

COLLIER COUNTY  
CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION

2012

MASON CLASSICAL  
ACADEMY



## APPLICATION COVER SHEET

NAME OF PROPOSED CHARTER SCHOOL: Mason Classical Academy

NAME OF NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION/MUNICIPALITY UNDER WHICH CHARTER WILL BE ORGANIZED OR OPERATED: Collier County

The Organization has applied for 501(c)(3) Non-profit Status: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No X

Provide the name of the person who will serve as **the primary contact** for this Application. **The primary contact** should serve as the contact for follow-up, interviews, and notices regarding this Application.

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NAME OF EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDER (if any): N/A

NAME OF PARTNER/PARENT ORGANIZATION (if any): HILLSDALE COLLEGE

Projected School Opening: AUGUST 2014

| School Year | Grade Levels | Total Projected Student Enrollment | Student Enrollment Capacity (if known) |
|-------------|--------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 2014-2015   | K-6          | 276                                |                                        |
| 2015-2016   | K-8          | 342                                |                                        |
| 2016-2017   | K-10         | 414                                |                                        |
| 2017-2018   | K-12         | 489                                |                                        |
| 2018-2019   | K-12         | 564                                |                                        |

I certify that I have the authority to submit this application and that all information contained herein is complete and accurate, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the application process or revocation after award. I understand that incomplete applications will not be considered. The person named as the contact person for the application is so authorized to serve as the primary contact for this application on behalf of the applicant.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

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August 1, 2012

Dear Dr. Patton and the Charter Application Review Committee,

On behalf of the founders of Mason Classical Academy, I am submitting our charter application to you and the Collier County School District Charter Application Review Committee.

Our sole purpose is to provide an educational opportunity for students, K-12, to become masterfully competent in mathematics, writing, reading comprehension, science, civics, and all other areas of a Classical Education with the hope that our graduates will become productive and contributing citizens of the United States of America. We seek to compliment the educational efforts of the teachers in Collier County by providing an alternative for the students in our area.

We look forward to working with you and your staff to provide public school choice to parents and students in the school district.

Sincerely,

Kelly E. Lichter, President  
Mason Classical Academy

## Executive Summary

The mission of Mason Classical Academy is to develop within its students the intellectual and personal habits, values, and skills upon which responsible, independent, and productive lives are built, in the firm belief that such lives are the basis of a free and just society. The Academy prepares its students to be leaders in their homes and communities, entrepreneurs in business, and statesmen in government. Through its rigorous curriculum with a strong emphasis in civics, Mason Classical Academy provides a traditional education with a constant view towards developing exceptional American citizens.

Mason Classical Academy (MCA) will target all students, regardless of personal circumstance, who desire a content-rich, rigorous, and time-tested learning curriculum in an environment that promotes and builds strength of character. MCA will welcome all students — public, private, and home schooled. Our plan is to open with grades K-6; adding 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades in Year 2 adding 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades in Year 3; and adding 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades in Year 4. MCA envisions primarily serving students from Collier County.

To accomplish our mission, MCA will ground education in the humanities, the sciences, and the arts in several current and research-based curricula/programs in the elementary and middle schools. These include: the Core Knowledge Sequence — a specific, grade-by-grade core curriculum of common learning; Riggs Institute’s *The Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking* — a multi-sensory, brain-based approach for teaching “explicit” phonics, reading and language arts; Singapore Math — a conceptual approach to mathematical skill building and problem solving, and Full Option Science System (FOSS) — a hands-on approach to scientific inquiry with emphasis on fundamentals. In the high school, students will receive a classical liberal arts education that aligns with but exceeds Florida standards. Students will study all subjects — literature and language, rhetoric, math, history, civics, the sciences, music and art—through sound, time proven methods. As in the lower grades, the curriculum will be rigorous. Students will receive homework and seniors will be required to compose and defend a Senior Thesis as a capstone to their academic experience at MCA. Students at all levels will be trained in Socratic Seminars to encourage intelligent, logical, and independent thinking. MCA’s curriculum with the supplemental programs has proven to be successful for all students, including those with special needs and second language issues.

Several very unique innovations characterize MCA. First, students will study Latin informally beginning in the elementary grades, to facilitate reading comprehension and vocabulary, and bolster performance in all subjects. Second, students will study history mainly through primary source documents to foster analytical skills and essential insight into their culture and heritage. Third, MCA students will be trained in study skills, such as time management, organization, note-taking, and research, which are essential for academic and future success. Finally, we believe one becomes good only by practicing right behavior. Instruction in the classical virtues will be integrated throughout the curriculum and in all grade levels. At MCA, high academic achievement, personal discipline, ethics, and personal responsibility will consistently be reinforced through the study of subjects in the classical tradition. As students enter the program, MCA will use state required assessments, district required assessments, and assessments provided by Core Knowledge, Riggs and Singapore Math. When student levels are determined, instruction will be targeted to bring students up to grade level and challenge their academic potential for optimal learning.

Classical Education is time tested and upholds a standard of excellence. We believe MCA’s high standards and research-based curriculum, supported by a well regulated campus, will provide students a rigorous and complete education that will challenge them to excel both in learning and in character. Students will graduate MCA highly literate and excellent individuals, ready to become active and responsible members of their community.

# I. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

## Section 1: Mission, Guiding Principles and Purpose

### *A. Provide the mission statement for the proposed charter school.*

The mission of Mason Classical Academy is to develop within its students the intellectual and personal habits, values, and skills upon which responsible, independent, and productive lives are built, in the firm belief that such lives are the basis of a free and just society. The Academy prepares its students to be leaders in their homes and communities, entrepreneurs in business, and statesmen in government. Through its rigorous curriculum with a strong emphasis in civics, Mason Classical Academy provides a traditional education with a constant view towards developing exceptional American citizens.

### *B. Describe how the school will utilize the guiding principles found in section 1002.33(2)(a), F.S.*

MCA will develop the academic potential and personal character of its students through a rigorous, classical liberal arts education. MCA will graduate highly-literate and intelligent ethical citizens who are well-prepared to uphold America's founding principles. They will become active, responsible members of their community.

America's Founders knew that the preservation of free government would always depend on the capacity of the American people to remain faithful to the principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. They also knew this would not be easy or automatic. The American experiment in liberty is staked upon a certain kind of education — an education aimed at providing citizens the knowledge and character required for self-government. Literacy, or the ability to read, write, analyze and compute with accuracy and clarity — is fundamental to self-government and vital to America's political, social and economic success. America's decline in literacy is a barrier to the achievement of individual dreams and goals, and a handicap to our citizens' full participation in society.

Recent state and national statistics and student performance scores suggest that our citizens are not equipped with the knowledge and character essential to sustain our free government and the way of life we enjoy as Americans. Increasingly, our students struggle to read, write, and perform basic arithmetic. Fewer citizens know the stories of our history and understand the basic principles underlying our Constitution. This decline in literacy is a major concern. Our intention in opening Mason Classical Academy is to counter this trend by providing students in Collier County with an education that challenges them to excel both in learning and in character. To accomplish this, MCA will provide students with a content rich and academically rigorous education in the classical liberal arts tradition.

Classical education upholds a standard of excellence. We believe all students will achieve their best potential when challenged with high expectations and meritorious standards. We further trust that students will recognize and emulate virtuous behavior when they are introduced to the

timeless heroes and heroines of literature and history. MCA will set a high bar. Knowledge will be pursued for its own sake, life will be examined with intellectual rigor and attention to character and discipline, ethics, and personal responsibility will be modeled and expected. Our classical education will ask students to work against their baser inclinations (laziness, socializing, the desire to watch television) in order to reach the goals of subject mastery and excellence in character.

MCA's curriculum will, inherently, not discriminate based on ability or disability. Students at MCA should expect to be challenged and work hard. All students will be expected to master basic skills and content material as well as master higher order thinking. Teachers will use performance grouping within the class, where appropriate, in Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade and placement in core subjects based on mastery of previous material and aptitude in 7<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades where appropriate.

MCA will develop the academic potential and personal character of its students through a rigorous, classical liberal arts education. MCA will graduate highly-literate and intelligent ethical citizens well-prepared to uphold America's founding principles, and become active, responsible members of their community. America's Founders knew that the preservation of free government would always depend on the capacity of the American people to remain faithful to the principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. They also knew this would not be easy or automatic. The American experiment in liberty is staked upon a certain kind of education — an education aimed at providing citizens the knowledge and character required for self-government. Literacy, or the ability to read, write, analyze and compute with accuracy and clarity — is fundamental to self-government and vital to America's political, social and economic success.

MCA believes it is vital to evaluate the preparedness of students to meet the demands of the curriculum. There will be several methods of student evaluation and contact with parents.

#### Initial Evaluation:

At the beginning of every academic year an initial evaluation of all students will be sent out to parents. This evaluation will take place after the students have been in school for three weeks. A brief report will be sent home to the parents identifying their student's academic progress and any deficiency the student may have. In addition, their character and work ethic will be addressed. This evaluation will be mailed to the parents. This will be used to notify parents how their students are performing and whether any deficiencies or performance in the classroom needs to be addressed. Communication with parents is essential, so they are aware of their child's performance and abilities and will know whether or not their child is performing at grade level.

#### Notification of Failure:

At least once per quarter and in a timely fashion, failing notices will be sent out for students who have a D or an F in an academic subject with the hope that student's progress can be remediated before failing the term. If an electronic grading system is used, it will be the parents' responsibility to monitor their child's progress.

#### Overcoming Major Deficiencies:

If a student proves to have major deficiencies because of a weak educational background or some other reason, the classroom teacher(s) will, in conjunction with the support staff, work on remediation strategies, which may include some pull-out tutoring and some modification of assignments with the understanding that the purpose is to bring the student up to grade level. In the case of 7-12 students, remedial classes or extra tutoring may be assigned in place of electives. Parents will be notified of the particular strategies that are adopted.

***C. Describe how the school will meet the prescribed purposes for charter schools found in section 1002.33(2)(b), F.S.***

***In accordance with the law, charter schools shall fulfill the following purposes:***

- Improve student learning and academic achievement.***
- Increase learning opportunities for all students, with a special emphasis on low-performing students and reading.***
- Encourage the use of innovative learning methods.***
- Require the measurement of learning outcomes.***

MCA's curriculum and supplemental programs were selected specifically to meet the needs of the target student population. We anticipate a population of students from diverse backgrounds and with diverse learning abilities. Our curriculum and supplemental programs are time-tested and researched based, and have successfully been implemented for students from academically, socially, and economically-varied backgrounds.

MCA's curricular approaches — Core Knowledge, Riggs (explicit phonics), and Singapore Math — are designed to build foundations of knowledge in the early grades. Because children learn by building on what they already know, this curriculum will benefit students with varying learning abilities. The emphasis on foundational skills and rich content will enable teachers to effectively bring students with pre-existing academic problems up to grade level, at the same time strengthen the knowledge base and challenge the academic potential of every student at grade level.

One example we have already cited is Singapore Math. English Language Learners (ELL) will benefit from the program's clear and simple explanations of math concepts, which are often just a few words in a cartoon balloon (Source: John Hoven and Barry Garelick, "Singapore Math: Simple or Complex?" Educational Leadership 65:3, November 2007). The program's detailed instruction, questions, problem solving, and visual and hands-on aids — such as blocks, cards and bar charts — ensure that students master the material. Ideally, students do not move on until they have thoroughly learned a topic. Educators say that slowing down the learning process gives students a solid math foundation upon which to build increasingly complex skills. (Source: Internet - Singapore Math Adopted in More US Schools - The New York Times Sept. 30, 2010)

Another curricular approach is the Riggs method — The Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking is appropriate and recommended for teaching all students the explicit phonics, reading, and language arts they must learn in order to succeed. Riggs is a multi-sensory, brain-based approach that addresses virtually every student's learning style through four pathways to the brain: sight, sound, voice, and writing. This time-tested method will provide a strong foundation

for students who demonstrate academic progress, and will be an effective remedial program for students with pre-existing academic challenges. This approach accelerates the learning process and provides an optimal learning opportunity for each student.

Another feature of the Riggs method is its use of appropriate sequencing. Riggs begins at the student's speech and oral comprehension levels; it allows students to build one skill upon another, always moving from the known to the unknown. Students are presented with a limited number of concepts — or information — in a given period of time. They then practice these concepts in a variety of ways until mastery is achieved. This method will serve ELL students as well as students with special needs across the spectrum.

### Special Populations

In certain cases where more intervention is necessary, the teacher in conjunction with the support staff and under the direction of the Principal may decide to pursue an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) to best meet the needs of the student.

In addition to identifying students who need academic assistance (an on-going process) MCA plans to have teacher assistants in the lower grade classrooms (K-2 initial year and more in later years of charter). Another method to assist in the learning process is scaffolding. Scaffolding refers to providing contextual supports for meaning through the use of simplified language, teacher modeling, visuals and graphics, cooperative learning and hands-on learning. Then, as students become more proficient, the scaffold is gradually removed. The objective at MCA will be to maintain the rigorous curriculum designed for each grade, but to modify methods and practices to ensure all students are achieving at grade level. Moreover, as MCA grows, additional classes may be offered in grades 7-12 in order to remediate those students requiring extra help. Particularly in the areas of reading, writing and math - to assist those students identified as needing additional help. For students who come to the high school below class level, remedial classes may be created in order to bring students up to grade level. As the seventh through twelfth grades grow, the Academy may also offer different levels of courses, such as Advanced Placement courses for students choosing a greater challenge. Assessments will be an on-going process and MCA plans to utilize its assessment data to improve academic achievement at all levels.

The instructional staff will review attainment levels on standardized tests and in-class assessments (Core Knowledge, Riggs and Singapore Math provide assessments) in order to determine appropriate learning strategies.

MCA teachers will employ the following methods:

- The Socratic Method — the use of direct intentional questions to guide students' understanding of problems and their solutions — will undergird the curriculum in all classes beginning in kindergarten.
- Use of Primary Source documents in History— Primary source documents, diaries, letters, drawings, and memoirs created by those who participated-in or witnessed events — will bring history to life and equip students with essential insight, and research and

analytical skills. Students in every grade will learn a true account of the times through the eyes and words of those who experienced such events and helped shape history.

- Teaching and Coaching in the classical virtues will be integrated throughout the curriculum and in all grades, specifically through student exposure to stories of self-command and self-sacrifice found in classical literature and history. As an example, children will learn about the virtue of “perseverance” by listening to the poem, *Try, Try Again*, or after reading Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s landmark speech, *I Have a Dream*.
- Integrating a Standard of Excellence represented in the Eight Pillars of Character (*citizenship, cooperation, courage, honesty, integrity, perseverance, respect, responsibility*). These will be displayed in the Academy’s halls and classrooms as the guiding principles of behavior for the school community.
- Teaching of Study Skills — such as time management, organizing, memory techniques, note-taking, outlining, and research — will be emphasized throughout the school and integrated throughout the curriculum to equip students for higher learning
- Studying Latin in the elementary and middle school grades and offering Latin as an elective in the higher grades will afford students a critical knowledge of English Grammar and a basis for studying other foreign languages, while bolstering performance in subjects across the board.

Additional methods MCA teachers will use in the high school grades include:

- Expanding the teaching of literature using the Socratic Method, started in the elementary and mid-school years into the high-school years. Students will read classics and great books such as Homer’s *Odyssey*, John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, Charles Dickens’s *A Tale of Two Cities*, and Fyodor Dostoevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*. The reading of such rich and important works that have shaped culture and history will enrich the mind and inspire students to learn.
- A rigorous civics curriculum that will emphasize America’s founding principles, including inalienable rights, American Constitutionalism and the free market system.
- Four classical virtues — *temperance, fortitude, justice, prudence*— will be introduced to extend the standard of excellence represented in the Eight Pillars of Character.
- A Senior Thesis— an in-depth inquiry into a question or topic that represents the culmination of the student’s academic experience at MCA. The process of researching and completing the thesis hones students’ ability to conduct research, to analyze and synthesize information, and to communicate effectively about what they have learned.

These methods will help provide students a rigorous and complete education that will challenge them to excel both in learning and in character. Students will learn explicit phonics, reading, English, spelling, composition, math, history, geography, science, music, art, and rhetoric—

through time-proven methods, and will be held to high standards of discipline, ethics, and personal responsibility. Equipped with knowledge of necessary skills and content, a true perception of history, and strong character, MCA students will be prepared to assume their role as self-governing citizens. Students will graduate highly literate and excellent individuals, prepared to uphold our nation's founding principles and become active and responsible members of their community.

***D. Describe how the charter school will fulfill, if applicable, the optional purposes of charter schools found in section 1002.33(2)(c), F.S.***

***In accordance with the law, charter schools may fulfill the following purposes:***

- Create innovative measurement tools.***
- Provide rigorous competition within the public school district to stimulate continual improvement in all public schools.***
- Expand the capacity of the public school system.***
- Mitigate the educational impact created by the development of new residential dwelling units.***
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including ownership of the learning program at the school site.***

MCA brings a Classical Education to Collier County, which does not currently exist thereby giving parents and students an exceptional proven alternative. MCA will ground education in the humanities, the sciences, and the arts in several current and research-based curricula/programs in the elementary and middle schools. These include: the Core Knowledge Sequence — a specific, grade-by-grade core curriculum of common learning; Riggs Institute's *The Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking* — a multi-sensory, brain-based approach for teaching “explicit” phonics, reading and language arts; Singapore Math — a conceptual approach to mathematical skill building and problem solving, and FOSS — a hands-on approach to scientific inquiry with emphasis on fundamentals.

In the high school, students will receive a classical liberal arts education that aligns with but exceeds Florida standards. Students will study all subjects — literature and language, rhetoric, math, history, civics, the sciences, music and art—through sound, time proven methods. As in the lower grades, the curriculum will be rigorous. Students will receive homework and seniors will be required to compose and defend a Senior Thesis as a capstone to their academic experience at MCA. Students at all levels will be trained in Socratic Seminars to encourage intelligent, logical, and independent thinking. MCA's curriculum with the supplemental programs has proven to be successful for all students, including those with special needs and second language issues.

Most teacher education programs do not teach potential teachers about classical education, so MCA teachers will have excellent professional development opportunities and learn the skills necessary to implement a classical education.

## Section 2: Target Population and Student Body

***A. Describe the anticipated target population to be served. If applicable, applicants should describe if they will target, in accordance with the law, certain populations defined in section 1002.33(10)(e), F.S.***

MCA will serve all students from Collier County, regardless of personal circumstances, who desire a content-rich, rigorous, and time-tested learning curriculum in an environment that promotes and builds strength of character. MCA will welcome all students — public, private, home-schooled, and children just beginning school.

### **Demographics**

The Collier County School District has 48 schools serving 43,118 students. There are 29 elementary schools, 10 middle schools, 8 high schools, 12 alternative schools and 2 career and technical centers. This is an overview of the population of students in Collier County who are invited to attend MCA.

The Race and Ethnicity breakdown:

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| Hispanic | 45% |
| White    | 39% |
| Black    | 12% |
| Mixed    | 2%  |
| Asian    | 1%  |
| Indian   | 1%  |

Over 62% of the population is considered “economically needy” and receive free or reduced lunch.

In the 2010-2011 school year, there was a graduation rate of 81.3% with 1.9% officially dropping out of school.

English is not the first language for 13% of students and 5,600 are enrolled in ELL courses. More than 47% live in non-English speaking homes, where English is not the first language and may not be spoken at all. For children in PreK-3, the percentage increases to more than 55%.

***B. Provide the following projection for each year of proposed operation: the grades that the school will serve, the projected number of students to be served in each grade, the number of students expected in each class, and the total number of students enrolled.***

MCA plans to open in August 2014 (FY15) with grades K-6. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be added in 2015 (FY16), the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade will be added in 2016 (FY17). The 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade will be added in 2017 (FY18). By 2018 (FY19) the Academy will be at capacity with 564 students.

Projected Enrollment:

| Grade | FY15          | Grade | FY16          | Grade | FY17          | Grade | FY18          | FY19          |
|-------|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|---------------|---------------|
| K     | 36            | K     | 36            | K     | 36            | K     | 36            | 36            |
| 1     | 36            | 1     | 36            | 1     | 36            | 1     | 36            | 36            |
| 2     | 36            | 2     | 36            | 2     | 36            | 2     | 36            | 36            |
| 3     | 36            | 3     | 36            | 3     | 36            | 3     | 36            | 36            |
| 4     | 44            | 4     | 44            | 4     | 44            | 4     | 44            | 44            |
| 5     | 44            | 5     | 44            | 5     | 44            | 5     | 44            | 44            |
| 6     | 44            | 6     | 44            | 6     | 44            | 6     | 44            | 44            |
|       |               | 7     | 44            | 7     | 44            | 7     | 44            | 44            |
|       |               | 8     | 22            | 8     | 44            | 8     | 44            | 44            |
|       |               |       |               | 9     | 25            | 9     | 50            | 50            |
|       |               |       |               | 10    | 25            | 10    | 50            | 50            |
|       |               |       |               |       |               | 11    | 25            | 50            |
|       |               |       |               |       |               | 12    | 25            | 50            |
|       |               |       |               |       |               |       |               |               |
|       | Total:<br>276 |       | Total:<br>342 |       | Total:<br>414 |       | Total:<br>489 | Total:<br>564 |

### Section 3: Educational Program Design

***A. Describe the school’s daily schedule and annual calendar, including the annual number of days and hours of instructional time.***

School starts at 8:00 a.m. for all students. The Opening Ceremony begins at 8:00 a.m. by the flag pole. Parents are encouraged to attend.

For grades K-6, school starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 2:30 p.m. The number of instructional hours will be 6.5 hours per day. The number of school days will be five per week. The amount of instructional time is 1,005 instructional hours.

Note: Instructional hours do not include passing time and lunch.

For grades 7-8, school starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 3:05 p.m. The number of instructional hours will be seven 50 minute class periods per day. The number of school days will be five per week. The length of the school year is 180 days. The amount of instructional time is 1,050 instructional hours.

Note: Instructional hours do not include passing time and lunch.

For grades 9-12, school starts at 8:00 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. The number of instructional hours will be eight 50 minute class periods per day. The number of school days will be five per week. The length of the school year is 180 days. The amount of instructional time is 1,200 instructional hours.

Note: Instructional hours do not include passing time and lunch.

**STUDENT DAYS**

1<sup>st</sup> Quarter ~ 43 days    3<sup>rd</sup> quarter ~ 52 days

2<sup>nd</sup> quarter ~ 42 days    4<sup>th</sup> quarter ~ 43 days

**First semester ~ 85 days    Second semester ~ 95 days    Total ~ 180 days**

**Daily Schedule (K-6)**

|                   |                                     |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 8:00-8:10         | Opening Ceremony                    |
| 8:15-9:00         | Reading/Phonics                     |
| 9:05-9:50         | Language Arts/Writing/Grammar       |
| 9:55-10:30        | History/Civics                      |
| 10:35-11:10       | Science                             |
| 11:15-11:50       | Walk to Enrichment/Spanish/Specials |
| 11:55-12:25       | Lunch                               |
| <b>12:30-1:10</b> | <b>Math Block</b>                   |
| 1:15-1:50         | Walk to Enrichment/Spanish/Specials |
| 1:55-2:30         | Walk to Enrichment/Spanish/Specials |

The following are tentative schedules for the middle and high schools:

**Daily Schedule (7-8)**

**Daily Schedule (9-12)**

|             |                              |             |                              |
|-------------|------------------------------|-------------|------------------------------|
| 8:00-8:10   | Opening Ceremony             | 8:00-8:10   | Opening Ceremony             |
| 8:15-9:05   | <b>Math Block</b> (Period 1) | 8:15-9:05   | <b>Math Block</b> (Period 1) |
| 9:10-10:00  | Core English (Period 2)      | 9:10-10:00  | Period 2                     |
| 10:05-10:55 | Core History (Period 3)      | 10:05-10:55 | Period 3                     |
| 11:00-11:50 | Core Science (Period 4)      | 11:00-11:50 | Period 4                     |
| 11:55-12:25 | Lunch                        | 11:55-12:25 | Lunch                        |
| 12:30-1:20  | Core Music/Art (Period 5)    | 12:30-1:20  | Period 5                     |
| 1:25-2:15   | Latin A/B (Period 6)         | 1:25-2:15   | Period 6                     |
| 2:20-3:10   | Elective (Period 7)          | 2:20-3:10   | Period 7                     |
|             |                              | 3:15-4:05   | Period 8                     |

**Start of the Day:**

At Mason Classical Academy, every school day begins with a sequence of activities carefully designed to convey a clear sense of expectation and to demonstrate our personal concern for each individual child.

1. **Welcome:** As parents drop off their children in the morning, the teachers and principal greet the students outside the building. This simple act of civility lets children know they are wanted at school, and it also visually suggests a “handing over” of the child to the teacher’s authority.
2. **Opening Ceremony:** After the students have arrived, a formal ceremony is conducted every morning around the flagpole or in the lobby during inclement weather. The students assemble by class, and the principal leads them in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance, while designated, properly trained students raise the flag. Next, a traditional or patriotic American song is sung, followed by the student’s recitation from memory a poem or notable speech (each student will be required to offer two recitations during the school year). The principal then makes any announcements, and each teacher briefly shares recent noteworthy accomplishments made by the students or classes. These reports focus on academics or projects of interest rather than on personal news. (Personal news is shared in the Academy’s newsletter).

**Start of Class:**

The tone of the opening ceremonies carries into the classroom as teachers begin their morning routines. Teachers interact with each child personally, answering questions, listening to the occasional story and taking attendance. Within the first few minutes, teachers make announcements for the morning, check school uniforms and inform students of the structure of the day’s opening lesson. This morning routine stresses personal attention, helps students focus on the work ahead and eases the class into its lessons.

**Lunch time:**

At lunch, everyone assembles as a school in the lunch room. Students are assigned to mixed groups in the lower school, while the upper school may choose where they sit. Teachers will also be assigned to a table.

## **End of the Day:**

The class day comes to an end in an organized manner. Teachers review homework assignments for that evening and check to make sure students understand the instructions. The children collect their possessions and line-up. Classes in the elementary school walk outside in line and meet their parents or guardians. Pre-selected students lower the flag and then fold and store it.

## **Homework Policy:**

A Classical Education requires students to engage in serious work at home. The exercises, reading assignments and test preparation that MCA requires of its students are not busy work. *Meaningful* homework assignments are an important part of MCA's curriculum. Teachers assign quality homework for each school night, within the following guidelines:

1. Kindergarten: 15 to 25 minutes
2. Grades 1 and 2: 20-35 minutes
3. Grades 3 and 4: 30-45 minutes
4. Grades 5 and 6: 40-60 minutes
5. Grades 7 and 8: 60-90 minutes
6. Grades 9 through 12: 90-120 minutes

From Friday to Monday is considered one school night for homework purposes. Homework may be assigned during long weekends. But it is not assigned the day of a vacation period to be due the day classes resume.

## ***B. Describe the proposed charter school's educational program.***

The Core Knowledge Sequence is based upon E.D. Hirsch's idea of cultural literacy, which makes it the ideal curriculum for a Classical Liberal Arts school. The Core Knowledge Sequence provides a grade-by-grade sequence of specific topics to be taught in grades K-8. Topics taught include history, geography, literature, visual arts, music, language arts, science and math. The content of the topics is based upon basic principles that are lasting and solid, for example, important events of world history, essential elements of math, and essential elements of written expression. As learning becomes more meaningful if knowledge is built on prior knowledge, the Core Knowledge Sequence provides a specific outline of the skills and content to be learned grade by grade. Thus, all children are exposed to shared knowledge needed to be included in a shared literate culture. Lesson plans and resources are included in this curriculum to guide teachers in instruction. Teachers and parents are all on the same page, and the chance of repetition and/or gaps as children move from grade to grade are eliminated. The curriculum constitutes approximately 50% of what is taught so teachers have the freedom to develop their own knowledge goals as well.

Riggs incorporates phonics-based spelling with a rules system dating from the Webster-Oxford standardization of English spelling, and also provides phonemic/graphemic correspondences from contemporary dictionaries, enabling students to learn correct spelling as well as regional dialects and pronunciations across the English-speaking world. For reading, Riggs students also learn syllabication, oral vocabulary, and comprehension. For composition, students learn spelling, cursive writing, creative writing, spacing, margins, listening skills, orthography rules, vocabulary, grammar, syntax, punctuation, and capitalization. Riggs uses direct and Socratic instructional

techniques to augment the instruction to integrate grammar and syntax, creative and organizational composition skills and vocabulary development. Riggs also uses a complete and comprehensive method to teach language arts skills — roots, prefixes, suffixes, homophones and homographs, antonyms, synonyms and graphic organizers. The Singapore Math Program requires a focus on high achievement and consistent assessments.

The program presents mathematical skill building and problem solving from a conceptual viewpoint, thereby saving instructional time by focusing on mastery of essential math skills that are required to move from level to the next. Moving students on to higher levels of skills is not an option. The program is detailed in instruction, questions, problem solving, and visual and hands-on aids — such as blocks, cards and bar charts, and ensures that students master the material. Ideally, students do not move on until they have thoroughly learned a topic. Singapore Math presents fewer topics and provides more time to thoroughly learn those topics.

The Full Option Science System (FOSS) employs Delta modules — available from Sandia National Laboratories — provides a rigorous, hands-on approach to scientific inquiry. Science classes will include the incorporation of technical approaches to observing, describing, recording, ordering, analyzing, testing and comparing predictions to observations.

### ***C. Describe the research base for the educational program.***

#### **Decline in Literacy**

Literacy, the ability to read and write, is absolutely necessary during the advancement of technology as people are exposed to more complex information. Herbert J. Walberg states, “Vocabulary is the most important single predictor of school success,” which coincides with E.D. Hirsch’s concept regarding literacy. E.D. Hirsch is responsible for the founding of Core Knowledge. Walberg (2001) claims that by the time a child turns four they will be exposed to roughly 45 million words if their parents are highly educated professionals, 26 million words if their parents are working-class but only 13 million words if they grew up in a welfare family.

Literacy is vital to America’s political, social and economic success. Recent studies indicate an alarming decline in literacy at the national, state, and local levels. Schools across the nation explore new reforms attempting to prepare their students in a time where unforeseen changes happen rapidly. Some schools tweak their curriculums by incorporating more technology, hoping this will bring about student success during the Information Age. Based on the research, the first priority above anything else is to increase literacy among students, because without it, they will be unprepared for the future.

#### **References:**

Moe, T. (2001). *A primer on america's schools*. Stanford, California: Hoover Institution Press.

## America's Civic Literacy Crisis

A recent study performed by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) demonstrates that our citizens are not being equipped with the civic knowledge necessary to sustain our free government and the way of life we enjoy as Americans.

In 2008, ISI asked 2,508 adults of all ages and educational backgrounds 33 straightforward civics questions, many of which high school graduates and new citizens are expected to know. The results were alarmingly discouraging. Seventy-one percent of Americans failed the exam, with high school graduates scoring 44% and college graduates also failing at 57%. Americans averaged an overall score of 49%. The Civics quiz results also showed:

- Fewer than half of all Americans can name all three branches of government, a minimal requirement for understanding America's constitutional system.
- Only 54% can correctly identify a basic description of the free enterprise system, in which all Americans participate.
- Thirty percent of elected officials do not know that "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" are the inalienable rights referred to in the Declaration of Independence.

As the ISI study demonstrates, a strong majority of America's citizens do not meet even the minimal requirements for understanding our constitutional system, for functioning in our economy, or for engaging in political discourse. (Source: [Americancivilliteracy.org/2008/summary](http://Americancivilliteracy.org/2008/summary))

Civics, the study of government with attention to the role of its citizens, is not an area that is formally assessed in Florida. However, for students to be cognizant of their role as responsible, informed citizens, they need at least a basic understanding of the workings and purpose of government. MCA will fill this need.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) measures the knowledge and skills critical to the responsibilities of citizenship in America's constitutional democracy. According to the Civics 2010 NAEP Assessment at Grades 4, 8 and 12 — also known as the Nation's Report Card, students are making little if any progress at most grade levels, as the following data indicates:

- 4<sup>th</sup> graders scored at or above the basic and proficient achievement levels, higher than in 2006 and 1998.
- There was no significant change in the overall score for eighth graders
- 12<sup>th</sup> graders scored lower in 2010 than in 2006 and had a lower percentage at or above proficient compared to 2006.

The Civics 2010 NAEP Assessment questions addressed three interrelated components: civic knowledge, intellectual and participatory skills, and civic dispositions. The civic knowledge questions assessed students' understanding of civic life, politics, and government; the foundations of the American political system; how the constitutional government employs principles of

democracy; the relationship of the U.S. to other nations; and the role of citizens in American democracy. This trend must be corrected. (See: <http://www.nationsreportcard.gov>)

**National Center For Education Statistics 2011**

| <b>Grade</b>     | <b>Subject</b> | <b>Basic</b> | <b>Proficient</b> | <b>Advanced</b> |
|------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Math           | 84%          | 37%               | 5%              |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Reading        | 71%          | 35%               | 8%              |
| 4 <sup>th</sup>  | Science        | 75%          | 325               | 1%              |
| 8 <sup>th</sup>  | Math           | 68%          | 28%               | 6%              |
| 8 <sup>th</sup>  | Reading        | 73%          | 30%               | 2%              |
| 8 <sup>th</sup>  | Science        | 62%          | 28%               | 2%              |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> | Math           | 59%          | 19%               | 3%              |
| 12 <sup>th</sup> | Reading        | 70%          | 32%               | 5%              |

***D. Explain how the educational program aligns with the school’s mission.***

MCA’s mission states:

The mission of Mason Classical Academy is to develop within its students the intellectual and personal habits, values, and skills upon which responsible, independent, and productive lives are built, in the firm belief that such lives are the basis of a free and just society. The Academy prepares its students to be leaders in their homes and communities, entrepreneurs in business, and statesmen in government. Through its rigorous curriculum with a strong emphasis in civics, Mason Classical Academy provides a traditional education with a constant view towards developing exceptional American citizens.

In 1776, the year of our nation’s conception, George Mason in the *Virginia Declaration of Rights* said "No free government, nor the blessings of liberty, can be preserved to any people, but by...a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles." By fundamental principles Mr. Mason referred to the certain understanding about nature, rights, and government expressed in the *Declaration of Independence* that is fundamental to the United State Constitution. We agree with Mr. Mason and the other Founders of our country, that the maintenance and prosperity of our free Republic depends upon the capacity of the American people to remain faithful to those founding principles.

Among those founding principles is self-government. The Founders understood self-government in the twofold sense of political self-government, in which we govern ourselves as a political community, and personal self-government, according to which each individual is responsible for governing himself. They believed the success of political self-government required a flourishing of personal self-government and that both are essential to preserving the American way of life.

The Founders further understood that essential to the people’s capacity for self-government are literacy – academic, civic, and cultural – and strong character. These qualities rely in large part on education. Another signer of the *Declaration of Independence*, Benjamin Rush, said the only “method of rendering a republican form of government durable...is by disseminating the seeds of virtue and knowledge through every part of the state by means of proper...education."

The Founders understood that education — an education that provides citizens with the knowledge and character necessary for self-government is essential to the maintenance and prosperity of the American Republic. For that reason, they — and leaders throughout our history — firmly supported education. They also had firm opinions about what that education should consist of.

Thomas Jefferson’s 1799 *Bill for the More General Diffusion of Knowledge* states that the object of education in primary schools is “to instruct...citizens in...their rights, interests and duties, as men and citizens.” This was necessary in order to render the people “the safe guardians of their liberty.” According to Jefferson, in grammar schools students should “be taught Latin...English grammar... reading, writing and numerical arithmetic, the elements of mensuration...and the outlines of geography and history.” Furthermore, “the books ...for instructing children to read shall...at the same time make them acquainted with Grecian, Roman, English, and American history.” “History,” Jefferson writes, “by apprizing them of the past will enable them to judge of the future.”

MCA’s educational philosophy and curricular approach were selected to provide the caliber of education Jefferson envisioned. MCA’s Core Knowledge, classical, liberal arts curriculum, supplemented by Riggs, Singapore Math, FOSS, Latin, and a strong emphasis on civics and classical virtues, will provide students a rigorous education that challenges them to excel both in learning and in character.

At MCA students will learn language and literature, history, geography, government, math, the sciences, music and the visual arts in a coherent and orderly program that runs from the rudiments of basic literacy and math skills to higher orders of thought and expression. Students will be taught an organized sequence of skills, and core knowledge through sound, time proven methods. These will be assessed as students move through the curriculum and students will demonstrate mastery of skills and content before progressing to the next level.

At MCA students will study explicit phonics and Latin, essential for literacy, beginning in kindergarten. They will read classic works of literature, study the fine arts, and learn firsthand accounts of history through the study of primary source documents, including the *Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution*. Students will also receive rigorous training in the fundamentals and theories of math and science, including the scientific method and will benefit from Socratic instructional techniques and training in study skills which further foster learning and character development. Through the Socratic Method, students will learn to ask important questions, setting them on the path to understanding themselves and their world, and encouraging them to act ethically and responsibly.

Finally, we agree with Aristotle that one becomes good only by observing and practicing right behavior. MCA will instruct students in the classical virtues, in all grades and throughout the curriculum. At MCA, discipline, ethics, and personal responsibility will be modeled and expected. Students will be introduced to virtuous behavior of timeless heroes and heroines of literature and history. Moreover, the school will define a standard of behavior using Eight Pillars of Character (citizenship, cooperation, courage, honesty, integrity, perseverance, respect, responsibility) and four classical virtues (temperance, fortitude, justice, and prudence) which will

help students learn and develop virtuous behavior – or patterns of thought and conduct based on high moral standards.

MCA’s rigorous academic program and training in the virtues will be supported by a well-regulated campus that fosters positive student/parent/teacher relationships. Teachers and volunteers will receive extensive training before implementing curriculum or assisting in the classroom and teaching methods may be modified and differentiated to meet student needs. The success of every student will depend upon his or her consistent effort and perseverance, and each will receive the support of every staff member whose focus is academic achievement and a commitment to educational excellence.

The Founders of our country believed the purpose of education is to prepare students to become good people and good citizens. In alignment with that vision, MCA will provide students with a rigorous education in the classical liberal arts tradition that will prepare them to become excellent, highly literate individuals and active, responsible members of their community prepared to articulate and uphold our Nation’s founding principles.

***E. Explain how the services the school will provide to the target population will help them attain the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards, as required by section 1002.33, F.S.***

MCA’s educational philosophy and curricular approach will promote literacy and character excellence for all its students. The chosen curriculum focuses on the acquisition of specific skills and knowledge of certain disciplines following the Core Knowledge Sequence in grades K-8 and a classical, liberal arts model in the high school. When combined with the chosen supplemental programs and instruction in the virtues, these methodologies will provide students with the strong foundation of basic skills and character necessary for success. The curriculum uses sequencing and builds upon knowledge so students are prepared when the curriculum advances and becomes more complex. These components work well together and provide a comprehensive and organized approach to instruction that meets state standards and that can be modified to bring students of all learning abilities up to grade level. This combined Core Knowledge, classical liberal arts curriculum and its supplemental programs will enable all students to experience academic excellence supported by civic purpose.

The Core Knowledge curriculum is aligned with Florida Next Generation State Standards and benchmarks. The alignment was completed by the Core Knowledge Foundation and the Core Knowledge curriculum is fully compliant with Florida standards and benchmarks.

For the other portions of the curriculum, upon approval of the charter application, MCA will begin to review the Scope and Sequences of the Singapore Math Program and Riggs and align them to the Florida Next Generation Sunshine State Standards and Benchmarks. If gaps exist, supplemental curriculum will be developed to complete the alignment. This alignment will be completed by April 2014.

All required courses in high school will be aligned to Florida Standards and Benchmarks by April, 2014. An April deadline was chosen to make sure there is sufficient time to order necessary instructional materials, supplies, etc., and to plan for professional development to

familiarize and train staff to implement the curriculum in the various instructional areas. For the high school, course syllabi will be utilized to check off each standard and benchmark in the alignment.

***F. Provide evidence that the existing design has been effective and successful in raising student achievement.***

We are working closely with Hillsdale College and the Barney Charter School Initiative as well as using Ridgeview Classical School, a K-12 charter school in Fort Collins, Colorado as a model for our charter school. *US News and World Report* ranked Ridgeview Classical Schools' high school as 15th in the country, 4th U.S. charter school, and 4th open-enrollment high school in the nation. The magazine analyzed 21,069 public high schools in 48 states using data from the 2006-2007 school year. (Source: US News and World Report – America's Best High Schools) Since their opening in 2011, their students continue to examine life with both intellectual rigor and ethical goals.

Note: The relationship with Hillsdale College is further explained in Section 9 (K,L)

***G. Describe the applicant's capacity to replicate an existing school design.***

***The capacity to replicate can be demonstrated by providing credible and well-defined strategies for replication, including the financial and human resources necessary to replicate the design***

The Founders of MCA are working with Hillsdale College and their Barney Charter School Initiative Program. Members of our Founding group attended a classical school conference at Hillsdale College in June 2012 and will attend the conference annually. One of the members of the Initiative, Dr. Terrence Moore, was the principal of Ridgeview Classical School for seven years. MCA has access to them as often needed for help in implementing a classical charter and staying true to our mission. Founding members have access to Hillsdale's representatives for conference calls and consultation. Dr. Moore provided MCA with a curriculum outline and has given advice from his experience at Ridgeview. Prior to opening, Hillsdale College representatives will advise the founding board with drafting founding documents, designing and writing a curriculum, and help searching for candidates to be the Academy's principal. Because Hillsdale College has a great number of supporters in Southwest Florida who truly believe in their mission, MCA has great confidence in fundraising abilities.

## Section 4: Curriculum Plan

***A. Describe the school's curriculum in the core academic areas, illustrating how it will prepare students to achieve the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards. If the curriculum has not been developed, describe how the plan for curriculum development shows how students will be prepared to attain the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.***

The curriculum with its supplemental programs will address students' needs in all skill and content areas. The curriculum is comprehensive in both content and instructional delivery and will be aligned with Florida Standards. The curriculum and supplemental programs chosen have proven track records in being effective with all students of all abilities, socioeconomic levels and geographic factors (i.e.: urban vs. rural).

The Reading Program is keyed to all modalities and learning styles. Students who may have a tendency to struggle with learning to read would benefit from this program as it is modeled after other multi-sensory approach programs that teach students who have reading disabilities how to read. It is a pro-active program as it does not wait for students to "fail."

The Math Program is based on a conceptual approach with specific skill building over time. Skills are taught within a conceptual framework that leads to better understanding. The program requires practice, repetition and review of skills taught which results in the ability to retain what has been learned. The Math program provides assessments to determine at what level each student is performing, and students are placed in skill level groups. Students must demonstrate mastery of one level before they move to the next level.

The Core Knowledge Sequence is based upon prior knowledge, so that new learning is based upon a strong foundation of what was previously learned, which makes learning new information easier and more meaningful. Assessments and assessment guidelines are provided to determine what how much learning has been retained. The curriculum provides opportunities for students to review or relearn content as needed.

