing transportation is not practicable at this time.

No plan is in place to offer ~~or consider offering~~ transportation in the future. However, the Academy will conduct a study in 2015 to determine whether transportation is feasible

Food Service:

Like many other charter schools, the Academy lacks the facility to provide food service and therefore does not participate in the federal hot lunch program. As a new LEA, the Academy solicited data from families regarding Free and Reduced for the first time in the spring of 2014, but with limited response. Now, with the advantage of our having LEA status confirmed from the beginning of the year, we are able to integrate this data collection in to our registration process; we expect a much better response. We do arrange to make lunches available through contracts with independent local providers. The vast majority of our students provide their own lunches. The Board does not have plans to consider offering a lunch program.

Tab 10: Business Arrangements, Community Involvement, School Choice**Business Arrangements and Partnerships:**

As with any business that has successfully grown over 15 years, we have a vendor list of several thousand business arrangements. A brief list of those companies follows:

Banking

We have outstanding banking relationships with four institutions: Mountain West Bank, Washington Trust, Inland Northwest Bank, and Bankcda. Our current investment, checking and loan needs are being met by all four banks.

Construction trades

The school has done three major remodel jobs, two new projects, five modular building projects and several smaller jobs. These projects have included some of the following firms: Miller-Stauffer Architects, Scott Rice Architects, Northwest Engineering, Shelter Associates, Ginno Construction, Small's Construction, CDF Landscaping, and others.

Supplies/Equipment

Interstate Office Supply, Staples, Office Max, CDW-G, InSight, Fred Meyer, Costco, Caxton, Follett, McGraw-Hill, Pearson, Barnes and Noble, Hastings, Amazon, Walter Nelson, Lowes, Neopost, Ricoh, and others.

Services

Advanced Benefits, Blue Cross of Idaho, Idaho School District Council, Avista, Kootenai Electric Co-op, Charles Dodson Attorney, Anderson Brothers CPA, Magnuson-McHugh CPA, TimeWarner, Coeur d'Alene Press, Herff Jones, Commercial Printing, Walsworth, AlSCO, Spokane Uniform House, Columbia Electric Supply, Moon Security Service

The Academy will contract for Special Education services as necessary. The Academy faithfully fulfills all requirements for serving special-needs students, using properly certified personnel. We will secure the services of such personnel to provide services on an as-needed basis annually. We have positive working relationships with other area charter schools, and may, as a group, retain a Special Education specialist.

We maintain ongoing arrangements with North Idaho College to provide enrollment options for our students, including classes at the college campus and classes taught by Academy teachers.

Community Involvement:

St. Vincent De Paul has recognized the Academy as the largest single donor to its annual holiday food drive. Each year, Academy families contribute between 1.5 and 2 tons of food to this cause.

The Academy participates annually in the *Festival of Trees*, a holiday community fundraiser for Kootenai Medical center, by sending its choirs to entertain audiences.

Academy administration maintains a membership in the Sunrise Rotary, which provides annual scholarships to our seniors and names a "Student of the Month," recognizing top Academy juniors and seniors and providing a showcase of our talented students.

The Academy's Jazz Band provides entertainment one Thursday every month at *The Fedora*, a local restaurant.

The Principal has been invited to speak before numerous organizations, including Kiwanas, Sunrise Rotary, Kootenai County Republicans, Kootenai County Democrats, Reagan Republicans, Pachyderm Club, Hayden Lake Rotary, and Leadership Coeur d'Alene, to name a few.

School Choice:

The Academy maintains membership in the Idaho Charter School Network, which advocates for school choice throughout the state. Two Academy administrators have served on the executive board of ICSN.

Academy administration has testified numerous times before the Idaho legislature in support of school choice and related issues.

Administration cooperates with other area charter schools to offer support and to identify shared concerns.

The Principal has been invited numerous times by the Montana Family Foundation to testify before the Montana legislature in support of charter school legislation. This included a one-hour exclusive presentation to members of both chambers as an expert.

The Academy offered its entire high school core curriculum via the Idaho Education Network (IEN) in support of the state Superintendent's initiatives and school choice.

Academy students are allowed numerous dual enrollment and concurrent enrollment opportunities, including IDLA, IDEA, and North Idaho College.

Termination:

In cases of termination, the Governing Board of Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy is responsible for the dissolution of the business and affairs of the school. Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy will fully cooperate with the authorizing body for the dissolution, complying with established processes and policies of the Charter School Commission and the state of Idaho. All personnel records will be sealed and returned to employees using all available means to determine current addresses.

All records of students will be immediately transferred to Coeur d'Alene School District 271. **Appendix Y, "Student Records Agreement"** All students will receive written notice of how to request a transfer of student records to a specific school. Past students will be notified of the process of requesting records by letter to the last known address and an e-mail to the last known e-mail address of parents/guardians.

Upon the dissolution of Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy, assets will be distributed in accordance with Idaho Code 33-5212(2). Funds sufficient for a final, independent fiscal audit will be set aside prior to dissolution proceedings.