

TREASURE VALLEY CLASSICAL ACADEMY CSP GRANT NARRATIVE

Executive Summary

Treasure Valley Classical Academy (TVCA) opened its doors to students in grades K-6 in August 2019. Each school year we will add a new grade until, in 2025-2026, we will serve up to 702 students in grades K-12. TVCA owes its founding to community support and community demand, and we are proud to contribute in turn to the community life of Fruitland and Payette County, Idaho. Our present (K-6) facility is a newly renovated 90-year-old historic brick schoolhouse in the heart of downtown Fruitland. The building was purchased from Alma Mater, Inc. (AMI), a local non-profit community historical foundation and TVCA supporter. Further discussions with AMI are underway concerning the transformation of another of its nearby properties into a setting for student enrichment and project-based lessons in sustainable agriculture. Meanwhile, plans for our future upper school (grades 7-12) facility are being laid in coordination with the Fruitland city government and school district.

Parents, families, and key community stakeholders in Fruitland and Payette County all enthusiastically support TVCA's mission (*to train the minds and improve the hearts of students through a classical, content-rich curriculum that emphasizes virtuous living, traditional learning, and civic responsibility*) and vision (*to form future citizens who uphold the ideals of our country's founding and promote the continuation of our American experiment, through a classical, great books curriculum designed to engage students in the highest matters and the deepest questions of truth, justice, virtue, and beauty*). TVCA shares its mission, vision, and K-12 curriculum with 24 other affiliate schools of Hillsdale College's Barney Charter School Initiative (BCSI) across the United States. Taken together, the proven success of the BCSI school model and the extensive school support and professional development opportunities offered by the BCSI team promise a bright future for TVCA and for our rural Idaho community.

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A. Grant Project Goals

Goal 1: *TVCA will contribute up to 702 quality rural charter school seats in Idaho.*

In August 2019, Treasure Valley Classical Academy (TVCA) opened to students in grades K-6 in Fruitland. Currently we have 311 students and a waitlist of 82. At full enrollment, we will serve up to 702 rural students across grades K-12.¹ A substantial portion of CSP Grant funds (detailed in the Project Budget spreadsheet and narrative) would be applied toward furnishing and supplying future classrooms as we expand to serve grades 7 and 8 during the two-year grant period.

Goal 2: *TVCA’s demographics will reflect (+/-5%) those of the Fruitland school district.*

TVCA currently serves and will continue to serve a racially and economically diverse student body. Our present demographics are as follows:

Voluntary Student Demographic Survey Results		Educationally Disadvantaged Students	
Number (%):	Reported Race/Ethnicity:		
232 (74.6%)	White/Caucasian	Free/Reduced Lunch	94
33 (10.6%)	Mixed Race		
14 (4.5%)	Hispanic/Latino	IEP/504 (SPED)	31
11 (3.5%)	Native American/Alaskan		
3 (1.0%)	Black/African American	English Language Learners	5
1 (0.3%)	Asian		
17 (5.5%)	[Chose Not to Respond]		

To serve all of our students we have removed barriers to enrollment and academic success and will continue to do so as we grow (as discussed in section F below). CSP Grant funds would promote equality of academic opportunity for students of all economic backgrounds by covering the cost of the many consumable books on our curriculum.

¹ Multi-level schools have been shown to accelerate learning outcomes in critical subjects: Stanford University’s CREDO reports that, “on average, charter multi-level school students post the strongest academic growth compared to their [traditional public school] virtual twins in reading. Their growth in math is similar. [Their growth in] reading is equivalent to 24 additional days of learning.”¹ (This data can be viewed at https://credo.stanford.edu/sites/g/files/sbiybj6481/f/idaho_report_final.pdf.)

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Goal 3: TVCA students in grades 4 and 8 will outperform students in surrounding school districts on ISAT English/Language Arts and Mathematics.

TVCA's charter with the Idaho Public Charter School Commission stipulates that our students' average ISAT scores exceed those of students in surrounding school districts as well as those of students in the state of Idaho at large. To track our progress toward this goal, we will rely on student-specific data provided to us annually by the IRI (Individual Reading Indicator), Idaho's state-mandated literacy assessment, and the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test, a mathematics and English/language arts assessment that we will administer as a member of the Bluum charter school network. We will also rely on our own data-driven literacy and mathematics curricula, *Literacy Essentials* and *Singapore Mathematics* (discussed in section B below). A substantial portion of our CSP Grant funds would be applied to the purchasing of materials associated with these curricula.

Goal 4: Early Literacy and Numeracy – TVCA will ensure that every student in our early grades masters fundamental skills in the areas of literacy and numeracy.

TVCA offers a rich and rewarding liberal arts, sciences, and fine arts curriculum (described in section B below). Students in primary grades must master fundamental skills in the areas of literacy and numeracy (or mathematics) in order to reap the benefits of this curriculum. CSP Grant funds would cover the salaries and benefits of three full-time kindergarten teachers, which will help us continue to offer tuition-free full-day kindergarten to every student (only half-day kindergarten is funded by the state of Idaho).

Goal 5: TVCA will educate well-rounded future citizens by developing robust fine arts and athletics programs that engage the Fruitland community.