With the strategies and methods used in the delivery of instruction, and with the consistent review of student progress through the assessment tools described, students who are not "getting" it will be addressed on an individual basis to determine what supports or additional strategies/methods are needed. Instruction in the various programs of the curriculum can be modified, differentiated or scaffolded to better address each student's learning style (visual, auditory, or kinesthetic). Students will also be able to receive instruction in smaller group settings if needed. Teachers can receive additional support for using different strategies by working in teams, accessing support from teachers or support staff who serves students with special education needs and/or English language learners, and any other appropriate personnel. If more intense interventions are identified and do not result in adequate progress being made, students can be referred for an educational evaluation.

The MCA philosophy of education subscribes to the tried and true form of education underlying Western Civilization: all students — regardless of socio-economic background or academic competence — benefit from a rigorous, content-rich, educational program that develops academic potential and personal character. We believe students will achieve their best potential when

taught foundational skills and information and challenged by high expectations and meritorious standards. We also agree with Aristotle that one becomes virtuous only by practicing the virtues. We further trust that young people will recognize and emulate virtuous behavior when introduced to the timeless heroes and heroines of literature and history. Our philosophy of education aligns with that of America's Founders in that the object of education is "to instruct... our citizens in... their rights, interests and duties, as men and citizens" (Jefferson, August 1818).

With these convictions, MCA will provide students a rigorous classical, liberal arts education that includes a strong emphasis on civics to equip students to understand and uphold America's founding principles. Unique to our approach is the combining of the classical, liberal arts tradition with cutting-edge, researched-based programs, each of which involves an organized and sequential continuum of learning.

Children learn by building on what they already know. Thus it is important for them to begin building foundations of knowledge in the early grades. By specifying the knowledge that all children should share, one can achieve equal access to that knowledge. Thus all students, including those considered at-risk, are exposed to a coherent core of challenging, interesting, interwoven knowledge when taught a content-based curriculum such as the Core Knowledge Sequence for Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This foundation of knowledge is then enhanced through a challenging, content-rich curriculum in the high school. This emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge not only provides a foundation for learning, but also defines a common heritage and establishes a common ground for communication and cooperation in a diverse society, starting at the school itself.

The curriculum for Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be the Core Knowledge Sequence published by the Core Knowledge Foundation. The Sequence is distinguished by a planned progression of specific knowledge in world history and geography, American history and geography, mathematics, science, language arts, visual arts and music. The Core Knowledge Sequence will be supplemented with the Riggs Institute method — The Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking — Singapore Math and The Full Option Science System (FOSS).

Riggs is a multi-sensory, brain-based approach to teaching "explicit" phonics, reading, language arts, and composition. "Explicit" phonics is the direct teaching of a set of letter-sound relationships in a clearly defined sequence, including the major sound/spelling relationships of consonants and vowels, that scientific research proves is foundational for literacy - the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate, compute and use printed and written materials associated with varying contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve their goals, to develop their knowledge and potential, and to participate fully in their community and wider society.

(Source: *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*; National Institute for Literacy; Third Edition).

Singapore Math is a conceptual approach that focuses on the student's complete understanding of essential math skills. A daily math block will be scheduled for the purpose of ability-grouping students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

The Full Option Science System (FOSS) which employs Delta modules — available from Sandia National Laboratories — will be used as a supplement to provide a rigorous, hands-on approach to scientific inquiry. Science will be taught with an emphasis on scientific facts and the inquiry based method and will include the incorporation of technical approaches to observing, describing, recording, ordering, analyzing, testing and comparing predictions to observations.

See Appendix A for more details on Core Knowledge, Riggs, and Singapore Math.

The skills of learning, namely reading, writing, speaking, listening, calculating, problem solving, and exercising critical judgment, are best taught through the content of an organized body of knowledge. The development of literacy will be one of the primary aims and focuses of effort at MCA. This will include a great deal of reading from a variety of both fiction and non-fiction primary literature. In the early grades, students will receive explicit, systematic phonemic awareness and phonics instruction. Children will be provided deliberate, coherent, direct instruction in letter-sound correspondences. Students will be taught to write and speak through example and sensible practice. Grammar, logic, and real spelling learned from classical literature will be part of these skills.

There is substantial support for the idea that the earliest elementary school experiences are fundamental to the ultimate success of students in high school. Improving graduation rates, reducing dropout rates and increasing the rate at which graduates choose to enroll in higher education all rest on the foundation of effective schooling long before those children walk through the doors of the high school program. The opportunity to be challenged, supported and systematically guided toward graduation is part of the unique mission of this school and the key rationale for proposing an integrated K-12 solution. MCA's primary goal at the elementary and middle school level is to produce high school-ready students with solid literary and mathematical skills and true self-esteem based on mastery of subject content.

In the high school, MCA students will study the traditional liberal arts — language and literature, rhetoric, math, history and government, the sciences, music and art — in a coherent and orderly program. The high school curriculum will follow the example set by the Core Knowledge Sequence in that it will deliver specific content and skills, aligned with but exceeding the state and district model content standards, for all subject areas. The curriculum will be developed so that the content and skills to be taught in each course is clearly articulated; goals and priorities are delineated. Grades will be tied to precise benchmarks and tell exactly what students know and can do. The benchmarks will thus drive the assessments. Classroom activities will further learning of the specific content or skills articulated for that course. Students will know what is expected of them and what constitutes excellence by the use of grading and assessment rubrics.

The objective of the high school curriculum will be to explore issues and texts intensively and in depth. The focus for teaching literature will be the great books and the classics using the Socratic Method. History will be taught mainly through the use of primary source documents—artifacts, documents, recordings or other sources of information created at the time under study. In the high school, for example, teachers of American History will introduce students to historical works that contributed to the formation of American society and culture such as George Washington's *Farewell Address* and Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Letter from Birmingham Jail*.

Such primary sources will bring history to life and equip students with essential insight, and research and analytical skills. Students will learn a true account of the times through the eyes and words of those who experienced such events and helped shape history.

High school mathematics and the sciences will offer rigorous training in the fundamentals and theories of these disciplines. Students will receive extensive training in analytical thinking and the scientific method. High school students will take three years of science, beginning with the fundamentals of biology that will require Algebra as a prerequisite. Chemistry in the sophomore year will require a minimum of Algebra II; physics will be taken in the junior year. If a student requires an additional year to acquire the requisite mathematical skills, the sequence can be delayed by a year. Elective courses in mathematics and the sciences will be added in subsequent years as the school grows and as we better understand the needs of the student body. Textbooks will be used as a resource, not as the basis of the curriculum. Teaching in the Sciences will likely include student exposure to reports of original research, observations or ideas such as Galileo's *The Starry Messenger*, Sir Isaac Newton's *Principia* or Euclid's *Geometry*. Students in the high school will be given some flexibility in the sequence of their courses within each subject. If a student should show an ability to take courses sooner than outlined for a particular grade, the student must obtain approval from the teacher of the requested class. Detailed course offerings and curriculum will be evaluated and refined in an on-going effort to offer a curriculum that most effectively promotes student achievement.

Foreign languages will be an important part of MCA's curriculum. Both Latin and modern languages will be taught. Latin will be taught informally in grades K-6 and then offered in the middle and high schools. Learning Latin affords 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. Intensive study of the grammar of our languages will instruct students on how to order those words into clear sentences and basic units of thought, and move into more complex sentences expressing more complex thoughts. Further, the frequent occurrences of Latin in the English language (*per diem*, *quid pro quo*, *ante bellum*, e.g., i.e., *status quo*, *et cetera*) will be clearly understood by graduates of our program. Finally, students in the high school will be able to read ancient works written in Latin that are the foundation of our literary, historical, and political tradition.

Modern languages will be taught as electives in the high school. Studying modern languages will solidify students' knowledge of their own language, enable them to gain insight into different cultures, afford the opportunity of reading the rich literature of other nations, and prepare young people to communicate in a complex world and participate in the global economy. The language requirements of MCA will meet or exceed Florida state standards and be in line with college expectations.

Students at MCA will also receive instruction in the 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, MCA will teach music and art largely through an

intensive study of technique and through the works of the masters – Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Raphael, Michelangelo, and Monet.

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, the Renaissance, Impressionism, Post impressionism, and 20<sup>th</sup> century sculpture. They will be exposed to Islamic art and architecture, African art, Chinese Art, Japanese Art, and American\ artwork.

In music, students will be exposed to a wide array of music from jazz to orchestral music as well as vocal music that includes songs from the Baroque, Classical, and Romantic periods. They will learn about composers and their music, the elements of music, and vocal ranges.

In addition to placing an emphasis on rigorous mental training, MCA’s curriculum and school environment will be designed to promote and build strength of character in students. The teaching of the classical virtues will be interwoven with the Socratic Method throughout the curriculum and at every grade level. Students will be exposed to great stories of self-command and self-sacrifice found in literature and history and engage in polite classroom discussion about the moral virtues of the various heroes and heroines. For example, as children and youth read or listen from the classics, they will be trained to ask themselves challenging questions about the themes and characters — *Would I do that? Why did that happen? What would I do if...?*

Furthermore, such virtuous standards as represented in the Eight Pillars of Character — *citizenship, cooperation, courage, honesty, integrity, perseverance, respect, responsibility* — will be displayed on the walls of the school’s entryway and classrooms as the model of behavior and four classical virtues – *temperance, fortitude, justice, and prudence*— will be emphasized in the high school. MCA faculty will model and expect virtuous behavior, and students will be given opportunities to practice and develop these traits. Students will be expected to be attentive and polite, and to treat each other respectfully.

To be “classical” means to uphold a standard of excellence. MCA will provide an environment that fosters academic and character excellence through the establishment of a unified team approach of its faculty and volunteers. We will intentionally integrate three separate schools elementary, middle, and high — into a unified school on one campus. A “family” atmosphere of respect and cooperation will be promoted, and every individual will be recognized as a stakeholder.

We believe that through this defined Core Knowledge, classical, liberal arts curriculum, and a well regulated campus, students will receive a rigorous and complete education that will challenge them to excel both in learning and in character. Students will graduate MCA highly literate and excellent individuals, ready to become active and responsible members of their community.

***B. Describe the research base and foundation materials that were used or will be used to develop the curriculum.***

As did America’s Founders, MCA’s Founders believe that our free government depends on the wisdom and virtue of the people—on their capacity for self-government—and therefore,

education must equip young people with the knowledge and character required for self-government. MCA's educational philosophy and curricular approach were selected because we believe they produce an academic program that will accomplish that goal.

The content-based, Core Knowledge Sequence for Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade will expose students to a coherent core of challenging, interesting, interwoven knowledge that not only provides a foundation for learning, but also defines a common heritage and establishes a common ground for communication and cooperation in a diverse society, starting at the school itself. With our approach this foundation of knowledge will be enhanced through research based supplementary programs in reading, math, and science, and a challenging, content-rich classical, liberal arts curriculum in the high school to promote optimal learning.

The classical, liberal arts hold students to high academic standards and require students to recognize and practice virtuous behavior. Classical education has an impressive history of over 2500 years in preparing students to become literate, informed and responsible citizens.

The curricular approach we will use begins with the rudiments of basic literacy and math skills and continues to the higher orders of thought and expression in a coherent and orderly fashion. In addition, the curriculum includes a strong civics component that will equip students to understand, articulate, and practice the principles on which this country was built – principles such as liberty, equality, natural rights, the Rule of Law, Constitutionalism, and self-government.

MCA's Core Knowledge, classical, liberal arts curriculum, supplemented by Riggs, Singapore Math, FOSS, Latin, and including a strong emphasis on civics and classical virtues, will provide students a rigorous and comprehensive education that challenges them to excel both in learning and in character. This philosophy and curricular approach will lead to the highest standards of academic and character excellence—the virtues of self-government the American Founders knew our Nation depends on.

Below we detail the reasoning behind our selection of two key methodologies used in the elementary and middle school grades: Riggs' Writing & Spelling Road to Reading and Thinking and Singapore Math.

Riggs' *The Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking* is a research-based method teaching all students the “explicit” phonics, reading, and language arts they must learn to succeed. Scientific research demonstrates “explicit” phonics instruction benefits children in the following four ways.

Explicit phonics:

1. significantly improves kindergarten and first-grade children's word recognition and spelling,
2. significantly improves children's reading comprehension,
3. is effective for children from various social and economic levels, and
4. is particularly beneficial for children who are having difficulty learning to read and who are at risk for developing future reading problems. (Source: *Put Reading First: The*

Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read, National Institute for Literacy, Third Edition)

The Riggs time-tested method will provide both a strong foundation for students who demonstrate academic progress, and an effective remedial program for pre-existing academic problems we anticipate many of our students have. Riggs is a multi-sensory, brain-based approach that addresses virtually every student's learning style through four pathways to the brain: sight, sound, voice, and writing. Students **see** the symbol(s) and **hear** the teacher say the sound(s); they repeat or **say** the sound(s) and **write** the symbol(s) from dictated, oral instructions. Thus, the teacher teaches through each student's stronger learning modality (or modalities) while, simultaneously, remedying their weaker ones. This process accelerates the learning process, avoids discrimination against any student's individual learning style, and provides an optimal learning opportunity for each student.

Another key feature of the Riggs method is its use of appropriate sequencing. Riggs begins at the student's speech and oral comprehension levels; it allows students to build one skill upon another, always moving from the known to the unknown. Students are presented with a limited number of concepts — or information — in a given period of time. They then practice these concepts in a variety of ways until mastery is achieved.

Singapore Math — a program that presents mathematical skill building and problem solving from a conceptual viewpoint — saves instructional time by focusing on mastery of essential math skills, not on re-teaching skills which should have been mastered in prior grades. The program's detailed instruction, questions, problem solving, and visual and hands-on aids — such as blocks, cards and bar charts — ensure that students master the material. Ideally, students do not move on until they have thoroughly learned a topic. Singapore textbooks are designed to build a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts as opposed to just memorizing definitions and formulas. Singapore Math's placement tests facilitate ability-grouping for optimal student success. Mathematically competent students will be able to study in higher level classes that challenge their math strengths, while students who need more time to master skills and understand concepts will receive time and assistance at the skill level best-suited for their success. Singapore Math's student-friendly, straight-forward presentation of essential concepts enables students who lack adequate reading skills — such as English Language Learners — to readily acquire necessary math skills.

### **Support for a Classical Education**

Classical Education has a history of over 2500 years in the West, and was thriving at the time of our nation's founding. Classical Education:

- values knowledge for its own sake;
- upholds the standards of correctness, logic, beauty, and importance intrinsic to the liberal arts;
- demands moral virtue of its adherents; and
- prepares human beings to assume their places as responsible citizens in the political order.

Classical Education uses history as its organizing principle. For example, when students study Ancient Greece, they concurrently study Ancient Grecian art, music and literature. At the elementary level, students are well-prepared to flourish in a competitive world market as they study specific aspects of both American history and world history in every grade. As students progress through the curriculum, they are able to build from a broader to a deeper understanding of history, work with more sophisticated texts and develop a clearer concept of how ideas have unfolded over time.

Classical Education is based on the concept of the trivium, or “three roads,” which speaks to the structure of every subject and discipline. The trivium model describes three stages — grammar, logic, and rhetoric — which follow the developmental growth of children from their ability to memorize information to giving a name to everything in their world to becoming argumentative, looking at the big picture, and expressing thoughts and opinions. “Grammar,” the first stage, is defined as the foundation of a subject or the collection of its parts and the mechanics of how they work. In the past, elementary schools were referred to as “grammar” schools; they provided students a foundation in the “basics” such as orthography and prescriptive English grammar. The rationale for the grammar stage is there must be an understanding of the facts before students can move to the next stage. During the grammar stage, specific literacy skills such as explicit phonics, grammar, and rules of spelling are intensively taught. Science is based on an understanding of key concepts as well as learning to use the scientific method as a grammar for scientific thinking. Latin is introduced and taught alongside English so that students learn the structural underpinnings of our language which expands the student’s vocabulary and aids reading comprehension. Oratory skills are taught beginning in kindergarten.

The second stage, “logic,” is characterized as the understanding of the parts, their relationship to each other, and the organization of the parts into the whole. In subsequent years, students revisit the data they have learned and begin to develop analytical skills by connecting themes, ideas and causes. Students at this age want to look at the big picture; they want to know “why?” As they continue to learn facts, they have the intellectual capacity to question those facts. The primary pedagogical style in this stage is logic or dialectic. In this method of instruction answers are arrived at by the exchange of logical arguments. There is a focus on higher-level thinking and communication skills. This method takes students to the highest of thinking examination of pertinent primary source documents. Plato believed that given the opportunities to exchange ideas and logical arguments, knowledge would develop and grow. During this stage, and in the next stage known as “rhetoric,” students read great works in the American tradition to better learn about and understand the great ideas, texts and events of Western Civilization.

The last stage of the trivium, “rhetoric,” is the ability to apply the foundational knowledge and logical understanding of a subject, and to creatively solve problems and express opinions. Students learn to read with sophistication and judgment, to attend to details, and to track nuances in both style and argument. They learn to take their time and work carefully and conscientiously. By doing so, students develop habits of mind that are an essential life skill. They are prepared to analyze arguments, present new ideas, and learn to effectively express their ideas — both verbally and in writing — with the individuality and skill students need in college and beyond.

In the classical liberal arts model, every subject has its grammar, logic and rhetoric stages. In her book, *The Well-Trained Mind* (WW Norton, 2009, Tenth Anniversary Edition), Susan Wise Bauer states that classical education depends on training the mind in a three-part process. By spending the primary years of school learning and absorbing facts in a systematic way — developing essential literacy — the foundation for advanced study is formed. By mid-school, students can learn to think and exhibit critical thinking skills. In the high school years, students can learn to express themselves. Classical education is language-focused, and learning is accomplished through written and spoken words. Subjects are aligned so that the different disciplines speak to each other and students are able to make connections between them. The challenge of finding links between the various fields of study is accomplished by using history to organize learning. This begins with the ancients and progresses to the modern in history, science, literature, art and music. Classical Education is knowledge-centered. The mind is trained to collect and analyze information, and to draw conclusions based upon that information. Classical Education requires self-discipline and instills virtue, as it requires students to examine moral and ethical issues. Classical Education invites students to examine different civilizations that have existed in the past, thus gaining a more critical and historical perspective on their own.

An instructional component of a Classical Education is the teaching of Latin. MCA will informally teach Latin to its young students. Students in K-6 grade will be introduced to Latin roots, but they will not take Latin as a formal class. All students are required to learn Latin appropriate to their grade level.

### **Support for Teaching Latin**

Latin instruction is useful in teaching reading. Approximately 65% of all English words have Latin roots. Research shows that when children in underperforming urban public schools received instruction in Latin for a year, they perform five months to one year ahead of control groups in reading comprehension and vocabulary. The children who had Latin instruction also showed gains in math, history and geography. (Source: Internet: TIME in Partnership with CNN, The New Case for Latin, December 2, 2000). Latin is the “patriarch” of the European languages, and English is the “child.” By learning Latin, students will learn English and other languages and use English and other languages more easily. They will expand their knowledge of vocabulary and comprehension. They will be able to express themselves orally and in writing with greater clarity and depth.

### **Support for Emphasizing Civics**

Classical education has always been concerned with the political order. Looking back, Greek education was political – geared towards preparing the youth for citizenship. As did the leaders of the ancient republics, America’s Founding Fathers realized that a free government depends upon the wisdom and virtue of its citizens – their capacity for self-government. It was their hope that schools would prepare young people to preserve the constitutional republic they created. In 1776, the year of our Nation’s conception, George Mason in the Virginia Declaration of Rights said "No free government, nor the blessings of liberty, can be preserved to any people, but by...a frequent recurrence to fundamental principles." By fundamental principles Mr. Mason referred to the certain understanding about nature, rights, and government expressed in the

Declaration of Independence that is fundamental to the United State Constitution. Along with the other Founders, Mr. Mason knew that this nation could only be sustained by self-governing citizens who understood principles such as liberty, equality, natural rights, the Rule of Law, Constitutionalism, and self-government— and were devoted to upholding them.

In recent years political knowledge has declined. According to a 2008 study conducted by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI) American Civic Literacy Program, 2,508 Americans were surveyed to determine their knowledge of America’s founding principles and texts, core history, and enduring institutions. The results showed that over 70% of those surveyed failed a basic test of civic information. Less than half of the participants could name all three branches of government, and only half could articulate a basic description on a free-enterprise system. Thirty percent of elected officials do not know that “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness” are the inalienable rights referred to in the Declaration of Independence. (Source: [Americancivilliteracy.org /2008/summary](http://Americancivilliteracy.org/2008/summary))

Classical liberal arts educators contend that by providing a curriculum with a strong history and civics component, the decline in political knowledge can be reversed and this knowledge can be regained. In the classical, liberal arts model, primary source documents are used to teach history, with an emphasis on American history and America’s founding principles.

### **Support for Incorporating Primary Source Documents**

Primary source documents are documents that are created by first-hand testimony of witnesses or recorders who experienced the events that are being documented. These documents can be created at the time the event is occurring, but can also include autobiographies, memoirs and oral history recorded later. Examples of primary source documents that the school may use will include:

- Plato’s Republic – ancient Greece
- The Declaration of Independence – U.S. History
- Private letters between John and Abigail Adams – the workings of the American family
- Diary of Anne Frank – experiences of Jews in World War II
- National Security Data Archives – U.S. history – declassified documents

The use of primary sources exposes students to important historical concepts. First, students become aware that all written history reflects an author's interpretation of past events. Therefore, as students read a historical account, they can recognize its subjective nature. Second, through primary sources the students directly touch the lives of people in the past. Further, as students use primary sources, they develop important analytical skills. For many students history is seen as a series of facts, dates, and events usually packaged as a textbook. The use of primary sources can change this view. As students use primary sources they begin to view their textbook as only one historical interpretation and its author as an interpreter of evidence, not as a purveyor of truth. Primary sources force students to realize that any account of an event, no matter how impartially presented it appears to be, is essentially subjective. Primary sources fascinate students because they are real and they are personal; history is humanized through them. Using original sources, students touch the lives of the people about whom history is written. They participate in human

emotions and in the values and attitudes of the past. By reading a series of public opinion surveys from World War II, for example, students confront the language of the person interviewed and his or her fears about shortages, as well as the interviewer's reactions recorded after the interview.

These human expressions provide history with color and excitement and link students directly to its cast of characters. Interpreting historical sources helps students to analyze and evaluate contemporary sources—newspaper reports, television and radio programs, and advertising. By using primary sources, students learn to recognize how a point of view and bias affect evidence, what contradictions and other limitations exist within a given source, and to what extent sources are reliable. Essential among these skills is the ability to understand and make appropriate use of many sources of information. Development of these skills is important not only to historical research but also to a citizenship where people are able to evaluate the information needed to maintain a free society. Perhaps best of all, by using primary sources, students will participate in the process of history. They will discuss with teachers and classmates about the interpretation of the sources. They will challenge others' conclusions and seek out evidence to support their own. The classroom will come alive as students test and apply important analytical skills (History in the Raw. The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration. <http://www.archives.gov/education/history-inthe-raw.html>).

### **Support for Teaching the Virtues**

Character is more than a good form of behavior. The English word “character” is derived from the Greek *kharaktēr*, which means ‘engraved mark,’ and refers to the particular impress or stamp which distinguishes something as different from another. When we speak of excellence of qualities that make an individual the sort of ethically or morally admirable person he is.

While character is often spoken of in terms of traits, values, ethical or moral values, or moral principles, historically, specific strengths of character are known as “virtues,” and the term “virtue” indicates overall moral excellence. Aristotle defined virtue (*aretê*) as the excellence that makes anything an outstanding specimen of its kind. When applied to human beings, his account of virtue is displayed especially in the decent person (*epieikês*) who recognizes and chooses what is appropriate, and in the well-balanced person in whom all parts of the soul are in harmony with one another. For Aristotle, and the ancient Greeks, virtue was not something people could simply choose or not choose without implication. Virtue is indissolubly connected to human happiness. In fact, for Aristotle people find true happiness only when their souls are working in accord with virtue. The happy life is the good or “virtuous” life.

This understanding is not exclusive to the ancients. America’s most prominent founders also saw the inseparable connection between “virtue” and happiness. In his *First Inaugural Address*, George Washington said "There is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists... in nature an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness." Thomas Jefferson wrote in a letter that, "without virtue, happiness cannot be," and in a speech at the Virginia Ratifying convention, James Madison called the supposition “that any form of government will secure liberty or happiness without any virtue in the people” a “chimerical idea.” Like the classical thinkers, America’s founders knew that virtue is essential not only to individual happiness, but also to the public happiness and prosperity. They also understood that virtue or character is not innate.

The Charter for America's first state-supported university was written by Abraham Baldwin, a signer of the United States Constitution and member of ten of America's first Congresses. That charter states: "[the] public prosperity [of free governments] and even existence very much depends upon suitably forming the minds and morals of their Citizens ... It should therefore be among the first objects of those who wish well to the national prosperity ... early to place the youth under the forming hand of Society that by instruction they may be molded to the love of Virtue and good Order." - Charter of the University of Georgia, 1785. More directly, Thomas Jefferson wrote in a letter to John Adams, that the "No government can continue good but under the control of the people," therefore, "their minds are to be informed by education what is right and what wrong; to be encouraged in habits of virtue and to be deterred from those of vice."

As did the leaders of the ancient republics, America's Founders knew that the maintenance and prosperity of a free-republic—the security and happiness of a free people—depends upon the character or virtue of its citizens. They also understood that virtue or character is only "the result of habit and long training." Youth become virtuous only by learning, observing, and practicing the virtues. Therefore, instruction in the virtues is an essential part of education.

Classical Education encourages this training in the virtues and the attainment of good character. A classical curriculum asks students to work against their baser inclinations (laziness, or the desire to watch television, or play video games) in order to reach a goal — mastery of a subject and excellence in character. Through the decorum of the classrooms and halls, the reading of great works in literature and history, and the invitation to polite discussion about heroes and heroines, students analyze, grapple with and contemplate important moral and intellectual questions. They learn to evaluate situations with sound judgment, recognize good behavior, and make personal decisions that embody and emulate virtue. When teachers model excellence and have high expectations of students' behavior, students will rise to the occasion.

Plato believed that youth ought to be brought up in such a way that they would fall in love with virtue because it was conducive to a good and happy life. Aristotle's balanced person or whole human being is not a slave to pleasure, fear, or greed, nor one who struggles with desires and aversions, but—as a result of habit and long training in the virtues—sees the world as it really is and freely chooses what is truly desirable. Laying a strong foundation in virtue and character at an early age leads to students flourishing and to their enjoyment of a happy life.

### **Support for a Classical Liberal Arts Approach**

The classical liberal arts approach has many documented successes within a broad range of school settings — including inner city schools (Westside Preparatory School in Chicago) and more "suburban" schools (Ridgeview Classical School in Fort Collins, Colorado) — despite the academic disabilities and disadvantages of its students. Marva Collins, founder of Westside Preparatory School, created the school in 1975 in an inner-city Chicago area serving students considered "problem children." Her curriculum was based on classical literature and other materials that contained lofty ideas and abstract concepts. The purpose was to teach values that hold societies together, and to encourage students to think about interpretation and meaning, and to appreciate the nuances of language. They were encouraged to analyze and challenge what they

read and to express opinions. As an example, fourth graders read Plato's dialogue, *The Republic*, wherein Plato asks, "What is Justice?" The students were then asked to discuss the various meaning of justice according to their viewpoint or interpretation.

By the end of the first year, every child scored at least five grade levels higher than when they first entered the school. When compared to Chicago Public Schools, one article written about her school stated, "working with students having the worst of backgrounds, those who were working far below grade level, and even those who had been labeled as 'unteachable,' Marva was able overcome the obstacles. News of third grade students reading at ninth grade level, four-year-olds learning to read in only a few months, outstanding test scores, disappearance of behavioral problems, second-graders studying Shakespeare, and other incredible reports, astounded the public." (Source: Excerpts from *Ordinary Children, Extraordinary Teachers and Marva Collins' Way*)

According to Marva Collins, "Classical Education reminds us that every achievement of humankind is valuable, and every child's soul is damaged when we fail to demand that they achieve. Our young people respond with violence and anger when schools and teachers put labels on them: "Inferior," "born to fail," "inability to cope." Our children don't need tags, measures, inkblot tests. They are screaming for a curriculum that challenges their minds." (Source: Marva Collins Seminars 2009-2011)

In recognition of her work with children at the Westside Preparatory School, Marva Collins has received many awards, including the Jefferson Award for Benefiting the Disadvantaged, the Humanitarian Award and the National Humanities Medal from President Bush – 2004.

*US News and World Report* ranked Ridgeview Classical Schools' high school as 15th in the country, 4th U.S. charter school, and 4th open-enrollment high school in the nation. The magazine analyzed 21,069 public high schools in 48 states using data from the 2006-2007 school year. (Source: US News and World Report – America's Best High Schools) Now in their tenth year, their students continue to examine life with both intellectual rigor and ethical goals.

*The Chicago Tribune*, in an article published October 29, 2010, stated the following about the Decatur Classical School: "Certainly, there are exceptions to the low percentages of Chicago children performing at the advanced level. At CPS' Decatur Classical School, 95.3 percent of students scored in the "exceeds category" in reading — the highest in the state. In math, 97.1 percent of students exceeded, second only to Whitney Young Magnet High School in Chicago, where seventh- and eighth-graders take ISAT tests and 100 percent scored in the advanced level. PTA President Kristin Boeke-Greven, who has two children at Decatur, said its liberal arts curriculum includes Latin instruction starting in kindergarten. "I think there is a formula that Decatur has figured out, and it is students who like to learn, teachers who are really committed and parents who are involved," Boeke-Greven said.

### **Support for the Core Knowledge Sequence (K-8)**

As has been previously noted, Classical Education puts young minds to work — it leads young people to understand themselves and the world around them. Students do not learn in the

abstract; they must acquire foundational skills and gain knowledge in certain disciplines to participate fully and effectively in the human community. To this end, MCA has adopted the Core Knowledge Sequence for its K-8 curriculum. The Core Knowledge Curriculum was developed by E.D. Hirsch, Jr. In *The Making of Americans*, Hirsch revealed an intellectual kinship between himself and classical education. He joined the academic trivium to its moral, civic purpose. According to Hirsch, people must not only use the same language to communicate effectively and to understand complex ideas, they must possess a reservoir of common facts, ideas, and references known to all in the culture. Abraham Lincoln is an example of a leader who relied on cultural literacy to convey his ideas. He had little formal education, but read the works of Shakespeare, the fables of Aesop, Euclid's geometry, and the documents of the American Founders. He was able, like few in our history, to express himself forcefully and with the principles of freedom and human dignity in his historic Gettysburg Address. Hirsch stresses that "cultural literacy" is vital to comprehend the vast areas of human knowledge necessary for our political, economic, social and moral well-being.

In 1986, Hirsch founded Core Knowledge (CK) based upon his idea of "cultural literacy." The CK Sequence has evolved from the field testing and consensus building that began in 1990. CK is the result of research into the content and structure of the highest performing elementary school systems around the world. The Core Knowledge Sequence is a grade-by-grade guide of specific topics in history, geography, literature, visual art, music, language, science and mathematics. The basic goals of the CK curriculum are:

- to foster autonomous and knowledgeable citizens
- to give every student an equal chance
- to foster community

Core Knowledge philosophy holds that these goals are intertwined and dependent upon common knowledge, which enables people to communicate with fellow citizens. (Source: Core Knowledge Foundation. 1999. *The Core Knowledge Sequence*. Charlottesville, VA: Core Knowledge Foundation).

Core Knowledge is based on the premise that a grade-by-grade core curriculum of common learning builds a strong and sound education. The CK Sequence is based on the theory that what children can learn is dependent upon what they already know. Identification of the content and skills provides a coherent approach to building knowledge across all grade levels. By following the sequence, every child will learn the fundamentals of science, the basic principles of government, the important events of world history and American history, the essential elements of mathematics, the masterpieces of art and music from around the world, and stories and poems passed down from generation to generation. Knowledge, language and skills build cumulatively from year to year through CK's sequential, clear and specific grade-by-grade outline. Literacy is the goal, and students are provided a strong foundation in reading through the teaching of "explicit" phonics. Beginning in kindergarten, teachers read to their students from the best sources — classical literature. When students are able to read independently, their books are the classics. With this approach, teaching of the virtues is intentional and intertwined with discussions of the classics.

In *A Nation at Risk: 25 Years Later*, published in 2008, E.D. Hirsch, Jr. refers to the severe decline in verbal and math scores, and the lack of coherent curriculum in grades K-8 — grades that lay the foundation so necessary for high school success. Students must be well-prepared in the elementary grades in order to thrive in the higher grades. Toward that end, Core Knowledge defines the knowledge and skills required for each successive grade level, and help to prevent the academic repetition and gaps very evident in schools today.

The time-tested benefits of Core Knowledge are:

- For students — the broad base of knowledge and vocabulary vital for higher levels of learning is provided. CK motivates students to learn and creates confidence.
- For the school — an academic focus and a consistency in instruction are promoted through the coherent, sequenced grade-by-grade curriculum. The CK Sequence promotes greater collaboration and communication around lesson planning, and CK guides staff toward more efficient use of resources. A community of adults and children is promoted through a common thread of instruction and learning.
- For parents — a clear outline of what their children are expected to learn in school at each specific grade level is provided. This encourages greater parent involvement both in school and at home. (Source: 2008 The Core Knowledge Foundation).

The Baltimore Curriculum Project (BCP), founded in 1996, demonstrates that high standards — plus the implementation of Core Knowledge — are effective in boosting test scores in reading. BCP put together an effective, efficient unified curriculum, with detailed lessons that incorporated high standards, and made those available to interested Baltimore Schools. The Core Knowledge curriculum was chosen as an essential part of the project. Direct Instruction was used to supplement the elementary reading, writing and mathematics program. In 1996, and again in 2002, BCP took over operations of three schools under Baltimore City's New Schools Initiative. In 2005, BCP converted these schools into charter schools. Students in all three schools demonstrated an increase in reading proficiency, as determined by comparing State Reading Test Proficiency before BCP intervention and after intervention. Reading proficiency — indicated by the number of proficient students at the three schools — increased by 47.6%, 33.9%, and 49.5%. (Source: The Baltimore Curriculum Project, Inc.).

### **Support for the Riggs Reading Program**

Beginning in kindergarten, the K-8 Core Knowledge Sequence at MCA will be supplemented with the Riggs Reading Program (Riggs) — *The Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking* — a multi-sensory and brain-based approach to teaching explicit phonics, reading, language arts, and composition. The Riggs method began with Dr. Samuel Orton, a neuroscientist who researched the functioning of the human brain in learning language skills. He collaborated with teachers to combine his multi-sensory techniques with classical and Socratic instructional approaches to teaching. Riggs is an “explicit” phonics approach as defined and recommended in a Federal Compilation of Reading Research: *Becoming a Nation of Readers, 1985*. Riggs incorporates phonics-based spelling with a rules system dating from the Webster-Oxford

standardization of English spelling, and also provides phonemic/graphemic correspondences from contemporary dictionaries, enabling students to learn correct spelling as well as regional dialects and pronunciations across the English-speaking world.

Riggs is far more than a phonics program. For reading, Riggs students also learn syllabication, oral vocabulary, and comprehension. For composition, students learn spelling, cursive writing, creative writing, spacing, margins, listening skills, orthography rules, vocabulary, grammar, syntax, punctuation, and capitalization. Riggs uses direct and Socratic instructional techniques to augment the instruction to integrate grammar and syntax, creative and organizational composition skills and vocabulary development. Riggs uses a complete and comprehensive method to teach language arts skills — roots, prefixes, suffixes, homophones and homographs, antonyms, synonyms and graphic organizers. They recommend vocabulary-rich literature, such as the classics, and are proponents of high expectations. (Source: The Riggs Institute)

Riggs’ brain-based approach and multi-sensory instruction addresses all learning styles. It has been used with success in classical charter schools (such as Ridgeview Classical Schools in Fort Collins, Colorado), in inner city schools, and with students of varied ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Riggs complies with the research-based requirements in “No Child Left Behind” as it teaches strands in the following areas:

- Explicit Phonics with dictated Initial Letter Formation
- The Alphabetic Principle
- Phonemic and Graphemic Awareness
- Correct Spelling w/47 Rules
- Fluent Oral and Silent Reading
- Oral and Print Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Pronunciation and Speech
- Creative and Organizational Composition
- Grammar/Syntax/Punctuation/Capitalization
- Analytical and Inferential Thinking
- Auditory/Visual/Verbal/Motor Cognitive Development in: Attention, Discrimination, Association, Memory

### **Support on the Singapore Math Method (K-8)**

For grades K-8, math will be taught using the Standards edition of Singapore Math. Singapore is the world leader in mathematics achievement, according to a study conducted by the American Institutes for Research and funded by the U.S. Department of Education (What the United States Can Learn From Singapore’s World-Class Mathematics System). Singapore students ranked first, while US students ranked 16<sup>th</sup> (see Tables 1 and 2 below). (Source: April 24, 2011 American Institutes for Research)

Singapore Math was developed in 1981 by the Curriculum Planning and Development Institute of Singapore. Educators in the United States began implementing Singapore Math in 2000. The program has been revised to include the following three initiatives:

- National Education to develop citizenship and values
- Information Technology, and
- Critical and Creative Thinking Skills

These initiatives were added to a Primary Mathematics Series that consists of skill building and problem solving from a conceptual viewpoint. Topics are taught to a mastery level with detail and consistency. Singapore textbooks are designed to build a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts as opposed to just definitions and formulas.

The Singapore Primary Mathematics series is time-tested and has a documented history of success. Studies were conducted in 1995, 1999 and 2003 by the International Association for Evaluation of Educational Achievement (Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study), which conducts studies to measure math and science achievement in four-year cycles. Results of these studies showed that Singapore's 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students scored the highest in all three years the study was administered.

**Table 1: Average Achievement of Grade 4 Students**

| Country               | Average |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Singapore             | 594     |
| Hong Kong             | 575     |
| Japan                 | 565     |
| Chinese Taipei        | 564     |
| Belgium               | 551     |
| Netherlands           | 540     |
| Latvia                | 536     |
| Lithuania             | 534     |
| Russian Federation    | 532     |
| England               | 531     |
| Hungary               | 529     |
| United States         | 518     |
| Cyprus                | 510     |
| Moldova, Rep. of      | 504     |
| Italy                 | 503     |
| Australia             | 499     |
| International Average | 495     |
| New Zealand           | 493     |
| Scotland              | 490     |
| Slovenia              | 479     |
| Armenia               | 456     |
| Norway                | 451     |
| Iran, Islamic Rep. of | 389     |
| Philippines           | 358     |
| Morocco               | 347     |
| Tunisia               | 339     |

(Source: ©2004 Int'l Assoc. for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) TIMSS 2003 Int'l Mathematics Report/by Ina V.S. Mullis, Michael O.Martin, Eugenio J. Gonzalez, Steven J. Chrostowski. Pub.: TIMSS & PIRLS Int'l Study Center, Lynch School of Education, Boston College)

**Table 2:**  
**Average Achievement of Grade 8 Students**

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| Singapore            | 605        |
| Korea                | 589        |
| Hong Kong            | 586        |
| Chinese Taipei       | 585        |
| Japan                | 570        |
| Belgium              | 537        |
| Netherlands          | 536        |
| Estonia              | 531        |
| Hungary              | 529        |
| Malaysia             | 508        |
| Latvia               | 508        |
| Russian Federation   | 508        |
| Slovak Republic      | 508        |
| Australia            | 505        |
| <b>United States</b> | <b>506</b> |
| Lithuania            | 502        |
| Sweden               | 499        |
| Scotland             | 498        |
| England              | 498        |
| Israel               | 496        |
| New Zealand          | 494        |
| Slovenia             | 493        |
| Italy                | 484        |

|                       |     |
|-----------------------|-----|
| Armenia               | 478 |
| Serbia                | 477 |
| Bulgaria              | 476 |
| Romania               | 475 |
| International Average | 467 |
| Norway                | 461 |
| Moldova, Rep. of      | 460 |
| Cyprus                | 459 |
| Macedonia             | 435 |
| Lebanon               | 433 |
| Jordan                | 424 |
| Iran, Islamic Rep. of | 411 |
| Indonesia             | 411 |
| Tunisia               | 410 |
| Egypt                 | 406 |
| Bahrain               | 401 |
| Palestinian Nat'l     | 390 |
| Chile                 | 387 |
| Morocco               | 387 |
| Philippines           | 378 |
| Botswana              | 366 |
| Saudi Arabia          | 332 |
| South Africa          | 264 |

## **Average Achievement of Grade 8 Students**

Professional development accompanies Singapore programs so teachers are better prepared to facilitate lessons. Singapore Math has a consistent emphasis on problem solving and model drawing, with a focus on in-depth understanding of the essential math skills recommended in the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Curriculum Focal Points, the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, and the proposed Common Core State Standards. (Source: Internet- Singapore Math Method)

Singapore Math recognizes that all children learn differently. English Language Learners benefit from the program's clear and simple explanations of math concepts, which are often just a few words in a cartoon balloon. (Source: John Hoven and Barry Garelick, "Singapore Math: Simple or Complex?" Educational Leadership 65:3, November 2007)

Singapore Math presents fewer topics and provides more time to thoroughly learn those topics. The program's detailed instruction, questions, problem solving, and visual and hands-on aids — such as blocks, cards and bar charts — ensure that students master the material. Ideally, students do not move on until they have thoroughly learned a topic. Educators say that slowing down the learning process gives students a solid math foundation upon which to build increasingly complex skills. (Source: Internet- Singapore Math Adopted in More US Schools- The New York Times Sept. 30, 2010)

Not only do students learn math concepts thoroughly, they also master essential math skills more quickly using Singapore Math. It has been reported that by the end of sixth grade, students have mastered multiplication and division of fractions, and are comfortable doing difficult multi-step word problems, ensuring they are well prepared to complete Algebra 1 in middle school. (Source: John Hoven and Barry Garelick, "Singapore Math: Simple or Complex?" Educational Leadership 65:3, November 2007)

## **Support for Full Option Science System (FOSS)**

There are a number of features that distinguish the FOSS program. These include:

- **Research-based and nationally field-tested** FOSS was developed through a rich collaboration of scientists, educational researchers, curriculum developers, assessment specialists, teachers, administrators, community members, and parents. FOSS combines proven teaching strategies with field-tested materials to promote scientific literacy and student achievement.
- **Classroom-tested** FOSS is the result of academic research on learning interwoven with practical experiences in classrooms. FOSS helps all educators teach and manage inquiry-based science. The carefully designed instructional sequences and thoroughly tested equipment provide support for teachers with different experience levels in science.
- **Students learn science by doing science** FOSS engages students in inquiry. Students construct an understanding of science concepts through their own investigations and

analyses, using laboratory equipment, student readings, and interactive technology. Students exercise logical thinking and decision-making skills appropriate to their age level.

