

Gem Prep: Meridian



Charter Petition

Grades K-12

Proposed Opening: August 2018

Primary Attendance Area:

West Ada School District

Referred to IPCSC by West Ada School District: June 27, 2017

Submitted: June 30, 2017

Commission Approved: August 17, 2017

Amended: January 18, 2017

Charter Submitted by:

Jason Bransford, Gem Prep: Meridian Director

jasonbransford@geminnovation.org

606 South Ave

PO Box 338

Deary, Idaho 83823

208.269.1213

Non-Discrimination Statement:

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

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Tab 1: Executive Summary, Mission, Vision, Legislative Intent.....	4
Executive Summary.....	4
Community Need and Interest	6
Founding Team Leveraging Experience & Success	6
Vision.....	8
Mission.....	8
Key Elements	8
Legislative Intent	9
Tab 2: Proposed Operations and Potential Effects of the Charter School	10
Legal Status	10
Articles of Incorporation.....	10
Bylaws	10
The Charter School's Potential Effects	10
Proposed Location: Primary Attendance Area.....	12
Signatures of Qualified Electors	12
Facilities	13
Administrative Services	14
Liability and Insurance.....	15
Civil Liability	15
Anticipated Enrollment	15
Recruitment.....	16
Tab 3: Educational Programs and School Goals	19
An Educated Person in the 21 st Century	19
How Learning Best Occurs.....	19
Educational Program and Goals	20
School Goals	22
K-6 Instruction	23
7-12 Instruction.....	24
Curriculum.....	26
Education Thoroughness Standards.....	29
Graduation Requirements	31
Special Education.....	33
Gifted and Talented.....	37
English Learner.....	38
Dual Enrollment	40
Tab 4: Measurable Standards, Accreditation and Accountability.....	41
Measurable Student Educational Standards (MSES).....	41
Methods for Measuring Student Progress	43
Testing.....	44
Accreditation.....	47
School Improvement	47
Tab 5: Governance Structure, Parental Involvement, Audits	49

Governance Structure	49
Board of Directors	49
Ethical Standards	54
Parental Involvement.....	54
Audits	55
Financial Reporting.....	56
Tab 6: Employee Requirements	57
Qualifications	57
Background Checks.....	57
Health and Safety Procedures	57
Disciplinary Procedures.....	58
Contacting Law Enforcement and Student's Parents	61
Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco	62
Bullying and Harassment.....	62
Suicide Prevention.....	62
Professional Codes and Standards	63
Transfer Rights	63
Employee Benefits	63
Collective Bargaining.....	63
Nondiscrimination in employment	63
Contracts	64
Teacher Professional Development.....	64
School Leader/Principal Development.....	65
Tab 7: Admissions, Discipline, Student Policies	66
Enrollment	66
Student Recruitment	67
Admissions Procedures.....	67
Waiting Lists	69
Notification of Enrollment Opportunities.....	70
Denial of Attendance	70
Student & Parent Handbook.....	70
Internet Use.....	71
Tab 8: Business Plan, Transportation and School Lunch.....	72
Business Plan	72
School's Financial Plan.....	75
Budget	75
Pre-Opening Plan and Timeline	77
Transportation Plan	77
School Lunch Program	78
Purchased Services.....	78
Tab 9: Virtual Charter School.....	79
Tab 10: Business Arrangements, Community Involvement, School Closure	80
Business Arrangements	80
Possible Community Partners:	81
Termination of the Charter/School Closure	81

Tab 1: Executive Summary, Mission, Vision, Legislative Intent

Executive Summary

Bill Daggett, CEO for the International Center for Leadership in Education, has said that “if Rip Van Winkle woke up today, the only thing he’d recognize is a public school classroom.” Lives have changed. Technology is woven into the very fabric of society in nearly every way. Communication, work, entertainment, etc., have all evolved to include technology. However, Idaho schools have yet to unlock the full power of technology to transform the learning experience for students. The Idaho education landscape lacks examples of schools using innovation to significantly improve the teaching and learning experience for students and teachers. While some schools have introduced technology into the classroom, few are using it to enable relevant, personalized and data driven instruction. The stark reality is that personalized learning, which is adaptive and capable of challenging students at their comprehension level, is in high demand but in short supply in Idaho. Without models demonstrating what is possible, we risk a continuing gap between the education our children receive and the world they will be expected to inherit.

Proficiency in reading, writing, and math has traditionally been the entry-level threshold to the job market, but the 21st century’s global economy will require a workforce with a different set of skills in order to be competitive. Future employees will need a more diverse skillset combining learning skills, literacy skills, and life skills. Students will need to be exceptional critical thinkers, problem solvers, innovators, communicators and collaborators in order to be competitive in tomorrow’s marketplace.

Across the state of Idaho there is an urgent need for more high quality educational options that prepare students for post-secondary success. Although there are some high performing charter and traditional schools, most of these schools are concentrated in a few areas, are overenrolled, and/or have long wait lists. This lack of high quality schooling options is limiting the potential of Idaho’s youth as well as having a detrimental impact on the state’s economy. Encompassed by the states with the lowest percentage of minimum wage earners in the nation, Idaho is currently ranked within the top ten states having the highest percentage of minimum wage earners.¹ Idaho’s population has one of the lowest percentages of college degrees²; ranking 46th across the nation in number of high school students matriculating to college³, with only 23% of Idahoans completing a bachelor’s degree or higher.⁴ These educational attainment rates do not match the needs of the workforce or those of employers. The Idaho Business Exchange Workforce Needs survey has reported that 43% of workers will need a Bachelor’s degree or more to fill the jobs employers anticipate, predicting a shortage of qualified workers in the years to come. According to the Rethink

¹ http://www.bls.gov/regions/west/news-release/minimumwageworkers_idaho.htm

² <http://media.spokesman.com/documents/2014/03/minwage-pc-3-25-14.pdf>

³ National Center for Education Statistics, 2014

⁴ *Field Guide to Idaho Education*, Idaho State Board of Education, 2014.

Series Report by the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation, Idaho needs to increase its share of young workers with a post-secondary degree by 33%. Increasing the supply of high quality educational options is essential, not only for the expanding options for young people but for the vitality of Idaho's economy. Gem Prep: Meridian will strive to enable students to set and excel to high standards, to become well-rounded, life-long learners, and to be able to compete successfully in the 21st century global economy.

In a rapidly changing world, data-driven personalized learning is an educational apex; preparing students for an exciting tomorrow, by providing a transformative education which allows students to reach their individual potentials while producing critical thinkers, achievers and life-long learners. Gem Prep: Meridian will help fill Idaho's need for effective, dynamic and powerful schools, which prepare students for post-secondary success.

After a great deal of research on best-practices and results-driven educational innovation, the Leadership Team from Gem Innovation Schools (GIS) began networking with some of the most highly successful blended learning schools in our nation such as KIPP, Rocketship, Alpha Public Schools, Summit Public Schools, and Rocky Mountain Prep. Having garnered the best practices from these schools, the Leadership Team developed a blended learning model which focuses on the personalized nature of learning and the ability to deliver individualized instruction to students.

The Gem Prep blended learning model places high performing teachers in the classroom with powerful online learning programs. The model is focused on individualized instruction and encouraging advancement at the student's own pace. When students master an educational concept, they are quickly introduced to the next step; advancing at their own level. Additionally, the use of adaptive technology offers the ability for students to encounter material presented in a way that is engaging and meaningful to them, while also providing formative data assessments that provide feedback on the growth and development of each student to the educator. These formative assessments give the educator a fast track to what concepts are being mastered and easily identify areas where additional support may be needed in order to allow the student to truly understand and become skilled in the subject matter.

The situation in the State of Idaho in terms of educational attainment is increasingly worrisome and there is a clear lack of K-12 schools preparing students for the jobs that will be available in the future. As the gap between necessary global workplace skills and current statewide educational outcomes widen, Gem Prep: Meridian was created to prepare Idaho's students for the world they will inherit.

Success of Gem Prep: Meridian will be defined by the accomplishment of the goals and metrics outlined in Tab 4 (MSES), which will academically prepare Gem Prep: Meridian students who are the heirs to tomorrow's economy.

Community Need and Interest

West Ada School District (WADA) is the largest school district in Idaho. With Idaho schools ranking as one of the lowest nationally in dollars spent per student on education, school districts statewide are taxed, endeavoring to make the most of each dollar to meet the ever-increasing demand to improve, innovate and prepare students for the developing global marketplace in which they will be asked to compete.

The Meridian community has a significant interest in charter schools. Charter schools in Meridian enrolled over 2070 students in 2016, leaving an additional 1145 students on local charter schools' waiting lists. An additional high quality educational choice for students in the Meridian area is greatly needed; one which serves students on an individualized basis utilizing innovative technology.

The Gem Prep: Meridian high school blended, flex model is unique to the Meridian attendance area, as well as to the state; incorporating a blend of face-to-face classes, online classes, dual credit classes and virtual classes all facilitated from the school campus. Gem Prep: Meridian is not considered a virtual school, as virtual options are only one component of the program as a whole. Inherent in the Gem Prep: Meridian model is the ability for students to access high quality teachers in any given subject without regard to the campus location through real-time virtual classrooms. The program will enable students in Gem Prep: Meridian greater access to quality teachers from multiple regions around the state, because the hiring candidate pool is not limited to a 30+ mile radius around one particular enrollment area.

Founding Team Leveraging Experience & Success

Gem Prep: Meridian will be operated by a seasoned charter school leadership team with over 12 years of experience managing several Idaho schools: Idaho Distance Education Academy (I-DEA), Gem Prep: Pocatello and Gem Prep: Nampa. The team is augmented by a governance board which provides expertise in all of the functions and areas needed to run a successful school. The chart below outlines the experience and areas of expertise of the school's board and founding team.

Areas of Experience and Expertise														
Founding Team & Board of Directors														
Team Member	Position	Finance	Edu Programs	Edu Innovation	New School Start-up	School Facilities	Governance & Law	Operations	Community Outreach	Develop./Fundraising	School Administration	Distance Learning	Special Populations	Technology & Data
Jason Bransford	Director	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	
Barb Femreite	Business Manager	X			X	X	X	X		X		X		
Josh Femreite	Operations Administrator			X	X	X		X				X		X
Laurie Wolfe	Academic Administrator		X	X	X						X	X	X	X
Derek Bub	Principal		X	X				X			X			X
Allison Akhnoukh	Board Member			X	X			X		X	X			
Jill Call	Board Member		X	X										
Bonnie Freytag	Board Member								X					
Murray Stanton	Board Member						X	X						
Roger Stewart	Board Member		X	X			X		X		X		X	
Brian Trammell	Board Member						X							
Dennis Turner	Board Member				X		X	X	X					

Gem Prep: Meridian will leverage the experience and expertise of a proven administrative team with a demonstrated track record of preparing students for success in college and professional technical careers.

The team has a contagious passion for education, a passion that ignites educators and students alike, and has a keen ability to transform their passion into consistent, measurable results. The team realizes that the ultimate success as educators is not only measured by immediate student outcomes, but also by the essential preparation of students for the purpose of inheriting and succeeding in the future global economy.

I-DEA began operating as a statewide virtual charter school in 2004. During the period from 2007 to 2013, the school began receiving accolades from state and national education leaders for the high performance and the successes students were achieving. In 2013 the leadership team realized that access to the home-based virtual school was limited to students who had an adult present in their household during their academic day; therefore, most students were unable to take advantage of the individualized programs available through the distance learning model. In September 2014, the leadership team launched Gem Prep: Pocatello, a blended learning campus, to inform the expansion from a single school virtual model to managing multiple blended learning schools across the state.

Utilizing the knowledge and practices learned through I-DEA and the blended program, the leadership team and board purposed to transition in a way to meet the needs of families who desire a more individualized, adaptive, face-to-face educational program for their students.

Since 2014, the leadership team has developed and implemented a face-to-face campus program in two separate locations: Pocatello and Nampa. Gem Prep: Nampa's school charter was awarded in October 2015 followed by Gem Prep: Pocatello's school charter awarded in September 2016.

The successes of the schools managed by the leadership team are highlighted in Appendix R-4 School Highlights and Academic Data.

Gem Prep: Meridian will be operated by a seasoned charter school administrative team which has 12 + years of experience managing I-DEA and two Gem Prep schools with governance from a Board which provides expertise in all of the functions needed to run a successful school.

Please see Appendix D-1 Board of Director Resumes and D-4 for Administrative Team Resumes

Vision

Gem Prep: Meridian will be a K-12, personalized, college and career preparatory school. Through personalization, and by leveraging best practices in technology, blended learning and online learning the school will engage students in 21st century work, using competencies necessary for productive lives as citizens in a dynamic, increasingly competitive global world.

The school will graduate students who are:

- College and career ready
- Problem solvers
- Life-long learners
- Self-motivated
- Responsible citizens

Mission

To prepare students for success in college and professional technical careers by providing a high quality, personalized, relevant and rigorous education through exceptional teaching, innovative uses of technology and partnerships with families.

Key Elements

Gem Prep: Meridian will be grounded in 21st century learning and innovative school practices.

- **High Expectations and Rigor.** The school's focus will be on 21st century learning and critical thinking skills, as well as Common Core-alignment. Personalized learning does not effectively benefit students if students are working with content that is below their capacity. The quality and rigor of student work is framed by competency-

based standards planning and challenging learning objectives and assessments. Additionally, students will be prepared for a post-secondary education through dual credit courses taken during high school and the alignment of curriculum with Common Core standards.

- **Personalization.** The blended learning, personalized instructional model is built on the belief that each student brings unique strengths and challenges to their learning experience and must be supported accordingly. Personalized learning includes working in adaptive online learning programs, working toward informed post-secondary goals, and utilizing flexible time at the secondary level for self-directed learning.
- **Data.** The school will be grounded in the importance of using data to drive instruction, and will use formative assessment and other data to continually adjust instruction and necessary interventions.
- **Innovation.** Continual improvement and innovation are of considerable importance. The organization will constantly review performance data and make adjustments to the school model as necessary.

Legislative Intent

Gem Prep: Meridian's vision and mission further enforce a focus on the legislative intent for public charter schools (Idaho Code 33-5202) as the following objectives are sought:

1. Gem Prep: Meridian's K-12 personalized and online curricula will increase the learning opportunities for all students by offering these specialized programs through Idaho's public school system. The school's programs focus on enriching student learning through increasing rigor and educational opportunities and choice as well as critical thinking.
2. Gem Prep: Meridian will provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities available within the public school system. Gem Prep: Meridian will offer its community a school of choice where choice and college preparation are at the heart of its philosophy and teaching.

The Board of Gem Prep: Meridian operates and oversees Gem Prep: Meridian with the intent to:

1. Use data to improve student learning;
2. Utilize personalized and blended learning;
3. Increase learning opportunities for all students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for students;
4. Include the use of innovative teaching methods;
5. Ensure differentiated instruction with research based materials, online learning opportunities, and teaching strategies shared between teachers and parents;
6. Create new professional opportunities for teachers;
7. Provide parents and students with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system;
8. Hold the school established under this charter accountable for meeting measurable student educational standards. (Excerpt of Idaho Code 33-5202).

Tab 2: Proposed Operations and Potential Effects of the Charter School

Legal Status

Gem Prep: Meridian, Inc., is a non-profit organization organized and managed under the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act. The Corporation is organized exclusively for educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (“IRS Code”), or the corresponding provisions of any future federal income tax code. The Articles of Incorporation for Gem Prep: Meridian were filed with the Secretary of the State of Idaho on Dec. 23, 2016.

In this document, the Charter School is the petitioning entity and is referred to as “Gem Prep: Meridian.”

Gem Prep: Meridian, Inc., will apply to become its own LEA and will be responsible for all programs, finances, reporting and monitoring.

Please see Appendix A-4 for IRS determination letter

Articles of Incorporation

The Articles of Incorporation are included in Appendix A-1.

Bylaws

Gem Prep: Meridian Charter School Bylaws are included in Appendix A-3.

The Charter School’s Potential Effects

By locating in the Treasure Valley area, the school will provide an additional choice of a personalized, college and career preparatory school. There is a tangible need for schools that are using technology to enhance the learning experience for students, particularly adaptive technology that allows students to be challenged at their capability level on a daily basis. Additionally, the West Ada School District is the largest school district in Idaho with a significant number of students currently on waiting lists for the existing charter schools, demonstrating the demand for more charter schools. Finally, Gem Prep: Meridian’s leadership team has a significant presence in the Treasure Valley and can be leveraged in terms of talent recruitment, student recruitment and local support.

Enrollment Trends

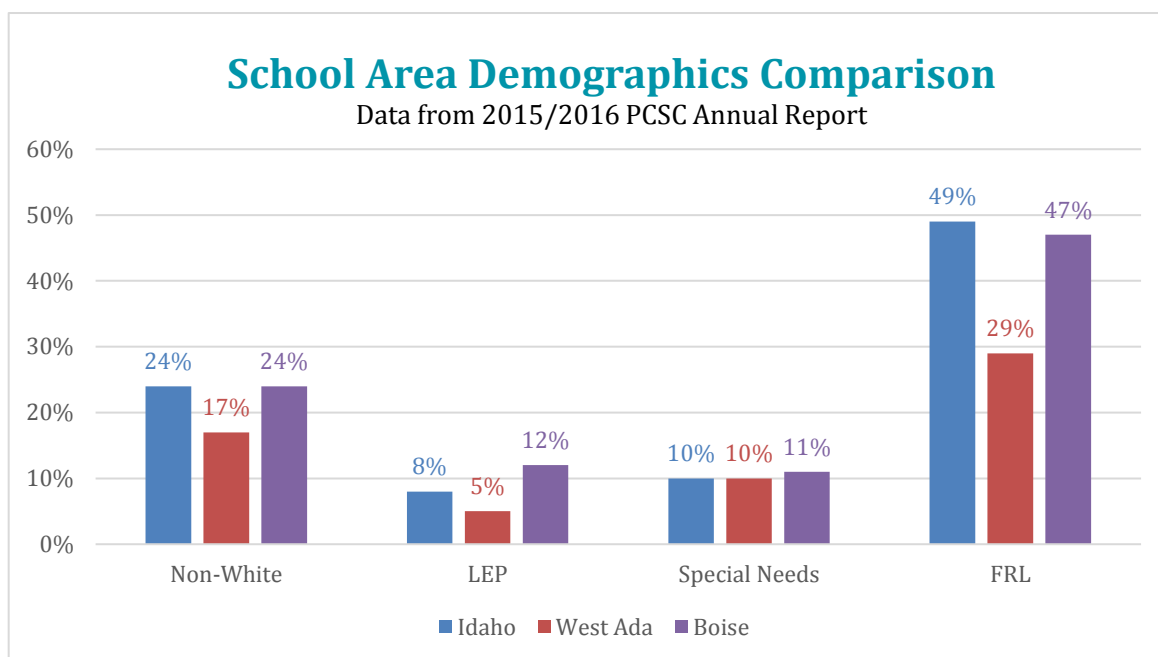
The Treasure Valley has one of the youngest urban populations in the United States, which is becoming increasingly diverse. Between 2010 and 2015, Treasure Valley public schools

saw 2% growth, or an increase of nearly 12,000 students, with charter schools growing by over 11% during the same period. Nielsen projections show an increase of 3,500 school age population by 2019.

