EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The world is changing rapidly, and education needs to keep pace with the challenges and advancements students will meet in the real world. Most Idaho students simply are not prepared for success in college, but Gem Prep: Ammon seeks to change that. Through the use of adaptive technology coupled with highly qualified teachers who use data to personalize instruction, Gem Prep is developing students who have the knowledge, characteristics, competencies, and mindsets that they will need to be successful in college and the next generation's workplace.

Gem Prep is a catalyst for changing education outcomes in Idaho. Gem's education model encompasses a graduate profile developed around the competencies, skills, and characteristics necessary for tomorrow's leaders. Gem Prep students will graduate with early college success in high school and with experiences and accomplishments in the areas of real-world communication, rigorous academics, and superior independence and motivation.

Part II: A. Grant Project Goals

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

Gem Vision: Gem Prep: Ammon (GPA) is a K-12, personalized, college preparatory school authorized by the Idaho Public Charter School Commission. Through personalization, and by leveraging best practices in technology, the school engages students in 21st-century work, using competencies necessary for productive lives as citizens in a dynamic, increasingly competitive global world.

GRANT PROJECT GOAL #1: _Increase the number of high-quality Idaho K-12 charter school seats._

At full growth, GPA will serve 574 K-12 students. During the grant period, GPA will add 425 students in grades K-9 and will continue adding students in grades 10-12 in the following years. Completion of this goal will be tracked through enrollment in GPA's student information system (SIS). Adding secondary grade levels aligns with the mission of preparing students for success in college by ensuring they have instructional rigor from K through 12.

GRANT PROJECT GOAL #2: _Sixty percent of GPA's 7th-12th grade students will take one or more advanced opportunities courses each school year, setting their trajectory for early college success in high school._ It is critical that GPA students take courses that provide both intellectual rigor and meet graduation requirements during their 7th-8th grade years, setting them up to take college-level courses when they reach high school. In existing Gem Prep schools, 80% of 7th and 8th grade students are successfully taking high school level courses. Students in 9th–12th grade will take a series of college-level courses while in high school. Many of these courses will be online, creating the necessity for a student workspace that is

conducive to productivity and collaboration. Completion of this goal will be tracked through the SIS, which tracks enrollment data, student schedules and grades. Students receiving coursework in above-grade-level content is part of how GPA fulfills its mission of providing students a rigorous education.

GRANT PROJECT GOAL #3: *Seventy-five percent of 7th & 8th grade students will take courses from a teacher who is physically located in a different building than the student.* Through the use of technology, GPA will connect students with excellent teachers, without regard to location. Using this technology expands the reach of the best teachers and provides options to mitigate geographic teacher shortages. Today's students need to obtain the skills to work and collaborate virtually across physical divides. Participating in courses that require cross-site collaboration allows students to develop such skills. Completion of this goal will be tracked through the SIS, which tracks enrollment data, student schedules and teacher assignments. As stated in the mission statement, these courses provide an "innovative use of technology" to ensure students have access to "exceptional teaching" regardless of their geographic location.

GRANT PROJECT GOAL #4: *Students in grades 4th-8th will meet or exceed the state proficiency and growth average in English Language Arts and math on state standardized assessments.* Student academic outcomes in the 4th-8th grades are a key indicator of their readiness to complete rigorous coursework in subsequent years. GPA will use the Idaho State Standardized Achievement Test (ISAT) to measure both growth and achievement for students in grades 4th - 8th. The GPA mission statement emphasizes high-quality instruction, which is synonymous with academic growth and proficiency. GPA believes that exceptional learning and teaching is reflected in growth and proficiency measures.

GRANT PROJECT GOAL #5: *GPA will serve students in grades K-12, mirroring (within a 5% margin) the student population of local district demographics.* GPA believes that a diverse student body

enriches the education of all students and is essential to preparing students for a pluralistic world. It is also important to mirror the demographics of the surrounding district to demonstrate that GPA successfully serves all students. GPA's SIS captures the student demographics during enrollment and will be used for comparison to the local student population demographics noted in the CSP Grant. Our mission to prepare students for success includes all students regardless of race, income, and special education status.

Part II: B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum

GPA is a college preparatory school. Every program, K-12, at GPA is designed and aligned to prepare students for success in college and beyond. The philosophical premise is that students need a tailored and rigorous instructional environment to help them develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies that will assist them in their success in college.

