

AN AMERICAN CLASSICAL SCHOOLS OF IDAHO

CSP Grant Narrative



RIVERTON

CLASSICAL ACADEMY

Virtus • Scientia • Felicitas

K-12
Proposed Opening 2027

Riverton Classical Academy
500 SW 3rd Street
Fruitland, Idaho 83619

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Riverton Classical Academy (RCA) plans to open in Heyburn for the 2027-2028 school year. It will serve students from Minidoka and Cassia Counties, including Burley, Rupert, Heyburn, Declo and the surrounding area. RCA will open with grades K-7 and will add one grade each year, enrolling up to 702 students in grades K-12 by the 2032-2033 school year.

The mission of RCA is *“to train the minds and improve the hearts of students through a classical, content-rich curriculum that emphasizes virtuous living, traditional learning, and civic responsibility.”* The vision of RCA is *“to form future citizens who uphold the ideals of our country’s founding and promote the continuation of our American experiment through a classical, great-books curriculum designed to engage the student in the highest matters and the deepest questions of truth, justice, virtue, and beauty.”*

RCA will offer an American classical education. American classical education provides an intensive focus on developing literacy and numeracy in the early years allowing students to move into a content-rich, balanced curriculum strong across all four core disciplines of math, science, literature, and history. American classical education also focuses students on the study of American literary, moral, philosophical, political, and historical traditions. American classical education also promotes a firm grounding in civic virtue and cultivates moral character.

The American Classical Schools of Idaho (ACSI) board governs RCA. ACSI will also function as a School Support Office (SSO). This SSO exists exclusively to create economies of scale for business management, food service, transportation, instructional support, and other services or support as requested by member schools. As an ACSI member school, RCA’s CSP grant application will closely mirror previous ACSI school grant applications.

A: SMART Grant Project Goals

In support of RCA's mission and vision, RCA is requesting \$2,000,000.00 to pursue four goals. RCA aims to provide an accessible, high-quality American classical education option to all families within our primary attendance zone.

<i>Goal</i>	<i>Measure(s)</i>
1. RCA will provide a rigorous classical education that cultivates both academic excellence and strong character. Our program will meet or exceed Idaho's performance standards in all subjects while fostering the virtues of courage, courtesy, honesty, perseverance, self-government, and service. Through this approach, we aim to produce well-rounded students who are prepared for success.	A. RCA will outscore the state average in ELA, mathematics, and science on the ISAT by 5% and scale up by an additional 5% every year thereafter (e.g., 10% in year two) until we approach full proficiency. B. RCA students will exceed the state ISAT growth average in ELA and mathematics each year. C. The annual family survey will ask parents and guardians to use a 5-point Likert scale to rate their agreement with the following statement: "In light of the mission, I believe the school seeks to cultivate virtuous character." RCA will achieve a 90% or higher positive rating on this prompt each year of operation.
2. In its inaugural year, RCA plans to establish 432 new, high-quality charter school seats for grades K-7, with a gradual expansion accomplished by adding one-grade level each subsequent year until becoming a K-12 school serving 702 students.	A. The school has a goal to achieve 100% enrollment. 100% enrollment will equal the following number of students: 432 in 2027, 486 in 2028, 540 in 2029, 594 in 2030, 648 in 2031, and 702 in 2032. B. RCA will enroll a diverse student body that is representative of surrounding community demographics, with a 5% margin of error in terms of race, socioeconomic status, and special education needs.
3. RCA is committed to ensuring that transportation and nutrition are never barriers to continued enrollment, particularly for students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The school will provide comprehensive busing services and a federally compliant school lunch program, ensuring that all students—regardless of their financial situation—have the support they need to thrive academically.	A. The number of economically disadvantaged students (operationally defined as Title I status) enrolled at RCA will meet or exceed the average of sending districts. B. RCA will achieve a 95% or higher retention rate among economically disadvantaged students.
4. Starting in its third year, RCA will offer a rigorous, comprehensive high school program to foster academic and personal growth. Students will develop customized post-secondary transition plans tailored to their unique goals and aspirations. RCA seniors will possess strong critical thinking and analytical skills, with a solid foundation in moral character. This will empower them to lead purposeful lives and succeed in any path they choose. RCA will invest resources to support achievement goal(s) for all students,	A. All high school students will have a personalized post-secondary plan, developed with the support of staff and parents. B. All 12th-grade students will participate in an exit meeting to discuss completing their post-secondary plans. The outcomes of those meetings will show that 100% of graduating seniors achieved their post-secondary transition goal (s).

including advanced opportunities, apprenticeships, and internships.	C. 90% of 12th-grade students will be accepted to a post-secondary institution or demonstrate the aptitude requisite to enter vocational/trade school, apprenticeship, or military training.
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B: Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum

Educational Philosophy

RCA's classical education philosophy is to guide students to pursue wisdom and virtue through a rich and well-ordered course of study grounded in the liberal arts tradition, with a strong focus on the four core disciplines of math, science, literature, and history. In American classical education, students study the timeless ideas and ideals expressed by the most trusted minds in the history of American and Western civilization; thus helping students gain an understanding of their place in the world and a sense of who they are in the context of human history. RCA's philosophy holds that learning has intrinsic value – that it is to be pursued for its own sake, not merely for a career. RCA's program will enhance students' formation as human beings by intentionally and consistently weaving concepts of moral virtue into its curriculum and daily activities. The end goal of RCA's education is the formation of citizens who are intellectually, morally, and civically equipped to be leaders in their communities – leaders who have a mature love for America, an appreciation of its unique founding, and the knowledge and skills to be true guardians of liberty.