West Ada School district enrolled 38,000 students in 2016 and has an anticipated growth of 2% over the next five years. This growth is projected to add approximately 760 school-aged individuals in the WASD. In an area where the education system is at maximum capacity, Gem Prep: Meridian can help relieve the burden, while at the same time creating a transformative educational footprint that will create opportunities for 21st century learning and for teachers.

Student Demographics

It is anticipated Gem Prep: Meridian will mirror the student demographic population of the West Ada and Boise area school districts. See comparison chart below.



Demand

As of the 2016-2017 school year there were 2070 students enrolled in charter schools in Meridian, with 1145 students on the waiting list of charter schools located within the attendance area. The demand for these schools is considerable in regard to available capacity. (Acknowledging that there is likely duplication of students across a number of the waitlists).

Gem Prep: Meridian will serve all children including special education, Gifted and Talented, students requiring Section 504 Accommodations and EL (English Learner) students, etc. (See Tab 3 for more information and how Gem Prep: Meridian will serve these students.)

One full year prior to opening and active recruiting, the school is generating a significant interest among local families. As of July 18, 2017, over 250 students have expressed an interest in enrollment. (83% are located in the West Ada area with 10% currently living in Boise.)

Potential Impact on Local School Districts

At its target enrollment of approximately 582 students, and because of Gem Prep: Meridian's mentor teacher counseling system, it is anticipated a high percent of students will have an advanced degree by the time they graduate from high school. Further, because most of Gem Prep: Meridian's graduates will successfully complete at least 1 college level course in high school, matriculation and completion of college will be much higher than the state averages. This will increase the number of students who are going on to college or highly employable careers, thereby having a significantly positive impact on the economic landscape of Idaho.

Gem Prep: Meridian is expected to have 288 students enrolled in year one of the charter. It is expected these students will come from various schools within the Treasure Valley area with West Ada School District being the primary source of the student transfer. Assuming all 288 new students transfer from WASD, there will be a reduction of 11.80 support units (assuming an ADA of 95%) with an estimated reduction of State foundation support to WASD of \$1,270,270, which is approximately 0.65% of their projected foundation funding for FY2018-2019.

Please see Appendix I-2 for Detailed Fiscal Impact.

Proposed Location: Primary Attendance Area

The school will be physically located within the West Ada School District. Gem Prep: Meridian's attendance area will include all of WASD.

The school anticipates drawing students from Nampa School District, Boise School District, Caldwell School District, and Vallivue School District. The City of Meridian and the WASD will be the most impacted. As mentioned, the WASD is growing quickly, and many of the schools are overcrowded. Most importantly, the school hopes to provide an additional choice of a personalized, college and career preparatory school in the area.

Please see Appendix K for a Map of the Primary Attendance Area

Signatures of Qualified Electors

Certified signatures of at least thirty (30) qualified electors of the proposed charter school are included in Appendix B.

Facilities

At full scale, Gem Prep: Meridian will require approximately 45,000 square feet. The assumption of classroom square feet per child is broken down to 48 square feet per child in kindergarten, 35 square feet per child in grades 1-6 and 30 square feet per child in grades 7-12. There will be 7,000 square feet needed for multi-purpose areas (cafeteria, library, rec room), an additional 5,500 square feet needed for administration and faculty, and an additional 10% of total need for circulation and restrooms. Gem Prep: Meridian does not currently have any organized sports planned, so as such there will not be any planned space for these activities.

At the K-6 grade levels Gem Prep: Meridian will require classrooms that will allow teachers and students the ability to move around and re-organize their room to accommodate the station rotation model. Each classroom will have access to high capacity wireless internet and Chromebooks for students. In high school, the facility will need to accommodate an open concept capable of adapting to the needs of the students and teachers. Common areas will be created with various learning pods to allow for student collaboration, project work, and students taking online classes. Each classroom will contain virtual teleconferencing equipment to accommodate the shared course model. Structurally, the school requires a facility that will allow for adaptation of the learning environment to suit its needs.

Gem Prep: Meridian will assure that all facilities meet state and federal health and safety laws and meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. The school leadership will comply with state laws to have annual safety inspections of their facilities and address any issues that are found during those inspections.

Gem Prep: Meridian will remain in compliance with applicable state and federal guidelines as provided in Section 39-4130, Idaho Code, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The School will provide certification that the facilities meet all requirements for health, safety, fire and accessibility for those with disabilities. Gem Prep: Meridian will continue to provide regular inspections of the facilities for health, safety and fire compliance and will provide copies of these reports upon request.

Gem Prep: Meridian's school leadership has successfully secured facilities for two other school startups and is aware that finding affordable facilities that can meet the programmatic needs of schools is an essential criterion for success. Given the lack of access to school district facilities or other public subsidies, the school anticipates that securing affordable facilities may be one of the most challenging components of this plan, particularly in Meridian.

Option 1

Gem Prep: Meridian is working with the Building Hope Foundation to secure a facility. Once the facility has been secured, Gem Prep: Meridian will enter into a lease to purchase contract

with Building Hope. At the end of five years, GPM has the option to purchase the facility from Building Hope at a purchase price equal to the remaining principal (senior and sub-debt). With this option, GPM's lease payments will build equity each year. Building Hope is currently under a purchase and sales contract for a facility located at 2750 E. Gala Court in Meridian and has a bank term sheet for purchase, pending charter approval. The building is a two story 31,200 SF facility on 4 acres that was previously used as a for-profit university. Pending charter approval, Building Hope is scheduled to close on the facility in late September to early October of 2017. The contracted price is \$4.4 million with an additional estimate of \$388,183 for renovation costs for the current facility.

The facility purchase price includes furniture, fixtures and equipment, which will decrease the first year expenses for these items.

Building Hope will construct an additional facility on the 4 acres for GPM year three expansion providing approximately 18,000 SF of additional classroom and gym space. Initial site plans for year three expansion were submitted to the City of Meridian on June 13, 2017. The expansion cost is estimated at approximately \$2.8 million.

See Appendix J-1 for Option 1 Facilities Template and Site Plans

Option 2

In the event that Building Hope is unable to close on the Option 1 building, Gem Prep: Meridian will seek to secure approximately 4 acres of property within the school's attendance area through a Building Hope purchase. A potential building site on South Meridian Road has been identified. The facility budget template includes \$1.25 million for land purchase, which well exceeds the cost sheet for the potential site. Due to time constraints, the school will secure modular rentals for year one while Building Hope simultaneously begins construction on the long term facility. The school estimates it will need seven two-classroom modular buildings, two open buildings, and one restroom building for the initial year of operation. These facilities allow for 14 classrooms, one building for lunchroom, one building for restrooms and one building for administrative offices. Gem Prep: Meridian's annual lease for these accommodations is estimated to be \$380,000 with an additional \$200,000 in site prep for the facilities.

For construction of the long term facility, Gem Prep: Meridian will enter into a similar agreement as Option 1 with Building Hope to develop and construct a facility through a lease to purchase option. Gem Prep: Meridian will move into the completed long-term facility in year two of operation.

See appendix J-2 for Option 2 Facility Details and for Meridian Road Land cost sheet

Administrative Services

The Administrative services will be provided by the school Administrators (state certification required), with support from the Board of Directors. Gem Prep: Meridian will

employ a part-time director, a part-time business manager, a part-time academic officer and a part-time operations officer. The certified Principal and staff provides school leadership and day-to-day operations. It is the intention of Gem Prep: Meridian to contract for professional services with a CMO at the completion of the first charter renewal cycle. See Tab 5-Governance for additional detail on responsibilities and for the organizational chart.

The performance certificate agreement will be made between the authorizer and the Gem Prep: Meridian Board.

Liability and Insurance

Civil Liability

To the fullest extent permitted by law, Gem Prep: Meridian agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the State of Idaho, the authorizing entity or any other sending districts, and their officers, directors, agents, or employees from and against all claims, damages, losses and expenses, including but not limited to attorneys' fees, arising out of or resulting from any action of the school provided that such claim, damage, loss or expense (a) is attributable to bodily injury, sickness, disease or death, or to injury or to destruction of tangible property including the loss of use resulting therefrom; and (b) is issued in whole or in part by any negligent act or omission of the school, any contractor of the school, or anyone directly or indirectly employed by any of them who may be liable, regardless of whether or not it is caused in part by a party indemnified hereunder. Such obligation will not be construed to negate, abridge, or otherwise reduce any other right or obligation of indemnity, which would otherwise exist as to any party or person, described in this paragraph. No host, or receiving district, will be held liable for damages in an action to recover for bodily injury, personal injury, or property damage arising out of the establishment or operation of the school. Pursuant to Idaho Code 33-5204(2), the Idaho State Board of Education and the Idaho Public Charter School Commission shall have no liability for the acts, omissions, debts or other obligations of this charter school, except as may be provided in an agreement or contract between the state and Gem Prep: Meridian. Gem Prep: Meridian will procure and maintain a policy of general liability insurance and property insurance, and directors and officers and errors and omissions insurance in the amount required by state law. Gem Prep: Meridian will have the same role as a public school in matters of civil liability. The appropriate insurance and legal waivers of all district liability will be obtained as required of other nonprofit users of district resources and facilities.

Anticipated Enrollment

The chart below outlines the anticipated growth plan for the school, for which the financial model has been developed. Expected average class size for grades K-3 is 24 students and for grades 4-6 is 30 students. In the blended learning model, teachers will be frequently meeting with smaller groups of 4-5 students at the elementary level. At the secondary level class sizes will vary, but will rarely exceed 30 students.

Gem Prep: Meridian Anticipated Enrollment

Grade	2018-2019 Y1	2019-2020 Y2	2020-2021 Y3	2021-2022 Y4	2022-2023 Y5	2023-2024 Y6
K	48	48	48	48	48	48
1st	48	48	48	48	48	48
2nd	48	48	48	48	48	48
3rd	24	48	48	48	48	48
4th	30	30	60	60	60	60
5th	30	30	30	60	60	60
6th	60	60	60	60	60	60
7th		45	45	45	45	45
8th		45	45	45	45	45
9th			30	30	30	30
10th			30	30	30	30
11th				30	30	30
12th					30	30
	288	402	492	552	582	582

Recruitment

The most important lesson learned from the opening of Gem Prep: Nampa (GPN) is that identifying a physical location impacts **every** element of student recruitment. Gem Prep: Meridian has already identified a school facility over a year prior to the scheduled school opening. The ability to focus on a more narrowly defined region of West Ada surrounding the facility will greatly benefit student recruitment efforts. The facility, located close to the freeway and in a particularly populated area of West Ada, is highly visible and convenient for parents. When parents know the physical location of the school, the interested family numbers are a stronger indication of how many students will actually enroll in the school. Without a physical location, the interested family list is a much weaker predictor of actual enrollment.

GPN's location was not identified until just four months prior to school opening, and proved a detriment to filling the available seats in the first year of operation. This was the primary reason all seats were not filled. Targeted regional student recruitment was difficult and resulted in a lower than expected first year enrollment of 197 students. Further, when a location was finally identified and secured, it was situated far from the main population centers of Nampa. Adding to the recruitment difficulties, was the fact that the GPN facility was a two-year temporary location. Convenience and visibility of a location makes a significant impact on student recruitment. Understandably, parents have a limit on how far

they are willing to send their children to school each day. Even with these challenges, GPN is on track to fill every seat for the 2017-2018 school year, plus have a waiting list.

Gem Prep staff take an aggressive and focused approach to student recruitment. Prior to any active recruitment for GPM, the school has already collected a list of over 250 students interested in enrolling. In comparison, GPN's list of interested students was half the size of GPM's list one year prior to its opening. While West Ada School District, being the largest and one of the fastest growing districts in the state will help GPM recruitment, the school does not rely on this as its sole means of enrollment. Additionally, the leadership team has gained valuable insights in student recruitment strategies from opening two other Gem Prep schools, including GPN in the Treasure Valley. The lessons learned from these experiences will drive the marketing efforts for Gem Prep: Meridian. As a result, Gem Prep: Meridian recruiting will be hyper-focused in proven recruitment techniques and tools, work smarter, and draw from extensive recruitment experience. The following are factors that will help the school meet the enrollment targets.

Treasure Valley Presence. Gem Prep: Nampa opened in 2016 and has since established a positive footprint in the Treasure Valley community. Gem Prep's unique learning model has encouraged visits by prospective students and parents, state and local lawmakers, education advocates, state and national philanthropists and various local community leaders. In year zero, Gem Prep: Meridian will use Gem Prep: Nampa as a showcase to interested families and educators by providing tours of the school. Prospective students and parents will be able to experience the education model as it functions. This will greatly benefit meeting the enrollment goal, as parents can experience the Gem Prep blended learning model in practice and see how it can work for their student(s). Parents can be confident knowing the leadership team has created and successfully operates two Gem Prep schools; one located in the Treasure Valley.

Recruitment Strategies. Through the experience of opening and operating three charter schools, the leadership team has developed proven recruiting strategies such as:

- Internet and Social Media presence such as Facebook, Google ads, and the Next Door App
- Hold academic and social activities at the school facility to build relationships with prospective families
- Partner with local pre-schools to distribute information about Gem Prep
- Present the Gem Prep model to community organizations and leaders, e.g. rotary groups, church organizations, etc., building a network of supporters throughout the community.
- Face to face information sessions with parents and students
- Recruit at local family friendly events, local library summer reading programs and lunches in the parks
- Advertising through mailers and billboards

Recruitment Goals: GPM recognizes the importance of a large interested student list prior to lottery and has set a goal of 1.5 times the enrollment capacity in order to fill all seats when

the school opens. In order to achieve this goal, GPM expects to meet the following intermediate goals:

- **August 31, 2017 goal:** Increase interested student list from the initial 200 to 300 (*Of the additional 100 students, the school will need 52 grade K-3 students and 48 grade 4-6 students.*)
- **October 31, 2017 goal:** Increase to 400 interested students (*Of the additional 100 students, the school will need 52 grade K-3 students and 48 grade 4-6 students.*)
- **December 29, 2017 goal:** Increase to 500 interested students (*Of the additional 100 students, the school will need 52 grade K-3 students and 48 grade 4-6 students.*)
- **February 15, 2018:** Anticipated lottery date. Increased to 600 interested students (*Of the additional 100 students, the school will need 52 grade K-3 students and 48 grade 4-6 students.*)

In order to build a strong waiting list, active student recruitment will continue throughout the spring and summer.

Tab 3: Educational Programs and School Goals

An Educated Person in the 21st Century

An educated person in the 21st Century is prepared to use technology appropriately and strategically to solve problems, find information, evaluate sources, make connections, forge deeper understandings, and effectively communicate with others.

An educated person in the 21st Century asks and answers challenging questions, solves problems, and reflects critically on their work and performance to inform future progress.

An educated person in the 21st Century demonstrates self-management and self-awareness. They demonstrate resilience and perseverance when faced with challenges. They acknowledge when they need assistance and when they can be of assistance to others.

An educated person in the 21st Century understands and acts upon their responsibility to the larger community. They are able to listen respectfully, work through challenges, and collaborate productively with others from different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives.

How Learning Best Occurs

Gem Prep: Meridian's objective is to build and foster a community of learners which view education as not confined to the traditional four walls of a classroom; but rather, as an exchange of knowledge and ideas through technology, effective curriculum, effective instruction and personal relationships.

Gem Prep: Meridian's core educational philosophy is that learning occurs when:

- learners construct meaning;
- learners are actively engaged in purposeful tasks;
- learners are expected and encouraged to learn;
- activities are integrated and meaningful;
- learners see themselves as part of the community and find ways to serve the community;
- learners see the connection between what they learn and the real world;
- learners are provided with support as an intrinsic part of the educational program;
- learners have challenging learning opportunities.

Gem Prep: Meridian will graduate students who are:

- College and career ready
- Problem solvers
- Life-long learners
- Self-motivated

- Responsible citizens

Educational Program and Goals

In developing an initial school model, the leadership team sought to incorporate successful best practices from its virtual school (I-DEA) as well as high performing charter schools across the nation. The founding team has been influenced by the success of high performing blended learning schools such as Rocketship, KIPP LA, Summit Public Schools, Alpha Public Schools, Rocky Mountain Prep and others. At the same time the school model created is unique to Gem Prep: Meridian, as it strives to meet the needs of the target student population and work within the Idaho operating environment.

Differentiated from what has traditionally been referred to in the current educational landscape as blended learning, the Gem Prep: Meridian model pivots strongly on rigor and personalization. Students will be enabled to progress through curriculum at their own pace while still enjoying meaningful community with their peers, who may be at a completely different academic level on any given subject.

The table below summarizes the origins of each component of the models described below:

Component of current I-DEA model	• Offline curriculum (K-12) • Some online curriculum selections • Assessment cycles and data driven instruction • Dual enrollment • Learning Management System • Single subject acceleration model (students working ahead of grade level when ready) • 7-12 asynchronous statewide instruction model
Practice drawn from other high performing school models	• K-6 in classroom rotational model (including multi-age grouping for core Math/ELA content) • 7-12 Flex Model • Some online curriculum selections • Staffing model • Principal residency model • Actionable data reporting for teachers to inform instruction

The key components of our model are as follows:

- **High Expectations and Rigor.** The school will be focused on 21st century learning and critical thinking skills, as well as Common Core-alignment. Personalized learning

does not effectively benefit students if students are working with content that is below their capacity. The quality and rigor of student work is framed by competency-based standards planning and challenging learning objectives and assessments. Additionally, students will be prepared for a post-secondary education through dual credit courses taken during high school and the alignment of curriculum with Common Core standards.

- **Personalization.** The school's instructional model is built on the belief that each student brings unique strengths and challenges to their learning experience and must be supported accordingly. Personalized learning includes working in adaptive online learning programs, working toward informed post-secondary goals and utilizing flexible time at the secondary level for self-directed learning. Pathways will be available for students to pursue professional technical careers, careers for which traditional college is necessary, or a combination whereby students obtain technical certificates, which allow a student to self-fund their college education. The path of learning will look different for each student, as it will be tailored to his or her needs. In the K-6 model, students will be using a blended learning rotation model, and the 7-12 model will use a flexible blended learning model. Differentiated instruction will occur at these pathways—online adaptive instruction, as well as elective courses. Teachers will also do targeted small group instruction as a form of intervention and acceleration.
- **Data.** Gem Prep: Meridian will be grounded in the importance of using data to drive instruction. The school will use formative assessment and other data to continually adjust instruction and necessary interventions.
- **Innovation.** Very much related to the above, the importance of continual improvement and innovation will be a focus for Gem Prep: Meridian. The organization will constantly review performance data and make adjustments to the school model as necessary.