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As TVCA grows into a K-12 school, we plan to develop athletics and fine arts programs. Our athletics program will include basketball, volleyball, soccer, and cross country. The supplies and equipment we need to cultivate our students' athletic abilities and compete against other local schools would be paid for in part by CSP Grant funds. Among the fine arts-related items in our Project Budget are a sound system and a screen for our auditorium, which would enhance both our fine arts programs and our opportunities to open our doors to the local community for musical performances and film screenings.

B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum

Educational Philosophy

TVCA shares its educational philosophy, instructional practices, and curriculum with 24 other BCSI charter schools across the country (the proven success of which is discussed below). Our philosophy is expressed by our mission statement: we aim *to train the minds and improve the hearts of students through a classical, content-rich curriculum that emphasizes virtuous living, traditional learning, and civic responsibility*. Our students are reminded of this mission each morning when they recite both the Pledge of Allegiance and our school pledge (*I will learn the true; I will do the good; I will love the beautiful*). Our current fifth and sixth graders are learning lessons in civic responsibility by collaborating to choose our school mascot; by drafting our school constitution; and by developing our inaugural school yearbook.

Our school virtues—*courage, courtesy, honesty, perseverance, self-government, and service*—represent the high standards of conduct we expect students to uphold. On Fridays, all students take home Character Cards for their parents' or guardians' signature. These Character Cards indicate which virtues students have exemplified during the preceding week and in which

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virtues they need to improve in the future. Our students also wear school uniforms in order to promote a culture of decorum, respect, and civic responsibility.

Instructional Practices

TVCA's instructional practices correspond to our educational philosophy. Our school schedule is designed to afford teachers at each grade level daily opportunities to coordinate and collaborate. Teachers assign daily homework in accordance with the school's ten-minutes-per-grade-level expectation: first graders are assigned ten minutes of nightly homework; third graders, thirty minutes; fifth graders, fifty minutes; and so on.

TVCA teachers receive extensive support and guidance from BCSI experts who have taught and developed our curriculum. The BCSI team is always available to offer advice to our teachers and answer their questions by phone or email; additionally, the BCSI team led a two-week faculty training course at TVCA prior to our August 2019 opening, and they will return during the first and second semesters of each academic year to offer on-site, in-person feedback to our teachers on instructional practices and curriculum implementation. BCSI also hosts annual professional development seminars for teachers (as well as training seminars for board members) at the Hillsdale College campus in Hillsdale, Michigan. BCSI's extensive support keeps TVCA's professional development-related costs low.

BCSI's carefully designed curriculum and active training and professional development programs have yielded strong results on state accountability assessments at schools across the country—in urban, suburban, and rural areas alike. BCSI schools of comparable demographics and in similarly rural areas include Seven Oaks Classical Academy (SOCA) of Ellettsville, Indiana, which earned an A in each of its first two years of state evaluation; Estancia Valley Classical Academy (EVCA) in Moriarty, New Mexico, which earned an A in five of its first six

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years of state evaluation; and North Arkansas Classical Academy (NACA) in Bentonville, Arkansas, which earned an A in four of its first six years of state evaluation. Students at each of these three schools outperformed public school students on 2017-2018 state English/language arts and mathematics assessments, often by wide margins. Finally, students in the graduating classes of 2018 at EVCA and NACA exceeded the national average score on the ACT (SOCA opened to grades K-8 in 2016 and has not yet graduated a class of seniors). Statistics like these demonstrate that TVCA's instructional practices and curriculum are well tested and consistently successful.

Distinctively classical elements of our academic program include the following: the centrality of the teacher in the classroom (student desks face the front of the classroom and teachers conduct instruction in a Socratic or interrogative manner); the centrality of the American and broader Western traditions in the liberal arts and fine arts portions of our curriculum; the use, in primary grades, of explicit phonics instruction (a means to reading fluency) and explicit grammar instruction (a means to English language mastery); the requirement that all students study a second language (all students in grades K-6 are introduced to Spanish; all students in grades 7-9 will study Latin; all students in grades 10-12 will choose either to continue their study of Latin or begin formal study of a modern language); and the cultivation of school virtues—*courage, courtesy, honesty, perseverance, self-government, and service*.

Technological tools will make important contributions to the fulfillment of TVCA's school mission, particularly in the areas of curriculum delivery and student assessment. All classrooms are equipped with smart projectors, on which our teachers regularly display worksheets, charts, images, maps, and readings to great instructional effect. Student attendance, assignments, and grades are all posted and tracked on PowerSchool, our Learning Management System. CSP Grant funds will cover the costs of smart projectors for future secondary school classrooms; document

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cameras for future and existing classrooms; and Chromebooks and I-pads for the administration of standardized assessments.³

Curriculum – Lower School (Grades K-6)

Comprehensive literacy and language mastery are foundational components of the TVCA curriculum. Derived from the Orton-Gillingham and Spalding methods of literacy instruction, our *Access Literacy* curriculum integrates writing and spelling to teach reading and promote thinking. Its basis is the principle that, since languages are first of all spoken, learning the English language should begin with a conversation about the sounds it makes and the way those sounds are translated into a written code. English words are composed of 42 basic sounds (phonemes), which are represented by the 26 letters of the English alphabet. Many letters may represent more than one sound and, often, several letters are combined to represent one sound: ultimately 72 common letter combinations (phonograms) represent the 42 basic sounds (phonemes) of the English language. The core of *Access Literacy* is the teaching of these 72 phonograms.