Curriculum

RCA plans to accomplish its educational philosophy by reaching three overarching curricular goals: 1. set a strong foundation of literacy in the early grades, 2. give students a deep and thorough understanding of numeracy and mathematical thought in the early grades, 3. present the students with a content-rich liberal arts and science curriculum that encompasses:

drinking deeply from the great books in literature; analyzing primary sources of history; exploring the beauty of math, science, and the natural world; gaining an appreciation for the fine arts; and the study of the American moral, philosophical, political, and historical traditions.

RCA will use the well-ordered, time-tested, and vetted curriculum outlined in Hillsdale's Program Guide 4.0. This comprehensive framework, rooted in the liberal arts and sciences, guides instruction across all subjects, from kindergarten through high school and exceeds the level of rigor contained within the Idaho Content Standards. It includes a curated selection of literature, textbooks, primary sources, and other resources to support teachers and ensure a world-class education for all students.

Hillsdale's Program Guide is a product of many teachers and Hillsdale College professors joining together to think about the best way to teach each subject to each grade level. Therefore, it clearly outlines specific skills and knowledge for students to master at each grade level, ensuring that students have prerequisite skills before entering the next grade. This well-defined and unchanging curricular organization, not present in district-led schools that change curricula every 5-7 years, represents a great advantage that RCA gains from charter school flexibility.

A Strong Foundation of Literacy in the Early Grades

RCA's first priority is the teaching of solid literacy skills in the early grades. This begins in kindergarten. *Literacy Essentials: The Journey from Spelling to Reading* is the program used to present a coherent, ordered, and thorough course of study in English literacy. *Literacy Essentials* uses research-based, proven methods of thoroughly teaching students phonemic awareness and orthography – correct and consistent spelling patterns. Students practice these basic skills multiple times per day in well organized, teacher-led activities. *Literacy Essentials* also presents a clear, interactive methodology for teaching students to correctly write each letter, resulting in

students who achieve legible penmanship early in their academic career. The constant exposure to spelling and writing through repeated practice sessions yields students with excellent literacy skills.

A Deep Understanding of Numeracy and Mathematical Thought in the Early Grades

To set a strong foundation for upper-grade studies in Mathematics, the curriculum prioritizes a thorough presentation of mathematical concepts in the early grades. *Singapore Math's Dimensions* program is the curricular tool used for this endeavor. It is important for students to understand the relationship between the physical world and mathematical concepts, that is, to move from concrete objects, to pictorial models, to abstract symbols (written numbers and mathematical operation symbols). *Dimensions* presents math lessons using this progression.

A Content-Rich Liberal Arts and Science Curriculum

RCA's curriculum is a content-rich liberal arts and science curriculum. "Liberal", in this case, means "free". Classical education prepares young people to live in freedom and independence, engaging them in the highest matters and the deepest questions of truth, justice, virtue, and beauty. Exposure to such deep content starts in kindergarten, increasing in breadth and complexity as students grow into greater levels of cognition.

RCA's curricular plan sets time aside each day for students to experience classical literature. Students experience these great stories by reading and by listening. In the early grades, teachers present stories aurally. This practice gives every student the privilege of exposure to great literature, increases their listening abilities, and enhances their moral imagination. In the upper grades, when students have gained the ability to read challenging works, their literature experience is enhanced by the practice of Socratic dialogue.

As mathematics is taught conceptually and thoroughly through the *Singapore Dimensions* program, RCA students will be poised to embrace more challenging mathematics as they reach the upper grades. In all mathematics teaching, special attention is given to helping students recognize the beauty of mathematics as it interprets the realities and intricacies of the universe. As students reach high school, the curriculum will present opportunities to excel in advanced mathematics, up to and including Calculus and Statistics.

The study of the natural sciences is an integral part of the classical tradition. Following Hillsdale's Program Guide, RCA will teach science in every grade level, starting in kindergarten. Scientific subject matter is presented appropriate to students' ages. Early grades investigate earth, physical, and life science concepts by teacher-led explanations and demonstrations. In the upper elementary grades, the curriculum introduces lessons in basic biology, chemistry, physics, geology, and astronomy. Thus, students are prepared for comprehensive courses in these disciplines when they reach high school age.

A liberal arts education is only complete with attention to the fine arts. RCA's curriculum stresses the importance of music and art starting in the early grades. Time is scheduled daily to teach students the value of music and art. Students learn about the great composers, instruments that are part of great musical traditions, and the history of influential songs. The curriculum guides a familiarization with the basic elements of music: rhythm, melody, harmony, form, timbre, etc. Students at RCA will have the opportunity to learn musical skills and perform for their peers and parents. Students will learn about the great works of art throughout Western civilization. The curriculum will expose students to mediums, elements, and history of art around the world. As part of the art curriculum, students will have opportunities to complete art projects of their own in many different mediums.

