

1. Program Description

a. Mission Statement: The mission of Traverse Classical Academy (TCA) is to join with parents to elevate and nurture the minds and hearts of young people through a rigorous, classical education in the liberal arts and sciences, with instruction in the principles of moral character and civic virtue.

b. Educational Need

— Currently there is no public school classical education offered in the 5-county area.

— Strong parent interest confirmed: at a community meeting in Traverse City in 2014; a public survey; informal group meetings; website feedback; interest from homeschool community.

— M-STEP results show students across the Grand Traverse region scored higher than the statewide average, but student proficiency rates in all subjects runs a wide range from a low of 15.2 to a high of 61.9. State ACT average score of 20.1 is nearly a full point below the national average. Michigan tied for the 38th composite score in the nation with New Mexico. Just 34% of Michigan students were deemed college-ready in algebra and biology — the national averages are 42% and 38%, respectively. Of the 441 TCAPS students entering college last year, 33.8% (149) were required to take remedial classes, the vast majority (134) in math. We can do better.

— To date, most charter schools in our region have been managing consistent growth and have waiting lists. Grand Traverse Academy, a K-12 charter school in our community, currently has waiting lists for some grades while the Woodland School has needed to conduct lotteries for the past several years. The Greenspire School, a relatively new charter middle school chartered by the TCAPS school district, has seen steady growth in five years of operation. Parents want choice.

— Notably, the local school board has faced consecutive and resounding millage defeats. Traverse City Area Public School board members have publicly discussed the possibility that these defeats may be related to community members holding to a different philosophy of education. We, the founding members of TCA, agree with these board members and we seek to offer an alternative which will provide a Classical and distinctly American education.

— Local, existing schools represent a mixture of performance and are mostly public schools. However, likely due to the economy and demographic makeup, even TCAPS (Traverse City Area Public Schools), include 3 Focus schools: Central Grade School, Eastern Middle School and TC Central High School. The disparity between the top 30% and bottom 30% provides room for improvement and a source for TCA alternative enrollment.

c. Describe the Uniqueness of the Program

In response to the community concerns identified above, we are proposing a charter public school that re-engages students in a classical education in the liberal arts and sciences while promoting the development of moral character and civic virtue. At Traverse Classical Academy:

- The Western tradition is central in the study of history, literature, science and the fine arts.
- There is a rich and recurring examination of the American literary, moral, philosophical, political and historical traditions.
- A content-rich curriculum is built around the belief that there is a common body of knowledge all members of our society should study in the core academic areas and in the arts.
- Classical virtues, as well as principles in self-government and civility, are identified and clearly taught in a seamless manner through course content.
- Literacy is taught through explicit phonics and traditional grammar and composition in the elementary grades.
- Greek and Latin root words are taught in upper elementary grades.
- Latin studies are an integral part of the upper school curriculum.
- Math facts provide the foundation for higher math concepts.
- Literature and history instruction in the upper school are rooted in primary sources and in great books.
- Instruction in the arts includes theory, history, and performance.
- Students are trained in study skills, planning and organization, close reading of text, and note-taking.

d. Cite Research to Support the Concept

“A Classical Education: Back to the Future,” (New York Times, June 7, 2010), **Stanley Eugene Fish** reminisces on “. . . the best education I have ever seen. I have worn the ring (high school) more than 40 years because although I have degrees from two Ivy league schools and have taught at U.C. Berkeley, Johns Hopkins, Columbia and Duke, Classical High School (in Providence, RI) is the best and most demanding educational institution I have ever been associated with. The name tells the story. When I attended, offerings and requirements included four years of Latin, three years of French, two years of German, physics, chemistry, biology, algebra, geometry, calculus, trigonometry, English history, civics in addition to extra-curricular activities and clubs. . . A student body made up of the children of immigrants or first generation Americans. . . Nearly a 100 percent college attendance rate.”

