

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Founded in 2003 as a K–8 program, North Star Charter School (NSCS) has grown into a high-performing K–12 school offering an accelerated curriculum in a safe, supportive environment. With standardized test scores well above state averages and over 1,200 students applying annually, NSCS is well-positioned for expansion following its recent merger with Rolling Hills Charter. This first-of-its-kind charter school merger in Idaho represents a win for the broader charter community, Rolling Hills families and staff, and the many families on North Star’s waitlist.

The merger enables NSCS to expand enrollment in grades 4–12 and optimize use of both campuses. The Rolling Hills facility will become North Star High School, giving high school students a dedicated space to establish their own identity, while the current Linder Road site will house the K–8 program. NSCS continues to provide big opportunities in a small school setting—where students are known, challenged, and supported as they embrace leadership, take risks, and grow as individuals.

To support this expansion, NSCS seeks CSP funding for critical start-up costs in curriculum, technology, furniture, marketing, and program development. These strategic investments will ensure a successful launch of the new high school and accommodate increased K–8 enrollment, positioning the school for long-term sustainability and continued excellence.

This growth reflects years of planning and is rooted in NSCS’s mission to provide a world-class education that fosters academic achievement, leadership, and virtuous citizenship.

NSCS's grant project goals are aligned with Idaho's required performance criteria and the school's mission to provide a world-class education in a safe, structured environment that fosters high academic achievement, leadership, and virtuous citizenship. Our project goals and the proposed grant spending are aimed at ensuring the sustainability and expansion of NSCS's educational excellence.

**Goal 1: Academic Achievement and Growth:** NSCS will promote academic achievement and continuous growth for all students K–12 while increasing enrollment (4th-12th) and adding an additional site (9th-12th). The school will ensure that students meet or exceed state proficiency and growth expectations in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics.

NSCS will closely monitor performance in benchmark grades, specifically targeting 4th and 8th grade outcomes on the Idaho Standards Achievement Tests (ISAT) to track proficiency and growth trends across the system. In addition, the school will monitor K–3 literacy development through performance on the Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) to ensure early academic success.

Through CSP funding, NSCS will procure updated curriculum materials to provide high-quality instructional resources aligned to Idaho Content Standards, supporting academic consistency and excellence across all grade levels. The school will also purchase additional devices and an upgraded infrastructure to support digital learning and assessment tools needed to drive student achievement.

**Measurements and Outcomes:** The school will annually track ISAT proficiency and growth in ELA and Math for grades 4 and 8 as representative benchmarks, track K–3 student reading proficiency through IRI results (aiming for >85% benchmark

attainment), and use iReady and local assessments to monitor academic growth in all grades K–12.

**Goal 2: Expansion of High School Advanced Opportunities, Electives, Athletics, and Extracurriculars:** NSCS will grow its high school enrollment by 15%, ensuring 100% of students participate in concurrent credit coursework, with most earning 60–66 college credits prior to graduation. Beyond academics, the school will expand elective offerings, athletic programs, and extracurricular activities to create a vibrant, small-school culture where students are known, supported, and challenged.

Through CSP funding, the school will create a full-service high school facility designed for academic, extracurricular, and leadership development opportunities as well as launch a new Culinary Arts program, including transforming the cafeteria into a student-operated café to offer practical leadership and real-world business experiences. NSCS will also launch a targeted marketing campaign to promote NSCS's unique high school and attract diverse student populations. The school is also requesting funding to purchase a transport van to allow flexible student access to academic and extracurricular opportunities across two campuses. *Measurements and Outcomes:* The school will track concurrent credit enrollment and credit completion rates, growth in number and participation in electives, athletics, and clubs. The school will also seek student input through a survey measuring their access to expanded opportunities and satisfaction with the high school environment.

**Goal 3: Middle School Expansion and Leadership Development:** NSCS will expand enrollment in grades 6–8 by 15% and offer a unique middle school model that combines the advantages of a small-school environment with broad academic and leadership

opportunities. Our students will experience increased elective, athletic, and extracurricular choices, fostering leadership development and preparing them for success in high school and beyond.