To form citizens who take their civic responsibilities seriously, RCA will make American moral, philosophical, political, and historical traditions a subject of study at every grade level. In the elementary grades students learn of important events and individuals in American history and memorize significant documents and speeches such as the preamble to the Constitution and the Gettysburg address. Literature selections in the early grades compliment students' learning of American history through biographies such as *Narrative of the Life of Fredrick Douglass*. The upper grade curriculum adds to this foundation as students focus intently on a detailed study of US History in the 7th and 8th grade. Finally, the high school grades offer training in economics, moral and political philosophy, and American government.

Instructional Practices

RCA's instruction is based on three main practices: intensely focused teacher-led instruction in a whole-group setting, thoughtful questions and discussions through the Socratic method, and the prudent use of technology.

Teachers at RCA lead their classrooms by precept and example. They are to lead out in accomplishing the mission of the school, managing the environment in their classrooms, and demonstrating knowledge of the content. Teachers are expected to establish and maintain a rich and well-ordered learning environment through routines, rules, and thoughtfully planned lessons. These lessons engage the entire class so that every student benefits from instruction. Due to the clarity of the curriculum, lessons are well-paced, organized, and engaging. Scheduling on a school-wide level is tailored so teachers can present short, intensely focused, academic lessons and then give students frequent cognitive breaks.

The classical pedagogy employed at RCA will promote thoughtful questions and orderly classroom discussions. The foundation of any effective classroom discussion is knowledgeable

students. Therefore, classical pedagogy encourages subject-matter teaching, memorization, and recitation. Background knowledge is pre-requisite to deep discussion. Socratic discussion methods are a standard feature of RCA instructional practices. Socratic questioning and discussion techniques involve guiding learning through thoughtful, open-ended questions that encourage students to think critically, explain their reasoning, and examine ideas more deeply rather than simply receiving answers.

Students and teachers at RCA will use technology to enhance learning and complete standardized assessments. Consistent with RCA's mission, computer technology will serve in presenting its robust curriculum via multiple visual and audial modalities to augment understanding, but never to undermine the teacher-student relationships central to a rich learning environment. For this reason, RCA will not use one-to-one devices, an arrangement that too often diminishes student-teacher interactions. This measured use of technology is consistent with recent research on the negative effects of excessive screen time. RCA will benefit from technology by using computers to track its students' academic progress on state assessments and other nationally recognized performance measures. These assessment results will allow RCA to refine curriculum delivery and improve student learning outcomes.

Meeting Diverse Learning Needs of the Local Population

RCA will draw students from both Minidoka and Cassia Counties. Both counties have a high percentage of Latino families. RCA will, therefore, have a significant percentage of English Language Learners (ELLs). The Literacy focus described above will be a significant benefit to ELLs. The whole group, teacher-led activities of the *Literacy Essentials* program are multi-sensory and simple to follow. Those with limited English proficiency are not left out in such an interactive

environment. RCA's instructional practices, along with its multi-tiered system of support described in the next section, will make it a school in which ELLs thrive.

Evidence of Success

American classical education as presented through Hillsdale's Program Guide is designed to align with students' natural stages of development by utilizing a cohesive K-12 curriculum with intentional horizontal and vertical alignment. This design has yielded tremendous results in diverse community contexts throughout the country. More than 30 Hillsdale member schools are now open across the U.S. Two Hillsdale member schools are operating in Idaho with 2 more opening this year. RCA will be the fifth Hillsdale affiliated school in Idaho. Students in Hillsdale member schools are achieving at very high levels. For example, Treasure Valley Classical Academy (TVCA) is our sister school in Payette County, Idaho. TVCA is excelling in many areas; consider the following:

- The senior class at TVCA outscored the state average on the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) by **25 points** in English language arts, by **46 points** in mathematics, and by **38 points** in science (on a 100 point scale).
- Collectively in all categories, TVCA scores were up to **56% higher** than surrounding schools and **48% higher** than the state.
- TVCA students scored an average of **1,155** on the **SAT**, well above the state (1003) and national (965) averages.

C: TEACHING AND LEARNING

The foundation of teaching and learning at RCA is a content-rich liberal arts and science curriculum that has been proven nationally. The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all learners and will be accompanied by a full range of academic services. These services will be provided through a Response to Intervention (RTI)/Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) framework built around core instruction (tier one), including targeted interventions (tier two),

and intensive support (tier three) to effectively serve all students. The RTI/MTSS framework at RCA will be data-driven and informed by the nationally benchmarked NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment, conducted three times per year.

Instructional Design and Faculty Training

RCA will anchor its pedagogical practices in Dr. Daniel Copeland's acclaimed work, *Tried and True: A Primer on Sound Pedagogy* from Hillsdale College. This influential text serves as a comprehensive guide for educators, offering valuable insights into lesson planning, assessment techniques, classroom management, and effective parent engagement. By implementing the principles outlined in this book, RCA aims to foster an environment conducive to student success. Dr. Copeland's book equips teachers with practical strategies to optimize learning experiences.