GPA's instructional methodology is to provide instructional access to content designed to prepare students for the rigors of college-level instruction. Because the elementary grade levels include foundational content, GPA utilizes a personalized approach, which leverages technology to adapt instruction to student needs, while simultaneously providing them with real-time feedback and remediation. Teachers also work with students in small group instruction settings to teach key concepts and help students continue to develop their skills. Part of the foundational elementary skill set includes developing the character and behavioral attributes that will position students for success as they enter middle and high school. To assist in the development of these skills, teachers meet individually with students in data conferences on a weekly basis to set goals, track progress toward previous goals, and discuss reflections on goals. These meetings assist the teachers in maintaining a culture of high expectations for behaviors

and academics by providing a forum for reflection, recognition, and accountability. Elementary students engage in electives such as coding, art, music, Spanish, etc. Each course is designed to build upon instruction in core courses while providing additional depth and application for students.

As students' progress to secondary grade levels, the focus of student competency development shifts toward independence, ownership of learning, and exposure to new skills. Students engage in courses in person, online, and through video teleconference to gain skills of professional communication and collaboration with colleagues (other students and teachers) in remote geographic locations. Secondary students also participate in college preparatory courses, which are dedicated to the development of competencies such as mindsets, communication skills, and habits of success. When students enter 11th grade, they take primarily college-level coursework with the objective of completing an associate's degree by high school graduation. Research literature demonstrates that students who access rigorous content while in high school have higher persistence rates in college (*Education Sciences, 2018).* The associate's degree requires both core and elective courses. Students complete their core requirements through the General Education Matriculation (GEM) courses to allow for a more seamless transfer to other Idaho colleges. Elective courses are chosen based on the scholars' degree and career plan goals. GPA students are capable of accessing and succeeding in college coursework while in high school because the school provides the foundational content knowledge and competencies they need to prepare them for the experience.

GPA believes that access to high-quality learning materials is central to the effective instruction of students. Accordingly, the school seeks to adopt a rigorous, sustainable, evidence-based

curriculum that provides students with optimal access to information and learning

opportunities. GPA curriculum aligns with national and/or Idaho Content standards, which

define the knowledge and skills students should have within their K-12 education. GPA has

established rigorous performance objectives, and additionally, ensures each curricula meets the

following qualifications: (a) rigor meets or exceeds common core state standards; (b)

curriculum is research and evidence based.

GPA utilizes the same curricula and instructional methods as other Gem Prep schools with a

similar student population. The Gem Prep schools that are currently operating have

demonstrated a track record of success. Gem Prep's ISAT Math and ELA 2023 proficiency scores

are 18% and 14% higher than the state average. According to the NWEA MAP assessment, our

entire network of students is in the 90th %ile for Math and 96th %ile for ELA in the Charter

Schools Growth Fund Portfolio. Gem Prep students also complete dual college credit at high

rates, with approximately 50% of Gem Prep students leaving high school with associate

degrees. Additionally, GP students scored nearly 10% higher than the state average on the

Spring 2023 Idaho Reading Indicator (ISIP).

GPA core academic curriculum undergoes an extensive review process by the curriculum

adoption committee. This committee reviews the curriculum on an annual basis to ensure core

academic content meets or exceeds content standards and maintains research-based efficacy

for their specific student demographic (Idaho Administrative Rules IDAPA 08.02.03.102).

GPA's ELA (English Language Arts) curriculum is *CommonLIT Pro* which provides rich and

rigorous evidence-based discussions and writing to build strong literacy skills. Students build

skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening, and they integrate language work throughout.

This researched and reviewed curriculum meets rigorous expectations in both alignment and usability ratings ([CommonLIT Report](#)).

GPA utilizes *Zearn* math curriculum, which allows students to learn across multiple instructional formats, rotating between learning independently with self-paced digital lessons and working with their teacher and classmates in a small group. Research indicates this program successfully increases student understanding and proficiency in mathematics. This curriculum meets rigorous expectations in both alignment and usability ratings ([Zearn Math EdReport](#))

GPA's science curriculum*, Amplify Science*, blends hands-on investigations, literacy-rich activities, and interactive digital tools to empower students to think, read, write, and argue like real scientists. ([Amplify Science EdReport](#)).

GPA has adopted *MyWorld Social Studies* curriculum. In preparing students to be college ready, MyWorld aligns with C3 Framework for social studies instruction, to help educators expand social studies and civic education in the classroom. *MyWorld* aligns with Idaho Content Standards ([Savvas, 2013](#)).

