



**NASHVILLE
CLASSICAL**
CHARTER SCHOOL

**Application for Charter
April 2, 2012**

- Charles Friedman, Lead Founder, Building Excellent Schools Fellow
- Leslie Hayes, Director, South Nashville Family Resource Center
- Anton Jackson, Attorney, McKenzie & Jackson
- Robert Lineberger, Principal, Diversified Trust
- David Mansouri, Director of Advocacy and Communications, Tennessee SCORE
- Jane Meneely, Finance Business Analyst, PICA Group
- Heather Stewart, Assistant General Counsel, Tennessee Board of Regents
- Lolita Toney, Sales Specialist, AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals
- Marcus Williamson, President, NeoSpine Division, Symbion

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Charles Friedman, Lead Founder
Nashville Classical Charter School
615-538-5841
cfriedman@buildingexcellentschools.org

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Charter Applicant Information Sheet

Please type on this form or use a computer to generate the required information.

Name of Proposed Public Charter School

Nashville Classical Charter School

Proposed School Address (if known)

217 S. 10th Street Nashville, TN 37206

City, County, and School System in which Proposed School is Located

Nashville, Davidson, Metro Nashville Public Schools

Legal Name of Group (Sponsor) Applying for Charter

Nashville Classical, Inc.

Primary Contact Person Charles Friedman

Address 209 10th Avenue South, Suite 416

City Nashville State TN Zip 37203

Daytime Telephone 615-538-5841 Fax 615-701-4090

Email Address cfriedman@buildingexcellentschools.org

Proposed Grade Levels & Total Student Enrollment

	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment
Year One	Kindergarten	108
Year Two	K, 1	162
Year Three	K, 1, 2	216
Year Four	K, 1, 2, 3	262
Year Five	K, 1, 2, 3, 4	295
Year Six	K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5	346
Year Seven	K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	383
Year Eight	K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7	418
Year Nine	K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	450
Year Ten	K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8	415

Ultimately, once all grade spans have been added, what is the proposed grade configuration of the school? K-8

Brief description of the proposed school's focus and mission (2-3 sentences):

Nashville Classical Charter School educates K-8 students through a classical curriculum and within an achievement-oriented culture, providing a strong foundation for academic success and personal

excellence in high school, college and life. We propose a rigorous, classical K-8 education to some of Nashville's most underserved and underperforming students. The need for a high quality public educational option is particularly strong in areas northeast and southeast of downtown Nashville, and based upon local demographics, we anticipate that up to 84% of our school community will consist of minority students and 89% will be living in poverty; as such, our proposed school fully aligns with several Metro Nashville priorities and broadens our city's classical reach to some of Nashville's most disadvantaged students.

Signature of Primary Contact Person Charles M. Friedman **Date**
3/30/2012

Assurances Form

This form must be signed by a duly authorized representative of the sponsor and submitted with the application. An application will be considered incomplete if it is not accompanied by the Assurances Form signed by an authorized individual.

As the authorized representative of the sponsor, I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for a charter for Nashville Classical Charter School to be located at 217 10th Ave. South is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and further I understand that, if awarded a charter, the school:

1. will operate as a public, nonsectarian, non-religious public school, with control of instruction vested in the governing body of the school under the general supervision of the chartering authority and in compliance with the charter agreement and the charter school act;
2. will meet the same performance standards and requirements adopted by the state board of education for public schools;
3. will provide special education services for students as provided in Title 49, Chapter 10;
4. will follow all federal and state laws and constitutional provisions prohibiting discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, national origin, religion, ancestry, or need for special education services;
5. will follow any federal and state court orders in place in the local school district;
6. will comply with federal and state applicable health and safety standards;
7. will not be a conversion of any private, parochial, cyber-based, or home-based school;
8. will not be a cyber-based school;
9. (if conversion school) will demonstrate that parents of sixty percent of the children enrolled at a public school or sixty percent of the teachers assigned to the school have consented their support to conversion (please provide petitions as attachment);
10. will open to bid all contracts for goods and services in excess of five thousand dollars (\$5,000);
11. will be subject to the provisions of Tenn. Code Ann. §12-4-101 and 12-4-102 with regard to conflicts of interest;
12. will deem meetings of the governing body as public business and be held in compliance with Tenn. Code Ann. §8-44-102;
13. will employ individuals to teach who hold a license to teach in a public school in Tennessee or meet the minimum requirements for licensure as defined by the state board of education;
14. will follow state audit procedures and audit requirements;
15. will not charge tuition, unless the governing body of the charter school approves a transfer from another district to a public charter school in its district pursuant to the provisions of Tenn. Code Ann. §49-6-3003;