RCA's partnership with the Hillsdale College K-12 Education Office (K-12 Office) will strengthen the faculty's instructional practices. The K-12 Office provides pedagogical training to faculty and school leaders at future member schools. K-12 Office support includes startup academic and pedagogical training, ongoing professional development, in-person content-specific training, and on-demand curricular guidance. RCA teachers will also have access to the Hillsdale K-12 Education Library, which provides a robust collection of online resources.

Support Structures within RCA's Instructional and Curricular Design

RCA's curriculum and instructional practices are designed to help all students thrive. Structures are put in place to ensure that students with unique needs receive requisite help. During the earliest years of instruction, students learn the 72 phonograms (part of the *Literacy Essentials* explicitly phonemic curriculum) and memorize the rules associated with their use. This process then flows into the development of reading fluency and comprehension as they progress through the grades. One of the strengths of *Literacy Essentials* is that it contains all the

components of a reading intervention program, and these are deployed within the general education classroom for the benefit of all students. Moreover, *Literacy Essentials* utilizes Orton-Gillingham's methodology, which includes a multi-sensory approach to phonics instruction. Orton-Gillingham's methods were originally designed to serve students with dyslexia, but experience shows that all students benefit from seeing, hearing, speaking, and writing as they learn to read. In addition to every student benefiting from the robust scaffolding of *Literacy Essentials*, RCA will employ a literacy coordinator to build and operate an elementary reading intervention program. Elementary teachers will have the assistance of the literacy coordinator to provide targeted interventions. This ensures that every student receives the support necessary to progress toward language mastery.

Singapore Math's Dimensions program strongly emphasizes the use of manipulatives and hands-on learning, especially in the earliest years when students focus on developing a keen number sense (including an emphasis on number bonding, place values, and fractions). Later, students utilize pictorial strategies such as bar modeling to solve complex problems visually. These strategies help students develop a deep, conceptual understanding of mathematics before encountering challenging abstract concepts in algebra, geometry, and calculus. The heavy emphasis on concrete and pictorial approaches in *Singapore Math* reflects what a math intervention might look like in other school contexts. To assist students who may need extra practice and repetition of key concepts, grades two through six will share a common math period so that students can be taught in inter-grade and cross-grade ability groups as necessary. This means all students will receive additional support or accelerated learning as appropriate.

Special Education

We recognize that some students will require intensive support beyond targeted academic interventions. To address such needs, RCA will operate a comprehensive special education department that includes a coordinator/director, teachers, paraprofessionals, and other contracted wrap-around service providers. RCA will hire a special education coordinator who will begin working several months before the school's opening to ensure that appropriate systems are in place to meet the needs of students with disabilities.

D: STUDENT ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT STANDARDS

To meet RCA's student achievement goals, academic progress must be monitored regularly. This is a necessary component of an RTI/MTSS model because teachers and school leaders cannot engage in data-driven decision-making without current and reliable data. RCA will utilize three data collection systems: the built-in (formative and summative) assessments from our comprehensive curriculum or curriculum-based measures (CBMs), the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and the Idaho Standards Achievement Test (ISAT).

The most frequent and meaningful academic monitoring is built into our literacy and mathematics programs—*Literacy Essentials* and *Singapore Math Dimensions*. These formative and summative assessments are an integral part of the curriculum. They are essential to providing teachers with daily updates regarding student progress. The insights gathered from these assessments will drive the development of remedial actions, interventions, and other instructional decisions. RCA school leadership will conduct regular classroom observations to ensure these assessment strategies are being implemented—a crucial practice for achieving consistent and measurable student outcomes.

The NWEA MAP is scheduled three times per year, in the fall, winter, and spring. This provides periodic benchmark data regarding student achievement in relation to national norms, using the Rasch Unit Scale, or RIT score. MAP results provide essential data to classroom teachers and the school leadership team, where system-wide decisions can be made in response to multi-year trends. MAP data will be analyzed during grade-band meetings and by the school leadership to inform academic support decisions and professional development. Parents will also be provided with MAP reports to ensure they have the necessary information to be equal stakeholders in their child's academic progress.

The ISAT will be conducted during the required window each year as a summative assessment of academic progress. While CBMs and MAP provide us with data to monitor progress and benchmarks, the ISAT is an accountability tool that provides the entire RCA community with an understanding of the student and, consequently, school performance. Results from the ISAT will be discussed internally and shared publicly to maintain a focus on school goals.

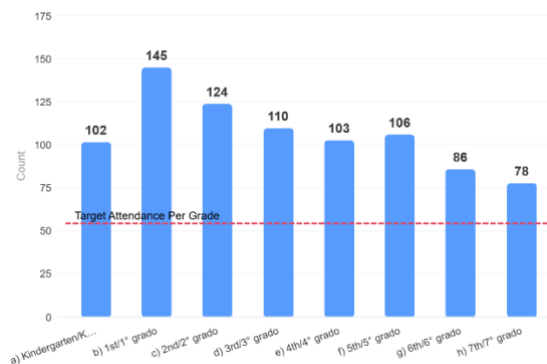
RCA will use longitudinal data to assess the accomplishment of its mission: to “train the minds” and “improve the hearts” of its students. To analyze student academic success (training the minds) data will be gathered from the following: MAP, SAT, ACT, CLT, ISAT, and student GPA figures. To analyze the effect of RCA's character development efforts (improving the hearts) data will be gathered from parent survey responses, attendance records, discipline records, and character card records. RCA's leadership team will analyze longitudinal data to determine any course corrections needed in the school's operations.