The program at Gem Prep: Meridian is a hybrid model, with blended learning at all levels. The Christensen Institute defines blended learning as: “a formal education program in which a student learns: 1) at least in part through online learning, with some element of student control over time, path and/or pace 2) at least in part in a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home 3) and the modalities along each student's learning path within a course or subject are connected to provide an integrated learning experience.”⁵

Gem Prep: Meridian identifies that while there are no large-scale, rigorous peer reviewed research studies currently available due to the fact that blended learning is considered somewhat new to the education landscape, the school has patterned the specific educational model after high performing blended learning schools in other states. These schools have demonstrated strong academic results and have considerable experience in implementing blended learning.

⁵ <http://www.christenseninstitute.org/key-concepts/blended-learning-2/>

As with most innovation, Gem Prep: Meridian realizes that adjustments and improvements are often necessary as these ideas are tested and put into practice in real-world settings. Gem Prep: Meridian is committed to evaluating the academic impact of the blended learning instructional model and making any necessary adjustments in order to meet all academic goals. The School is committed to vigilance in ongoing assessments, evaluations and adjustments to facilitate successful student outcomes. We understand that newness, in and of itself, does not make something valuable, just as status quo does not always make something successful.

Please see Appendix R-1 for information on adaptive blended and online learning.

School Goals

Gem Prep: Meridian will have the following educational goals.

School Goals	As Measured By
1. Students will be prepared for success in college and/or career upon graduation from high school.	○ ISAT Scores ○ SAT, ACT or Compass Scores ○ The number of students who pass their dual credit courses with a grade of “C” or better ○ Graduation Rates ○ College graduation rates
2. Students will participate in personalized learning experiences that are tailored to their individual needs and that give them significant choice in their learning, which will result in technologically capable young people who are self-motivated, life-long learners.	○ Benchmark Assessments ○ Adaptive online assessments
3. Teachers, students, and school leaders will use data to drive instruction and to improve learning outcomes, including implementing innovative new strategies and making adjustments to the school model.	○ Student Surveys ○ Narratives from Teachers and School Leaders
4. Gem Prep: Meridian will be a welcoming, safe, and inclusive school community.	○ Average Daily Attendance rates ○ School culture survey ○ Parent Volunteering rates

Please see Tab 4: MSES for methods of measuring goals, collecting data, monitoring progress and annual reporting of goals.

K-6 Instruction

Gem Prep: Meridian's K-6 blended learning model will utilize a classroom rotational model that enables students to gain exposure to whole group, small group and independent (both online and offline) instruction. Gem Prep: Meridian will use multiple instructional delivery pathways to optimize student acquisition and mastery of clearly defined standards and goals. Methodology used will contain a combination of teacher created and curated content; which includes both small group instruction and adaptive online learning programs.

A daily instructional experience will likely include:

- **Whole group instruction.** Each block will begin with teacher led whole group instructions introducing the focus for today's lesson and providing an opportunity for students to work in heterogeneous groups.
- **Teacher led small group instruction.** The classroom teacher will work with a small group of students. The focus will be on skill building with targeted support based on each individual student's needs. The teacher will have instant access to each student's data and be able to tailor the small group instruction based on the real-time data from each student. The teacher will utilize the data from the adaptable online programs and assessments to meet each student where they are, to determine where they need to be, and to develop and implement guided learning plans which promote student achievement and success.
- **Independent reading.** Gem Prep: Meridian believes strongly in the importance of frequent independent reading as a way to promote fluency and foster a love of learning. During this station, students will select appropriately leveled texts from the classroom library or online library.
- **Adaptive online curriculum.** Students will work independently with online curriculum. The online curriculum is personalized to each student and "adapts" based on historical performance. In addition, teachers will be provided with data from the programs that they can use to inform whole and small group instruction. Examples of the types of online curriculum that may be used are DreamBox math, TenMarks math, ThinkCerca for argumentative writing and RazKids for reading fluency. The adaptive curriculum enables students to be challenged every day in a dynamic learning environment. In any given class there may be students working in subject content below grade-level, on grade-level or two to three levels above their own grade level; while still being involved with their peers developing a strong sense of community within the class as a whole.
- **Small groups.** Students will work independently on projects and activities that reinforce the core skills being taught during the teacher led small and whole group instruction. Initially this work may be more independent. During independent learning time students work on adaptive learning software, online assignments and/or playlists. Online assignments may be assigned by the teacher or by the adaptive software program to personalize each student's learning. Initially this work may be more independent. However, over time, and with support from the Paraprofessional and/or volunteers, students will begin to work more collaboratively on projects.

Please see Appendix R-2 for a diagram of the different learning modalities in K-6.

7-12 Instruction

The 7-12 model is not a virtual school model. It is a blended learning flex model with one of the components being virtual classrooms accessed from the Gem Prep: Meridian school campus. The 7-12 model will be driven by the following:

- **Sharing of highly qualified teachers across the state.** A cornerstone of the Gem Prep: Meridian secondary school model is the sharing of teachers across all Gem Prep schools. Core subjects will be taught synchronously across the state with some students in person with the teachers while others access the lesson via telecast with a paraprofessional providing supervision. All paraprofessionals* will be highly qualified and possess the academic knowledge and skills to support students in each subject in which they supervise far end students (students on the receiving end of the telecast). Far end students will have the ability to interact with the certified teacher during the live telecast. They will also be able to ask questions and send messages via a chat feature to the certified teacher before, during and after class, write on a virtual whiteboard, participate in class discussions, and ask and answer questions from peers around the state. Certified teachers will also have online office hours during the week so that students can receive additional help, ask questions or clarify their understanding of course material with the teacher. In addition to ensuring students across the state have access to highly qualified teachers in each subject area, this model ensure financial sustainability by enabling teacher staffing to be spread across three smaller schools.
- **Early access to college courses and interest driven electives.** Students will be encouraged to enroll in dual college credit courses both online and in person at local universities. Students across the entire 7-12 continuum will have access to over 200 courses through partnerships with Idaho Digital Learning (IDLA). In addition, high school students will have the opportunity to enroll in a vast array of courses at local universities. This program component also supports financial sustainability by reducing the number of students (particularly in grades 11 and 12) who require direct instruction and supervision on a daily basis.
- **Blended Learning: Flex Model:** The Flex Model will be used at the 7-12 level. The Christensen Institute defines a Flex model as:
“a course or subject in which online learning is the backbone of the student learning, even if it directs students to offline activities at times. Students move on as individually customized, fluid schedule among learning modalities. The teacher of record is on site, and students learn mostly on the brick- and-mortar campus, except for any homework assignments. The teacher of record or other adults provide face-to-face support on a flexible and adaptive as-needed basis through activities such as small-group instruction, group projects and individual tutoring.”

Gem Prep: Meridian's flex model is designed to mentor and encourage students to develop clear educational goals and expectations for achievement; and to simultaneously support students in their learning processes.

By individual design encompassing a variety of education tools (virtual classrooms, dual credit courses, on campus face-to-face instruction, fluid schedules, study blocks, etc.) students are able to create an education framework that meets their personal skills, abilities and interests, and which facilitates their progression toward their own goals. Gem Prep: Meridian will use a broadcasting system to telecast live classes to other regions across the state. A natural byproduct of the Gem Prep: Meridian's personalized flex model is that students become adept in self-management, time-management, goal setting, and distance communication; all skills they will need for their future post-secondary academic and career pursuits.

*Paraprofessional's Role within the Flex Model

The paraprofessional's role during synchronous instruction is to ensure that the technology is working for the far end students so that they may actively participate in class with their peers around the state. Paras may also assist individual students who need additional support during in class instruction. Paraprofessionals will proctor quizzes and tests under the certified teacher's supervision during synchronous classes, ensure that students are on task, and communicate any student needs or concerns to the certified teacher.

7-12 Learning Modalities

In Gem Prep: Meridian's flex model of instruction, students in grades 7-12 will experience a wide variety of rich and unique learning modalities, most of which are accessed directly from the school campus.

- **Synchronous Instruction – “Send”.** Students will receive core instruction (Math, English, Science and Social Studies) from a credentialed teacher. For a portion of these classes, the teacher will be based locally and students will interface with the teacher on site. While this teacher is working with students locally she will also be “sending” her lesson to another Gem Innovation Schools' location via telecast. During this time with the teacher, teaching strategies may include direct instruction, small group/cooperative learning, and project based learning. Please see detailed description of synchronous instruction below.
- **Synchronous Instruction – “Receive”.** For a portion of core classes, students will “receive” instruction from a teacher located in another Gem Prep School location. This instruction will be broadcast live via teleconference into the student's local campus classroom. During this period, students will be supervised and supported by a paraprofessional locally while engaging in learning with their peer students across the state. (See ‘paraprofessional's role’ in 7-12 instruction, above.)
- **Online.** Teacher led core instruction will be supplemented by online instruction. Students will work through content housed in the Learning Management System as well as adaptive online curriculum. Students can move at their own pace to enable reinforcement and remediation of the core concepts taught during synchronous class

time. Online learning takes place in a larger space with monitoring and support provided by a paraprofessional.

- **Asynchronous.** Students will have the opportunity to enroll in electives provided by approved vendors such as Idaho Digital Learning Academy (IDLA). These courses will be taken asynchronously with students moving at their own pace through the material.
- **Off campus.** Students in grades 11 - 12 will have the opportunity to leave campus to take courses at local universities. Participation in these courses will enable students to receive college credit while they are still enrolled at Gem Prep: Meridian. While it is anticipated that most students will be able to provide their own transportation or utilize public transportation to access college campuses, the school will evaluate the need to support students with transportation on an as needed basis.

Please see Appendix R-3 for the diagram on the 7-12 learning model, and Appendix R-1 for information on adaptive blended learning.

Curriculum

K-6 Curriculum

Gem Prep: Meridian will have a robust process for selecting curriculum. A curriculum committee will meet annually to evaluate new and existing curriculum. In line with the organization's commitment to data as described previously, each curriculum will be evaluated against demonstrated capacity to increase student achievement. Curriculum will also be closely evaluated to ensure that it aligns with Idaho Core standards in math and English Language Arts and Idaho Standards in all other subjects.

Gem Prep: Meridian's new and existing curriculum will be reviewed and evaluated on an annual basis. As well, student achievement data will be reviewed against Common Core standards to assess program effectiveness.

Proposed Curricula for K-6:

	Offline	Online
ELA	• Explode the Code • Handwriting Without Tears	• iReady • ReadyGen • Headsprout • RazKids
Math	• Singapore Math	• Dreambox • iReady • Zern Math
Science	• Science Fusion student textbook	• Science Fusion
Social Studies	• Idaho Adventures	• My World Social Studies

Curriculum 7-12

Gem Prep: Meridian's Curriculum can be accessed by students through the Learning Management System. The delivery of the curriculum will be a hybrid of synchronous and asynchronous learning. The direct instruction component for Gem Prep: Meridian students will be further developed by the certified teachers, with supplemental resources augmenting the core curriculum and allowing for adaptivity to fit the blended learning model. Having this content housed within the organization's LMS also enables seamless integration between the days when students are receiving synchronous teacher led instruction and days when they are working independently online. This internal curriculum will be supplemented with online programs.

Similar to the elementary school model, Gem Prep: Meridian plans to utilize a curriculum committee that will meet annually to evaluate new and existing curriculum. The committee will review student achievement data against Common Core standards to assess program effectiveness. The first Gem Prep: Meridian students will matriculate to 7th grade in 2019-2020. As such, we look forward to using the next several years to research the impact of various curricula in other school models during the early years of Common Core implementation.

Gem Prep: Meridian will leverage the curriculum that has been successfully used at I-DEA. Gem Prep: Meridian's core and supplemental curriculum, as well as the learning management system, is adapted from those utilized through I-DEA, however the delivery of curriculum follows the blended learning model. Essentially all curriculum delivery in I-DEA is asynchronous with students taking courses established by certified teachers, but with very little live instruction from the teachers. Whereas, in Gem Prep: Meridian the delivery is a hybrid of synchronous and asynchronous instruction. The direct instruction component for Gem Prep: Meridian students is further developed by the certified teachers, with supplemental resources augmenting the core curriculum and allowing for adaptivity to fit the blended learning model.

Curriculum can be accessed by students through the Learning Management System. Having this content housed within the organization's LMS also enables seamless integration between the days when students are receiving synchronous teacher led instruction and days when they are working independently online.

In addition to the core curriculum used for each course, many courses contain supplemental curriculum to enhance student knowledge and skills in key content areas. The proposed curricular chart below illustrates specific core and supplemental curriculum.

Proposed Curricula for 7-12

	Core Curriculum	Supplemental Curriculum
ELA	Pearson's Common Core English interactive online textbook (7-12)	- ThinkCerca (7-12) - Newsela (7-12)

	- EngageNY ELA (7-12)	
Math	- EngageNY math (7-12) - Pearson's Digits interactive math (7-8) - Pearson's High School Mathematics Common Core (Algebra I and beyond)	TenMarks (7-Algebra II)
Science	CK 12 Life Science, Earth Science, Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics (7-12)	- Discovery - Hippocampus
Social Studies	Houghton Mifflin Harcourt online social studies textbooks (7-12)	- Discovery - Hippocampus

Estimate of student time spent in each of the learning modalities

The chart below is a sample weekly schedule for an 8th grade student at Gem Prep: Meridian, which illustrates approximately how much time students will spend in each of the learning modalities during a given week. During the times when students are not participating in synchronous courses, they will be logged into their learning management system and completing assigned projects, independent coursework, designated readings, group projects, etc. The curriculum and content students complete during their asynchronous time may vary widely depending upon the requirements of each given course.

Sample 8th Grade Schedule

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8:00 - 9:00	Synchronous Math Class	Asynchronous Math Block	Synchronous Math Class	Asynchronous Math Block	Synchronous Math Class
9:05 - 10:05	Asynchronous IDLA Digital Photography	Asynchronous IDLA Digital Photography	Asynchronous IDLA Digital Photography	Asynchronous IDLA Digital Photography	Asynchronous IDLA Digital Photography
10:10 - 11:10	Asynchronous Science Class	Synchronous Science Class	Asynchronous Science Class	Synchronous Science Class	Asynchronous Science Class
11:15 - 12:15	Synchronous English Class	Asynchronous English Block	Synchronous English Class	Asynchronous English Block	Synchronous English Class
12:15 - 12:50	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch

12:55 - 1:55	Synchronous PE / Health	Synchronous PE / Health	Synchronous PE / Health	Synchronous PE / Health	Synchronous PE / Health
2:00 - 3:00	Asynchronous Social Studies	Synchronous Social Studies	Asynchronous Social Studies	Synchronous Social Studies	Asynchronous Social Studies

When students are working in asynchronous blocks, they will be supported by certified teachers and/or paraprofessionals providing tutoring, course assistance monitoring, etc. This additional structure assists students with necessary tools, time management and support, and also provides a level of expertise and encouragement toward student success.

Education Thoroughness Standards

Gem Prep: Meridian will address and fulfill the requirements and goals of the Thoroughness Standards identified in Idaho Code. It has been established that a thorough system of public schools in Idaho is one in which the following standards are met:

STANDARD A

A safe environment conducive to learning is provided.

Goal: Maintain a positive and safe teaching and learning climate.

Objectives: Gem Prep: Meridian will:

- Adhere to a philosophy that is focused on character development that promotes student respect for themselves and others.
- Develop a health and safety policy to provide guidelines for physical safety. These guidelines will include and not be limited to the procedures for fire drills, methods for checking students in and out of school, notification of parents' rights, and staff monitoring responsibilities.
- Provide a facility that adopts policies that meet all required city, state, and federal health, accessibility, safety, fire, and building codes for public schools, and is inspected as required to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- Establish, publish, and enforce policies that define acceptable and unacceptable behavior, including weapons, violence, gangs, and use or sale of alcohol and drugs.
- Create an environment that encourages parents and other adults to visit the school and participate in the school's activities.

STANDARD B

Educators are empowered to maintain classroom discipline.

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

Objectives: Gem Prep: Meridian will:

- Establish behavioral expectations for students, staff and visitors that encourage a positive and respectful school climate and culture that is essential to creating and maintaining a safe and supportive school community.

- Follow the guiding principles of a classroom discipline model focused on respect for oneself and one's learning environment.
- Develop a student handbook providing a code of conduct including clear expectations and consequences for unacceptable behavior, and a process for teachers to handle minor and major infractions in the classroom setting.
- Teach appropriate behaviors and foster responsible decision-making skills.
- Establish and maintain consistent rules aligned throughout the school.

STANDARD C

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

Goal: Offer opportunities for students to develop and express exemplary character traits in concert with the overall educational program.

Objectives: Gem Prep: Meridian will:

- Adhere to a philosophy that focuses on character development, emphasizing the importance of modeling by adults.
- Help students build personal bonds and carry out responsibilities to one another and to the faculty and staff.
- Develop a sense of community and service within the school, and between the school and the larger community.

STANDARD D

The skills necessary to communicate effectively are taught.

Goal: Teach students a range of effective communication skills, both written and oral; skills appropriate for the 21st century.

Objectives: Gem Prep: Meridian will:

- Integrate meaningful language experience in reading, writing, oral presentation and spelling, across the content areas.
- Provide a technology-rich environment to enable students to assess information, process ideas and communicate results.

STANDARD E

A basic curriculum necessary to enable students to enter academic or professional technical post-secondary educational programs is provided.

Goal: Develop an educated citizenry for the 21st century through a dynamic, interactive academic program which grounds a student in the basics of reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies as a means to lead students to more in depth thinking.

Objectives: Gem Prep: Meridian will:

- Use the Idaho State Department of Education's Core Standards as a starting point to engage students in research-based and evidence-based pedagogy as a prerequisite for college and career readiness.
- Emphasize American history and the lives and writings of the Founders.
- Integrate business and economic concepts.

- Provide a strong foundation in basic reading, writing, science, social studies, and computational skills.
- Provide a technology-rich environment, encouraging the effective use of technology as a tool in the workplace of the 21st century.
- Physical activity during the school day will be incorporated into the curriculum.

STANDARD F**The skills necessary for the students to enter the workforce are taught.**

Goal: Teach students “Habits of Mind” that are essential to post-secondary education and the work place, i.e. persistence, flexible thinking, metacognition, innovation, risk taking, lifelong learning, problem-solving, etc.