Through CSP funding, we will invest in furnishings to create flexible spaces for middle school electives, athletics, and leadership programming. We will also create targeted marketing to promote NSCS's unique middle school environment and attract diverse student populations. *Measurements and Outcomes:* The school will increase enrollment in Middle School by 15% or more while expanding and tracking participation in leadership programs, electives, and extracurricular activities. We will also collect student input through a survey assessing the impact of leadership development opportunities.

#### **Goal 4: Deepen Academic Performance Through Standards-Based Grading in**

**Elementary:** Elementary teachers will implement Standards-Based Grading (SBG) across grades K–5, ensuring instruction is tightly aligned to Idaho Content Standards and emphasizing student mastery of ELA and Math content.

Through CSP funding, we will procure and ensure that standards-aligned instructional materials will support content mastery. Newly purchased technology will assist in both instruction and monitoring student progress toward standards mastery. *Measurements and Outcomes:* The school will train elementary teachers and ensure implemented SBG practices. We will also track performance rates in ELA and Math content standards.

#### **B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum**

NSCS's academic approach is rooted in widely recognized best practices and research-based curricula. We prioritize strategies such as differentiated instruction, collaborative

learning, small group instruction, and one-on-one support to meet the diverse needs of all students. Teachers collect and analyze both formative and summative assessment data to drive instruction, adjust supports, and personalize learning. This approach ensures that every student at NSCS receives targeted, responsive teaching that promotes strong academic growth and achievement.

In elementary classrooms, teachers utilize instructional strategies to ensure every student achieves grade-level standards. Through direct instruction, teachers introduce new concepts and with collaborative learning, they encourage communication, teamwork, and problem-solving. Small group and one-on-one instruction allow for targeted support tailored to individual student needs. This strong academic foundation prepares them for the expectations of NSCS's middle school program.

In our middle school, students are expected to manage multiple classes, engage with rigorous content, and take ownership of their learning, all within NSCS's accelerated curriculum designed to challenge students. This preparation ensures students are ready for the demands of NSCS's dual credit high school program, where they will balance high school responsibilities with college-level coursework, setting them on the path to future academic and career success. The opportunity to earn dual credit begins in 9th grade and expands through senior year, allowing students to build college-level skills and coursework experience that leads to the opportunity to earn an associate degree.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) provide a proven framework for establishing structured environments where students clearly understand expectations and are recognized for meeting them. This includes the teaching of behavioral standards and a shared commitment among staff to apply them consistently across all

classrooms and common spaces. Regular award assemblies and celebrations honor students who exemplify positive behavior, reinforcing a school-wide culture of excellence, accountability, and pride. This support system reduces disciplinary issues and fosters a respectful, inclusive environment where every student feels valued, capable, and motivated to succeed. By upholding these high standards, we ensure that students not only meet but exceed the expectations that define NSCS's tradition of excellence.

NSCS students have consistently outperformed schools across the state. In the 2023–2024 school year, our ISAT math and ELA scores were 30% higher than the state average, while our Science ISAT scores exceeded the state average by an impressive 36%. Additionally, our Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI) scores surpassed the state average by 24%, reflecting our commitment to developing foundational literacy skills.

NSCS's Academic Excellence Committee, composed of board members, parents, teachers, and administrators, meets a few times per year to work collaboratively to evaluate instructional materials and review student performance data based on the state standards. Their ongoing efforts ensure that our curriculum remains rigorous, data-informed, and aligned with the needs of our students.

NSCS's ELA core curriculum, Wonders by McGraw Hill, is a comprehensive, research-based literacy program fully aligned with the Idaho Core Standards. Wonders systematically builds reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills to ensure students develop a strong foundation in literacy. In addition to Wonders, The Heggerty curriculum, used in grades K-3, is a research-based program that builds critical phonemic awareness skills through daily, systematic instruction. It lays a foundation for

early reading success and complements the Wonders curriculum. At the middle school level, in addition to novel-based studies grounded in essential standards, teachers also incorporate CommonLit, a research-based digital literacy program. CommonLit promotes critical thinking, close reading, and evidence-based analysis, giving students opportunities to engage with complex ideas, strengthen their literacy skills, and connect their learning to real-world issues and diverse perspectives.