E: STUDENT DEMAND AND COMMUNITY/LOCAL SUPPORT

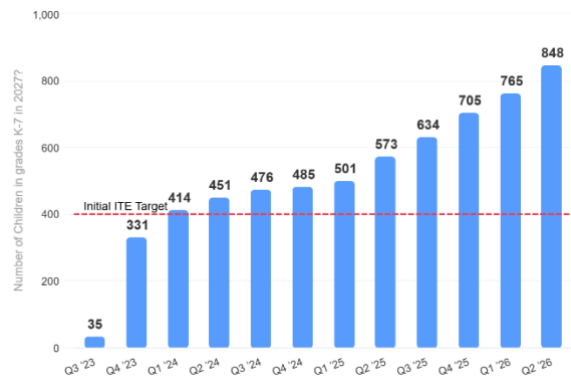
RCA is scheduled to open in 2027 with 432 students (capped at 54 per grade, K-7) and gradually expand to a maximum 702 students (K-12) by adding a new class each year. Local

demand has been extremely strong and demonstrates significant community interest. As of May 2026, 848 students have expressed interest through our on-line intent-to-enroll form for our 432 open seats. Distribution and trend diagrams are detailed below:

Potential Students by Grade



Intent-to-Enroll Trend by Quarter



Minidoka and Cassia counties currently have very few school choice options. Except for a small private Catholic school in Rupert, home-schooling has been the only alternative school choice option. Being the only tuition-free public charter school in the area positions RCA well for successful student enrollment.

Community Partnerships

From the beginning stages of development, RCA's founders have fostered many meaningful partnerships. The Wilson Theatre in Rupert—an iconic hub of community activity—launched RCA's public engagement campaign in November of 2023. Members of RCA's founding group have presented to numerous local service clubs like Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions. Relationships have been built with city officials in Heyburn, Burley, and Rupert. RCA is a member of the Minidoka-Cassia Chamber of Commerce where the school leader networks with many area businesses and public entities. Additionally, the South-Central Idaho Hispanic Chamber of Commerce has assisted RCA by providing

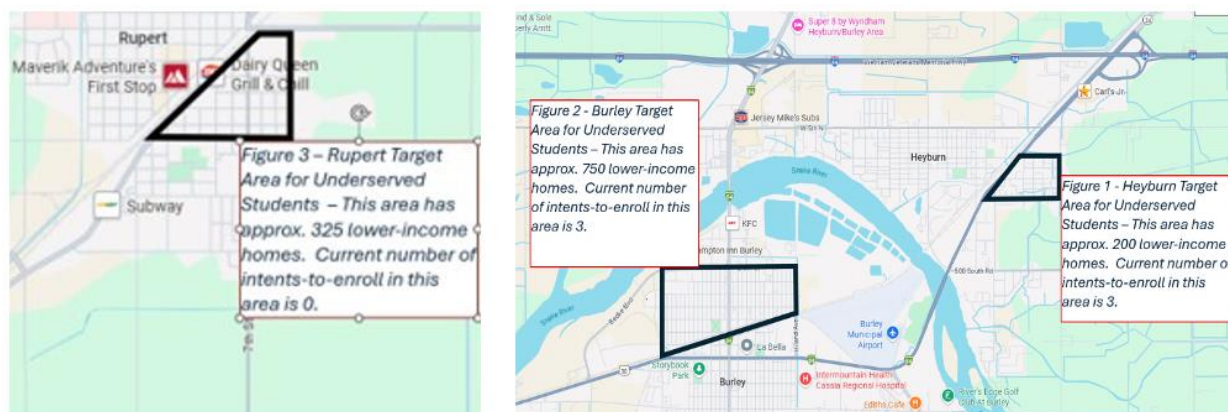
forums where RCA has promoted itself to Hispanic families. Founding group members have built positive relationships with our two local school districts by meeting with superintendents to detail our mission, vision, and timeline for opening. Many local business leaders have pledged their support to RCA in the form of monetary donations, in-kind contributions, and public advocacy. Finally, RCA's school leader is a long-time community member and educator. Having worked with hundreds of local families over the past three decades, he has built many strong and supportive relationships.

Community Outreach Strategies

RCA's American classical education model, emphasizing civics and virtue, will distinguish it within the primary attendance zone (PAZ). RCA leadership, alongside the community founding group, is spearheading a comprehensive outreach campaign to raise awareness of the unique benefits of American classical education. RCA is already actively implementing a multi-faceted marketing campaign, including social media, targeted advertising, and community events, to generate interest and drive enrollment. In collaboration with ACSI, RCA has secured over \$25,000 in marketing funds to support these efforts.