16. will operate on a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year and will adopt and operate under an annual budget for such fiscal year;
17. will prepare a budget in the same format as that required by the state department of education for local education agencies;
18. will maintain its accounts and records in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and in conformance with the uniform chart of accounts and accounting requirements prescribed by the comptroller of the treasury;
19. will prepare and publish an annual financial report that encompasses all funds and includes the audited financial statements of the charter school;
20. will require any member of the governing body, employee, officer or other authorized person who receives funds, has access to funds, or has authority to make expenditures from funds, to give a surety bond in the form prescribed by Tenn. Code Ann. §8-19-101;
21. will at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage;
22. will be non-religious in its programs, admissions policies, governance, employment practices and all other operations, and its curriculum will be completely secular;
23. will adhere to all provisions of federal law relating to students who are limited English proficient (LEP), including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974, that are applicable to it; and
24. will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that pertain to the applicant or the operation of the charter school.

Charles Friedman

Name of Authorized Signer (Print or type)

Lead Founder, Nashville Classical Charter School

Title of Authorized Signer

Charles M. Friedman

Signature

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Mission

Nashville Classical Charter School educates K-8 students through a classical curriculum and within an achievement-oriented culture, providing a strong foundation for academic success and personal excellence in high school, college and life.

Vision

Our vision defines, focuses, and illustrates our mission. Our classical curriculum is built upon three concepts—grammar, logic, and rhetoric—and three components—structured learning, Great Books, and the spoken language. Our achievement-oriented culture is one in which all students are challenged and supported to achieve regardless of race, class, or home language. The reason why we exist is to ensure that matriculating eighth grade students are fully prepared for the demands and opportunities of a rigorous secondary school. Thus, Nashville Classical ensures that, at each grade level prior to the terminal eighth grade year, all students are firmly and measurably on the path for success in high school and college. Academic success is measured using internal and external assessments aligned to Tennessee and Common Core Standards; personal excellence is measured by demonstrated behaviors aligned to our core values (**Focus, Integrity, Resilience, Scholarship, and Team**).

Nashville Classical Charter School (“Nashville Classical”) educates K-8 students using research-based instructional techniques proven to deliver results and corresponding directly to the key components Governor Haslam has identified¹ to guide Tennessee’s education reform movement: (1) intensive literacy instruction; (2) targeted intervention; (3) data driven instruction and planning; and (4) targeted, comprehensive professional development. Locally, Nashville Classical’s targeted focus on literacy in the youngest grades aligns fully and well with current Metro Nashville Public School priorities – using innovative approaches to close the achievement gap for ELLs and special education students, showing a commitment to diversity, and educating students in some of our most underperforming communities.²

In “The Talented Tenth” published in 1903, W.E.B. Dubois predicted racial advancement through the educational attainments of a few select men who achieved excellence through a rigorous classical education. In 2012, just over 100 years since Dubois’ seminal words, access to a classical education must transcend the select few. A classical curriculum and disciplined commitment to scholarship can enable all students to cross the bridge of learning into the world of sustained high school success and college accomplishment.

