



AWARDED APPLICATION PROJECT NARRATIVE

White Pine Charter School

*White Pine STEM
Academy
Expansion*

Communities of Excellence Application Narrative

Executive Summary

White Pine Charter School was opened in 2003 as a K-8 Core Knowledge charter school. We have a history of excellence, including being eastern Idaho's only Five Star K-8 school when Idaho used the star system to evaluate schools. We have heard from students and parents throughout our history that our accelerated approach to learning often leaves students underwhelmed by the lack of rigorous high school options. In order to address this educational gap in our community, for the past several years, our Board and Administration has been trying to plan an expansion to high school. We are excited that we have now been authorized by the Public Charter School Commission to expand our school to a high school.

To accomplish this expansion, we will be dividing our school into two programs: White Pine Charter School, a K-6 school that will continue to use Core Knowledge; and the White Pine STEM Academy, a 7-12 school that will utilize mastery and project-based learning to prepare students to for college and career in a world that is becoming increasingly reliant on science, technology, engineering and mathematics. In 2019-2020, we will be expanding to ninth grade and aim to serve 56 additional students. In addition, we will be adding a fourth-grade class, enabling the K-6 to serve an additional 25 students. In the 2020-2021 school year, we will add 10th grade and aim to serve an additional 56 students at the STEM Academy as well as an additional fifth-grade class, adding an additional 26 students to the K-6.

We are submitting this proposal for Communities of Excellence funding to supplement the state and federal funds we will already receive with regards to these additional students so that we can offer a state-of-the-art education to students in eastern Idaho and to secure long-term success for this new venture.

A. Grant Project Goals

The White Pine Charter School and the White Pine STEM Academy have four goals in which it hopes to use Communities of Excellence funding to accomplish.

Goal 1: White Pine Charter School and White Pine STEM Academy will provide a dynamic and technologically advanced learning environment that ensures the schools exceed state-wide benchmarks for achievement and growth on ISAT scores in language arts and mathematics.

The mission of White Pine Charter School and the White Pine STEM Academy is “Success for Every Student”. One of the metrics that is used to demonstrate the commitment to this are the aggregate ISAT scores for our school. Simply put, schools with higher ISAT scores have demonstrated that they have strong educational practices and have been successful in facilitating student growth.

Goal 2: White Pine STEM Academy students will participate in Advanced Opportunities programs, such that:

- 1) 80% of all middle school students will complete at least one Advanced Opportunity available to middle school students; and***
- 2) 100% of all students in grades 9-12 will attempt at least one Advanced Opportunity, and 90% will successfully complete at least one Advanced Opportunity available to high school students.***

White Pine Charter School has always believed in accelerated learning, and our expansion into the White Pine STEM Academy will not be different. In order to ensure this, we have a high expectation of our students participating in Advanced Opportunities while enrolled in our school.

Goal 3: White Pine STEM Academy students will earn a professional certification such that:

- 1) At least 75% of middle school students will earn at least one Microsoft Office certification before the completion of eight grade; and***
- 2) At least 65% of White Pine STEM Academy high school students will earn at least one Adobe certification before graduation.***

In 2017, members of the White Pine Charter School Administration and Board of Directors had the opportunity to tour a STEM-based high school in eastern Washington along with members of the Idaho state legislature. One of the things that stood out in the curriculum for the school that was visited was that all students in the school work on Microsoft Office and Adobe certifications. The response from our legislators was that we need to do build these certifications into the curriculum of the school we were designing and, ideally, get students to start working on the certifications before they are in high school. At the STEM Academy all middle school students will take at least one class on Microsoft Office and all high school students will take a class on Adobe Photoshop, both culminating with certification exams.

Goal 4: White Pine Charter School and White Pine STEM Academy will target recruitment such that enrollment is composed of a combined average of non-white, English Language learner, special needs, and economically disadvantaged students within five percent of the local representation for this combined group.

One of the objectives of the STEM Academy is to provide an education that will prepare students for college and careers. We recognize that students who are economically disadvantaged and those who non-white have a disproportionate amount of opportunities to develop skills that will transfer to college and careers. Therefore, we will increase our efforts to

reach out to these students in particular. Further, we anticipate that students on the autism spectrum will be drawn to our mastery-based education program and technical curriculum. We want to be sure that we target recruitment so that these students are able to take advantage of a program that may maximize their ability to be successful.