To meet GPA's performance objectives and gain experience communicating and learning in a variety of ways, students take courses in three different course formats: (a) in-person classes, (b) online classes, and (c) virtual classes through live video teleconference systems in a send-receive model. Select classrooms are equipped with video teleconference equipment to facilitate send/receive courses. All students interact with digital content using Chromebooks. GPA utilizes the learning management system, Canvas, to design content for all core classes in grades K-12. Canvas provides a consistent framework for instructional delivery, assessment, and access to academic progress for all students in grades K-12. In addition to GPA's use of a

learning management system, the school also uses computer adaptive technology to provide individualized learning. Computer adaptive programs, such as *Istation*, assess each student and adapt the activities and assessment questions based on the student's response. Based on their assessment results and individual abilities, students are able to engage individually with digital activities daily.

GPA also utilizes technology to support safe, equitable, and positive classroom environments through a variety of strategies and the use of GoGuardian. GoGuardian provides teachers and administrators access to observe student technology use, which facilitates students staying on task to maximize learning time. The program is also a security system to ensure students are only accessing safe and appropriate academic content when they engage with digital learning.

GPA is a tuition-free K-12 Idaho public charter school authorized by the Idaho Public Charter School Commission. GPA has developed specific elements within the elementary and secondary models "in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives" designed to meet the unique needs of GPA demographics (ESEA 4310 1C, 20 U.S.C. 7221i).

The instructional approach of GPA prioritizes three areas of emphasis: (a) acquisition and retention of high-quality teachers, (b) innovative, individualized instructional models, and (c) development and implementation of college-ready competencies. GPA students deserve the best teachers and staff. Accordingly, GPA developed a thorough hiring process and offers all teachers a 1-year contract. This ensures that students have consistent access to teachers who thoroughly support the development of all students in GPA's college preparatory model.

To meet GPA's rigorous performance objectives, the school uses an instructional model with a variety of course formats to meet the individual needs of its unique population. Student

learning is additionally enhanced through differentiation via blended learning, adaptive technology, and grade and subject acceleration.

Per ESEA 4310, GPA has identified a specific set of educational objectives, which include the development of the Gem Prep Graduate Profile and the implementation of college-ready competencies. All students should have access to a high-quality education built upon a strong academic, social, and emotional foundation. GPA provides tuition-free, full-day kindergarten to all students, laying a critical foundation for future success. All students begin building their college competencies in kindergarten with their K-12 graduate profile focused on the following areas: (a) college planning and saving, (b) evidence of college-ready competencies, (c) college and career coaching, (d) academic growth, (e) social/emotional development, and (f) self-advocacy.

Part II: C. Teaching and Learning

All students should have access to a high-quality education built upon a strong academic, social, and emotional foundation. To meet GPA's rigorous performance objectives, the school uses an instructional model with a variety of course formats and instructional strategies to meet the individual needs of its unique population. GPA uses a variety of standards-based assessments throughout the school year to identify student-learning needs and inform decisions throughout the Response to Intervention (RTI) process. These include benchmark assessments, diagnostic assessments, lesson and unit assessments, summative assessments, and formative assessments. Three times per year, all students are assessed using the NWEA MAP reading and math growth assessments. These benchmark assessments provide student and class growth data, standards-based mastery information, and progress toward annual learning objectives.

Benchmark assessment data is used to evaluate the efficacy of the overall curriculum, gauge collective, and individual teaching practices, and monitor student achievement progress. Teachers and paraprofessionals use this data to identify students considered for a grade or subject acceleration, struggling students, and inform classroom blended learning groups, lesson plans and pacing, and specific instructional strategies. Benchmark assessment data is used at the classroom, grade, and school level to differentiate instruction based on individual skill and content standard mastery. The RTI team reviews all assessment data monthly and evaluates benchmark data to identify students performing below grade level. Team intervention plans are created to meet the individual needs of each struggling student and range from one-on-one or small-group instruction to after-school tutoring. Additionally, K-8 students take weekly College Readiness Quizzes (CRQ) in reading and math to assess their mastery of weekly learning standards and identify struggling students. CRQ data guides interventions in a three-fold RTI model. First, students are provided classroom interventions to reteach skills and build learning deficits during scheduled reading and math blocks. Second, GPA uses computer-adaptive assessments to frequently monitor student progress in reading via Istation and in math. Computer-adaptive assessments provide practitioners with specific skill diagnosis and individualized intervention lessons. These assessments evaluate each student and adapt the questions based on the student's response. For example, if a student gets a question correct, the next question becomes more challenging. If a student answers a test question incorrectly, the subsequent question becomes more simplified. Computer-adaptive assessments allow teachers to identify and target the specific skills each student needs in their learning progression and measure their goal progress. The third layer of support is weekly after-school

tutoring during College Prep Academy where students receive one-on-one, small group, and whole group instruction based on their individual needs.