To fortify the effectiveness of our classical curriculum, we draw upon seven core beliefs of schools already successfully educating low income populations. (1) All children can and will learn. (2) All students must be reading at or above grade level by third grade. (3) All staff receives targeted, mission-driven and individualized professional development. (4) Joy and rigor create a culture of achievement. (5) K–2 interim assessments address math and literacy development; grades 3-8 interim assessments address mastery of skill and content in each subject. (6) A longer school day/year and strategic daily schedule maximize achievement. (7) A deep, pro-active partnership between home and school fosters strong learning for every child. These core principles, embedded in our design alongside the concept and components of a classical education, create a unique elementary school design currently unavailable to families residing in communities northeast and southeast of downtown Nashville.

¹ Haslam, Bill. “Haslam: Education is Tennessee’s Best Economic Development Strategy-10/25/09.” <http://www.billhaslam.com/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=ieJPIWOtEnH&b=5478963&ct=7636889>.

² <http://www.mnps.org/AssetFactory.aspx?did=64065>.

Enrollment and Need

We propose a rigorous, classical K-8 education for some of Nashville's most underserved and underperforming students. The need for a high quality public school is particularly strong in the neighborhoods immediately northeast and southeast of downtown Nashville. Public elementary schools here include Napier, Warner, and Buena Vista. In 2010-2011, less than one in five students attending these schools scored proficient or advanced on the TCAP reading test. Zoned middle schools include Donelson, Bailey, and John Early, which entered 2011-12 in "School Improvement 1" "Reconstitution," and "Corrective Action" statuses respectively.³ Because the majority of eighth graders here struggle to read, they arrive in high school without the foundation on which to thrive in school or in life. In 2011, high schools into which students here matriculated achieved an average composite ACT score of 16.2 - significantly lower than the TN average of 19.6 and far below the college ready standard of 21.⁴

To combat the achievement gap at its roots, Nashville Classical proposes to open with 108 kindergarten students (27 students per classroom) in our first operational year (2013-2014).⁵ The school will add one grade with 54 students each year, eventually reaching full K-8 enrollment by 2022.⁶ The slow growth model of adding one grade per year allows us to strategically develop systems, instructional programs and new curricular materials, while building upon a strong foundation of culture and achievement. Researchers agree that the most critical stage at which to close the achievement gap is in the youngest grades. If left unaddressed, this gap steadily widens each year from kindergarten. Notably, vocabulary size in kindergarten predicts reading comprehension in the middle elementary years and orally tested vocabulary at the end of first grade predicts reading comprehension ten (10) years later.⁷ By age three, children in the poorest families have vocabularies one third as large as those from affluent families and, by kindergarten, poor children have cognitive scores 40% below their more affluent peers.⁸ Similarly, research demonstrates that a classical background has an empirical impact on an individual's academic outcomes. For example, students who listed Latin language in their course experience had the highest mean SAT Critical Reading Scores of 12 possible foreign language courses.⁹

We educate a highly mobile population and understand the potential for attrition (as well as positive attrition due to potential middle school enrollment into private and magnet schools). Based upon the experiences of similar schools, conservative financial planning assumes an annual attrition rate of 7% beginning in grade three.¹⁰ To ensure sufficient revenue during start-up, we enroll four cohorts of students in year one and enroll two cohorts per year thereafter. Allowing for attrition, Nashville Classical will educate 450 students at its full capacity in its ninth year of enrollment.

Research supports our proposed school size for its impact on teachers and students. Smaller schools have demonstrated focused, mission-driven cultures where professional developments drives teacher efficacy.¹¹ In addition, there is "a particularly strong correlation between small school size and improved performance among poor students in urban school districts. These findings provide evidence that small schools can also help narrow the achievement gap between white/middle class/affluent students and ethnic minority and poor students."¹² Similarly, a RAND corporation research finds that "...the few studies that compared schools with different grade configurations suggest that young teens do better in K-

³ <http://www.shaynees.mnps.org/Page78983.aspx>.

⁴ All data from TNReport Card - <http://www.tn.gov/education/reportcard/>.

⁵ In Y1, the ratio of students to teachers is 18:1 and, therefore, the school complies with State Board of Education Rule 0520-1-3-.03.