NSCS utilizes Bridges Math in elementary grades and College Preparatory Mathematics (CPM) in secondary grades to provide a cohesive, research-based math education aligned with Idaho Content Standards. Bridges Math offers structured, hands-on lessons that build conceptual understanding and number sense through visual models and collaborative learning. CPM continues this approach in middle and high school, emphasizing problem solving, mathematical reasoning, and student discourse to develop critical thinking skills.

Social studies instruction is designed to strengthen both content knowledge and literacy skills. In elementary grades, students explore history through Nystrom's interactive, inquiry-based resources and Idaho Rendezvous, a program specifically focused on Idaho history and civic engagement. Social studies concepts are also integrated into the Wonders curriculum, helping students deepen their understanding through connected reading, writing, and critical thinking activities. In middle school, students build their historical knowledge using HMH World Civilizations, a comprehensive program that offers a global perspective while developing analytical and critical thinking skills essential for success in higher education and beyond.

Science instruction at NSCS is guided by the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), ensuring a hands-on, inquiry-driven approach to learning. Instruction is supported by high-quality, research-based resources including a variety of lessons derived from Mystery Science, FOSS, and Carolina curricula. Mystery Science, built on cognitive science research and best practices in science education, engages students through real-world mysteries and promotes critical thinking and exploration. Together, these programs provide a rich, engaging foundation for scientific understanding.

Through Junior Achievement and Dave Ramsey Foundations in Personal Finance, students are exposed to foundational concepts in financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and career readiness at both the elementary and secondary level. Through age-appropriate, hands-on activities, students learn about earning, saving, spending, and the basics of business and economics. By incorporating these real-world concepts early, we aim to equip students with the knowledge and habits needed for lifelong financial success.

With NSCS's recent transition from IB to a dual credit high school, teachers deliver content-specific instruction aligned with the requirements of our partnering college, CWI. Teachers are provided with the required coursework and texts from this institution, allowing students to engage in authentic college-level learning experiences while still in high school. This approach allows for academic consistency, supports seamless credit transfer, and prepares students for the expectations of postsecondary education.

Beyond the core curriculum, NSCS enriches students' academic experiences through a variety of electives and extracurricular opportunities. Students at the elementary level participate in music, physical education, library, and computer science, nurturing



creativity, physical development, and digital literacy while helping to develop well-rounded learners. At the secondary level, students can choose from electives such as choir, band, technology, art, physical education, outdoor living, culinary arts, theater, and Spanish. In addition, the secondary program provides opportunities for students to compete in basketball, volleyball, baseball, cross country, mountain biking and golf against other local high school teams.

The integration of technology plays a key role in enhancing classroom instruction, meeting state assessment standards and supporting student learning. With the use of Chromebooks, students have access to extended interactive digital content that enriches core lessons and deepens engagement. Teachers utilize diagnostic tools such as Iready, Istation and Isat Intermins to monitor student progress closely, allowing for accurate interventions and support. A variety of online applications are used to deliver individualized lessons and targeted skill practice, ensuring instruction is tailored to each learner's needs. To keep students safe online, NSCS uses Lightspeed, a trusted filtering and monitoring system that protects students while they access digital resources.

Our High School Students are 1 to 1 with a Chromebook device, while our Middle School classrooms each have their own cart of Chromebooks. With anticipated growth in the 2025–2026 school year, NSCS will invest in additional technology to ensure all students and staff have continued access across both campuses.

All classes at the secondary and elementary level are expected to use Google Classroom to post announcements, display class calendars and manage assignments. Parent communication is a priority for us at all levels and these multiple forms of

communication via technology allow us to run a school community that is informed and united on the happenings of the school.

As a charter school, NSCS benefits from the autonomy that allows us to implement and build programs to genuinely fit our community's needs. We can pivot and adjust our curriculum more nimbly, without waiting for a distant district-level approval. This helps us easily add courses that students care about, such as project-based classes or interdisciplinary electives. We have additional advantages in our hiring practices. Our payscale and calendar are competitive and unique. Our flexible curriculum design, strategic hiring practices, responsive scheduling, and dynamic staffing demonstrate how we deliberately use our charter autonomy to create a highly personalized, supportive, and student-centered approach.