- **Integrated reading, writing, and mathematics** FOSS helps develop basic skills within the context of learning science through student readings, science journals, student projects, and the use of mathematics to quantify and communicate results of investigations and experiments.
- **Assessment system** The FOSS assessment system uses a number of formative and summative strategies to help teachers and students monitor their progress and measure their ability to apply the concepts they have learned. The system includes teacher observations, student sheets, response sheets, student self-assessments, and end-of-module and summative exams. The FOSS assessment system is an ongoing research project at Lawrence Hall of Science.
- **Interactive technology** FOSS developers, working with a multimedia design team, have developed a series of interactive activities on CD-ROM and on-line for use by students K–8 at home and at school. The interactive technology is an essential component of the middle school courses.

### **FOSS set out to achieve three important goals.**

1. **Scientific Literacy** Provide all students with science experiences that
  - are appropriate to their stages of cognitive development.
  - serve as a foundation for more advanced ideas that prepare them for life in an increasingly complex scientific and technological world.

Because the quality of life will be significantly influenced by science and technology in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is important for all citizens to be scientifically literate throughout their life. They should be able to make thoughtful, informed decisions appropriate to their age and experience.

2. **Instructional Efficiency**

Provide all teachers with a complete, flexible, easy-to-use science program that

- reflects current research on learning, including collaborative learning, student discourse, and embedded assessment.
- uses effective instructional methodologies, including hands-on active learning, inquiry, integration of disciplines and content areas, and multisensory methods.

Hands-on science is intrinsically fun and interesting for students. And most teachers can be superb science teachers when they are provided with effective instructional materials. FOSS is designed to make hands-on science engaging for teachers as well as students.

3. **Systemic Reform** FOSS continues to respond to the needs of systems moving away from passive exposure to scientific concepts toward real experiences for students that reflect the vision of the National Science Education Standards. The hands-on experience with relevant experimental modules and bolstering stories provides systemic reform to the teaching of science.

***C. Describe the school's reading curriculum. Provide evidence that reading is a primary focus of the school and that there is a curriculum and set of strategies for students who are reading at grade level or higher and a separate curriculum and strategy for students reading below grade level.***

Riggs' *The Writing & Spelling Road to Reading & Thinking* is a research-based method teaching all students the "explicit" phonics, reading, and language arts they must learn to succeed. Scientific research demonstrates "explicit" phonics instruction benefits children in the following four ways.

Explicit phonics:

1. Significantly improves kindergarten and first-grade children's word recognition and spelling,
2. significantly improves children's reading comprehension,
3. is effective for children from various social and economic levels, and
4. is particularly beneficial for children who are having difficulty learning to read and who are at risk for developing future reading problems. (Source: *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*, National Institute for Literacy, Third Edition)

The Riggs time-tested method will provide both a strong foundation for students who demonstrate academic progress, and an effective remedial program for pre-existing academic problems we anticipate many of our students have. Riggs is a multi-sensory, brain-based approach that addresses virtually every student's learning style through four pathways to the brain: sight, sound, voice, and writing. Students **see** the symbol(s) and **hear** the teacher say the sound(s); they repeat or **say** the sound(s) and **write** the symbol(s) from dictated, oral instructions. Thus, the teacher teaches through each student's stronger learning modality (or modalities) while, simultaneously, remedying their weaker ones. This process accelerates the learning process, avoids discrimination against any student's individual learning style, and provides an optimal learning opportunity for each student.

Riggs incorporates phonics-based spelling with a rules system dating from the Webster-Oxford standardization of English spelling, and also provides phonemic/graphemic correspondences from contemporary dictionaries, enabling students to learn correct spelling as well as regional dialects and pronunciations across the English-speaking world. For reading, Riggs students also learn syllabication, oral vocabulary, and comprehension. For composition, students learn spelling, cursive writing, creative writing, spacing, margins, listening skills, orthography rules, vocabulary, grammar, syntax, punctuation, and capitalization. Riggs uses direct and Socratic instructional

techniques to augment the instruction to integrate grammar and syntax, creative and organizational composition skills and vocabulary development. Riggs also uses a complete and comprehensive method to teach language arts skills — roots, prefixes, suffixes, homophones and homographs, antonyms, synonyms and graphic organizers.

***D. Explain how exceptional students and students who enter the school below grade level will be engaged in and benefit from the curriculum.***

Riggs is a multi-sensory program that assesses where students are functioning, and offers highly targeted instruction. It has been used in the past to both prevent and correct learning disorders. It was patterned after the Orton-Gillingham model of reading instruction for students who are dyslexic. Skills are presented in a specific order with opportunities for repetition. Students are assessed continually to determine mastery of skills.

Another key feature of the Riggs method is its use of appropriate sequencing. Riggs begins at the student's speech and oral comprehension levels; it allows students to build one skill upon another, always moving from the known to the unknown. Students are presented with a limited number of concepts — or information — in a given period of time. They then practice these concepts in a variety of ways until mastery is achieved. This method will serve ELL students as well as students with special needs across the spectrum.

***E. Describe proposed curriculum areas to be included other than the core academic areas.***

**Latin and Foreign Language:** The classical school will begin informal Latin in the elementary school. In the middle and high school, the teaching of will extend beyond the teaching of Latin and Greek roots and require instruction in Latin grammar and Latin-English, English-Latin translation by a trained Latinist.

The teaching of Latin is an integral part of the classical school's rigorous literacy curriculum. Latin provides insight into the meaning of over half of English words. Its complex grammar enables students to gain a critical knowledge of English sentence structure. Latin offers a bridge to learning other languages. And knowledge of Latin allows one to achieve the heights of English literacy since so many Latin phrases still find currency in modern speech: e.g. (*exempli gratia*), *ex post facto*, *ex officio*, *id est* (i.e.), *ex nihilo*, *ibid.* (*ibidem*), *gravitas*, *E pluribus unum*, A.D. (*Anno Domini*), *homo sapiens*, et cetera. So hold the *post mortem*! Latin is far from a dead language.

Students will be required to take at least one more semester of Latin in the high school, or a full year if the student has not been in the middle school. Normally, the course will be taken in the first year of high school.

For students coming out of the classical school's middle school, the normal pattern will be to take an advanced Latin course with the goal of getting to the level of translating original Latin. Still, there will be a need for a comprehensive review of Latin grammar. In the high school, this review will be achieved through the reading of a more demanding Latin textbook than the one used in the middle school, most likely Wheelock.

The goal of the Latin curriculum is, in part, to have students able to read at least some Virgil in the original as they are reading the *Aeneid* in translation in the freshman classical literature course.

For college entrance, it is advisable that students take three years of a foreign language. Students may decide to continue in Latin beyond the semester or year requirement for graduation. Or they may study other foreign languages MCA provides.

Spanish will be taught beginning in the elementary grades and will be taught predominantly by the immersion method. That is, much of the course will be conducted in the language as taught by a native or near-native speaker. The general practice of hiring supposed foreign language teachers who do not have themselves genuine fluency and turning the course into mostly “culture days” where little in the way of the language is spoken will be avoided at all costs.

### **Fine Arts:**

In the elementary and middle schools, music and art are an integral part of the core curriculum. In high school, students will continue to study and perform in the arts. Music courses will include choir, band, and orchestra (once the budget allows). Art will include drawing and painting and art history.

As in the K-8 curriculum, effort will be made to teach students how the arts are, on the one hand, a reflection of the philosophy and ethos of a given age and, on the other, a striving of human beings to reach the realm of the beautiful, and thus providing transcendent and timeless lessons to human beings. Therefore, while technique and composition in either music performance or painting and sculpture are important matters to study, students should explore the overall theme and meaning of any work of art or music. For example, what does the Sistine Chapel Ceiling tell us not only about Michelangelo’s or Renaissance technique but also about the nature of man qua man? What insight do we gain about the human spirit from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony?

### ***F. Describe how the effectiveness of the curriculum will be evaluated.***

The effectiveness of the curriculum will be evaluated by whether or not the students are making adequate annual learning gains as measured by end-of-the-year course exams required by the State of Florida and the Department of Education. FCAT scores will also determine the effectiveness of the classical curriculum. MCA will meet or exceed the annual measurable achievement objectives from the No Child Left Behind Act.

## Section 5: Student Performance, Assessment and Evaluation

***A. State the school's educational goals and objectives for improving student achievement. Indicate how much academic improvement students are expected to show each year, how student progress and performance will be evaluated, and the specific results to be attained.***

Student academic performance is central to a school's existence. Student performance expectations must be aligned with the mission and the educational plan. The student performance expectations will:

**Provide student-centered goals that are SMART:**

- Specific;
- Measurable;
- Ambitious and Attainable;
- Reflective of the school's mission;
- Time-Specific with Target Dates

Educational goals and objectives:

- By the end of Year 3, 100% of students in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade will score a Level 2 or higher on the FCAT 2.0 Reading test.
- By the end of Year 5, 100% of students in grade 10 will score a level 3 or higher on the FCAT 2.0 Reading test.
- By the end of Year 3, students in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 90% of students will obtain a score at or above a Proficient Score on the NAEP Civics Question Tool.
- A graduation rate of 95% or higher beginning in Year 4.
- At the completion of year 6, 90% of our students who apply to post-secondary institutions will be accepted.
- To measure successful training in the virtues - beginning year 1, 98% of the students who receive referrals to the office for behavioral infractions identified in the MCA Student Handbook will decrease the number of referrals by 5% each year.

***B. Describe the school's student placement procedures and promotion standards.***

To determine placement of the students, we will initially exam data from the Data Warehouse which includes standardized test scores. Teachers and parent interviews may also play a role in placement. The summative and formative tests outlined below will also serve as a means for placement and promotion.

Singapore Math's placement tests facilitate ability-grouping for optimal student success. Mathematically competent students will be able to study in higher level classes that challenge their math strengths, while students who need more time to master skills and understand concepts will receive time and assistance at the skill level best-suited for their success. Singapore Math's student-friendly, straight-forward presentation of essential concepts enables students who lack

adequate reading skills — such as English Language Learners — to readily acquire necessary math skills.

Singapore Math assessments will be used as placement tests and as a means to demonstrate mastery of the material taught at each level. If a student masters 80% or more of the content, they can move up a level. If not, they can begin instruction at that level, or repeat it. The placement tests can also be used as an exit test for each respective level.

**C. If the school will serve high school students, describe the school's graduation requirements, to include the methods used to determine if a student has satisfied the requirements specified in section 1003.43, F.S., and any proposed additional requirements.**

The guidance counselor will be responsible for ensuring graduation requirements are met for each student (see Counselor under Job Descriptions in Section 10A).

Because graduation requirements change regularly, MCA will revisit the graduation requirements for the 2014-2015 school year. According to FS 1003.43, the graduation requirements are as follows:

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

**TOTAL CREDITS REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION:  
CLASS OF 2015: 24 CREDITS  
16 REQUIRED CREDITS AND 8 ELECTIVE CREDITS**

**GENERAL SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS:**

**ENGLISH: 4 CREDITS**

**MATHEMATICS: 4 CREDITS**

**SCIENCE (LABORATORY): 3 CREDITS**

**SOCIAL STUDIES: 3 CREDITS**

**UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ½CR**

**ECONOMICS ½ CR**

**HOPE (HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES IN  
PHYSICAL EDUCATION): 1 CREDIT**

**FINE/PERFORMING/PRACTICAL ARTS:  
INSTRUMENTAL/VOCAL MUSIC,  
1 CREDIT**

**SPECIFIC COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

**ENGLISH I, II, III, IV or EQUIVALENT**

**INCLUDING ALGEBRA I, GEOMETRY,  
OR A HIGHER LEVEL COURSE**

**INCLUDING BIOLOGY OR  
EQUILIVANT**

**UNITED STATES HISTORY  
WORLD HISTORY**

**DRAMA, ART, CERTAIN PRACTICAL  
ARTS CLASSES**

### STUDENTS WILL ALSO BE REQUIRED TO:

1. ACHIEVE A PROFICIENT SCORE ON READING FCAT 2.0 – LEVEL 3 OR HIGHER OR STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES THAT ARE CONCORDANT.
2. TAKE THE 10TH GRADE FCAT WRITING
3. PASS THE ALGEBRA 1 END OF COURSE EXAM (EOC) – LEVEL 3
4. MUST PASS GEOMETRY AND BIOLOGY AND TAKE END OF COURSE EXAM (EOC) WHICH COUNTS 30% OF COURSE GRADE.
5. FOR 9TH GRADE STUDENTS ENTERING IN THE 2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR COMPLETE AT LEAST ONE (1) ONLINE COURSE WITHIN THE 24 REQUIREMENT FOR HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION.
6. HAVE AN UNWEIGHTED CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE OF 2.0 ON A 4.0 SCALE, BASED ON ALL COURSES APPLIED TOWARD MEETING GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS.

### **MCA Additional Requirements:**

**Latin:** Students will be required to take at least one more semester of Latin in the high school, or a full year if the student has not been in the middle school. Normally, the course will be taken in the first year of high school.

**A Senior Thesis**— an in-depth inquiry into a question or topic that represents the culmination of the student’s academic experience at MCA. The process of researching and completing the thesis hones students’ ability to conduct research, to analyze and synthesize information, and to communicate effectively about what they have learned. These methods will help provide students a rigorous and complete education that will challenge them to excel both in learning and in character. Students will learn explicit phonics, reading, English, spelling, composition, math, history, geography, science, music, art, and rhetoric—through time-proven methods, and will be held to high standards of discipline, ethics, and personal responsibility. Equipped with knowledge of necessary skills and content, a true perception of history, and strong character, MCA students will be prepared to assume their role as self-governing citizens. Students will graduate highly literate and excellent individuals, prepared to uphold our nation’s founding principles and become active and responsible members of their community.

***D. Describe how baseline achievement data will be established, collected, and used. Describe the methods used to identify the educational strengths and needs of students and how these baseline rates will be compared to the academic progress of the same students attending the charter school.***

For FY15 MCA will need to gather information from students’ previous schools as baseline data for 1-6. By the end of FY15, MCA will have its own baseline data through the various test scores mentioned in Section 5A. During FY16 MCA will establish baseline data for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This may mean gathering data from students’ previous schools if they are new to MCA. In FY17 MCA will establish baseline data for 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade or gather information from new students to MCA and in FY18, it will establish baseline data for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade. As an ongoing practice, data from both Summative and Formative Assessments (formal and informal) will be

collected and analyzed monthly to determine if students are making the expected progress. This data will determine the strengths and weaknesses of the students. The baseline data will be used to show whether or not MCA is making appropriate gains year to year.

***E. Identify the types and frequency of assessments that the school will use to measure and monitor student performance.***

**Summative Assessments** will be used to sum up how well the student has performed over time. They include:

- The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT 2.0) will be used to measure student progress in reading for grades 3-10, math for grades 3-8 and science for 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This exam is given in the spring by a specified date (FS. 1008.22).
- Algebra 1 End-of-Course exam (EOC) as a minimum of 30% of student's course grade in Algebra 1 and Algebra 1 Honors.
- Students who earned high school credit for Algebra 1 or Algebra 1 Honors in middle school must take the Algebra 1 End-of-Course exam if they have not had Grade 10 FCAT 2.0 Mathematics.
- Biology 1 End-of-Course exam (EOC).
- Geometry End-of-course exam (EOC).
- Plans are underway to implement a new EOC assessment for U.S. History and a new middle school civics course. MCA will revisit this during the 2013-2014 planning phase to ensure all requirements are met.
- For grades 4, 8 and 12 – the National Association for Educational Progress NAEP Question Tool. This program has test questions that are used to assess progress in the area of Civics Education. (Source: NAPE – Internet <http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/itmrls>)

**Formative Assessments** will be used to monitor student progress. They include:

- The NWEA – MAP which is administered three times per year: The NWEA will be used as a short-cycle assessment. It will be administered in August, December and May, and will show the expected progress that students should make throughout the school year (expected progress determined by assessment authors). We expect that our students will begin to demonstrate progress by December of the same year in which the NWEA was administered.
- DRA (Diagnostic Reading Assessments) for students grades K-3
- Dibels (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) – for kindergarten students
- Teacher-developed pre- and post-assessments
- Teacher-developed rubrics
- The Core Knowledge Sequence Assessments: Assessments include the Core Knowledge Curriculum-Referenced Tests, published by Questar Assessment, that are available for grades 1 through 5. These comprehensive, end-of-year exams reflect the specific subject matter outlined in the Core Knowledge Sequence, and offer teachers a way to assess how well their students are learning and retaining the material they teach. Each grade-level test

has four sections, covering mathematics, language arts, history and geography, and science.

- The Riggs assessment that is given daily after each lesson.
- Singapore Math assessments will be used as placement tests and as a means to demonstrate mastery of the material taught at each level. If a student masters 80% or more of the content, they can move up a level. If not, they can begin instruction at that level, or repeat it. The placement tests can also be used as an exit test for each respective level.

***F. Describe how student assessment and performance data will be used to evaluate and inform instruction.***

As an ongoing practice, data from both Summative and Formative Assessments (formal and informal) will be collected and analyzed monthly to determine if students are making the expected progress. The data collected will be used to determine appropriate placement in skill groups for math in addition to evaluating student strengths, challenges, and weaknesses in the core content areas. The data from all assessments will be disaggregated to show a trend analysis for not only each student, but for all students. Statistical methods will be used, when applicable to streamline the data collection and analysis processes. MCA will use the result of the data to drive instruction. Adjustments will be made to the curriculum, instructional delivery and any other areas necessary to improve student achievement.

The Founders at MCA believe in the importance of assessments but understand student learning and how teachers teach is central rather than merely focusing on raising test scores and school grades. Assessment should not always happen at the end of a lesson or unit but rather in the middle. This ensures teachers have an opportunity to evaluate and inform instruction. Students also play a role in assessment as they assess themselves through reflection of their own individual work and how they can improve and build on prior knowledge.

***G. Describe how student assessment and performance information will be shared with students and with parents.***

MCA teachers will learn how to give effective feedback to students and parents. The best feedback is highly specific, directly revealing or highly descriptive of what actually resulted, clear to the performer, and available or offered in terms of specific targets and standards. Quality feedback is not praise or blame but purely descriptive.

Students will maintain Student Data Folders that will include the results of assessments that are graphed to show their progress throughout the year in each subject area. These Data Folders will be reviewed consistently by the teachers and students, and reviewed with the parents at each parent-teacher-student conference. Conferences will happen two times per year unless more are requested. These conferences will be scheduled in advance and happen during the fall midterm and spring midterm. Students will receive report cards quarterly and Performance Reports (see below) in the middle of each quarter.

**Performance Reports:** Instead of giving a single letter grade, the teacher will analyze students' academic achievements through three kinds of data: level of achievement, quality of work, and

progress against standards. Achievement levels refer to achievement against exit-level standards of performance sophistication (basic, proficient and advanced can be used). Work quality refers to the caliber of the products produced at any level. Progress refers to absolute gains toward exit standards (not to be confused with growth, which is measured as change in the individual). These reports will be used during parent-teacher-student conferences.

Parents will also have access to “Teacher-Ease,” an online grade book program where they can monitor their students’ progress.

#### Initial Evaluation:

At the beginning of every academic year an initial evaluation of all students will be sent out to parents. This evaluation will take place after the students have been in school for three weeks. A brief report will be sent home to the parents identifying their student’s academic progress and any deficiency the student may have. In addition, their character and work ethic will be addressed. This evaluation will be mailed to the parents. This will be used to notify parents how their students are performing and whether any deficiencies or performance in the classroom needs to be addressed. Communication with parents is essential, so they are aware of their child’s performance and abilities and will know whether or not their child is performing at grade level.

#### Notification of Failure:

At least once per quarter and in a timely fashion, failing notices will be sent out for students who have a D or an F in an academic subject with the hope that student’s progress can be remediated before failing the term. If an electronic grading system is used, it will be the parents’ responsibility to monitor their child’s progress.

#### Overcoming Major Deficiencies:

If a student proves to have major deficiencies because of a weak educational background or some other reason, the classroom teacher(s) will, in conjunction with the support staff, work on remediation strategies, which may include some pull-out tutoring and some modification of assignments with the understanding that the purpose is to bring the student up to grade level. In the case of 7-12 students, remedial classes or extra tutoring may be assigned in place of electives. Parents will be notified of the particular strategies that are adopted.

## **Section 6: Exceptional Students**

***A. Please indicate the level of service that the school will provide to students with disabilities by selecting from the list below.***

MCA will serve students with disabilities whose needs can be met in a regular classroom environment (at least 80% of instruction occurring in a class with non-disabled peers) with the provision of reasonable supplementary supports and services and/or modifications and accommodations.

***B. Describe how the school will ensure that students with disabilities will have an equal opportunity of being selected for enrollment in the charter school.***

MCA will ensure that students with disabilities will have an equal opportunity of being selected for enrollment in the school by following the outlined enrollment procedures that follow below:

- All students that apply to MCA by a certain date with all the registration materials complete will be considered for enrollment
- ESE students will attach a current IEP to their registration materials
- The RTI/PS/MTSS team at MCA will consult with an ESE Charter School Representative from Collier County Public Schools and a determination will be made as to whether the student's needs could be best met in a MCA regular classroom environment with at least 80% of instruction occurring in a class with non-disabled peers, with the provision of reasonable supplementary supports and services and/or modifications and accommodations.
- Pending a positive recommendation from the collaborative MCA/CCPS team, the student would move to the first come, first serve enrollment spot based on the date all registration materials were submitted. Should more students apply than spots available, a lottery would occur and approved ESE students would have the same opportunity of being selected for enrollment as non-ESE students.

***C. Describe how the school will work with the sponsor to ensure the charter school is the appropriate placement for each student with a disability, based on the student's needs.***

MCA will continue to work with CCPS in a team RTI/PS/MTSS approach in order to determine a student's needs and if MCA would be an appropriate placement for a student with his/her disability.

***D. Describe how the school will utilize the regular school facilities and adapt them to the needs of exceptional students to the maximum extent appropriate, including the use of supplementary aids and services.***

MCA will utilize the regular school facility and will adapt these facilities to meet the needs of exceptional students to the maximum extent appropriate, including the use of supplementary aids and services as outlined in Technical Assistance Guide For Charter School Principals, Charter School Services and Resources, Report Number 031312-01, Coordinated by Dr. David Glennon.

***E. Describe how the school's effectiveness in serving exceptional education students will be evaluated.***

MCA's effectiveness in serving exceptional education students will be evaluated in the ways listed below:

- Parent Surveys
- Student Report Cards
- Student Assessments
- Quarterly Excent IEP Progress Notes
- Annual IEP Progress Monitoring

***F. Provide the school's projected population of students with disabilities and describe how the projection was made.***

Based on the information listed on page 5 of the LEA Profile 2012 Report displayed on the Florida Department of Education website, 87% of ESE students received services in a regular classroom with 80% of instruction occurring in a class with non-disabled peers. Since our demographic is estimated to be all of Collier County, we estimate that 13% of our population will have a disability as reported on page 1 of the LEA Profile Report. With our first year enrollment estimated at 276 students, we estimate that approximately 11% may have a disability. Many younger students, however, may have averted ESE labeling by participating in successful RTI programs. Therefore, it is only an estimate as to how many ESE students MCA will serve.

***G. Identify the staffing plan, based on the above projection, for the school's special education program, including the number and qualifications of staff.***

MCA will staff at least one certified ESE teacher to participate on the RTI/PS/MTSS team and provide ESE inclusion and pull-out (in lieu of foreign language instruction) services as determined by the IEP. Once actual enrollment numbers are determined, an exact staffing for ESE personnel will follow, therefore the number and qualifications of staff will be determined by actual enrollment.

***H. Describe how the school will serve gifted and talented students***

According to the Florida Department of education website, 4% of students in Florida are labeled gifted while 7% are gifted in Collier County. Just as the RTI/PS/MTSS process is an attempt to provide "Good Teaching" and thereby negate the reason for labels, the same philosophy applies to the Gifted and Talented students. The curriculum at MCA is academically rigorous, there are two tiers provided for all students in Reading/Language Arts, the Singapore Math program is based on ability regarding placement and Foreign Language instruction is provided for enrichment as well. Should individual students require additional challenging curricula; the RTI/PS/MTSS process will take place.

## **Section 7: English Language Learners**

***A. Describe how the school will comply with state and federal requirements for serving English language learners, including the procedures that will be utilized for identifying such students and providing support services.***

MCA will continuously seek training to determine best practices and required procedures utilized in identifying English Language Learners and in providing support services to enhance English language acquisition, per the Meta Consent Decree.

- All students will complete a native language survey when enrolling in MCA. Should a parent/guardian indicate that a language other than English is spoken at home, an immediate referral will be sent to the ESOL Contact. Initial Assessment should occur within a few days, however, 20 school days are allowable to complete said assessment.
- The initial assessment will be a state approved assessment such as the Accountability Works On-Line Cella Form 3 test. If a student is exited from the program (before Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> of the school year), they will not be monitored. However, if they are entered into the program, they will complete the State Cella in grades K-12 and the FCAT in grades 3-12 to determine testing out of a program. Students will be monitored per the Consent Decree.
- Students who are entered into the program will receive support services from an ESOL paraprofessional, or the Spanish Teacher. Teachers who provide their Reading/Language Arts education are required to have 300 hours of ESOL training. Other teachers, such as the math instructor, will be required to have 60 hours of ESOL training.
- Lesson plans for ESOL students will need to include ELL Strategies to support and enhance English language acquisition.

***B. Identify the staffing plan for the school's English language learner program, including the number and qualifications of staff.***

Approximately 16% of Collier County students are active ELL students. MCA can anticipate a similar percentage in their enrollment. Actual staffing numbers will depend on actual enrollment. However, the Spanish Teacher will serve as the ESOL Contact initially and paraprofessionals will be hired according to need. Please refer to Financial Appendix D for approximate staffing projections.

## **Section 8: School Climate and Discipline**

### ***A. Describe the school's planned approach to classroom management and student discipline.***

The role of discipline at Mason Classical Academy is to create an environment conducive to learning. It is to provide an atmosphere of civility in which due respect will be given to teachers and individual students, as well as to all institutional and private property, so that all members of the community will be allowed to pursue learning without distraction. In addition, discipline at the Academy ought always to uphold the school's Mission Statement. The Academy recognizes that the good conduct of students in school promotes their education on campus. This requirement will also promote good behavior off campus and prepare students for good citizenship in adulthood. Accordingly, students will be expected to adhere to the general rules of the school as well as those rules established by each teacher within his or her classroom.

The goals of discipline at MCA will be:

1. To maintain a highly effective learning environment where students focus on gaining knowledge with as minimal distraction as possible.
2. To utilize the need for discipline as a rich opportunity for students to learn about themselves and others, and to provide students with actual Character Education and lessons.
3. To reinforce MCA's commitment to treating all students with fairness, respect, and equality.

### **Teachers**

MCA's philosophy is that the teacher's job is to teach. Teachers will have the authority to implement discipline in their classrooms that is consistent with MCA discipline goals. Teachers will utilize the principal to implement discipline whenever appropriate and most especially when disciplinary action by the teacher would take away from maintaining an effective learning environment in the classroom.

### **Principal**

The principal will preserve the integrity of the disciplinary process at MCA. By modeling the Eight Pillars of Character, and consistently treating students and their families with respect and professionalism, the principal will be an extremely valuable part of a student's character development and education at MCA. The primary goal of any consequence given by the principal is to require the student to take responsibility for the infraction. The goals of a parent conference with the principal will be:

- To exchange accurate information about the student.
- To determine how the parent-school partnership can best work together to lead the student to reform his behavior.

Note: Disciplinary procedures may also involve other designated MCA staff besides the principal.

### ***B. Describe the school's Code of Conduct, including the school's policies for discipline, suspension, dismissal and recommendation for expulsion.***

## **Standards of Conduct**

At Mason Classical Academy, we seek to not provide not only a solid academic foundation but also a firm grounding in the Eight Pillars of Character. This begins with clear standards of personal conduct, basic expectations for appearance, behavior and attitude that both enhance the learning atmosphere of the school and prepare children for life in a world of other individuals with their own needs, opinions and expectations. Our watchwords are self-discipline and respect, and we express those concerns in virtually all aspects of Academy life. While we make no attempt to stifle the active imagination, we make every attempt to channel that imagination in positive and productive directions.

## **Dress Code**

Mason Classical academy maintains an official standard of dress, complete with a school uniform, and all students are required to be in uniform whenever they are at school or at most school-related functions. We maintain this dress code for several reasons:

(1) to underscore the Academy's seriousness of purpose by encouraging students to think of their attire as an aspect of their work; (2) to eliminate the self-consciousness and social competition that fashion tends to promote; and (3) to promote a sense of identity with the school and among the students as a group.

## **Classroom Decorum**

Students must maintain a respectful attitude in class and respond to teachers with politeness and deference. They must also remain quiet and attentive during lessons and individual work. This includes the raising of hands and waiting quietly for permission to speak. Classes are structured to ensure that students interact with one another in appropriate ways.

## **Disciplinary Action**

Disciplinary action usually proceeds as follows:

1. Reprimand or policy reminder
2. Demerit
3. Detention (after school)
4. Suspension
5. Expulsion

To ensure uninterrupted learning, MCA maintains a policy of demerits and detentions with parental notification. The Academy's goal is to work closely with parents to uphold standards of courtesy, respect and helpful behavior. We have also adopted Lee Cantor's Assertive Model of Discipline.

Demerits may be issued for the following:

1. Leaving an assigned seat without permission
2. Speaking without permission
3. Showing disrespect to an adult or child
4. Teasing, roughhousing or fighting
5. Lying or creating a false impression

6. Displaying conduct deemed by the teacher or principal to be unbecoming of a MCA student.

A student serves a detention when a second demerit is issued. The Academy notifies parents when a detention is required, and a day during the next three-day period is selected for the student to serve the detention after school. Students are relieved of all demerits at the end of each grading period.

Any student who is subject to a fourth detention during one marking period serves, instead, a one-day suspension. Suspended students are required to submit all missed academic work at the beginning of the next school day. The principal may suspend any student when, in his or her judgment, circumstances necessitate it.

Any student who demonstrates a general unwillingness or inability to abide by classroom or MCA rules is subject to expulsion. After meeting with the parents, the student and the involved faculty, the principal will decide if the expulsion is warranted.

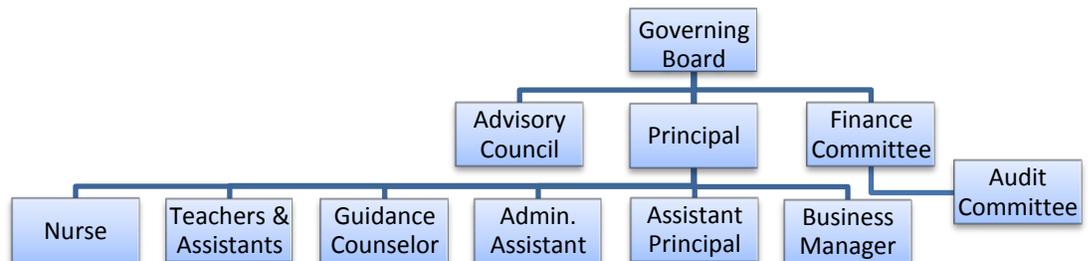
## II. ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN

### Section 9: Governance

**A.** Describe the legal structure of the governing board. If the governing board has not yet formed, describe the plan, including a timeline, for formation. Description must demonstrate how school will organize as or be operated by a non-profit organization.

MCA is organized as a not-for-profit corporation in the State of Florida. The corporation's Board of Directors has appointed three volunteers to the school's Governing Board.

**B.** Provide an organizational chart for the school and a narrative description of the chart. Clearly describe the proposed reporting structure to the governing board and the relationship of the board to the school's leader and administration.



**C.** Provide a description of the responsibilities and obligations of the governing board as a whole.

MCA considers the response to questions B and C to be interconnected and believes neither can be answered completely without including information from one answer in the other. Consequently, MCA submits its explanation to these two sections below. The description below responds fully to questions B and C.

#### **Governing Board:**

MCA shall be governed by the Governing Board and managed by its Principal pursuant to the school's charter and duly adopted Bylaws. The Governing Board will be responsible for adopting policy, overseeing the management of the school and ensuring financial compliance and responsibility. In addition, the Governing Board will ensure that the mission and goals of the charter are carried out by engaging in strategic planning. The Governing Board will not be involved in the daily operations of the school, but will hire a Principal, who will be evaluated at least annually. The Principal, in partnership with the entire Governing Board will decide upon a periodic evaluation of the Principal's performance. The Governing Board will make sure the

Principal manages MCA in compliance with the school's charter and all state and federal laws and regulations.

The Governing Board will perform ongoing assessments of the school and its programs and its operations. The Governing Board will also routinely assess its own performance. Governing Board members will participate in and develop short and long-range plans for the school. It will monitor the effectiveness of the school's programs and implementation to determine if the school has met its stated goals.

Although the Governing Board does not hire staff, it is responsible for setting the salary schedule and approving the annual budget for staffing needs.

**The Principal:**

The Principal reports to the Governing Board at regular meetings about the school's operations. The Principal will serve as liaison between MCA and the school's authorizer. The Principal shall present his/her recommendation to the Governing Board on any subject under consideration prior to action taken on the subject, if requested. The Principal will be required to attend all Governing Board meetings.

The Principal will be responsible for overall instructional leadership for the charter school, including the discipline of students, and the planning, operation and supervision of the educational program of the school. The Principal shall have the responsibility for all personnel matters including having the authority to hire, discipline and terminate all school employees. The Principal will periodically evaluate MCA employees as provided for by Florida law and MCA policy.

He/she will establish and maintain an appropriate community relations program. The Principal shall uphold and enforce the charter, MCA Governing Board policies and local, state, and federal laws and regulations. Personnel under the supervision of the Principal, as identified in the Organization Charter include the Guidance Counselor, Nurse, Business Manager, Assistant Principal, Administrative Assistants, Teachers, Educational Assistants and Ancillary Staff.

**Business Manager:**

The Principal will hire the MCA Business Manager, who will assist the Principal in preparing, planning for and presenting an annual school budget to the MCA Governing Board. The Business Manager is also expected to be available at all Governing Board regular meetings to report on the financial status of the school and present budget adjustment requests to the Governing Board. The Business Manager will be an *ex officio* member of the Governing Board's Audit Committee and attend all meetings of the Finance Committee. The Business Manager will also be expected to keep the Governing Board apprised of changes in law, regulation and rules applicable to public school finances and to ensure that the Governing Board is made aware of any potential financial concerns the school may face. The Business Manager will work cooperatively with the school's Principal to keep the Governing Board well informed about the school's financial stability.

**Teachers & Staff:**

Teachers and staff will have regularly scheduled meetings with the Principal. The Principal will ensure that teacher inputs are regularly communicated to the Governing Board. The Principal and the Governing Board will determine how to best address teacher input regarding school governance.

All school personnel will report to the Principal. If the school eventually meets its enrollment targets and can budget for an assistant principal, the Principal will decide whether staff and/or faculty supervision responsibilities should be delegated accordingly. The Principal will determine the most appropriate staffing requirements and structure for the administrative office, who will report directly to the Principal. From time to time, school administrative staff may be asked to assist the board in preparing board packets, agendas, notices, etc. However, they shall remain under the direct supervision of the Principal or his designee.

**Parents and Community:**

Parents and community members can hold a direct leadership position and influence the management of the school by serving on the Governing Board. Parents who are not members of the Governing Board are actively encouraged to attend the Governing Board meetings and to participate in ad-hoc committees which shall be formed from time to time.

**Finance Committee:**

The Finance Committee shall assist the Governing Board in carrying out its budget and finance duties. At least one member of the Governing Board shall serve on the Finance Committee. The Business Manager shall be required to attend all Finance Committee meetings. Specifically, the Finance Committee shall:

- (1) Make recommendations to the Governing Board in the following areas:
  - (a) Financial planning, including reviews of the charter school's revenue and expenditure projections
  - (b) Review of financial statements and periodic monitoring of revenues and expenses
  - (c) Annual budget preparation and oversight
  - (d) Procurement
- (2) Serve as an external monitoring committee on budget and other financial matters.

**Audit Committee:**

The Audit Committee shall consist of two Governing Board members, one volunteer member who is a parent of a student attending the charter school and one volunteer member who has experience in accounting or financial matters. The Principal and Business Manager shall serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of the committee. The Audit Committee shall:

- (1) Evaluate the request for proposal for annual financial audit services
- (2) Recommend the selection of the financial auditor
- (3) Attend the entrance and exit conferences for annual and special audits
- (4) Meet with external financial auditors at least monthly after audit field work begins until the conclusion of the audit
- (5) Be accessible to the external financial auditors as requested to facilitate

- communication with the Governing Board and the Principal
- (6) Track and report progress on the status of the most recent audit findings and advise the governing on policy changes needed to address audit findings
  - (7) Provide other advice and assistance as requested by the Governing Board; and
  - (8) Be subject to the same requirements regarding the confidentiality of audit information as those imposed upon the local school board by the Audit Act and rules of the state auditor.

The Governing Board is also contemplating creating other standing committees and will create this authority in MCA's bylaws. It is anticipated that committees for fund-raising, policy development, principal evaluations and an outreach committee will be created in addition to other standing or ad-hoc committees.

**School Advisory Council:**

MCA will constitute a School Advisory Council to assist the school Principal with school-based decision-making and to involve parents in their children's education. School Advisory Council membership shall reflect an equitable balance between school employees and parents and community members. At least one community member shall represent the business community, if possible. The council will:

- (1) Work with the school Principal and give advice, consistent with state and charter school rules and policies, on policies relating to instructional issues and curricula and on the school's budgets.
- (2) Where appropriate, coordinate with any existing work force development boards or vocational education advisory councils to connect students and school academic programs to business resources and opportunities.
- (3) Serve as the champion for students in building community support for schools and encouraging greater community participation in the public schools.
- (4) Hear grievances from parents according to the Parent Grievance Policy.
- (5) Assist the Governing Board in filling Board vacancies.

**The Community's Involvement:**

MCA has already begun to receive support from individuals and businesses within the local community in the form of donations and commitments to actual direct support of the school. Community relations will continue to be important. MCA will create partnerships with local businesses and pursue grant opportunities. MCA may recruit individuals from the community to provide supplementary educational experiences for the students.

***D. Describe the policies and procedures by which the governing board will operate, including board powers and duties; board member selection, removal procedures and term limits; code of ethics, conflict of interest, and frequency of meetings.***

In general, the Governing Board's powers and duties will be consistent with those set forth in the school's proposed bylaws, F.S. Ch. 1002.33, F.S. Ch. 1012 and Article IX of the Florida Constitution. The Governing Board's bylaws will describe how the Governing Board will exercise its powers and duties. The proposed bylaws outline the primary governance policies of MCA's

Governing Board. The bylaws will be adopted by the Governing Board during the school's planning year.

MCA's bylaws shall address the conduct of its board members. Members will be required to sign conflict of interest disclosure statements, be familiar with their responsibilities as a member in the context of open meetings and clearly understand their ethical and fiduciary obligations to the school. Board members will participate in Florida Governance training. The Bylaws will address how and when members may be removed for unacceptable or inappropriate conduct. The Governing Board meets at least once each month (except during the summer and/or school holidays as deemed appropriate) to hear reports, to consider and adopt policies, to act on committee recommendations and to consider requests and concerns from parents, students, teachers and the public. The Governing Board will follow the requirements of the Florida Sunshine Laws. The Governing Board's powers, duties and responsibilities are as follows:

The Governing Board will operate in compliance with its bylaws, policies adopted by it, and with all federal and state laws applicable to public charter schools, including without limitation:

- All state and federal health and safety requirements applicable to public schools, including those health and safety codes relating to educational building occupancy
- All state and federal laws applicable to providing special education services
- All provisions of state law applicable to conflicts of interest including federal regulations 34 CFR 75.525 and 80.36 and SB446
- Criminal background checks in accordance with state statute
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Act as amended
- Florida Statutes Chapters 1002.33 and 1012, the Florida Sunshine Laws and Article IX of the Florida Constitution
- Take necessary measures to ensure that the charter school operates subject to all federal, state and local laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry or need for special education services.
- Shall be responsible for its own operation, including preparation of a budget, (subject to audits) and contracting for services and personnel matters
- May contract with a school district, a university or college, the state, another political subdivision of the state, the federal government or one of its agencies, a tribal government or any other third party for the use of a facility, its operation and maintenance and the provision of any service or activity that the charter school is required to perform in order to carry out the educational program describe in its charter
- May pay the costs of operation and maintenance of its facilities or may contract with the school district to provide facility operation and maintenance services
- May acquire and dispose of property; provided that, upon termination of the charter, all assets of the locally chartered charter school shall revert to the local school board and all assets of the state-chartered school shall revert to the state, except that, if all or any

- portion of a state-chartered facility is financed with the proceeds of general obligation bonds issued by a local school board, the facility shall revert to the local school board
- May accept or reject any charitable gift, grant, devise or bequest provided that no such gift, grant devise or bequest shall be accepted if subject to any condition contrary to law or to the terms of the charter. The particular gift, grant, devise or bequest shall be considered an asset of the charter school to which it is given
  - Shall comply with all applicable state and federal laws and rules related to providing special education services. Charter school students with disabilities and their parents retain all rights under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and its implementing state and federal rules
  - Employ the Principal
  - Delegate administrative and supervisory functions of the head administrator when appropriate
  - Approve the annual budget of anticipated income and expenditures, and direct the preparation of the annual financial audit report
  - Have the capacity to sue and be sued
  - May contract for provision of financial management, food services, education related services or other services
  - Be responsible for its own operation, including preparation of the budget

**Individual Members:**

No board member shall have the authority to speak on behalf of, take any action or otherwise attempt to bind the Governing Board or MCA, unless expressly authorized to do so by the Governing Board by majority vote. Unless acting as expressly authorized, individual members when participating in activities that involved the school shall be acting in the capacity of volunteers at the direction of the Principal. It is the Governing Board’s responsibility to uphold the school’s mission statement and review it periodically for accuracy and validity. Each individual member should fully understand and support it. The Governing Board shall pay particular attention to the objectives as espoused in MCA’s Founding documents and shall cooperate fully with the objectives of our external affiliations.

- Serving on the MCA Governing Board is a serious responsibility. Attendance at all regular meetings, special meetings, trainings and retreats of the MCA Governing Board is an expectation of each member. The Board will meet regularly at least quarterly, although it may meet more frequently during the startup years; attendance at special meetings, which may occur more frequently, is expected particularly during the planning year and startup year. Trainings and retreats may last up to two days in duration and are not expected to be held more than twice a year. Members are expected to be accessible for personal contact and committee involvement in between Governing Board meetings.
- The Governing Board members are required to engage actively in all Governance Training as well as voluntarily participate in training regarding school law, governance, and public school finance. Each Governing Board member is expected to obtain a minimum of 4 hours per year of such training.
- Governing Board members are public advocates of the school, should be aware of

the school's activities and encourage participation in appropriate activities by the community. Governing Board members actively cultivate a positive public image for the school.