⁶ In Y9, the ratio of students to teachers is 19:1 and therefore complies with SBE Rule 0520-1-3-.03.

⁷ Cunningham, A.E., and K. E. Stanovich. "Early reading acquisition and its relation to reading experience and ability 10 years later." *Developmental Psychology*. 1997.

⁸ Hart and Risley, "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap," *American Educator*. Spring 2003.

⁹ *College-Bound Seniors 2010* <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/profdownload/2010-total-group-profile-report-cbs.pdf>.

¹⁰ Nashville Classical will replace withdrawn students through grade two but does not anticipate replacement in future grades. The school will remain open to revisiting this strategy as needed given facility space, financial viability and, most importantly, community's need.

¹¹ Wasley, P.A., & Lear, R.J. (2001, March). "Small schools, real gains." *Educational Leadership*, 5 (6), 22-27.

¹² Education Commission of the States, <http://ecs.org/ecsmain.asp?page=html/issuesK12.asp>.

8 schools than in schools with configurations that require a transition to an intermediary school.”¹³ Nashville Classical believes that a K-8 school under 500 children maintains a small school and provides opportunity for the growth of a professional development culture that ensures our mission.

As an open enrollment charter school, Nashville Classical will be available to all students within the city. We place enrollment emphasis, however, and therefore all recruitment efforts within the local neighborhoods immediately northeast and southeast of downtown Nashville. We do this to best serve the significant academic needs represented here, particularly as we consider the growing downtown Nashville population¹⁴, and offer a central location that already includes academic magnet schools such as Meigs and Hume-Fogg. We propose to work with a community that exceeds average numbers in a variety of subgroups within Nashville Public Schools. Based upon the 13 elementary schools within our enrollment zone, we anticipate that up to 85% of our school community will consist of minority students and 90% will be living in poverty. Approximately 13% will qualify for Special Education services and at least 10% will be English Language Learners. Schools central to our zone, enroll ELL populations as high as 22 (Warner Elementary) and 37 (Schwab Elementary) percent. As such, our proposed school directly aligns with several Metro Nashville priorities:

- **English Language Learners Instruction:** Innovative and/or proven approaches
- **English Language Learners & Exception Education:** Closing the achievement gap
- **Limited Resource Allocation:** Innovative and/or proven approaches
- **Geographic Location:** Accessibility to communities in North Nashville¹⁵
- **Commitment to Diversity:** Educating all students

Capacity

Strong governance, community support, and committed leadership are vital to a charter school’s successful execution of its mission. Nashville Classical will be governed and operated by a high capacity and diverse team of Nashville’s educational, civic, and business leaders. An experienced group whose backgrounds include educational leadership, business development, marketing/communication, finance, law, and project management, the Board ensures that Nashville Classical has the resources, governance, and leadership in place to deliver on its mission, meet rigorous accountability goals, remain true to the terms of the charter, and ensure the school’s financial and academic success. We are grateful for the wide support of local partners, including those within early childhood education, the faith-based community, community activists and engagement groups, and local business and philanthropic leaders. Nashville Classical’s Lead Founder and proposed Director, Charles Friedman, brings the national training, support and network of Building Excellent Schools, the local, strategic support of the Tennessee Charter School Incubator, and the educational track record of, commitment to, and success within urban public education reform. A Building Excellent Schools Fellow, Mr. Friedman brings extensive leadership within Teach For America as Teacher, Program Director, and Turn Around Specialist. Mr. Friedman is well positioned to ensure that all students have full access to life’s opportunities and that Nashville Classical builds a culture of unparalleled professional development. Trained and supported by BES (Sample Training Agenda in **APPENDIX A**), the Founding Board came together as a group of concerned citizens and conducted three separate retreats discussing a shared vision and design elements before finalizing a mission statement in December 2011. Inspired by the school’s mission, the Founding Board has placed its full efforts and energy towards founding a high performing, classical elementary school with the mission of educating every student for academic success and personal excellence in high school, college and life.