Instruction in the 72 phonograms helps students learn single-letter and multi-letter spelling patterns and the sounds that correspond to those patterns. In other words, this instruction helps students gain *phonemic awareness*, which is a strong predictor of early reading success.⁴ Students learn to *encode* sounds they hear by writing them and by spelling words and nonsense words. Through the physical (or kinesthetic) act of writing, students commit sound-to-symbol relationships to long-term memory. After encoding (translating sounds to symbols) students are introduced to *decoding* (translating symbols to sounds), through which they learn to read. By practicing encoding and decoding vocabulary words, students practice cause-and-effect, part-to-

³ The budget documents accompanying this application provide further details concerning TVCA’s plan to apply CSP Grant funds toward classroom and school technology.

⁴ F.R. Vellutino, (2007) “Components of Reading Ability: Multivariate Evidence for a Convergent Skills Model of Reading Development,” *Scientific Studies of Reading*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 3–32. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

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whole, and whole-to part thinking.⁵ In sum, *the Access Literacy program trains students to think well and to think deeply*, which prepares them for success in all areas of our curriculum.

Numeracy, like literacy, is indispensable to students' cognitive development and, ultimately, to their flourishing as human beings and citizens. TVCA teaches numeracy and mathematics in order to impart to students conceptual understanding (an understanding of why mathematics works) as well as procedural fluency (an understanding of how mathematics problems are solved). Our mathematics instruction combines Socratic (interrogative) instruction and a *Singapore Mathematics* curriculum. Teachers instruct by asking questions and eliciting answers and explanations, encouraging students to share different means by which they have solved problems.

Developed in the 1980s, *Singapore Mathematics* gave Singaporean students a competitive advantage in mathematics and the sciences. Between 1995 and 2015, Singaporean eighth graders ranked first in the world four times (and never ranked lower than third) in mathematics on the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS); American eighth graders ranked between ninth and nineteenth. Also between 1995 and 2015, Singaporean fourth graders ranked first in the world five times (and never lower than second), while American fourth graders ranked between sixth and fourteenth.⁶

Curriculum – Upper School (Grades 7-12)

BCSI provides the academic architecture for TVCA's upper (middle and high) school curriculum. The middle school curriculum, like the elementary curriculum, is based on the renowned Core Knowledge Sequence developed by Ed Hirsch, Jr. The following chart shows how

⁵ Diane McGuinness, "A Prototype for Teaching the English Alphabet Code," http://www.rtf.org.uk/archive.php?n_ID=95&n_issueNumber=49 (2002); *Why Our Children Can't Read and What We Can Do About It* (New York: The Free Press, 1997).

⁶ This data can be viewed at <https://nces.ed.gov/timss/idetimss/>.

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TVCA’s high school graduation requirements, particularly in core subjects, exceed those of the state of Idaho:

TVCA Requirements		Idaho Minimum Requirements*	
English/Language Arts	10 credits	English/Language Arts	9 credits
Mathematics	8 credits	Mathematics	6 credits
Sciences	8 credits	Sciences	6 credits
Social Studies	8 credits	Social Studies	5 credits
Other Courses	14 credits	Other Courses	20 credits
Total	48 credits	Total	46 credits

*(<https://sde.idaho.gov/topics/hs-grad-req/files/general/High-School-Graduation-Minimum-Requirements.pdf>)

By the time they reach high school, our students will be prepared for close readings and Socratic discussions of complete works with their teachers and their classmates: Homer, Thucydides, Herodotus, Plato, and Plutarch are among the authors read by freshmen; Shakespeare, Chaucer, Dickens, Austen, Augustine, and Adam Smith are among those read by sophomores. Juniors study American literature, American history, and American government, reading our country’s founding documents and the writings of presidents, authors, and activists of the nineteenth century. Seniors read the works of Dostoevsky, Orwell, and others, and study the presidencies, wars, politics, and ideas that shaped the twentieth century.

TVCA’s high school curriculum is rigorous across all subjects. Requirements include four years of mathematics courses (including Pre-Calculus and Calculus for most students) and four years of science courses (including Biology, Chemistry, and Physics for all students). Language requirements include one year of high school Latin (in grade 9, following two years of Latin in grades 7-8), after which students may choose either to continue their study of Latin or to begin study of a modern language in grades 10-12. Other requirements include a semester-long course in Composition, in which freshmen practice coherent, concise, and compelling writing in order to build habits of clear thinking, and a semester-long course in Moral Philosophy, in which sophomores read and discuss the works of such thinkers as Plato, Cicero, and Kant. High-school

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electives will include courses in Music Theory, Art History, Performance Ensembles, Advanced Art, Leadership, and Computer Science. Seniors will write a 15-20-page Senior Thesis under the direction of faculty advisors, which they will defend orally before panels of faculty members and audiences of classmates.

TVCA's high-school curriculum is identical to that of Principal Stephen Lambert's prior school, Atlanta Classical Academy (ACA), which graduated its first class of seniors in 2019. 100% of ACA's graduating seniors were offered admission to significant post-secondary four-year institutions (examples include the University of Notre Dame, Vanderbilt University, Georgia Institute of Technology, and The College of William and Mary, among many others). Altogether, ACA's Class of 2019 was awarded more than \$5.2 million in merit scholarships. ACA also graduated two national merit scholar semifinalists and was a 2019 AP Honors school.