School-wide classroom data is shared with all practitioners weekly to identify strengths, areas of opportunity, and learning trends. Each teacher meets with their principal at least once per month to review student data and collaboratively design data-informed lesson plans. Teachers also meet with each student at least once per month to review student data, growth, and self-selected goals. The computer-adaptive assessments also inform computer-adaptive content so students can individually engage with digital activities based on their assessment results and individual abilities. Teachers are able to work with students one-on-one and in small groups and then students are able to work independently at their instructional level, practice new skills, and receive challenging instruction while still in a supportive and individualized environment.

Part II: D. Student Academic Achievement Standards

Through formative assessments, student outcomes are tracked and measured in smaller increments of time and scope. These allow for a constant and consistent gauge of student performance, and they give educators the ability to personalize and adjust instructional practices as needed throughout the school year. By measuring student outcomes through both formative and interim assessments, GPA can "keep a finger on the pulse" of where students, classrooms, and teachers are at any given time throughout the year. This enables quick adjustments to instruction and the ability to employ responsive supports where and when they are needed. The school also uses a series of summative assessments on an annual basis to get a big-picture view of the overall student, classroom, and teacher achievement. Assessment data is shared across the school and across the Gem Prep network of schools for the purpose of (a)

tracking where each teacher, each classroom, and each student are succeeding and (b) bringing

to light areas where teachers may need additional support to effectively teach students—

whether it be in areas of pacing, instructional excellence, classroom management, supporting

individual students, etc. The assessment data is used in weekly professional development

sessions, identifying which students/teachers/classrooms are achieving the most growth; and

then leveraging those high achieving teachers to share best practices for the development of

other teachers. GPA uses a comprehensive set of assessment tools and framework to facilitate

its data-driven culture:

Gem Prep: Ammon Assessment Framework	
FORMATIVE / INTERIM / SUMMATIVE	
K-2nd	Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI), Northwest Evaluation Association Assessment (NWEA MAP), WIDA Access 2.0 English Language, weekly College Readiness Quiz
3rd	3rd Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI), Northwest Evaluation Association Assessment (NWEA MAP), WIDA Access 2.0 English Language, Idaho Standard Achievement Test (ISAT) weekly College Readiness Quiz
4th - 6th	Northwest Evaluation Association Assessment (NWEA MAP), WIDA Access 2.0 English Language, Idaho Standard Achievement Test (ISAT) weekly College Readiness Quiz
7th - 9th	Northwest Evaluation Association Assessment (NWEA MAP), WIDA Access 2.0 English Language, Idaho Standard Achievement Test (ISAT), ISAT interim, weekly College Readiness Quiz
10th - 11th	WIDA Access 2.0 English Language, Idaho Standard Achievement Test (ISAT), ISAT interim, weekly College Readiness Quiz, Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test (PSAT) and SAT
12th	WIDA Access 2.0 English Language, Idaho Standard Achievement Test (ISAT), ISAT interim, Idaho Civics Exam

The principal supervisor, data manager, and principal work in conjunction with GPA teachers to

regularly monitor and evaluate student data. This team provides "wrap around" support for

struggling teachers. Areas of concern are quickly identified, and effective, measurable plans are

implemented to further develop the teacher, remedy any areas of struggle (e.g. student

comprehension, instruction concerns, content pacing, etc.), and to ultimately ensure student

mastery. GPA believes that excellence and equity are inseparable. The principal ensures that a

high percentage of students reach proficiency benchmarks AND that the learning environment

is equally conducive for all students to achieve. All student population subgroups (race, income level, special need, etc.) are supported and equally expected to reach proficiency levels. During weekly 2-hour professional development, information is provided to the school staff, principal, and teachers, which demonstrates the weekly progress of every student. All formative, interim and summative data is available. Additionally, all aggregate GPA data is shared with all GP schools. Teachers are paired by grade level across all Gem Prep schools. The group's professional development leader, a position filled by an administrator, presents each teacher's data and facilitates a group discussion about the various challenges and successes teachers are realizing. Inevitably, some teachers will struggle. For those who struggle, best practices are shared, and strategies are put into place to lift all teachers, with the goal to help every GPA teacher become master teachers.