RCA's outreach strategy will ensure accessibility for all families, including those from diverse and underserved communities. As part of this strategy, RCA is partnering with Head Start and the local Community Council of Idaho to emphasize the availability of this free public education to families who may otherwise be uninformed. RCA's operations will also include bus transportation and nutrition programs, to ensure all students feel they have equal access to the school's opportunities. RCA is conducting a focused marketing campaign to Spanish-speaking families. This campaign includes Spanish-language videos, social media content, local event participation, and a household Spanish mailer/postcard for lower-income and multi-family

housing areas in the PAZ. RCA is committed to reaching Spanish-speaking families. The maps on below detail the underserved regions that RCA will focus on during this outreach campaign:



One of RCA’s community founding group members is a bilingual community member with strong ties to the Hispanic community. This individual has been and will continue to be an effective advocate for RCA among Hispanic families. She assists in translating materials, explaining RCA’s mission in Spanish at outreach events, and helping families with enrollment.

Anticipated Student Demographics

RCA outreach and recruitment efforts are designed to ensure a diverse student body enrollment that is representative of the surrounding communities' demographics, with a 5% margin of error in terms of race, socioeconomic status, and special education needs. The table below displays RCA’s anticipated student demographics.

City	Population	White	Hispanic	Native American	Other
Burley	12,148	54.50%	38.00%	1.40%	6.10%
Heyburn	3,896	69.10%	29.00%	0.40%	1.50%
Rupert	6,498	45.80%	53.60%	0.00%	0.60%

Census.gov (July 2023)

Parent and Student Engagement

RCA was founded by a dedicated group of community members who remain actively involved. The community founding group will serve as the blueprint for two parent and community leadership groups: the Parent Teacher Community Association (PTCA), supporting school events and fundraising, and the Mission Support Team (MST), a stakeholder collaborative team driving continuous improvement. These groups will empower parents and families to actively participate in the school community. RCA will establish a student council as the school grows, offering students a platform for leadership and civic engagement.

F: EFFECTIVELY SERVING ALL STUDENTS

In its recruiting efforts, RCA will ensure prospective parents understand that the school is a public school that intends to meet the needs of all students, including those with learning disabilities, English language limitations, or other at-risk conditions. The school will also work to ensure that parent and student rights are protected, including the proper handling of personally identifiable information. This section outlines the operation of our special education program, transportation, school lunch, and additional considerations for meeting the needs of all students.

In addition to a strong academic program and the previously outlined interventions that will be available to all students, RCA will operate a special education program aligned with our mission to train the minds and improve the hearts of all students. The design of our special education program will emphasize inclusion in the classroom to the maximum extent possible. It will incorporate pullout services only where necessary to meet the unique needs of an individual student. This means that special education teachers and paraprofessionals will be active participants in the classroom and a resource that is available to students not only when they are

receiving specific services but also at the exact moment they need assistance in the general education classroom. This full-service department will expand along with the student population.

RCA is poised to offer an effective continuum of services to English Language Learners (ELLs). Given the outstanding quality and interactive nature of *Literacy Essentials*, ELLs will gain consistent exposure to fundamental phonics and spelling lessons. ELLs will also benefit from RCA's intervention and MTSS structure. Intervention scheduling will provide peer pairing and additional school staff to support ELLs.

RCA will participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), including free or reduced-price meals for eligible students. This endeavor is expected to be achieved through collaboration with ACSI's school support office and the recruitment of skilled individuals capable of delivering a high-quality food service program. Our meals will stand out as they will be scratch made to the greatest extent possible, ensuring both nutrition and flavor at an affordable rate for families.

RCA will bus students throughout its primary attendance zone in order to provide equal access to all students. RCA plans to purchase four buses and establish routes throughout Burley, Heyburn, Rupert/Paul and Declo, including strategically planned stops designed to decrease bus-riding time. Bus routes will be finalized post-lottery to best accommodate student needs.

Other American classical schools in their first year report a notable percentage of students behind grade level in academic subject areas and with a range of behavioral needs. RCA recognizes this potential need for academic and behavioral support in the early years. Our plan includes supplementary instruction in phonics and remedial math. Teachers will receive comprehensive training in intervention strategies to ensure all students receive the support they need to thrive.

Teachers will also receive training in effective classroom management techniques, emphasizing the school's six core virtues. A fair and consistent discipline plan, adjusted for each grade level, will promote student self-government and a positive learning environment. The guidelines provided by the IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and the Idaho Special Education Manual will be followed regarding disciplining students with disabilities.

G: STAFFING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

RCA will hire an entire school staff (K- 7) prior to the first year of operation. These individuals will come from local, regional, and national markets and include a blend of new and experienced educators with K-12 backgrounds and subject area expertise. It is important to recognize that there is not a large pool of classical educators to hire from, so each new school that opens must train and develop its own teachers. For that reason, we anticipate recruiting a faculty made up of professionals with a range of backgrounds. The qualifications that will unite them are (a) subject area expertise, (b) a love of learning, and (c) a desire to teach and instill virtue in students. After the first year of operation, RCA will begin to build additional grades (8-12). The desired qualifications for teachers in the upper school will be graduate-level education in their respective subject areas.