### **C. Teaching and Learning**

At NSCS, the consistent use of both formative and summative assessments is central to informing instructional strategies and driving student success. Teachers regularly review a variety of classroom and standardized assessment data to identify student strengths, address areas for growth, and adjust instruction to meet individual needs.

In elementary grades, benchmark assessments including Istation (for K–3 reading) and i-Ready are administered in the fall, winter, and spring to monitor growth in reading and math. Additionally, ISAT Interim Assessments are given midyear in grades 3–11 to provide deeper insights into student progress toward grade-level standards. Diagnostic data from these assessments are used to identify both at-risk and advanced learners, determine instructional needs, and guide targeted interventions.

This data-driven approach is supported by a master schedule that ensures the full implementation of Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 supports in both ELA and math. Tier 1 instruction is vital for all students, ensuring equitable access to high-quality, grade-level content. Regardless of their current level of academic performance, all students must continue to receive grade-level instruction to prevent the widening of achievement gaps, promote growth, and support educational equity within the core classroom environment.

Tier 2 interventions at NSCS occur daily for 25 to 45 minutes providing targeted, small-group instruction designed to address specific skill gaps. All Tier 2 interventions at NSCS use research-based programs, including SIPPS, Rewards, Leveled Readers, Sound Partners, Learning A–Z, i-Ready, Istation, Imagine Math, and CommonLit Intervention. In the elementary grades, paraprofessionals support certified teachers in delivering Tier 2 interventions, allowing for smaller group sizes and more individualized attention. In secondary, students are supported by their teachers during advisory class. By offering daily support, students receive the timely, structured practice they need to strengthen foundational skills and successfully access grade-level content.

When a student continues to struggle with grade-level standards despite receiving Tier 1 and Tier 2 instruction, they are provided with additional Tier 3 support. Tier 3 instruction occurs for at least 20 minutes, three times per week, using specialized, research-based curriculum not offered in Tier 1 or Tier 2. Programs used include IMSE (Institute for Multi-Sensory Education), Comprehensive Orton-Gillingham Plus, and Bridges Math Intervention. This intensive, individualized approach is designed to address significant learning gaps and help students make meaningful progress toward grade-level expectations. At this stage, teachers develop a General Education Support

Plan (GESP) that outlines specific targeted goals for the student. These goals are closely monitored through weekly or bi-monthly progress monitors to assess the effectiveness of the interventions. If a student does not respond to the initial or adjusted support plan after sufficient time and documented efforts, they may be referred to our SST (Student Success Team) to determine if moving forward in a special education referral is needed.

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) are a high priority at NS, recognizing that collaborative time is essential for both student and teacher growth. PLCs provide dedicated opportunities for teachers to study student data, identify trends, and adjust instruction based on real-time needs. Beyond data analysis, PLCs also serve as a space for professional learning, where staff receive professional development on new best practices, engage with new initiatives, and continually refine their instructional strategies. This protected PLC time is built into the master calendar and weekly prep schedules. This collaborative environment not only improves academic outcomes but also builds a strong sense of community, trust, and shared ownership among staff, all of which are critical to sustaining a culture of excellence and continuous improvement.

#### **D. Student Academic Achievement Standards**

NSCS upholds rigorous academic performance standards and utilizes a system of oversight to ensure strong student outcomes across all grade levels. Our Performance Management Plan emphasizes clear goals, high expectations, data-driven instruction, and continuous monitoring to support each student's academic success.

NSCS's academic performance oversight encompasses a layered approach to monitoring student achievement. Across all grade levels, the school collects and

analyzes data from formative, interim, and summative assessments to guide instructional and operational decision-making. Data is collected and analyzed by administrators, instructional teams, and our Board of Directors to ensure accountability at every level.

At the elementary level, teachers meet monthly under administrative facilitation to review student performance, curricular outcomes, and intervention strategies.

Benchmarking tools such as iReady and Istation are used systematically to monitor student growth, define individualized learning plans, and identify students needing targeted support. The addition of a trained reading specialist in 2023–24 provided small group interventions, resulting in immediate and measurable growth.

In middle school, all content area teachers share a daily common prep period. Grade-level teams meet regularly to analyze student data, including interim ISAT assessment results for Math and ELA. A structured intervention/advisory block allows students identified through these meetings to receive 30 minutes of additional academic support each day.