Annually, the CEO, CAO, data manager, principal supervisors, and principal work together to review student data and adjust goals and plans accordingly. This review includes a disaggregation of student data to ensure that subpopulations are performing well and that any discrepancies in their performance are addressed. Academic benchmarks are reviewed and re-evaluated. The assessment data is leveraged to create or revise policies and to make leadership decisions for areas of emphasis the following school year. All student level data is protected via safety protocols to ensure confidentiality.

Part II: E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support

GP schools have a long track record of serving a student population that mirrors the local school district. GPA has developed a community engagement and student recruitment plan that intentionally enrolls a diverse student population and seeks input from families on what they

are looking for in a school. This input comes from surveys, information sessions, and

community meetings. Branding was created by a professional designer, and messaging was

created with the help of an experienced consultant to balance high expectations with robust

support. GPA uses a variety of engagement and recruitment tools including social media,

mailers, door-to-door campaigns, public forums, surveys, local preschools, and community

events and groups. Student recruitment materials (also available in Spanish) feature students

who represent racial diversity and a range of age levels. These materials make it abundantly

clear that GPA serves students at all academic levels, including special education students.

Door-to-door efforts and mailers include a variety of neighborhoods, including those most likely

to yield enrollment from students of color and low income. Social media parameters are

narrowed to target these same neighborhoods and demographics. During the summer, GPA

staff attend free lunch at the parks (which are intended for low-income families) to inform

families about school choice options. Strong demand currently exists for enrollment at GPA

from a regionally diverse student population. The current GPA interest list is over 260 students

strong, to date, because of our recent community outreach. Administrators will hold monthly

community outreach events to raise public awareness and seek dialogue with potential GPA

families and community members. GPA will dedicate significant time and financial resources to

student and staff recruitment efforts, including an ongoing annual budget of $5,000 for this

purpose. Idaho Falls is the 4th largest city in Idaho with a current population of 66,989 and

experienced a 16.5% increase in population from 2010 to 2020. The city of Ammon, which in

included in the Bonneville School District, experienced a 42.2% population increase during the

same timeframe. In an attempt to keep pace with growth, the district has changed attendance

boundaries, relocated modular buildings, and purchased land for a future high school complex.

Gem Prep's Planned Growth

Grades	Yr. 1	Yr. 2	Yr. 3	Yr. 4	Yr. 5
K	52	52	52	52	52
1	52	52	52	52	52
2	26	52	52	52	52
3	26	52	52	52	52
4	26	26	52	52	52
5	26	26	26	52	52
6	45	45	45	45	52
7	45	45	45	45	45
8	45	45	45	45	45
9		30	30	30	30
10			30	30	30
11				30	30
12					30
Total	343	425	481	537	574

GPA expects that student demographics will mirror the population of the Bonneville School

District. Focused recruitment strategies will enable GP's student demographics to roughly reflect

the district's non-white, English Language Learner, economically disadvantaged (low income),

and special education (see below data).

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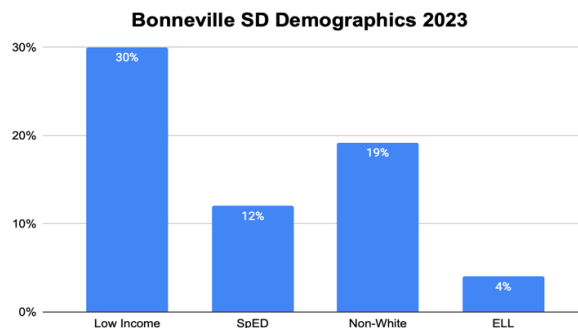
Parent Engagement – Prior to opening, information sessions are held to inform and collect

input from prospective families and community members. Families are also surveyed to find

out why they are choosing Gem Prep, and what elements of a school are most important to

them. Current and prospective families are involved in recruiting students and volunteering to

help with pre-opening activities. Once the school is operating, Gem Prep uses myriad strategies

for parent engagement. Class Dojo is a digital management program teachers use to

communicate with elementary students and their parents. Student behavior is tracked and

celebrated, student portfolios and grades are shared with parents, and staff members can share

daily messages, videos, tutorials, updates, and pictures with students and families in a secured

digital application. Additionally, the school has a variety of parent committees established for

advisory, feedback, and participation, such as the Parent Advisory Committee, the Finance and

Fundraising Committee, and the Community Connections Committee. In addition to volunteer

activities during school hours, the school intentionally seeks to engage families in activities that

fall outside of normal school hours. Each school year, families are encouraged to engage in the

school community through a variety of activities such as back-to-school night, parent/teacher

conferences, attending student performances, educational fairs, helping in the classrooms,

after-school activities, fundraising, and committees. GPA has established a mutually beneficial

partnership with the College of Eastern Idaho (CEI) to provide dual credit college courses, and

collaborate on community events and activities.