C. Teaching and Learning

TVCA looks forward to graduating students who will flourish morally and intellectually, as educated human beings and as informed, concerned citizens. TVCA graduates will be exceptionally well prepared for success in higher education and in professional life, as the ACA data just cited attest. Our curricula (*Literacy Essentials* and *Singapore Mathematics*, discussed in section B above) encourage differentiated instruction: curricular assessments (formative and interim) in both subjects yield data on the basis of which teachers will assign students to higher or lower ability groups and periodically reassign them as they make progress or as new needs for remediation come to light.

Our school schedule was carefully designed to facilitate this differentiation: the school day *i)* begins with a common literacy block across all grades and includes a second common literacy block across grades K-3; *ii)* includes two common mathematics blocks across grades 2-6; and *iii)*

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includes common planning time for teachers at each grade level. Teachers and aides use this planning time to discuss the needs of their students. Students spend the common literacy and mathematics blocks with grade-mates of comparable ability in groups devoted to targeted remediation, grade-level instruction and practice, or accelerated instruction and practice.

TVCA relies on both curricular and standardized assessments to determine the needs of individual students and to drive and differentiate instruction. Among our curricular literacy assessments are Running Records (regularly-administered 100-word reading tests) and the Basic Code Assessment (a periodically administered comprehensive test of students' encoding and decoding skill levels). The most important initial mathematics determinations are based on students' performance on a series of three Singapore Mathematics placement tests: all students begin by taking a grade-level test; their scores determine whether they take an above- or below-grade level test next; their scores on their second tests determine whether their third test will be more or less challenging than their second. Standardized assessments include the IRI and the MAP discussed in section B above, both of which will further inform teachers' instructional strategies.

Our Student Services Team (SST) responds to individual student needs according to a detailed intervention structure or sequence aimed at keeping students in classrooms or returning students to classrooms to the greatest extent possible. Teachers who observe unique academic needs or behavioral challenges in their classes discuss these issues with our SST, which sets in motion the following intervention sequence:

Step One—Classroom Intervention: A member of our SST spends time in the classroom directing and redirecting the students in need, observing and tracking progress over four weeks. When necessary, this step is followed by Step Two.

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Step Two—Small-Group or One-on-One Intervention: A member of our SST spends time with student(s) in small-group or one-on-one settings as appropriate, again tracking progress over four weeks. When necessary, this step is followed by Step Three.

Step Three—SSD Consultation: Our Student Services Director conducts a one-on-one consultation with the student in need in order to determine whether to refer that student for special education or to develop new strategies and tactics for the SST to employ in the classroom or in a small-group or one-on-one setting.

Close collaboration among teachers, aides, the SST, administrators, and parents/guardians occurs throughout this sequence, which contributes to our goals of helping all TVCA students adjust and thrive and keeping students in classrooms to the greatest extent possible (in keeping with our “push-in” model).

D. Student Academic Achievement Standards

TVCA is committed to meeting the student academic achievement standards specified in our school’s approved charter performance certificate and outlined as follows:

District/State Proficiency Comparison	Do Math/ELA proficiency rates meet or exceed district and state averages?
Criterion-Referenced Student Growth	Are K-8 students on track to achieve Math/ELA proficiency within 3 years or by grade 10?
Norm-Referenced Student Growth	Are high school students making expected academic growth in Math/ELA compared to peers?
College and Career Readiness	Are students graduating from high school on time (4-year ACGR>90%)?

Student proficiency and growth will be measured by data yielded by formative, interim, and summative assessments. Student scores on the (formative) IRI, administered in September 2019 and at the beginning of each academic year thereafter, will serve as baselines for growth targets in literacy; the series of mathematics placement tests described in section C above will do likewise in mathematics. Mid-year (interim) MAP assessments will inform TVCA teachers and staff of

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student progress in both ELA and mathematics. End-of-year (summative) ISAT scores will indicate student achievement over the course of the year.

TVCA's BCSI curriculum (described in section C above) delineates clear learning outcomes in keeping with both state standards and our school's distinct mission and character. Student performance on regular assessments (both curriculum-provided and teacher-designed) is charted by teachers and accessible to parents on PowerSchool, our LMS. Quarterly performance is presented to parents on report cards per student in grades 3-6 (and per student in subsequent grades to be added in future school years). Semesterly and cumulative performance is presented to parents on curriculum-specific Skills Maps per student in grades K-2. These Skills Maps detail specific concepts and competencies in the subjects of literacy (such as phonemic awareness, formal spelling, and reading vocabulary) and numeracy (such as counting, comparing, adding, and subtracting), delineating student progress by meaningful and data-based descriptions of performance level ("Basic/Beginner," "Lacking in Progress," "Making Good Progress," and the target level of "Mastery") rather than merely by letter grades. In addition to receiving regular written and digital information of their students' proficiency and growth, parents are expected to attend conferences with teachers at the end of the first and third quarters of the school year.

E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support

TVCA opened in August 2019 to students in grades K-6. Currently we have 311 students enrolled and 82 students on our wait list. We are authorized to enroll up to 54 students per grade (for a total of up to 702 students) as we grow into a K-12 academy. Phase One of our facility plan consisted in the purchase and renovation of Fruitland's original schoolhouse, a 90-year-old historic brick building on the town's main street, which will continue to house grades K-6. Our Phase-Two expansion to prepare for grades 7-12 is underway. With Building Hope, Inc., our nationally

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renowned charter school facilities partner, we are proceeding on three fronts: *i*) negotiating the purchase of adjacent property in coordination with Fruitland’s city government and school district (the property’s current owner), both of which share our interest in completing the transaction; *ii*) researching modular facilities in which to house grades 7-8 for the next two years while our permanent upper school facility is under construction; and *iii*) defining the exact scope and objectives of our permanent upper school facility.