Objectives: Gem Prep: Meridian will:

- Utilize a social emotional learning program such as the Responsive Classroom Program to teach effective “Habits of Mind.”
- Enable students to develop the following intellectual habits important in the work place: adapting to new situations and responding effectively to new information, solving problems, locating and evaluating information from a variety of sources, making flexible connections among various disciplines of thought, thinking logically and making informed judgments.
- Enable students to develop the following personal habits important in the work place: accepting responsibility for personal decisions and actions, honesty, courage, and integrity; a healthy lifestyle; empathy, courtesy, and respect for differences among people; self-confidence; concentration and perseverance; responsible time management; assuming a fair share of the work load; and working cooperatively with others to reach group consensus.

STANDARD G**The students are introduced to current technology.**

Goal: Provide students with a technology-rich environment using tools such as computers, scientific equipment, and networks linked to local and nationwide resources.

Objectives: Gem Prep: Meridian will:

- Use interactive technology as tools in an integrated educational program.
- Emphasize the acquisition of basic computer skills as a supplementary medium of communication and research to complement other approaches.
- Use computers as tools for such activities as differentiated learning opportunities, remediation, acceleration, authoring, computation, record keeping and data storage, and communication.

Graduation Requirements

Below are the current graduation requirements, which may be adjusted as state law changes or as the board determines necessary to prepare students for the rigors of the 21st century economy.

School Graduation Requirements

CONTENT AREA	STATE CREDIT REQUIREMENTS
Core of Instruction	29 credits
Electives	17 credits (minimum)
Total Credits	46 credits (minimum)
Core Subject Areas	29 credits
Language Arts (English 8 credits and Speech 1 credit)	9 credits Speech credit can be obtained through other courses that meet the state speech requirements as approved by the local district
Mathematics	6 credits Including Algebra I and Geometry standards. 2 credits must be taken in the last year of high school. Students who have completed six (6) credits of math prior to their last year of high school, including at least two (2) semesters of Advanced Placement or dual credit calculus or high school course, are exempt from taking math during their last year of high school. AP Computer Science, Dual Credit Computer Science, and Dual Credit Engineering can be considered as either a math or science credit.
Science	6 credits (4 lab)
Social Studies (US History, Economics and American Government)	5 credits
Humanities (Interdisciplinary Humanities, Fine Arts or Foreign Language)	2 credits
Health	1 credit CPR is required to be taught in Health
Electives	17 credits 16 credits are chosen by the student
Career Exploration	1 credit (school required elective)
Other Graduation Requirements	
College Entrance Exam (SAT, ACT, or Compass), Proficient Score on ISAT ELA and Math	
Biology or Chemistry End of Course Exam	
Civics Exam	
Senior Project	

General Support Structures

Gem Prep: Meridian recognizes the unique needs of all children and their potential for significant educational development, and will provide opportunities designed to meet each child's needs. Gem Prep: Meridian will serve all children including special education, Gifted and Talented, students requiring Section 504 Accommodations and EL (English Learner) students.

Each person has the right to learn at the most appropriate level where growth will take place. Because gifted and talented, EL, Title I and Section 504 students have special needs, they will

be provided educational experiences that will strive to meet those needs. The Gem Prep: Meridian model is centered on personalized instruction, and as such will allow teachers to tailor instruction to the specific needs of each individualized student, using online adaptive technology as well as personalized, online (“asynchronous”) courses. In addition, after school office hours in 7-12th grade will be provided as well as tutoring services in K-6th grades. Through data driven instruction, the school will provide progress monitoring and a robust intervention program, specifically, targeted differentiated instruction in small groups. If Gem Prep: Meridian qualifies for Title I funding, the school will create a Title I program, based on the school model of personalization and targeted instruction.

Special Education

Gem Prep: Meridian will follow the requirements of IDEA, the state of Idaho, and all other federal and state mandates regarding students with special needs. The Gem Prep: Meridian Board of Directors will adopt the 2015 Idaho Special Education Manual with all subsequent revisions and implement appropriate special education policies and procedures consistent with state and federal laws, rules, regulations, and legal requirements. All children will receive appropriate services as outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, Section 504, and the Idaho Special Education Manual. The Idaho Special Education Manual will be used for identifying, evaluating, programming, developing Individual Education Plans (IEP), planning services, developing the discipline policy, budgeting, and providing transportation for special needs students, as necessary.

Gem Prep: Meridian will plan and budget to provide Highly Qualified special education teacher(s) and other personnel, physical facilities that are appropriately accessible to permit access by students with disabilities, funding and contractual arrangements to ensure that Gem Prep: Meridian students with disabilities will receive special education and services as required in IDEA 2004 and outlined on the students’ IEPs. All special education personnel will meet highly qualified special education standards and will be interviewed, selected, hired, trained, and in place by the first day of the school year.

Gem Prep: Meridian will follow a three-step process, as outlined in the Idaho Special Education Manual, to determine whether or not a student requires special education services:

1. The school will locate students by establishing and implementing an ongoing Child Find system, which will include referrals by parents, school staff, etc. An individual will be appointed to coordinate the development, revision, implementation, and documentation of the Child Find system.
2. Gem Prep: Meridian’s Child Find system will also publicize and ensure that staff and the school’s constituents are informed of the availability of special education services through information included in staff orientation, on the school’s web page, in registration materials and through the use of various social media.

3. Gem Prep: Meridian will conduct a thorough and comprehensive evaluation for students referred, to determine if the student qualifies for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. The school will adhere to the guidelines and timelines outlined in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and the Idaho Special Education Manual. As outlined in the Idaho Special Education Manual, an evaluation team, which includes (at a minimum) a special education teacher, a general education teacher, a district representative, the student when appropriate and the parent and/or adult student, will review the information from the comprehensive evaluation to determine the student's eligibility for special education. These sources include, but are not limited to, general education interventions, formal and informal assessments, and progress in the general curriculum, and will also include any and all referrals by parents and/or other adults including teachers, counselors, or other school professionals as outlined in the Idaho Special Education Manual.

When the determination of the team is that a student is not making adequate academic progress, the team will develop a Response to Intervention (RTI) plan. Gem Prep: Meridian will implement and utilize a comprehensive Response to Intervention program as recommended in the Idaho Special Education Manual. This comprehensive, general education-led program will consist of the core components of problem identification, problem analysis, applying researched-based intervention and progress monitoring to determine student response to the scientifically research-based interventions. Gem Prep: Meridian will use a five-step Problem Solving Model for RTI, which includes three tiers. The following are the steps for RTI.

1. Universal screenings in reading and math. (Please see benchmark/diagnostic assessments below).
2. Scientifically based instruction for all students (Tier 1)
3. Secondary prevention interventions for students not responding adequately to Tier 1 instruction (Tier 2)
4. Monitoring student progress
5. Tertiary prevention instruction for students making insufficient progress in response to Tier 2 instruction (Tier 3)

If during an evaluation process, the multi-disciplinary team determines the need for an evaluation by personnel not directly employed by Gem Prep: Meridian, such as a school psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, or other required experts not currently employed by the school, such evaluations will be contracted with a private provider. If the student qualifies for special education services, and the subsequent Individualized Education Plan (IEP) requires the need for contracting with personnel not directly employed by Gem Prep: Meridian, then the school will contract with the appropriate service providers to provide IEP-related services (i.e. Speech and Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapists etc.).

Individual Education Plans

A Highly Qualified special education teacher will be responsible to monitor Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and supervise the implementation as written. A special education teacher will provide services in an inclusion or a pull-out model depending on the degree of accommodation necessary to meet the student's needs. These services will be delivered by a special education teacher or licensed provider, with supporting para-educator(s) as allowed by IDEA and the ESSA. The special education teacher will consult with the general education staff to utilize effective classroom accommodations, adaptations, and modifications.

The continuum of settings and services that will be provided at Gem Prep: Meridian includes general education classes, resource classes, and provisions for supplemental services such as resource services, itinerant instruction provided in conjunction with the general classroom, classroom aides, replacement curricula, behavioral supports, etc. In determining appropriate settings and services for a student with a disability, the IEP team shall consider the student's needs and the variety of alternate placements and related services available to meet those needs. Gem Prep: Meridian may contract with private providers for the provision of related services. Services may be provided by a licensed therapist, who may use a para-educator for support. In the rare event that the IEP team determines that the student's academic needs cannot be met on site, the school may contract with other agencies to provide those services.

For all special education students, Gem Prep: Meridian will develop, review, and revise IEPs in accordance with state and federal laws. Gem Prep: Meridian will adhere to the IDEA Procedural Safeguards and FERPA to assure protection of student and parent rights, including the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in student special education records. These statutes also provide for the right to review and inspect records. Gem Prep: Meridian will ensure access to charter school programs, as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Gem Prep: Meridian facilities plan will permit access by students with disabilities.

Gem Prep: Meridian will use evidenced-based programming and curricula when working with students with disabilities who need supplemental or replacement curricula. Gem Prep: Meridian will follow the guidelines provided by the IDEA and Idaho Special Education Manual in regards to the disciplining of a student protected under the IDEA. This will include the consideration of a Functional Behavior Assessment and subsequent Behavior Intervention Plan when the special-education multidisciplinary team identifies that the behavior of the student impacts their learning or the learning of others. When the Behavior Intervention Plan is required, it will be developed with Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. When required in accordance with the IDEA and Idaho Special Education Manual, the special education multidisciplinary team will conduct a Manifestation Determination to establish whether or not the misconduct of a student with a disability was (1) a demonstration of the disability, that is, an inability to understand impact and consequences or an inability to control behavior; (2) the result of an inappropriate placement; and/or (3) the lack of provision of services consistent with the IEP and placement.

Programming

Students with disabilities will work on their IEP goals while participating in the school's research based educational program. The program, which includes blended learning, online learning, differentiated small group instruction and dual enrollment, will be flexible enough to allow students with disabilities to work at their own level of understanding. General education teachers will provide modifications and accommodations as required by students' IEPs and will work with the special educational staff to best serve learners with special needs. Parents will be involved in every step taken by the school in regard to their children with special needs.

Researched based curriculum will be available for students based on each student's individual education goals. Examples of possible curriculum include programs like National Geographic's Inside program levels A-E with the online coach and supplemental trade books. In grades 9-12 the school will use programs like National Geographic's Edge program fundamentals - Level C with the online coach and supplemental trade books. These are both research based programs that address the five subdomains of language learning. Vocabulary, grammar and writing are addressed in every unit. Focus and repetition of reading strategies helps to ensure mastery and promotes transfer. Scaffolded instruction shows students how to be successful with the text. Students will use programs like the Edge or Inside Online Coach. These software programs allow students to read literature silently, listen to fluent reading, and practice oral reading fluency, all with built in comprehension, vocabulary and fluency supports.

Nondiscriminatory Enrollment Procedures

Gem Prep: Meridian will not deny enrollment to a student with a disability because of that student's need for special education or related aids and services. All appropriate services will be provided for students with disabilities who meet the federally- established eligibility criterion for such services. Enrollment policies described elsewhere in this charter petition are consistent with the mission of Gem Prep: Meridian and civil rights requirements. The nondiscriminatory policy will be stated on the school's website, applications, advertisements, etc.

LRE Requirements

Gem Prep: Meridian will ensure that a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) is available to students who attend Gem Prep: Meridian and who are eligible for special education. FAPE is determined for each individual student with a disability. FAPE will include special education in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) and will include related services, supplementary aids and services, and/or assistive technology devices and services required to help the student benefit from his or her education program.

The school will provide special education and related services to eligible Gem Prep: Meridian students in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE), educating students with disabilities with their non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate. Related services may include (but is not limited to) Positive Behavior Interventions, Adaptive Technologies, Extended School Year, variety of educational environments, resource room, etc. This will be in accordance with the Idaho Special Education Manual, PL94-142, and as identified on each

student's IEP. In many cases, the LRE will be specified within Gem Prep: Meridian. In rare cases, the LRE might be an alternative site, depending on the needs of each student. Gem Prep: Meridian will provide assessments to admitted students as required, meeting individual student needs and IDEA requirements. LRE decisions are made individually for each student. The student's goals and required services are developed prior to the determination of the location of services and settings. The services and settings needed by each student with a disability must be based on the student's unique needs that result from his or her disability, not on the student's category of disability.

When determining appropriate Positive Behavior Interventions Supports school staff will develop a behavior intervention plan that 1) improves the environmental conditions to prevent problem behaviors, 2) teach the student new skills to enable the student to achieve the same function in a socially appropriate manner, 3) reinforce desired behaviors, including newly self-taught replacement skills, and 4) use strategies to defuse problem behaviors effectively and in ways that preserves the student's dignity. If a student is in danger of hurting themselves or others the school staff will follow the school discipline process outlined in the school handbook following the procedures identified in the Idaho Special Education Manual for Manifest Determination. When students are receiving special education services off-site the location and supervision will be established by the school. A certified professional providing the special education services provides weekly progress reports to the Director of Special Education.

Transportation Plan

Gem Prep: Meridian will provide transportation for special needs students if it is determined that this is necessary to provide for a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE).

Monitoring Progress

Gem Prep: Meridian will follow state and federal laws regarding assessment of Special Education students. Please see Assessment Plan below for additional monitoring of progress of Special Education students.

Confidentiality

Gem Prep: Meridian will protect student and parent rights and protect the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in student special education records as outlined in Idaho Senate Bill 1372 (Student Data Accessibility, Transparency and Accountability Act of 2014) and FERPA law – 33 CFR 99.30 (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.).

Gifted and Talented

Gem Prep: Meridian will offer gifted students advanced curriculum, a faster pace of instruction and opportunities to explore topics in depth. This can be done through single subject accelerations in one or more content areas, dual credit (for high school students) or grade acceleration.

Pursuant to Idaho Code 33-2003 Gem Prep: Meridian will identify students possessing high performing capabilities in specific academic, intellectual, leadership, creativity and

visual/performing arts talent areas. The identification in each area will be by a variety of assessments outlined in *The Best Practices Manual for Idaho Gifted/Talented Programs*.

Gifted and Talented students will be supported in the school model through asynchronous (elective online/distance) coursework, personalized online instruction, targeted differentiated instruction via data driven instruction, dual enrollment, dual credit, single subject acceleration and grade level acceleration. Any student who tests into a higher grade level will be placed into a course(s) appropriate to their level of achievement. Teachers may also provide extension activities to students.

Referral to the Gifted and Talented program may be made by parents, students and/or teachers. The referral should include evidence that the child is high performing in specific academic, intellectual, leadership, creativity and visual/performing arts talent areas and that his/her needs are not being met. This can include portfolios, test scores and observations. High performing students with unmet needs will be evaluated. This may include academic testing, review of student records, evaluation of portfolio samples, cognitive testing, evidence of leadership, and in the case of potential grade acceleration, The Iowa Acceleration Scale Placement in the gifted and talented program will begin with the development of an individualized plan to meet each student's unique needs. Gifted and talented students' coursework, grades, assessments and parent satisfaction with the program will be monitored by Gem Prep: Meridian teachers and their plans will be adjusted accordingly.

English Learner

Gem Prep: Meridian will apply the federal definition of English Learner (EL) as defined by Title III and IX of the ESSA. The Academic Administrator will ensure the use of a home-language survey upon all student's enrollment. The eligibility criteria (listed below) will be used for a Home Language Survey in order to identify the primary home language other than English. Students for whom English is a second language will be assessed using the state recommended EL placement test.

Gem Prep: Meridian's goal will be to help students reach English proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening. To accomplish this, the Academic Administrator will ensure that English Learner (EL) students take the W-APT, or most current state recommended screening, for screening for English language proficiency upon registering, and parents will need to choose whether or not their child will participate in services. If the child enters the EL program, the Academic Administrator will ensure an Educational Learning Plan (ELP) including curriculum, teaching strategies, academic goals and assessment accommodations will be developed. The instructional model will depend upon the number of students needing services. Services will be provided in the general education classroom unless it is determined that pull out services are required. Gem Prep: Meridian EL students will use curriculum such as National Geographic School Publishing's programs: *Inside Language*, *Literacy*, and *Content* and Hampton-Brown *Edge*, and Rosetta Stone English. The Academic Administrator will oversee the monitoring of EL student. All EL students will be required to participate in the ACCESS 2.0, or most current state recommended testing, as the summative annual language proficiency test. Gem Prep: Meridian parents of EL students will be invited to participate in

the development, implementation, and evaluation of the EL Program. Gem Prep: Meridian will provide an interpreter for parent meetings as needed and will send home written information in the parent's language.

During synchronous learning and small group learning, teachers will use Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol and other research based EL instructional approaches, such as: making what is spoken visible, explicit teaching of vocabulary, chunking and scaffolding texts, and using manipulatives. All teachers will be highly qualified. The Academic Administrator will oversee and provide direction for staffing depending on the number of EL students enrolled.

Teachers also monitor the students' progress in the online adaptive programs as well as work with students in small groups based on our blended learning station rotation model. The school's plan is to train teachers on how to incorporate the WIDA ELD framework into their teaching and their required portfolio assignments. As teachers are trained on incorporating the Idaho Core standards into their instruction and assignments, the school will also include the WIDA ELD framework. Professional development in research based best practices and strategies for EL students such as Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol will be provided and the Academic Administrator will be responsible for ensuring appropriate professional development.

The Academic Administrator and school staff will meet annually to determine the effectiveness of the ELD program. Data to determine effectiveness of the ELD program may include results from the ACCESS 2.0, ISAT, IRI, and formative assessment data. Evaluation of the program may also include data such as swiftness of intervention, type of intervention, comparison with peers for student improvement tracking; availability of resources; staff training; and viable sources of assistance. Gem Prep: Meridian's blended learning model will ensure that student growth is monitored frequently and a focus on personalized learning provides for quick response to curriculum and teaching strategies if student growth is not demonstrated. Teachers will review student data from online adaptive programs, formative assessments, and observations during small group instruction and use this data to inform instruction, interventions, and curriculum effectiveness on a regular basis as part of our blended learning model. Students who meet state recommended levels of proficiency on ACCESS 2.0 at or above level 5 on the overall grade adjusted composite and a level 5 on each domain, (speaking, listening, reading and writing) and a score of a level 2 on the ISAT (grades 3-12) or a score of 3 on the IRI (grades K-3) as well as any other criteria outlined on the students EL plan will be exited from the EL program. The school staff and Academic Administrator will review individual student EL plans each spring to determine if students have met the exit criteria outlined by the state of Idaho and their individual EL plan. Students who are exited from the program will be monitored for two years. If sufficient evidence deems that a particular student needs to be placed back into an EL program, he/she will be coded as EL for language support services and for testing purposes. The school will ensure that all documentation to support a reclassification for a student is placed in the student's cumulative file. Parents will be notified of the reclassification and given the opportunity to waive ELL services.