David Brooks, Journalist, Op-Ed Columnist, New York Times, “The Big University,” says “. . . for the past many decades colleges narrowed down to focus on professional academic disciplines, but now there is a series of forces leading them to widen out so that they leave a mark on the full human being. The trick is to find a way to talk about moral and spiritual things while respecting diversity.” That might be done by “First, reveal moral options. We’re the inheritors of an array of moral traditions. There’s the Greek tradition emphasizing honor, glory and courage, the Jewish tradition emphasizing justice and law, the Christian tradition emphasizing surrender and grace, the scientific tradition emphasizing reason and logic, and so on. But, the great works of art and literature have a lot to say on how to tackle the concrete challenges of living, like how to escape the chains of public opinion, how to cope with grief or how to build loving friendships.”

Kelly Lichter, Founder and Board President, Mason Classical Academy, Naples, FL, “A classical education is a balanced education that attends to advancing the intellect while instructing the moral character. It delivers the best content of the Western traditional canon through pedagogy that acknowledges current understanding of child development and learning. Students will be prepared to think for themselves. They will have at their command a large body of factual knowledge, a logical frame of mind that allows them to organize and analyze facts, and the ability to put forward reasoned and persuasive arguments in what they say and write . . .” — which will prepare them well for life in whatever they choose to do.

Leigh A. Bortins, engineer, home school advocate, C.E.O., Classical Conversations, says decisions we make today will be better if informed by “classical content,” that is by an awareness of what great thinkers of the past have made of the problems we encounter in the present. She wants her children and ours to “hear the collective wisdom of the ages”

and “regularly consult the advice of wise and virtuous men and women” when faced with modern “predicaments.”

A pioneer in the rediscovery of classical education died last year. **Marva Collins** was a Chicago inner-city school teacher who rebelled against the failures of the educational establishment by teaching her students Shakespeare, Socrates, other challenging—but inspiring—subjects, and phonics and character education. The obituary is illuminating but it calls her method “back-to-basics,” as if Shakespeare and classical philosophers were merely “basic.” Rather, her method, which employed great books and dialectical pedagogy, was genuinely classical, as is evident in her book The Marva Collins Way. She is important in showing that classical education is not “elitist,” as it is often described, but that it can be especially liberating for the poor or otherwise disadvantaged. “Her slogan: ‘I will not let you fail’ was really true,” her son Eric said. “And she felt that just because you’re poor doesn’t mean I have to water it down or dumb it down, in fact it should be harder. She was constantly being asked by reporters, ‘Why does an inner city grade school kid need to learn Socrates, Shakespeare or advanced math?’ And she would say, ‘They are part of a larger world the children should aspire to.’”

e. Describe Educational Goals and Curriculum

Educational Goals

TCA has adopted a set of goals designed to 1) consistently implement career and college ready standards, 2) reduce the achievement gap, 3) improve the instructional core, 4) improve graduation and attendance rates, and 5) build support for effective teaching.

The educational goal is to prepare students academically for success in life, through work and college as appropriate. To measure this goal, the following achievement and growth targets will be adopted:

<u>Grades</u>	<u>Metrics</u>	<u>Targets</u>
Grades 2-8	Performance Series - Scantron	Students enrolled for 3 or more years will on average achieve scaled scores equal to or greater than the grade-level achievement targets for reading and math.
Grades 9-11	EXPLORE, PLAN, PSAT, SAT	Students enrolled for 3 or more years will on average achieve EXPLORE, PLAN, PSAT and SAT subject scores equal to or greater than the

achievement targets for reading, math, science, and English.

Grades 3-8
and 11 MSTEP

Increase student achievement in accordance with state and federal adequate yearly progress requirements in the core academic subjects of math, reading, science, writing and social studies as defined by the state reaching 85% by 2020 and 100% by 2022.

Grade 11 MME

85% proficiency in math and reading.

Refusing to settle for minimum levels of student competence, Traverse Classical Academy pursues the goal of *mastering* academic content and skills. All students follow a common, rigorous course of study with elective options provided to recognize each individual's strength.

Curriculum (brief summary)

Core Knowledge English/Language Arts Sequence

We will use the Core Knowledge sequence. This is a specific, K-8 grade-by-grade Core curriculum of common learning which meets Michigan and Common Core State Standards.