TVCA’s success to date is due in part to a publicity strategy that we will continue to employ as we go forward. Our strategy emphasizes the following:

Digital Outreach—TVCA maintains a well-organized and continually updated school website; maintains an active Facebook page and responds to questions and concerns expressed thereon as appropriate; sends weekly digital newsletters to families.

Community Involvement—TVCA participates in local family- and child-friendly events (the Payette County Fair and Fruitland Family Fun Day, for example), setting up information booths, introducing our school to parents and community members, and taking contact information from those who express interest; TVCA will also open our campus and facilities to the local community (by hosting a Veterans Day Ceremony and a December Fine Arts Event, for example).

Marketing—TVCA school leaders and board members have worked and continue to work with professional marketing partners to advertise our school in various ways, including the following: a bilingual billboard and print-media advertisement program targeting underserved families; Hispanic families, discussions with local preschools, homeschool organizations, civic and cultural organizations; presentations at local public libraries and chamber-of-commerce functions.

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As TVCA continues to grow, we will further refine and direct our publicity strategy to maintain numbers of educationally disadvantaged students comparable (within a 5-percent margin) to those of the surrounding Fruitland district—namely, 31.70% non-white; 42.40% Title-1; 7.36% ELL; and 11.25% SPED. The three-year school budget spreadsheet accompanying this application shows that TVCA has allocated sufficient funds to execute this strategy.

Parents provided invaluable assistance to TVCA even before our August 2019 opening, particularly in the areas of uniform, outreach, and enrollment coordination. Going forward, parents and community members will continue to play an active role in TVCA’s school life by participating in our Parent-Teacher-Community Association (PTCA), described in section J below.

TVCA has earned strong support from key community stakeholders, including Fruitland’s mayor and city council, church communities, libraries, civic organizations, and city chambers of commerce within the attendance zone as well as financial support from private citizens and parking agreements with the Highway Worship Center and Fruitland Electric Company. We have also secured the city of Fruitland’s permission to use a city park across the street from the school as our playground until we build our own as part of our Phase-Two expansion.

Meanwhile our fruitful partnership with Alma Mater, Inc. (AMI), the non-profit community historical foundation from which we purchased our current K-6 facility, continues. We are working with AMI to develop another of its properties in downtown Fruitland, the historic Hitchcock Service Station. Our goals include the installation of a community raised-bed vegetable garden, which will serve as a project-based learning center for our students. Our food service providers, Treasure Valley Catering, share our interest in teaching TVCA students project-based lessons in sustainable agriculture.

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F. Effectively Serving All Students

TVCA understands and embraces its obligation to meet the needs of every student. We strive to realize the potential of students of all backgrounds and to graduate students who are prepared to participate intelligently and responsibly in their communities.

Numerous longitudinal studies show that early literacy and numeracy skill acquisition is the greatest predictor of later learning.⁷ The BCSI curriculum is itself a powerful remediation tool for educationally disadvantaged students because of its focus on building literacy, language comprehension, and writing skills in primary grades. *Access Literacy* is a research-tested program informed by the Orton-Gillingham method of teaching language and literacy. Its writing-and-spelling to reading and thinking is a direct, explicit, multi-sensory, structured, sequential method that includes a variety of diagnostic and prescriptive strategies for helping students in need. TVCA faculty and staff received four full days of intensive training in *Access Literacy*'s program and method prior to our August 2019 school opening. Similarly, the *Singapore Mathematics* sequence used in grades K-8 imparts both procedural fluency and conceptual understanding to students, which empowers them to succeed in algebra and other higher branches of mathematics they will study in high school. TVCA faculty and staff received two full days of intensive training in the program and method of *Singapore Mathematics* prior to our school's opening as well.

Differentiated instruction and targeted remediation in literacy and numeracy are facilitated by TVCA's carefully designed ability grouping programs. Initial formative assessments and qualitative observations have revealed that our current second-grade class is in greatest need of remediation in literacy. This need will be met by directing aides to spend the common literacy block with second graders. Initial formative mathematics assessments have confirmed our

⁷ See for example Duncan *et alia*, 2007: <https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/dev-4361428.pdf>.

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expectation that extensive remediation (two grade levels' worth in many cases) is required across grades 2-6. We have worked closely with BCSI's mathematics curriculum specialist to devise a data-driven plan to meet this need and are now implementing this plan.

TVCA's special education program fully complies with the Idaho Special Education Manual. Our program is overseen by our Student Services Director (SSD), a certified SPED instructor, and implemented by our Student Services Team (currently four paraprofessionals and a certified speech pathologist). We are currently working with the education nonprofit Bluum and Blue Cross of Idaho to take advantage of the latter's Healthy Minds Partnership program, through which we could employ full-time a licensed clinical social worker on campus, at no cost to TVCA, beginning next school year. Prior to our school opening, all faculty and staff received thorough training from our SSD in effective intervention strategies and corresponding support tools.