Part II: F. Effectively Serving All Students

GPA believes that all students deserve and can succeed in an atmosphere of high expectations.

However, many students need additional support to succeed in such an environment. A

Response to Intervention (RTI) system is in place at GPA to identify and intervene with students who struggle academically or behaviorally while the challenges are still relatively small. Teachers are trained in and expected to utilize interventions for students who need additional support. Additionally, GPA has a certified English Language (EL) Coordinator who provides screening, assessment, and intervention support to all EL learners. Further, secondary students meet with their college preparatory advisory class to learn non-academic competencies such as goal setting, mindsets, and habits of success. The teacher for the class also meets individually with students to review their future goals, their progress toward previous goals, and to reflect on progress since the last meeting. During this time, the teacher checks key indicators with the students (such as grades, behavior data, and attendance) and provides assistance or direction for the student. This is another place where students who face unique contextual challenges can get help or can be referred for additional help. The teacher's role is to intervene and assist before problems have snowballed, but also to provide a place for the student to reflect and improve.

Teachers norm around a definition of rigor and what it looks like in the classroom. Teachers are trained to ensure that students from educationally disadvantaged circumstances are provided the same intellectual rigor as every other student, even if they need additional support. If an assignment, question, or activity would be given to a classroom of gifted and talented students at a high-priced private school, then it might be worthy of GPA students as well. With this visualization, GPA teachers are asked to hold the bar high for all students but provide robust support for students who struggle. Some students may even need behavioral or academic

intervention plans, and teachers, parents, and administrators are expected to fully integrate

these plans.

The school provides a continuum of services for students who require special education

services. Students identified as eligible for services as outlined in the Individuals with

Disabilities Act (IDEA). Once identified, the student's Individualized Educational Program (IEP)

team establishes the necessary intervention strategy. The IEP team consists of the classroom

teacher, a special education teacher, the parents, and an administrator. The team first

considers support options, which allow students to spend as much time as possible with peers

who do not receive special education services (LRE: Least Restrictive Environment).

After determining what appropriate services and supports can be provided within the regular

classroom, supplementary aids and interventions may be provided based on each student's

unique needs. Because Gem Prep is a college preparatory school, special education students

may need additional support to access college preparatory curriculum. The teams who support

special education students in Gem Prep begin with two primary questions: 1) What are the

post-secondary goals of these students? 2) What accommodations or supports will be

necessary to provide access to curriculum designed to help this student meet their post-

secondary goals? These questions guide the team in providing accommodations or support that

may include, but are not limited to, adjustments to which courses the student takes, support

staff in the classroom to ensure comprehension of key material, or additional support for online

courses.

GPA's special education focus is always on the student's abilities and not their disabilities. GPA

provides services for students as determined by the IEP, such as speech and language services,

counseling, behavioral intervention, school-based occupational therapy, psychological services, etc. GPA's special education staff meet, or exceed, the requirements as outlined by the Idaho State Department of Education. They undergo continuous professional development to persist in meeting the needs of students with disabilities at a high level.

Gem Prep believes that no child should go without food and will provide a lunch program to students. GPA plans to implement an onsite lunch program to provide meals that qualify for the National School Lunch program. The operations team will manage all reporting requirements, FRL forms, direct certifications, and lunchroom and serving staff.

GPA plans to contract for busing students to and from school within its attendance boundary. During the annual registration process, families who wish to utilize busing, fill out a busing form. The busing contractor uses a program that analyzes the location of GPA students and creates bus stops that best serve those who request busing. GPA has plans to run 2-3 bus routes. Additional routes may be added as the school grows to better serve students and the locations of those families. The busing contractor will have a lift-accessible bus to provide students with disabilities access to busing services. Door-to-door transportation is available for students who may be homeless, in a foster home, or whose disability necessitates such service. Busing is also available for extracurricular activities as needed through the busing contract.

Part II: G. Staffing and Professional Development

GPA's staffing structure was designed to deliver the educational model with all appropriate associated support services. The student-to-teacher ratio is 26:1 with the student-to-adult ratio at 14:1. In addition to teachers, GPA student support staff includes paraprofessionals, a school counselor, a receptionist, and an operations manager. The roles and responsibilities of each

staff member have been clearly identified to ensure students are well supported. The administrator for GPA is bilingual with a strong track record of success at two other GP schools. He has an ability to relate to students from many backgrounds and is an excellent role model for students and staff in Ammon. Our budget includes 1.5 FTE special education teachers and 1 FTE special education paraprofessionals by year three to ensure effective support for special needs students. The budget also provides significant support for contracted services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, etc.