Riggs Institute: The Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking

Beginning in kindergarten and continuing through sixth grade, TCA will use the Riggs program, which is a multi-sensory and brain-based approach to teaching explicit phonics, reading, spelling, language arts, and composition. This program will be taught in conjunction with the Core Knowledge English/Language Arts Curriculum.

Math

To provide a foundation in number literacy, TCA will adopt Singapore Math from K - 7.

8th grade: Algebra 1

9th grade: Geometry

10th grade: Algebra 11

11th grade: Pre-Calculus/Trigonometry

12th grade: Calculus or Statistics

Science

TCA will use the Core Knowledge science sequence, which is aligned to Common Core. TCA will take a balanced approach to science education that includes direct instruction, teacher demonstrations, reading books, and experimentation. Science will be taught with an emphasis on scientific facts, including the incorporation of technical approaches to observing, describing, recording, ordering, analyzing, testing and comparing predictions to observations. High school students will meet or exceed state requirements for science instruction, i.e. biology, chemistry, physics.

Latin

Learning Latin gives students a critical knowledge of English grammar and a basis for studying other foreign languages. Since over half of English words derive from Latin, students will considerably improve their English vocabulary and “word sense.” Words used in everyday English have long histories. Knowing those histories, which may involve multiple languages, equips students with a greater command over those words. The English word *curriculum*, for example, contains the root word *cur* derived from the Latin verb *currere*, which refers to running through a track or course. The study of Latin runs from 6 - 9th grades.

Modern Foreign Language

As resources permit, TCA will offer exposure to a modern romance language in the early grades, as these are the ages at which children most readily pick up languages. Modern foreign languages will also be offered at the high school level, in addition to Latin, as the school grows.

Handwriting/Cursive: Riggs

Starting in the middle of the 2nd grade, students will learn to write in cursive. Handwriting trains the brain. The physical act of writing requires focus, discipline, patience, attention to detail and accuracy—priceless skills for the young child at the beginning of his academic career.

Fine Arts

Studying music and the visual arts will inculcate love of the beautiful and equip students with important core knowledge about their culture. In keeping with classical education, TCA will teach music and art largely through the study of works and technique of the great masters, including Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Monet.

The goal of **music instruction** is to engage and enrich the child’s understanding of music, and deepen his ability to make and evaluate music.

In **Visual Arts**, students will learn about the elements of art, sculpture, portraits, still life, landscapes, photography, architecture, expression and abstraction, works

of art from long ago, Greek and Roman Art, Medieval Art, the Renaissance, Impressionism, and Post impressionism. In addition to learning about art history and theory, students will also have the opportunity to do studio art.

History: Original Source Documents

The classical approach is oriented toward the Socratic method, with robust Socratic seminars. Examples of primary source documents include:

Plato's Republic - Ancient Greece

The Declaration of Independence - U.S. History

Private letters between John/Abigail Adams - workings of the American family

Diary of Anne Frank - experiences of Jews in World War II

The Great Conversation

TCA will pursue *The Great Conversation*, Robert Maynard Hutchins' book which introduces *The Great Ideas* series. We will strive to cultivate a student body capable of having an ongoing conversation about what the greatest human minds have discovered and thought, inspiring students to pursue the conversation for the rest of their lives.

A set of core virtues will be adopted school-wide whose purpose is to build students' moral vocabulary and point them to the character traits necessary to live a good and happy life. TCA will not have a separate program for the teaching of virtue. Instead, character education and moral culture are the foundation of the school and will be infused throughout the curriculum.

f. Specify Educational Outcomes Expected and Assessment Strategies

Educational Outcomes

Within the charter school movement, a number of classical academies have opened across the nation and are making a significant difference in student achievement – advancing literacy, closing the achievement gap and preparing students for college.

Michigan's Hillsdale College launched the Barney Charter School Initiative (BCSI) designed specifically to support the classical education model in charter schools across the nation. The model is based in part on the work that has been accomplished at the Hillsdale Academy, founded in 1990. Recent ACT composite scores for Hillsdale students were an average of 29. *Traverse Classical Academy will sign an agreement with Hillsdale College to partner with the BCSI.*

During the launch phase of the Barney Charter School Initiative, two schools opened in 2012 in Lewisville TX and Moriarty NM. Additional charters opened in 2013, one in Savannah GA and another in Bentonville AR. In 2014, charters opened in Atlanta, GA; Naples, FL; Las Vegas NV; and Leander TX.