B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum

Educational Philosophy

White Pine's philosophy is grounded in the belief that highly challenging content in a safe environment creates the setting for accelerated learning. We believe that students learn when:

- a) students are taught to be life-long learners;
- b) students construct meaning;
- c) students see the connection between what they learn and the real world;
- d) students are actively engaged in purposeful tasks;
- e) activities are integrated and meaningful;
- f) students are allowed differentiated learning opportunities;
- g) students are encouraged to explore and master learning skills;
- h) students work individually and as members of a group;
- i) students are encouraged to apply their personal interest in classroom assignments;
- j) students and faculty have time built into the schedule for consistent and continual collaboration on class assignments and educational program;
- k) students are given opportunities to seek understanding of other beliefs, opinions and cultures;
- l) all students have advanced learning opportunities; and

m) students see themselves as part of the community and find ways to serve the community.

To achieve these conditions, staff and faculty will succeed when they:

- a) Create a highly-personalized, open, and trusting learning environment for all students and their families;
- b) Expect students to produce high quality work that is presented to the public;
- c) Create a school culture where character counts, and exploration, reflection, and learning through failure is a part of the learning process;
- d) Weave science, technology, engineering, and mathematics into every subject;
- e) Integrate the study of English language arts and social studies into STEM subjects;
- f) Ensure that curriculum is rigorous and relevant through intensive STEM community involvement;
- g) Help students understand how they learn best, by working in teams, and producing meaningful individual outcomes;
- h) Build a network of teachers, advisors, parents, business and community leaders, and mentors to inspire and support students to achieve success in the local STEM community and beyond; and
- i) Create an environment where students develop academic and personal skills and habits for success.

WPCS and the STEM Academy will be the greenhouse to nurture and grow a new generation of technically savvy learners and scientifically literate citizens who will possess and use

knowledge, skills, creative thinking, and positive attitude to pursue technical training, post-secondary education, productive career paths, and enjoy healthy and happy lives.

Instructional Practices

Students attending WPCS and the STEM Academy will see substantive differences from other area educational opportunities, including:

- a) An extended academic day;
- b) Study of a second language;
- c) Required homework;
- d) Written and signed disciplinary policy; and
- e) Required dress code.

WPCS believes that learning is done on the student's level. Accordingly, we have created learning environments that foster interaction between the teacher and students. Our elementary classrooms are set up with tables instead of individual desks to facilitate small group and individualized learning. We employ a speaker system that allows teachers to move around the classroom while being heard clearly from anywhere in the classroom. Technology is integrated into instructional practices, as the K-6 program has at least 1:2 device to student ratio. The school uses iPads for Kindergarten and 1st grade and Chromebooks in grades 2-6. Students are encouraged to enhance their learning with online programs like Lexia for literacy, Kahn Academy for math, and Discovery Learning for social studies and science. The technology ratio is also critical to facilitate our ongoing growth assessments using I-Ready and our state required assessments, such as I-Station (formerly the Idaho Reading Indicator) and ISAT testing.

The STEM Academy will employ a mastery-based approach to instruction. In this role, teachers will spend less time lecturing and more time facilitating learning through individualized assignments. Like the elementary school, classrooms will be furnished with tables instead of individual desks to encourage collaboration and small group learning. As students work through the program, their flexibility will increase, and our commons area will be set up with additional spaces for high school students to collaborate on their own schedules. Students will enjoy a 1:1 device to student ratio. Classrooms will all be set up with interactive/smart projectors. Most classrooms will utilize Chromebooks, but our Computer Applications classroom will take place in a PC lab. Science labs will be equipped with state-of-the-art equipment, including zSpace simulators to allow students to participate in virtual reality experiments. Teachers will utilize a Learning Management System to propagate individualized assignments and track progress towards learning objectives. The school will provide access to Google Classroom and Schoology as Learning Management Systems, to be employed based on individual teacher preferences.