- Governing Board members, through committee membership or during board meetings may advise the Principal on policy implementation as requested.
- Provide leadership to Governing Board committees. As needed, members will be called upon to serve as active, ongoing members of specific committees. This requires a number of committee meetings per year plus individual committee task completion time.
- Commit time to developing financial resources for MCA. This includes many options, such as helping colleagues to become aware of the school, or applying for grants, as well as supporting other fund development activities of MCA in a manner appropriate for Governing Board members.
- Commit time to read and review Governing Board materials and committee recommendations in order to responsibly and knowledgeably vote and act upon Governing Board proposals. Take responsibility for self-education on major issues before the Governing Board. Remain cognizant of MCA's culture and philosophy, remain ardent ambassadors for its improvement and outreach.
- Participate in the annual Governing Board member self-review process. In general, utilize personal and professional skills, relationships and knowledge for the advancement of MCA.

**Officers of the Governing Board:**

The Governing Board shall elect officers as deemed appropriate and necessary for the body once the school is open and as determined its bylaws. It is currently contemplated that the Board will have a chair or president, vice-chair, secretary and a treasurer. The roles of these respective officers shall be described in the bylaws, but it is anticipated that they will follow traditional duties and responsibilities of contemporary school board officers and/or those of a non-profit entity.

***E. Explain how the founding group for the school intends to transition to a governing board.***

The founding group for the school intends to officially transition to a Governing Board during a duly-noticed Mason Classical Academy Board of Directors meeting. Their orientation process is described in the answer to question F, below.

***F. Describe the plans for board member recruitment and development, including the orientation process for new members and ongoing professional development.***

The Governing Board will develop a policy to ensure that membership to the Governing Board will include a broad range of expertise, including backgrounds in education, science and related fields. These requirements will be incorporated into the Governing Board's policies and/or bylaws. The Governing Board will notify the school's community and the community at large of position openings on the school's governing body. When vacancies occur on the Governing Board, announcements will be made at local business meetings, on the school's web page or other resources MCA uses to distribute information to parents and the school's community.

The Governing Board, through the support of the School Advisory Committee, will recruit new members who will be interviewed to determine their interest in the school, applicable experience and background. The Governing Board will determine what credentials or experience is relevant, depending on the vacancy on the Board at the time and the needs of the school.

Letters of interest must be submitted to the School Advisory Committee, which will present them to the Governing Board. The School Advisory Committee will interview the candidates and make a recommendation to the Governing Board. However, the Governing Board will have the authority to interview and select any candidate for the position.

Elected Governing Board members shall be issued board member orientation binders containing the school's charter agreement, corporate bylaws, student-parent handbook (upper and lower schools), and employee handbook. All Governing Board Members will meet personally with the Advisory Committee to review the contents of the binder and will be required to maintain a "board book" during their terms. Duly elected Governing Board members will also be required to affirm, in writing, that they agree to abide by the school's charter, mission statement, corporate bylaws, and all state and federal statutes, rules and codes governing MCA. Governing Board members shall also be required to participate in the State of Florida's Governance Training.

***G. List each of the proposed members of the school's governing board, indicating any ex-officio members and vacant seats to be filled. For each proposed member, provide a brief description of the person's background that highlights the contribution he/she intends to make through service as a governing board member and any office of the board that individual holds.***

**Kelly Lichter, President**

Mrs. Lichter is a Naples resident who is committed to improving the quality of public education, locally and nationally. She is a Doctoral student at Nova Southeastern University (NSU) and is scheduled to complete her coursework in Instructional Leadership with a minor in Charter School Leadership by 2013. Her dissertation is a program evaluation of the Core-Knowledge Curriculum Sequence and is a work in progress. Mrs. Lichter earned her Master's Degree in Social Studies Education from NSU in 2008 and holds a Bachelor's Degree in History from Baldwin Wallace College. She taught U.S. History and Government in Solon, Ohio before moving to Naples, Florida in 2006 to teach in the Social Studies department at Palmetto Ridge High School. Mrs. Lichter is the driving force behind Mason Classical Academy's educational philosophy and has established a valuable partnership with Hillsdale College and the Director of the Hillsdale Barney Charter School Initiative, Phil Kilgore. She sits on the Board of Directors at Mason Corporation, serves as a recruitment volunteer for Baldwin Wallace College, and serves in her church's youth ministry. Mrs. Lichter is the daughter of the late Donald Mason (the school's namesake), a wife, and mother of two small children.

**Christy Bazley, Secretary**

Christy Bazley is a life-long learner, educator and entrepreneur. A Naples resident since 1993, she holds a Master's degree in Educational Psychology from State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany, and a Bachelor's degree from SUNY New Paltz. She has taught both elementary and special education in both public and private settings and is currently working on a

Reading Endorsement. She most recently taught at a Lee County school, receiving a grade of A+. She received the “Outstanding Teaching” award while teaching 3<sup>rd</sup> grade at Tilson Elementary in Decatur, Georgia. Also, she owned her own private tutoring company that provided a Resource Room service to private schools. Mrs. Bazley, along with her sister, is committed to classical education reform and is affiliated with Hillsdale College. She is married, has two adult children and enjoys the hobbies of kayaking and homestead farming.

**Jason Lane, Treasurer**

Mr. Lane is a former professional golfer who owns and operates the Lane Insurance Group in Estero, Florida. He started Lane Insurance in 2008 and has been a Naples resident since 1995. Mr. Lane attended Old Dominion University in Norfolk Virginia on a golf scholarship and graduated with his Bachelor’s Degree in political science with a minor in criminal justice. He is an American patriot who is committed to restoring public education and has devoted his time, expertise and resources towards fulfilling the Academy’s mission statement. Mr. Lane is married to his beautiful wife Amy and has two small children.

**H. *Outline the methods to be used for resolving disputes between a parent and the school.***

MCA firmly believes that adults must be models of good character even in the most difficult situations. Should a parent have a grievance concerning a particular class or the administration of the school, that grievance should be resolved using the following chain of command. Issues that arise in a particular classroom should always be addressed to the teacher first since the teacher always has more direct knowledge of the student than anyone else.

**Teacher**

Parents should schedule a meeting with the teacher through the office. Under no circumstance is it ever acceptable for a parent to confront a teacher about an issue with students present, including his own child.

**Assistant Principal**

If the grievance cannot be resolved with the teacher and the matter regards discipline, the parent should schedule a meeting with the assistant principal.

**Principal**

If the grievance cannot be resolved with the teacher and the matter regards academics, the parent should schedule a meeting with the principal.

**School Advisory Council**

If the grievance cannot be resolved after talking with the teacher or the appropriate parties, the parent must submit his grievance in writing to the School Advisory Council.

If a resolution is not achieved by the foregoing process, two other options are available:

- (1) The grievance may be submitted to the Governing Board, in writing. The Governing Board will review the summary and will make one of the following determinations: 1. The Governing Board may decide to support the previous decision; 2. The Governing

Board may appoint up to two Board members to address the issue; 3. The Governing Board may address the issue in an open Board format; 4. The Governing Board may address the issue in an executive session, in accordance with the Florida Sunshine Laws.

- (2) Parental concerns and grievances may also be raised during the community comments portion of the Board of Directors meeting. The concern or grievance must be submitted in writing and no more than three minutes will be granted. Grievances or discussions involving specific personnel will not be entertained during an open Board meeting. It is recommended that the concern or grievance be addressed in one of the aforementioned steps before using this option.

Grievances regarding policy should be directed to a Board Member. Grievances regarding an administrator should be directed to the individual first, then in writing to the Governing Board. The Governing Board and School Advisory Council will not entertain anonymous complaints nor can they hold information in confidence when it is not in the best interest of the school, its staff or students.

### **Chain of Command**

This procedure refers to parents' communication of any kind that seeks or requires an action on the part of the school regarding their students. MCA understands that parents will have questions, opinions, and comments that need to be expressed concerning their children's education. Such communication can be very helpful to the successful operation of the school. MCA's preference is that such communication be expressed initially to the teacher or teachers of the child. If further communication is warranted, the parent should consult the assistant principal, according to whether the matter concerns discipline or academics. If further communication is warranted after seeing the assistant principal, the parent should go to the Governing Board or the School Advisory Committee as needed. The Governing Board is not the first point of contact and, therefore, will refer all communications that seek response or action to the appropriate individual(s).

*If the school is filing the application in conjunction with a college, university, museum, educational institution, another nonprofit organization or any other partner, provide the following information:*

- I. Name of the partner organization.*

Hillsdale Barney Charter School Initiative

***J. Name of the contact person at the partner organization and that person's full contact information.***

Mr. Phil Kilgore  
*Director*  
Hillsdale Barney Charter School Initiative  
33 East College Street  
Hillsdale, MI 49242

Phone: (517) 437-7341  
Fax: (517) 437-3923  
Email: [pkilgore@hillsdale.edu](mailto:pkilgore@hillsdale.edu)

***K. A description of the nature and purpose of the school's partnership with the organization.***

**Nature and Purpose:**

The nature of the partnership between the Hillsdale Barney Charter School Initiative (HBCSI) and MCA is their common desire to reclaim America from forces that have drawn so many away from its first principles. The Governing Board is actively cooperating with Hillsdale College by attending the Initiative's conferences and consulting with Director Phil Kilgore and Dr. Terrence Moore.

The purpose of MCA's partnership with the HBCSI is to work together to rescue America's public schools from the tide of a hundred years of progressivism. This philosophy has corrupted our nation's original faithfulness to the previous 24 centuries of teaching the liberal arts in the West; and just as our nation's founders were compelled to provide for effective public schools, so are MCA and the HBCSI. To this end, HBCSI will help guide MCA through the conceptual elements that foster successful classical education to begin redeeming American public education. This partnership will involve working together to complete the charter application approval process, develop a rigorously classical core-knowledge curriculum, recruit a competent staff, identify a facility, draft a budget, counsel the Governing Board, and provide other relevant tutelage that MCA may require.

***L. An explanation of how the partner organization will be involved in the governance of the school.***

The Hillsdale Barney Charter School's involvement in the governance of the school will be limited to counseling the Governing Board on issues related to staying true to MCA's mission.

## Section 10: Management

*A. Describe the management structure of the school. Include job descriptions for teachers and each administrative position that identify key roles, responsibilities and accountability.*

The management structure is located in the answers to questions A and B in Section 9 of Article II.

### JOB DESCRIPTIONS

#### PRINCIPAL - MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY

**Immediate Supervisor:** Governing Board

**JOB GOAL:** To manage the school and to provide organizational and instructional leadership to assure high student outcomes and maintain the integrity of the school's approved charter.

#### **PERFORMANCE RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Note: At the discretion of the Principal, he/she may delegate any of the authority and responsibilities of the position. However, the Principal is not relieved of final responsibility for actions taken under such delegation.

#### **I. Relationship with Governing Board/Committees**

- Attends and participates in meetings of the Governing Board/Committees.
- Informs and advises the Governing Board/Committees about the programs, practices, and problems of the schools, as well as activities operating under the authority of the Governing Board/Committees.
- Implements Governing Board/Committees policies; advises the Governing Board/Committees when he/she identifies the need to add, modify, or delete a policy.
- Submits recommendations to the Governing Board/Committees relative to matters requiring Governing Board/Committees action, supported by data and information as necessary to make informed decisions.
- Recommends, annually, to the Governing Board/Committees system-wide goals. Monitors and reports back to the Committee, at least semi-annually, on the progress toward achieving the goals.
- Works with the Governing Board/Committees that implements the mission of the school and a comprehensive long-range plan.

#### **II. Budget**

- Prepares annual operating budget recommendations based on guidelines set by the Governing Board/Committees. Works with the Governing Board/Committees to develop the final budget. Implements the approved budget.

#### **III. Educational Leadership & Curriculum**

- Assures high academic performance outcomes for all students.

- Keeps informed of current curricular and educational thoughts, trends, and practices, as well as proposed legislation impacting the school. Informs the Governing Board/Committees of significant developments in these areas.
- Oversees development and implementation of objectives and long-range plans for curriculum and instructional evaluation and improvement.
- Assures continuous study and revision of curriculum guides and courses of study to best support teacher needs.

#### **IV. Personnel**

- Hires all administrators.
- Ensures the hiring of qualified and competent personnel.
- Assigns, transfers, and promotes employees as the interests of the school system may indicate.
- Assures professional development opportunities are provided to the school staff.
- Assures systematic performance evaluation of school personnel and takes necessary actions regarding any employee whose performance is judged to be unsatisfactory.
- Holds such meetings of school personnel as are necessary for discussion of matters related to the welfare and improvement of the schools.
- Oversees employee relations in the school system.

#### **V. Facilities**

- Hires manager of facilities.
- Determines, with the Governing Board/Committees, short and long-range building needs and oversees implementation of construction, operation and maintenance programs.

#### **VI. General Management**

- Takes necessary steps to assure the safety and welfare of students and employees in the schools and at school sponsored activities
- Maintains records for the schools, including financial accounts, business and property records, personnel, scholastic, and school population records. Acts as custodian of such records and of all contracts, documents, securities, title papers, books, and other papers of the Governing Board/Committees.

#### **VII. Communications/Public Relations**

- Maintains open lines of communication and cooperative working relationships with the authorizer, supports organizations and other committees.
- Maintains open lines of communication and cooperative relationships with school staff, the Governing Board/Committees, parents and the community at-large.

Performs other appropriate tasks which may be assigned by the Governing Board/Committees.

- 1) administer local board's (or governing body of a charter school's) policies, state and federal requirements and applicable laws;

- 2) be accountable for student achievement; budget management; expenditure of funds; dissemination of information; district or charter school communications; attend all local board or governing body of a charter school's meetings or, when necessary, designate a licensed administrator to attend;
- 3) ensure that school patrons and the public are informed and involved in the acquisition, planning and development of school facilities and that students are provided with adequate facilities which conform to state and federal mandates;
- 4) be accountable for student safety
  - (a) ensure that all students are supervised while on school property and while attending or traveling to school events or activities on school-provided transportation;
  - (b) ensure that all buildings, grounds and facilities provide a safe and orderly environment for public use
- 5) administer and implement the charter school's approved staff accountability plan and procedures;
- 6) ensure that a process is in place to identify, train, assign and support personnel resources in classrooms, which shall include, but not be limited to, the following:
  - a) establish the specific expertise of the person;
  - b) obtain a background check and fingerprint records;
  - c) provide the person with a three-hour training, prior to entering a classroom, about how the school operates, appropriate teaching methods and expectations of principal and assigned teacher;
  - d) establish a start date and ending date for the person; and
  - e) provide for an evaluation of services upon completion of the assignment;

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS:** The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodation:

- The employee must occasionally lift and move up to 25 pounds in supplies which requires bending, stooping and lifting.
- The employee must use hands and arms to manipulate objects.
- The employee must use keyboards, tools and other controls.
- The employee must sit and stand for long periods of time.
- The employee will escort students around campus.
- The employee must have normal vision and hearing with or without aid.
- The employee must be able to move about assigned locations unaided during the work day.

## ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL - MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY

**Immediate Supervisor:** Principal

**SUMMARY:** Assists the Principal in all aspects of school management, curriculum development and student services.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:** Incumbent must achieve the following outcomes with or without reasonable accommodation:

- Develops, implements and reviews school policies and procedures.
- Coordinate implementation of district instructional program and ancillary and operational support programs.
- Serves as instructional leader at the school.
- Monitors school activities and policies for adherence to all district, state and national regulations.
- Assesses appropriateness of school services and programs.
- Recommends changes in programs, personnel, facilities, materials and equipment.
- Evaluates the work of assigned school staff; provides reports to the Principal and cooperates in recognition or remediation of staff members as requested.
- Designs in-service training programs at the school.
- Assists in the recruitment and selection of applicants for school-based positions.
- Establishes programs and communication procedures to encourage committee participation, student organizations, community support and extra-curricular activities.
- Develops and maintains student discipline procedures for assigned caseload following established guidelines.
- Assist in the development of budget recommendations for the school.

**CURRICULUM:** Oversees all aspects of scheduling, course descriptions and registration and assigns duties as necessary; oversees all aspects of district mandated standardized testing; oversees all aspects of student records and assists Principal as legal representative for the school; oversees textbook inventory; creates and serves on committees as necessary inside and outside of the school.

**ATTENDANCE/DISCIPLINE:** Establishes attendance and discipline referral and reporting procedures for campus-wide use; develops parental notification procedures; directs the preparation of suspension, neglect, referral and tardy forms; responds to inquiries from welfare, probation, legal and security agencies; creates and serves on committees as necessary inside and outside the school.

**BUILDING AND GROUNDS:** Supervise district employees completing operational tasks on campus; verifies completion of work orders; maintains orderly school environment; contacts security as necessary; serves as contact for outside contractors; oversees custodial work; creates and serves on committees as necessary inside and outside of the school.

**DUTIES:** In addition to the essential functions of this job, the incumbent must perform the following duties:

- Complies with the Code of Ethics and upholds and enforces rules, administrative directives and regulations, school board policies, and local, state and federal regulations.
- Articulates and facilitates the implementation of the mission and values of MCA
- Safeguards confidentiality of privileged information.
- Prepares and maintains accurate and complete records and reports as required by law, state directives, district policy and administrative regulations.
- Shares the responsibility for the supervision and care of district inventory, proper and safe use of facilities, equipment and supplies, and reports safety hazards promptly.
- Maintains professional relationships and works cooperatively with employees, the community and other professionals.
- Maintains professional competence through individual and staff training, in-service educational activities and self-selected professional growth activities.
- Attends and/or conducts staff meetings and participates on committees within area of responsibility.
- Performs other tasks related to area of responsibilities as requested or assigned by an immediate supervisor.

**EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES:** The minimum expectations for this job are as follows:

- Effective communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Flexibility, organization, decision-making and problem solving skills.
- Interpersonal skills with diverse populations in-person and on the telephone.
- Knowledge of community, computer system, financial and legal requirements.
- Ability to meet deadlines, work on multiple projects and coordinate the work of others.
- Knowledge of district policies on immunization, medication, first aid, emergencies and child abuse/neglect.
- Three years of teaching experience.

**EDUCATION:** The minimum requirements for this job are as follows: Bachelor's degree in Education or equivalent.

**WORKING ENVIRONMENT:** The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job:

- The incumbent works with various staff members in a team environment including the administrative staff, State Department personnel, legal counsel, parents, students, advocates and others outside the district.
- Frequent interactions with people in person and on the phone will be necessary.
- Duties are primarily performed in a normal school environment.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS:** The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodation:

- The employee must occasionally lift and move up to 25 pounds in supplies which requires bending, stooping and lifting.
- The employee must use hands and arms to manipulate objects.
- The employee must use keyboards, tools and other controls.
- The employee must sit and stand for long periods of time.
- The employee will escort students around campus.
- The employee must have normal vision and hearing with or without aid.
- The employee must be able to move about assigned locations unaided during the work day.

## GUIDANCE COUNSELOR - MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY

**Immediate Supervisor Title:** Principle

**SUMMARY:** To develop and implement a comprehensive counseling program to address the academic, career and personal/social goals for all students.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:** Incumbent must achieve the following outcomes with or without reasonable accommodation:

- Develops and implements a comprehensive counseling program that aligns with state guidelines.
- Plans and implements the counseling program to address the academic, career and personal/social needs of every student.
- Coordinates delivery of an annual needs assessment for the counseling program.
- Evaluates, interprets and archives high school records from local, in-state, out-of-state, and international educational institutions.
- Translates and authenticates transcripts to conform to MCA and state requirements for high school graduation.
- Works with students in enrolling in classes
- Validates transcripts for use by government bureaus, universities, courts, military, security agencies, employers, Counselors, students, parents and others.
- Maintains grade point averages, class rankings, honor rolls, FCAT Exam results and other student academic data as required.
- Delivers the four program components: the counseling curriculum, individual student planning, responsive services and system support.
- Provides short-term individual and group counseling opportunities for students to promote school success, personal growth, self-understanding, communication, problem solving and decision-making skills.
- Assists families by providing referrals to outside services for students with acute or chronic mental health needs.
- Orients students and parents regarding current and future educational goals and career objectives.
- Assists in curriculum development, professional development and identification of interventions to assist students.
- Consults with administration, staff and parents regarding mental health issues in order to assist students with attitude, learning and/or behavioral problems.
- Serves on the school health/mental health team.
- Assists with test preparation (e.g. test-taking skills, staff training on optimal testing conditions) and interpretation of standardized testing.
- Evaluates the counseling program on an annual basis for continuous improvement.
- Regularly attends counseling meetings to keep current on policies, procedures and best practices regarding school counseling programs and issues.
- Facilitates the development of the school/community social and health assessment as a required component of the state accreditation process.

**DUTIES:** In addition to the essential functions of this job, the incumbent must perform the following duties:

- Complies with the Code of Ethics and upholds and enforces rules, administrative directives and regulations, school board policies, and school, state and federal regulations.
- Articulates and facilitates the implementation of the mission and values of MCA
- Safeguards confidentiality of privileged information.
- Prepares and maintains accurate and complete records and reports as required by law, state directives, school policy and administrative regulations.
- Shares the responsibility for the supervision and care of school inventory, proper and safe use of facilities, equipment and supplies, and reports safety hazards promptly.
- Maintains professional relationships and works cooperatively with employees, the community and other professionals.
- Maintains professional competence through individual and staff training, in-service educational activities and self-selected professional growth activities. Attends and/or conducts staff meetings and participates on committees within area of responsibility.
- Performs other tasks related to area of responsibilities as requested or assigned by an immediate supervisor.

**MINIMUM REQUIRED EDUCATION, LICENSES, CERTIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS:**

- Master's degree in Counseling.
- Three years of experience in a public school setting or counseling environment.
- Counseling skills in a range of diverse needs, including college/career information and mediation/conflict resolution.

**PREFERRED KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ABILITIES AND EXPERIENCE:**

- Effective communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Flexibility, organization, decision-making and problem solving skills.
- Interpersonal skills with diverse populations in-person and on the telephone.
- Ability to meet deadlines, work on multiple projects, and coordinate the work of others.
- Knowledge of state policies on immunization, medication, first aid, emergencies and child abuse/neglect.
- Knowledge of all laws, regulations and guidelines affecting teachers and students.
- Knowledge of effective classroom management techniques.
- Ability to maintain positive relationships with students, parents, community members and staff.

**WORKING ENVIRONMENT:** The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an incumbent encounters while performing the essential functions of this job:

- The incumbent will work with staff members in a team environment that may include the administrative staff, State department personnel, legal counsel, parents, students, advocates and others outside the school.
- Frequent interactions with people in person and on the phone will be necessary.

- Travel from location to location may be necessary.
- Functions are primarily performed indoors and outside in a normal school environment.
- The incumbent will also meet with or escort students outdoors and will perform the essential functions of this job in a variety of buildings and locations.

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS:** The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by the incumbent to successfully perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodation:

- The employee must occasionally lift and move up to 25 pounds in supplies which requires bending, stooping and lifting.
- The employee must be able to use a variety of instructional materials in the classroom.
- The employee must use hands and arms to manipulate objects.
- The employee must use keyboards, tools and other controls.
- The employee must sit and stand for long periods of time.
- The employee must have normal vision and hearing with or without aid.
- The employee must be able to move about assigned location unaided during the day.

## SCHOOL NURSE - MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY

(may be a contracted service)

**Immediate Supervisor:** Principal

Duties and Responsibilities include:

- Communicating and consulting with administrators, medical providers, and community agencies around policies, procedures, program development and services.
- Developing an assessment, data collection and evaluation of health services and preparing regular written reports.
- Organizing and implementing state mandates (immunizations, health screening, etc.)
- Developing or maintaining effective health records.
- Developing programs in the prevention of communicable diseases in the school and/or community
- Collect and report data regarding health status of students
- Administer routine vision, hearing, height and weight screenings
- Provide nursing and/or medically prescribed interventions
- Monitor students per individualized health care plans
- Perform basic first aid and CPR as needed.
- Care of school inventory as well as proper and safe use of facilities equipment and supplies and reports safety hazards
- Develop a nursing diagnosis and implement student health management plan
- Provide appropriate health education
- Assess and provide counseling, crisis intervention and appropriate referral services
- The School Nurse must have a current and valid School Nurse License.

## **CLASSROOM TEACHER - MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY**

**Immediate Supervisor:** Principal

**SUMMARY:** Teaches by creating a flexible program and an environment favorable to learning and personal growth; by encouraging students to develop skills, attitudes and knowledge needed to obtain a good foundation for continuous growth and development; by providing students with experiences which integrate the affective, cognitive and psychomotor dimensions of learning; by establishing effective rapport with students and their parents; by assisting students in developing positive feelings toward themselves and others.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:**

#### **EDUCATING STUDENTS**

- Cooperates in the development and implementation of the school program of instruction.
- Plans and implements a program of study that, as much as possible, meets the individual needs, interests and abilities of students and complies with Florida Department of Education standards and the Mason Classical Academy goals and objectives.
- Guides the learning process toward the achievement of curriculum goals. Establishes clear objectives for all lessons, assignments, units and projects in harmony with curriculum goals and communicates the objectives to students.
- Employs instructional methods and materials that are most appropriate for meeting stated objectives including the use of computers and other technological classroom support equipment in student instruction.
- Meets and instructs assigned classes in the locations and at the times designated.
- Shows commitment to the school's mission, academic program and student academic outcomes as outlined in the approved charter

#### **MANAGING STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

- Establishes and maintains standards of appropriate student behavior and discipline to achieve a functional learning atmosphere in the classroom and assists in its maintenance campus wide.
- Provides and maintains a safe and supervised environment in the classroom and on the school grounds.
- Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and appropriate to the maturity and interests of students.

#### **EVALUATING STUDENT PROGRESS**

- Evaluates the learning progress of students on a regular basis using appropriate assessments.
- Prescribes effective learning programs and initiates referrals to appropriate personnel when concerns arise.
- Assesses the accomplishments of students on a regular basis and provides progress reports as required.
- Administers group standardized tests in accordance with the school testing program.

## **PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**

- Establishes and maintain open lines of communication with students and parents concerning students' academic, social and behavioral progress.
- Cooperates with professional staff and support personnel in assessing and helping students with health, attitude, learning and behavioral problems
- Communicate and cooperate with other professional staff in academic and personal growth areas.
- Attends and/or conducts staff meetings and participates on committees within area of responsibility

## **MANAGEMENT**

- Selects and requests appropriate books and instructional materials and maintains required inventory records.
- Provides directions and materials for substitute teachers. Plans for and supervises classroom aides, guests and volunteers.
- Prepares and maintains accurate and complete records and reports as required by law, state directives, school policy and administrative regulations.
- Shares the responsibility for the supervision and care of school inventory, proper and safe use of facilities, equipment and supplies, and reports safety hazards promptly

## **UPHOLDS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

- Complies with the Code of Ethics, upholds and enforces rules, administrative directives and regulations, school policies, and local, state and federal regulations.
- Articulates and facilitates the implementation of the mission and values of Mason Classical Academy.
- Safeguards confidentiality of privileged information.
- Maintains professional relationships and works cooperatively with employees, the community and other professionals.
- Maintains professional competence through individual and staff training, in-service educational activities and self-selected professional growth activities.
- Performs other tasks related to area of responsibilities as requested or assigned by an immediate supervisor.
- Conforms to MCA policies including attendance, absences and evaluations.
- Attendance must be adequate to acceptably perform listed job functions.

## **EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES**

- Effective communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Flexibility, organization, decision making and problem solving skills.
- Interpersonal skills with diverse populations in-person and on the telephone.
- Knowledge of computer systems, financial procedures, and legal requirements.
- Ability to meet deadlines, work on multiple projects, and coordinate the work of others.
- Knowledge of school policies on immunization, medication, first aid, emergencies and child abuse and neglect
- Knowledge of all laws, regulations and guidelines affecting teachers and students.
- Knowledge of effective classroom management techniques.

- Ability to maintain positive relationships with students, parents, community members and staff.

### **EDUCATION AND LICENSURE**

- Minimum Bachelor's degree.
- Current Florida teaching certificate endorsed in the area to be taught

### **WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

- The employee works with various staff members in a team environment including the administrative staff, parents, students, advocates and others outside the school.
- Frequent interactions with people in-person and on the phone will be necessary.
- Duties are performed indoors and outside in a normal school environment.
- The noise level in the work environment is usually moderate.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

- The employee must occasionally lift and move up to 25 pounds in supplies which requires bending, stooping and lifting.
- The employee must have the ability to adjust focus on a computer monitor in order to get information from a variety of information systems.
- The employee must use hands and arms to manipulate objects.
- The employee must use keyboards, tools and other controls.
- The employee must sit and stand for long periods of time.
- The employee must occasionally work outside.
- The employee must be able to use and move/lift variety of instructional materials in the classroom.
- The employee must be able to see and hear on a continuous basis as well as speak frequently.
- Employee must be able to move quickly from place to place on occasion over smooth to uneven surfaces on the playground or on grass.
- Walk through classroom and be able to maneuver tight spaces, e.g. between desks.
- When dealing with students may entail kneeling, squatting, stooping and bending on an occasional to frequent basis on a given day.

### **EMOTIONAL DEMANDS**

- Manage the repetitive instructional preparation, review, and grading of student assignments without experiencing undue stress (which leads to emotional detachment from the teaching process and to ineffectiveness in the classroom).
- Maintain high emotional energy and display enthusiasm for the subject matter and individual student effort.
- Develop effective coping strategies for dealing with the fatigue and stress of ongoing involvement in teaching, supervising, and monitoring of students.
- Address stressful events created by hostile, confrontational students by remaining calm and listening non-critically, reasoning objectively, and remaining consistent in judgments.

- Ensure that out-of-classroom pressures (personal, home, business) do not interfere with overall effective teaching performance.
- Enhance one's professional teaching commitment with punctuality and attendance (avoiding the “coming late, leave early”, or "often absent' syndrome).
- Realize the need to seek timely professional assistance as necessary to maintain emotional stability and professional standards of conduct.
- Possess emotional openness to constructive feedback from peers, consulting teacher/mentors, and administrators regarding compliance with professional standards.
- Analyze and remedy emotional needs or unresolved conflicts which interfere or preclude adhering to policy, administrative direction or professional standards.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER - MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY**

**Immediate Supervisor:** Principal

**SUMMARY:** Teaches by creating a flexible program and an environment favorable to learning and personal growth; by encouraging students to develop skills, attitudes and knowledge needed to obtain a good foundation for continuous growth and development; by providing students with experiences which integrate the affective, cognitive and psychomotor dimensions of learning; by establishing effective rapport with students and their parents; by assisting students in developing positive feelings toward themselves and others.

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:**

#### **EDUCATING STUDENTS**

- Cooperates in the development and implementation of the school's program of instruction.
- Plans and implements a program of study that, as much as possible, meets the individual needs, interests and abilities of students and complies with Florida Department of Education standards and the Mason Classical Academy goals and objectives.
- Guides the learning process toward the achievement of curriculum goals. Establishes clear objectives for all lessons, assignments, units and projects in harmony with curriculum goals and communicates the objectives to students.
- Employs instructional methods and materials that are most appropriate for assuring high student outcomes including the use of computers and other technological classroom support equipment in student instruction.
- Meets and instructs assigned classes in the locations and at the times designated.
- Plans and implements a program of study that, as much as possible, meets the individual needs, interests and abilities of students and complies with Florida Department of Education Standards and the Mason Classical Academy goals and objectives and individual student IEP plans if appropriate
- Participates in all IEP meetings and ensures the educational goals of the IEP are met in the classroom.

#### **MANAGING STUDENT BEHAVIOR**

- Establishes and maintains standards of appropriate student behavior and discipline to achieve a functional learning atmosphere in the classroom and assists in its maintenance campus wide.
- Provides and maintains a safe and supervised environment in the classroom and on the school grounds.
- Creates a classroom environment that is conducive to learning and appropriate to the maturity and interests of students.

#### **EVALUATING STUDENT PROGRESS**

- Evaluates the learning progress of students on a regular basis.

- Prescribes effective learning programs and initiates referrals to appropriate personnel when concerns arise.
- Assesses the accomplishments of students on a regular basis and provides progress reports as required.
- Administers group standardized tests in accordance with the school testing program.

### **PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATIONS**

- Establishes and maintain open lines of communication with students and parents concerning students' academic, social and behavioral progress.
- Cooperates with professional staff and support personnel in assessing and helping students with health, attitude, learning and behavioral problems
- Communicate and cooperate with other professional staff in academic and personal growth areas.
- Attends and/or conducts staff meetings and participates on committees within area of responsibility

### **MANAGEMENT**

- Selects and requests appropriate books and instructional materials and maintains required inventory records.
- Provides directions and materials for substitute teachers. Plans for and supervises classroom aides, guests and volunteers.
- Prepares and maintains accurate and complete records and reports as required by law, state directives, school policy and administrative regulations.
- Shares the responsibility for the supervision and care of school inventory, proper and safe use of facilities, equipment and supplies, and reports safety hazards promptly.

### **UPHOLDS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

- Complies with the Code of Ethics and upholds and enforces rules, administrative directives and regulations, school board policies, and local, state and federal regulations.
- Articulates and facilitates the implementation of the mission and values of Mason Classical Academy.
- Safeguards confidentiality of privileged information.
- Maintains professional relationships and works cooperatively with employees, the community and other professionals.
- Maintains professional competence through individual and staff training, in-service educational activities and self-selected professional growth activities.
- Performs other tasks related to area of responsibilities as requested or assigned by an immediate supervisor.
- Conforms to MCA policies including attendance, absences and evaluations.
- Attendance must be adequate to acceptably perform listed job functions.

### **EXPERIENCE, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES**

- Effective communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Flexibility, organization, decision making and problem solving skills.
- Interpersonal skills with diverse populations in-person and on the telephone.

- Knowledge of computer systems, financial procedures, and legal requirements.
- Ability to meet deadlines, work on multiple projects, and coordinate the work of others.
- Knowledge of school policies on immunization, medication, first aid, emergencies and child abuse/neglect.
- Knowledge of all laws, regulations and guidelines affecting teachers and students.
- Knowledge of effective classroom management techniques.
- Ability to maintain positive relationships with students, parents, community members and staff.

### **EDUCATION AND LICENSURE**

- Bachelor's degree.
- Current Florida teaching certificate endorsed in the area to be taught or pursuing alternative licensure program.

### **WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

- The incumbent works with various staff members in a team environment including the administrative staff, parents, students, advocates and others outside the school.
- Frequent interactions with people in-person and on the phone will be necessary.
- Duties are performed indoors and outside in a normal school environment.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

- The employee must occasionally lift and move up to 25 pounds in supplies which requires bending, stooping and lifting.
- The employee must have the ability to adjust focus on a computer monitor in order to get information from a variety of information systems.
- The employee must use hands and arms to manipulate objects.
- The employee must use keyboards, tools and other controls.
- The employee must sit and stand for long periods of time.
- The employee must occasionally work outside.
- The employee must be able to use and move/lift variety of instructional materials in the classroom.
- The employee must be able to see and hear on a continuous basis as well as speak frequently.
- Employee must be able to move quickly from place to place on occasion over smooth to uneven surfaces on the playground or on grass.
- Walk through classroom and be able to maneuver tight spaces, e.g. between desks.
- When dealing with students may entail kneeling, squatting, stooping and bending on an occasional to frequent basis on a given day.
- Requires daily attendance at job.

### **EMOTIONAL DEMANDS**

- Manage the repetitive instructional preparation, review, and grading of student assignments without experiencing undue stress (which leads to emotional detachment from the teaching process and to ineffectiveness in the classroom).

- Maintain high emotional energy and display enthusiasm for the subject matter and individual student effort
- Develop effective coping strategies for dealing with the fatigue and stress of ongoing involvement in teaching, supervising, and monitoring of students.
- Address stressful events created by hostile, confrontational students by remaining calm and listening non-critically, reasoning objectively, and remaining consistent in judgments.
- Ensure that out-of-classroom pressures (personal, home, business) do not interfere with overall effective teaching performance.
- Enhance one's professional teaching commitment with punctuality and attendance (avoiding the “coming late, leave early”, or "often absent" syndrome).
- Realize the need to seek timely professional assistance as necessary to maintain emotional stability and professional standards of conduct.
- Possess emotional openness to constructive feedback from peers, consulting teacher/mentors, and administrators regarding compliance with professional standards.
- Analyze and remedy emotional needs or unresolved conflicts which interfere or preclude adhering to policy, administrative direction or professional standards.
- Requires daily attendance at job.

## ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT - MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY

**Immediate Supervisor:** Principal

**SUMMARY:** To provide clerical support as necessary to ensure completion of required projects at the school site and to perform a variety of responsible data entry, typing and general clerical activities in support of an academic or administrative function.

**ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS:** Incumbent must achieve the following outcomes with or without reasonable accommodation:

- Enroll and register students
- Maintain Student Information System
- Assist Counselors in class scheduling duties.
- Researches data and prepares statistical reports as required.
- Daily record keeping of absences and tardiness.
- Manage sign-in and sign-out sheet for students (must have parent permission until age 18).
- Answers attendance questions.
- Perform a variety of responsible office duties, enter a variety of text or numerical data into a personal computer; enter, update, and maintain accuracy of information.
- Type written materials from straight copy or rough draft utilizing a typewriter or personal computer.
- Perform a variety of clerical duties involving data and information processing of materials and resources.
- Perform routine typing of reports from detailed copy; post records; proof completed typing assignments.
- Maintain records, inventories, index and cross reference files; file data numerically or alphabetically.
- Operate a variety of office equipment, including a personal computer, typewriter, calculator, copier, and other machines pertinent to the assignment.
- Inspect and review documents to assure data is complete before entering into computer or before processing.
- Duplicate items; package and distribute completed copies.
- Assure the timely distribution and receipt of records, reports, and bulletins as directed.
- Make telephone calls as directed; take and relay messages.
- Greet and assist students, faculty, staff, parents, and others; answer phones and refer telephone calls and visitors to appropriate personnel; answer routine questions according to established guidelines.
- Review, check, correct, and compile a variety of information and reports.
- Verify data for accuracy.
- Prepare and maintain a variety of records.
- Organize, process, and print reports and other written materials.
- Process a wide variety of materials such as correspondence, reports, contracts, forms, applications, memoranda, and other documents.
- Provide work directions to others as assigned.

- Independently compose written communication.
- Maintain confidentiality of records and information
- Perform other duties as assigned.

## **KNOWLEDGE**

- Effective communication skills, both verbal and written.
- Flexibility, organization, decision-making and problem solving skills.
- Computer, English, bookkeeping and mathematics skills.
- Interpersonal skills with diverse populations in-person and on the telephone.
- Knowledge of community, computer system, financial and legal requirements.
- Ability to meet deadlines and work on multiple projects.
- Knowledge of word processing, database and spreadsheet software.
- Keyboarding requirement: 50 words per minute.
- Modern office practices, procedures, and equipment.
- Operation of a variety of office machines including personal computer.
- Alphabetical, numerical, and subject matter filing systems.
- Correct English usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary
- Telephone techniques and etiquette.
- Intermediate/advanced working knowledge of Microsoft software
- Modern office practices, procedures, and equipment.
- Correct English usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and vocabulary.
- Operation of a personal computer and a variety of other office equipment including calculators, copiers, and fax machine.

## **ABILITY TO**

- Perform clerical duties such as filing, duplications, typing and maintaining routine records.
- Operate a personal computer, copier, typewriter, adding machine, and fax machine.
- Learn to operate various software applications, including word processing and data entry.
- Understand and follow oral and written directions.
- Work cooperatively with others.
- Complete work with many interruptions
- Work independently with little direction.
- Compose correspondence from verbal direction or from a rough draft independently.

## **EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE**

- Any combination equivalent to graduation from high school supplemented by college course work in business, office practices, or related field and minimum of three (3) years of responsible secretarial experience.

## **WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

The work environment characteristics described here are representative of those an employee encounters while performing the essential functions of this job:

- The incumbent works with various staff members in a team environment including the administrative staff, State Department personnel, legal counsel, parents, students, advocates and others outside the school.
- Frequent interactions with people in person and on the phone will be necessary.
- Travel from location to location may be necessary.
- Duties are primarily performed in a normal school environment.

### **PHYSICAL DEMANDS**

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodation:

- The employee must occasionally lift and move up to 25 pounds in supplies which requires bending, stooping and lifting.
- The employee must have the ability to adjust focus on a computer monitor in order to get information from a variety of information systems.
- The employee must use hands and arms to manipulate objects.
- The employee must use keyboards, tools and other controls.
- The employee must sit and stand for long periods of time.
- The employee must occasionally work outside.
- The employee must have normal vision and hearing with or without aid.
- The employee must be able to move about assigned locations unaided during the day.

***B. Outline the criteria and process that will be used to select the school's leader and the process by which the school leader will be evaluated.***

**Principal Selection Process:**

MCA will recruit individuals for the Principal position through a public process including advertising in local and national newspapers and professional printed media, referrals, and through appropriate electronic recruitment mechanisms.

**Principal Criteria:**

The Principal will be someone who can take charge of academic program and recognize educational expertise. He/she will be experienced in leading an educational organization and be a self-starter. The Principal will be a competent and dedicated teacher with established classroom experience. He or she will be expected to engage in teaching as a role model to other teachers.

***C. Provide a staffing plan for each year of the charter term aligned with the school's projected enrollment as detailed on the cover page of this application.***

The Staffing Planning Assumptions for the school have been developed so that they are consistent with the objectives of the school, the funds made available to operate the school, and the expected school enrollment. These assumptions are detailed in Financial Appendix D. Classroom size limits are taken into consideration so as to ensure that classroom sizes stay within the regulated limits or below. As the school's enrollment is expected to grow, the school staffing requirements will also increase at a corresponding rate.

***D. Explain the school's plan for recruitment, selection, development, and evaluation of staff.***

MCA will require all teachers to meet or exceed the expectations for certification as required by Chapter 1012 and Florida Statutes. The school will comply with all teacher/paraprofessional certification requirements of the Federal No Child Left Behind Act. Parents and the community will be informed of the qualifications of teachers as per the guidelines in the NCLB legislation, and as required by Florida Statutes. MCA will not violate the anti-discrimination provisions of Florida Statutes or the Florida Education Equity Act.

MCA will conduct the necessary background checks and fingerprinting to meet the Florida Statutory employment requirements. An average teacher salary of \$40,000 is used for the first year of the plan. Teachers will be able to receive pay increases on an annual basis. Average benefit contributions for all salaried employees amount to approximately 30%. Employees of the school will have the same rights of collective bargaining as any other public employees. Teacher qualifications will be available in writing for parents and the community.

Recruiting for the staff members will follow the customary policy of locating appropriate sources of staff members needed and inviting qualified candidates to interviews. The Principal will be responsible for the selection of staff members. There are two minimum requirements to be considered for employment as teachers at the Academy:

- (1) State of Florida Certification
- (2) Possessing high moral character

Staff retention will be accomplished by providing competitive salaries and benefits comparable to those provided by surrounding school districts, as well as offering a challenging environment. Staff members will also be involved in the planning and operation of the school under the direction of the Principal.

Instructional staff and paraprofessionals will adhere to the requirements of Florida Statutes and will be certified in the field in which they will be teaching. Instructional staff from other states will have their teaching credentials evaluated by the Florida Department of Education to determine certification eligibility.