At the high school level, collaboration is integrated into the master schedule to promote cross-grade data discussions. Intervention blocks, a Google based tracking system, and weekly monitoring of D and F lists ensure students needing additional support are identified and served promptly. Data such as ISAT proficiency rates (including 100% proficiency in ELA at the high school level) and Math Lab interventions are routinely reviewed.

All student performance data, including ISAT, IRI, interim assessments, and course outcomes, is reported annually to the NSCS Board of Directors. Board members review performance data by teacher, subject, and grade level to ensure academic excellence.

NSCS utilizes Formative Assessments through classroom-level checks for understanding; Interim Assessments such as ISAT interim benchmarks, iReady diagnostics, and ISIP (Istation indicators); and Summative Assessments including Idaho ISATs, Idaho Reading Indicator (IRI), concurrent credit course performance, and a Capstone Senior Project Presentation. Assessments are consistently used across grade levels, well understood by instructional staff, and embedded into ongoing instructional practices.

NSCS systematically collects data on: ISAT proficiency and growth scores in ELA and Math, IRI literacy proficiency scores for K–3 students, interim benchmark assessments through ISAT Interim and iReady platforms, D/F tracking at the secondary level to monitor academic risk, intervention participation data across middle and high school, and participation rates in advanced opportunities such as concurrent credit. This data is analyzed monthly by administrators and instructional teams, shared with the Board annually, and used immediately to adjust instructional strategies, interventions, and professional development priorities.

Interim benchmarks are established at the beginning of each academic year based on baseline assessment data and reviewed quarterly to ensure progress toward end-of-year performance goals. Annual reviews ensure benchmarks are updated to reflect trends in student performance, subgroup needs, and school-wide priorities.

Staff receive ongoing training on effective data interpretation and instructional reflection, ensuring that data is used meaningfully to impact student outcomes. This system ensures that every student's learning path is supported by intentional, strategic actions based on performance data.

### **E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support**

NSCS has provided a rigorous, high-quality education in a safe, structured environment for over 22 years. Throughout this time, we have remained committed to academic excellence, making necessary adjustments when needed to better serve our students and respond to the evolving educational landscape. A recent example was our decision to transition from the IB program in the high school to a concurrent credit college model, which better aligned with the needs and aspirations of our students and community. As a result, high school enrollment and waitlists have consistently increased, affirming the strong and growing demand for a NSCS education. This year, our lottery had over 1200 students K-12 wanting to attend NSCS!

Charter schools rely heavily on enrollment for sustainability. With the recent expansion to two campuses through the Rolling Hills merger, NSCS recognizes the opportunity and importance of strategically communicating the positive impact of this change and the unique offerings it brings to the broader community. NSCS has a strong reputation, but as we expand our programs, effectively "telling our story" to the community is vitally important to ensuring continued success. To this end, we are seeking funding from the CSP grant, to formalize and expand our outreach efforts in a comprehensive marketing campaign that highlights the unique value and opportunities offered through a NSCS education, ensuring continued growth and engagement.

Our phased marketing plan includes several key activities. First, we will partner with a local research firm to assess brand awareness, community perception, and the impact of the two-campus model. This research will involve data collected through surveys, interviews and focus groups with current and prospective families. The school will then work with a local advertising agency to create compelling messaging, video and digital content. The content will provide us with material that can be used for many years beyond the grant. Our goals would include establishing baseline metrics, effectively communicating the two-campus model, identifying key differentiators, creating a distinct high school brand, and ultimately grow demand and enrollment.

Our recruitment strategy also includes targeted outreach partnerships with community organizations, hosting public information nights and open houses at locations throughout the valley, and ensuring that all marketing materials are inclusive, accessible, and representative of the full community. We project our enrollment demographics will remain consistent with our boundaries, within the required 5% range.

NSCS emphasizes strong engagement through a variety of opportunities. Our PTO hosts multiple events throughout the year that help to create connections and community while NSCS also encourages feedback through regular surveys, town halls and open houses. Parents and community members can play an important role in shaping the direction of NSCS by serving on the Board, participating in PTO, volunteering in the classroom, and serving on committees.