Curriculum

White Pine Charter School was founded in 2003 using the Core Knowledge curriculum. The K-6 program will continue to use this as its core curriculum and fill in with state standards, as necessary (for example, in 4th grade we have extensive modules on Idaho history). We complement Core Knowledge with the Core Knowledge Language Arts curriculum and we are currently evaluating and selecting a new math curriculum to be implemented for grades K-6 during the 2019-20 school year. We have a rotation of “specials” that give all elementary students time with Art, Music, PE, Spanish, and Keyboarding instruction each week.

White Pine STEM Academy will branch away from Core Knowledge for grades 7-12. Our mathematics curriculum is Eureka math. We will be investing in Project Lead the Way for computer science, biomedical science, and engineering curriculums. These curriculums are web-based and feature their own Learning Management System. Language arts, social studies, and science teachers will be empowered to build their own curriculum that meets or exceeds the Idaho state standards. These curricula will include STEM concepts and reinforce learning from other classes. In addition, since they will be taught via mastery-based learning, they will involve more individualized assignments and afford students more opportunities to work at their own pace. We will also partner with the College of Eastern Idaho to allow juniors and seniors to shuttle to the CEI campus and take concurrent enrollment classes for both high school and college credits. Based on visits to STEM schools in Washington, northern Idaho, and Ohio, we have developed a preliminary course of study that includes four full years of language arts and math as well as junior and senior level internships.

C. Teaching and Learning

All academic programs are differentiated through a team approach, allowing teachers to teach from their strengths. Teachers may specialize in subject areas, allowing them to focus on teaching as well as exposing students to different teaching personalities. Time is scheduled to provide teachers with time to collaborate and participate in professional development to assure team success. WPCS leverages local community resources and opportunities for experiential learning through community involvement, expeditionary/field learning, service projects, and internships. The school intends for each student to obtain a sense of community and neighborhood that provides a lifelong sense of belonging and confidence.

It is highly important for WPCS students to be challenged, to be taught as individuals, and to learn in a safe, educational environment that allows them to learn about today's world and equips them with the tools to reshape and improve the world of tomorrow.

WPCS intends to meet the goal of producing students who possess the academic and personal habits and attitudes desired of an educated citizen in the 21st century. Goal attainment is assessed by ongoing student testing and staff professional development. The receiving teacher will have intimate knowledge of curriculum and the strengths and weakness of the students. The school monitors student progress throughout the year with periodic assessments using I-Ready, a tool that measures and monitors language arts and math achievement and I-Station (formerly the Idaho Reading Indicator) which measures reading aptitude and growth for students throughout the year through grade 3. In addition to I-Ready and I-Station, teachers use curriculum-based assessments and other objective forms of data (such as completion of learning objectives) to identify the individual needs of students. For all assessments, student growth is the priority over aptitude on a single assessment. The school will know if it accomplishes its goals by the continuing success rate of its students and by their scores on standardized tests.

White Pine teachers constantly use data to pursue and identify opportunities to differentiate education. Students in the bottom 25% of benchmark assessments are referred to the Response to Intervention (RTI) team to identify additional classroom interventions to help them be able to achieve appropriate benchmark scores. Each grade level is discussed by the RTI team approximately once a month so that there are frequent updates on the progress of students and the effectiveness of interventions. This data-based decision making provides teachers with

resources and targeted interventions to help them meet the needs of identified students. It is a collaborative effort to make sure all students succeed. Teachers also assess student progress weekly to drive decisions. Students are discussed throughout the school year until they have made enough growth to just be monitored by their classroom teacher and don't need RTI support. Accelerated students are given differentiated instruction through higher reading level book assignments, individualized or small group math assignments, and opportunities to complete alternative assignments and projects. White Pine has an after school gifted and talented program that meets twice a week. This year, gifted and talented students have been building their own drones.

In order to facilitate achievement of the school's mission "Success for Every Student", White Pine began implementing Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) during the 2016-17 school year. PBIS is a three-tiered program. All students are exposed to the Tier 1 PBIS program, which emphasizes Willing, Positive, Connected, and Significant (WPCS) behaviors in a large group setting. For 80% of students our Tier 1 interventions are sufficient for the student to find success. For the other 20% of students, we provide Tier 2 supports which involve assigning students a P.A.W.S. (Pause and Work Smart) Coach to help students work on two individualized goals and provide positive feedback. For 15% of students, this intervention is sufficient for the student to find success. For the remaining 5%, Tier 3 supports are necessary, which are more comprehensive and individualized based on the outcome of student, parent, and teacher interviews as well as observations.