Our SST responds to individual student needs in coordination with homeroom teachers and according to the detailed intervention sequence outlined in section C above (Step 1: Classroom Intervention; Step 2: Small-Group or One-on-One Intervention; Step 3: SSD Consultation—to determine whether to refer the student to SPED or to devise new strategies to employ in Steps 1 and 2). Child Find evaluations are completed in a timely manner under the principal's guidance in order to identify student needs. Each student determined to be in need has as advocates an IEP team to include the student's homeroom teacher, a member of the SST, an administrative representative, parents or guardians, and other faculty and staff as appropriate. IEP teams review and, when necessary, revise IEPs according to evolving student needs. IEP plans are developed, and TVCA's intervention sequence is followed, with a view to allowing students to be educated alongside their mainstream peers. TVCA endorses a "push-in" approach to special education

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wherever possible, while providing various alternative settings for students with special needs for use as necessary.

TVCA will take actions to meet the needs of English Language Learners according to the State ELL Guidelines for Idaho Districts Manual. These actions include administering Home Language Surveys, WIDA Placement Tests to determine students' English proficiency, and annual student progress assessments, as appropriate. TVCA works to ensure bilingual teachers can provide classroom assistance where necessary. The objective of TVCA's program for ELL students is to enable them to achieve English proficiency as soon as possible. TVCA's commitment to meeting the needs of SPED and educationally disadvantaged students is reflected in our three-year operating budget, which reserves funds for these purposes.

Classical education is inherently rigorous. TVCA's curriculum and methods of instruction constitute a gifted-and-talented program for all students. For students who excel, teachers recommend more advanced coursework (additional reading assignments or more difficult literature, for example). These same students are also encouraged to assume leadership roles in their classes, in extracurricular activities, and in student government.

In order to meet the needs of educationally disadvantaged students, TVCA has removed barriers to attendance and academic success. We have purchased four new school busses and plan to add a fifth bus next year to accommodate our growing student population. Our transportation coordinator has designed bus routes that bring students from four school districts, ranging from Weiser (20 miles north) to Parma and New Plymouth (8-10 miles south and east), to our Fruitland campus within the ride-time limits prescribed by the state of Idaho for individual school districts.

Thanks to our partnership with Treasure Valley Catering, we provide nutritious and locally-sourced hot lunches, taking advantage of FFRP funds to ensure that all students who request hot

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lunches receive them. Discussions are underway concerning an expansion of our food service program to include breakfast. Meanwhile we provide homeroom teachers with nutritious snacks to distribute at their discretion.

G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan

The TVCA administration and staff consists of a Principal, an Assistant Principal (and 2019-20 Idaho New School Fellow), a Director of Operations, a Facilities Manager, a Student Services Director/SPED Teacher, and a Secretary. Our Principal has demonstrated his ability to attract and recruit talented faculty and staff to contribute to the TVCA mission. Many TVCA teachers hail from the Fruitland area; many others have come from across the country. All were attracted to the school's mission and recruited by digital and print-media marketing as well as visits by the Principal to career fairs at Hillsdale College. Their numbers are as follows: 3 classroom teachers per grades K and 1 (18 students per classroom); 2 teachers per grades 2-4 (27 students per classroom); 1 teacher per grades 5 and 6 (27 students per classroom); 4 teacher aides (1 for grade K, 1 for grade 1, 1 for grades 2 and 3, 1 for grades 4-6); 4 specials teachers (1 art, 1 Spanish, 1 music, 1 physical education); and 5 Student Services/SPED team members (4 paraprofessionals, 1 speech therapist). As TVCA continues to grow we will recruit additional faculty and staff by the same means, discerning through interviews whether candidates are best suited to contribute to the mission of the school. CSP Grant funds would be applied toward the salaries and benefits of key faculty and staff, as detailed in the Project Budget spreadsheet and narrative accompanying this application.

BCSI and Hillsdale College provide extensive professional development opportunities at little or no cost to TVCA (or to any other BCSI school). The BCSI team led a two-week faculty training in July-August 2019 prior to our school opening. In September 2019 the BCSI team

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returned to TVCA to observe and advise teachers, especially on matters of instructional practice and curriculum implementation; they will return each semester for our first five school years for this purpose. At all times, the BCSI team is available by phone and email to answer our teachers' questions and address their concerns. Annually and at BCSI's and Hillsdale College's expense, the TVCA faculty will travel to the Hillsdale College campus for a week-long professional development program.

TVCA's Principal outlined the standards and procedures of evaluation—expectations regarding classroom culture, mission alignment, curriculum implementation, parent engagement, professional bearing, etc.—to all faculty prior to our school opening. The Principal observes teachers in classrooms daily to offer direction according to the Charlotte Danielson Evaluation Framework. Special attention is paid to *i*) planning and preparation, *ii*) classroom environment, *iii*) instructional assessment, and *iv*) professional responsibility. These categories feature on the official evaluation forms used during formal end-of-year evaluations. Faculty are assigned one of four ratings (Unsatisfactory, Basic, Proficient, or Distinguished), also as outlined in the Danielson Framework. Teachers who receive ratings of Basic or Unsatisfactory in any area will be given specific directives and suggestions for improvement.

H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan

TVCA has closely collaborated with a contracted CFO/support organization to develop a 5-year balanced operating budget forecast to achieve annual savings of 13-16% over our first five-year charter term. The budget includes a realistic projection of future operating revenues and was drafted in accordance with both the school mission and the requirements of the Idaho Department of Education and federal and local law. (The Three-Year Operating Budget accompanying this

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application details the funds allocated to such purposes as facility costs—which amount to less than 20%--and resources for students with special needs.)