¹³ http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2004/RAND_MG139.pdf.

¹⁴ Studies on the need for a downtown elementary school include http://www.sitemason.com/files/ldO5EY/NCDC_DowntownSchoolsFinal_.pdf

¹⁵ Our primary target community is northeast and southeast of Downtown, however, we remain sensitive towards and responsive to the needs of North Nashville. Our central location on South 10th Street, and more specifically our current bus route (**APPENDIX C**) proposes one stop in North Nashville and we intend to canvass in those neighborhoods aggressively to address that need.

2. ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Mission Statement

Nashville Classical Charter School educates K-8 students through a classical curriculum and within an achievement-oriented culture, providing a strong foundation for academic success and personal excellence in high school, college and life.

Vision Statement

Our mission focuses and informs our vision. As a classical school, our curriculum is built upon three concepts—grammar, logic, and rhetoric—and three components—structured learning, Great Books, and the spoken language. Our achievement-oriented culture is one in which all students are challenged and supported to achieve regardless of race, class, or home language. We ensure that matriculating eighth grade students are fully prepared for the demands and opportunities of a rigorous high school program, and thus ensure that at each grade level prior to our terminal eighth grade that all students are firmly on the path to success in high school and college. Academic success is measured using internal and external assessments aligned to TN State Performance Indicators and the Common Core Standards; personal excellence is measured by mastery of traits and behaviors aligned to our core values (**Focus, Integrity, Resilience, Scholarship, and Team**).

Nashville Classical Charter School (“Nashville Classical”) moves K-8 students seamlessly through the key components of a classical education and provides a strategically sequenced, standards-driven education, and a targeted focus on literacy in the youngest grades, aligns fully and well with TN charter law, MNPS priorities, and the ambitious academic goals we outline for our students. All sequential goals - measurable and achievable at each grade level – are born from a strong elementary foundation and culminate in one overarching vision: the promise and opportunity of success in high school, college, and life.

The ultimate goal for all of our students is the same one articulated in “The Talented Tenth,” published in 1903, by W.E.B. DuBois. DuBois predicted racial advancement through the educational attainments of a few select men who achieved excellence through a rigorous classical education. In 2012, over 100 years since DuBois’ seminal words, we live in a world in which access to a classical education and achievement at the highest possible levels must transcend the select few. We recognize that a disciplined commitment to scholarship can enable all students to cross the bridge of learning into a world of accomplishment. At Nashville Classical, coursework at all grade levels requires students to perform high level conceptual tasks, mandatory in a college preparatory environment. At the same time, we recognize that higher level conceptual thinking is only possible with a solid base of fundamental knowledge and skills, which we must be able to track and measure throughout our K-8 program.

For the city of Nashville, classical education holds particular significance. Indeed, since the 19th century, Nashville’s education, literary history, and architecture have earned it the nickname of the Athens of the South. Nashville Classical proposes to be part of that landscape, broadening our city’s classical reach to some of Nashville’s most disadvantaged students.

Within a classical framework, we draw upon seven core principles of schools that already successfully educate low income populations. (1) All children can and will learn. (2) All students must be reading at or above grade level by third grade. (3) All staff receives targeted, mission-driven and individualized professional development. (4) Joy and rigor create a culture of achievement. (5) K–2 interim assessments address math and literacy development; grades 3-8 interim assessments address mastery of skill and content in each subject. (6) A longer school day/year and strategic daily schedule maximize achievement. (7) A deep, pro-active partnership between home and school fosters strong learning for every child.

These core principles, embedded into our design alongside the concept and components of a classical education, create a unique school design that provides a unique instructional approach, unique curriculum, unique focus on literacy and unique school culture.

Key Design Elements

The concepts and components of a classical education and the core elements of current successful schools inform our unique school design and our mission-driven, ultimate goal - outstanding academic results for every student.