Our recruitment strategy includes attending job fairs at Hillsdale College and elsewhere to directly engage with teachers trained in classical education. Additionally, we plan to foster relationships with in-state and out-of-state mission-aligned colleges to recruit faculty members. We will identify highly qualified paraprofessional staff and assist them in completing teacher certification to enable their transition into faculty positions. Finally, ACSI partners with Mission 43 (an Idaho Veteran organization) to recruit and support Veteran and military spouse educators to

join member school faculties. Of note, RCA's Idaho sister schools have demonstrated strong success in hiring competent, mission aligned teachers.

An extremely valuable component of our partnership with the Hillsdale College K-12 Education Office is the intensive training they provide to new school faculty before opening (at no cost). The summer before we launch, Hillsdale's Teacher Support Team will come to RCA for a two-week intensive training session on all aspects of the curriculum and classical pedagogy. The Teacher Support Team returns to RCA during the second month of school to offer follow-up training with every faculty member. RCA school leadership will assist in this training with twice-monthly professional development sessions built into faculty meetings and classroom observations. Observations will occur at a minimum of once every two weeks and include follow-up coaching as needed. Additionally, Hillsdale College hosts a free classical education professional development conference every summer that includes segments on curriculum, instruction, and leadership. This conference is a focused follow-up to the initial training, and sessions are presented by a combination of Hillsdale K-12 staff and teachers from American classical schools throughout the country. RCA has budgeted funds to ensure that every teacher will have the opportunity to attend the Hillsdale summer conference annually.

RCA offers appealing benefits to attract and retain teachers. The primary attraction is mission-alignment—the opportunity to teach in a school that is aligned to the faculty member's educational beliefs and values. Faculty members are highly regarded and treated as professionals. School leaders will foster an environment in which faculty are supported in their efforts to improve their craft and grow professionally. RCA will also hire a curriculum resource specialist who facilitates the acquisition and readiness of curricular and instructional materials. This staff member alleviates the stress of material preparation for faculty so they can concentrate

solely on teaching their students. Among ACSI member schools, teacher retention is very high. Both of Idaho's operating ACSI schools retain over 90% of their faculties on an annual basis.

H: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING PLAN

RCA has planned, in conjunction with Bluum and ACSI, a 3-year operating budget. This budget is based on the other now-operating schools in the ACSI federation. Please note that RCA anticipates between \$2 and \$2.5 million in grant funds from the Albertson Family Foundation to assist with initial operating costs. These funds are spread out over five years (including one pre-operational year) and are used to close budgetary gaps until enrollment increases to the point where independent financial viability is possible. Fellowships from the Borbonus Family Foundation and operational assistance from Bluum support the leadership team in launching the school.

RCA intends to build a new facility on approximately 17 acres of donated land in Heyburn. This donated land is valued at approximately \$600,000. Construction is planned to complete a full K-12 building in one phase. The building is approximately 50,000 sq ft and includes 31 standard classrooms, 4 larger rooms to accommodate music and art, 4 student services rooms, a resource center, a main office, a multi-purpose room and a kitchen. Based on the initial building plan, RCA anticipates a construction cost of \$17,356,152.

Through a collaboration between RCA and Bluum, school leadership receives support, resources, and training to create a financial plan. The RCA financial plan emphasizes a prudent and conservative approach to mitigate risk. Key aspects of this plan include budgeting for fewer students than the maximum capacity (418 student enrollments versus 432) and using numbers based upon the current construction costs and interest rates for Valor Classical Academy in Kuna, Idaho (planning factor of \$330/square foot including hard & soft costs).

Together with the Bluum financial team and ACSI, RCA leadership is developing a financing structure for constructing the RCA facility. This includes incorporating subordinated, low-interest capital from several sources (Idaho's Revolving Loan Fund, Building Hope Finance, and the Charter School Growth Fund), thus minimizing the loan amount for the senior lender and reducing overall interest payments. Further, RCA has retained Paradigm of Idaho as an experienced owner's representative to manage the construction project and mitigate costs. Using an RFQ process, RCA leadership, with Paradigm of Idaho, has secured an experienced architect and construction management/general contractor with the qualifications to construct the facility in the timeline and budget required. We expect construction to start in August 2026.

Each year, the school leader will prepare a budget inclusive of all costs. The budget will be reviewed by the board and adjusted as necessary prior to final approval. Bluum will provide no-fee business management services to the school during the first few years of operation while internal capacity is developed. Accounting practices will align with state laws and best practices in public accounting. The board will provide ongoing financial oversight.

I: BOARD CAPACITY AND GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

RCA will be governed by the board of American Classical Schools of Idaho. ACSI is a non-profit organization launched in Idaho to assist in the founding and governing of American classical schools in Idaho. The ACSI board is the governing authority for RCA, which includes, but is not limited to, responsibility for financial oversight as well as supervision and evaluation of the head of school to ensure high-quality implementation of the educational model.