TVCA's budget is prepared by the Principal in conjunction with our contracted CFO/support organization and approved by the governing board in compliance with Idaho Code § 33-801 and State Board of Education policy. Each year it is presented at a public hearing and delivered to the Idaho Department of Education on or before 15 July. Income sources include state allocations per pupil, federal and private grants, business partnerships, and donation. TVCA received a \$1.6-million grant from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson's Foundation in support of our first five-year charter term.

TVCA's purchasing process complies with Idaho Code § 33-601. Accounting records are kept in accordance with generally accepted principles and standards. The Principal manages the school's overall finances as well as its daily revenues, expenses, and cash flow. Per school bylaws, the Board of Directors ensures the school's financial integrity and therefore exercises oversight of school finances.

TVCA's Board of Directors has received BCSI training by nationally recognized board-governance expert Dr. Brian Carpenter, particularly in the areas of *i*) internal controls policies (segregation of duties) and *ii*) conducting a board-led auditor selection policy. In addition, per Dr. Carpenter's recommendation, the Board will ensure *i*) that Board members, staff members, and volunteers with access to material amounts of school money are bonded; *ii*) that the school's cash assets are on deposit only in Board-approved places and investment vehicles; *iii*) that management expenditures fall within approved budget parameters; *iv*) that long-term financial planning reflects the Board's priorities for the school; *v*) that documents such as IRS Form 990 are completed

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accurately and filed in a timely manner; and *vi*) that management uses auditor-approved accounting procedures and methods.

I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure

TVCA Board members bring to the table a wide range of experience in business development, marketing, finance, education, law enforcement, food service, parliamentary procedure, technology development, real estate, youth programs oversight, and executive leadership. (Board member biographies submitted elsewhere in this CSP Grant application provide specific information.) The Board is actively recruiting a new member who is bilingual and Hispanic in order better to reflect TVCA’s student population. All founding Board members have completed a three-day charter school governance course hosted by BCSI at Hillsdale College. While TVCA’s operating budget designates travel funds for annual BCSI Board training events, BCSI leads these events and provides accommodations at no cost to TVCA. Five TVCA Board members have also completed a two-day Charter School 101 boot camp conducted by the Idaho Department of Education. TVCA’s Bylaws (included alongside TVCA’s Charter School Performance Certificate) provide details on Board membership, authority, and powers (see Article 4), outline Board meeting procedures and open meeting laws (see Article 5), and describe officer roles (see Article 6).

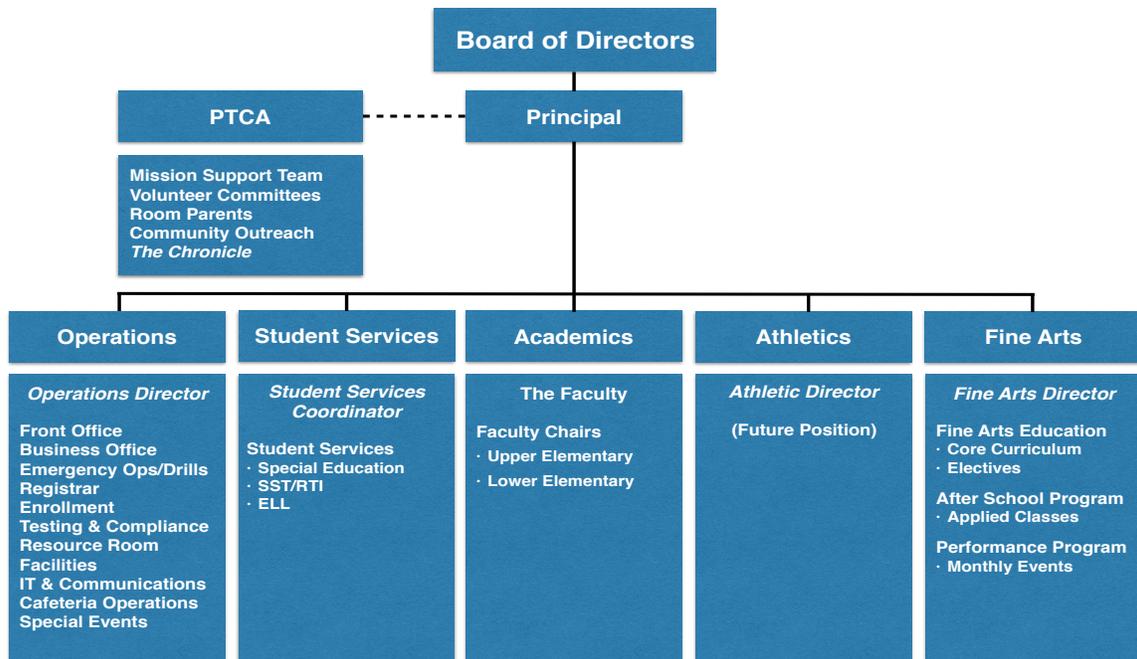
Management duties were transferred from the Board to the Principal upon approval of the TVCA charter. Since then the Board has assumed the role of a governing entity charged with the task of overseeing the school according to clear and established policies and procedures. The Board ensures TVCA’s long-term success by i) engaging in strategic planning; ii) making sure the Principal manages school affairs in compliance with Idaho’s State Charter School law and all other state and federal laws and regulations; iii) assessing school programs and operations; and iv)

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formulating and participating in short-term and long-term plans for the school. Each Board member has signed a copy of the Charter School Board Members Code of Conduct, and the Board’s performance is routinely assessed both internally and by BCSI.