D. Student Academic Achievement Standards

WPCS and the STEM Academy uses the state adopted Idaho Content Standards as a minimum threshold for the content delivered to its students. All curriculum is aligned with state standards and emphasizes developing skills and key competencies in personal responsibility, expanding and integrating knowledge, communication skills, thinking and reasoning skills, and social responsibility.

WPCS and the STEM Academy will maintain high expectations for student achievement. WPCS firmly believes that when performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported, the rate of improvement accelerates. And when performance is measured, reported, and recognized/rewarded, we can optimize achievement.

WPCS measures student progress through standardized testing, formative and summative teacher assessments, and student self-evaluation. Learning outcomes are written and transparent, in student friendly statements. The WPCS and STEM Academy principals will ensure that essential knowledge and skills for student learning are defined for each program, and communicated to students and parents in simple, student-friendly language. The principal will work with the WPCS Board of Directors and STEM community partners to ensure that all curriculum and learning objectives are meaningful and relevant to the 21st Century workplace and meeting the needs of local and regional colleges, universities, and STEM employers.

Classroom assessment and grade reporting are meaningful and reflect student growth and student demonstration of proficiency on content standards and core competencies. Assessments occur in a variety of ways, including student self-evaluation and performance results are delivered both verbally and in writing.

WPCS uses formative, interim, and summative assessments to demonstrate that the school is meeting performance standards outlined by the state and the WPCS Board of Directors. Formative and summative evaluations are the basis of valid and reliable assessment. The goal is not only to give a grade, but also to encourage students to do their personal best and show them their own improvement throughout the year.

In addition to teacher-designed classroom assessments, students are required to participate in the Idaho Assessment Program, including any assessment required by law or helpful to WPCS school improvement strategies, such as the ISAT and I-Station (formerly the Idaho Reading Indicator). WPCS assesses students and record and analyze data to drive instruction, and give parents, teachers, and the school a normed perspective on individual student abilities and personal academic habits, as well as the efficacy of WPCS programs.

E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support

Several years ago, in response to growing waiting lists, the WPCS Board of Directors decided to work on expanding. At the time, we offered two classes per grade. We started by adding a third kindergarten class during the 2015-2016 school year. This has continued each year and in the fall of 2019-2020 we will have three classes in grades K-4 and anticipate still having wait lists in most grades. By the 2021-2022 school year, we will have three classes in grades K-6.

During the summer of 2018, the White Pine administrative team began assessing interest in a STEM-based high school in the Idaho Falls area. At the Melaleuca Freedom Celebration last July, over two hundred individuals signed a petition indicating their support of our initiative. Of our current middle school students, 116 of 134 have submitted letters of intent to attend the White Pine STEM Academy next year, for an 87% retention rate. As of April 10, we have 301

students entered in our April 16 lottery. Of those 301 students, 36 are wanting to attend the STEM Academy, which is the most students we have had in our lottery for our secondary program in recent memory.

WPCS and the STEM Academy has developed a preliminary marketing plan that has identified the following strategies to create awareness about WPCS and the STEM Academy:

1. Use email to communicate with all families who have ever attended WPCS, people who supported White Pine at the Melaleuca Freedom Celebration, and for our Advisory Board members to distribute through their workplaces.
2. Leverage Facebook to advertise to relevant audiences by using geotargeting.
3. Advertise WPCS and the STEM Academy in various media outlets.
4. Work with partner organizations to send promotional emails, including agencies that work with Hispanic and low-income families and families with students with disabilities.
5. Have a presence at free events that target children.

Given that our STEM Academy will be largely project-based, we anticipate that there will be an increase in special education enrollment, specifically with students on the autism spectrum, as the subject matter and type of learning is particularly attractive to those students and their families. We have already seen this as families have enrolled their special needs children this year in anticipation of the STEM Academy opening.