Dual Enrollment

Gem Prep: Meridian students will be allowed to participate in dual enrollment with other schools, as required by Idaho Code 33-203. Dual enrollment is subject to school district policy and procedures, as allowed in Idaho Code 33-203. State funding of a dually enrolled student will be limited to the extent of the student's participation in the public school programs. Information concerning dual enrollment will be available on the school's website. Prior approval from the school administrator is required for dual enrollment.

Students dual enrolling with an active Individual Education Plan (IEP) will receive the services identified in an inclusion setting to meet the intent of their IEP. In all cases, transportation shall be provided to students by their parent(s) or the parent's representative when exercising dual-enrollment opportunities.

The Advanced Opportunities Program will be an essential part of Gem Prep: Meridian. The school's growth plan includes implementation of the Advanced Opportunities Program as secondary grades are added.

Tab 4: Measurable Standards, Accreditation and Accountability

Measurable Student Educational Standards (MSES)

Gem Prep: Meridian's MSES goals are developed around our Mission: To prepare students for success in college and professional technical careers by providing a high quality, personalized, relevant and rigorous education through exceptional teaching, innovative uses of technology and partnerships with families.

MSES Goal #1 At least 70% or more of Gem Prep: Meridian juniors and seniors will complete one or more dual credit course(s) during their last two years of high school, earning a grade of 'C' or better as measured by college transcripts.

Measurement Tool

Individual college transcripts from the institution from which the dual credit course was taken will be the official measure in determining successful completion of MSES Goal #1.

Connection to our Mission

The school's mission focuses on preparing students for success in college and professional technical careers. Advanced opportunities such as dual credit courses are one pathway to help them become prepared. Successful completion of dual credit courses indicates that the student is capable and prepared for post high school content.

Implementation

Each semester an audit of individual transcripts from the local colleges and universities will be completed. Transcripts from the dual credit institutions are sent to the student's school so that the course(s) may be added to the student's transcript. An Excel spreadsheet will be created with the student names of all juniors and seniors enrolled at Gem Prep: Meridian, and credit will be tracked when dual credit courses are recorded with the name of the course, the institution and the students' final grades. The school counselor and/or the high school principal will administer the review of the transcripts, and will compare the number of successfully completed dual credit courses to the number of enrolled juniors and seniors, to ensure that at least 70% of our students have met or exceeded this goal. The Excel spreadsheet with individual student level data will be shared with the commission. These results will be included in the performance certificate report.

MSES Goal #2 At least 70% or more of Gem Prep: Gem Prep: Meridian students who have been enrolled for two years or more will demonstrate mastery of college and career standards by meeting or exceeding proficiency on the math Idaho Standards Achievement Test administered each spring.

Measurement Tool

Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT)

Connection to our Mission

A proficient score on the ISAT at the 10th grade level is an indicator of college and career readiness.

Implementation

The Idaho Standards Achievement Test is administered each spring in April and May. Official results are not available until the summer. The ISAT will be administered to students in grades 3-10. The Idaho SDE gathers the data and provides it to the school during the summer following the spring administration. Gem Prep: Meridian will compare our student data to the state average. The results will be aggregated by grade level and will be included in the performance certificate report.

MSES Goal #3 At least 70% or more of Gem Prep: Meridian students who have been enrolled for two years or more will demonstrate mastery of college and career standards by meeting or exceeding proficiency on the English Language Arts Idaho Standards Achievement Test administered each spring.

Measurement Tool

Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT)

Connection to our Mission

A proficient score on the ISAT at the 10th grade level is an indicator of college and career readiness.

Implementation

The Idaho Standards Achievement Test is administered each spring in April and May. Official results are not available until the summer. The ISAT will be administered to students in grades 3-10. The Idaho SDE gathers the data and provides it to the school during the summer following the spring administration. Gem Prep: Meridian will compare our student data to the state average. The results will be aggregated by grade level and will be included in the performance certificate report.

MSES Goal #4 At least 70% of Gem Prep: Meridian juniors will score at or above the state composite score average on a college entrance exam such as the SAT or ACT.

Measurement Tool

College entrance exams such as SAT or ACT.

Connection to our Mission

Students who demonstrate readiness for college level courses on these exams, have the English and math skills necessary to succeed academically without the need for remedial coursework. The SAT and ACT are also accepted as admission tests for college entrance at most institutions. By offering these exams and by having high expectations of Gem Prep:

Meridian students, these students are provided opportunity to overcome some of the first obstacles to college entrance and success.

While these MSES goals are primarily academic in nature, Gem Prep: Meridian will also prioritize teaching and measuring non-cognitive skills such as MESH (Mindsets, Essential Skills, and Habits). At the time of consideration for renewal of the charter in approximately 2021, Gem Prep: Meridian believes that MSES goals such non-cognitive skills will be essential. Gem Prep: Meridian plans to begin administering MESH survey data in the 2018-2019 school year to establish a baseline for future years.

Methods for Measuring Student Progress

In evaluating the school's success in meeting mission-based goals and objectives, the school will utilize both standards-based and performance-based assessments.

Standards and standardization are the basis of assessment. Performance will be assessed on at least five levels:

1. Student progress relative to previous performance will be assessed through standardized assessments. The school will create student baselines using mandated testing results.
2. Performance will be assessed relative to district and state developed standards. The school will do a comparison of annual results with baseline scores to assess progress.
3. Online adaptive assessments.
4. Student's progress towards meeting the Idaho Core will be assessed by Gem Prep: Meridian certified teachers through statewide standardized assessment results and internal assessments such as end of course exam, benchmark assessments, and individual student work.
5. College Readiness will be assessed through nationally normed assessments such as the SAT as well as progress in dual credit and dual enrollment programs.

Interventions and Corrections

Gem Prep: Meridian's data driven instruction model allows ample time for interventions and corrections. After teachers give benchmark assessments, online adaptive assessments or other teacher created assessments, teachers will have time to analyze the data during professional development time. After the school gives these benchmark/diagnostic assessments, administration will facilitate a full day of data analysis with teachers. During this time, teachers will analyze results and prepare re-teaching and intervention plans with students who are struggling. Teachers may also prepare extension activities or course changes to Gifted and Talented students. For students who need interventions, teachers will plan targeted, differentiated small group lessons during synchronous instruction. Students' online and/or blended learning plans may also be altered to reflect the results of assessments and to provide additional remediation.

Testing

Gem Prep: Meridian will participate in all state and federally mandated testing. The school will have a test coordinator who will oversee the testing program and insure the testing process is followed with fidelity for all tests.

The leadership team is currently investigating new Student Information Systems (SIS) that better align with the school model.

Gem Prep: Meridian is considering using Illuminate or PowerSchool. In addition to the SIS the leadership team is currently investigating the addition of Illuminate's Data and Assessment Management System, which would work with either of the student information systems. The Illuminate DNA system would give teachers and administrators access to reports, built in assessments, the ability to capture assessment data, data analysis tools and support, as well as data forecasting tools.

The organization ensures that student progress is closely tracked with two annual administrations of a criterion-referenced assessment across all grade levels. This data provides the school with important growth data over the course of a school year. Gem Prep: Meridian will consider the use of the NWEA MAP assessment for these bi-annual administrations.

Proposed Testing Schedule:

Grade level	Language Arts	Math	Science
Kindergarten	- Primary MAP (fall and spring) - Idaho Reading Indicator (state) - Kindergarten Skills Inventory (internal)	- Primary MAP (fall and spring) - Kindergarten Skills Inventory (internal)	
First Grade	- Primary MAP (fall and spring) - Idaho Reading Indicator (state)	- Primary MAP (fall and spring) - MCOMP (local)	
Second Grade	- Primary MAP (fall and spring) - Idaho Reading Indicator (state)	- Primary MAP (fall and spring) - MCAP (local)	
Third Grade	- ISAT* - Idaho Reading Indicator (state)	- ISAT* - MCAP (local)	
Fourth Grade	- ISAT* - MAP fall and spring - NAEP	- ISAT* - MAP (fall and spring) - NAEP	
Fifth Grade	ISAT*	ISAT*	ISAT Science

Sixth Grade	• ISAT*	• ISAT*/MAP fall and spring	
Seventh Grade	• ISAT*	• ISAT*	• ISAT Science
Eighth Grade	• ISAT* • MAP (fall and spring) • NAEP	• ISAT* • MAP (fall and spring) • NAEP	
Ninth Grade	• ISAT	• ISAT	
Tenth Grade	• ISAT* • PSAT	• ISAT* • PSAT	End of course biology or chemistry exam
Eleventh Grade	• SAT • PSAT/ISAT*/College Entrance Exam • SAT	• SAT • PSAT/ISAT*/College Entrance Exam • SAT	
Twelfth Grade	NAEP	NAEP	

- *Required testing to meet NCLB/ESSA
- Growth will be measured on the spring 2019 ISAT to the spring 2020 ISAT

Statewide Alternate Assessments (for special education students as outlined in their IEP)

- ISAT Alt Science (Grades, 5, 7 and 10)
- IRI Alt (Grades K-3)
- NCSC ELA & Math (National Center and State Collaborative Grades 3-8 & 10)

English Language Learners

- Idaho English Language Assessment (IELA) Spring 2015 only
- Access 2.0

Benchmark Assessments and Progress Monitoring

As part of the school's data driven instruction model, regular diagnostic and benchmark assessments will be administered. Many of the online programs which the school is considering such as Dreambox Math, iReady and Headsprouts have progress monitoring built in. The school will administer school-wide screening for reading and math at the K-3 grade levels in the fall, winter and spring, and follow up with a diagnostic assessment if a student scores in the "intensive" level on the screener. However, the administration of the following external benchmark/interim assessments are also planned:

Grade Level	Assessment	Fall	Mid-Year	Spring
K	NWEA MAP	X	As needed	X
1	NWEA MAP	X	As needed	X
2	NWEA MAP	X	As needed	X
3	ISAT Interim	X	As needed	
4	NWEA MAP	X	As needed	X
5	ISAT Interim	X	As needed	
6	NWEA MAP	X	As needed	X
7	ISAT Interim	X	As needed	
8	NWEA MAP	X	As needed	X
9-11	ISAT Interim	X	As needed	

The school may edit this assessment plan as the state finalizes its assessments.

Annual Reporting of MSES

Annual reports will be made available to the Idaho State Department of Education and the Idaho Public Charter School Commission regarding Gem Prep: Meridian's MSES. Non-student specific MSES results will also be made available to parents and other stakeholders on the school's website, within 30 days of receipt of data. Student-specific data will be shared with parents.

Cumulative Records

The Gem Prep: Meridian Office will keep all student records on file including immunization records, standardized tests, individual, quarterly progress reports and attendance records or unofficial transcripts. The cumulative files may be reviewed by students and by parents or guardians of students under age 18. Gem Prep: Meridian will not release student records without the written consent of the parent (or student, if 18 years of age).

Middle School Credit Requirements

Gem Prep: Meridian will follow Idaho School Code requirements for middle school students. Students who meet those standards will be graduated to ninth grade.

Alternate Path:

Retaking a failed semester course over the summer through IDLA at the expense of the parent.

Failure to meet this requirement will result in retention. Recommendation of retention will be placed in student's cumulative file in the event he/she transfers to another school.

If a 7th or 8th grade Gem Prep: Meridian student must be retained at their current grade level, the class size for that grade level will increase by one if the current class size has reached maximum capacity.

Credit Verification: Students entering the 8th grade who transfer from homeschool or an unaccredited school may verify 7th grade core classes through online diagnostic testing in Math and English Language Arts, and a portfolio review of student work in Science and Social

Studies. The student may be asked to take a full year of Health/PE in 8th grade if credit for 7th grade is not documented.

7th Grade Courses	Credits	8th Grade Courses	Credits
Language Arts 7	2	Language Arts 8	2
Math or Pre-Algebra	2	Pre-Algebra, or Algebra I	2
Life Science 7	2	Physical Science 8	2
Social Studies 7	2	Social Studies 8	2
Health/PE 7	1	Health/PE 8	1
Total	9		9

*Special Education, 504, and ELL plans will dictate alternate course requirements if needed.

Accreditation

Gem Prep: Meridian will apply to Northwest Accreditation Commission, a Division of AdvancED for accreditation, as required in IDAPA 08.02.02.140.

Gem Prep: Meridian will apply for and renew accreditation every 5 years as required by the Northwest Accreditation Commission. The requirements used by the AdvancED Accreditation Commission are research-based standards to not only evaluate Gem Prep: Meridian's organizational effectiveness, but also its K-12 programs, school wide culture, and satisfaction of our stakeholders. The five standards- Purpose and Direction, Governance and Leadership, Teaching and Assessing for Learning, Resources and Support Systems, and Using Results for Continuous Improvement, provide the framework for Gem Prep: Meridian to continually monitor effectiveness. It is the school's belief that using this set of research-based standards can provide focus and help Gem Prep: Meridian leadership and stakeholders continue to provide a quality education for Gem Prep: Meridian students.

To ensure continuing accreditation of Gem Prep: Meridian, the school will maintain accreditation for its K-12 program in accordance with Idaho Code 33-5205(3) (e) and IDAPA 08.02.02.140. An accreditation committee appointed by the school administration will choose the appropriate accreditation standard and oversee the accreditation process. After accreditation, the school administration will submit annual accreditation reports to the Idaho State Department of Education and the authorizing entity. The accreditation will be completed through NWAC/AdvancED.

School Improvement

If identified as a school in need of improvement, either as a priority or focus school, the board will actively look at data to ensure effective leaders are in place. In addition, school leaders including the Leadership Team will look closely at multiple levels of data to begin determining where and what focus areas need to be addressed. Strategic improvement planning will go into effect and the Idaho State Department of Education will become a network and resource to help guide Gem Prep: Meridian in school improvement efforts. The school will utilize the State Wide System of Support and utilize the framework for analyzing problems, identifying underlying causes, and addressing instructional issues to better

understand why we have not made sufficient progress in student achievement. A plan will be written and will be comprehensive, highly structured specific and focused primarily on the school's instructional program. The school will utilize the WISE tool and or other state suggested tools that allow us to include scientifically based research that will strengthen the core academic subjects in the school and address the specific academic issues that caused the school to be identified for school improvement.

Tab 5: Governance Structure, Parental Involvement, Audits

Governance Structure

Gem Prep: Meridian Charter School is a legally and operationally independent entity managed under *the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act*. The Board of Directors will be legally accountable for the operation of the charter school. Gem Prep: Meridian commits to compliance with all federal and state laws and rules and acknowledges its responsibility for identifying essential laws and regulations, and complying with them. The Board of Directors' meetings will generally follow Robert's Rules of Order, and will follow the Open Meetings laws, keep accurate minutes, and make the minutes available to the public, according to the Gem Prep: Meridian Bylaws and Public Records laws.

Please see Appendix A-3 for the Bylaws and Appendix D-1 for the Board of Directors' resumes.

Public Records

Gem Prep: Meridian will comply with all aspects of the Idaho Public Records Law. All students will receive written notification of how to request a transfer of student records to a specific school. Upon request, all records of students residing in the District will be immediately transferred to the District.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors will be legally accountable for the operation of Gem Prep: Meridian. The school commits to compliance with all federal and state laws and rules and acknowledges its responsibility for identifying essential laws and regulations, and complying with them. Please see the Bylaws for number of voting and non-voting board members, election and term of office of voting and non-voting directors and officers.

Please see Appendix A-3 for the Bylaws.

Selection and Replacement

Recommendations of new board candidates and elections of the Board of Directors will be held according to the Gem Prep: Meridian Bylaws.

See Appendix A-3 Bylaws regarding election process

The Board of Directors Seats

Current board members and their resumes are in Appendix D-1.

Board of Directors Responsibilities

The Board will be responsible for the financial health of the school, managing the school's funds responsibly and prudently while prioritizing spending with consideration given to the

school's mission, vision and educational program goals. The Board will make an effort to establish financial practices and reporting that result in accuracy and transparency. Board members will participate in fundraising activities as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Board. Board members will put the interests of the school first and will refrain from using the position for personal or partisan gain.

Board business conducted at Board meetings will be done per the bylaws and applicable laws (see Bylaws in Appendix A-3). Board members will commit to the ethical standards set forth in the Ethical Standards Agreement (see Board Ethics Statements in Appendix D-3).

The Board is to serve as the liaison between the school and the authorizing entity.

Recruiting Board Members

Gem Prep: Meridian will seek prospective members who have training or experience in accounting/finance, law, education, publicity, marketing, and/or business.

The Gem Prep: Meridian, Inc., Board understands that effective boards are a result of intentional and strategic planning. When planning for recruitment of new members, the board considers what the anticipated future board profile should reflect, and moves forward in a deliberate fashion to determine what expertise and necessary qualities they will seek in new members. Gem Prep: Meridian administrators and the school's current board members continually seek out exceptional individuals to serve on the schools' Board through ongoing professional and personal networking opportunities. Ideal prospective members will have training or experience in accounting/finance, law, education, publicity, marketing, and/or business. The Board will leverage networking opportunities of staff, teachers, parents and community relationships such as the local Rotary Club, when seeking prospective members. When seeking hard-to-fill skills, the board may determine to seek possible candidates by posting an opening on local community boards and profession-specific communications and forums. Once a potential board candidate has been identified, their profile will be presented to the board for review and discussion, and if the members are in agreement the recruitment process may begin.

The recruitment process may involve both vetting and cultivating the interest of potential future board members, prior to appointment. Future appointees will be provided with educational materials relative to online and blended learning, such as webinars, books and conferences, prior to appointment and during their service on the board. The membership of the school board has a direct impact on the ability of the school to fulfill its vision. Should the board find that certain skills are not being filled by potential board members and finds the need to recruit more broadly, the board may establish a committee to oversee the recruitment and vetting of new members, to facilitate the process of renewing the school with energetic, enthusiastic, committed and skilled leadership.

Relationship between the Board of Directors and School Administration

The Gem Prep: Meridian Board of Directors is the governing board of the Gem Prep: Meridian school and has ultimate control over the school and all employee and parent concerns. If a parent or employee has a concern, they will first attempt to resolve the issue with the principal. If the issue cannot be resolved with the principal, the parent or employee may attempt a resolution with the School Academic Administrator and then the School Director.

If their concern is still not resolved, it will be brought before the Gem Prep: Meridian School Board.

The organization chart below demonstrates the reporting and interaction structure for Gem Prep: Meridian.

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Policy development and review
- The financial health of the school
- Administrative and operational oversight (not day-to-day operations)
- The legal affairs of Gem Prep: Meridian
- To adopt, advocate for and oversee a school budget, which is responsive to school goals and meets the needs of all students
- To conduct an annual self-evaluation of its own leadership, governance and teamwork.
- To communicate and interpret the school's mission and other policy related matters to the public and stakeholders.
- To ensure there is a supportive, smoothly operating leadership team which advocates for both children and the community.