The ACSI board currently includes seven talented board members with strong backgrounds in charter school governance and American classical education. The board chair is the owner of a software development company. He has been involved for almost a decade in the

founding of TVCA—the first American classical school in Idaho. The board treasurer is a retired bank executive and former business owner. She is a strong advocate for American classical education, with strong ties to TVCA and to Hillsdale College. ACSI's board secretary is an information technology professional who has been involved in the founding of both of ACSI's operating schools—TVCA and INCA. The board representative of North Idaho Classical Academy is a former member of the Idaho House of Representatives. He is a strong advocate for classical education, having provided opportunities for his own children to learn in this school model. The board's Valor Classical Academy (VCA) representative, inspired by classical education's focus on truth, virtue, and beauty, volunteered substantial effort to be part of VCA's founding group. She is a dedicated professional with a background in human resources and public administration. Idaho Novus Classical Academy's (INCA) board representative has over 25 years of experience as a commercial real estate professional. His expertise is in acquisition, disposition analysis, and big-picture strategy. His dedication to American classical education and his experience in the professional arena bring great value to the ACSI board. The board's Treasure Valley Classical Academy (TVCA) representative has dedicated years of volunteer service to building TVCA's Parent-Teacher Community Association and championing classical education in her community. ACSI's CEO has extensive military leadership experience and is a nationally recognized leader in American classical education.

The board's internal by-laws provide a procedure to appoint new members and fill competency gaps as they arise. The intent of the board is that additional members will be added as new schools come online, so that all schools have local representation and the board's skill breadth will continue to increase. Board policies and procedures are fully compliant with the law and include the requisite open meetings and open records requirements.

The ACSI board follows clear directives that ensure its members avoid conflicts of interest. These directives were developed in conjunction with the board’s legal counsel, Chris Yorgason, who is a well-known and respected practitioner of charter school law in Idaho.

Oversight of RCA’s finances is a chief responsibility of the board. Board members receive regular reports pertaining to the status of school budgets. Part of the oversight process involves monitoring implementation of spending procedures, including a robust internal controls policy. Additionally, the board selects an independent auditor each year to review and publicly report on RCA’s financial status and compliance with law and internal policy.

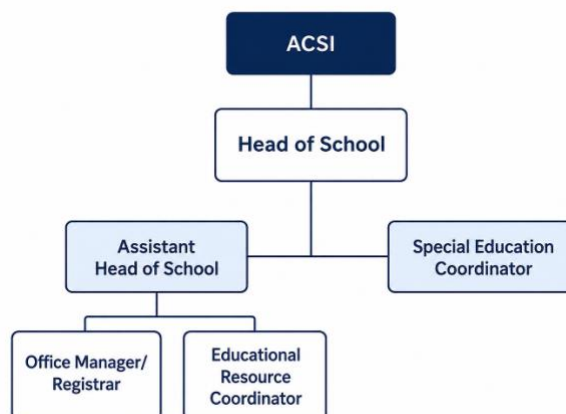
The board conducts a self-evaluation and arranges targeted ongoing training annually. The Hillsdale College Office of K-12 education offers in-depth training on effective governance and oversight twice a year. This training includes information on the responsibilities of a governing board and the distinction between governance and management activities.

J: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership Team Structure Through Year Three: Initial Leadership Model

The school will be led by the already hired head of school under the authority of the ACSI board. The Head of School (HoS) will serve as the school's chief academic officer and supervise an assistant head of school, special education coordinator, all faculty, and academic support staff.

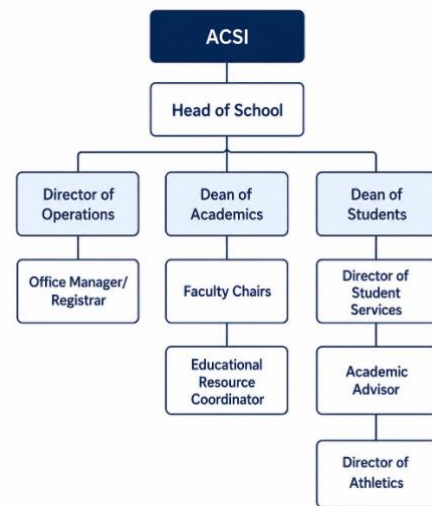
Once hired, the assistant head of school oversees operations and will supervise all ancillary staff. The special education coordinator will develop and implement the special education program and supervise all paraprofessionals. The office



manager/registrar is responsible for managing workflow in the office and all processes with the student information system. The educational resource coordinator is responsible for curriculum, instructional materials, classroom supplies, and equipment distribution.

Leadership Team Structure in Year Four and Beyond: Target Leadership Model

As RCA grows to include high school grades, the leadership framework will expand. The assistant head of school role will transform into two separate positions: Dean of Students and Director of Operations. The special education coordinator will transition to a director of student services—a more comprehensive role including evaluation of special education faculty, RTI processes, and other student services. Faculty chairs will be identified to create additional opportunities for teacher leadership. An academic advisor will be added to facilitate student post-secondary transition planning. A director of athletics will be identified to provide support for extracurricular programs.



Supervision and Evaluation of the Principal

At the end of each academic year, the board will conduct a formal evaluation of the school leader, drawing on several sources: an annual parent survey, an annual employee survey, school visits, as well as observation of faculty training, classes, standardized testing results, enrollment numbers, the school's budget, and the school leader's self-evaluation.

Classical Innovations in Leadership

Another important element of the leadership structure at RCA is that all school leaders will teach one or more courses after the first year of operation. This is a central aspect of classical education, where leaders are expected to be teachers first. This enables leaders to incorporate first-hand experience into educational policy decisions and fosters reciprocal empathy between school leadership and teachers.