Estancia Valley Classical Academy (NM) earned an “A” on its School Grade Report Card. Only 10% of all schools earned an “A” rating using New Mexico’s A-F School Grading System.

Founders Classical Academy (Lewisville TX) earned the highest accountability rating of “Met Standard” on its Texas Academic Performance Report. FCA students have scored 100% proficient or advanced on the following end of course assessments: English I, English II, Algebra II, Biology, Chemistry, World Geography, and US History.

Savannah Classical Academy (GA) is a Title I charter school with 70% of its students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. 82% of students are non-caucasian. After one year of explicit instruction in phonics, students at SCA had above average growth in vocabulary acquisition at all grade levels and nearly all students advanced through one full year of curriculum in Singapore Math.

Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy earned the accountability status of “Achieving” on its Accountability Report, as status earned by only 69 schools in the state. “Achieving” means that the school met annual achievement and growth targets for student performance in literacy and mathematics. NWACA received several Outstanding Education Performance Awards from the Office for Education Policy at the University of Arkansas.

Five more BCSI schools opened in 2015: Palm Bay, FL; Dallas, TX; Mesquite, TX; Golden, Co; and Flower Mound, TX.

Michigan-based Livingston Classical Academy (Whitmore Lake) will open Fall 2016.

Assessment Strategies

The assessment program at TCA will include the state mandated assessments and Performance Series by Scantron, Explore, PLAN and SAT. Additional assessments specific to the curriculum (Riggs, Core Knowledge, and Singapore Math) will also be used. The assessment program offers educators an analytical look at how students are progressing in key academic areas, and provides diagnostic data to create intervention groups for remediation and drive instructional decisions. The entire school community will support a rigorous, structured and disciplined academic program, driven by assessments and its resulting data. Formative assessments will be used to monitor student progress and include Diagnostic Reading Assessments (K-3), Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (K), Core Knowledge Sequence Assessments (1-5) Riggs Assessment, and Singapore Math assessments in addition to the mandated assessments

previously identified. In addition, student achievement will be measured in a variety of other ways. Portfolios, essay writing, project completion, teacher observations, parent surveys, oral assessments, concept quizzes and tests, anecdotal reports, student self-assessments, etc., will be used throughout the school.

g. Specify the School calendar, including holidays, school day schedule, hours of operation, and annual hours of instruction.

TCA is preparing for a 2017 start and will comply with the TBAISD Common Calendar which dictates 183 student school days. In addition to the dates on the TBAISD calendar, TCA will add the following to the 2017-18 calendar:

- Hillsdale College will provide teacher training for 10 days in August prior to school opening. The training will be in-house.
- Formal Parent-Teacher conferences will be conducted at the end of each semester.

The K-6 day begins at 8:00 am and dismisses at 2:45 pm. At the elementary school level, classes are self-contained with two recess periods per day in addition to a lunch period. At the middle/high school, the day begins at 7:30 am with homeroom and ends at 3:30 pm. The schedule provides 8 periods (one period of lunch and 7 classes) in addition to homeroom at the beginning of the day and a study hall at the end of the day. Schedules support the classical program which exceeds the minimum number of instructional hours (1098) required by Statute.

2. Student Population

TCA will attract students from a wide range of educational backgrounds and interests. Many will leave the traditional school district in order to attend, but we will likely draw from a wide swath of our community's educational options. The Classical approach will appeal to parents and students who desire a content-rich, rigorous, and time-tested learning curriculum in an environment that promotes and builds strength of character. TCA will welcome all students – public, private, home-schooled, and children just beginning school. While we anticipate a strong interest from the entire spectrum of current educational populations, we believe that our educational approach will draw students who have recently graduated from private and parochial schools which offer K-6 or K-8 programs. Additionally we believe that many home school families will recognize our passion for excellence, including those who currently use Classical curriculum. It is

anticipated that these groups will add some or all of their children to our student population.

a. Specify age/grade range

TCA has been developed with an enrollment plan that begins with initial program offerings in K-9, opening in the fall of 2017. Substantial support exists for the idea that the earliest elementary school experiences are fundamental to the ultimate success of students in high school. The plan is to grow to a full K-12 program within the first four years. Beginning in year 2018, the program would expand one grade level per year until the full K-12 program is offered to the students and families in 2021.