NSCS stakeholders have been active participants in the decision to merge with Rolling Hills and expand NSCS's programs. Student, parent, and staff surveys, focus groups, and meetings were conducted throughout the process to ensure support and success



for the growth opportunity. NSCS was able to create strategies and plans based on feedback from stakeholders on electives, transportation and facility usage. NSCS remains committed to providing a voice for all stakeholders and ensuring its programs align with community needs and values.

## **F. Effectively Serving All Students**

NSCS is committed to offering an inclusive, supportive, and high-performing educational environment for all students. As a public charter school, NSCS operates on an open, fair, and non-selective enrollment process and is prepared to meet the diverse needs of the students who choose to attend. We set high expectations for all students, regardless of background, and provide a comprehensive academic and behavioral intervention system to ensure success. Grade-level teams, paraprofessionals, counselors, and administrators closely monitor student progress, offering individualized support based on assessment data, teacher observations, and parent input.

Our intervention services include: Small group academic instruction during designated intervention periods; Counselor-assigned case management for students on 504 Plans, ensuring appropriate accommodations are updated annually; English Learner support services for any ELL students, including individualized learning plans and access to appropriate instructional materials; Gifted and Talented programs to challenge and extend learning for high-performing students, demonstrating NSCS's commitment to meeting all student needs.

NSCS maintains a strong partnership with families, ensuring that parents are consistently informed and involved in intervention planning. Specialized staffing,

professional development, and intentional program design support the high expectations held for all students.

NSCS has developed a continuum of services for students with disabilities. Special Education teachers are assigned across all grade levels (K–12) to manage Individualized Education Plans (IEPs), ensuring that every student receives the accommodations and supports required for success. Our key strategies for supporting students with disabilities include a push-in model, where students receive instruction within the general education classroom, when possible, along with appropriate accommodations. At the high school level, transition plans are developed to support students in reaching their post-secondary employment or educational goals. To provide specialized services, NSCS contracts with a licensed School Psychologist and a Speech and Language Pathologist who offer both small group and individualized support. Additionally, Special Education staff meet with new families and students' previous schools to ensure a smooth transition for students entering NSCS each fall.

While NSCS does not currently have an on-site cafeteria, students are allowed to bring their own meals, and microwaves are available for reheating food. To meet the nutritional needs of students who may forget lunch or need extra support, NSCS offers donated snacks and microwaveable items. The expansion to the new Rolling Hills site (North Star High School) will include access to kitchen facilities, providing additional opportunities to better serve student nutrition needs in the future.

NSCS provides transportation options for all students, including specialized transportation services for students with disabilities when necessary. With the acquisition of the Rolling Hills site, NSCS is also investing in student transportation

improvements, including the purchase of a transport van through CSP grant funding to shuttle students between campuses. This will ensure flexible access to programs, electives, and extracurricular activities at both campuses.

NSCS has built an inclusive, supportive, and high-performing environment where all students are welcomed, supported, challenged, and celebrated. Through strong intervention systems, specialized staff, family partnerships, and high expectations, NSCS ensures that every student, regardless of background or ability, can thrive.

### **G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan**

NSCS's staffing model is designed to support high-quality instruction and the consistent implementation of our educational approach. Our small class sizes and strong student-to-staff ratios allow for personalized support and academic rigor. Each elementary classroom is supported by a part-time paraprofessional, and additional paraprofessionals are placed in general and special education settings to assist with interventions and targeted instruction. As a small school, our administrative team remains actively engaged in classrooms, enabling real-time support, consistent instructional practices, and a deep understanding of teacher needs.

NSCS prioritizes recruiting and retaining exceptional educators. Our hiring process includes early outreach, participation in local job fairs, and leveraging community networks. We offer a competitive package that includes leadership opportunities, a modified school calendar, professional collaboration, and competitive compensation. Our recent expansion allowed us to welcome former Rolling Hills staff, maintaining continuity and culture while supporting growth.

New teachers participate in a three-year mentorship program, paired with experienced staff to ensure a strong transition and peer support. Quarterly remote learning days are used for professional development focused on PBIS, instructional strategies, and collaborative planning. We also encourage teacher-led training to leverage internal expertise. Staff evaluations are conducted emphasizing strengths and identifying areas for growth through self-reflection and administrator feedback.