Based on our current enrollment and through the targeted efforts of our marketing strategies, we anticipate growing our free/reduced lunch numbers from 34% (as of March 1,

2019) to 40%, Hispanic enrollment from 11% to 14%, special education enrollment from 10% to 13% and maintaining enrollment for non-white minorities at 5%.

WPCS relies on proactive parent involvement. The Parent-Faculty Association (PFA) of WPCS provides consultation to the Administrator regarding ongoing plans for the school. Parents of students who attend WPCS are involved in the education of their children and in the school at many levels. Parents bring an in-depth understanding of their children's personalities, learning styles, and strengths and weaknesses, which is essential for the continuing educational development of their children.

The White Pine STEM Academy has an Advisory Board of key community stakeholders. Our Advisory Board is comprised of:

- Representative Wendy Horman, District 30
- Jennifer Jackson, K-12 STEM Program Manager, Idaho National Laboratory
- Dr. Rick Aman, President, College of Eastern Idaho
- Ann Marie Peters, Director of Strategic Partnerships, College of Eastern Idaho
- Dr. Tom Ottoway, Dean and Professor of Informatics, ISU College of Business
- David Hoffenberg, Chief Operating Officer, Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center
- Chip Schwarze, CEO, Greater Idaho Falls Chamber of Commerce
- Jim Dalton, Attorney at Law

Parents and other stakeholders play a role in decision-making through public input with the Board of Directors. Our Board works hard to ensure that they respond to parent input that is presented to them. Parents were involved with the committee that made STEM academy's student culture decisions, such as dress code, social events, schedules, etc. Additionally, once

we are working on designing our permanent building, we will engage a parent committee to provide input into the building design, so that we can make sure stakeholders are invested in our long-term future.

F. Effectively Serving All Students

WPCS is committed to providing a thorough, free, and appropriate education to all students, regardless of individual circumstance. Students with disabilities, limited English proficiency, homeless students (including unaccompanied minors), and gifted and talented students are afforded all the rights provided by state and federal law, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (“IDEA”), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (“Section 504”) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, etc. WPCS will not discriminate against any student on any basis prohibited by state or federal law.

Educationally Disadvantaged Students

A limited English proficient (LEP) student is defined as an individual who has a native language other than English and comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or is a Native American and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on such individual’s level of English language proficiency; and who has difficulty speaking, reading, writing or understanding the English language whose difficulties may deny such individual the opportunity to learn successfully in classrooms where the language instruction is English. WPCS provides English language development services for eligible LEP students who enroll, and LEP designation may not be a factor in enrollment lottery procedures.

When WPCS enrolls LEP students they are first identified through the Home Language Survey to determine the primary language spoken at home. We use the WIDA ACCESS Screener to determine if they qualify for LEP services based on scores. In working with LEP students, WPCS has developed a LEP plan for meeting needs of LEP students that ensures WPCS second language instruction is integrated into the overall curriculum, is responsive to cultural differences, and maintains high learning and achievement standards. Additionally, all LEP students receive supplemental English language development appropriate for linguistic abilities. This added instruction helps each student benefit from instruction in the classroom and simultaneously achieve appropriate academic levels. Further, provisions of comprehensive professional development on specific strategies proven to increase English proficiency are given to all teachers and paraprofessionals that are serving LEP students. WPCS administers the WIDA's ACCESS for ELLs Assessment to evaluate LEP students' listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency.

WPCS and the STEM Academy provides supplemental services in English language arts and math to students who are economically disadvantaged through the Title I program. The majority of these services involve pulling eligible students out during enrichment time to provide supplemental small group instruction to try to build competency in reading and math. In addition, Title I services are also provided directly in the classroom when that is most appropriate for the student. If a student is able to demonstrate proficiency in the content area, they are graduated from Title I services and are reintegrated into the classroom during that enrichment time. Our program is very fluid and students are assessed continually. Students

can enter and exit Title I multiple times throughout the year as additional supports prove necessary.

Students with Disabilities

WPCS has adopted policies and procedures for the provision of special education services to students with disabilities, and it employs and supervises appropriately certificated personnel to implement student IEPs and Section 504 Plan accommodations. WPCS staff participate in training opportunities provided by the state regarding these policies and procedures. WPCS also participates in all monitoring activities conducted by the Idaho State Department of Education, and WPCS staff, administrators, and Board of Directors apply policies and procedures adopted by the Board for Special Education, and/or contained in the Idaho Special Education Manual.