GPA takes a "cast a wide net approach" to recruit staff. The school advertises early (in January) to ensure adequate time to vet potential employees. Recruitment efforts include social media, teacher fairs, and leveraging personal contacts of both parents and staff. Potential teachers complete a four-phase application process screening for qualifications, knowledge of instructional practices, gauging functional competencies through scenarios and measuring the candidate's intellectual preparation for instruction as well as their ability to manage and instruct students effectively. GPA is hyper-focused on retaining the best teachers, with the highest performing being awarded retention bonuses. Teachers with a demonstrated track record of success may mentor new teachers, run professional development, and hold shared leadership responsibilities (all of which come with stipends). When these teachers indicate the possibility of leaving GPA, the CEO personally contacts the teacher to find ways to keep them with the school.

GPA plans for both the time and support necessary to ensure that instructional excellence is the norm in every classroom. Teacher contracts include 10 extra days for professional development, in addition to weekly 2-hour trainings. Most of this time is spent in professional

learning activities, which is coordinated by the Professional Development Director. Much of the actual learning will be led by teachers who have a track record of success. All teachers (K-12) and staff attend training prior to the beginning of the school year. This training outlines the school's vision for instructional excellence and allows all teachers to observe the same teaching videos and norms on a shared vision. New teachers attend summer training to learn and practice effective implementation of the instructional model.

The principal is considered the instructional leader of the school and spends time in every classroom every week. The principal uses an online tool, Whetstone, which allows the principal to provide immediate feedback and coaching to teachers. Additionally, the program facilitates the ability of the principal to both record a lesson and narrate feedback on the recording for the teacher. Coaching and feedback are grounded in individual professional learning plans for the school year, which focus all teachers on mastering essentials for effective instruction. If a student is identified with needs not fully met, master teachers may be given the autonomy to innovate and try new instructional strategies, as they see fit.

Part II: H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan See Budget Narrative

Part II: I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure

The Gem Innovation Schools of Idaho (GIS) board of directors is GPA's charter holder and governs GPA pursuant to board policy. The Chief Executive Officer reports directly to the board and implements the board's budget, operational and academic directives. The school principal reports to the Chief Academic Officer and has building level responsibility. GPA is a separate LEA from other Gem Prep schools with independent budgets, staff, and performance certificate as required by the PCSC.

The GPA's Board of Directors is composed of a talented and seasoned group of professionals and civic leaders. Board expertise and experience satisfies governance areas such as education, law, real estate, strategy, finance, management, and community relations, etc. Further strengthening the board, the current board chair has ten years of governance experience with Gem Prep schools. Even during rapid periods of expansion, the GP board successfully oversaw schools who significantly outperformed their local districts and the state averages on standardized assessments. (See section B) See *Board and Leadership Bio.*

Recruitment and nomination of potential new board members is the responsibility of the board's Governance Committee. When recruiting, the committee leverages professional networks, as well as the connections of staff, teachers, parents, and community members. When less than two board members possess any categorized skill set, the committee identifies that skill as the recruitment priority. Further, if board members cannot be identified who possesses the necessary skills set, the Committee recommends board training to develop expertise in that skill within existing board members. Board members must share a commitment to the mission of the school and be willing to volunteer their expertise to ensure the school's success in fulfilling its mission.

The Board Handbook clearly outlines that the roles and responsibilities of the board are to govern the school, working to establish effective board policies and delegate authority for the administration of the school to the CEO. The board chair has the responsibility of ensuring all board members understand and adhere strictly to their roles. The CEO may bring any concern about board members (individually or collectively) to the board chair, who ensures that the board is in compliance with agreed-upon roles and standards. The board has four committees:

finance, academics, governance, and facilities. Board committees provide in-depth insights to the whole board, as needed. These committees increase the capacity of the board to govern effectively by providing an outlet for much of the heavy lifting to be done outside of regular board meetings.

To ensure monitoring of performance, academics, financial operations, general operations, and legal compliance, a data dashboard of the school is included in the regular monthly board meeting packet. The data dashboard presents a monthly and 'year-to-date' snapshot of the school's academic, financial, and operational performance, and is reviewed by the board at each regularly scheduled board meeting. Also included in the monthly board packet are expenditure reviews and approvals, various contracts, etc., as necessary, for board review and oversight. The data dashboards increase the capacity of the board to govern effectively during times of expansion by allowing the board to focus on the most critical metrics of success.