School Director works under the direction of the Board. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Implement the vision and mission of the school
- Recommend to the Board the hiring of personnel
- Fulfill state charter school requirements
- Insure GPM meets the performance requirements outlined in the performance cert
- Execute the policies of the Board
- Act as the intermediary between the Board and stakeholders
- Make recommendation to the Board on issues facing the school

Business Manager works under the direction of the school Director. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Monthly and annual financial reporting to the board and outside entities
- Budgeting
- Day to day financial operations and accounting
- Financial records
- Purchasing and contracts
- State reporting requirements
- Payroll
- Insurance
- Benefits
- Accounts Payable

Academic Administrator works under the direction of the school Director. Responsibilities

include but are not limited to:

- Develop curriculum, instruction and assessment
- Recommend special services
- Implement professional development
- Supply annual educational reports
- Supervise and evaluate school principal
- State assessment planning
- Oversee hiring educational staff and provide recommendations

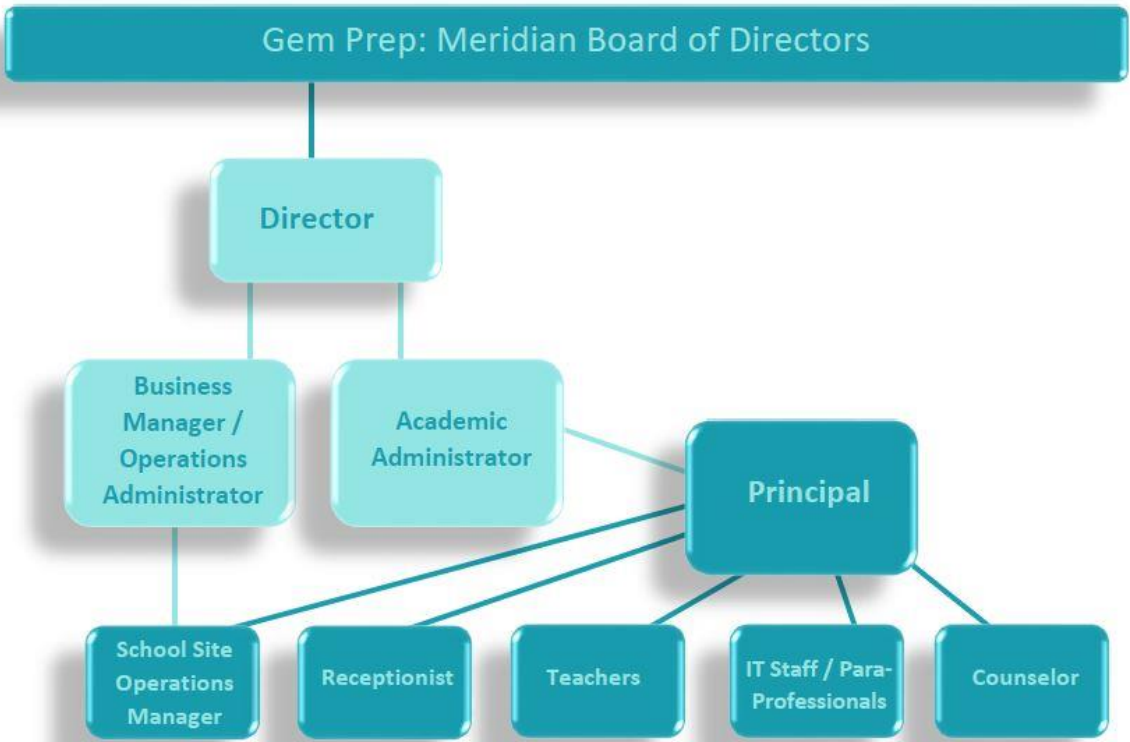
Operations Administrator works under the direction of the school Director. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Facilities management
- Supervise school operations employee
- Transportation
- Nutrition
- Building security and student safety
- Technology

Principal works under the direction of the Academic Administrator. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Parent and public relations
- Building school wide community and culture
- Student and staff discipline.
- Participate in curriculum development
- Supervise student scheduling
- Conduct all staff evaluations
- Provide teacher mentoring and coaching
- Resolve personnel issues
- Oversee substitute teacher roster, training and evaluation
- Student enrollment and records
- Attendance

The following organizational chart is the initial proposed plan. The school anticipates minor changes over the course of school growth.



Board Development

When new Board Members are added, they will be provided with a New Board Member Packet. This packet contains information to help them understand what is involved in being a Board Member, such as, but not limited to, the Gem Prep: Meridian Charter, roles and responsibilities, meeting laws, state statute for charter schools, ethical standards, policies and financial reports and budgets.

Annually or throughout the year, at the discretion of the Chairman, there may be a training schedule to include, but not limited to, the roles/responsibilities of a Board, review of the school’s charter, the Board’s Ethical Standards, and state statutes. As appropriate, the Board may include other training, including external training, as appropriate based on costs and time. The Chairman will make sure the Board is aware of these opportunities.

Board members will be encouraged to attend staff and parent education meetings.

The administrative team continues to disseminate research and information on blended learning to the Board, keeping them current and allowing for informed and knowledgeable decisions to be made by the governing body. The Gem Prep: Meridian School Board members are committed to continued development. In May 2015, a board representative attended a blended learning consortium held at Boise State University, and upon return, shared the insights received with the other board members. Also, each board member has read the book entitled “Blended: Using Disruptive Innovation to Improve Schools” by Heather Staker and Michael Horn. Board members also participated in an in-service specifically about blended

learning. In the 2015-2016 school year, the Board received training regarding academic assessments and also participated in training and discussion about board development and the best practices of transitioning from founding boards to long-term mature governing school boards. In April 2016, representative members of the Board attended the SDE Charter School Boot Camp. The Board believes strongly in seeking out relevant and solid guides on blended learning, and in sharing that knowledge with each other and with their constituents in an effort to make Gem Prep: Meridian a high performing, personalized learning school which prepares students for college, career and citizenship.

In an effort to continue the development and excellence of each Gem Prep: Meridian Board member, an annual self-assessment will be conducted, similar to the Idaho School Board Association (ISBA)'s self-assessment tool. The data will be used to improve the Board and its individual members' functionality. An example may be the discovery that the Board is weak in financial knowledge, leading to additional training specific to educational finances. In addition to the needs addressed in the self-assessment surveys, Board members will participate annually in development opportunities specific to leadership of online and blended learning schools.

Ethical Standards

Gem Prep: Meridian's School Board adheres to ethical standards established to ensure members conduct themselves in a trustworthy and ethical manner at all times in the performance of their duties and responsibilities. Each Board Member is required to read, understand, sign and adhere to the ethical standards of the Board. The school also includes training for Board Members on the ethics policy.

Please see Appendix D-3 for signed Board ethics statements.

Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is a cornerstone of the school, and it is recognized that parental involvement is key to student success.⁶ Upon enrollment, parents will agree to comply with all school policy and procedures as outlined in the Student & Parent Handbook.

Gem Prep: Meridian will strongly encourage, but not require, parents to complete 20 hours of participation/volunteerism each school year, with the intention that the more parents are involved, the more they will understand and be able to positively benefit the education of their students. The School's enthusiasm toward the participation program is to impart education ownership to the parents and to truly partner with them for their students' successes. All activities that parents/guardians voluntarily participate in on behalf of the school, whether at the campus or off-campus, are counted towards their volunteer hours. Parents are also encouraged to participate in school-related activities, including those pertaining to curriculum and instruction, such as tutoring and storytelling. Volunteers

⁶ Numerous studies have found links between parental involvement and engagement and student academic success are strong, in fact, this link has now been deemed "undisputed". An example of these critical links includes the U.S. Dept. of Ed's 1995 report, *Strong Families, Strong Schools*. Additional researchers, including Kellaghan, Sloane, Alvarez, and Bloom (2003), and Beth Simon (1999), Topor, D, Keane, S., Shelton, T. and Calkins, S. *"The Interface of Family, School, and Community Factors for the Positive Development of Children and Youth"* (2010) have also well- documented and synthesized research on this topic.

may also be involved in monitoring the playground, student drop-off and pick-up, and assisting with school events, PTO, school socials, etc. The school will maintain a differentiated list of parent volunteer activities and a log of volunteer hours is kept in the school office. As the school grows from kindergarten through high school, the parental involvement opportunities will be updated, as appropriate.

In an effort to encourage enrollment of students from families of diverse family dynamics, parents are provided a lengthy list of opportunities in which to be involved. This allows parent volunteerism and involvement even in families with two working parents, single parent households, low income families, etc.

All volunteers will complete a Volunteer Agreement form. Volunteers will receive structured training (as needed), and must follow all policies and procedures defined by the school. If activity occurs that is not in keeping with the school policies, the school leader reserves the right to relieve the volunteer of his or her responsibilities.

A parent organization will provide consultation and support to the Board and the Administration regarding ongoing plans for the school.

Parental participation may also include, but is not limited, to the following:

- Ongoing contact with certified teaching staff
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Volunteering for school projects, programs and committees
- Attending Orientation Sessions
- Creation and participation in a Parent Teacher Organization
- Attending board meetings
- Creating committees to participate in the leadership and operation of the school
- Attending ongoing educational workshops
- Attending ongoing field trips and activities
- Receiving key information regarding school events on the Gem Prep: Meridian website
- Reviewing online Student & Parent Handbook which is updated annually. School leadership will also solicit input on the Student & Parent handbook.

In order to create awareness of volunteer opportunities and other parental involvement opportunities, the information may be communicated via email and the school website

Audits

Every year Gem Prep: Meridian will hire an independent certified public accountant to conduct an independent audit that complies with all generally accepted auditing standards. At the completion of the audit, the Board will review the results of the audit, approve and accept the audit report and findings. A copy of the audit report will be submitted to the Authorizing entity and the State Department of Education. The school will address any concerns brought up by the audit in a timely manner.

Financial Reporting

Gem Prep: Meridian will comply with the financial reporting requirements of Idaho Code Section 33-701 (5-10). The Board will have prepared and published, within one hundred twenty (120) days from the last day of each fiscal year, an annual statement of financial condition and report of the school as of the end of such fiscal year in a form prescribed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction pursuant to Idaho Code Section 33-701(5)(6).

The Gem Prep: Meridian, Inc., Board will present and discuss all financial matters at public sessions and will post all financial results, budgets, audits, contracts and disbursements electronically on the Gem Prep: Meridian website. The Board will hold an annual public hearing where the budget is discussed in detail. The Board will post notices of all meetings, including financial meetings, at the Gem Prep: Meridian school site as well as two other public sites within the attendance area, such as at a public library.

Such annual statement shall include, but not be limited to, the amounts of money budgeted and received, and from what sources, and the amounts budgeted and expended for salaries and other expenses by category. The annual statement will be submitted to the State Department of Education as required by law.

The school will place copies of all teacher contracts and vendor contracts on the school website. In addition, the school will place a listing of all disbursements on the website and makes available all such information upon request.

Annually, Gem Prep: Meridian will file with the State Department of Education such financial and statistical reports as the SOPI may require pursuant to Idaho Code Section 33-701(7). Gem Prep: Meridian will destroy all claims or vouchers paid five years from the date the same was canceled and paid pursuant to Idaho Code Section 33-701(8).

Gem Prep: Meridian will review the school budget periodically and make appropriate budget adjustments. Amended budgets shall be submitted to the State Department of Education pursuant to Idaho Code Section 33-701(9).

Gem Prep: Meridian will invest any money coming into the hands of the school in investments permitted by section 67-120 of the Idaho Code.

Tab 6: Employee Requirements

Qualifications

Gem Prep: Meridian's full time and part time staff will meet or exceed qualifications required by state law. Instructional staff shall all be certified teachers as required by Idaho Code Section 33-5205(3)(g) and will be Highly Qualified in the teaching positions that require it. This will include Special Education teachers. They will meet the qualifications outlined on the State Department of Education's website Highly Qualified Guidelines and Other Frequently Asked Questions. Administrators will be certified as administrators.

Staff will be required to possess personal characteristics, knowledge, and experience consistent with the philosophy, mission and expectations of Gem Prep: Meridian.

Administrator Qualifications

Gem Prep: Meridian Administrators will meet or exceed qualifications required by state law will be highly qualified and will fit the school model and philosophy. The school leader will have an Idaho principal certification.

Background Checks

All employees, subcontractors, board members, and volunteers who have unsupervised contact with students in a PK – 12 school setting are required to undergo State of Idaho Background Investigation Check and FBI fingerprinting in compliance with Idaho Code 33-130. Each person stated above shall submit the completed fingerprint card or scan to the school who will submit such background check information to the Office of Certification at the State Department of Education.

Health and Safety Procedures

Gem Prep: Meridian will adopt a comprehensive Health and Safety plan in conjunction with feedback from parents and staff. To ensure employee and student safety, Gem Prep: Meridian will comply with health and safety procedures, such as the following:

- 1) All state rules and regulations for student safety will be followed.
- 2) Conduct criminal history check for all employees in compliance with Idaho Code 33-130. This requirement is a condition of employment.
- 3) Require all students have proof of immunization before enrolling.
- 4) Require students to have a birth certificate or other identification before being enrolled at Gem Prep: Meridian.
- 5) Requires that all visitors sign in at the office and receive and wear a visitor's pass when visiting the school building.
- 6) Student check out during the school day will require the person picking up the child to sign the child out at the office and to produce appropriate photo identification.

- 7) Staff will be trained in procedures outlined in the public schools' emergency plan.
- 8) 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, and fire and building codes for public schools. Fire and safety officials using the same guidelines for all public schools will inspect the facility.
- 9) A health / nurse room will be furnished and supplied adequately for the number of students in the school. Health records highlighting chronic issues will be held on each student and made available in emergencies.
- 10) Emergency contact numbers will be maintained on all students. A plan will be in place for quickly contacting parents during an emergency.
- 11) Fire and evacuation drills will be conducted regularly. Maps illustrating fire exit routes will be posted near the exit in every room.
- 12) Gem Prep: Meridian will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety and risk management policies. These policies will be developed in consultation with the school's insurance carriers and, at a minimum, address the above and following items:
 - a) Policies and procedures for response to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and bomb threats.
 - b) Policies relating to preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens.
 - c) A policy requiring that all staff receives training in emergency response.
 - d) Policies relating to the administration of prescription drugs and other medicine.
 - e) A policy that the school will be housed in a facility that has received fire marshal approval and has been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined the facilities present no substantial safety hazard.
 - f) Policies establishing that the school functions as a gun-free, drug, alcohol, and tobacco free workplace.
 - g) A policy regarding internet usage that complies with all requirements set forth in the Children's Internet Protection Act.

Policies are incorporated as appropriate into the school's Student & Parent Handbook, and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis in the school's staff development efforts.

Disciplinary Procedures

At the core of Gem Prep: Meridian's culture will be a commitment to academic excellence, college access and career success. Students will be expected to work hard towards this pursuit and they will be provided with a community of adults who believe that success is possible for all students enrolled in the school. The school views each student as an individual and seeks to develop an educational path that meets his or her needs.

The school realizes that creating a positive, safe, welcoming school culture is paramount to the school's success and the well-being of the students. At Gem Prep: Meridian, the Principal will be the primary lead for school culture, in conjunction with the Assistant Principal (s). S/he will design a comprehensive, consistent, school wide discipline plan with input from teachers. The plan will establish behavioral expectations for students, staff and visitors that encourage a positive and respectful school climate and culture that is essential to creating and maintaining a safe and supportive school community. The school culture plan will also focus on community building, connectedness, and creating an inclusive school—one where

teachers are in the hallways greeting students, or making sure no student is sitting alone at lunch, for example. The school will also create an anonymous reporting system for instances such as bullying, drugs and alcohol, to ensure safety.

The school culture plan will focus on the positive, will be preventative rather than reactionary and will be grounded in research based programs such as Positive Behavior Intervention Systems (PBIS) and Responsive Classrooms. At the core of the culture plan will be Gem Prep: Meridian's philosophy that character development which promotes student respect for themselves and others should be the first focus.

The key components of the school culture plan shall include:

- High expectations for behavior
- A positive, safe, inclusive and supportive learning community
- Respect for oneself, others and the learning environment
- Teaching appropriate behaviors and fostering responsible decision-making skills
- Building character and social-emotional skills: "Habits of Mind"
- The importance of adults modeling the behaviors that we expect from students

Responsive Classroom⁷ has been found to increase student achievement, improve student teacher interactions, and has led to higher quality instruction. The program is rooted in cultivating Habits of Mind that are necessary for success in school, life and the work force. These habits were created in conjunction with the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) standards on social emotional learning, which identify five areas of social emotional learning: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making. Gem Prep: Meridian believes that these skills and habits are essential for students' future success, and as such, the school plans to integrate these programs and skills into both the school culture as well as the academic courses.

Expectations for appropriate student behavior will be high and will be communicated to students regularly. School policies are outlined in the Student & Parent Handbook and will be reviewed at orientations, and the handbook will be available on the Web site. Students will be trained and coached on school culture during daily practice. The school will measure the effectiveness of the school culture plan by tracking attendance, discipline referrals, and academic progress as well as surveying all community members, including teachers, students, and parents.

Discipline at Gem Prep: Meridian will emphasize a positive approach, and the school will expect students to behave in an age-appropriate, respectful way towards adults, classmates in school and personal property. When this does not occur, classroom teachers will use corrective strategies that correlate with the school's philosophy. Teachers and staff will be primarily responsible for the maintenance of proper student behavior both within and outside of the classroom setting during the school day. Every reasonable effort should be

⁷ Please see <https://www.responsiveclassroom.org/about-responsive-classroom> for a detailed description of Responsive Classroom.

made by teachers/staff to solve discipline problems before they are referred to administration.