WPCS provides all special education services to eligible students with disabilities who enroll in the school. If WPCS is unable to provide the required services for a student, we will contract with an outside agency to provide such services, (e.g., speech, occupational therapy, and psychological testing). In order to ensure effective services to students with disabilities, WPCS and the White Pine STEM Academy:

- a) Employs nondiscriminatory enrollment procedures.
- b) Conducts child Find activities and evaluations.
- c) Develops, reviews and revises IEPs.
- d) Provides special education and related services identified on student IEPs using qualified personnel.
- e) Meets least restrictive environment requirements.

- f) Implements IDEA discipline procedures.
- g) Protects student and parent rights.
- h) Provides a professional development plan.
- i) Provides a plan for ensuring access.
- j) Develops a transportation plan.

Nutrition

White Pine Charter School participates in the National School Lunch Program and currently provides breakfast and lunch, serving meals that are prepared on-site. We offer free/reduced lunch within the guidelines of federal requirements. On April 9, 2019 we had an on-site state nutrition review and received several commendations from the State Department of Education. For the STEM Academy, we will offer meals that rotate per WPCS's menu. These meals will be prepared at WPCS and transported to the STEM Academy. In addition, we plan to offer a daily salad and soup bar, both in compliance with federal requirements.

Transportation

WPCS contracts with Teton Stage Lines to provide free transportation to students who live within the boundaries of Districts 91 and 93. If a student lives outside of these districts, they can attend, but will be required to provide their own transportation. We will continue to provide transportation through Teton Stage Lines. Our preliminary plan is to have all students bused to WPCS and then have STEM Academy students shuttled to and from the STEM Academy. However, this may have to be reevaluated with consideration to logistics affected by road construction and traffic patterns.

G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan

WPCS strives to recruit, retain, and train high quality teachers and staff to meet the school's mission. Staffing levels are such that they accommodate current WPCS operations and will be expanded for our projected operations. For example, as we transition from a middle school that served grades 6-8 to a STEM Academy that will serve grades 7 and up, we need to create two stand-alone 6th grade classrooms. From a staffing and budget standpoint, two of the teacher positions that had been part of our middle school will now become part of our elementary school. In order to recruit and retain the best teachers, WPCS will pay its teachers and staff above the state salary guidelines and strive to be competitive with the local school districts and comparable to area charter school compensation. When vacancies arise that need to be filled, WPCS publishes job openings on its website and other media, as appropriate. WPCS complements its recruitment efforts by building strong community partnerships and seeking out both traditional and non-traditional educators.

WPCS has built and will continue to nurture an environment of professionalism, high expectations, and continuous improvement. Increasing the capacity of our staff through meaningful and relevant professional development will positively impact student achievement, teacher performance, and school culture. Teacher development and evaluation are designed for improvement and growth. Our professional development program is a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers' and principals' effectiveness in raising student achievement. WPCS offers a range of professional learning opportunities for staff, aligned with the Professional Learning Plans and the needs and objectives of WPCS, to ensure

including the expansion to STEM-focused, mastery- and project-based learning. WPCS training may include (but are not limited to):

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|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| a) Core Knowledge Curriculum | f) Classroom Management |
| b) Character Education | g) Student IT |
| c) School Culture & Mission | h) Learning Management Systems |
| d) Mastery/Project-Based Instruction | i) Time Management |
| e) Differentiated Instruction | j) Student Mentoring & Feedback |

Because mastery and project-based education may be new for many secondary teachers, WPCS will focus professional development efforts for STEM Academy staff on these topics.

For new teachers, we have a comprehensive new teacher orientation in the fall. In addition, during the first half of the year, we give new teachers the opportunity to meet together with the Administration to discuss successes, challenges, resource needs, etc. Also, for new teachers, we pair them up with an experienced teacher who acts as their primary point of contact if they need support or information. We conduct monthly staff meetings to ensure everyone is on the same page and to give teachers the opportunity to share information. As part of these meetings, we also do a book study to try to inspire innovative teaching methods. Currently, we are reading Teach Like a PIRATE by Dave Burgess.