#### **H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan**

NSCS) has a strong track record of operational success and sound financial management, ensuring effective use of CSP grant funds and successful implementation of its expansion plans. Over the past three years, the school has strategically increased enrollment and improved operational efficiencies to strengthen its financial position in preparation for opportunities like this.

NSCS's CSP grant request aligns directly with its broader three-year operating plan. The school has a continued focus on enrollment growth and the expansion will allow the school to do that. The Project budget submitted leverages the schools current general fund dollars to help the school expand its program offerings while also ensuring it maintains its curricular resources and instructional practices that has made NSCS the top school it is today. The expansion, and the associated CSP funding will allow the school to have a one-of-a-kind opportunity to create a separate high school and expanded elementary and middle school founded around the academic excellence that NSCS is known for.

The Three-Year Budget Projection reflects conservative assumptions regarding revenue growth, salary adjustments, and inflationary impacts, demonstrating a stable financial

trajectory with positive cash flow. The school has purposefully shown a small increase in enrollment growth across the three-year budget period so as to not create a situation where revenue projections cannot be met or exceeded. The school anticipates growing from a budgeted enrollment of 1178 in fiscal year 25-26 (the first year of expansion), which is a 187 student increase from the previous year, to an enrollment of 1250 by fiscal year 27-28. The school's revenue assumptions include a 4% CEC approved annually as well as 2.5% increase in discretionary funding. All special distributions, transportation funding, and local funding, are anticipated to be flat throughout the five year period, with the only increases coming from those revenues that are directly impacted by the increase in enrollment at the secondary level associated with the expansion. Expenditures assume that the 4% CEC is provided to staff in the form of additional compensation and that a 6% increase is assumed for health insurance premiums. Other line items for supplies and materials were increased by a minimum 4% annually, with some showing larger increases based on past expectations and or anticipated future inflationary impacts.

The proposed CSP budget—focused on curriculum, technology, facilities, marketing, and program developments support NSCS's academic, operational, and strategic goals without exceeding sustainable expenditure levels. As outlined in the budget narrative, the proposed investments are all necessary to implement the planned expansion and will occur during the first year of grant implementation. Due to the nature of the expansion following the merger with Rolling Hills, strategic up-front investments are required to ensure a successful launch of the new high school site and accommodate increased K–8 enrollment at the original Linder Road campus. Following these initial

investments, NSCS will be positioned for continued enrollment growth, improved operational efficiency, and enhanced academic programming, ensuring sustainability well beyond the grant period.

The CSP grant implementation will be implemented by the NSCS Leadership Team which includes the Head of School, Elementary and Secondary Principals, COO, and Finance Manager. This team brings a breadth of knowledge and expertise across all functional areas that will ensure the use of these funds will lead to greater student success for its students. NSCS's existing procurement policies, which include adherence to both state of Idaho and federal procurement rules and guidelines, will ensure that NSCS utilizes the federal funding received in compliance with the federal rules associated with the receipt of CSP funds.

In the Summer 2025 the school will finalize the acquisition of the Rolling Hills facility, as well as procure moving services to begin the process of integrating the furniture, fixtures, and equipment, from Rolling Hills across both facilities. The school anticipates that its initial purchases of FF&E will arrive in the middle of August, allowing the school time to get them installed and ready for student use on day one of the school year.

Summer/Fall 2025: The school will work this summer to purchase new technology due to the expanded enrollment, leveraging both CSP and state technology funding, as well as identify curricular resources for those students new to NSCS to ensure we have appropriate educational resources for all students. With its General Fund dollars, the school also anticipates doing some minor facility remodels over the summer to the Rolling Hills campus to prepare the facility for high school student use.

Fall 2025: The school will launch a comprehensive Marketing campaign. With the recent expansion to two campuses through the Rolling Hills merger, it is critical that we effectively communicate the uniqueness and value of our programs in order to ensure continued growth and engagement. CSP grant funds will support research, marketing asset development, outreach campaigns, and community engagement initiatives. These deliverables will be developed with the intention of being used far beyond the grant period. The operating budget will support marketing efforts beyond the grant period.

Fall 2025: The new high school building contains a unique cafe and kitchen that will support NSCS's development of a Culinary Arts program. This class has been one of the most requested electives from our students and we are excited to now have the facility to support it. The school is seeking funding to cover a one-year agreement with a Culinary Arts consultant that can set up the facility and teacher for a successful program.