The developers recognize that the building of a high school program takes conscious effort. Therefore, the enrollment plan begins with only one class of 9th grade students in year one. This beginning class of 2017 freshmen would have a full four years of classical education when they step out as our first graduation class in 2021. This selective growth plan will ensure the successful development of a high school program designed to prepare graduates for college and beyond in support of the Academy's mission.

b. Estimate Total Enrollment

The following chart shows anticipated enrollment in years one through five. The growth model is designed to allow the school to build to 702 students over a five year period. To date, every Barney Charter School Initiative academy has opened with a waiting list.

In the First Year, K- 8 grades will each have 2 classes, with 27 students per class. Grade 9 will be 1 class of 27 students. In successive years, all grades will have 2 classes, but the initial Grade 9 will continue to graduation as a single class. In the Fifth Year, all grades (K-12) will have 2 classes.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Grade Levels</u>	<u>Projected Enrollment</u>
First Year	K - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9	513
Second Year	K - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10	567
Third Year	K - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - 11	621
Fourth Year	K - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - 11 - 12	675
Fifth Year	K - 1 - 2 - 3 - 4 - 5 - 6 - 7 - 8 - 9 - 10 - 11 - 12	702

c. Describe Recruitment Plan that Ensures Open Enrollment

Open Enrollment

TCA acknowledges and certifies that it will comply with all Revised School Code requirements related to admissions and enrollment; specifically:

- The proposed charter public school is prohibited from charging tuition.
- The proposed charter public school cannot discriminate on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a disabled person or any other basis that would be illegal, if used by a school district.
- The proposed charter public school can limit admissions to pupils within a particular range of age or grade level currently permitted by law.
- The pupils must be residents of the State of Michigan.
- Admissions must be open to pupils on a state-wide basis.
- The proposed charter public school will utilize a lottery or other impartial selection process to admit students if demand exceeds capacity.

Recruitment efforts/activities

TCA will attract families from surrounding school districts and families who may currently be homeschooling their children, in addition to families from the area's private schools. One of the proposed board members is active in the homeschool community and will continue to share enrollment information with these parents.

TCA is prepared to serve a variety of students, including, those with special needs (approximately 12% of the overall population), limited English language proficiency, and/or students performing below grade level.

TCA will begin officially recruiting students as soon as legally possible.

Recruitment to date:

Brochure

Webpage (<http://www.traverseclassicalacademy.org>)

Letter of Intent for students

TCA logo items

Radio appearances

Word of mouth advertising by all Founding Team members

Media advertising

Informal community meetings

The basic purpose of promotion prior to school opening is to create not only a large pool of applicants, across all the grade levels, but to attract the greatest number of students who would be most likely to continue at TCA through graduation.

With this goal in mind, our message will clearly convey:

What is the Classical curriculum?

What benefits accrue from completing the Classical curriculum study?

What opportunities directly follow K-12 Classical study? i.e., College, life preparation?

Every effort will be made to avoid surprises. By articulating clear expectations to both students and parents, we intend to achieve a high degree of satisfaction and retention over the years of enrollment.

3. Staffing

a. Describe anticipated number of positions. Provide titles, responsibilities and qualifications of the following, where applicable: administration, instructional staff, non-instructional staff, contracted services and volunteers.

Administration, instructional staff, non-instructional staff:

First year staffing to include 1 Principal, 1 Assistant Principal. All teachers will be classically trained: 14 K-6 self-contained classroom teachers; 5 middle/high school teachers; 7 teacher apprentices, 5 specials teachers (Foreign Languages, Art, Music, Physical Education), 1 Counselor, 2 school secretary/receptionists; 1 business manager; and 1 custodian. Staffing configurations will be approved by the Academy Board of Directors.