Our continuous improvement approach is called Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). PLCs are intended to be data driven and allow teaching teams to evaluate what is working and what may not be working as well in the classroom. This year, PLCs are being driven by I-Ready data for language arts and math. Each team identified a way that works for them to track student progress and to help shape instructional practices. In past years, each team has been

able to identify their own goals. For example, one year, the third and fourth grade teachers collaborated to track progress in students learning their multiplication tables. PLCs meet approximately monthly throughout the year.

H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan

White Pine Charter School employs a full-time Chief Financial Officer/Business Manager. This individual reports to the school's Chief Executive Officer/Administrator and works collaboratively with the Administrator and Board Treasurer to ensure the school operates with fiscal responsibility and within resource allocations. Our CFO holds an MBA and Master of Accountancy from Idaho State University. He has extensive experience administering programs funded by state and federal funds and is, therefore, very familiar with state and federal fiscal requirements. The school utilizes 2M as an accounting system to ensure transactions are coded using the state's IFARMS chart of accounts. The school's independent financial audit firm is Wipfli, a national audit firm that has an office located in Idaho Falls, ID. The school has a history of strong audits and has a strong financial portfolio. In addition to this request for Communities and Excellence funding, White Pine is applying for funding from the Louis Calder Foundation, the Army Educational Outreach Program and will be pursuing funding from the Albertson's Family Foundation. For specific financial information, please refer to Appendices A-C, School Project Budget, Budget Narrative, 3 Year Operational Budget.

WPCS is located at 2959 John Adams Parkway in Ammon, Idaho. Our building was constructed with a USDA loan and USDA guaranteed loan through US Bank in 2005. The US Bank loan was refinanced through Bank of Idaho earlier this year. In total, our annual debt service on the building is approximately \$200,000. For at least its first two years, the STEM

Academy will be located on a property less than half a mile from WPCS at 2664 1st Street, also in Ammon, ID. This building features a large cabin building that will be used for a commons area, a computer lab, and some instruction. We have purchased two modular buildings from Gem Prep in Pocatello and are leasing two additional modular buildings from DesignSpace Modular. In total, we will easily be able to accommodate 9 or 10 classrooms plus a computer lab. In total, our property and modular lease expense will cost about \$130,000 per year, while the White Pine Board of Directors vets land prospects and works on the design and construction of a new building to serve as the permanent home of the STEM Academy.

As of the FY 2018 audit, the school carried \$800,000 in restricted and unrestricted financial reserves. The school's building was recently appraised at \$4.6 million in comparison to \$2.4 million in current leverage, giving the school \$2.2 million in equity. Aside from its mortgages, the school carries no long-term debt and in FY 2018 exceeded a 1.25:1 debt service ratio.

I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure

White Pine Charter School, Inc. is organized and managed under the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act and is managed locally by its Board of Directors and employed Administrator.

According to the corporate bylaws, the Board of WPCS consists of no less than five (5) and no more than seven (7) members. At least one director must not have children attending WPCS. At least two directors must be parents with children attending the school. All Board work is subject to open meeting laws and it is the responsibility of the chair and secretary to make sure that the laws are followed and appropriate documentation of meetings is maintained.

The elected Board of Directors is legally accountable for the operation of the Charter School. The Board is responsible for financial and legal requirements of the corporation including the

annual budget, expenditures and legal compliance with local, state and federal regulations. The chair of the Board signs employment contracts and ensures compliance with state and federal regulatory agencies. The Board has the responsibility to approve the selection of the school Administrator, who may not be one of its members. The Board is also responsible for hearing and approving or disapproving the recommendations of the school Administrator with respect to changes in staffing levels, program, discipline or curriculum. The Board, when necessary, adjudicates disagreements between parents and the administration. The Board of Directors is currently contracting with the Idaho School Board Association to rewrite the school policies. Once this project is completed, the policies will be reviewed and approved by the Board in accordance with its bylaws and then the policies will be reviewed annually thereafter. Yearly, each Board member also signs a conflict of interest form, pursuant to school policies.