Procedure by which Students can be Suspended, Expelled and Reenrolled

Gem Prep: Meridian's Student & Parent Handbook follows state law (Idaho Code 33- 205) that outlines a "code of conduct" including expectations and consequences for unacceptable behavior. Suspension or expulsion will be considered only as the final option in a series of efforts to avoid such measures including, but not limited to, the following steps, in chronological order:

1. Parent/Guardian notification by Teacher/Staff (written and/or verbal).
2. Parent/Guardian notification by Teacher/Staff/Principal (written and/or verbal) and possible Parent/Teacher/Principal conference.
3. Possible suspension and prior to suspension if needed, the principal shall grant an informal hearing on the reasons for the suspension and the opportunity to challenge those reasons. Parent notification suspension not to exceed five (5) school days in length.
4. Re-admission after conference with Student/Parent/Principal. Possible additional ten (10) days suspension by the school's board of directors and provided, on a finding by the school's board of directors, that immediate return to school attendance by the suspended student would be detrimental to other pupils' health, welfare or safety, the board of directors may extend the suspension for an additional five (5) school days. Readmission after conference with student/ Parent/ Principal.
5. Expulsion (Idaho code 33-205) by school's board of directors by written notice to the Parent/Guardian of the pupil stating the grounds for expulsion and the time and place where such Parent/Guardian may appear to contest the action of the board. Length of expulsion to be determined by school's board.
6. Readmission after meeting with the Gem Prep: Meridian Board of Directors and Administrator prior to the end of the expulsion. In accordance with Idaho Code 33-205, the school's Board of Directors may deny enrollment or may expel or deny attendance to Gem Prep: Meridian to any pupil who is habitual truant, or who is incorrigible, or whose conduct in the judgement of the Board is such as to be continuously disruptive of school discipline or the instructional effectiveness of the school, or whose presence in a public school is detrimental to the health and safety of other pupils. A student may be readmitted once meeting the expectations set by the board for that student's readmission. For example, if a student has been expelled for injuring another student in anger, the board may require the student to receive anger management counseling, apologize to the injured student, and meet with the teacher and school principal to discuss a plan to avoid similar instances in the future in order to be readmitted to the school.

Please see Appendix Q for the Student & Parent Handbook, which contains detailed information on discipline.

Students with Disabilities

A pupil identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the school has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education

Improvement Act (“IDEA”) or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) will be subject to the same grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, and will be accorded the same due process procedures applicable to regular education pupils except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. The school will follow the IDEA, Section 504, and all applicable federal and state laws, including the procedures outlined in the Idaho Special Education Manual, when imposing any form of discipline on a pupil identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the school has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such pupils.

Contacting Law Enforcement and Student’s Parents

When a student is suspected of being in violation of federal, state, or local law for possession, use, or distribution of any illegal drug or controlled substance, the local law enforcement agency is to be notified immediately. The principal or designee shall communicate all available information to the police and offer the full cooperation of the administration and faculty in a police investigation. The principal or his/her designee will notify a parent or guardian of an interview or detainment of a minor student by law enforcement officials.

Any search, seizure, or subsequent disciplinary action shall be subject to applicable school policies, regulations, state laws or student handbook rules.

The policy will be included in the student handbook and on the school’s website.

Gem Prep: Meridian will comply with Idaho Code Section 33-210. In keeping with the federal regulations established by the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988, Gem Prep: Meridian will be committed to the concept of having a drug free work and student environment. The school’s intent is that programs and activities will be planned and carried out by the professional staff that will enable the school to achieve this goal.

The primary focus of Gem Prep: Meridian’s program shall be educational in nature, with instruction geared to discourage student experimentation of any mood altering substance. The school’s health class will be the first line of defense against drug and alcohol use. A companion focus of this program shall be aimed to assist students who have made unacceptable choices regarding any controlled substance. A necessary part of the latter focus is an attitude among teachers and other staff members that one of their responsibilities is to assist those students who need help in overcoming their potentially addictive behaviors. Gem Prep: Meridian leadership believes that it is possible to have a totally drug free environment in the school setting. If a student cannot, or will not, commit to responsible behavior to help achieve this goal, several sanctions may be imposed as a disciplinary measure. They include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Parent or guardian contacted
- Referral to assistance, such as counselors and/or health professionals
- Referral to an outside agency for chemical dependency assessment and/or treatment

- Suspension from school
- Expulsion from school

Please see Appendix Q for the Student & Parent Handbook.

Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco

The Board of Directors recognizes that student use of chemical substances is a serious problem of utmost concern in our society. Drug, alcohol, and tobacco use is detrimental to a state of well-being and undermines the aim of education, which is to enable individuals to develop to their full potential. The school will seek to ensure the highest standards of learning in the classroom and recognizes that use of chemical substances—including alcohol, tobacco, controlled substances and other substances as defined in the policy—creates educational, economic and legal problems (I.C. 33-210). Gem Prep: Meridian will support prevention, early intervention, and appropriate referral. The school's intent will be to identify and document any behavior/appearance that would be considered problematic to the student.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying/harassment shall be defined as any physical, verbal, cyber, or socially aggressive behavior calculated to intimidate, harm, injure, coerce, ridicule, or threaten. Any staff member observing or suspecting bullying behavior shall intervene.

Please see Appendix Q for the Student & Parent Handbook.

Suicide Prevention

Gem Prep: Meridian will comply with Idaho Code 33-512 B, Suicidal Tendencies-Duty to Warn and Idaho Administrative Procedures Act (IDAPA). 08.02.03.160. Additionally, Gem Prep: Meridian will use the 4-pronged approach recommended in the Idaho Guidelines for Suicide Prevention in Schools:

- *Student Well-Being:* Dr. Thomas Joiner, in his book *Why People Die By Suicide*, documented two major warning signs for suicide: failed belongingness and perceived burdensomeness. School personnel and a strong school culture can play a key role in increasing student feelings of belongingness and capability/effectiveness (non-burdensomeness).
- *Training:* Staff training will include all certified school personnel, in the fall of each new school year. Training will be incorporated into the professional development days, provided to certified teachers prior to the start of each school year.
- *Student Training:* Student prevention will be administered in a regular, relevant class setting, in our health class. The curriculum will focus on warning signs; protective factors, available community mental health services, and a strong message of hope, with the purpose of helping students identify classmates or themselves to prevent suicide. The school will use the following guidelines:
 - Do not present students with curriculum until school personnel, parents, and

- community mental health providers are on board and support is available for those presenting with suicide ideation.
- Do not present student suicide prevention training within six to twelve months of a completed suicide, depending on the readiness of the school community. Continue post-intervention activities.
- *Screening:* It is critical to follow up with students who are identified by the training or coursework as at risk.

Professional Codes and Standards

Staff must comply with the professional codes and standards approved by the State Board of Education, including the Code of Ethics for Idaho Professional Educators outlined in IDAPA 08.02.02.076.

Transfer Rights

Gem Prep: Meridian will be its own Local Education Agency (LEA). No employee transfer rights apply between Gem Prep: Meridian and any other school district.

Employee Benefits

Gem Prep: Meridian will comply with all state and federal laws addressing employment benefits and insurance. At a minimum, all eligible employees will be covered by worker's compensation insurance and unemployment insurance, will have Federal Social Security withheld along with the employer's matching contributions, will be covered under the Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho (PERSI), and will be offered health insurance. It is the intent of Gem Prep: Meridian leadership to offer competitive wages and benefits so that it can recruit and retain talented employees. All employees will contribute to the Federal Social Security System. Gem Prep: Meridian will make all employer contributions as required by PERSI and Federal Social Security. In addition, the school will also pay for worker's compensation insurance, and any other payroll obligations of an employer as required by Idaho Code 33-1279. Gem Prep: Meridian will also allow for accumulation of sick leave as allowed by Idaho Code 33-1217. The Board provides health insurance and may establish other benefits. The Board has developed a process to ensure that all eligible employees are enrolled in one of the school's health insurance plans.

Collective Bargaining

Per Idaho Code 33-5205, Gem Prep: Meridian's staff and employees will be a separate unit for purposed of collective bargaining.

Nondiscrimination in employment

Job postings and all other hiring and employment practices will be free of any unlawful discriminatory language or practices.

Contracts

All teachers and administrators will be on a written contract with Gem Prep: Meridian approved by the Board.

The contract will be conditioned upon a valid certification being held by such professional personnel at the time of entering upon the duties. A copy of all teacher and administrator contracts along with certificates for certified teachers and administrators will be kept on file.

Teacher Professional Development

As a new school, Gem Prep: Meridian will need to hire several new teachers. It is essential that each of these teachers joins the organization ready to have immediate impact on students' education and that they are supported and developed through the course of their career. The school realizes that its model will require specific professional development in order for it to be effective. The school will be thoughtful in approach to hiring and retaining good teachers to ensure that the model is implemented with fidelity.

Please see Appendix N-1 for the Professional Development Plan.

Retention

Gem Prep: Meridian leadership knows that recruiting, selecting and developing high quality teachers is a wasted effort if the organization is unable to retain those teachers so that they continue to have a positive impact on student learning year after year. A key component of the school's retention strategy will be in the development efforts described above. Teachers will be treated as professionals and significant investment will be made in ensuring they continue to improve their craft and feel value in this work. Further, a personalized approach to professional development (PD) will be utilized to make PD more meaningful to each teacher. A professional development plan for each teacher will be created with their supervisor, in accordance with submitting portfolio evidence to ensure that all teachers are successful in the model and that PD is personalized to their individual learning needs.

Teacher Evaluation

Professional development will take a personalized approach. After a self-assessment, teachers will set goals with the school principal at the start of the year. They will be observed multiple times per year by school leadership, and will be evaluated twice per year according to multiple measures, including student achievement and formal observations. Evaluators will meet with teachers at least three times per year to set goals, have a mid-year conference, and have an end of the year, final/summative conference.

Professional Development will be tailored to the needs of teachers as identified in their growth plans. As stated above, all teachers will have a personalized learning plan that identifies their individual needs and lays out a professional development plan that is a mix of in person and online offerings. Teachers will be evaluated according to the Gem Prep: Meridian Rubric, which is aligned to standards.

Teachers who are underperforming will be given coaching and additional resources by both the Academic Administrator and the Principal. The teacher's professional development plan will be adjusted as necessary to assist them.

School Leader/Principal Development

A School Leader/Principal has been hired for Gem Prep: Meridian. The contract began July 1, 2017.

The principal of the school will be evaluated at least once yearly, and will include multiple objective measures such as: teacher observation, parent input, teacher input, survey results, and student achievement results. The plan is also aligned to standards.

Tab 7: Admissions, Discipline, Student Policies

Enrollment

Gem Prep: Meridian enrollment is capped at 732 students in grades K-12. Annually, no less than thirty (30) days prior to Gem Prep: Meridian’s application deadline, the Board of Directors will establish, at its regularly scheduled meeting, by motion and vote, an ‘Annual Enrollment Capacity’ as follows: Based on recommendations from the Administration, the Board will establish: (1) an annual school-wide enrollment capacity not to exceed 732 students; and (2) an annual enrollment capacity for each grade. Each year, the Administration will: (1) Post the Annual Enrollment Capacity information on the Gem Prep: Meridian web site within five (5) days of the Board vote; and (2) conduct the lottery and enrollment process in compliance with the limits established in the Board’s Annual Enrollment Capacity motion and vote.

Enrollment Capacity

In order to assure availability for all students who wish to re-enroll, Gem Prep: Meridian’s enrollment caps will be set at 48 students for grades K-3 and 60 students for grades 4-12. Gem Prep: Meridian will follow Idaho law in cases of over enrollment by utilizing the lottery provision. The chart below outlines the enrollment capacity plan.

Grades 7-12 numbers are larger than the actual anticipated enrollment numbers. These caps are necessitated in order for the school to accommodate all students who wish to continue enrollment. (See the chart on page 18 Tab 2 showing the anticipated enrollment projections for the school.)

Gem Prep: Meridian Enrollment Capacity

Grade	2018-2019 Y1	2019-2020 Y2	2020-2021 Y3	2021-2022 Y4	2022-2023 Y5	2023-2024 Y6
K	48	48	48	48	48	48
1st	48	48	48	48	48	48
2nd	48	48	48	48	48	48
3rd	24	48	48	48	48	48
4th	30	30	60	60	60	60
5th	30	30	30	60	60	60
6th	60	60	60	60	60	60
7th		60	60	60	60	60
8th		60	60	60	60	60
9th			60	60	60	60
10th			60	60	60	60
11th				60	60	60
12th					60	60
	288	432	582	672	732	732

Student Recruitment

Student Recruitment will be owned locally. The principal will be held accountable for meeting their enrollment projections. Equally, if not more important, it will be critical that the school leaders and staff make connections with prospective parents early and feel a sense of ownership for ensuring that they are providing a high quality education that attracts students. Recruitment strategies will include developing partnerships with local preschools, religious and other community organizations, as well as holding information sessions and advertising through local channels and on external communications.

(See Tab 2 for detailed recruitment plan and actual anticipated enrollment numbers.)

Admissions Procedures

Gem Prep: Meridian will be open to all children, on a space-available basis within each grade. No student will be denied admission based on ethnicity, creed, gender, disability, or place of residence. No out of state residents will be enrolled.

Gem Prep: Meridian will follow the equitable selection process that is outlined in IDAPA 08.02.04.203.07 or another method that is approved by the authorizer.

As a public charter school, Gem Prep: Meridian must, as a condition of its charter, have an open enrollment policy. Charter schools have a cap or limit as to the number of students they

can accept. If the number of applications to a charter school exceeds the capacity of the school, all applicants will have an equal chance of being admitted through a random selection process or lottery.

Gem Prep: Meridian will follow the model admission procedure identified by the Idaho State Board of Education.

1. Prospective students will be given the opportunity to enroll regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, sex, social or economic status, or special needs.
2. Prior to enrollment each year, Gem Prep: Meridian will advertise in local media and online and make application forms available online. The application will include information pertinent to filling available slots.
3. Gem Prep: Meridian's full-time employee's children will have first preference for admission to the school, with a maximum of 10% of the student population consisting of full-time employee's children.
4. Siblings of students already selected by lottery will be given next priority.
5. Prospective students residing in the primary attendance area of the school will be the next priority.
6. All other students residing outside of the attendance area will be the final priority.

Gem Prep: Meridian will substantially follow the model admission procedure identified by the Idaho State Board of Education.

Requests for Admission

Gem Prep: Meridian will comply with Section 33-5205 (3)(j) Idaho Code. A parent, guardian, or other person with legal authority to make decisions regarding school attendance on behalf of a child in this state, may make a request in writing for such child to attend Gem Prep: Meridian. In the case of a family with more than one (1) child seeking to attend Gem Prep: Meridian, one written request for admission must be submitted on behalf of all siblings. The written request for admission must be submitted to, and received by, Gem Prep: Meridian on or before the enrollment deadline established by Gem Prep: Meridian. The written request for admission shall contain the name, grade level, address, and telephone number of each prospective student. If the initial capacity of Gem Prep: Meridian is insufficient to enroll all prospective students, a lottery (as outlined above) shall be utilized to determine which prospective students will be admitted to Gem Prep: Meridian. Only those written requests for admission submitted on behalf of prospective students that are received prior to the enrollment deadline established by Gem Prep: Meridian shall be permitted in the lottery. Written requests for admission received after the established enrollment deadline will be added to the bottom of the final selection list for the appropriate grade.

Lottery Process

Gem Prep: Meridian will hold a lottery each year unless the initial capacity of Gem Prep: Meridian is sufficient to enroll all prospective students. The lottery will be held in a public forum and a neutral 3rd party will conduct the lottery selection. Gem Prep: Meridian will determine the students who will be offered admission by conducting a fair and equitable lottery conducted according to IDAPA 08.02.04.203 and Idaho Code 33-5205.

Waiting Lists

Once the equitable selection process is conducted each year, waiting lists for each grade will be developed. Students will be placed on the list according to the order they were drawn for each priority group. Those lists will be used to fill available spots until the next equitable selection process is conducted. If a student does not accept an offer for enrollment or the parent does not respond to the offer by the date designated in the offer, the student's name will be removed from the list and the next eligible student will be offered the seat.

Any written requests for admission received after the lottery has been conducted will be added to the bottom of the wait list for the appropriate grade and preference group.

Wait lists will not carry over from one year to the next.

All openings during the school year will be filled according to the order of the wait list. If a parent, guardian, or other person receives an offer on behalf of a student and declines admission, or fails to respond to such an offer in a timely manner by the date designated in such offer by Gem Prep: Meridian, then the name of such student will be stricken from the wait list, and the seat that opens in that grade will be made available to the next eligible student on the wait list.

Written requests for admission received after the lottery has been conducted will be added to the bottom of the wait list for the appropriate grade. If a student is enrolled in Gem Prep: Meridian, and their sibling is on the waitlist, the sibling student will advance to the bottom of the sibling waitlist for their respective grade level, in accordance with (Rules Governing Public Charter Schools) IDAPA 08.02.04.203.04.

The names of the persons in highest order on the final selection list shall have the highest priority for admission to Gem Prep: Meridian in that grade, and shall be offered admission to Gem Prep: Meridian in such grade until all seats for that grade are filled.

Attendance Requirements and Records

Consistent attendance is essential to remaining in the Gem Prep: Meridian program. Gem Prep: Meridian students will meet or exceed the instructional hours as outlined in Idaho Code: 450 hours for kindergarten; 810 hours for grades 1-3; 900 hours for grades 4-6; and 990 hours for grades 7-12.

Notification of Enrollment Opportunities

In accordance with IDAPA08.02.02.203.02, Gem Prep: Meridian will ensure that the public notification process of enrollment opportunities will include the dissemination of enrollment information, at least three months in advance of the enrollment deadline established by Gem Prep: Meridian each year. The information will be posted in highly visible and prominent locations within the attendance area of the school, as well as on the school's website. In addition, Gem Prep: Meridian will ensure that such process includes the dissemination of press release or public service announcements to media outlets such as television, radio, and newspapers that broadcast within, or disseminate printed publications within, the area of attendance of the school. Gem Prep: Meridian will ensure that such announcements are broadcast or published by such media outlets on at least three occasions, beginning no later than fourteen days prior to the enrollment deadline each year. Enrollment information shall advise that all prospective students will be given the opportunity to enroll in the public charter school regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origin, religion, gender, social or economic status, or special needs.

Denial of Attendance

In accordance with Idaho Code 33-205, the school's Board of Directors may deny enrollment or may expel or deny attendance to Gem Prep: Meridian to any pupil who is a habitual truant (I.C. 33-201), or who is incorrigible, or whose conduct, in the judgment of the Board, is such as to be continuously disruptive of school discipline or the instructional effectiveness of the school, or whose presence in a public school is detrimental to the health and safety of other pupils, or who has been expelled from another school district in this state or any other state. Any pupil having been denied enrollment or expelled may be enrolled or readmitted to the school by the Board of Directors upon such reasonable conditions as may be prescribed by the Board, but such enrollment or readmission shall not prevent the Board from again expelling such pupil for cause.

The process for expulsion and denial of attendance is in Tab 6 under Student Discipline. For Special Education cases, refer to Tab 3 under Special Education Services.

Student & Parent Handbook

Gem Prep: Meridian has developed a draft K-6 Student & Parent Handbook, which outlines school policies, Internet Use, and disciplinary procedures. As the school grows, a secondary handbook will be developed to reflect the laws applicable at that time.

In order to ensure that both parents and students understand the expectation for students at Gem Prep: Meridian, handbook policies will be reviewed at orientation, and will be available on the school's Web site.

Please see Appendix Q for the Student & Parent Handbook.