J. School Leadership and Management

TVCA will function as a non-profit corporation organized and managed under the Idaho Nonprofit Corporation Act, as outlined in its Corporate Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation. The following diagram illustrates TVCA’s leadership and management structure:



(a) The Board of Directors:

TVCA is governed by a Board of Directors and managed by its Principal pursuant to its charter and duly adopted bylaws. The Board ensures the school accomplishes the outcome for which it was chartered within all the pertinent parameters. (Further details concerning Board membership and governance are described in section I above.)

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(b) The Parent Teacher Community Association:

TVCA's primary collaborative team is the Parent Teacher Community Association (PTCA). Led by two parent co-chairs, the PTCA collaborates with the principal to help the school flourish and accomplish its mission. The PTCA co-chairs i) coordinate parent volunteer support; ii) assist the Principal in selecting grade-level room parents; iii) promote the school through communications and interactions with the school and local community; iv) oversee editing of the school's biweekly newsletter; and v) chair the school's Mission Support Team (MST).

The MST, to be established by the Principal and the PTCA, will serve as TVCA's continuous process improvement organization, i) advancing the school's mission by analyzing constituent inputs and ii) identifying opportunities for mission-based improvements. MST process-improvement events will be conducted according to the DMAIC framework (Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control). The MST is led officially by the PTCA co-chairs, but in order to incorporate the views of all school constituents, it will also include two *teachers* (upper/lower elementary); two *students* (initially upper elementary); two *parents* (upper/lower elementary); a *member of the staff* (non-teaching); and the Principal.

(c) The Principal:

Mr. Lambert is TVCA's founding Principal and a 2018-19 Idaho New School Fellow. In 2014 he was hired by Northside Education, Inc., an Atlanta-based 501-c-3 educational corporation, to help found Atlanta Classical Academy (ACA), a new BCSI K-12 charter school. He served as Assistant Principal and then as Principal of a school of 630 students, 67 faculty and staff, and an annual operating budget of \$6.3M. During his tenure as Principal, ACA maintained a faculty retention rate of 97%, a student retention rate of 95%, and a student wait list of approximately 1200, while earning AdvancEd/SACS accreditation as an independent K-12 charter school.

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Mr. Lambert retired at the rank of colonel from the U.S. Air Force in May 2014 after a decorated 24-year career. Previously, he served as the Director of the U.S. Air Force Commanders' Professional Development School, where he was responsible for preparing over 1,400 senior officers annually for command with an executive-level curriculum spanning a broad range of topics and integrating mentorship from the most senior cadre of Air Force general officers. Before that, he served as the Vice Commander of the 86th Airlift Wing headquartered at Ramstein, Germany, where he helped lead an organization comprised of over 10,000 Air Force personnel dispersed across three air bases in Germany, Spain, and Belgium.

Mr. Lambert earned his undergraduate degree in political science from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1990. He is a distinguished graduate from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, CA, where he was awarded an MA in National Security Affairs in 1995. In 2004, he was selected for a research fellowship at the Center for Strategic Intelligence Research (Defense Intelligence Agency, Washington D.C.) and in 2008 he was chosen to be a National Defense Fellow at the Fletcher School of Law & Diplomacy (Tufts University, Boston).

Mr. Lambert regularly meets with the TVCA Board of Directors to report on the school's operations and is required to attend all Board meetings. His responsibilities include the following: overseeing the planning, operation, and supervision of TVCA's educational program; upholding and enforcing the school's charter, Board policies, and local, state, and federal laws and regulations; and handling personnel matters including the hiring, management, termination, and annual evaluation of all school employees as provided for by TVCA policy. Personnel under the supervision of the principal, as identified in the organization charter, include the Student Services Director, business manager, administrative assistants/registrar/coordinator, and the faculty, educational assistants and ancillary staff.

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(d) Director of Operations:

TVCA's Director of Operations (DO) oversees most non-academic school functions (as shown in the diagram above), including financial operations (which by prior agreement are provided by a contracted CFO/support organization that assists in preparing, planning for, and presenting an annual school budget to the TVCA Board). The DO furnishes required monthly financial reports for review at regular Board meetings; keeps the Board apprised of changes in law, regulations, and rules applicable to Idaho public school finances; and ensures that the Board is made aware of any potential concerns about the school's finances. The DO and contracted CFO/support organization works with the Principal to keep the Board apprised of the school's financial health.

(e) Teachers and Staff:

The Principal frequently observes teachers in classrooms in order to promote an active conversation on curriculum, pedagogy, and school culture. As TVCA grows, the Principal will establish the following faculty chairs: lower elementary (K-3); upper elementary (4-6); middle school (7-8); upper-school humanities; upper-school mathematics; and upper-school science. Faculty chairs will serve as lead teachers for curriculum horizontal and vertical integration, and will work to foster a collaborative and interdisciplinary understanding of the K-12 BCSI Curriculum. Experience at other BCSI schools shows that faculty chairs are tremendous multipliers for faculty integration and development. Teachers and staff attend regularly scheduled meetings at which issues regarding school governance are discussed. All school personnel report to the Principal. The Principal determines the most appropriate staffing requirements and structure for the administrative front office.