2025-26 School Year: Full implementation of expanded programs and dual-campus operations. The CSP grant will complement existing revenue sources projected in the three-year operating budget.

NSCS's facilities plan is robust and viable. Through the merger agreement, NSCS will acquire the Rolling Hills campus on July 1, 2025, Ownership of the asset and associated debt will transfer entirely to NSCS, with structured debt service payments outlined in the three-year budget plan. This acquisition strengthens NSCS's asset/debt ratio and long-term financial positioning. Facility costs, including debt service and maintenance, are projected to be approximately 15% of the overall General Fund budget, ensuring that the school will not only be able to meet its debt obligations but

that the school will also have dollars available for the on-going maintenance needs associated with a second campus. The new high school campus is ideally located and fully sufficient to meet the school's academic, extracurricular, and special services needs for grades 9–12.

The school's three-year financial projections are conservative in nature while still maintaining the robust educational offerings that NSCS continues to offer today. With a conservative budget, adequate fund balance, and financial opportunities within its operating budget to reduce expenditure should the financial need arise, NSCS is well positioned for this merger and to utilize the CSP funding received to expand education offerings for its students.

### **I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure**

The Current Board of NSCS consists of seven Directors who have been elected or appointed for two-year terms. Directors include a balance of Parent Directors (parents or grandparents of current students) and Community Directors (individuals without close ties to the school community), ensuring diversity of perspective while avoiding conflicts of interest. Prospective Board members are nominated by stakeholders and complete an application outlining their professional background and potential contributions. The Board and leadership team assess the school's current needs and actively recruit candidates with expertise in key areas such as education, finance, strategy, marketing, and external relations. Any identified skill gaps are addressed either through targeted recruitment or by accessing additional board training. This process ensures the Board possesses the competencies necessary to responsibly govern a public charter school, particularly one undergoing expansion.



The current NSCS Board of Directors is comprised of seven members with expertise in finance, marketing, project management, education, and athletics, providing well-rounded oversight in academics, operations, community engagement, and student experience.

Board members understand that their role is one of governance, not day-to-day management and operational matters are delegated to the Head of School and administrative team. The Board strictly complies with Idaho's Open Meetings Law and maintains detailed written minutes of all public meetings. Board policies require annual performance reviews of the Head of School and regular evaluations of school operations to monitor academic, financial, operational, and legal compliance. A Conflict of Interest policy is enforced, and members must disclose any potential conflicts prior to taking Board action.

NSCS has prioritized board development by offering annual participation in Board Training through the Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA). The training offered by ISBA ensures that Board members are equipped with the necessary information to lead effectively.

## **J. School Leadership and Management**

NSCS has developed a tiered leadership structure to support its growing K–12 program. NSCS's leadership structure is comprised of the following roles and responsibilities:

Head of School (HOS): Oversees the entire K–12 program, executive team and reports directly to the Board. Chief Operations Officer (COO): Oversees non-academic operations, including facilities, human resources, finance, development, safety, and

legal compliance. Secondary Principal (Grades 6–12): Manages curriculum, instruction, student performance, and staff supervision at the middle and high school levels.

Elementary Principal (Grades K–5): Manages curriculum, instruction, student performance, and staff supervision at the elementary level. Assistant Principal (Elementary - 0.6 FTE): Provides additional support for the growing K–5 population.

Dean of Students (High School - 0.5 FTE): Supports student discipline, leadership development, and culture-building initiatives at the new high school campus. Director of Finance (Contracted) and Business Manager (In-House): Manage day-to-day financial operations under the oversight of the COO, ensuring strong financial controls and reporting.

The Head of School is evaluated annually by the Board using a structured process that includes leadership competencies, performance metrics, and stakeholder input, with clear protocols in place for addressing performance concerns.

The leadership team has effectively addressed key challenges during expansion, including the legal and operational complexities of merging with Rolling Hills, managing facilities and bond financing, and ensuring strong communication through town halls and surveys.

NSCS's leadership demonstrates strong governance, operational expertise, and a commitment to transparency, positioning the school for continued success and sustainability.