Internet Use

Gem Prep: Meridian will have a comprehensive, realistic and enforceable Internet Use Policy, which will include parent permission.

Tab 8: Business Plan, Transportation and School Lunch

Business Plan

Gem Prep: Meridian is a non-profit organization organized and managed under the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act. The Corporation is organized exclusively for educational purposes within the meaning Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (“IRS Code”), or the corresponding provisions of any future federal income tax code and has received an IRS determination letter effective December 23, 2016. The Articles of Incorporation for Gem Prep: Meridian were filed with the Secretary of the State of Idaho on December 23, 2016. Charter schools face the challenges of tight budgets resulting in part from not having access to the local taxes that traditional public schools enjoy. The non-profit status is important in accessing contributions from entities that are willing to donate to the programs of charter schools.

Marketing Plan

Gem Prep: Meridian leadership believes that the best marketing strategy is to deliver an excellent education for students which produces strong results. The school can tell this story to a broad range of external stakeholders. In addition to the most critical audiences of prospective families and teachers, the organization will seek opportunities to proactively build a brand around innovation that establishes Gem Prep: Meridian as a national leader in the realm of next generation learning. The school will engage in a variety of marketing and relationship building activities in an effort to bolster enrollment and solidify the brand within the community. This may be accomplished through a variety of tools capable of reaching a wide cross section of the local community, which continues to include underserved and at-risk families. The school intends to participate in successful outreach opportunities such as:

- Participation in community and other **networking events**, e.g. fairs, family days, parades, special zoo events, holiday activities, etc. The current bilingual principal attends most of these community functions.
- **Social Media**: Facebook, Community Calendars
- Gem Prep: Meridian **Web site**
- **Brochures and Posters** handed out and placed on community bulletin boards, the local swimming pool, rec center, local public libraries, and other family gathering places, as well as shared with local community leadership groups such as rotary, etc. Principal participates in outreach activities where he can meet face-to-face with constituents.
- **Local media coverage**, news releases and articles - specifically identifying that the school is open to all students within the enrollment area and serves-equally-all demographics.
- **Invitations to campus** given to legislators, community leaders, philanthropists, local businesses, etc.
- **Signage on campus** and at public events; in languages appropriate to

demographics of the enrollment area.

- Participation in **community support drives** with other schools and local businesses.
- **Events** (open houses, summer socials on campus, gatherings at local community activities, and summer lunches in the park, etc.)
- Participation in **PTO activities**, fund raisers and community projects on and off campus
- **Relationship building** with local libraries; partnering with them in various venues for student story-time and outreach opportunities to reach a wide-range of constituents.

The School's marketing plan intends to reach a diverse cross section of families. The School intends to have a diverse student body that represents many different populations including underserved populations, minorities, as well as to all within the enrollment area.

Management Plan

The Gem Prep: Meridian, Inc., Board of Directors is the governing board of the Gem Prep: Meridian school and has ultimate control over the school and all employee and parent concerns. If a parent or employee has a concern, they will first attempt to resolve the issue with the school principal. If the issue cannot be resolved with the principal, the parent or employee may attempt a resolution with the School Academic Administrator and then the School Director. If their concern is still not resolved, it will be brought before the Gem Prep: Meridian board.

Please see Appendix D-1 for resumes of the Board of Directors.

The organization chart below demonstrates the reporting and interaction structure for Gem Prep: Meridian.

The Board of Directors is responsible:

- For policy development and review
- For the financial health of the school
- For administrative and operational oversight (not day-to-day operations)
- For the legal affairs of Gem Prep: Meridian, Inc.
- To adopt, advocate for and oversee a school budget, which is responsive to school goals and meets the needs of all students
- To conduct an annual self-evaluation of its own leadership, governance and teamwork.
- To communicate and interpret the school's mission and other policy related matters to the public and stakeholders.
- To ensure there is a supportive, smoothly operating leadership team which advocates for both children and the community.

School Director works under the direction of the Board. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Implement the vision and mission of the school
- Recommend to the Board the hiring of personnel
- Fulfill state charter school requirements
- Insure GPP meets the performance requirements outlined in the performance cert
- Execute the policies of the Board
- Act as the intermediary between the Board and stakeholders
- Make recommendation to the Board on issues facing the school
- Strategic Planning

Business Manager works under the direction of the school Director. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Monthly and annual financial reporting to the board and outside entities
- Budgeting
- Day to day financial operations and accounting
- Financial records
- Purchasing and contracts
- State reporting requirements
- Payroll
- Insurance
- Benefits

Academic Administrator works under the direction of the school Director. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Develop curriculum, instruction and assessment
- Recommend special services
- Implement professional development
- Supply annual educational reports
- Supervise and evaluate school principal
- State assessment planning
- Oversee hiring educational staff and provide recommendations

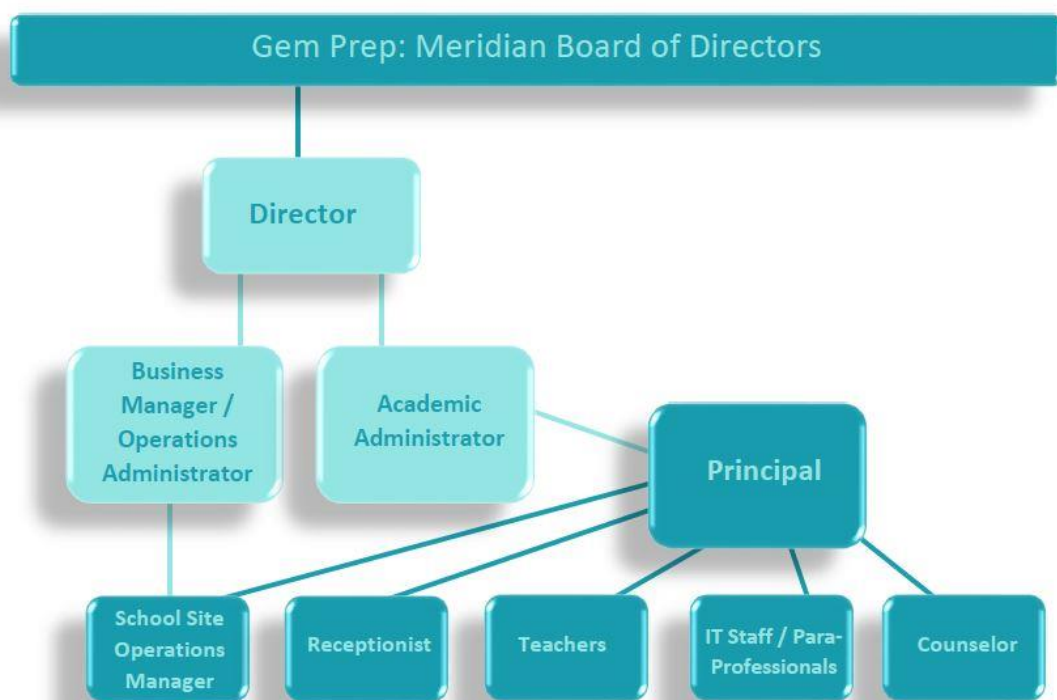
Operations Administrator works under the direction of the school Director. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Facilities management
- Supervise school operations employee
- Transportation
- Nutrition
- Building security and student safety
- Technology

Principal works under the direction of the Academic Administrator. Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Parent and public relations
- Building school wide community and culture
- Student and staff discipline.
- Participate in curriculum development
- Supervise student scheduling
- School Calendar
- Marketing
- Conduct all staff evaluations
- Provide teacher mentoring and coaching
- Resolve personnel issues
- Oversee substitute teacher roster, training and evaluation
- Student enrollment and records
- Attendance

The following organizational chart is the initial proposed plan. The school anticipates minor changes over the course of school growth.



School's Financial Plan

Budget

The budget for Gem Prep: Meridian is prepared in compliance with Idaho Code Section 33-801 and rules of the State Board of Education; is presented at a public hearing in June of each

school year; and will be delivered to the State Department of Education as required on or before July 15th for the subsequent school year. Copies of the budget will be provided to any interested parties via the Gem Prep: Meridian website. Further, the budget will be prepared, approved, and filed using the required accounts associated with the Idaho Financial Accounting Reporting Management System (IFARMS).

See Appendix F for Three Year Operating Budget with Assumptions.

See Appendix I-2 for Detailed Fiscal Impact Three Year.

Income sources

Funding sources will include SDE foundation payments based on support units by grade, staff apportionment and benefits based on support units, transportation reimbursement based on current year expenditures and directed program payments in support of specific SDE initiatives.

Any federal funds for Title I, Title II and Title VI-B will be calculated through the prescribed formulae and submitted within required deadlines.

The leadership team has raised over 5 million dollars in grant funding to assist Gem Prep: Meridian, as well as other Gem Prep Schools, with start-up costs.

Fundraising Plan

The Board of Directors, Administrator, and/or parent organizations will be responsible for fundraising efforts, if implemented, to generate capital or to supplement per-pupil allocations.

In addition, the school, will either employ or contract services for a Development Director. The Development Director will continually strive to identify, educate and cultivate key donors who are capable of making major gifts.

Please see Appendix E-1 for the grant letter from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation (JAKAF) and Appendix E-2 for the JAKAF Grant Distribution Letter.

Operating Expenditures

Gem Prep: Meridian will operate under a purchase order system in compliance with Idaho Code Section 33-601. All expenditure requests are signed off by the appropriate operating personnel and approved by the Finance Department. Pursuant to Idaho Code Section - 67-2302 the school will pay all of its operating obligations no later than 60 days after receipt of invoice. All operating expenditures will be approved monthly at regularly scheduled Board meetings.

Non-operating expenditures

Non-operating expenditures are based on the specific terms set out in the agreement. Non-operating expenditures are generally limited non-recurring expenditures and debt service obligations.

Cash Flow

The Business Manager will reconcile cash flow monthly to the bank statements and compare

the current monthly expenditures to the monthly cash plan approved by the Board, and perform a variance analysis and reports to the Board on a monthly basis.

Financial Management

The accounting records will be kept and maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Gem Prep: Meridian, will follow the reporting requirements set forth by the Idaho State Department of Education IFARMS.

The Board of Directors will be ultimately responsible for financial management. The Board delegates the day-to-day financial management and day-to-day accounting of the school to the Business Manager. The Business Manager, in conjunction with his/her team (including the school operations manager at the school site), will complete a monthly review of operating results and present such results to the Board.

In addition to the annual audit (see Tab 5), a report to the Board will be given which includes any material weaknesses in internal controls and/or operating inefficiencies that should be addressed in the coming year.

The school will institute various segregation of duties to assist in the assurance that there is propriety required to protect the school's books and records, including receipt and deposit of cash, payment of expenditures and reconciliation of accounts and records.

Pre-Opening Plan and Timeline

The pre-opening timeline can be found in Appendix M.

Transportation Plan

Gem Prep: Meridian plans to offer student transportation in their first year. School leadership is currently investigating two options for transportation. Based on a successful implementation of a similar plan at Gem Prep: Pocatello, the first option will take advantage of public transportation allowing students to ride the public bus system to and from school. The school plans to negotiate with Valley Ride on the use of current and future public bus routes for their students. The second option will be contracted services. Gem Prep: Meridian will follow all state reporting requirements for transportation per Idaho Code 33-5208(4). A formal bid process as outlined by the Idaho State Department of Education and Idaho Code 33-402(2) will be followed. Transportation will be provided to the student population as outlined in Idaho Code 33-5208(4)(a)(b).

Students with special needs will be provided transportation in accordance with requirements of state and federal law. A student's IEP will determine if transportation is required and the best method of transportation. All transportation will adhere to the IDEA. Transportation of field trips, excursions, and extracurricular activities will be provided by the school through contracted services, and supported through appreciated donations from families, as well as philanthropic avenues.

School Lunch Program

The Gem Prep: Meridian Board will adopt policies relating to school lunch in accordance with federal and state laws. Gem Prep: Meridian believes that no child should go without food and intends to provide a lunch program to students.

Gem Prep: Meridian is currently investigating two options for implementing the lunch program.

Option 1:

Gem Prep: Meridian will seek a partnership with the West Ada School District. Following the model used at Gem Prep: Nampa, the district manages the full nutrition program including state and federal reporting, collection of FRL forms from families, and food preparation and delivery. Lunches will be delivered daily to the school. Gem Prep: Meridian expects there to be a contracted fee for delivery of the lunches, however, payments for food and federal reimbursement will flow directly through West Ada SD. The School Operations Manager will manage the serving of lunch using a combination of school staff and parent volunteers.

Option 2:

Gem Prep: Meridian will contract with a local catering company to provide daily lunches. Families will fill out orders and make payments online through a web portal. Though this option may not include participation in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the school intends to offer free and reduced lunches to those who qualify. The catering company will deliver lunches daily to the school. The School Operations Manager will manage the serving of lunch using a combination of school staff and parent volunteers.

Gem Prep: Meridian may not initially participate in the National Lunch Program, however, free and reduced data will be collected annually by individual FRL forms and/or through Direct Certification. The forms will be collected at the beginning of each school year. Gem Prep: Meridian will pursue receiving a high percentage of respondents to the FRL survey. Students who qualify for free or reduced lunches will be offered a lunch for free or at a reduced price, whether or not the school participates in the NSLP program.

Families will be notified about the nutrition options through various communication avenues such as on-campus events like 'back to school night', as well as in-house announcement TV screen, Facebook, flyers, teacher newsletters, principal newsletter, emails, etc.

Purchased Services

See Tab 10 for a list of possible vendors.

Tab 9: Virtual Charter School

This section is not applicable to Gem Prep: Meridian.

Tab 10: Business Arrangements, Community Involvement, School Closure

Gem Prep: Meridian will purchase curriculum from several curriculum providers such as:

Pearson for ReadyGen digital courseware, Prentice Hall Common Core Literature digital courseware, Life Science and Physical Science digital courseware, Integrate High School Math digital courseware, Digits Math grades 6-8 digital courseware. Scott Foresman Social Studies textbooks.

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt for Science Fusion, World History, The Americans and World Geography interactive online subscriptions.

Singapore Math grade K-5 textbooks

Handwriting Without Tears workbooks

iReady for Diagnostic and Instruction Math and Reading site licenses

Kindergarten through sixth grade does not share teachers with other schools. However, beginning in fall 2019, Gem Prep: Meridian plans to share educators for the secondary model. For this arrangement, there are two possible strategies being considered: 1) one to one sharing with no monetary exchange: i.e. a biology teacher in Gem Prep: Pocatello will telecast to classes in Gem Prep: Nampa and Gem Prep: Meridian and vice versa an English teacher in Meridian will telecast to classes in Pocatello and Nampa. 2) a split FTE: i.e. a teacher will be contracted on three school payrolls—possibly a .4 FTE for Gem Prep: Nampa, a .4 FTE for Gem Prep: Meridian and a .2 FTE for Gem Prep: Pocatello. All options will be discussed with the Idaho State Department of Education prior to implementation.

Business Arrangements

Gem Prep: Meridian, Inc., does not currently have contracts with other schools, businesses or individuals. When Gem Prep: Meridian, Inc., is authorized to operate the program as a charter school and becomes an LEA, possible key business arrangements will be:

Regence: Used to service employee health insurance plans.

Delta Dental: Used to service employee dental insurance plans.

MSBT Law: A full service law firm, used in representing and advising in the areas of general and municipal law, education law, administrative law, employment law, etc.

Excent Corporation: Gem Prep: Meridian will utilize Enrich Special Education Software to facilitate file management of IEPs and student special education records.

Hayden, Ross, PLLC: An independent, full-service CPA firm will be used for independent audits of school finances.

Illuminate Education, Inc.: Gem Prep: Meridian will use the Illuminate Data and Assessment program which provides tools to access real-time data; allowing teachers to flexibly group students, align tests with state content standards, efficiently analyze data for RTI protocol, etc.

ICRMP: Used for loss protection for property and casualty insurance coverage, exclusive to Idaho local governments.

Instructure, Inc.: Gem Prep: Meridian will utilize the Canvas software application for the administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and data delivery for the School's learning management system.

Power School: Used to manage the student information system for online enrollment and registration, as well as managing school processes and data.

Tyler Technologies: Used for public sector accounting software and technology services.

Possible Community Partners:

- **Gem Prep: Meridian PTO:** Administration will attend PTO meetings. The School and PTO will work well together, boosting parent involvement, communication, community awareness, project funding, etc.
- **Idaho Charter School Network:** Partner with Gem Prep: Meridian to advocate for policy conducive to positive charter school outcomes.
- **J.A & Kathryn Albertson Foundation:** Has provided generous philanthropic support for the growth of Gem Prep: Meridian.
- **Idaho School Board Association:** Utilized to provide board training, staff training and legal advice.
- **Idaho Association of School Business Officials:** Utilized as a partner for school finance training, networking, finance laws and budgeting expertise.

Please see Appendix E-1 for JAKAF Grant Award Letter and Appendix E-2 for JAKAF Grant Distribution Letter.

Termination of the Charter/School Closure

In case of termination, the Chairman of the Board of Directors will be responsible for the dissolution of the School.

Prior to any school closure decision, a closure protocol will be developed to ensure timely notification to parents, orderly transition of students and student records to new schools, and proper disposition of school funds, property and assets, in accordance with Idaho law.

Pursuant to Idaho Code 33-5212, the assets for the school shall be distributed first to satisfy outstanding payroll obligations for employees of the school, including any tax, public

employee retirement system and other employee benefit obligations, then to creditors of the school, and then to the authorized chartering entity in the case of a public charter school authorized by the board of a local school district. In the case of a public charter school authorized by any other authorized chartering entity, any remaining assets shall be distributed to the public school income fund. Assets purchased using federal funds shall be returned to the authorized chartering entity for redistribution among other public charter schools. If the assets of the school are insufficient to pay all parties to whom the school owes compensation, the prioritization of the distribution of assets may be determined by decree of a court of law.

Within a month after the determination to dissolve the school, the Chairman will contact the parents of past and present students informing them of the process to obtain student school records and/or to which school the records should be forwarded. The School will send written notification to parents of students at their last known address and will email the parents at their last known email. The notification will explain how to request a transfer of student records to a specific school, where to obtain records before dissolution, and where the records will be stored after dissolution. The School will send the records to the school requested by the parents. Parents can either email or send written instructions.

Within two months after the final school year, the Chairman will direct the remaining student records to parents for whom the school has mailing addresses. Any remaining student records will be stored in a secure location for the legal limit. The school will maintain a Facebook page or similar page stating who to contact for student records.

The Chairman will direct all personnel records to all former employees of the school. All former employees shall receive their personnel records within one month after the final school year.

Gem Prep: Meridian will fund and complete a final fiscal audit. The audit will be submitted to the Idaho Public Charter School Commission and the State Department of Education.

See Appendix A-3 for the Bylaws.