**Professional Development:**

The Assistant Principal shall serve at the school's Professional Development Coordinator. Resources in the budget for professional development for both components of MCA (K-8 and 9-12) include the following:

- (1) Consultants/Trainers from Core Knowledge, Singapore Math, Socratic Seminars, and Virtue Instruction/Eight Pillars of Character
- (2) Consultants/trainers from Riggs may be used. Optionally, Riggs can be self-taught using Riggs manuals and teaching materials. Professional Development Opportunities may occur on-site or by attending local, state, and/or national conferences. Core Knowledge provides both lesson plans and an overview of topics for each grade level in the areas of Language Arts, History and Geography, Visual Arts, Music, Mathematics and Science. The Sequence guides teachers in what instructional resources are necessary to be purchased to fully deliver the curriculum. MCA will assure appropriate training and technical assistance so that all school personnel will implement the curriculum correctly and are given the greatest possible support to accomplish this.
- (3) For K-8 teachers implementing the Core Knowledge Sequence, a minimum of five days of Core Knowledge professional development is recommended in the first year of implementation. All staff members will participate in the "Getting Started with the Sequence" for Grades K-8. Likewise, the school administrators and Core Knowledge Coordinators will participate in the Core Knowledge Coordinator and Leadership Institute. These workshops can be scheduled during the school's allotted professional development days throughout the school year, although the first three days will take place in July or August 2014.
- (4) Singapore Math contains different elements that comprise daily lessons (mental math, teacher directed, guided practice, activity, and independent practice) that align with their conceptual and skill building framework to teaching math. What needs to be included in a lesson, how the lesson is introduced and presented, how it progresses from the concrete to the abstract, and how to differentiate for students is clearly presented in a logical

sequence that needs to be followed. Mastery of the material is expected before students move from one level to the next level.

- (5) Singapore Math must be followed with fidelity in order for students to be successful. Teachers are required to be trained in assessing students, placing students in the appropriate skill groups, and in implementing the lessons using the Singapore strategies and methods in Foundations of Number Sense and Foundations of Model Drawing. Teachers are also trained in the implementation of effective Singapore Math Strategies in their classrooms. In addition to building Singapore Math expertise among staff, MCA will provide training to increase Singapore Math capacity within the school by providing models that will utilize resources effectively.
- (6) The Socratic Seminar is a method of teaching designed to engage students in intellectual discussion by responding to questions using questions instead of answers. Prior to conducting a seminar, students are given a text to read. After the text has been read, open-ended questions are asked. Training of MCA teachers will occur in the following areas:
  - (a) What texts to be assigned that will support the mission of the school
  - (b) How to formulate questions that will encourage critical thinking, analyzing meaning, expression of ideas with clarity and confidence
  - (c) Norms for the group to follow
  - (d) How to train students in Socratic Seminar discussions MCA will provide training to staff in Virtue Instruction to include:
    - i. The Eight Pillars of Character
    - ii. Behavior Management
    - iii. Anger management/mediation/conflict resolution programs/bullying
    - iv. Effective communication
    - v. How to integrate opportunities to discuss and model virtuous behavior within the curriculum
    - vi. Discussion techniques (like Socratic Seminars) to teach ethical reasoning
    - vii. Media literacy

Trainers in the stated programs will work in collaboration with the Professional Development Coordinator to provide targeted training in the strategies/methods for each component of the curriculum. As each component of the curriculum is learned, professional development in scaffolding, differentiated instruction, cognitive approaches to learning and strategies to enhance memory need to be target to each program. Staff will learn how to implement these strategies and methods within the context of each of these programs.

As each program is learned, professional development in scaffolding, differentiated instruction, cognitive approaches, strategies to enhance memory, and Socratic Method will be targeted to each program, and staff will learn how to implement those strategies and methods within the context of the programs.

Teachers will need to begin their training during the month of July of 2014 in order to be ready to implement the curriculum when school begins in August of 2014.

After the school year begins, the contract year for teachers each additional year will reflect additional days for Professional Development before the school year begins, during the school year, and after the school year ends. Funds will be allocated for staff to attend relevant conferences and training programs in addition to hiring consultants to provide training at the school site

**Section 11: Education Service Providers**

N/A

**Section 12: Human Resources and Employment**

***A. Explain the school’s compensation plan, including whether staff will be publicly or privately employed.***

MCA will mirror Collier County School District’s pay scale. The following is the instructional salary schedule:

| Bachelors Degree |                                                          |                    |                    |                      |          |
|------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Step             | Initial Placement With the Following Years of Experience | Annual Base Salary | Board Paid Pension | Board Paid Insurance | Total    |
| A                | 0-4                                                      | \$38,198           | \$1,875.52         | \$8,409              | \$48,483 |
| B                | 5                                                        | \$39,344           | \$1,931.79         | \$8,409              | \$49,685 |
| C                | 6                                                        | \$40,663           | \$1,996.55         | \$8,409              | \$51,069 |
| D                | 7                                                        | \$41,984           | \$2,061.41         | \$8,409              | \$52,454 |
| E                | 8                                                        | \$43,304           | \$2,126.23         | \$8,409              | \$53,839 |
| F                | 9                                                        | \$44,623           | \$2,190.99         | \$8,409              | \$55,223 |
| G                | 10                                                       | \$45,943           | \$2,255.80         | \$8,409              | \$56,608 |
| H                | 11                                                       | \$47,264           | \$2,320.66         | \$8,409              | \$57,994 |
| I                | 12                                                       | \$48,583           | \$2,385.43         | \$8,409              | \$59,377 |
| J                | 13                                                       | \$49,904           | \$2,450.29         | \$8,409              | \$60,763 |
| K                | 14                                                       | \$51,224           | \$2,515.10         | \$8,409              | \$62,148 |
| L                | 15                                                       | \$52,544           | \$2,579.91         | \$8,409              | \$63,533 |
| M                | 16                                                       | \$53,864           | \$2,644.72         | \$8,409              | \$64,918 |
| N                | 17                                                       | \$56,900           | \$2,793.79         | \$8,409              | \$68,103 |
| O                | 18                                                       | \$60,576           | \$2,974.28         | \$8,409              | \$71,959 |
| 20 years         |                                                          | \$61,928           | \$3,040.66         | \$8,409              | \$73,378 |
| 21 years         |                                                          | \$62,617           | \$3,074.49         | \$8,409              | \$74,100 |

**ADVANCE DEGREE SUPPLEMENTS**

- Master Degree: \$2,700
- Specialist Degree: \$4,000
- Doctorate Degree: \$5,000
- Certificate of Clinical Competence \$2,000

MCA will be a public employer; and as such, the employees will be enrolled in the Florida Retirement System under F.S. (121.021(34)). All full-time employees will be offered health insurance. MCA will pay 100% of the employee health insurance. Dependent health coverage and dental insurance will also be made available. Dependents’ insurance will be paid by the employee. All employees will be eligible to participate in a 403b plan or the Florida Retirement System. Workers compensation will also be provided.

***B. Describe the personnel policies and procedures to which staff will be required to adhere, including expectations for participation in the school’s professional development program. If personnel policies and procedures have not been developed provide a clear plan, including timeline, for the development and approval by governing board.***

**\*For Personnel Policies and Procedures See Employee Handbook: Appendix D**

**Professional Development:** The Assistant Principal will be responsible for planning professional development opportunities.

Resources in the budget for professional development for both components of MCA (K-8 and 9-12) include:

- Consultants/Trainers from Core Knowledge, Singapore Math, Socratic Seminars, and Virtue Instruction/Eight Pillars of Character. Consultants/trainers from Riggs may be used. Optionally, Riggs can be self-taught using Riggs manuals and teaching materials. Professional Development Opportunities may occur on-site or by attending local, state, and/or national conferences. Core Knowledge provides both lesson plans and an overview of topics for each grade level in the areas of Language Arts, History and Geography, Visual Arts, Music, Mathematics and Science. The Sequence guides teachers in what instructional resources are necessary to be purchased to fully deliver the curriculum. MCA will assure appropriate training and technical assistance so that all school personnel will implement the curriculum correctly and are given the greatest possible support to accomplish this.

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- Norms for the group to follow
- How to train students in Socratic Seminar discussions MCA will provide training to staff in Virtue Instruction to include:
  - The Eight Pillars of Character
  - Behavior Management
  - Anger management/mediation/conflict resolution programs/bullying
  - Effective communication
  - How to integrate opportunities to discuss and model virtuous behavior within the curriculum
  - Discussion techniques (like Socratic Seminars) to teach ethical reasoning
  - Media literacy

Trainers in the stated programs will work in collaboration with the Professional Development Coordinator to provide targeted training in the strategies/methods for each component of the curriculum. As each component of the curriculum is learned, professional development in scaffolding, differentiated instruction, cognitive approaches to learning and strategies to enhance memory need to be target to each program. Staff will learn how to implement these strategies and methods within the context of each of these programs.

As each program is learned, professional development in scaffolding, differentiated instruction, cognitive approaches, strategies to enhance memory, and Socratic Method will be targeted to each program, and staff will learn how to implement those strategies and methods within the context of the programs.

Teachers will need to begin their training during the month of July, 2014 in order to be ready to implement the curriculum when school begins in August 2014.

After the school year begins, the contract year for teachers each additional year will reflect additional days for Professional Development before the school year begins, during the school

year, and after the school year ends. Funds will be allocated for staff to attend relevant conferences and trainings in addition to hiring consultants to provide training at the school site.

## Section 13: Student Recruitment and Enrollment

***A. Describe the plan for recruiting students, including strategies for reaching the school's targeted populations and those that might otherwise not have easy access to information on available educational options.***

MCA plans to attend local education trade shows such as the Back to School Expo and advertise in the Neapolitan Family Magazine, which is a widely circulated free publication. Use of public radio, newspaper and social networking will be utilized. MCA has a website, [masonclassicalacademy.org](http://masonclassicalacademy.org) and once approved will be listed on the Collier County District website. Also, informational meetings will be given at local libraries where the community can learn about Mason Classical Academy and how they can either get involved or register their child.

***B. Explain how the school will achieve a racial/ethnic balance reflective of the community it serves or with the racial/ethnic range of other local public schools.***

All students who meet the State of Florida's eligibility requirements for attending a public school may apply for admission to MCA. MCA does **NOT** discriminate among applicants on the basis of age, disability, gender, ethnic or national origin, religion, or academic standing. If enrollment exceeds the school's class size capacity, then we will indeed perform a random lottery.

***C. Describe the school's enrollment policies and procedures, including an explanation of the enrollment timeline, criteria and/or any preferences for enrollment, and lottery process.***

Opportunities for enrollment will be advertised in local newspapers, on the school's website, distribution of flyers, through focus groups held throughout the year at different locations in the community, and other means deemed appropriate by the Principle and/or Governing Board. Applications for enrollment will be accepted on a first-come first-serve basis. In accordance with the F.S. Chapter 1002.33(10)(d), MCA may give enrollment preference to siblings of students currently enrolled. MCA will begin accepting Lottery Applications in January of 2014. Their first lottery will be held in March with subsequent lotteries held as needed each month (specific date to be determined). MCA will adhere to state laws and regulations and require the following documents when enrolling students:

- Proof of age
- Copy of immunization records
- Special Education information (if appropriate)
- Emergency contact information
- Emergency Medical Authorization
- Health insurance information
- Lunch form (to gather free/reduced lunch data)
- Authorization for Release of Information Form
- Home Language Survey
- Registration forms and any other required by MCA

For the first year, Students accepted in the Lottery will be sent Registration Packets one month prior to the beginning of school. The completed packets will need to be returned by a set

deadline, within two weeks of the start of school, in order to hold the slot. In subsequent years, students will be asked to enroll for the following school year by April 1. Lotteries for the following year will be held in mid-April.

If the number of applications exceeds the number of openings, a lottery process for admission will be instituted for all applicants. Notice of the lottery, including the date and time, will be advertised to the public in the newspaper and to the applicant pool. The Principal, or a designee, will draw numbers for the lottery. The corresponding names are listed in the order they are drawn. All names are drawn and listed in the order of the drawing on the appropriate grade-level roster. After openings are filled, all others are put on a waiting list according to the order of the drawing. A member of the Governing Board as well as a member of the outside community will be present for the drawing. Subsequent lotteries are conducted based upon enrollment needs. Students who are accepted are notified via a letter sent to their homes. Students who do not confirm within the deadline specified in the letter forfeit their right to attend MCA for the year they enrolled. Applications will be accepted on an on-going basis. Applications will be kept on file at the school at all times.

***D. Explain any student and/or family contracts that will be used as a requisite for initial and continued enrollment in the school. Describe if and how the school will enforce such contracts.***

**\*Please see Appendix B for the Family Affirmation.**

If the Affirmation is violated, the principal will schedule a meeting with the parents and student to discuss the issue and review the signed contract. If parents and students are unwilling to comply, the student will be referred to the Governing Board for dismissal.

***E. Explain any other efforts to encourage parental and community involvement, if applicable.***

MCA's rigorous academic program will also be supported by a well-regulated campus that fosters positive student/parent/teacher relationships. Parents will be encouraged to volunteer *4 hours per month* for each K-6<sup>th</sup> grade student they have enrolled, and *1 hour per month* for each 7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade student they have enrolled. Volunteers will play an integral role at MCA and will receive extensive training before assisting in the classroom. The success of every student will depend upon his or her consistent effort and perseverance. The support behind every student will be a unified team of professionals focused on student achievement and committed to educational excellence.

All parents of Mason Classical Academy students are members of what shall be referred to as the Parents Association, which exists to promote friendly relationships among parents, to acquaint them with the spirit of MCA, to obtain their cooperation with its objectives for the development of their children and to initiate the parents' involvement in, and support for, projects and functions that aid the Academy academically, socially and financially. The mission of the MCA Parents Association is:

1. To help the Academy communicate with parents.
2. To help the parents understand the fundamental premises upon which the Academy functions.

3. To help schedule, promote and host student and parent activities.
4. To welcome new parents into the association and to instill in the new parents the need for their continued involvement and support of the Academy.
5. To encourage pride in the children and the Academy.

### III. BUSINESS PLAN

#### Section 14: Facilities

*If the site is not acquired:*

*F. Explain the school's facility needs, including desired location, size, and layout of space.*

A school site has **not** been selected or secured at this time. Therefore, MCA offers the following information regarding its facilities plan. MCA is carefully and thoughtfully pursuing several options which will continue to be explored for its facilities plan. Installing portable classrooms on an improved parcel is the school's current plan for its temporary location. The ideal location would situate the school somewhere west of Collier Boulevard, south of Immokalee Road, east of Tamiami Trail North and north of Tamiami Trail East.

MCA is conceptually considering a facilities plan which brings together four (annual) phases for the school. **Table 1** illustrates the school's enrollment projections, approximate square footage required to adequately meet MCA's proposed educational plan, and costing information for each phase. The costing information is calculated based on the projected expenses related to renting portables.

**Table 1 (FY15)**

| <b>Mason Classical Academy - Facility Sizing Allocations and Costing Information</b> |                       |                           |                          |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
|                                                                                      | <b>Class</b>          | <b>Enrollment</b>         | <b>Room Size (sq ft)</b> |                |
| <b>FY15</b>                                                                          | K                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 1                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 2                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 3                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 4                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 5                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 6                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | Art                   |                           | 1,250                    |                |
|                                                                                      | Music                 |                           | 1,250                    |                |
|                                                                                      | Library               |                           | 2,000                    |                |
|                                                                                      | Nurse's Station       |                           | 280                      |                |
|                                                                                      | Kitchen               |                           | 400                      |                |
|                                                                                      | Cafeteria/Gym         |                           | 5,000                    |                |
|                                                                                      | Student Bathrooms (2) |                           | 800                      |                |
|                                                                                      | Staff Bathrooms (2)   |                           | 400                      |                |
|                                                                                      | Teacher Lounge        |                           | 400                      |                |
|                                                                                      | Lobby/Reception       |                           | 400                      |                |
|                                                                                      | Offices/Work Stations |                           | 800                      |                |
|                                                                                      | Hallways              |                           | 2,000                    |                |
|                                                                                      | Storage               |                           | 500                      |                |
|                                                                                      | Central Halls         |                           | 600                      |                |
|                                                                                      |                       | <b>Total FY15:</b>        | <b>276</b>               | <b>29,880</b>  |
|                                                                                      |                       | <b>Annual Rent Costs:</b> | <b>\$</b>                | <b>358,560</b> |

**Table 1 Continued (FY16)**

| <b>Mason Classical Academy - Facility Sizing Allocations and Costing Information</b> |                       |                           |                          |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
|                                                                                      | <b>Class</b>          | <b>Enrollment</b>         | <b>Room Size (sq ft)</b> |                |
| <b>FY16</b>                                                                          | K                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 1                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 2                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 3                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 4                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 5                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 6                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 7                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 8                     | 22                        | 1,100                    |                |
|                                                                                      | Art                   |                           |                          | 1,250          |
|                                                                                      | Music                 |                           |                          | 1,250          |
|                                                                                      | Library               |                           |                          | 2,000          |
|                                                                                      | Nurse's Station       |                           |                          | 280            |
|                                                                                      | Kitchen               |                           |                          | 400            |
|                                                                                      | Cafeteria/Gym         |                           |                          | 5,000          |
|                                                                                      | Student Bathrooms (4) |                           |                          | 1,600          |
|                                                                                      | Staff Bathrooms (2)   |                           |                          | 400            |
|                                                                                      | Teacher Lounge        |                           |                          | 400            |
|                                                                                      | Lobby/Reception       |                           |                          | 400            |
|                                                                                      | Offices/Work Stations |                           |                          | 800            |
|                                                                                      | Hallways              |                           |                          | 2,000          |
|                                                                                      | Storage               |                           |                          | 500            |
|                                                                                      | Central Halls         |                           |                          | 600            |
|                                                                                      |                       | <b>Total FY16:</b>        | <b>342</b>               | <b>33,980</b>  |
|                                                                                      |                       | <b>Annual Rent Costs:</b> | <b>\$</b>                | <b>407,760</b> |

**Table 1 Continued (FY17)**

| <b>Mason Classical Academy - Facility Sizing Allocations and Costing Information</b> |                           |                    |                          |               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
|                                                                                      | <b>Class</b>              | <b>Enrollment</b>  | <b>Room Size (sq ft)</b> |               |
| <b>FY17</b>                                                                          | K                         | 36                 | 1,800                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 1                         | 36                 | 1,800                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 2                         | 36                 | 1,800                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 3                         | 36                 | 1,800                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 4                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 5                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 6                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 7                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 8                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 9                         | 25                 | 1,250                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 10                        | 25                 | 1,250                    |               |
|                                                                                      | Art                       |                    |                          | 1,250         |
|                                                                                      | Music                     |                    |                          | 1,250         |
|                                                                                      | Library                   |                    |                          | 2,000         |
|                                                                                      | Nurse's Station           |                    |                          | 280           |
|                                                                                      | Kitchen                   |                    |                          | 400           |
|                                                                                      | Cafeteria/Gym             |                    |                          | 5,000         |
|                                                                                      | Student Bathrooms (4)     |                    |                          | 1,600         |
|                                                                                      | Staff Bathrooms (2)       |                    |                          | 400           |
|                                                                                      | Teacher Lounge            |                    |                          | 400           |
|                                                                                      | Lobby/Reception           |                    |                          | 400           |
|                                                                                      | Offices/Work Stations     |                    |                          | 800           |
|                                                                                      | Hallways                  |                    |                          | 2,000         |
|                                                                                      | Storage                   |                    |                          | 500           |
|                                                                                      | Central Halls             |                    |                          | 600           |
|                                                                                      |                           | <b>Total FY17:</b> | <b>414</b>               | <b>37,580</b> |
|                                                                                      | <b>Annual Rent Costs:</b> | <b>\$</b>          | <b>450,960</b>           |               |

**Table 1 Continued (FY18)**

| <b>Mason Classical Academy - Facility Sizing Allocations and Costing Information</b> |                       |                           |                          |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
|                                                                                      | <b>Class</b>          | <b>Enrollment</b>         | <b>Room Size (sq ft)</b> |                |
| <b>FY18</b>                                                                          | K                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 1                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 2                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 3                     | 36                        | 1,800                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 4                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 5                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 6                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 7                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 8                     | 44                        | 2,200                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 9                     | 50                        | 2,500                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 10                    | 25                        | 1,250                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 11                    | 25                        | 1,250                    |                |
|                                                                                      | 12                    | 25                        | 1,250                    |                |
|                                                                                      | Art                   |                           |                          | 1,250          |
|                                                                                      | Music                 |                           |                          | 1,250          |
|                                                                                      | Library               |                           |                          | 2,000          |
|                                                                                      | Nurse's Station       |                           |                          | 280            |
|                                                                                      | Kitchen               |                           |                          | 400            |
|                                                                                      | Cafeteria/Gym         |                           |                          | 5,000          |
|                                                                                      | Student Bathrooms (4) |                           |                          | 1,600          |
|                                                                                      | Staff Bathrooms (2)   |                           |                          | 400            |
|                                                                                      | Teacher Lounge        |                           |                          | 400            |
|                                                                                      | Lobby/Reception       |                           |                          | 400            |
|                                                                                      | Offices/Work Stations |                           |                          | 800            |
|                                                                                      | Hallways              |                           |                          | 2,000          |
|                                                                                      | Storage               |                           |                          | 500            |
|                                                                                      | Central Halls         |                           |                          | 600            |
|                                                                                      |                       | <b>Total FY18:</b>        | <b>417</b>               | <b>37,730</b>  |
|                                                                                      |                       | <b>Annual Rent Costs:</b> | <b>\$</b>                | <b>452,760</b> |

**Table 1 Continued (FY19)**

| <b>Mason Classical Academy - Facility Sizing Allocations and Costing Information</b> |                           |                    |                          |               |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---------------|
|                                                                                      | <b>Class</b>              | <b>Enrollment</b>  | <b>Room Size (sq ft)</b> |               |
| <b>FY19</b>                                                                          | K                         | 36                 | 1,800                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 1                         | 36                 | 1,800                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 2                         | 36                 | 1,800                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 3                         | 36                 | 1,800                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 4                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 5                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 6                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 7                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 8                         | 44                 | 2,200                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 9                         | 50                 | 2,500                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 10                        | 50                 | 2,500                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 11                        | 50                 | 2,500                    |               |
|                                                                                      | 12                        | 50                 | 2,500                    |               |
|                                                                                      | Art                       |                    |                          | 1,250         |
|                                                                                      | Music                     |                    |                          | 1,250         |
|                                                                                      | Library                   |                    |                          | 2,000         |
|                                                                                      | Nurse's Station           |                    |                          | 280           |
|                                                                                      | Kitchen                   |                    |                          | 400           |
|                                                                                      | Cafeteria/Gym             |                    |                          | 5,000         |
|                                                                                      | Student Bathrooms (4)     |                    |                          | 1,600         |
|                                                                                      | Staff Bathrooms (2)       |                    |                          | 400           |
|                                                                                      | Teacher Lounge            |                    |                          | 400           |
|                                                                                      | Lobby/Reception           |                    |                          | 400           |
|                                                                                      | Offices/Work Stations     |                    |                          | 800           |
|                                                                                      | Hallways                  |                    |                          | 2,000         |
|                                                                                      | Storage                   |                    |                          | 500           |
|                                                                                      | Central Halls             |                    |                          | 600           |
|                                                                                      |                           | <b>Total FY19:</b> | <b>564</b>               | <b>45,080</b> |
|                                                                                      | <b>Annual Rent Costs:</b> | <b>\$</b>          | <b>540,960</b>           |               |

Note: There may be classroom size differences between these data and the financial information.

***G. Provide an estimate of the costs of the anticipated facility needs and describe how such estimates have been derived.***

The estimated costs of the school's anticipated facilities needs for the first year are approximately \$495,000. Furniture, equipment, computers and software account for approximately \$95,000 of the first year's facilities budget, while the remaining \$400,000 has been budgeted for rent, utilities, supplies and insurance. These estimates and the rest of MCA's proposed five-year budget were obtained through consultations with School Financial Services, Inc.

***H. Explain the strategy and schedule that will be employed to secure an adequate facility.***

MCA is currently researching several options for a permanent location for the school. In the meantime, a vacant parcel along Collier Boulevard is being given serious consideration for a temporary location. However, no agreement is in place at this time. Installing portable classrooms on an improved parcel is the school's current plan for its temporary location. MCA is in the process of obtaining quotes to determine the cost of the portable classrooms. The temporary site will be chosen before August 1, 2013 to allow sufficient time for improvements and/or modifications to the site/facility before opening day in August of 2014. MCA plans to build its own permanent state-of-the-art campus once enough funds have been raised. But the temporary facilities will be secured with the agreement that the property will be available on a long-term basis, in the event that capital fundraising fails to meet expectations.

Prior to opening, MCA will ensure the facilities are in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and policies. Safety and security requirements will be further analyzed when more specific plans for the facility's location are solidified. When the temporary site is selected, MCA will work with representatives from the Collier County Sheriff's Office, Naples Fire Department, a Collier County School District representative, and the school's administration to help formulate an appropriate crisis response plan and will turn the plan into the District prior to opening in August of 2014. The temporary facilities will comply with the Site Requirements for Education Facilities (SREF) for the state of Florida. The school's facilities will comply with the Florida Building Code, pursuant to Chapter 533; the Collier County Building Code; and the Florida Fire Prevention Codes pursuant to F.S. (633.025). The school will also implement a crisis response plan for the staff and students once the location and facilities plans are finalized.

MCA will begin its capital campaign for its permanent campus as soon as the land is secured for a permanent facility. The costs for the building will be completely financed through private donations, naming rights and grants.

***I. Describe the back-up facilities plan.***

In the event that an improved parcel is not secured for installing portables in time for an August 2014 opening, renting sufficient space is the school's back-up facilities plan. MCA is in the process of contacting local churches and searching commercial office space rental listings in order to locate the most cost-effective adequate temporary back-up location for the school.

***J. Describe the plan and methods the school will employ to comply with Florida's constitutional class size requirements.***

The staffing and enrollment numbers were created based off of the constitutional class size requirements. See Financial Appendix D and E.

## **Section 15: Transportation Service**

*A. Describe the school's plan for transportation, including any plans for contracting services. Your plan should discuss, to the greatest extent possible, the issues relevant to the school's transportation plans.*

MCA will not provide transportation to and from school. If the need arises, the school will contract transportation services. In the case for instructional activities outside of school, transportation will be provided.

## **Section 16: Food Service**

### ***A. Describe the school's plan for food services, including any plans for contracting services or plans to participate in the National School Lunch Program.***

MCA proposes to contract food service with SLA Management; a Florida based foodservice management company dedicated to providing high quality, nutritious, and cost efficient meal programs. All of their school lunches mirror the National School Lunch standards for daily values of protein, vegetables, fruit, dairy and grain. In order to provide an on site, National School Lunch compliant program, MCA will become an approved sponsor with the Florida Department of Education Food and Nutrition Division. SLA Management is a DOE approved Management Company and will assist MCA in becoming an approved sponsor through the application process.

## Section 17: Budget

***A. Provide an operating budget covering each year of the requested charter term that contains revenue projections, expenses and anticipated fund balances. The budget should be based on the projected student enrollment indicated on the cover page of the application.***

Please see budget attached labeled Financial Appendix A. These budgets contain all projected revenue and expenses except for:

- Public Charter School Grant: Because the competitive nature of this grant creates uncertainty as to availability, this potential source of revenue is omitted from these budgets. If grant funds are received, the primary focus will be classroom technology, equipment, furnishings and supplies, as well as staff development activities.
- Supplemental Federal Funds (IDEA, Title I, etc): Even though the school expects to qualify for these funds, they are supplemental to the academic program, each with a specific focus and cannot be used to supplant other expenses of the school. Therefore, these budgets demonstrate that the school will be adequately funded without these funds.

***B. Provide a start-up budget (i.e., from the date on which the application is approved to the beginning of the first fiscal year of operation) that contains a balance sheet revenue projections, expenses and anticipated fund balance.***

Please see budget attached labeled Financial Appendix A. These budgets show financing for start-up costs by a note payable provided by Kelly Lichter.

***C. Provide a detailed narrative description of the revenue and expenditure assumptions on which the operating and start-up budget are based. The budget narrative should provide sufficient information to fully understand how budgetary figures were determined.***

Narrative detail is provided for each line of the budget, included in the attached labeled Financial Appendix B.

These budgets reflect the collaborative effort of the school's founders and School Financial Services, a Florida firm which has worked with Florida charter schools since 2001. By this team effort, these budgets are the product of leveraging the knowledge of the school's vision, environment, and instructional model with the practical value of a decade of accounting and budgeting for charter schools.

The Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP) is the primary revenue source, and is based on the latest available Revenue Estimate Worksheet (as of FY13, 1st Calc) provided by the Florida Department of Education. A modest increase of 1% per year in Years 2-5 is included in these budgets.

As detailed above, expenses also are increased by an inflation factor of 1% per year in Years 2-5. The net effect is that revenue inflation totals 4% and expense inflations total 4% over the five (5) years budgeted.

The largest expenditure, of course, is instructional costs, with the largest portion of instructional costs being instructional salaries and benefits.

The following are schedules referenced in the budget narrative:

Food Service Revenue:

|                                | <u>FY15</u>                              |                                          |                   |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------|
|                                | <u>Free</u>                              | <u>Reduced</u>                           | <u>Full Price</u> |
| Enrollment                     | 276                                      | 276                                      | 276               |
| Participation                  | 85%                                      | 85%                                      | 85%               |
| Meals Served Per Day           | 235                                      | 235                                      | 235               |
| Free & Reduced / Paid          | 54% <span style="color: green;">▼</span> | 6% <span style="color: green;">▼</span>  | 40%               |
| Meals Served Per Day By Group  | 127                                      | 14                                       | 94                |
| Days Per School Year           | 180 <span style="color: green;">▼</span> | 180 <span style="color: green;">▼</span> | 180               |
| Meals Served Per Year By Group | 22,803                                   | 2,534                                    | 16,891            |
| Price + Reim Per Meal          | 1.47                                     | 1.67                                     | 1.77              |
| Revenue                        | <u>33,521</u>                            | <u>4,231</u>                             | <u>29,897</u>     |

|                                | <u>FY16</u>                              |                                          |                   |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------|
|                                | <u>Free</u>                              | <u>Reduced</u>                           | <u>Full Price</u> |
| Enrollment                     | 342                                      | 342                                      | 342               |
| Participation                  | 85%                                      | 85%                                      | 85%               |
| Meals Served Per Day           | 291 <span style="color: green;">▼</span> | 291                                      | 291               |
| Free & Reduced / Paid          | 54% <span style="color: green;">▼</span> | 6% <span style="color: green;">▼</span>  | 40%               |
| Meals Served Per Day By Group  | 157                                      | 17                                       | 116               |
| Days Per School Year           | 180 <span style="color: green;">▼</span> | 180 <span style="color: green;">▼</span> | 180               |
| Meals Served Per Year By Group | 28,256                                   | 3,140                                    | 20,930            |
| Price + Reim Per Meal          | 2.94                                     | 2.94                                     | 1.94              |
| Revenue                        | <u>83,073</u>                            | <u>9,230</u>                             | <u>40,605</u>     |

|                                | FY17        |                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|
|                                | <u>Free</u> | <u>Reduced</u> | <u>Full Price</u> |
| Enrollment                     | 414         | 414            | 414               |
| Participation                  | 85%         | 85%            | 85%               |
| Meals Served Per Day           | 352         | 352            | 352               |
| Free & Reduced / Paid          | 54%         | 6%             | 40%               |
| Meals Served Per Day By Group  | 190         | 21             | 141               |
| Days Per School Year           | 180         | 180            | 180               |
| Meals Served Per Year By Group | 34,205      | 3,801          | 25,337            |
| Price + Reim Per Meal          | 2.94        | 2.94           | 1.94              |
| Revenue                        | 100,562     | 11,174         | 49,153            |

|                                | FY18        |                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------------|
|                                | <u>Free</u> | <u>Reduced</u> | <u>Full Price</u> |
| Enrollment                     | 483         | 483            | 483               |
| Participation                  | 85%         | 85%            | 85%               |
| Meals Served Per Day           | 411         | 411            | 411               |
| Free & Reduced / Paid          | 54%         | 6%             | 40%               |
| Meals Served Per Day By Group  | 222         | 25             | 164               |
| Days Per School Year           | 180         | 180            | 180               |
| Meals Served Per Year By Group | 39,905      | 4,434          | 29,560            |
| Price + Reim Per Meal          | 2.94        | 2.94           | 1.94              |
| Revenue                        | 117,322     | 13,036         | 57,346            |

|                                | FY19           |                |                   |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
|                                | <u>Free</u>    | <u>Reduced</u> | <u>Full Price</u> |
| Enrollment                     | 564            | 564            | 564               |
| Participation                  | 85%            | 85%            | 85%               |
| Meals Served Per Day           | 479            | 479            | 479               |
| Free & Reduced / Paid          | 54%            | 6%             | 40%               |
| Meals Served Per Day By Group  | 259            | 29             | 192               |
| Days Per School Year           | 180            | 180            | 180               |
| Meals Served Per Year By Group | 46,598         | 5,178          | 34,517            |
| Price + Reim Per Meal          | 2.94           | 2.94           | 1.94              |
| Revenue                        | <u>136,997</u> | <u>15,222</u>  | <u>66,963</u>     |

Instructional Function, Computers and Software:

|                                     | <u>FY15</u>          | <u>FY16</u>          | <u>FY17</u>          | <u>FY18</u>          | <u>FY19</u>          |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| New Teachers                        | 16.50                | 6.00                 | 4.00                 | 3.50                 | 6.00                 |
| Computers / Teacher                 | 2                    | 2                    | 2                    | 2                    | 2                    |
| Unit Cost                           | <u>600</u>           | <u>606</u>           | <u>612</u>           | <u>618</u>           | <u>624</u>           |
| <b>Classroom Computers</b>          | <b><u>19,800</u></b> | <b><u>7,272</u></b>  | <b><u>4,896</u></b>  | <b><u>4,327</u></b>  | <b><u>7,492</u></b>  |
| Server                              | 5,000                | -                    |                      |                      |                      |
| Installation / Training             | <u>1,000</u>         | <u>-</u>             | <u>-</u>             | <u>-</u>             | <u>-</u>             |
| <b>General Infrastructure</b>       | <b><u>6,000</u></b>  | <b><u>-</u></b>      | <b><u>-</u></b>      | <b><u>-</u></b>      | <b><u>-</u></b>      |
| Computers in Lab                    | 24                   |                      |                      |                      |                      |
| Unit Cost                           | <u>600</u>           | <u>-</u>             | <u>-</u>             | <u>-</u>             | <u>-</u>             |
| <b>Computer Lab</b>                 | <b><u>14,400</u></b> | <b><u>-</u></b>      | <b><u>-</u></b>      | <b><u>-</u></b>      | <b><u>-</u></b>      |
| Total Computers From Prior Year     | -                    | -                    | 69                   | 77                   | 84                   |
| Installation / Training             | 600                  | 606                  | 612                  | 618                  | 624                  |
| Refresh Factor                      | <u>20%</u>           | <u>20%</u>           | <u>20%</u>           | <u>20%</u>           | <u>20%</u>           |
| <b>Refresh</b>                      | <b><u>-</u></b>      | <b><u>-</u></b>      | <b><u>8,446</u></b>  | <b><u>9,520</u></b>  | <b><u>10,489</u></b> |
| <b>Software</b>                     | <b><u>27,600</u></b> | <b><u>34,200</u></b> | <b><u>41,400</u></b> | <b><u>48,900</u></b> | <b><u>56,400</u></b> |
| <b>Total Computers and Software</b> | <b><u>67,800</u></b> | <b><u>41,472</u></b> | <b><u>54,743</u></b> | <b><u>62,747</u></b> | <b><u>74,382</u></b> |

***D. Explain the school's spending priorities.***

The School's governing board will determine from year to year the specific spending priorities as the budget is adopted. However, the school will approach all fiscal decisions with the focus on delivering the highest quality education possible.

Therefore, the functional spending priorities will be, in order:

- Direct educational delivery for all students, in accordance with all laws, statutes and rules and including the costs of providing for student health and safety.
- Education support activities.
- Administration and other functions.

In summary, should the need arise to make budget adjustments, those items which are essential to the mission of the school will be the highest priority while those items which could be classified as merely helpful will be sacrificed.

***E. Provide monthly cash flow projections for the school's start-up period (i.e. from the date on which the application is approved to the beginning of the first fiscal year of operation) through the first year of operation.***

Please see budget attached labeled Financial Appendix C. Cash flow projections are included for all five years of the initial term of the charter, which exhibit clearly the positive cash flow the school expects to enjoy.

***F. Describe the school's fundraising plan. Report on the current status of any fundraising efforts, including verification of any fundraising monies reported in the school's start-up or operating budgets.***

The school currently neither has plans for a concerted fund-raising effort nor has budgeted revenues from such efforts. Upon establishing a support organization (i.e., PTO) for the school, such possibilities will be investigated and evaluated. We expect any funds generated to be relatively small in comparison to FEFP, and will not allow fund-raising efforts to become such a focus that the instruction of students is compromised. Similarly, no designated gift will be accepted without the approval of the Charter School Board.

## **Section 18: Financial Management and Oversight**

### ***A. Describe who will manage the school's finances and how the school will ensure financial resources are properly managed***

The school will contract with School Financial Services of Bonifay, Florida to provide assistance in the design, development, planning, financing, staffing, maintenance, operations, and fiscal oversight of the school. The relationship between School Financial Services and the school has already been initiated, and will continue through the development of the school and into the operations phase of the school's life. In this way, the school will benefit from the experience and expertise School Financial Services brings to bear.

School Financial Services provides back office accounting services to over 40 charter schools in Florida. The firm limits its practice to charter schools, thereby providing access to knowledgeable, relevant professionals. The school will be working directly with Gary Scott, President of School Financial Services, and Keith Spence, Chief Operating Officer.

School Financial Services uses Cougar Mountain Fund Accounting software, which is specifically designed for not-for-profits. Cougar Mountain has integrated general ledger, accounts payable, payroll, and bank reconciliation functions. The comprehensive nature of this software coupled with the internal controls in place facilitates the recording of transactions by fund, function, and object. This allows for transactions to be recorded accurately and appropriately, including properly identifying purchases of property. Property records are maintained in accordance with state requirements. Source documents supporting transactions are preserved, facilitating the audit process. General ledgers and books of original entry are kept so as to allow financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and in compliance with Redbook.

Having appropriate financial statements will allow the preparation of projections of budget performance and cash balances through the fiscal year, thus allowing the school to adjust activity as necessary to maintain fiscal integrity.

The system as described has undergone numerous audits of dozens of schools by at least 7 different auditors in three states without any finding relating to the accounting system, demonstrating the effectiveness of the process of fiscal management.

School Financial Services will prepare, on an annual basis, a budget outlining all anticipated revenues and expenditures. The budget will be submitted to the governing board for approval. Upon approval, a copy of the budget will be filed with the board minutes for public record, a copy will be held at the school site, and a copy will be provided to School Financial Services.

SFS, on behalf of the School, shall prepare and maintain monthly financial statements, which shall include a balance sheet and a statement of revenues, expenditures and changes in fund balance. The monthly financial statements shall be prepared in accordance with the function/object dimensions prescribed in the Florida DOE publication, Financial and Program Cost Accounting and Reporting for Florida Schools (the "Red Book").

The School shall also prepare and maintain all reports required to be filed with the Government of the United States and the State of Florida. Such reports shall include, but are not limited to, all payroll tax returns and any required filing relating to the School's non-profit status.

***B. Describe the financial controls, including an annual audit and regular board review of financial statements, which will be employed to safeguard finances.***

Internal controls are based on sound practice, such as segregation of duties or compensating controls, use of pre-numbered forms, limited access to cash, and monthly reporting to the Charter School Board and Sponsoring District. The business process also emphasizes the seamless and convenient delivery of service so that school staff can easily comply with internal controls and are able to concentrate on the educational process.

The internal control policy of the School shall be guided by the following broad principles:

- Responsibility will be clearly established.
- Adequate records will be maintained.
- Assets will be insured & inventoried and appropriate employees bonded.
- Adequate procedures for cash receipts, cash disbursements, and record keeping will be in place.
- The School will undergo regular and independent audits.
- Specific internal controls include, but are not limited to:
- Only one primary operating bank account will be maintained by the school (others may be maintained for internal funds)
- The bank statement will be opened intact by the reconciler
- The bank statement will be reconciled by an employee who has access to neither the general ledger nor check-writing system
- Items outstanding for 180 days will be investigated
- All funds will be deposited to the bank account on a daily basis intact or whenever practical. At a minimum, no receipts will go longer than three days without being deposited
- All checks received will be immediately stamped "For Deposit Only"
- Printed, pre-numbered receipts will be issued for all cash received whenever possible
- All disbursements will be made by check (except for minor petty cash disbursements). Printed, pre-numbered checks will be used and voided checks will be maintained to complete the number sequence. (School personnel may be permitted use of a pre-paid debit card for emergency purchases or to facilitate local transactions where a card is required. This account is only resupplied after reconciliation of prior use with a complete and full accounting of expenditures supported by receipts)
- Checks require two signatures
- Checks will not be pre-signed under any circumstances
- Checks for expenses other than payroll will be issued only upon verification by the Principal of receipt of the good or services ordered in good condition and correct quantity. The School may authorize SFS to make disbursements for contracted services, leases, notes payable, ongoing commitments, etc., payables for goods/services that are confirmed as rendered/received by the School and within the limits of the approved budget

- Appropriate documentation will be maintained for disbursements (invoice, contract, etc). All invoices will be reviewed and initialed for approval before a check is issued
- Employees will be paid only upon verification of employment by Charter School Board action
- Appropriate legal forms (W-4, I-9, etc) must be completed prior to employees being paid
- Investment activity will comply with 112.661, FS
- Property will be tagged
- Property will be inventoried at least annually
- Discrepancies in the property inventory will be investigated and reconciled
- Financial statements (see below) will be reviewed by Charter School Board monthly, evidenced by action
- The budget will be approved by the Charter School Board prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, evidenced by action
- Budget amendments will be approved as necessary
- Financial reports will be submitted to the sponsor as required by Charter and Rule
- School financial records, including files for receipts, invoices, bank statements, and cancelled checks will be kept up-to-date and fully accessible at all times
- An annual audit will be conducted by an independent CPA (see below)
- Under no circumstances are school funds to be used for personal benefit or gain or administration or staff

Detailed financial statements will be prepared on a monthly basis for analysis by the Charter School Board. These financial statements will be reviewed by the Charter School Board at monthly meetings and will be submitted to the Sponsoring District for monitoring/review.

The monthly financial statements will be in compliance with Rule 6A-1.0081, F.A.C and include:

- Balance Sheet
- Revenue and Expense Report
- Year-to-date comparison of budgeted vs. actual revenues and expenditures
- Notes to Accompany Financials, to include:
  - Actual enrollment at the time the statement is submitted
  - Projected enrollment for the current school year
  - Notes to the monthly financial statement to include other material information

Additionally, Bank Reconciliation and Bank Registers will be submitted to the Charter School Board along with the financial statements.