The board seeks legal advice and legal review of contracts prior to approval and purchases Model Board Policy updates from legal counsel. Annually, the board's Governance Committee reviews board policy and makes recommendations to the full board. The full board reviews and approves school policies, the annual school audit, evaluates the school's director, and completes and reviews conflict of interest forms, as well as anti-fraud statements. Board members understand their responsibility to conduct board business without conflict of interest. The school board members are committed to continued development. The board believes strongly in seeking out relevant board training opportunities to assist in making GPA a high performing, personalized learning school which prepares students for college, career, and citizenship.

Board members identify the greatest needs for professional learning. Once needs are identified, the board develops a professional development plan which provides opportunities for board members to advance their expertise, and to strengthen and deepen the board as a whole. The annual school budget includes $5,000 for board training and development opportunities, which is fully reimbursable by the state. Board members attend regular training such as the Idaho School Board Association's annual convention. They also attend the State Department of Education charter school workshops, which provide information about best practices and common challenges of charter boards. These workshops and training opportunities also provide critical networking connections for board members.

A New Board Members packet is provided to new board members. This packet contains information to help them understand what is involved in being a board member. Packets include, but are not limited to, the GPA Board Handbook, GPA Charter, roles and responsibilities, open meeting and record laws, state statute for charter schools, ethical standards, conflict of interest information, board policies, financial reports, and budgets. New members are also provided with educational materials relative to GPA's educational model, such as webinars, books, and conferences, prior to appointment, and during their service on the board.

Part II: J. School Leadership and Management

The school's management plan provides the school support from an executive team with a demonstrated track record of preparing students for success in college and beyond. The executive team is composed of a CEO, CAO, CFO, COO, Chief Growth Officer and College Access Director, with an average of 17 years of school management experience. The executive team manages human resources, legal matters, facilities, federal programs, purchasing, payroll,

accounts payable, operations and financial management. This allows the principal to focus on the instructional leadership of the school, supported through weekly one-on-one meetings with the Principal Supervisor and weekly team meetings with other Gem Prep principals. The principal's responsibilities include student academic success, building school community and culture, providing teacher mentoring and coaching, conducting staff evaluations, student discipline, and facilitating parent and community relations.   The Principal Supervisor evaluates the principal annually using the Charlotte Danielson Evaluation Framework.

The board reviews key indicators on the school's data dashboard each month. Key indicators include enrollment, academic growth and achievement, financial stability, student demographic diversity, stakeholder satisfaction, and teacher turnover. Monthly reviews allow the board to, proactively, address concerns as they arise. If concerns arise, administrators may provide context or additional information to address those concerns. If the concern warrants additional action, the board may either send the concern to one of the committees or ask the administration to make a recommendation at the next meeting concerning a resolution. In addition, the CEO is evaluated annually on the performance of the school, which is informed by indicators outlined in the data dashboard. *See Board and Leadership Bio attachment.*

The greatest operational challenges for GPA's growth are ensuring that facilities' logistics are thoroughly planned, schedules are conducive to rigorous instruction, technology is well planned to meet the instructional needs of students, and sufficient academic leadership is provided to support teachers and students. An instructional model team has been formed to address questions, challenges, and iterate on the model to ensure its success.

The team is responsible for solutions to the operational challenges and has created master schedules to ensure that the facilities and schedules work together to provide a conducive learning environment. The team has outlined a plan to provide the technology that will meet the students' instructional needs—including video teleconference equipment and computers. Finally, the roles and responsibilities of administrative support have been aligned and clearly defined to ensure robust support for new teachers and students during this growth phase.

The biggest risk factors are centered on effective, uniform instructional excellence in the context of a rapidly expanding school. Because these teachers and many of the students will be new to GPA, proactive planning and intentionality are key. A secondary instructional model handbook has been developed to share the vision of instructional excellence and codify expectations for students and staff. Further, principals have been trained in the implementation of the instructional model and provided an outlet for questions or challenges they may face.

The school's leadership team has a strong track record of success operating high-performing Idaho charter schools. GPA is founded on principles learned from these experiences. The school's leadership team developed a portfolio of communication tools to share the vision of a GPA college preparatory education to stakeholders including parents, students, and staff. This portfolio also outlines the ideological framework and strategies that the school uses to provide an exemplary college preparatory education.