Yearly elections for members of the Board of Directors will be held according to the bylaws and school policies. Nominations for the Board are submitted to the Board Governance Committee. The Governance Committee then evaluates the candidates with regards to the skills and qualifications most needed to accomplish the board's goals. For example, currently we are considering the need for a general contractor, attorney, CPA, former educator, or science and technology leaders to serve on the board. Annually, parents and guardians of the students attending WPCS and Faculty and employees vote individuals into positions vacated on the Board from the slate of candidates proposed by the Governance Committee. In the event of a resignation or death, the current board may vote in a successor to complete the term. If there are expertise needs that are not reflected in the board composition, we invite subject-area experts to assist us by working on a Board committee or the STEM Academy's Advisory

Board. Additionally, the school will contract services to ensure that necessary professional input can be obtained, such as legal or accounting services, as necessary.

The CEO/Administrator works under the direction of the Board of Directors and is empowered to provide educational direction, administration, and on-site day to day operation as well as make decisions concerning the school's operations consistent with the Board's strategic direction. The CEO/Administrator reports monthly operations to the Board of Directors.

Understanding that school governance is organic, the Board prioritizes professional development. Most meetings have a time set aside on the agenda for training. In addition, board members are encouraged to attend the Idaho School Board Association and the National Alliance of Public Charter Schools conferences. Pursuant to policy, the Board Governance Committee completes a self-evaluation annually to identify specific areas of continuous improvement and training opportunities.

J. School Leadership and Management

WPCS and the STEM Academy's Administrative Leadership Team is comprised of four individuals:

1. Jeremy Clarke, CEO/Administrator and WPCS STEM Academy Principal- The Administrator is the chief executive officer of the school. Under the direction of the Board of Directors, the Administrator is charged with the complete administration, supervision, and operation of the school and its educational program. All employees shall report to the Administrator through the appropriate chain of command. It is also the Administrator's responsibility to lead White Pine STEM Academy within the

framework of its charter and the policies of the School Board, State Board of Education, and the Idaho Charter School Commission. The building administrator's major responsibility is the improvement of the teaching-learning practice; his/her goal is to provide for the continued improvement of the total educational process.

2. Ken Graham, White Pine Charter School Principal – Under the direction of the CEO/Administrator it is the Principal's responsibility to lead White Pine Charter School within the framework of its charter and the policies of the School Board, State Board of Education, and the Idaho Charter School Commission. The building administrator's major responsibility is the improvement of the teaching-learning practice; his/her goal is to provide for the continued improvement of the total educational process.
3. Nick Burrows, CFO/Business Manager – Under the direction of the CEO/Administrator, the CFO/Business Manager shall have the responsibility for assisting with the implementation of financial and business (including human resources, information technology, facilities, nutrition, and grant writing) affairs of the school system to provide the best educational and operational services with the fiscal resources available.
4. Devan Tyler, Federal Programs and Special Education Director – Under the direction of the CEO/Administrator, the Federal Programs and Special Education Director is responsible for the implementation of services to meet the needs of disabled students with 504s and IEPs as well as programs and services to meet educationally disadvantaged students, such as English Language Learners and students who are economically disadvantaged.

Per school policy, the Board evaluates the CEO/Administrator annually in the spring. During the evaluation, progress towards goals are discussed as well as other strengths and opportunities. If any performance concerns exist, they are discussed as part of this evaluation. The CEO/Administrator evaluate the other members of the school's leadership, following a similar format that the Board uses.

As the oldest and largest charter school in the Idaho Falls area, White Pine Charter School has a history of effective leadership and governance. The school enjoys healthy financial reserves and a strong financial position. With regards to this expansion, the two biggest concerns are ensuring that we have enough students and have enough space.

In order to prepare for the student body concerns, several years ago the Board and Administration made the conscientious decision to start growing the elementary knowing that when there are three classes per grade, we will have a pipeline of approximately 80 students to enter the STEM Academy each year. It will take us a few more years to get there, but we feel that this critical mass will be instrumental to our success.

To ensure that students at both WPCS and the STEM Academy have sufficient space to provide the best environments for learning, the Administration and Board worked hard and aggressively to find the solution that would be best for our stakeholders. We are excited about our plans for the White Pine STEM Academy to be centered in a unique environment while the long-term facilities decisions are made and implemented. This move enables both facilities to best meet the needs of our students.