Providing further transparency, the Principal and Charter School Board will have access to the bank register and images of paid invoices and checks at any time through an on-line document storage facility.

The School will adhere to the audit selection requirements per Florida Statutes and the Auditor General Requirements and ensure that the Audit Report checklist (§11.45(3)(a), Florida Statutes accompany the audit in a timely manner according to the dates agreed upon for audited and

unaudited reports between the Sponsor and the Board in the Charter. The auditing firm shall be selected by request for proposal (RFP) process and only those firms experienced in audits of charter schools will be considered. The audit will be of assistance to the School's Governing Board in carrying out its responsibility to assure that its financial resources are properly managed.

***C. Describe the method by which accounting records will be maintained.***

In order to provide financial information that is comparable to that reported for other public schools, the school will maintain all financial records in an accounting system that is in accordance with the accounts and codes prescribed in the most recent issue of the publication titled, "Financial and Program Cost Accounting and Reporting for Florida Schools" (Redbook), pursuant to § 1002.33(9)(i)1 of the Charter School Law. Thus, the School's accounting will be consistent with accounting conducted for Florida school districts and will contain a uniform chart of accounts for budgeting and financial reporting. The uniform chart of accounts addresses topics that include governmental accounting standards, program cost accounting, and reporting.

School Financial Services, Inc. is responsible for the financial management of the School, and uses Cougar Mountain Fund Accounting software, which is specifically designed for not-for-profits. Cougar Mountain has integrated general ledger, accounts payable, payroll, and bank reconciliation functions. The comprehensive nature of this software coupled with the internal controls in place facilitates the recording of transactions by fund, function and object. This allows for transactions to be recorded accurately and appropriately, including properly identifying purchases of property. Property records are maintained in accordance with state requirements. Source documents supporting transactions are preserved, facilitating the audit process. General ledgers and books of original entry are kept so as to allow financial statements in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and in compliance with Redbook.

The documents comprising the accounting records will be kept in accordance with the General Records Schedule for Local Government Agencies GS1-L, as authorized by 119 and 257, FS.

***D. Describe how the school will store student and financial records.***

Student and financial records will be kept in accordance with the General Records Schedules GS1-SL and GS7, as authorized by 119 and 257, FS.

"Record" includes any pertinent information, regardless of the media stored upon. Therefore, written record, audio recordings, video recordings, disks, etc, are all considered records.

Student records will be stored in secure, locked, fire-proof cabinets. Confidentiality of student information will be maintained; access will be controlled by a records custodian and limited to specific need and authority. Such access will be logged.

Financial records will be kept in electronic and paper formats. Permanent documents, such as deeds, mortgages, etc, will be kept in secure, locked, fire-proof cabinets.

***E. Describe the insurance coverage the school will obtain, including applicable health, workers compensation, general liability, property insurance and directors and officers liability coverage***

The School will, at its own expense, provide evidence of insurance consistent with the Sponsor's requirements for insurance and in accordance with the time frame for providing that insurance as stated in the charter. The School will only acquire insurance from an insurer (carrier) that is authorized by the Department of Insurance of the State of Florida, or an eligible surplus line insurer under Florida Statutes. The insurer will have an AM Best rating of "A-" or better and financial size category of "IV" or better according to the latest edition of Best's key rating guide published by AM Best Company.

Insurance coverage will be in procured and maintained coverage consistent with the Sponsor's requirements for insurance and expected to be as follows:

**1. Health**

The school will provide health and other group insurances to employees in amounts competitive with other employers.

**2. Worker's Compensation Insurance**

Part 1 as required in Florida Statute and Part II shall have the following limits: \$500,000 each accident; \$500,000 Disease - each employee; and \$500,000 disease – policy limit.

**3. Commercial General Liability Insurance**

One million per occurrence/3 million annual aggregate. The coverage for property damage may be subject to a maximum deductible of \$1,000 per occurrence.

**4. Property Coverage**

Property coverage insurance will be carried on all real and tangible property with a value greater than \$500.

**5. School Leaders Errors and Omissions Insurance**

One million dollars per claim/annual aggregate, maximum \$25,000 deductible.

Additionally, as needed, the school will establish the following coverages:

**1. Fidelity Bonds**

The School will carry fidelity bonds (limits as per charter agreement) on all employees whose duties include receiving or disbursing cash.

**2. Automobile Liability Insurance**

One million per occurrence/3 million annual aggregate including all owned, hired, and non-owned automobiles.

**3. Builder's Risk Insurance**

Insurance equal to the actual replacement cost for construction work.

#### Evaluation Criteria: Financial Management and Oversight

Reviewers will look for:

A clear description of how the school's finances will be managed. The description must include assurances that the governing board retains ultimate control over the school's finances.

A clear description of strong internal controls. The system of internal controls must be sufficient to safeguard finances.

## **Section 19: Action Plan**

*A. Present a timetable for the school's start-up.*

See Appendix C

#### IV. STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the applicant group and submitted with the application for a charter school.

As the authorized representative of the applicant group, I hereby certify under the penalties of perjury that the information submitted in this application for a charter for Mason Classical Academy is accurate and true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further, I certify that, if awarded a charter, the school:

Will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, employment practices and operations.

Will enroll any eligible student who submits a timely application, unless the school receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case students will be admitted through a random selection process.

Will adhere to the antidiscrimination provisions of section 1000.05, F.S.

Will adhere to all applicable provision of state and federal law relating to the education of students with disabilities, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974; and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

Will adhere to all applicable provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient, including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974.

Will participate in the statewide assessment program created under section 1008.22, F.S.

Will comply with Florida statutes relating to public records and public meetings, including Chapter 119, Florida Statutes, and section 286.011, F.S., which are applicable to applicants even prior to being granted a charter.

Will obtain and keep current all necessary permits, licenses and certifications related to fire, health and safety within the building and on school property.

Will provide for an annual financial audit in accordance with section 218.39, F.S.

The governing board, at its discretion, allows Mrs. Kelly Lichter, President to sign as the legal correspondent for the school.

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*Signature*

*Date*

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*Printed Name*

## OVERVIEW OF TOPICS – KINDERGARTEN

### Language Arts

#### I. Listening and Speaking

- A. Classroom Discussion
- B. Presentation of Ideas and Information
- C. Comprehension and Discussion of Read-Alouds — All Texts
- D. Comprehension and Discussion of Read-Alouds — Fiction, Drama, and Poetry
- E. Comprehension and Discussion of Read-Alouds — Nonfiction and Informational Text

#### II. Reading

- A. Print Awareness
- B. Phonological and Phonemic Awareness
- C. Phonics: Decoding and Encoding
- D. Oral Reading and Fluency
- E. Reading Comprehension —All Texts

#### III. Writing

#### IV. Language Conventions

- A. Handwriting and Spelling
- B. Parts of Speech and Sentence Structure
- C. Capitalization and Punctuation

#### V. Poetry

- A. Mother Goose and Other Traditional Poems
- B. Other Poems, Old and New

#### VI. Fiction

- A. Stories
- B. Aesop’s Fables
- C. American Folk Heroes and Tall Tales
- D. Literary Terms

#### VII. Sayings and Phrases

### History and Geography

#### World:

#### I. Geography: Spatial Sense

#### II. An Overview of the Seven Continents

#### American:

- I. Geography
- II. Native American Peoples, Past and Present
- III. Early Exploration and Settlement
  - A. The Voyage of Columbus in 1492
  - B. The Pilgrims
  - C. July 4, “Independence Day”
- IV. Presidents, Past and Present
- V. Symbols and Figures

### **Visual Arts**

- I. Elements of Art
  - A. Color
  - B. Line
- II. Sculpture
- III. Looking at and Talking about Works of Art

### **Music**

- I. Elements of Music
- II. Listening and Understanding
- III. Songs

### **Mathematics**

- I. Patterns and Classification
- II. Numbers and Number Sense
- III. Money
- IV. Computation
- V. Measurement
- VI. Geometry

### **Science**

- I. Plants and Plant Growth
- II. Animals and Their Needs

III. The Human Body

IV. Introduction to Magnetism

V. Seasons and Weather

VI. Taking Care of the Earth

VII. Science Biographies

## OVERVIEW OF TOPICS - GRADE 1

### Language Arts

#### I. Listening and Speaking

- A. Classroom Discussion
- B. Presentation of Ideas and Information
- C. Comprehension and Discussion of Read-Alouds — All Texts
- D. Comprehension and Discussion of Read-Alouds — Fiction, Drama, and Poetry
- E. Comprehension and Discussion of Read-Alouds — Nonfiction and Informational Text

#### II. Reading

- A. Print Awareness
- B. Phonemic Awareness
- C. Phonics: Decoding and Encoding
- D. Oral Reading and Fluency
- E. Reading Comprehension — All Texts
- F. Reading Comprehension — Fiction, Drama, and Poetry
- G. Reading Comprehension — Nonfiction and Informational Text

#### III. Writing

- A. Narrative Writing
- B. Informative/Explanatory Writing
- C. Persuasive Writing (Opinion)

#### IV. Language Conventions

- A. Handwriting and Spelling
- B. Parts of Speech and Sentence Structure
- C. Capitalization and Punctuation

#### V. Poetry

#### VI. Fiction

- A. Stories
- B. Aesop's Fables
- C. Different Lands, Similar Stories
- D. Literary Terms

#### VII. Sayings and Phrases

### History and Geography

#### World:

- I. Geography
  - A. Spatial Sense
  - B. Geographical Terms and Features

- II. Early World Civilizations
  - A. Mesopotamia: The “Cradle of Civilization”
  - B. Ancient Egypt
  - C. History of World Religions

- III. Modern Civilization and Culture: Mexico
  - A. Geography
  - B. Culture

American:

- I. Early People and Civilizations
  - A. The Earliest People: Hunters and Nomads
  - B. Early American Civilizations

- II. Early Exploration and Settlement
  - A. Columbus
  - B. The Conquistadors
  - C. English Settlers

III. From Colonies to Independence: The American Revolution

IV. Early Exploration of the American West

V. Symbols and Figures

### **Visual Arts**

I. Art from Long Ago

- II. Elements of Art
  - A. Color
  - B. Line
  - C. Shape
  - D. Texture

III. Kinds of Pictures: Portrait and Still Life

### **Music**

I. Elements of Music

- II. Listening and Understanding
  - A. Musical Terms and Concepts
  - B. Music Can Tell a Story
  - C. American Musical Traditions (Jazz)

III. Songs

## **Mathematics**

I. Patterns and Classification

II. Numbers and Number Sense

III. Money

IV. Computation

A. Addition

B. Subtraction

C. Solving Problems and Equations

V. Measurement

VI. Geometry

## **Science**

I. Living Things and Their Environments

A. Habitats

B. Oceans and Undersea Life

C. Environmental Change and Habitat Destruction

D. Special Classifications of Animals

II. The Human Body

A. Body Systems

B. Germs, Diseases, and Preventing Illness

III. Matter

IV. Properties of Matter: Measurement

V. Introduction to Electricity

VI. Astronomy

VII. The Earth

A. Geographical Features of the Earth's Surface

B. What's Inside the Earth

VIII. Science Biographies

## OVERVIEW OF TOPICS - GRADE 2

### Language Arts

#### I. Listening and Speaking

- A. Classroom Discussion
- B. Presentation of Ideas and Information
- C. Comprehension and Discussion of Read-Alouds — All Texts
- D. Comprehension and Discussion of Read-Alouds — Fiction, Drama, and Poetry
- E. Comprehension and Discussion of Read-Alouds — Nonfiction and Informational Text

#### II. Reading

- A. Phonics: Decoding and Encoding
- B. Oral Reading and Fluency
- C. Reading Comprehension — All Texts
- D. Reading Comprehension — Fiction, Drama, and Poetry
- E. Reading Comprehension — Nonfiction and Informational Text

#### III. Writing

- A. Narrative Writing
- B. Informative/Explanatory Writing
- C. Persuasive Writing (Opinion)

#### IV. Language Conventions

- A. Spelling
- B. Parts of Speech and Sentence Structure
- C. Capitalization and Punctuation

#### V. Poetry

#### VI. Fiction

- A. Stories
- B. Mythology of Ancient Greece
- C. American Folk Heroes and Tall Tales
- D. Literary Terms

#### VII. Sayings and Phrases

### History and Geography

#### World:

#### I. Geography

- A. Spatial Sense
- B. Geographical Terms and Features

#### II. Early Asian Civilizations

- A. Geography of Asia

- B. India
- C. China

### III. Modern Japanese Civilization

- A. Geography
- B. Culture

### IV. The Ancient Greek Civilization

American:

#### I. American Government: The Constitution

#### II. The War of 1812

#### III. Westward Expansion

- A. Pioneers Head West
- B. Native Americans

#### IV. The Civil War

#### V. Immigration and Citizenship

#### VI. Fighting for a Cause

#### VII. Geography of the Americas

- A. North America
- B. South America

#### VIII. Symbols and Figures

### **Visual Arts**

#### I. Elements of Art

#### II. Sculpture

#### III. Kinds of Pictures: Landscapes

#### IV. Abstract Art

#### V. Architecture

### **Music**

#### I. Elements of Music

- II. Listening and Understanding
  - A. The Orchestra
  - B. Keyboard Instruments
  - C. Composers and Their Music

- III. Songs

**Mathematics**

- I. Numbers and Number Sense

- II. Fractions

- III. Money

- IV. Computation

- A. Addition
- B. Subtraction
- C. Introduction to Multiplication
- D. Solving Problems and Equations

- V. Measurement

- A. Linear Measure
- B. Weight
- C. Capacity (Volume)
- D. Temperature
- E. Time

- VI. Geometry

**Science**

- I. Cycles in Nature

- A. Seasonal Cycles
- B. Life Cycles
- C. The Water Cycle

- II. Insects

- III. The Human Body

- A. Cells
- B. Digestive and Excretory Systems
- C. Taking Care of Your Body: A Healthy Diet

- IV. Magnetism

- V. Simple Machines

- VI. Science Biographies

## OVERVIEW OF TOPICS GRADE – 3

### Language Arts

- I. Reading and Writing
  - A. Reading Comprehension and Response
  - B. Writing
  - C. Spelling, Grammar, and Usage
  - D. Vocabulary

- II. Poetry

- III. Fiction

- A. Stories
- B. Myths and Mythical Characters
- C. Literary Terms

- IV. Sayings and Phrases

### History and Geography

#### World:

- I. World Geography
  - A. Spatial Sense
  - B. Geographical Terms and Features
  - C. Canada
  - D. Important Rivers of the World
- II. The Ancient Roman Civilization
  - A. Geography of the Mediterranean Region
  - B. Background
  - C. The Empire
  - D. The “Decline and Fall” of Rome
  - E. The Eastern Roman Empire: Byzantine Civilization

- III. The Vikings

#### American:

- I. The Earliest Americans
  - A. Crossing from Asia to North America
  - B. Native Americans
- II. Early Exploration of North America
  - A. Early Spanish Exploration and Settlement
  - B. Exploration and Settlement of the American Southwest
  - C. The Search for the Northwest Passage
- III. The Thirteen Colonies: Life and Times Before the Revolution

- A. Geography
- B. Southern Colonies
- C. New England Colonies
- D. Middle Atlantic Colonies

## **Visual Arts**

- I. Elements of Art
  - A. Light
  - B. Space in Artworks
  - C. Design: How the Elements of Art Work Together

- II. American Indian Art

- III. Art of Ancient Rome and Byzantine Civilization

## **Music**

- I. Elements of Music
- II. Listening and Understanding
  - A. The Orchestra
  - B. Composers and Their Music
  - C. Musical Connections

- III. Songs

## **Mathematics**

- I. Numbers and Number Sense
- II. Fractions and Decimals
- III. Money
- IV. Computation
  - A. Addition
  - B. Subtraction
  - C. Multiplication
  - D. Division
  - E. Solving Problems and Equations
- V. Measurement
  - A. Linear Measure
  - B. Weight
  - C. Capacity (Volume)
  - D. Temperature
  - E. Time
- VI. Geometry

## **Science**

I. Introduction to Classification of Animals

II. The Human Body

- A. The Muscular System
- B. The Skeletal System
- C. The Nervous System
- D. Vision: How the Eye Works
- E. Hearing: How the Ear Works

III. Light and Optics

IV. Sound

V. Ecology

VI. Astronomy

VII. Science Biographies

## OVERVIEW OF TOPICS GRADE – 4

### **Language Arts**

#### I. Writing, Grammar, and Usage

- A. Writing and Research
- B. Grammar and Usage

#### II. Poetry

- A. Poems
- B. Terms

#### III. Fiction

- A. Stories
- B. Myths and Mythical Characters
- C. Literary Terms

#### IV. Speeches

#### V. Sayings and Phrases

### **History and Geography**

#### World:

#### I. World Geography

- A. Spatial Sense
- B. Mountains and Mountain Ranges

#### II. Europe in the Middle Ages

- A. Geography Related to the Development of Western Europe
- B. Background
- C. Developments in History of the Christian Church
- D. Feudalism
- E. The Norman Conquest
- F. Growth of Towns
- G. England in the Middle Ages

#### III. The Spread of Islam and the “Holy Wars”

- A. Islam
- B. Development of Islamic Civilization
- C. Wars Between Muslims and Christians

#### IV. Early and Medieval African Kingdoms

- A. Geography of Africa
- B. Early African Kingdoms
- C. Medieval Kingdoms of the Sudan

#### V. China: Dynasties and Conquerors

American:

I. The American Revolution

- A. Background: The French and Indian War
- B. Causes and Provocations
- C. The Revolution

II. Making a Constitutional Government

- A. Main Ideas Behind the Declaration of Independence
- B. Making a New Government: From the Declaration to the Constitution
- C. The Constitution of the United States
- D. Levels and Functions of Government (National, State, Local)

III. Early Presidents and Politics

IV. Reformers

V. Symbols and Figures

**Visual Arts**

I. Art of the Middle Ages in Europe

II. Islamic Art and Architecture

III. The Art of Africa

IV. The Art of China

V. The Art of a New Nation: The United States

**Music**

I. Elements of Music

II. Listening and Understanding

- A. The Orchestra
- B. Vocal Ranges
- C. Composers and Their Music
- D. Musical Connections

III. Songs

**Mathematics**

I. Numbers and Number Sense

II. Fractions and Decimals

- A. Fractions

B. Decimals

III. Money

IV. Computation

A. Multiplication

B. Division

C. Solving Problems and Equations

V. Measurement

VI. Geometry

**Science**

I. The Human Body

A. The Circulatory System

B. The Respiratory System

II. Chemistry: Basic Terms and Concepts

A. Atoms

B. Properties of Matter

C. Elements

D. Solutions

III. Electricity

IV. Geology: The Earth and Its Changes

A. The Earth's Layers

B. How Mountains Are Formed

C. Rocks

D. Weathering and Erosion

V. Meteorology

VI. Science Biographies

## OVERVIEW OF TOPICS GRADE – 5

### **Language Arts**

#### I. Writing, Grammar, and Usage

- A. Writing and Research
- B. Grammar and Usage
- C. Vocabulary

#### II. Poetry

- A. Poems
- B. Terms

#### III. Fiction and Drama

- A. Stories
- B. Drama
- C. Myths and Legends
- D. Literary Terms

#### IV. Speeches

#### V. Sayings and Phrases

### **History and Geography**

#### World:

#### I. World Geography

- A. Spatial Sense
- B. Great Lakes of the World

#### II. Early American Civilizations

- A. Geography
- B. Maya, Aztec and Inca Civilizations
- C. Spanish Conquerors

#### III. European Exploration, Trade, and the Clash of Cultures

- A. Background
- B. European Exploration

#### IV. The Renaissance and the Reformation

- A. The Renaissance
- B. The Reformation

#### V. England from the Golden Age to the Glorious Revolution

- A. England in the Golden Age
- B. From the English Revolution to the Glorious Revolution

#### VI. Russia: Early Growth and Expansion

- A. Geography
- B. History and Culture

## VII. Feudal Japan

- A. Geography
- B. History and Culture

## American:

### I. Westward Expansion

- A. Westward Expansion before the Civil War
- B. Westward Expansion after the Civil War

### II. The Civil War: Causes, Conflicts, Consequences

- A. Toward the Civil War
- B. The Civil War
- C. Reconstruction

### III. Native Americans: Cultures and Conflicts

- A. Culture and Life
- B. American Government Policies
- C. Conflicts

### IV. U. S. Geography

## **Visual Arts**

### I. Art of the Renaissance

### II. American Art: Nineteenth-Century United States

### III. Art of Japan

## **Music**

### I. Elements of Music

### II. Listening and Understanding

- A. Composers and Their Music
- B. Musical Connections

### III. American Musical Traditions (Spirituals)

### IV. Songs

## **Mathematics**

### I. Numbers and Number Sense

### II. Ratio and Percent

- A. Ratio
- B. Percent

III. Fractions and Decimals

- A. Fractions
- B. Decimals

IV. Computation

- A. Addition
- B. Multiplication
- C. Division
- D. Solving Problems and Equations

V. Measurement

VI. Geometry

VII. Probability and Statistics

VIII. Pre-Algebra

**Science**

I. Classifying Living Things

II. Cells: Structures and Processes

III. Plant Structures and Processes

- A. Structure: Non-Vascular and Vascular Plants
- B. Photosynthesis
- C. Reproduction

IV. Life Cycles and Reproduction

- A. The Life Cycle and Reproduction
- B. Sexual Reproduction in Animals

V. The Human Body

- A. Changes in Human Adolescence
- B. The Endocrine System
- C. The Reproductive System

VI. Chemistry: Matter and Change

- A. Atoms, Molecules, and Compounds
- B. Elements
- C. Chemical and Physical Change

VII. Science Biographies

## OVERVIEW OF TOPICS GRADE – 6

### **English**

#### I. Writing, Grammar, and Usage

- A. Writing and Research
- B. Speaking and Listening
- C. Grammar and Usage
- D. Spelling
- E. Vocabulary

#### II. Poetry

- A. Poems
- B. Terms

#### III. Fiction and Drama

- A. Stories
- B. Drama
- C. Classical Mythology
- D. Literary Terms

#### IV. Sayings and Phrases

### **History and Geography**

#### World:

#### I. World Geography

- A. Spatial Sense
- B. Great Deserts of the World

#### II. Lasting Ideas from Ancient Civilizations

- A. Judaism and Christianity
- B. Ancient Greece
- C. Ancient Rome

#### III. The Enlightenment

#### IV. The French Revolution

#### V. Romanticism

#### VI. Industrialism, Capitalism, and Socialism

- A. The Industrial Revolution
- B. Capitalism
- C. Socialism

#### VII. Latin American Independence Movements

- A. History

## B. Geography of Latin America

American:

### I. Immigration, Industrialization, and Urbanization

A. Immigration

B. Industrialization and Urbanization

### II. Reform

## **Visual Arts**

### I. Art History: Periods and Schools

A. Classical Art: The Art of Ancient Greece and Rome

B. Gothic Art

C. The Renaissance

D. Baroque

E. Rococo

F. Neoclassical

G. Romantic

H. Realism

## **Music**

### I. Elements of Music

### II. Classical Music: From Baroque to Romantic

A. Baroque

B. Classical

C. Romantic

## **Mathematics**

### I. Numbers and Number Sense

### II. Ratio, Percent, and Proportion

A. Ratio and Proportion

B. Percent

### III. Computation

A. Addition

B. Multiplication

C. Division

D. Solving Problems and Equations

### IV. Measurement

### V. Geometry

### VI. Probability and Statistics

VII. Pre-Algebra

**Science**

I. Plate Tectonics

II. Oceans

III. Astronomy: Gravity, Stars, and Galaxies

IV. Energy, Heat, and Energy Transfer

A. Energy

B. Heat

C. Physical Change: Energy Transfer

V. The Human Body: Lymphatic and Immune Systems

VI. Science Biographies

## OVERVIEW OF TOPICS GRADE – 7

### English

#### I. Writing, Grammar, and Usage

- A. Writing and Research
- B. Speaking and Listening
- C. Grammar
- D. Spelling
- E. Vocabulary

#### II. Poetry

- A. Poems
- B. Elements of Poetry

#### III. Fiction, Nonfiction, and Drama

- A. Short Stories
- B. Novels
- C. Elements of Fiction
- D. Essays and Speeches
- E. Autobiography
- F. Drama
- G. Literary Terms

#### IV. Foreign Phrases Commonly Used in English

### History and Geography

#### I. America Becomes a World Power

#### II. World War I: “The Great War,” 1914–1918

- A. History
- B. Geography of Western and Central Europe

#### III. The Russian Revolution

- A. History
- B. Geography

#### IV. America from the Twenties to the New Deal

- A. America in the Twenties
- B. The Great Depression
- C. Roosevelt and the New Deal

#### V. World War II

- A. The Rise of Totalitarianism in Europe
- B. World War II in Europe and at Home, 1939–45
- C. World War II in the Pacific, and the End of the War

## VI. Geography of the United States

### **Visual Arts**

- I. Art History: Periods and Schools
  - A. Impressionism
  - B. Post-Impressionism
  - C. Expressionism and Abstraction
  - D. Modern American Painting

### **Music**

- I. Elements of Music
  
- II. Classical Music: Romantics and Nationalists
  - A. Romantic Composers and Works
  - B. Music and National Identity
  
- III. American Musical Traditions (Blues and Jazz)

### **Mathematics**

- I. Pre-Algebra
  - A. Properties of the Real Numbers
  - B. Linear Applications and Proportionality
  - C. Polynomial Arithmetic
  - D. Equivalent Equations and Inequalities
  - E. Integer Exponents
  
- II. Geometry
  - A. Three-Dimensional Objects
  - B. Angle Pairs
  - C. Triangles
  - D. Measurement
  
- III. Probability and Statistics

### **Science**

- I. Atomic Structure
  
- II. Chemical Bonds and Reactions
  
- III. Cell Division and Genetics
  
- IV. History of the Earth and Life Forms
  - A. Paleontology
  - B. Geologic Time
  
- V. Evolution

- A. Evolution
- B. Natural Selection
- C. Extinction and Speciation

## VI. Science Biographies

## OVERVIEW OF TOPICS GRADE – 8

### English

#### I. Writing, Grammar, and Usage

- A. Writing and Research
- B. Speaking and Listening
- C. Grammar
- D. Spelling
- E. Vocabulary

#### II. Poetry

- A. Poems
- B. Elements of Poetry

#### III. Fiction, Nonfiction, and Drama

- A. Short Stories
- B. Novels
- C. Elements of Fiction
- D. Essays and Speeches
- E. Autobiography
- F. Drama
- G. Literary Terms

#### IV. Foreign Phrases Commonly Used in English

### **History and Geography**

#### I. The Decline of European Colonialism

- A. Breakup of the British Empire
- B. Creation of the People's Republic of China

#### II. The Cold War

- A. Origins of the Cold War
- B. The Korean War
- C. America in the Cold War

#### III. The Civil Rights Movement

#### IV. The Vietnam War and the Rise of Social Activism

- A. The Vietnam War
- B. Social and Environmental Activism

#### V. The Middle East and Oil Politics

- A. History
- B. Geography of the Middle East

#### VI. The End of the Cold War: The Expansion of Democracy and Continuing Challenges

- A. The American Policy of Detente
- B. Breakup of the USSR
- C. China under Communism
- D. Contemporary Europe
- E. The End of Apartheid in South Africa

VII. Civics: The Constitution — Principles and Structure of American Democracy

VIII. Geography of Canada and Mexico

### **Visual Arts**

- I. Art History: Periods and Schools
  - A. Painting Since World War II
  - B. Photography
  - C. 20th-Century Sculpture
- II. Architecture Since the Industrial Revolution

### **Music**

- I. Elements of Music
- II. Non-Western Music
- III. Classical Music: Nationalists and Moderns
  - A. Music and National Identity
  - B. Modern Music
- IV. Vocal Music
  - A. Opera
  - B. American Musical Theater

### **Mathematics**

- I. Algebra
  - A. Properties of the Real Numbers
  - B. Relations, Functions, and Graphs (Two Variables)
  - C. Linear Equations and Functions (Two Variables)
  - D. Arithmetic of Rational Expression
  - E. Quadratic Equations and Functions
- II. Geometry
  - A. Analytic Geometry
  - B. Introduction to Trigonometry
  - C. Triangles and Proofs

## **Science**

### **I. Physics**

- A Motion
- B. Forces
- C. Density and Buoyancy
- D. Work
- E. Energy
- F. Power

### **II. Electricity and Magnetism**

### **III. Electromagnetic Radiation and Light**

### **IV. Sound Waves**

### **V. Chemistry of Food and Respiration**

### **VI. Science Biographies**

## SINGAPORE MATH SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

### **About the Singapore Math Scope and Sequence:**

Listed below are the mathematics topics for each grade level.

### **PRIMARY 1**

#### **Whole Numbers**

- 1) Number and Notation and Place Values
- 2) Cardinal and Ordinal numbers
- 3) Comparing and Ordering of Numbers
- 4) Addition and subtraction of single and 2- digit numbers
- 5) Multiplication (multiplication of numbers whose product is not great than 40.
- 6) Division -- dividing numbers not greater than 20.

#### **Money and Measures**

- 1) Measurement of length and mass
- 2) Time
- 3) Money

#### **Statistics**

- 1) Picture Graphs

#### **Geometry**

- 1) Shapes
- 2) Patterns

## PRIMARY 2

### **Whole Numbers**

- 1) Number notation and place values
- 2) Addition and Subtraction of two numbers up to 3 digits
- 3) Multiplication and division within the 2,3,4,5, and 10 times table
- 4) Word Problems (solving 1 step word problems **involving** the four operations)

### **Money and Measures**

- 1) Measurement of length, mass and volume -- estimating and measuring using metric system of measures
- 2) Addition and subtraction of length, mass and volume
- 3) Time -- tell and write time from the clock
- 4) Addition and Subtraction of Money) 1-step Word Problems involving length, mass, volume and money.

### **Statistics**

- 1) Pictures and graphs using scale representations, solve problems using information in picture graphs

## PRIMARY 3

### Whole Numbers

- 1) Number Notation and Place Values -- reading and writing numbers up to 10,000
- 2) Addition and Subtraction of number up to 4 digits
- 3) Multiplication tables up to  $10 \times 10$
- 4) Multiplication and Division by a 1 digit number
- 5) Odd and Even numbers
- 6) Word problems using 2 steps and the four operations on whole numbers

### Money and Measures

- 1) Units of Measures -- standard numbers and measuring in compound units for length, mass, time, area and volume, conversions of units
- 2) Addition and Subtraction of length, mass, volume and time.
- 3) Addition and Subtraction of money and measures in compound units using decimal notation
- 4) Word Problems using 2-steps involving money and measures
- 5) Perimeter of a Rectilinear Figure
- 6) Area and Perimeter of a Square and a Rectangle

### Statistics

- 1) Bar Graphs

### Fractions

- 1) Equivalent Fractions
- 2) Comparing and Ordering Fractions

### Geometry

- 1) Concepts of Angles

## PRIMARY 4

### Whole Numbers

- 1) Number and Notation and place value up to 100,000
- 2) Approximation and estimation to nearest 10 and 100, estimations involving addition, subtraction and multiplication
- 3) Factors and multiples up to 100
- 4) Multiplication by a number up to 2 digits
- 5) Division by a 1-digit number and by 10
- 6) Word problems using 3 steps involving whole numbers

### Money and Measures

- 1) Multiplication and division of length, mass, volume and time
- 2) Multiplication and division of money
- 3) Units of measure for volume
- 4) Volume of a cube/cuboid and liquid
- 5) Area and Perimeter of a square, rectangle and related figures
- 6) Word problems involving volume

### Statistics

- 1) Tables
- 2) Bar Graphs
- 3) Word Problems using data from bar graphs

### Fractions

- 1) Addition and Subtraction
- 2) Product of a proper fraction and a whole number
- 3) Mixed numbers and improper fractions
- 4) Word problems - 2-step word problems involving fractions

### Decimals

- 1) Number notation and place value
- 2) Addition and Subtraction
- 3) Multiplication and division decimals up to 2 decimal places and 1-digit whole number
- 4) Conversion between decimals and fractions
- 5) Approximation and estimation
- 6) Word problems involving decimals

### Geometry

- 1) Perpendicular and parallel lines
- 2) Angles in degrees
- 3) Symmetry
- 4) Geometric Figures -- understanding different triangles and quadrilateral figures
- 5) Properties of a square and rectangle
- 6) 2-D representation of a 3-d solid

## PRIMARY 5 -EM1/2

### **Whole Numbers**

- 1) Number notation and place values up to 10 million
- 2) Multiplication and division up to 4 digits by a 2-digit number
- 3) Factors and multiples
- 4) Order of operations
- 5) Word problems using whole numbers

### **Mensuration** (the act or process of measuring)

- 1) Conversion of measurements involving decimals and fractions
- 2) Volume of a cube/cuboid - finding the edge of a cube
- 3) Area of a triangle

### **Statistics**

- 1) Line graphs

### **Fractions**

- 1) Addition and subtraction
- 2) Product of fractions
- 3) Concept of fraction as division
- 4) Division of a proper fraction by a whole number
- 5) Word problems involving fractions

### **Decimals**

- 1) Multiplication and division of decimals up to 3 decimal places

### **Geometry**

- 1) Angles
- 2) 8-point compass
- 3) Properties of a parallelogram, rhombus, trapezium, and a triangle
- 4) Geometrical Constructions
- 5) Tessellations

### **Average, Rate and Speed**

- 1) Calculating averages
- 2) Calculating rate
- 3) Word problems involving average and rate

### **Ratio and Proportion**

- 1) Ratio recognition and interpretation, word problems using ratios

### **Percentages**

- 1) Concept of percent - change fractions and decimals to percentages and visa versa, express a part of a whole as a percent.
- 2) Percentage of a quantity

### 3) Two step problems using percentage

## **PRIMARY 6 - EM1/EM2 STREAM**

### **Mensuration** (the act or process of measuring)

- 1) Area and circumference of a circle
- 2) Area and perimeter of a figure related to square, rectangle, triangle and circle
- 3) Volume of a solid made up of cubes/cuboids and volume of liquids

### **Statistics**

- 1) Pie charts

### **Geometry**

- 1) Angles in geometric figures
- 2) 2-D representation of a 3-D solid, visualize a prism and pyramid from drawings
- 3) Nets, identify nets of cubes, prism, pyramid

### **Average, Rate and Speed**

- 1) Time using the 24 hour clock
- 2) Speed, distance and time
- 3) Word problems using average, rate and speed

### **Ratios and Proportion**

- 1) Ratio and direct proportion

### **Percentage**

- 1) One quantity as a percentage of another

### **Algebra**

- 1) Algebraic expression in one variable

## SECONDARY ONE LEVEL O

### **Numbers and Algebra**

- 1) Numbers and the four operations, negative numbers, rational numbers, using of greater, less than symbols
- 2) Ratio, rate and proportions
- 3) Percentage including expressing one quantity as a percentage of another, problems involving percentages
- 4) Speed, concepts of speed, average speed, conversion of units
- 5) Algebraic representation and formulae
- 6) Algebraic manipulation
- 7) Functions and graphs
- 8) Solutions of equations and inequalities

### **Geometry and Measurement**

Angles, triangles and polygons including classifications and constructions

### **Statistics and Probability**

Data handling

## **SECONDARY TWO LEVEL O**

### **Numbers and Algebra**

- 1) Ratio, rate and proportion including map scales and direct/indirect proportions
- 2) Algebraic manipulation including factorization, addition, subtraction, multiplication of fractions
- 3) Functions and graphs including quadratic functions
- 4) Solutions of equations including simultaneous linear equations
- 5) Set language and notation

### **Geometry and Measurement**

- 1) Congruence and similarity
- 2) Pythagorean Theorem
- 3) Mensuration including volume and surface area of pyramid, cone and sphere

### **Statistics and Probability**

- 1) Data analysis - mean, mode and median
- 2) Simple probability problems

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_

AN AFFIRMATION

We the families and staff of Mason Classical Academy affirm the following:

**THE ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT:**

The mission of Mason Classical Academy is to develop within its students the intellectual and personal habits, values, and skills upon which responsible, independent, and productive lives are built, in the firm belief that such lives are the basis of a free and just society. The Academy prepares its students to be leaders in their homes and communities, entrepreneurs in business, and statesmen in government. Through its rigorous curriculum with a strong emphasis in civics, Mason Classical Academy provides a traditional education with a constant view towards developing exceptional American citizens.

**ACADEMY LIFE:**

Students and parents respect Mason Classical Academy teachers, as role models and instructors, for their commitment to truth and their genuine concern for children. Intelligence, creativity, responsibility, and loyalty are characteristics of the faculty.

Parents expect and appreciate direct and regular communication from faculty regarding their children. Reciprocally, parents are responsive to suggestions from teachers and administrators for helping students.

The principal oversees the implementation of the Mission Statement in the school. In their capacity as policy-maker and community leader, this administrator advances the Academy's role as an institution dedicated to providing the best education for children.

By providing moral and ethical standards, the Academy prepares its students to accept the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society. Every child is capable of achieving his potential to the fullest extent when afforded respect, fairness, kindness, discipline, and appropriate instruction.

**THEREFORE WE SUPPORT** the Mission Statement as it is expressed in the curriculum and school culture of the Academy. We uphold the Student/Parent Handbook. This includes support of the high academic standards of our school; the uniform code, the code of discipline, the code of good sportsmanship in athletics; and general culture of respect for the administration, teachers, and students of Mason Classical Academy.

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Mason Classical Academy Start-up Two Year Process Overview

|                         | <b>Application and Approval</b><br>May-October 2012                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Preparing to Open</b><br>Year One (2012-2013)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Who</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founding Board</li> <li>• Sponsor</li> <li>• DOE Charter Schools Office</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founding Board</li> <li>• Sponsor</li> <li>• DOE Charter Schools Office</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>What</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Application</li> <li>• Submit draft application to Sponsor for feedback</li> <li>• Make final revisions</li> <li>• Apply for nonprofit status</li> <li>• Recruit Governing Board Directors</li> <li>• Continue to consult district charter specialists</li> <li>• Incorporate</li> <li>• Write business plan</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with sponsor to develop contract</li> <li>• Formalize organization</li> <li>• Apply for CSP Startup Grant and other funding</li> <li>• Attend post-application training</li> <li>• Review and finalize bylaws and policies</li> <li>• Market the school</li> <li>• Fundraising</li> </ul> |
| <b>Deadlines Events</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August 1 application deadline</li> <li>• Sponsor has 60 days to review</li> <li>• Hillsdale Classical Charter School Conference (June 2012)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contract</li> <li>• Florida Charter School Conference- November</li> <li>• Hillsdale Classical Charter School Conference (June 2013)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                |

|                         | <b>Preparing to Open</b><br>Year Two (2013-2014)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Who</b>              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Founding Board</li> <li>• Sponsor</li> <li>• DOE Charter Schools Office</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>What</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board Governance Training</li> <li>• Apply for CSP Startup Grant and other funding</li> <li>• Market the school</li> <li>• Fundraising</li> <li>• Find location and prepare facility</li> <li>• Recruit, hire and train administration, faculty and staff</li> <li>• Create systems for administrative functions</li> <li>• Acquire equipment, supplies, instructional materials</li> <li>• Develop academic calendar, class schedules</li> </ul> |
| <b>Deadlines Events</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Governance Training</li> <li>• Classical Recruitment Fair at Hillsdale (February 2014)</li> <li>• Hillsdale Classical Charter School Conference (June 2014)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |

**SCHOOL'S PROPOSED PERSONNEL POLICIES**

**THIS IS INTENDED AS A DRAFT HANDBOOK TO DESCRIBE EMPLOYEE POLICIES FOR THE PROPOSED NEW CHARTER MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY. THE GOVERNING BOARD ALONG WITH ITS ADMINISTRATOR AND STAFF, IF RELEVANT, WILL DETERMINE WHAT PRACTICES, WHERE NOT MANDATED OTHERWISE BY LAW, SHOULD BE REVISED TO FIT THE MCA'S INTENDED ENVIRONMENT AND PRACTICES. THE GOVERNING BOARD WILL ALSO, DURING THE PLANNING YEAR, HAVE A PROFESSIONAL – VERSED IN HUMAN RESOURCES LAW AND PRACTICES, REVIEW THE HANDBOOK TO ENSURE THAT IT IS UP TO DATE WITH THE MOST RECENT APPLICABLE LAWS AND REGULATIONS.**

**DRAFT  
EMPLOYEE  
HANDBOOK**

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*Note: Pagination is not as indicated since this is an appendix and part of a master document.*

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## APPENDICES

### Certification of Receipt of MCA Employee Handbook

#### I. OVERVIEW OF MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY

**A. Mission:** The mission of Mason Classical Academy is to develop within its students the intellectual and personal habits, values, and skills upon which responsible, independent, and productive lives are built, in the firm belief that such lives are the basis of a free and just society. The Academy prepares its students to be leaders in their homes and communities, entrepreneurs in business, and statesmen in government. Through its rigorous curriculum with a strong emphasis in civics, Mason Classical Academy provides a traditional education with a constant view towards developing exceptional American citizens

**B. MCA Working Environment:** MCA endeavors to create a friendly working environment for all employees. In pursuit of this goal, MCA has adopted the following employee relations objectives:

1. Provide an exciting, challenging, and rewarding workplace and experience.
2. Select employees on the basis of skill, training, ability, attitude, and character without discriminating.
3. Review wages, employee benefits, and working conditions periodically with the objective of being competitive in these areas, consistent with sound business practices.
4. Assure employees, after talking with their supervisor, an opportunity to discuss any issue or problem with the appropriate administrator.
5. Take prompt and appropriate action to resolve complaints which may arise in the everyday conduct of our business.
6. Respect individual rights and treat all employees with courtesy and consideration.
7. Maintain open communications and mutual respect in our working relationships.
8. Promote an atmosphere consistent with MCA's vision, mission, and goals.

**THE POLICIES IN THIS HANDBOOK ARE GUIDELINES; ARE NOT EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED CONTRACTS WITH EMPLOYEES; AND DO NOT CREATE CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS OF ANY KIND BETWEEN MCA AND ANY OF ITS EMPLOYEES. ADDITIONALLY, THIS HANDBOOK IS NOT TO BE CONSTRUED BY AN EMPLOYEE AS CONTAINING BINDING TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT. MCA RETAINS THE RIGHT TO TERMINATE ANY EMPLOYEE, AT ANY TIME, CONSISTENT WITH STATE AND FEDERAL LAW.**

The provisions of this Handbook have been developed at the discretion of the Governing Board, and the policies in this Handbook may be amended, revised, supplemented, or rescinded at any time, in the sole discretion of the MCA Governing Board.