Principal - responsible for providing instructional, operational and administrative leadership. He/she will organize, supervise, and evaluate development of curriculum, Academy programs, staff and student achievement, while overseeing the day-to-day operations of the academy. Master's Degree; Michigan Teacher Certification; Administrator's Certification preferred; 4 years administrative experience; strong verbal/written communication skills.

Business Manager - responsible for all financial transactions and record-keeping. Supervises business office, custodial staff, upkeep of facilities/grounds, security. Assures school systems, policies and procedures are properly implemented and maintained. Bachelor's Degree or major in accounting; 3-5 years experience in school or similar management background.

Assistant Principal - works closely with Principal to assure adherence to Academy philosophy, systems, policies and procedures. Works closely with teachers and students to establish and maintain discipline conducive to learning in the classroom. Bachelor's degree; leadership skills; interpersonal and communication skills.

Counselor - assists students in developing social, emotional, and coping skills necessary to function successfully in school and society in general. Works with students individually or in groups, collaborating with the student's family, outside agencies and internal staff. Prepares schedules, transcripts, and serves as resource person for college information and applications. Works with other staff to foster a safe school environment where students can learn. Master's Degree; appropriate State licensure.

Teachers - TCA will employ classically trained teachers who understand the philosophical content and methodology of the classical educational program. They will implement curriculum and philosophy; administer tests; monitor academic progress. Bachelor's degree; Michigan Teacher Certification; teaching experience preferred.

Teacher Apprentices - assist the Teacher with all instructional duties. Experience with students; Associates Degree or equivalent required.

School Secretary/Receptionists - responsible for overall office environment. Process student applications and records; oversee schedules and building usage. Must work well with the public; experienced with Microsoft Work and Excel.

Custodian - maintains the buildings in a clean and safe condition. Custodial experience. Sound knowledge of safety procedures.

Contracted Services

TCA does not propose contracting with a full-service Educational Service Provider. We have a letter of intent from **Access Point** to provide human resources and to employ all staff. Access Point, a professional employer organization (PEO) with an office in Traverse City, has knowledge and experience with Michigan charter schools. As a PEO, Access Point will provide the academy with improved compliance, risk management and effective employment practices. All teachers employed at TCA shall possess the requisite certification for teaching the assigned subject matter at the assigned grade level and shall undergo a criminal background check and unprofessional conduct check as required by the State Safety Legislation. The partnership with Access Point provides greater access to expansive employee benefits packages and professional personnel management. Access Point can provide TCA with a database of available teachers. Access Point can also provide additional training to staff in various subject areas including Blood borne Pathogens training, first aid and CPR.

AP provides services for Woodland School and Greenspire, both Traverse area charters.

TCA will also contract with other appropriate agencies to ensure effective school operations.

Hillsdale College - In alignment with the Barney Charter School Initiative, Hillsdale College will provide TCA at no cost to the Academy with:

- A general model for a classic liberal arts curriculum and Hillsdale College faculty assistance in designing the tailored and specific curriculum for TCA (provision of principles, outlines, suggested sources, and review of curriculum products prepared by charter school faculty)
- Assistance in identifying potential principal/instructors for the Academy.
- Pre-opening teacher training in the form of ten days of in-service training at the school for the faculty, and on-going teacher training to be delivered annually.

Volunteers

TCA will be committed to providing educational excellence. Parental involvement is a crucial component for the child's experience of support and congruence between home and school. Parent-teacher conferences will be held at least two times per year to ensure clear direct communication about each child's progress and experience. Additional conferences may be held if requested by either party for any reason.

We will sponsor a PTO (Parent Teacher Organization). Our PTO will serve multifaceted purposes of promoting strong ties between homes, school, and community. Parent opinions and ideas will be valued. Parent surveys will be distributed annually to parents to monitor general parent opinion and satisfaction with the school program. Results of that survey will be included in the Annual Report, and will be distributed to all parents. Numerous diverse opportunities will be available for parents to be involved in the operations of the school. Parents will be asked to volunteer their efforts in supporting the school for a minimum of 10 hours per family, if possible. Our requested commitment of parental involvement can be fulfilled through different avenues, allowing flexibility for how parents would like to support the school.