**C. What MCA Expects From You:** As a member of MCA’s team, we need your help to make each working day enjoyable and rewarding. Your first responsibility is to perform the duties assigned to you promptly, correctly and pleasantly. You are also expected to cooperate with management and your fellow employees. How you interact with fellow employees and those whom MCA serves, and how you accept direction can affect the success of your department. In turn, the performance of one department can impact the entire service offered by MCA. Whatever your position, you have an important assignment: perform every task to the very best of your ability. We are dedicated to making MCA an organization in which you can approach administration to discuss any problem or question. We expect you to voice your opinions and contribute your suggestions to improve the quality of MCA. We are all working for the success of MCA and to support student success, so please communicate with each other and with management.

MCA encourages you to discuss any issue you may have with a co-worker directly with that person. If a resolution is not reached, please arrange a meeting with the Principal to discuss any concern, problem, or issue that arises during the course of your employment. Retaliation against any employee for the appropriate use of communication channels is unacceptable. Please remember it is counterproductive for employees to create or repeat rumors or office gossip.

We encourage all employees to bring forward their suggestions and good ideas about how MCA can be made a better place to work and our service to customers enhanced. When you see an opportunity for improvement, please talk it over with the Principal. She/he can help you bring your idea to the attention of the people of MCA who may be responsible for implementing it. All suggestions are valued.

**D. Purpose of the Employee Handbook:** The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance and information in regard to the various, in some instances complex, employment issues, terms, and policies. This handbook covers a broad range of topics, and is meant to apply generally to all employees. If you have questions, please see the Principal or Business Manager in charge of human relations for MCA.

## **II. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES**

**A. Equal Employment Opportunity:** MCA is an equal opportunity employer committed to maintaining a non-discriminatory, diverse work environment. MCA does not unlawfully discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, national origin or ancestry, mental or physical disability, medical condition, status as a Vietnam-Era or disabled veteran status, military service, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation, marital status, gender identity or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law. This policy covers all programs, services, policies, and procedures MCA.

**B. Employees with Disabilities:** In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA),

MCA does not discriminate against any "qualified individuals with a disability." Individuals qualify for employment if they meet the educational, skills, and experience requirements of a position and can perform the essential functions of the job with or without a reasonable accommodation. Individuals have a disability if they have an impairment that impacts a major life function such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, hearing, seeing, speaking, breathing, learning, or if the impairment otherwise impacts an individual's ability to perform a class of jobs or broad range of jobs. Psychological impairments, learning disabilities, and some chronic health impairments, such as epilepsy, diabetes, arthritis, cancer, cardiac problems, and AIDS may also be considered disabilities.

MCA is committed to diversity and nondiscrimination and supports the full employment of qualified individuals with disabilities in its workforce. Therefore, a process has been established to assist employees with disabilities in reasonably modifying the work environment to allow the employee to perform the essential functions of his or her job. It is the responsibility of the employee to request an accommodation of his or her physical or mental disability by contacting the Principal. In accordance with the ADA, MCA will take such requests seriously and will promptly determine whether the employee is a qualified individual with a disability and whether a reasonable accommodation exists which would allow the employee to perform the essential functions of the job without imposing an undue hardship on MCA or other employees.

**EMPLOYEES WITH SERIOUS DISEASES.** MCA will not discriminate in employment decisions against individuals with infectious, long-term, life-threatening or other serious diseases as long as they are physically and mentally able to perform the duties of their job without undue risk to their own health or that of other employees or students.

1. "Serious disease" defined. Serious diseases for the purposes of this policy include, but are not limited to, cancer, heart disease, multiple sclerosis, hepatitis, tuberculosis, human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") and acquired immune deficiency syndrome ("AIDS").
2. Non-discrimination policy. Employees afflicted with a serious disease are to be treated no differently than any other employee. If the serious disease affects their ability to perform assigned duties, such employees are to be treated like other employees who have disabilities that limit their job performance. Reasonable accommodations will be considered as described above in paragraph D. 2. To the extent required by law, MCA will maintain the confidentiality of the diagnosis and medical records of employees with serious diseases.

**C. Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy:** MCA is committed to providing a work place that is free of unlawful discrimination or harassment. Every employee is expected to treat his or her co-workers, visitors, students and guests professionally and respectfully. Each employee is required to familiarize him/herself with this Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy, reporting obligations and procedures. If you have any questions about the MCA's policy, please contact the Principal or his/her designee for clarification.

1. No Tolerance Harassment/Discrimination Policy. MCA is committed to creating a workplace free of discrimination and harassment. Both the law and MCA prohibit any form of

discrimination and/or harassment based on race, color, religious creed, age, sex, national origin or ancestry, mental or physical disability, medical condition, status as a Vietnam-Era or disabled veteran status, military service, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation, marital status, gender identity or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law. All of these groups are referred to in this policy as “protected classes.” This policy applies to all employees, contract workers, consultants, vendors, students, parents and guardians, visitors and guests, or any other people doing business with or for the MCA. It is in effect not only at MCA primary site but during all school-sponsored functions.

2. Discrimination/Harassment Described. Discrimination and harassment include conduct that could reasonably be construed generally as any unwelcome behavior towards another, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is based on a person’s belonging to a protected class. This conduct will most likely interfere with others’ ability to work and most certainly will be intolerable as an example to our students and our community. All such harassment can be unlawful when it is severe or pervasive enough to affect a reasonable employee’s job.

a. SEXUAL HARASSMENT: Because sexual harassment raises issues about human interaction that are to some extent unique, the subject of sexual harassment is described separately here, however, it is no more or less tolerable than harassment based on some other protected status. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that may include:

- requests for sexual favors;
- sexual advances;
- persistent or unwelcome flirtation or requests for dates, especially if the behavior continues after a clear objection has been made;
- sexually motivated inappropriate conduct such as facial expressions or body language, leering, making sexual gestures or actual touching, kissing, impeding or blocking another’s movements;
- displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures or cartoons; demands to submit to sexual requests in order to maintain employment or avoid some employment-related loss (e.g. salary), and offers of job benefits or favors in return for sexual favors;
- intimidation and hostility directed to an individual because of sex; or explicit or degrading verbal, written or electronic comments of a sexual nature, such as comments about an individual’s body or dress.

This list is not exhaustive and applies to conduct by co-workers, supervisors, volunteers and others invited to the MCA premises. Sexual harassment can apply to conduct in any work-related setting outside the work place as well.

Consensual sexual behavior between adults, outside the workplace and welcome by both parties is not considered sexual harassment; however, those who engage in such relationships should be aware that questions regarding the actual freedom of choice of one of the parties may be raised later, especially when a superior/subordinate relationship exists between them.

If you believe that you have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment, following the process described in paragraphs 3 through 6 below.

b. HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION OTHER BASIS. Other prohibited harassment includes verbal or physical conduct which degrades or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual even partly because of a person's belonging to a protected class. Conduct similar to that described above as sexual harassment and discrimination, if based on one of these protected classifications is illegal. For example, verbal conduct such as epithets, jokes based on ethnicity, age-related derogatory comments, foul or obscene language or racial slurs will likely be unwanted and offensive to others resulting in unwelcome behavior that could be interpreted as harassing or discriminatory.

3. Employee Responsibilities. All employees of MCA are responsible for taking appropriate action to prevent and eliminate harassment and discrimination at MCA. If you experience discrimination or harassment, MCA encourages you to firmly and promptly notify the offender that his or her conduct is offensive, even if it is not directed at you. If you choose not to address the issue directly with the person, or if the conduct continues you should report the conduct immediately. If you observe discrimination or harassment of another employee, student, visitor or guest, by a fellow employee, report the concern immediately. At no time should you assume that inappropriate conduct between a student and an adult is acceptable, "consensual" or that it should not be reported because you are concerned that you misinterpreted the conduct.

4. Reporting Complaints. If you experience or observe harassment or discrimination you should bring your concerns directly to MCA's Principal or the Business Manager. Your complaint will be promptly investigated by the individual to whom you reported or a third-party investigator, if appropriate. The complainant and the alleged offender will be instructed to limit their work contact with each other immediately, pending the outcome of the investigation.

**5. NO RETALIATION. MCA WILL NOT TOLERATE RETALIATION OR REPRISALS OF ANY TYPE AGAINST ANY EMPLOYEE WHO COMPLAINS OF HARASSMENT OR PROVIDES INFORMATION IN CONNECTION WITH ANY SUCH COMPLAINT. RETALIATION IS CONSIDERED TO BE MISCONDUCT AND GROUNDS FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION, UP TO AND INCLUDING DISCHARGE.**

6. Complaint Procedure, Investigation and Response. Complaints may initially be made verbally, however, the complainant must complete a "Harassment Complaint Form" to assist with the investigation process.

- a) Normally, an investigation will include interviews with the complainant, and the alleged offender (who will be told of all of the allegations against him or her) and all witnesses or other relevant persons as necessary to establish the facts. All employee-witnesses, the

complainant and the alleged offender are expected to cooperate in the investigation. Failure to cooperate or deliberately providing false information during an investigation, including in complaint itself, will be grounds for disciplinary action, up to termination or discharge. Other individuals, such as a third party investigator, may be involved to resolve the complaint. The investigator will collect and review all relevant documents.

- b) MCA will investigate every report of harassment or discrimination. In conducting an investigation, MCA will respect the privacy of all concerned; however, complete confidentiality may not always be possible because of the need to conduct a complete and thorough investigation and to ensure that both sides' interests are fairly protected.
- c) As soon as the investigation is finished, the investigator will meet with the individual's supervisor or if appropriate the supervisor's supervisor(s), and report whether he or she believes that discrimination or harassment has occurred. If the investigation results in a finding of discrimination and/or harassment, then the supervisor will determine the appropriate disciplinary action up to and including a recommendation to terminate or discharge the employee. The supervisor will inform the complainant and the alleged offender of the outcome of the investigation and his/her proposed disciplinary action. The date of the discussion with the respective party shall constitute the "determination date."
- d) Appeal. If the complainant or alleged offender is not satisfied with the outcome of a discrimination complaint, either employee may appeal that decision to the MCA Governing Board or to a neutral third party, whichever is deemed appropriate by the Principal under the circumstances. The employee appealing the supervisor's decision must submit a written appeal to the Principal with copies to the other party within five (5) working days of the determination date. The non-appealing party and supervisor of the appealing party has the option of submitting written materials in support of their respective positions within three (3) working days from the date they receive the appealing parties' appeal.
- e) Final Decision. The Governing Board or neutral third-party will inform the complainant/respondent of the appeal decision in writing within five (5) working days from the date the appeal was submitted. This is the final level of review in the internal complaint process. The time lines set forth in this policy may be waived or extended by the Governing Board.

**D. Religious Accommodation:** Sometimes individuals hold religious beliefs or conduct religious practices that conflict with their work schedules or assigned responsibilities. MCA will attempt to provide a reasonable accommodation for religious beliefs and practices of such individuals if to do so does not impose an undue hardship for the employee's department, or interfere with the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of the position. If you would like to request reasonable accommodation based on your religious beliefs, you should contact the Principal or the Business Manager. You may be asked to provide appropriate documentation to support your request.

**E. Employee Background Check:** Prior to becoming an employee of MCA, a comprehensive background check consisting of prior employment verification, professional reference checks, education licensure and certification confirmation, and a criminal background check is conducted in accordance with applicable laws.

**F. Immigration Law Compliance:** All offers of employment are contingent upon verification of your right to work in the United States. You will be asked to provide original documents verifying your right to work and, as required by federal law, to sign a Federal Form I-9, “Employment Eligibility Verification Form.” If you at any time cannot verify your right to work in the United States, MCA may be obliged to terminate your employment.

**G. Personnel Records:** The responsibility of handling personnel records and related personnel administration functions at MCA has been assigned to the Business Manager. Questions regarding insurance, wages, and interpretation of personnel policies may be directed to him or her. MCA strives to balance its need to obtain, use, and retain employment information with each individual’s right to privacy. To this end, it attempts to restrict the personnel information maintained to that which is necessary for the conduct of its business or which is required by federal, state, or local law. The Principal (or designee) is responsible for overseeing the record keeping for all personnel information. Employees have a responsibility to ensure their personnel records are up to date and should notify the Business Manager in writing of any changes in name; address; contact phone numbers; marital status (for benefits and tax withholding purposes only); number of dependents (for benefits and tax withholding purposes only); addresses and telephone numbers of dependents and spouse or former spouse (for insurance purposes only); beneficiary designations if applicable; and emergency contact information. If you have a change in any of these items, please complete an **“employee change” form** and return to the Business Manager as soon as possible.

1. Contents of File. In addition, an employee’s personnel file may contain the following information:
  - a) Complete application for employment along with verification of qualifications for the position as outlined in job description;
  - b) Professional license;
  - c) Official transcript;
  - d) Employee’s contract;
  - e) Signed Job description;
  - f) Pre-employment references;
  - g) Signed acknowledgment that the employee has received the employee policies handbook, **which includes** separate acknowledgements that employee has received and understands policies on child abuse and neglect, confidentiality, equal employment opportunity; drug free workplace, conflicts of interest,

employee complaints and problem solving, termination and discharge, employee discipline, email and computer usage, the employee code of conduct and confidentiality.

- h) Performance appraisals;
  - i) Documented attendance at educational and training programs, including in-service courses and orientation;
  - j) Any complaints, allegations, inquiries or findings of student abuse or neglect; warnings or disciplinary actions;
  - k) Documentation of equipment issued to employee: keys, pagers, cell phones, etc.
2. Separate File. The following records will be maintained in a separate file, apart from the personnel file, for each employee:
- a) Employment medical records;
  - b) INS (Immigration and Naturalization) I-9 Form;
  - c) Workers' compensation records;
  - d) Health records;
  - e) Drug testing records;
  - f) Fingerprint results/background check results.
3. Inspection of Personnel File. Employees may inspect their own personnel records in the presence of the Principal (or designee). Such an inspection must be requested in writing to the Principal (or designee) and will be scheduled at a mutually convenient time. Employees who feel that any file material is incomplete, inaccurate, or irrelevant may submit a written request to the Principal (or designee) that documentation to correct such materials be added to personnel files. Only supervisors and others in management who have an employment related need-to-know about another employee may inspect the personnel files of a particular employee.

#### **H. Work Schedule:**

1. Business Hours. MCA generally operates from 7:30 am until 4:30 pm. Work schedules are determined by the Principal. Please consult with the Principal if you have any questions concerning your work schedule.
2. Classroom Coverage. Students must be supervised at all times and are never left unattended. If you need to leave your classroom or work station, you must contact the Principal so adequate coverage can be arranged. If you need to leave the campus for any

reason, you are required to notify the Principal, sign out at the front desk, and sign back in upon returning.

3. **Absence or Lateness.** If you are unable to report to work, or if you will arrive late, you are required to contact the office before 7:30 am. If you know in advance that you will need to be absent, you must request this time off directly from the Principal. If you are absent because of an illness, the Principal may require that you submit a written statement from your health care provider stating that you are able to resume your employment responsibilities. Unauthorized absences, lateness, or leaving campus may lead to disciplinary action, including possible dismissal.
4. **Severe Weather and Emergency Conditions.** In the event of severe weather conditions or other emergencies, MCA will follow the Collier Public Schools schedule.

## **I. Recruitment**

MCA selects applicants for employment on the basis of such factors as experience, character, conformity with MCA's mission and philosophy, necessary credentials, and ability to perform their required duties. MCA is committed to evaluating each applicant and employee on the basis of personal skill and merit. MCA will make every effort to ensure that both the letter and spirit of the laws prohibiting discrimination are fully implemented in all of its working relationships.

MCA actively seeks diversity in its student/parent body, faculty, staff and administration. The MCA is committed to equal employment opportunity. As previously stated, the MCA does not discriminate on an individual's race, religion, color, creed, national origin, citizenship, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation or affection preference, age, sex, or any other classification protected by law. This policy governs all aspects of employment at MCA, including hiring, assignments, training, promotion, upgrading, demotion, downgrading, transfer, lay-off and termination, compensation, employee benefits, discipline and all other terms and conditions of employment.

The MCA will take all appropriate steps to verify the information provided on an employment application. These steps may take place before or after commencement of employment. Any misrepresentation, falsifications or omissions of any information or date on employment applications may result in your exclusion from further consideration for employment and/or termination of employment.

The MCA as all charter schools are required to finger print prospective employees for purposes of determining whether or not the prospective employee has a criminal history.

MCA uses several sources to generate a pool of qualified applicants once a determination has been made that a vacancy exists. These sources may include job postings, mailings, informal networking, outside job fairs, on-campus recruiting, on-line internet services, etc.

## **J. Employee References.**

All written or telephone requests for business references, whether addressed to an individual or MCA, will be referred to the Principal (or designee) for reply. All information released on employees must be in writing, with a copy retained in the employee's personnel record. Without an employee's prior written authorization or release, the Principal (or designee) will only confirm that the employee works or has worked at MCA.

## **K. Employee Requested Credit Checks.**

All requests for business credit checks (salary confirmation) will be referred to the Principal (or designee) for reply when written authorization from the employee has been obtained. Replies to telephone requests for salary confirmation will be limited to confirming title, salary, dates of employment and employment status

## **L. Compliance with Laws Affecting Child Welfare**

### **Florida Statute Section 39.201 (1)(a)**

“Any person who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child is abused, abandoned, or neglected by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person responsible for the child's welfare, as defined in this chapter, shall report such knowledge or suspicion to the department in the manner prescribed in subsection (2).

**A. Reporting responsibility.** As noted, child abuse should be reported immediately by telephone to a child protective agency. The telephone call is to be followed by a written report within thirty-six (36) hours. There is no duty for the reporter to contact the child's parents. In fact, if a child is released to a peace officer or a child protective agency agent, the reporter will not notify the parent as required in other instances of removal. Child protective agencies responding to incident reports are prohibited from disclosing a reporter's identity to a reporter's employer.

**B. “Abuse” defined.** Child abuse is broadly defined as “a physical injury which is inflicted by other than accidental means on a child by another person.” Child abuse can take the following forms:

- **Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse means, in general, sexual assault or sexual exploitation. Sexual abuse does not include children who voluntarily engage in sexual activity with children of a similar age. However, such situations raise the issue of possible neglectful adult supervision. Pregnancy of a minor does not, in and of itself, constitute suspicion of child abuse;
- **Neglect:** Neglect occurs when a child's custodian has failed to provide adequate “food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision” that may or may not have resulted in any physical injury;
- **Unlawful corporal punishment:** Unlawful corporal punishment occurs when any person willfully harms or injures a child to such a degree that a traumatic condition results; and

- Willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment: Child abuse also includes the situation where any “person willfully causes or permits any child to suffer... unjustifiable pain or mental suffering,” or when any person endangers a child’s health.

### **III. WAGE AND SALARY POLICIES**

**A. MCA – an equal opportunity employer:** Employee compensation will be structured to attract, motivate, retain, and reward high quality personnel to effectively carry out the objectives of MCA without regard to race, color, ancestry, religion, age, sex, national origin, disability, medical condition, status as a veteran, sexual orientation, spousal affiliation, gender identity or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law. MCA will prioritize its expenditure of resources to achieve a competitive compensation position in public education in the local area market.

**B. Pay Periods:** The payroll period is a two week period from Mondays 12:00 AM until Sundays 11:59 PM and you will be paid each subsequent Friday following the completion of that pay period. Your check will reflect your compensation for that pay period, less required payroll deductions. If you were hired after a payroll deadline (check with your supervisor), your first paycheck will be delayed until the second payday after you started work. You will be issued pay checks every two weeks or 26 times per year. Your deductions will be itemized on your payroll stub. You should review your paycheck stub carefully each payday. If, at anytime, you have any questions about the amounts shown on your paycheck or how they are calculated, you should contact the Business Manager. If you have been overpaid, and it is later discovered, you will be required to return the overpayment in full to MCA

**C. Basis for Determining Pay:** The MCA Governing Board adopts a salary schedule each year based upon education, experience, and legislative mandates.

**D. Salary Increases:** Each job class or licensing level presently has a salary range. Increases beyond the initial or minimum salary for your class or license level may be granted annually until the employee reaches the top step of their salary range. If you receive a new job at a higher or lower level of pay, your salary will be adjusted according to the salary schedule rules that are adopted by the MCA Governing Board.

**E. Direct Payroll Deposit:** Direct payroll deposit is the automatic deposit of your pay directly into a financial institution account. Contact the Business Manager for details and the necessary authorization forms. This is a benefit we provide for your convenience. We encourage all employees to take advantage of this service.

**F. Mandatory Deductions from Paycheck:** Federal income tax, Social Security and Medicare taxes will be deducted from your pay check as required by law. These deductions will be itemized on your check stub. The amount of the deductions will depend on your earnings and on the information you furnish on your W-4 form regarding the number of exemptions you claim. If you wish to modify the number of deductions, please request a new W-4 form from the Business Manager. Only you may modify your W-4 form. *Verbal or written instructions are not sufficient to modify withholding allowances.* We advise you to check your pay stub to ensure that it reflects the proper number of withholdings. Other mandatory deductions from your paycheck include

court-ordered garnishments or support deductions. If MCA receives a court order mandating that your pay be garnished you will be notified and provided a copy of the order. MCA will comply with the court order until such time as you provide a subsequently dated and signed court order directing MCA to cease making the deduction from your pay check.

**G. Employment Classifications:** Your position at MCA is classified as either regular full-time, part-time or short-term. In addition, you are classified as either **non-exempt** or **exempt**. Certain policies and procedures outlined in the Employee Handbook may apply differently to you depending on how your job position is classified. If you have a question concerning applicability of any particular provision, contact the Principal or the Business Manager prior to signing the receipt for this Handbook.

1. Non-Exempt and Exempt Employees. At the time you are hired or you transfer to a new position, you will be classified as either "exempt" or "nonexempt." This is necessary because, by law, employees in certain types of jobs are entitled to overtime pay for hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours per workweek. These employees are referred to as "non-exempt" in this Employee Handbook. This means that they are not exempt from (and therefore should receive) overtime pay.

Exempt employees are Principals, business managers, teachers, counselors, social workers, and others whose duties and responsibilities allow them to be "exempt" from overtime pay provisions as provided by the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and any applicable state laws.

2. Full-Time Employees. An employee, who works 40 hours per week, is considered a fulltime employee.
3. Part-Time Employees. An employee who is regularly scheduled to work less than 40 hours per week is considered a part-time employee. If you are a part-time employee working less than 25 hours per week, you are not eligible for the employee benefits described in this Employee Handbook. Benefits will be prorated for employees working between 25 and 39 hours per week.
4. Overtime Pay. If you are a non-exempt employee you will be paid overtime in accordance with state and federal laws. Any overtime must be approved in advance by your supervisor; failure to obtain authorization prior to working overtime may result in disciplinary action. For purposes of determining overtime pay, MCA's work week shall be from 12:00 a.m. Monday until 11:59 p.m. Sunday.

#### **IV. PERFORMANCE**

**A. Performance Reviews:** The Principal will follow governing board policies and Florida Department of education requirements when conducting performance reviews for all licensed and certified personnel. The performance reviews will be conducted collaboratively between the Principal and MCA employees. Nonexempt employees will be evaluated annually; licensed

personnel will be evaluated in a manner consistent with FDOE regulations. The MCA's Principal will be evaluated no less frequently than once per year by MCA's Governing Board.

During a formal performance review the Principal may cover the following areas:

- The quality and quantity of your work.
- Strengths and areas for improvement.
- Initiative and teamwork.
- Attendance.
- Customer service orientation.
- Problem solving skills.
- Ongoing professional growth and development.
- **All other competencies for your position, level of licensure or certification.**

Additional areas will also be reviewed as they relate to your specific job.

Your review provides an opportunity for collaborative, two-way communication between you and the Principal. This is a good time to discuss your interests and future goals. The Principal is interested in helping you to progress and grow in order to achieve personal as well as work-related goals. The Principal can answer any questions you may have about the performance review process.

The Principal uses your annual performance evaluation as a factor in recommending your rate/salary increase, promotions, or award of subsequent contracts, if any. Your performance evaluation may also be impacted by your willingness to follow and cooperate with MCA's employee conduct policies as described in this Handbook or other directives or instruction given to you by the Principal or your supervisor.

## **V. STANDARD OF CONDUCT**

Generally speaking, we expect each employee to act in a mature and responsible way at all times.

**A. Smoking:** The use of tobacco, or tobacco products at MCA or any MCA-sponsored functions, events or activities is prohibited for students, faculty, and staff.

**B. MCA and Staff Meetings:** On occasion, we may require that you attend a meeting or school function outside your duty day. If you are a non-exempt employee, you will be paid for time spent. Prior approval by the Principal will be required for any overtime.

**C. Computer Software (Unauthorized Copying):** MCA licenses the use of computer software from a variety of outside companies. MCA does not have the right to reproduce the software or to grant licenses for other users. Employees shall use the software only in accordance with the software publisher's license agreement. As a rule do not download school-purchased software on any other computer without verifying the right to do so. Illegal reproduction of software can subject an employee to civil damages and criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment. In addition, violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action up to and including discharge or termination from your employment.

**D. Employee Technology Acceptable Use Policy:** MCA provides technology resources and business equipment to its staff for educational and administrative purposes. This policy governs the use of business equipment, computers and telephonic communication systems, including email, Internet and Internet systems (collectively referred to as (technology resources). The use of MCA technology resources is a privilege granted to employees for the enhancement of job-related functions. Violation of which may result in disciplinary actions. MCA does not attempt to articulate all possible violations of this policy. In general, users are expected to use MCA computers and computer networks in a responsible, polite, and professional manner. Users are not allowed to:

1. Knowingly send, receive, or display sexually oriented images, messages, or cartoons.
2. Knowingly or recklessly send, receive, or display communications that ridicule, disparage, or criticize a person, a group of people, or an organization based upon race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, or political beliefs or for any other reason.
3. Knowingly send, receive, or display communications that demean, threaten, insult, harass, or defame others.
4. Knowingly send, receive, or display communications that disparage or berate MCA, Board Members, or employees, or diminish employee productivity and/or professionalism.
5. Violate any local, State, or Federal statute or regulation including, but not limited to copyright laws.
6. Solicit, endorse, or proselytize others for commercial ventures, outside organizations, or religious, social, or political causes.
7. Disrupt, disable, damage, or interfere with services, equipment, or other users.
8. Access, assist, or allow others to access equipment, files, passwords, user codes, or information without authorization.
9. Use MCA computers for personal business.

MCA reserves the right to review, audit, intercept, access, and disclose all matters placed on MCA technology resources, as business conditions and/or security considerations warrant, without employee notice, during or after employee working hours. The use of an MCA provided password by an employee does not restrict MCA's right to access electronic communications. While MCA does not regularly monitor electronic communications it reserves the right to do so without notice.

**Because MCA reserves the right to access and monitor the use of MCA's technology resources, no employee should have any expectation of privacy in connection with the use of this equipment or the transmission, receipt, or storage of information in such equipment, whether the information is personal or school-related.**

**E. Dress Code and Personal Appearance:** Please understand that you are expected to dress and groom yourself in accordance with accepted social and business standards. You are expected to be suitably attired and groomed during working hours or when representing MCA. If the Principal decides that your attire and/or grooming are inappropriate for MCA you may be asked to leave your workplace until you are properly attired and/or groomed. Employees who violate dress code standards may be subject to disciplinary action.

**F. Drug-Free Workplace Policy:** Employees who work while under the influence of alcohol or drugs present a safety hazard to themselves, their co-workers and students. In addition, employees who work under the influence of alcohol or drugs threaten MCA's reputation and integrity. MCA policy is to create a drug-free workplace in accordance with the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, sale or use of a controlled substance in the workplace or while engaged in business off premises, such as at a parent's home, are strictly prohibited.

**G. Acceptance of Gifts:** Advance approval from the Principal is required before an employee may solicit a gift on behalf of MCA. MCA staff members are not to receive payment for tutoring, counseling, advising or providing services related to special programs from any student assigned to their classroom or other school functions.

**H. Employment of Relatives:** If you and members of your family are employed by MCA, one may not supervise the other nor work in the same department. If the employees are unable to develop a workable solution, the Principal will decide which employee may be transferred in such situations. Family members include the employee's spouse, child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandparent-in-law, granddaughter, grandson, daughter-in-law, son-in-law, stepparent, domestic partner (a person with whom the employee's life is interdependent and with whom the employee shares a mutual residence), brother, sister, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, daughter or son of the employee's spouse or domestic partner, and any relative living in the household of the employee or domestic partner. Should two employees who work together or supervise each other enter into a personal, non-work related relationship, one or both employees may have to be transferred.

No person who is the spouse, father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, brother, or brother-in-law, of the head administrator may be employed by MCA unless approved by the Governing Board. The Governing Board may not hire a head administrator who is the spouse, father, father-in-law, mother, mother-in-law, son, son-in-law, daughter, daughter-in-law, sister, sister-in-law, brother, or brother-in-law of any member of the Governing Board.

**I. Solicitations and Distributions:** Solicitation for any cause during working time and in working areas is not permitted. You are not permitted to distribute non-MCA literature in work areas at any time during working time. Employees are not permitted to sell raffle chances, merchandise or otherwise solicit or distribute literature without management approval. Persons not employed by MCA are prohibited from soliciting or distributing literature on MCA property.

**J. Confidentiality:** As an employee of MCA, you may learn confidential information about students, other employees or school business (together referred to as “confidential school information”). During and after employment with MCA, confidential MCA information may not be shared with non-employees of MCA and may only be shared with other MCA employees on a need-to-know basis. If you violate this policy, disciplinary action will be taken up to and including termination or discharge.

MCA will provide employee information to outside agencies only upon written authorization of the employee or as provided by law. Only the Principal or her designee can make decisions about releasing confidential personnel information. Most banks, credit agencies, or other parties requiring employment information will provide you with an appropriate form. You must provide a written and signed authorization form to the school, before MCA will release your personal information. MCA’s standard reference letters are limited to confirming dates of employment, job title, and current rate of pay. All requests for employment verification must be received by the Principal or Business Manager in writing. MCA’s response will be in writing. MCA does not provide letters of recommendation.

MCA protects employees' confidentiality and expects the employees to protect confidential school information as well. No one should provide any information about an employee and must refer any phone calls seeking such information to Principal or Business Manager. Under no circumstances will MCA verify employment by telephone. In addition, MCA also expects that you respect the privacy of your fellow employees, both with employees and non-employees. Personal information about any employee may not be discussed with other employees or non-employees without written authorization. Breaching confidences may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination or discharge.

**K. Employee Privacy:** MCA reserves the right to search any person entering on its property or offsite while performing services for MCA and to search property, equipment, and storage areas including but not limited to, clothing, personal effects, vehicles, buildings, rooms, facilities, offices, parking lots, desks, cabinets, lunch and equipment boxes or bags, and equipment. Any items that you do not want to have inspected should not be brought to work.

**L. Basis for Conduct-related Discipline:** In addition to the foregoing described standards of conduct, the following is a list of unacceptable activities that can result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. This list should NOT be considered comprehensive and nothing in this list alters the at-will nature of employment for some employees.

- 1) Violation of any MCA policy.
- 2) Violation of security or safety rules or failure to observe safety rules or MCA safety practices.
- 3) Negligence or any careless action which endangers the life or safety of another person.
- 4) Being intoxicated or under the influence of a controlled substance, including alcohol, while at work; use, possession or sale of a controlled substance in any quantity while on

MCA premises, except medications prescribed by a physician to the employee in possession and which do not impair work performance.

- 5) Unauthorized possession of dangerous or illegal firearms, weapons or explosives on MCA property at any school sponsored event.
- 6) Engaging in criminal conduct or acts of violence, or making threats of violence toward anyone on MCA premises or when representing MCA; fighting, or provoking a fight on MCA property.
- 7) Insubordination or refusing to obey reasonable instructions or directives issued by your supervisor while at work; unreasonably refusing to help out on a special assignment.
- 8) Threatening, intimidating or coercing fellow employees on or off the premises at any time, for any purpose.
- 9) Intentional or negligent destruction of or damage to school property, or the property of fellow employees, customers, suppliers, or visitors in any manner.
- 10) Theft or unauthorized possession of school property or the property of fellow employees; unauthorized possession or removal of any school property, including documents, from the premises without prior permission from administration; unauthorized use of school equipment or property for personal reasons; using school equipment for personal profit or business.
- 11) Dishonesty; falsification or misrepresentation on your application for employment or other work records; untruthfulness about sick or personal leave; falsifying reason for a leave of absence or other data requested by MCA; unauthorized alteration of MCA or student records or other documents.
- 12) Spreading malicious gossip and/or rumors; engaging in behavior which creates discord and lack of harmony; interfering with another employee's ability to perform his/her job; restricting work output or encouraging others to do the same.
- 13) Immoral conduct or indecency on MCA property.
- 14) Conducting a lottery or gambling on MCA premises or when using MCA property and/or equipment.
- 15) Unsatisfactory or careless work, failure to meet work productivity or work quality standards.
- 16) Any act of harassment as described above.

- 17) Leaving work before the end of a workday or not being ready to work at the start of a workday without approval of your supervisor; stopping work before time specified for such purposes.
- 18) Sleeping or loitering during working hours.
- 19) Excessive use of MCA telephones for personal calls.
- 20) Smoking on MCA property or in MCA vehicles.
- 21) Creating or contributing to unsanitary conditions.
- 22) Failure to report an absence or late arrival; excessive absence or lateness.
- 23) Obscene or abusive language toward any supervisor, employee, parent, or student; indifference or rudeness; any disorderly/antagonistic conduct on MCA premises.
- 24) Speeding or careless driving of vehicles.
- 25) Failure to immediately report damage to, or an accident involving, MCA equipment or property.
- 26) Unauthorized soliciting during working hours and/or in working areas; selling merchandise or collecting funds of any kind for charities or others without authorization during business hours, or at a time or place that interferes with the work of another employee on MCA premises.
- 27) Failure to use required timesheets, alteration of your own timesheet or records or attendance documents, punching or altering another employee's timesheet or records, or causing someone to alter your timesheet or records.
- 28) Any other act or omission which impairs or restricts the ability of MCA to provide a safe and healthy environment for employees and students.

**M. Discipline Process:** A number of tools are utilized to motivate, correct, and/or discipline employees, including, but not limited to verbal and written warnings, suspensions, and discharge or termination as determined to be appropriate in each individual circumstance.

If your work performance is unsatisfactory or if your conduct on the job becomes a problem, your supervisor may counsel you and work with you to help resolve the issues. You may initiate this counseling as well. Your supervisor **may** but is not required to a progressive, corrective process. This disciplinary process may involve, but is not limited to, oral or written warnings, probation for poor work performance/habits, disciplinary suspension, and termination.

If progressive discipline is not considered appropriate, however, the sequence described above will not be followed.

**THE PRINCIPAL RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DISCIPLINE AN EMPLOYEE BY TAKING**

**WHATEVER ACTIONS, AT HIS/HER SOLE DISCRETION, DEEMS TO BE APPROPRIATE  
AND IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE SCHOOL, UP TO AND INCLUDING  
TERMINATION OR DISCHARGE.**

In the case of serious misconduct, it may be necessary to protect the safety and security of the workplace by suspending or placing the involved employees on administrative leave in order to remove them from the workplace. In addition, in some instances, while your supervisor is investigating and considering appropriate action, you may be relieved from duty pending a full investigation of the circumstances. The investigation may have one of the following results: (a) if the circumstances do not justify suspension, you will be allowed to return to work, although other disciplinary action may be taken; (b) if the circumstances do justify suspension you will be notified of the suspension and dates and conditions for returning to work. You will not be paid or accrue sick leave (if applicable to you) for the period suspension occurs; or (c) if the circumstances justify termination, and you are not a “tenured” employee, you will be dismissed and a final paycheck will be issued excluding time of unpaid suspension. If you are a “tenured” employee and the circumstances justify termination or discharge, the process outlined in this handbook will be followed.

**N. Grievance Procedures for on the Job Problems:** As an employee of MCA and an important member of our team, we are concerned that on-the-job problems are brought to the attention of MCA. Many problems tend to arise out of misunderstanding or lack of complete information. If problems are kept hidden, they tend to fester and to grow out of proportion to their seriousness. If you feel that anything has occurred that is in any way unfair to you, or if you have any complaints, requests, or constructive criticism, the best way to eliminate the problem is to talk it over. If the problem involves harassment of any kind, please Article II, C.4.

- 1) **Applicability.** This grievance procedure policy does not apply for complaints about the following situations:
  - The contents of an evaluation or the discretionary act(s) of professional judgment relating to the evaluation of the work performance of any employee by his/her immediate supervisor;
  - Discharge or termination decisions (See below);
  - Situations in which the remedy for the alleged violation resides exclusively in some person, agency, or authority other than MCA, its Principal or Governing Board;
  - A former employee cannot file a grievance after the effective date of separation from employment.
- 2) **Grievance process.**
  - a) **Step 1.** All problems should be taken to your immediate supervisor first for discussion. Your supervisor is always ready and willing to answer your questions about your work or your progress. If you have ideas for doing things a better way or encounter a problem about practices discussed herein or if any problems arise in the course of your work, talk to your supervisor. In most instances, the problem can be immediately solved after this first step is taken.

- b) Step 2. If, after talking to your supervisor, you have not received a satisfactory explanation or decision, you should notify your supervisor that you wish to present the problem to the Principal. To do this, write a statement to the Principal that includes:
- your name and position;
  - what the problem is;
  - when you discussed it with your supervisor;
  - what your supervisor's response was;
  - why you disagree; and
  - what you suggest as the proper response to the problem you raised.

The Principal will investigate and will discuss the outcome of his/her review of the supervisor's proposed resolution of the problem with you.

- c) Step 3. If you feel you did not receive a satisfactory resolution from the Principal or decision, you should notify the Principal that you wish to present the problem to a neutral third party. To do this, write a statement to the Principal that includes:
- your name and position;
  - what the problem is;
  - when you discussed it with your supervisor;
  - what your supervisor's response was;
  - why you disagree; and
  - what you suggest as the proper response to the problem you raised

The person designated by the Principal will make recommendations for a proposed resolution to the Principal and will discuss the recommendation with you. The Principal may, but is not required to accept the third party neutral's recommendation, or meet with you and the third party to reach a compromise solution, or the Principal may reject recommendation and reach a decision about the grievance that will be final.

In all cases, if an immediate decision is possible, it will be given to you; if not, you will be informed of a time when an answer will be available.

We urge that you bring all problems or complaints out into the open since only in this manner can any action be taken by the company. All complaints should be brought no later than ten (10) school days from the complained of incident. This is to insure that a proper investigation and fair evaluation can take place.

## **VI. TERMINATION AND DISCHARGE**

### **A. Definitions.**

- 1) Termination. In the case of a licensed employee, "termination" means non-renewal of a contract at the end of its term. For all other employees, "termination" means severing or ending the employment relationship.

- 2) Discharge. Discharge means to sever the employment relationship of licensed personnel or employees under contract before the end of the existing contract.
- 3) Just cause. Just cause refers to a reason for termination or discharge that is rationally related to an employee's competence or moral turpitude or the proper performance of his/her duties and that is not in violation of the employee's civil or constitutional rights.

**B. Termination/Discharge Policy for Employees with Less than Three (3) Consecutive Years of Service:**

- 1) General. MCA may terminate an employee (licensed or non-licensed) with fewer than three (3) years of consecutive service for any reason it deems sufficient.
  - a) Non-contract employees. Employees with three (3) years or less of consecutive service and who are not employed pursuant to a contract are considered at-will employees. A written notice of termination will be provided to the employee.
  - b) Contract employees. Contract employees with three (3) years or less of consecutive service; i.e., who have not been reemployed under a third consecutive contract, may be terminated by non-renewal of their contracts without cause.

Protest Procedure for Employees with Less than Three (3) Consecutive Years of Service. For an employee of less than three (3) consecutive years who was terminated or whose contract was not renewed, there is no protest procedure because such an employee may be terminated or not renewed without just cause. However, an employee of less than three (3) years may request a written explanation from the Principal that details the rationale for his/her termination or non-renewal. Requests for an explanation will be made in writing and delivered to the Principal no later than five (5) working days after receipt of the notice of termination or notice of non-renewal. Reasons for the determination will be provided to the employee within ten (10) days of receiving his/her request. The decision of the Principal to terminate is final and not subject to appeal.

**C. Termination/Discharge Policy for Employees with Three (3) Years or More Years of Consecutive Service.**

- 1) Non-Contract and Contract: No employee who has been employed by MCA for three (3) years or more of consecutive service may be discharged except for just cause.
- 2) Protest Procedure. MCA provides the following procedures for challenges to termination or discharge decisions for employees with three (3) or more years of consecutive service:
  - a) Request for Statement of Rationale. An employee who has been employed by MCA for three (3) consecutive years and who receives a notice of termination or (for licensed personnel a notice of non-renewal) may request a written statement of the reasons for non-renewal. The Principal will provide a written statement of the rationale within five (5) working days from the date she receives the request.

- b) Hearing before the Governing Board. If after receiving the Principal's written reasons for termination, the employee contends that the reasons do not constitute just cause, the employee will be granted permission to address his/her objections to termination to the Governing Board by following these steps:
- i. The employee must submit a written request for a hearing before the Governing Board within ten (10) days after receiving the written rationale for termination from the Principal. The request for hearing must include a statement explaining why the employee believes that he/she was terminated for reasons that do not constitute just cause. In addition, the statement must include facts, supporting documentation and potential witnesses who will support the employee's position.
  - ii. If the employee provides a statement explaining why he/she believes there was not just cause for his/her termination, the Governing Board will meet to hear the employee present the his/her statement in no less than five (5) and no more than fifteen (15) working days after receipt of the employee's written statement of contentions.
  - iii. At the hearing, both the employee and the Governing Board may have representation of their choice, but at their own expense. Both parties will notify the other no later than 10 calendar days prior to the scheduled hearing date whether either will have an attorney present. Failure to notify the other of having an attorney representative will be good cause to postpone the hearing.
  - iv. Rules for Hearing:
    - A. The hearing will be conducted in accordance with the provisions of the Florida Open Meetings Law; i.e. the meeting will be held in closed session unless the employee may requests that the hearing be held in a public session. The MCA Governing Board, however, reserves the right to deny an open meeting if the grounds for termination are based on issues that will include identifiable student information and the employee has not secured a full release from the named student's legal guardian at least three days prior to the proceedings. The employee must provide the original release to the school.
    - B. The Principal will first state the reasons for termination and present the factual support for those reasons. The reasons will be limited to those first provided to the employee after his/her request for an opportunity to address the Governing Board.
    - C. The employee will next state his/her reasons and factual support for contending that the termination was not for just cause. Those reasons and factual support must be the same as those provided in the employee's written response to the statement provided by the Principal.
    - D. The Principal may offer such rebuttal testimony that she deems appropriate.

- E. Each party, including the Governing Board may question all witnesses.
- F. Only evidence presented at the hearing will be considered and the Governing Board is only required to consider that testimony it considers reliable.
- G. No record will be kept of the hearing.
- H. The Governing Board will notify the employee and the Principal of its decision in writing within five (5) working days from the conclusion of the meeting.

**D. Appeals from Determinations by Governing Council: Arbitration.** Either the terminated employee or other representatives of MCA may appeal the decision of the Board. The matter will be appealed to an independent arbitrator who will hear all evidence as if presented for the first time.