Examples of parental support opportunities:

- Assisting with the arts programs
- Volunteering in the classrooms
- Volunteering/chaperoning at school functions
- Chaperoning field trips
- Odyssey of the Mind competitions, or other academic endeavors that support the curriculum.
- Reading with students

Assisting Teachers with photocopies and other preparations
School Beautification Projects
Helping with Fundraisers
Serving on Committees

TCA looks forward to developing strong, ongoing partnerships with a broad cross section of persons and organizations interested in supporting elevated standards in education. We are in communication with civic leaders, service groups, former educators, and other professionals who support our mission. The potential is virtually limitless for their involvement in ensuring TCA's fertile academic and character-enriching environment.

4. Facilities

a. Describe site. If known, include address and square footage to be used. If unknown, describe preferred facilities and space requirements.

Preferred facilities and space requirements.

TCA anticipates opening in Year 1 with a student enrollment of 513. Our goal is that by Year 5, we are educating 702 students. With an initial per pupil space ratio of 75 square feet and then increasing to nearly 100 sf per pupil, this will require an initial facility of approximately 38,000 sf in Year 1 and expanding up to 60,000 - 70,000 sf by Year 5. TCA is aware that the space ratio of 75 square feet per pupil is at the low end of national average, but many successful charter schools use this amount (or less) of space per pupil.

Some facility options:

- A local private school (recently closed) has two buildings on 18 acres for sale.
- HighMark school development, facilities solution provider for new and existing charter schools. HM has a dedicated source of capital which will cover 100 percent of the facility or acquisition. They will purchase a property and build a school which will accommodate growth. The company will provide the school with buy-out options, usually starting at the charter's 5-year renewal time. It is their full intent that the school will own the building. HM is currently working with a Hillsdale-affiliated charter school in Florida and a new environment charter school in Kalamazoo, MI.
- One Founding Member has considerable experience repurposing facilities from one use to another. He could lead TCA through a self-initiated "buy-convert" or build process to attain a facility.
- A local developer has offered to assist TCA with a new or remodeled facility to suit, once the academy has been authorized, with TCA having long-term ownership.
- Several rental/leasing options are being explored.
- Several TCAPS school properties may become available.

5. Authorization

a. Answer the following questions:

- 1. Does this program currently exist as a private school?** No.
- 2. Did you apply to the local school district in which the proposed school is located for PSA authorization?** No.
If no, explain why not. Two telephone conversations with TCAPS did not encourage applications, one in 2014, the other in fall, 2015.
- 3. Have you applied to any other authorizing bodies for PSA authorization?**
Yes. If yes, specify why; it was not authorized. TCA submitted a Phase 1 application to Central Michigan University John Engler Charter School Office in 2014 which was turned down. As a matter of policy, CMU does not disclose reasons for rejection.
- 4. If approved as a PSA by Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District or Northwestern Michigan College, what date do you anticipate beginning operation as a PSA?** If approved, Traverse Classical Academy would open K-9 in September, 2017. Grade 10 would be added Fall 2018, Grade 11 in 2019, and Grade 12 in 2020.

6. Budget

a. Describe start-up funding plan and current assets (if any)

- Checking account recently opened with a small balance
- MDOE Charter School start-up/implementation grants – we anticipate there will be an opportunity to apply in 2017.
- MDOE per/pupil funding when TCA opens
- Grant funding: Bradley Foundation
- TCA has formed a 501(c)3 Traverse Classical Foundation to raise pre-operational funds. Sources include personal contributions, fundraising, grants, and guaranteed loans.

b. Specify estimated percentages of total revenues to be used for:

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----|
| 1. Salaries and Benefits | 65% |
| 2. Facilities | 20% |
| 3. Equipment/Supplies | 10% |
| 4. Other | 5% |

(The long-term desire of the Founding Board is to operate strictly on MDOE per/pupil funding.)

TCA Founding Board: 17 individuals with a broad spectrum of background/experience in business (entrepreneurs and corporate), education, community leadership, non-profits, environmental leadership, and legal.