**E. Report to Florida Department of Education:** MCA will file a record with the Florida Department of Education of all terminations and all actions arising from terminations annually.

**F. Termination/Discharge Policy for Other Personnel Exempt From Protest Procedures:** In addition to employees who have less than three (3) consecutive years of employment, the rights to due process protests upon termination do not apply to the following MCA personnel:

1. Certified school instructors employed to fill the position of certified school instructor entering military service;
2. Persons employed as licensed school administrators;
3. Non-certified school employees employed to perform primarily school-wide management functions.

**G. Termination/Discharge Policy for Contract Employees Discharged Prior to Contract Term:** A contract employee may be discharged prior to the end of his/her contract term for just cause according to the following procedures:

1. Notification and Immediate Removal.
  - a) Notice of discharge. The Principal will serve written notice (certified mail return receipt requested) or will arrange personal delivery retaining a receipt signed and dated by the employee, of intent to recommend to the Governing Board that the employee be discharged. Service otherwise consistent with the rule of civil procedure will be sufficient to complete service as meant by these provisions.
  - b) Stated reasons. The notice will include the reasons for the Principal's decision to discharge the employee along with a written description of the employee's right to a hearing before the Governing Board.

- c) Immediate Removal. In the event that the Principal determines that it is necessary to immediately remove the employee from the school premises, the employee will be placed on paid administrative leave pending the outcome of a hearing on the Principal's decision to discharge.
2. Protest Procedure/Hearing. A contract employee who receives a notice of discharge may request a hearing before the Governing Board by giving the Principal a written notice of his/her decision to request a hearing within five (5) working days of receipt of the notice to discharge.
- a) Date of hearing. If the employee timely notifies the Principal that he/she is requesting a hearing on the notice of discharge, a hearing will be scheduled by for no less than twenty (20) and no more than forty (40) working days after the Principal receives the written election from the employee. The employee will have at least ten (10) working days prior notice of the hearing date.
  - b) Hearing Procedures.
    - i. MCA and the employee may have representation of their choosing and at their own expense. Both parties will notify the other no later than 10 calendar days prior to the scheduled hearing date whether either will have an attorney present. Failure to notify the other of having an attorney representative will be good cause to postpone the hearing
    - ii. Discovery will be limited to depositions and request for production of documents, which will be completed prior to the hearing.
    - iii. The Governing Board will have the authority to issue subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses and to produce documents and other evidence at the request of either party and will have the power to administer oaths.
    - iv. MCA will have the burden of proving the just cause for discharge by a preponderance of the evidence. The evidence at hearing will be limited to the reasons as stated in the notice of discharge.
    - v. MCA will present its evidence first; the employee will present second; either party may present witnesses and introduce documents to prove their respective case.
    - vi. An official record must be kept of the preceding and the employee is entitled to one copy at the expense of MCA.
    - vii. The Governing Board will render its written decision within twenty (20) calendar days of the conclusion of the hearing and deliver its decision to the employee by certified mail return receipt requested or by personal delivery.

3. Appeal from Decision on Discharge: Arbitration. Either the discharged contract employee or a representative(s) of MCA may appeal the decision of the Governing Board. The matter will be appealed to an independent arbitrator who will hear all evidence as if presented for the first time.

**H. Phasing Out and Elimination of Positions/Reduction-in-Force:** From time-to-time, it may be necessary to phase-out or eliminate certain job classifications or reduce the number of positions in a particular employment category. An orderly process will be established by the MCA Reduction in Force Policy to guide such phase-out or reduction in force. A reduction in force carried out pursuant to MCA's policy is just cause for termination or discharge.

**I. Administrative Leave Pending Possible Disciplinary Action:** If you are suspected of violating MCA's policies, procedures, or work rules, you may be placed on administrative leave with pay pending an investigation of the situation. However, this should not be interpreted to mean that the Principal cannot suspend an employee immediately, if the situation so warrants.

**J. Resignation:** Non-exempt employees should give a minimum of two weeks written notice of resignation to the Principal. MCA will consider you to have voluntarily terminated your employment if you do any of the following:

1. Resign from MCA,
2. Fail to return from an approved leave of absence on the date specified by MCA, or
3. Fail to report to work or call in for two (2) or more consecutive work days

All certified or licensed employees are required to provide written notice of their intent to terminate employment with MCA to the Principal at least thirty (30) calendar days in advance.

**K. Retirement:** Eligible employees who meet the criteria established by the State of Florida and wish to retire and should contact the Business Manager in advance of the anticipated retirement date to initiate retirement proceedings.

**L. Return of MCA Property:** Any MCA property issued to you, such as keys, computer equipment, etc. must be returned to MCA at the time of your resignation, termination, or discharge. You will be responsible for any lost or damaged items. In most instances, when you are issued MCA property, you will be required to sign a wage deduction authorization permitting MCA to withhold from your last paycheck an amount equal to the value of any property issued to you that is lost, stolen or damaged.

**M. Safety:**

1. General Employee Safety MCA is committed to the safety and health of all employees and recognizes the need to comply with regulations governing injury and accident prevention and employee safety. Maintaining a safe work environment, however, requires the continuous cooperation of all employees. MCA will maintain safety and health practices consistent with the needs of our profession. If you are ever in doubt about how to safely perform a job, it is your responsibility to ask the Principal or his/her designee for assistance. Any suspected unsafe conditions and all injuries that occur on the job must be reported immediately. Compliance with these safety rules is considered a condition of

employment. We strongly encourage employee participation and your input on health and safety matters.

***SAFETY COMMON SENSE:***

- **Lifting:** Ask for assistance when lifting heavy objects or moving heavy furniture. Bend your knees, get a firm grip on the object, hold it close to your body and space your feet for good balance. Lift using your stronger leg muscles, not your weaker back muscles.
- **Materials Handling:** Do not throw objects. Always carry or pass them. Use flammable items, such as cleaning fluids, with caution. Also, stack materials only to safe heights.
- **Trash Disposal:** Keep sharp objects and dangerous substances out of the trash can. Items that require special handling should be disposed of in approved containers.
- **Cleaning Up:** To prevent slips and tripping, clean up spills and pick up debris immediately.
- **Preventing Falls:** Keep aisles, work places and stairways clean, clear and well lighted. Walk, don't run. Watch your step.
- **Handling Tools:** Exercise caution when handling objects and tools. Do not use broken, defective or greasy tools. Use tools for their intended purpose only. Wear safety glasses or goggles whenever using a power tool.
- **Falling Objects:** Store objects and tools where they won't fall. Do not store heavy objects or glass on high shelves.
- **Work Areas:** Keep cabinet doors and file and desk drawers closed when not in use. Remove or pad torn, sharp corners and edges. Keep drawers closed. Open only one drawer at a time.
- **Using Ladders:** Place ladders securely. Do not stand on boxes, chairs or other devices not intended to be used as ladders.
- **Machines:** Do not clean machinery while it is running. Lock all disconnect switches while making repairs or cleaning.

- **Electrical Hazards:** Do not stand on a wet floor while using any electrical apparatus. Keep extension cords in good repair. Don't make unauthorized connections or repairs. Do not overload outlets.
  - **Fire Prevention:** Know the location of the fire extinguisher(s) in your area and make sure they are kept clear at all times. Notify your supervisor if an extinguisher is used or if the seal is broken. Make sure all flammable liquids, such as alcohol, are stored in approved and appropriately labeled safety cans and are not exposed to any ignition source. Evacuation exits should be posted. Be familiar with fire drill procedures and plans for evacuating students.
2. **Reporting Safety Issues.** All accidents, injuries, potential safety hazards, safety suggestions and health and safety related issues must be reported immediately to the Principal or her designee. If you or another employee is injured, you should contact outside emergency response agencies, if needed. The Employee's Claim for Worker's Compensation Benefits Form must be completed for any instance of employee injury, even if no medical attention is sought at the time of injury. If you fail to report your injury timely, you may jeopardize your right to collect workers' compensation benefits.

**N. Weapons:** MCA prohibits all persons who enter MCA property from carrying a handgun, firearm, knives of any length, or other weapons regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry the weapon or not. The only exception to this policy will be police officers, security guards or other persons who have been given written consent by MCA to carry a weapon on the property. Any employee violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. All staff must review and be familiar with of safety policies and procedures listed in the MCA SAFE MCA PLAN that was provided to you during staff orientation.

**O. Violence in the Workplace Policy:** MCA has adopted a policy prohibiting workplace violence. Consistent with this policy, acts or threats of physical violence, including intimidation, harassment, and/or coercion, which involve or affect MCA or which occur on MCA property will not be tolerated. Every employee is required to report incidents of threats or acts of physical violence of which he/she is aware to the Principal. Acts or threats of violence include conduct which is sufficiently severe, offensive, or intimidating to alter the employment conditions at MCA, or to create a hostile, abusive, or intimidating work environment for one or several employees. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Hitting or shoving an individual.
2. Threatening an individual or his/her family, friends, associates, or property with harm.
3. Intentional destruction of or threatening to destroy MCA School's property.
4. Making harassing or threatening phone calls.
5. Harassing surveillance or stalking (following or watching someone).
6. Unauthorized possession or inappropriate use of firearms or weapons.

**P. Security:** Maintaining the security of MCA buildings and vehicles is every employee's responsibility. Develop habits that insure security as a matter of course. For example: When you leave MCA premises make sure that all entrances are properly locked and secured.

**Q. Parking Areas:** You are encouraged to use the parking areas designated for employees. Remember to lock your car every day and park within the specified areas. Courtesy and common sense in parking will help eliminate accidents, personal injuries, and damage to your vehicle and to the vehicles of other employees. If you should damage another car while parking or leaving, immediately report the incident, along with the license numbers of both vehicles and any other pertinent information you may have, to your supervisor. MCA is not responsible for any loss, theft or damage to your private vehicle or any personal property in your vehicle or kept on MCA premises.

**R. Prohibited Disclosure of Confidential Information.** No person shall sell or use student, faculty or staff lists with personal identifying information obtained from a public school or a local school district for the purpose of marketing goods or services directly to students, faculty or staff or their families by any means of communication. The provisions of this section shall apply until the students and his/her parent(s) or legal guardians have consented in writing.

**S. Prohibited Sales by School Personnel.** Employees of the school shall not directly or indirectly, sell or be a party to any transaction to sell or receiving any commission or profit from any contract for sale any instructional material, furniture, equipment, ,insurance, school supplies to MCA. This provision shall not apply in cases in which school employee contracts to perform special services with the school with which they are associated or employed during time periods wherein service is not required under a contract for instruction, administration or other employment. No employee of the school shall solicit or sell or be the party to a transaction to solicit or sell insurance or investment securities to any employee of the school.

## **VII. BENEFITS**

MCA is committed to sponsoring a comprehensive benefits program for all eligible employees. Literature is available from our insurance companies for details on your health/dental coverage. Please see the Business Manager for information on your benefits and coverage. If you are a full-time employee, or a part-time employee who works more than twenty-five (25) hours per week, you will be eligible to receive all of the benefits described in this Employee Handbook. For part-time employees, benefits are pro-rated. Coverage is available to you and your dependents as defined in the benefit summary plan descriptions. Please see the Business Manager for details.

**A. Group Insurance:** A comprehensive, quality insurance program is available to employees and their families. You become eligible for coverage on the first day of the month following your date of hire. The following benefits are provided, as defined and limited in the literature provided by our insurance company:

- Medical Care Coverage
- Dental Care Coverage

- Vision Care Coverage
- Retirement Savings

#### LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE

- A. The Charter School shall provide the following Basic Life/Accidental Death and Dismemberment coverage to all employees: \$25,000 Life/AD&D (\$4.00 per month).
- B. Charter School employees have the option to select Voluntary Life through Prudential for themselves, spouse or children, which is a 100% employee deduction.
- C. MCA shall provide employees, on a matching basis, long-term disability coverage. The waiting period for coverage shall be Thirty (30) days.

**B. Florida Retirement System (FRS):** The Florida Retirement System (FRS) is provided to eligible employees (those who have completed sufficient service). See Business Manager for details.

**C. Social Security:** In accordance with the applicable federal law, all employees are required to participate in and contribute to Social Security. MCA also makes a mandatory matching contribution on behalf of employees. Contribution levels are established by law, and are subject to change. To obtain information about Social Security and related programs, you may contact the local Social Security office.

**D. Workers' Compensation:** MCA maintains Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage for employees who sustain an injury or illness compensable under Florida workers' compensation laws. MCA pays the full cost of the workers' compensation insurance. All workers' compensation claims are subject to evaluation and investigation by MCA and its insurance carrier. If you are injured while performing duties related to your job at MCA, you must report the injury promptly to your immediate supervisor. More information is available from MCA's Business Manager.

**E. Unemployment Compensation:** MCA employees are covered in accordance with applicable unemployment compensation laws and regulations that also govern eligibility for unemployment benefits. All forms or contacts related to unemployment compensation claims should be delivered or referred to the MCA Principal or Business Manager.

**F. Leave Benefits:** As a part of the Benefits package provided to MCA employees, the Board may allow approved leaves of absence. Leaves may be granted with or without pay. Requests for Leave forms must be completed and submitted to the Principal for approval. Explanations of the reason for leave request need not be entered on a Request for Leave form for personal leave. However, explanations are necessary for all other types of leave

**G. Sick Leave:** Regular full-time employees are entitled for 10 paid sick days per school year; contract personnel are entitled to the number of sick leave days stated in their contract. Unless

otherwise provided for or as approved by the Principal, sick leave is to be used by employees in accordance with the following provisions:

- Sick leave is to be used only in the event of illness of the employee, or of the employee's immediate family, and for no other purpose. Misuse of sick leave is cause for disciplinary reasons, up to and including termination or discharge. For the purposes of this section, "immediate family" is defined as a spouse, child, sibling, parent, grandparent, any other relative permanently residing with the employee, or any other person as defined by the Principal.
- Notice of absence from work due to illness should be provided to the Principal or his or her designee by 7:30 a.m. on the day of illness, if possible, or as soon thereafter as is reasonable, allowing reasonably enough time for the Principal to find a substitute teacher, in the instance of instructional employees, or temporary help, in the instance of administrative staff. When possible, such as in the event of foreseeable extended illnesses and planned medical procedures, advance notice of the use of Sick Leave should be given to the Principal or his or her designee.
- An employee will not be paid for unused sick leave days upon severance of his/her employment from MCA, however, unused sick leave may be carried over into succeeding school years up to a maximum of 200 hours. Accumulated unused sick leave may be used for personal or family illnesses as described in the Family Medical Leave provisions below.
- If an employee misses three (3) consecutive workdays due to illness, the Principal may request that you bring a release to return to work notice from your physician or licensed health practitioner. The Principal may, at any time, request that an employee bring a doctor's note verifying that your leave was necessitated by illness

**H. Personal Leave** Personal Leave of up to two (2) days per year may be granted, upon request, to all eligible employees. This leave is granted to employees for personal matters that require absence during working hours. Requests for personal leave should be made at least two school days in advance and the Principal has the discretion to deny personal leave as she/he deems it appropriate. A request must be in writing and approved prior to taking the leave. Personal leave not taken shall be accumulated the next year as unused with sick leave up to the maximum set forth. Employees will not be paid for unused leave when employment with MCA is voluntarily or involuntarily served.

**I. Family and Medical Leave Policy ("FMLA")** MCA acknowledges that from time to time situations occur in employees' lives that require time away from work. MCA will provide eligible employees unpaid leaves of absence to attend to family and medical needs in accordance with the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and as amended in 2008.

- a) Eligibility for FMLA Leave. An employee is eligible for FMLA leave if he/she:

- has worked for MCA for at least 12 months in the last 7 years; and
- has worked at least 1,250 hours for MCA during the 12 calendar months immediately preceding the request for leave.

Employees with any questions about their eligibility for FMLA leave should contact the MCA's Principal or his/her designee.

- b) FMLA Leave. Employees who meet the eligibility requirements described above are eligible to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during any 12-month period for one of the following reasons:
- To care for the employee's son or daughter during the first 12 months following birth;
  - To care for a child during the first 12 months following placement with the employee for adoption or foster care;
  - To care for a spouse, son, daughter, or parent ("covered relation") with a serious health condition;
  - For incapacity due to the employee's pregnancy, prenatal medical or child birth; or
  - Because of the employee's own serious health condition that renders the employee unable to perform an essential function of her or her position.
- c) Married couples. In cases where a married couple is employed by the MCA, the two spouses together may take a combined total of 12 weeks' leave during any 12-month period for reasons i and ii, or to care for the same individual pursuant to reason iii.
- d) Covered Service member Leave. Eligible employees who are family members of covered service members are entitled to take up to 26 workweeks of leave in a "single 12-month period" to care for a covered service member with a serious illness or injury incurred in the line of duty on active duty. The definition of "family members" includes family members covered in 3(b)(iii) and "next of kin," which means the nearest blood relative (including siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and first cousins). The 26 weeks include leave for qualifying exigencies described below. All other provisions of the FMLA apply, such as employee eligibility, appropriate notice, medical certifications, definitions, etc. As with other types of leave, MCA has the right to require the employee to support a request for leave with an appropriate medical certification. When two eligible employees are married and work for MCA, and when the reason triggering the FMLA event is to care for a service member under this section, a combined total of 26 weeks applies.
- e) Qualifying Exigency. The 12 weeks available to all FMLA-eligible employees is available to eligible employees with a covered military member serving in the National Guard or Reserves to use for "any qualifying exigency" arising out of the fact that a covered military member is on active duty or call to active duty status in support of a contingency operation. "Qualifying exigency" means:
- Military member's short-notice deployment (leave to address any issue that arises from an impending call or order to active duty in support of a contingency operation seven days or less prior to the date of deployment);

- Military events and related activities (leave to attend any military ceremony, program or event related to the active duty call or to attend family support or assistance programs and informational briefings);
  - Arranging for alternate childcare and related activities;
  - Addressing certain financial and legal arrangements;
  - Periods of rest and recuperation for the service member (up to 5 days of leave);
  - Attending certain counseling sessions;
  - Attending post-deployment activities (available for up to 90 days after the termination of the covered service member's active duty status); or
  - Other activities arising out of the service member's active duty or call to active duty and agreed upon by MCA and the employee
- f) Intermittent Leave. Intermittent leave and reduced work schedules are allowed when such are medically necessary. Employees must make reasonable efforts to schedule leave for planned medical treatment so as not to unduly disrupt MCA's operations. Covered Service member Leave due to qualifying exigencies may also be taken on an intermittent basis. Leave may not be taken on an intermittent basis when used to care for the employee's own child during the first year following birth, or to care for a child placed with the employee for foster care or adoption, unless both MCA and employee agree to such intermittent leave. If an employee requests intermittent leave, it may be necessary for the MCA to transfer him/her to another position that will better accommodate an intermittent or reduced schedule.
- g) Pay, Benefits, and Protections During FMLA Leave. Employees taking FMLA leave must use all of their available accrued and unused paid sick and personal days and vacation (if applicable) as part of the leave. Once the employee's paid leave benefits are exhausted, the employee will continue for the duration of the family and medical leave without pay.
- h) Medical and other benefits. MCA will continue to maintain group health insurance coverage for the employee and, where applicable, for his/her dependents during the FMLA leave, up to a maximum of twelve weeks in a twelve-month period. After an employee's paid leave is exhausted, an employees must arrange to pay the premium contributions they previously had deducted in order to continue group health or other insurance for themselves and, where applicable, their dependents during the family and medical leave. The employee will be required to arrange for and pay for other benefits while on leave without pay. Failure to make arrangements and to pay the premiums for benefits other than health insurance while on leave may result in termination of those employee benefits.

If an employee fails to return to work at the end of the family and medical leave, MCA may require the employee to reimburse it for the amount MCA paid for the employee's health insurance premiums during the leave.

- i. Employee Responsibilities When Requesting FMLA Leave.

1. If the need to use FMLA leave is foreseeable, the employee must give MCA at least 30 days prior notice of the need to take leave. When 30 days notice is not possible, the employee must give notice as soon as practicable (within 1 or 2 business days of learning of the need for leave except in extraordinary circumstances). Failure to provide such notice may be grounds for delaying the start of the FMLA leave.
2. Requests for FMLA leave should be submitted to MCA's Principal or his/her designee by using the Request for Family/Medical Leave form.
3. When submitting a request for leave, the employee must provide sufficient information for MCA to determine if the leave might qualify as FMLA leave, and also provide information on the anticipated date when the leave would start as well as the duration of the leave. Sufficient information may include that the employee is unable to perform job functions; that a family member is unable to perform daily activities; that the employee or family member needs hospitalization or continuing treatment by a healthcare provider; or the circumstances supporting the need for leave.
4. An employee undergoing planned medical treatment will be required to make a reasonable effort to schedule the treatment to minimize disruptions to MCA's operation.

i) Employer responsibilities.

1. When an employee requests leave, MCA will inform the employee whether he or she is eligible under the FMLA. If the employee is, the employee will be given a written notice that includes details on any additional information he or she will be required to provide. If the employee is not eligible under the FMLA, MCA will provide the employee with a written notice indicating the reason for ineligibility.
2. If leave will be designated as FMLA-protected, MCA will inform the employee in writing and provide information on the amount of leave that will be counted against your 12 or 26 week entitlement.

j) Medical Certification.

1. If the employee is requesting leave because of the employee's own or a covered relation's serious health condition, the employee must supply appropriate medical certification. Employees may obtain Medical Certification forms from the Principal or his/her designee. When the employee requests leave, MCA will notify the employee of the requirement for medical certification and when it is due (no more than 15 days after you request leave). If the employee provides at least 30 days' notice of medical leave, he or she should also provide the medical certification before leave begins.

2. Failure to provide requested medical certification in a timely manner may result in denial of leave until it is provided. MCA, at its expense, may require an examination by a second healthcare provider designated by MCA, if it reasonably doubts the medical certification initially provided. If the second health care providers' opinion conflicts with the original medical certification, MCA, at its expense, may require a third, mutually agreeable, healthcare provider to conduct an examination and provide a final and binding opinion.
  3. MCA may require subsequent medical recertification. Failure to provide requested certification within 15 days, except in extraordinary circumstances, may result in the delay of further leave until it is provided.
- k) Reporting While on Leave. If an employee takes leave because of the employee's own serious health condition or to care for a covered relation, the employee must contact MCA on the first and third Tuesday of each month regarding the status of the condition and his or her intention to return to work. In addition, the employee must give notice as soon as practicable (within 2 business days, if feasible) if the dates of the leave change, are extended, or were unknown initially.
- l) Exemption for Highly Compensated Employees. Highly compensated employees (i.e., highest-paid 10 percent of employees at MCA) may not be returned to their former or equivalent position following a leave if restoration of employment will cause substantial economic injury to MCA. (This fact-specific determination will be made by MCA on a case-by-case basis.)
- m) Special Rules for Instructional Employees. Instructional employees are subject to certain limitations on FMLA leave coverage. An "instructional employee" includes teachers, instructional assistants, coaches and other employees whose duties principally involve the direct provision of instruction services to students. The following limitations on FMLA for instructional employees arise when leave is requested near the end of the semester or when intermittent leave is involved.
- i. Leave near the end of a semester:
    - A. If an instructional employee begins leave more than five weeks before the end of a semester, MCA may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester if (i) the leave will last at least three weeks, and (ii) the employee would return to work during the three-week period before the end of the term.
    - B. If the instructional employee begins leave during the five-week period before the end of a semester for an eligible reason other than his/her own serious illness, MCA may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester if (i) the leave will last more than two weeks, AND (2) the employee would return to work during the two-week period before the end of the term.

- C. If the instructional employee begins leave during the three-week period before the end of a semester for an eligible reason other than his/her own serious illness, MCA may require the employee to continue taking leave until the end of the semester if the leave will last more than five working days.
- ii. Intermittent Leave. If an instructional employee needs intermittent or reduced leave and the employee would be on leave for more than 20 percent of the total number of working days over the leave period, ( e.g. five days in a four week period) the employer may require the employee to choose between the following:
  - A. taking a certain period of consecutive (full) days on leave, not greater than the duration of the employee’s planned medical treatment, or
  - B. transferring temporarily to an available alternative position for which the employee is qualified, which has equivalent pay and benefits, and which better accommodates recurring periods of leave than does the employee’s regular position.
- iii. Counting FMLA days: If the employee is required to remain on leave until the end of a semester academic term, the employer may only designate as FMLA leave for the period of time the employee is actually unable to work, not the period of time after which he or she was ready and able to return to work but was asked by the employer to remain on leave.

**J. Leave for Jury Duty and Court Subpoena Leave:** is available to employees as follows:

- If you are a regular employee, full-time or part-time, and are required by an order of court to serve as a juror, MCA will pay you the difference between your jury duty pay and your regular straight-time pay for any schedule work time that you miss during the first two weeks of your jury duty. To be reimbursed, you must present a court voucher and proof of actual jury duty service.
- To receive jury duty pay, employees must provide MCA’s Business Manager with a copy of the court order as soon as it has been received. An employee required to be available for jury duty, but not required to be in court, must report to work. Utilization of the court calling system, if available, is required in order to receive jury duty pay.
- If you are served with a Subpoena for witness duty and the matter in which you are to testify is directly related to MCA, e.g. MCA student or employee matter, MCA will pay you the difference between your witness fees, plus any mileage reimbursement, and your regular straight-time pay for any schedule work time that you miss. To be reimbursed, you must present the subpoena and a copy of the witness fee payment voucher.

**K. Professional Leave:** may be granted at the discretion of the Principal, upon request, for professional development, professional organizational activities, school-related professional activities, or other activities related to the employee's assignments.

**L. Religious Leave:** may be granted, upon request, to all employees for observance of recognized religious events. Personal leave may be used or leave without pay will be granted. This leave may be granted for up to two (2) days per year.

**M. Military Leave of Absence:** If you are a full-time employee and are inducted into the U.S. Armed Forces, you will be eligible for reemployment after completing military service, provided:

- a) You show your orders to the Principal as soon as you receive them.
- b) You satisfactorily complete active duty service of five years or less.
- c) You enter the military service directly from your employment with MCA.
- d) You apply for and are available for re-employment within ninety (90) days after discharge from active duty. If you are returning from up to six (6) months of active duty for training, you must apply within thirty (30) days after discharge.

**N. Military Reserves or National Guard Leave of Absence:** Employees who serve in the U. S. military organizations or state militia groups may take the necessary time off during the school year, with pay up to 15 days, to fulfill this obligation, and will retain all of their legal rights for continued employment under existing laws. These employees may apply accrued personal leave and unused earned vacation time to the leave if they wish; however, they are not obliged to do so. *You are expected to notify your supervisor as soon as you are aware of the dates you will be on duty so that arrangements can be made for replacement during this absence.*

**O. Voting Leave:** will be granted to employees who are eligible voters and whose work day begins less than two hours after the polls open and ends less than three hours before the polls close. If you qualify you will be granted for a maximum of two (2) hours with pay in order to vote in an election recognized under the law. Written requests for this leave must be submitted prior to the day of the election. Employees utilizing this benefit must vote in the election for which they are granted leave. The Principal will schedule voting leave to ensure department work is covered.

CERTIFICATION OF RECEIPT OF MCA  
EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK 2014-2015

I, \_\_\_\_\_, (print name) have received a copy of the MCA's Employee Handbook ("Handbook") 2010-2011 and understand that I am responsible for becoming familiar with the policies described in it. I understand that the information contained in it represents administration guidelines only, which may be modified from time to time. I understand that neither the Handbook's policies nor any representations made by the administration representative, at the time of hire or subsequently, are to be interpreted as a contract between the school and any of its employees. Unless I have a written contract with MCA or am otherwise covered by the long term employment provisions of the Florida School Personnel Act, I understand that I am employed as an "at will" employee and that the employment relationship can be terminated at any time by either the employee or MCA. The only contract that I should rely upon regarding my specific terms of employment is the written contract signed between me and the school's head administrator, IF ANY. I further understand that my employment is voluntarily entered into, that I am free to resign at any time and that MCA may terminate the employment relationship whenever it determines that it is in its best interest to do so in compliance with state and federal statute.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I have been informed about Handbook and I understand that I have the responsibility to become familiar with all policies and procedures included in them. Further, I have read and understand the provisions of the following school policies, procedures and guidelines contained in the Handbook and agree that adherence to them and all others is a condition of my continued employment. (initial each box)

- Equal Employment Opportunity
- Anti-Harassment/Discrimination Policy
- Standards of Conduct
- Grievance Procedure
- Employee Technology Acceptable Use Policy
- Safety School Plan

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### A Classical Education for Modern Times

Terrence O. Moore

Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,  
rectique cultus pectora roborant.\*

\*“Yet learning increases inborn worth, and righteous ways make strong the heart.” Horace

The Hillsdale College Barney Charter School Initiative has deliberately taken a classical approach to education. By “classical,” we mean a form of education that could be called classical, civic, and liberal but in the school reform movement these days most often goes by the designation “classical.” Some might call it “conservative,” but we prefer the term “traditional.” That is, we adhere to an ancient view of learning and traditional teaching methods. Such a choice might at first seem paradoxical or even out-of-touch with reality. Why, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, in the age of the internet, in a country that has long been addicted to the revolutionary and the novel, when almost everyone in the world of K-12 education is singing the chorus of “critical thinking skills for a twenty-first-century global economy,” should cutting-edge schools root themselves so deeply in the past? Is not newer always better? What could today’s young people learn from old books? We must answer these questions clearly from the outset.

Classical education has a history of over 2500 years in the West. It began in ancient Greece, was adopted wholesale by the Romans, faltered after the fall of Rome, made a slow but steady recovery during the Middle Ages, and was again brought to perfection in the Italian Renaissance. The classical inheritance passed to England and from the mother country to America through colonial settlement. At the time of this nation’s founding classical education was still thriving. Jefferson heartily recommended Greek and Latin as the languages of study for early adolescence. One of the Founding Fathers’ favorite books was Plutarch’s *Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans*. Eighteenth-century Americans venerated and trusted George Washington in large part because he reminded them of the Roman patriot Cincinnatus. So important has classical education been in the history of the West that it would only be a slight exaggeration to say that the march of civilization has paralleled the vibrancy of classical schools. Unlike the old classical schools, today’s classical schools do not make the medium of instruction Latin and Greek (though to be classical they must require the study of Latin at some point). Nonetheless, the Hillsdale-sponsored charter schools will remain classical by upholding the same standards of teaching, of curriculum, and of discipline found in the schools of old. Indeed, in these schools English will be taught using methods derived from centuries of teaching and learning the classical languages. Hillsdale thus takes stock in the tried and true rather than in the latest fads frothing forth from the schools of education.

Apart from this impressive history, Hillsdale has embraced classical education as the surest road to school reform for at least four reasons. These reasons constitute a clear break from modern, progressive education and a return to traditional aims and methods. Classical education:

- values knowledge for its own sake;
- upholds the standards of correctness, logic, beauty, weightiness, and truth intrinsic to the liberal arts;

- demands moral virtue of its adherents;
- and prepares human beings to assume their places as responsible citizens in the political order.

We shall discuss each of these characteristics of classical education in turn.

### Knowledge and Core Knowledge

The classical view of education holds that human beings are thinking creatures. Unlike other living beings, humans live by their intelligence. We want to know things. Specifically, we want to know what the things around us are and how they operate. We want to know who we are, where we come from, and what is expected of us. In short, we want to know the truth. From birth, the curiosity of children is astounding. Children observe everything around them. They pick up language at an astonishing rate. As soon as they begin to speak, they ask the question “What is it?” of everything that catches their attention. Children demonstrate what is true of all people: we are all natural learners. Any plan of education, therefore, should take advantage of young people’s natural curiosity. Schemes that stall children in their learning because “they are not ready for it” or it is not “age appropriate,” or that use various gimmicks that sugar-coat learning as though children regard their books as they do their medicine, are not only unnecessary but counterproductive and insulting to the human mind.

While children are naturally disposed to learning, everything we need to know does not come to us unaided from nature. Children need explicit instruction to understand the world around them, whether in language, the operations of physical nature, or the relations among human beings. As children grow, their questions become increasingly complex and their abilities to assimilate their observations more advanced. At every child’s disposal is a veritable arsenal of mental capacities: memory, reason, imagination, a sense of beauty, a facility for language. Classical education does not simply leave children to their own mental urges and inclinations. Rather, it feeds and directs and strengthens children’s mental capacities in the same way that sports exercise their physical abilities. The mind, like the body, atrophies when not well-trained. The emphasis on rigorous mental training is an important difference between classical education and modern, progressive education. By stressing childhood “creativity” and “spontaneity,” while at the same time denigrating “mere rote learning” (and therefore human memory itself), without making children do much work or work on anything important, the modern school takes bright young children and puts them on a path to becoming bored adults who do not know very much. It is the old story of the tortoise and the hare. Falling in love with our talents—without making any substantial effort to improve them—causes one to lose the race. In this case, it is the all-important race towards becoming informed, moral, thinking citizens.

So classical education puts young minds to work. It leads young people to understand themselves and the world around them. Students do not learn in the abstract. They must acquire concrete skills and gain knowledge in certain disciplines to participate fully and effectively in human civilization. To this end, Hillsdale, though it does not require the Core Knowledge curriculum in its schools, does embrace E. D. Hirsch’s idea of “cultural literacy.” For people to communicate effectively, according to Hirsch, they must not only use the same language. To express and understand complex ideas, they must possess a reservoir of common facts, ideas, and references known to all in a given social and political order. Abraham Lincoln is perhaps the best example

of a leader who relied on cultural literacy to convey his ideas. Like other Americans on the frontier, he had little formal schooling. Yet he read intensively the works of Shakespeare, the King James' Bible, the fables of Aesop, Euclid's geometry, and the documents of the American Founding. Few men in our history have been able to express so forcefully and with such economy the principles of freedom and human dignity:

*Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation,  
conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.*

Lincoln's audience at Gettysburg instantly knew that he referred to the "proposition" of the Declaration of Independence. For this reason, the Gettysburg Address is not only one of the greatest speeches in our history; it is the shortest. Lincoln did not have to retell the history of the Revolution. His fellow Americans already knew it.

One of the great dangers we presently face as a nation is that, in the words of Hirsch, "many young people today strikingly lack the information that writers of American books and newspapers have traditionally taken for granted among their readers from all generations." The same observation applies to the realm of politics, the financial and industrial world, and all other facets of American life. Employers are constantly amazed at what their employees do not know and therefore cannot do. In politics, the poignant allusions of a Lincoln would fall upon deaf ears. Indeed, most citizens and most elected officials are alarmingly ignorant of the basic facts of American history and constitutional government. Make no mistake. Cultural literacy is not merely ornamental trivia. Our purpose is not to make *Jeopardy* champions. Rather, cultural literacy is essential to a nation and its citizens. A culturally illiterate America cannot live up to the demands placed upon us by history and the present condition of the world. A culturally illiterate individual cannot comprehend and navigate the vast areas of human knowledge essential to his political, economic, and moral well-being.

By endorsing the idea of cultural literacy (and civic literacy), Hillsdale's charter school initiative has resolved to break out of the cycle of ignorance that modern culture and modern educational theories and practices perpetuate. The students of these schools will study the traditional liberal arts—language and literature, history and government, mathematics and the sciences, music and art—in a coherent and orderly program. Each curriculum will run from the rudiments of basic literacy and math skills to the higher orders of thought and expression. *All* students will be required to complete this classical curriculum. Admittedly, different children have different talents. Some students "catch on" more quickly than others. We shall always seek to challenge every student all the time. Yet Hillsdale regards any system of tracking that relegates certain students to an inferior curriculum as nefarious. Not all students will learn at the same speed, but all will complete the course.

### Upholding Standards

In addition to requiring students to know certain things, a classical education also teaches young people judgment according to certain standards. To be "classical" means to uphold a standard of excellence. The classical works of Greece and Rome are not great simply because they are old. They are great because they employ harmonious language to depict remarkable human events and to explain the transcendent ideals of human existence. Each of the liberal arts has its own

standard of correctness, logic, beauty, weightiness, and truth. The study of a language offers perhaps the best example, especially since human beings live by communicating. Everyone can talk, and most people can read and write on a “functional” level. A classical education requires more than functional literacy, however. It teaches students from an early age high standards of grammar, precision in word choice, and an eloquence that can emanate only from a love of the language. Throughout his education, the student will be exposed to the highest examples of eloquence attained by the greatest writers and speakers of the language.

*“ . . . I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.” Shakespeare*

*“There is a tide in the affairs of men . . .” Shakespeare*

*“We few, we happy few, we band of brothers.” Shakespeare*

*“These are the times that try men’s souls.” Paine*

*“Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few.” Churchill*

These sentences are entirely grammatical. They could just as easily be used to teach grammar as “I come to help Jane, not to hurt her.” By preferring Shakespeare to an anonymous “See Jane” sentence (usually not well written) we teach three things rather than one. We teach grammar. We teach cultural literacy. We also teach beauty. Our purpose is to introduce young people to the masters of the language so they themselves learn to employ the force and the beauty of the spoken and written word.

Young people today are particularly in need of standards of thought and of real beauty. Their speech ranges from the sloppy to the vulgar. The person whose only expressions of approval and disapproval are “that’s cool” and “that sucks” lacks not only a copious vocabulary but also the ability to judge events according to their nature and gravity. Teachers at Hillsdale schools will not fail to teach students the standards that lift them out of the formless dross of the culture. Music is another area in which students are in dire need of high standards. The logical thinking that comes from mathematics and the sciences is no less important. Upholding standards is a principle of exclusion as much as of inclusion. Hillsdale does not pretend that all writing is equally good, that all human endeavors are equally important or beneficial to human life, or that all scientific theories are equally true. In choosing the elements of the curriculum—works of literature and art, events in history—our motto is that of Churchill: “I shall be satisfied with the very best.”

### Moral Virtue

Education is a moral enterprise. Young people are put into moral situations constantly. “Should I tell Mom that I broke her favorite vase or pretend like nothing happened?” “Should I copy the answers of the person sitting next to me?” “Should I smoke the cigarette and drink the beer my friend just gave me?” “Should my boyfriend and I have sex since we love each other?” These are the timeless moral questions youth face today and have always faced. Anyone who thinks they are new should read the *Confessions* of St. Augustine. This patriarch of the church stole apples as a child and as a teenager impregnated a woman to whom he was not married. His knowledge of sin came from his own inner struggle. Schools can approach the moral lives of children and youth in three ways. They can try to ignore moral issues altogether. They can open up moral questions for students to explore in a “non-judgmental” and noncommittal environment. Or they can teach classical views of self-command using traditional teaching methods.

The first approach is simply impossible. All schools must maintain an atmosphere of order and decorum for learning to take place. Schools that try to ignore the character of their students either end up with major discipline problems or teach some forms of character without claiming to do so. As soon as a school says “this is right” and “this is wrong” it is teaching character in some form. The second approach might seem the most worthy of reasonable people. “Let us talk about morality in a non-judgmental way and let students come up with their own answers,” say the advocates of moral reasoning and values clarification. They even make moral discussion a part of the curriculum. What happens in these discussions is that teachers open up pre-marital sex, drug use, and other illicit activities as plausible “life choices” so long as students can explain those choices in terms of “their own values.” Predictably, research has indicated that students who are exposed to open-ended discussions of moral issues are far more likely to engage in vice. (See William Kilpatrick, *Why Johnny Can't Tell Right from Wrong*, ch. 4).

In contrast to the first two approaches, Hillsdale advocates the teaching of the classical virtues using traditional methods. In the public charter school setting we leave questions of faith up to the students and their parents. But we agree with Aristotle’s dictum that one becomes virtuous by practicing the virtues. We believe that every young person has a conscience. It may be a conscience embattled against the individual’s own passions and the allurements of the culture, but it is a conscience nonetheless. Like the capacities of the mind, the conscience must be educated or it will lapse into lethargy. We insist that students always be attentive and polite. We insist that schools inculcate core virtues at all levels of learning. When students become capable of discussing virtue, we do not present them with moral conundrums that seemingly have no right or wrong answers. Instead, we confront them with the great stories of self-command and self-sacrifice found in literature and history. These narratives show that actions have consequences, and that there is a clear difference between right and wrong. Just as we encourage students to emulate the intellectual virtues of writers and scientists, so we lead them to emulate the moral virtues of heroes and heroines. The history of classical education is quite simply a history of the conjunction of learning and morality. The Roman teacher Quintilian made the connection explicit:

*My aim, then, is the education of the perfect orator. The first essential for such a one is that he should be a good man, and consequently we demand of him not merely the possession of exceptional gifts of speech, but all the excellences of character as well.*

The Hillsdale model schools expect no less of their students.

### Civics and Citizenship

Classical education has always been concerned with the political order. Aristotle defined man as “by nature an animal intended to live in a polis.” Accordingly, for the Greeks education was essentially political. All free citizens bore the responsibility and the privilege of voting in the assembly and defending the polis from invasion. Young boys were taught from an early age how to speak and how to fight. The American Founders similarly hoped that schools would teach young people how to preserve the constitutional republic they would inherit. The Founders knew that free government depends not on the decisions of a few politicians but on the wisdom and virtue of a people. Political wisdom and virtue do not come easily. More than two centuries of American history have confirmed that this nation can be sustained only by citizens who understand, serve, and defend America’s founding principles. As much as they embraced free,

constitutional government, the Founders feared the unchecked passions of an uninstructed multitude. In this light, Hillsdale regards the decline in political knowledge in our day as portending untold compromises on the safety and happiness of our people.

Hillsdale-sponsored schools will provide a political education reaffirming our nation's founding principles. They will exalt the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness as guaranteed by and realized through the American frame of government. They will ensure that their students enter the world as citizens fully cognizant of their rights and responsibilities. They will teach students that true freedom and happiness are to be obtained through limited, balanced, federal, and accountable government protecting the rights and liberties of a vibrant, enterprising people. Such political knowledge can only be gained by a thorough study of American history and government: that study to consist principally in the reading of primary sources. If such explicit political instruction appears to some too patriotic, we must remember that James Madison, the father of the Constitution, considered a "reverence for the laws" a "prejudice" which even the most enlightened nations cannot afford to be without.

### The End in View

Contrary to popular opinion, classical education is far from arcane, irrelevant, dull, and unimaginative. Rather, the classical view understands that a human being without knowledge of the past, without reverence for his inheritance, and without a judgment formed by the standards of true greatness, is much like a man with amnesia. He does not know who he is or where he comes from. He does not know his rights or his duties. He knows neither his debts nor his debtors. Worse, he may easily become the pawn of the first person he runs into, so unfamiliar and mysterious will his surroundings seem to him. A true classical, liberal, civic education recognizes with Lincoln that if we know where we are, by knowing where we have been, we shall then know "whither we are tending." While Hillsdale College worries that today's educational practices shortchange young people and fail to provide them with the cultural, moral, and civic literacy necessary to live a productive and happy life, it sees great opportunity in the resurgence of classical schools. Indeed, the demand for traditional education on the part of students and parents alike promises to be one of the surest methods of reacquainting today's citizens with the nation's Founding principles. Another way of saying this is that an increasing number of people today, even young people, demonstrate a longing for the good and the beautiful and the true. And such a longing is the first step on the road to true happiness.