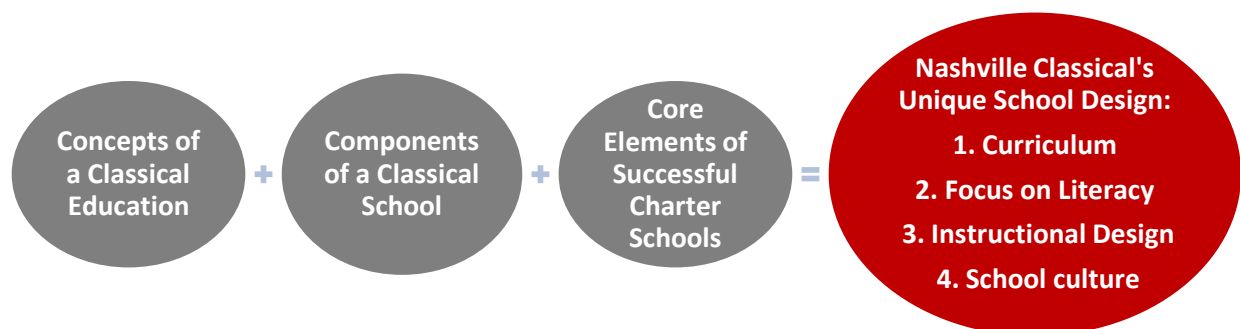
We developed our school design in response to the following questions:

- Why a classical school?
- What is a classical school framework?
- Why an elementary school?
- What does a classical school offer our proposed community?
- Why a charter school?

Why a Classical School?

A classically-framed, achievement-oriented education most benefits disadvantaged children who typically do not benefit from a literacy-rich home environment. The autonomy of a charter allows us to maximize the use of resources towards the academic needs of our population and the college imperative of our mission - by extending the school day, maximizing literacy instruction, increasing instructional personnel, providing the study of classical languages to infuse vocabulary development, and creating a school culture where achievement is embraced with joy and is the school's ultimate bottom line. Our K-8 grade configuration allows us to attack the achievement gap at its roots – kindergarten – and educate every student through eighth grade. A classical school further informs our design to best reach the needs of our community and meet the ambitious academic goals we have set for them. **Figure 2.01** illustrates our design process and belief that Nashville Classical is a unique school whose sum maximizes the impact of its individual parts. Nashville Classical's unique instructional approach, unique curriculum, unique focus on literacy and unique school culture will produce a unique result: for every classical student, a collegiate future.

Figure 2.01 – Nashville Classical School Design Process



1. Unique Curriculum. We propose to provide a high quality, college preparatory, classically influenced curriculum to some of the city's most at-risk population. This unique curriculum:

- Empowers and trains teachers to focus on the core

- Provides a balanced, rich, and unique focus on literacy
- Prepares students in foundational and advanced mathematics
- Builds core knowledge in the physical and social sciences
- Develops curriculum in alignment with classical principles and the Common Core
- Creates vertical and horizontal alignment in every subject from grades K-8

2. Unique Focus on Literacy. A classical curriculum succeeds in the 21st century because of its unique focus on literacy. This unique focus on literacy includes:

- Balanced literacy blocks addressing acquisition, comprehension and writing
- Curricula targeted to build specific literacy skills
- Access to Great Books within small group settings
- Individualized, computer-based adaptive literacy instruction
- Study of the classical roots of the English language, providing systematic study and explosion of vocabulary – one root cause of our students’ current underachievement

3. Unique Instructional Design. We embody the classical trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and apply distinctive instructional methods in all subjects and all classrooms. This unique approach leads us to:

- Take a structured, sequential approach to instruction and curriculum delivery
- Create consistency across all subjects and in all classrooms
- Enable diverse Learners and support the learning of all sub-groups

4. Unique School Culture. We build school culture around common, research-based values¹⁶ and offer a highly structured school environment, balancing the rigor of educational excellence with the joy that comes from high achievement. Cultural elements include:

- **FIRST** values – building the mindset and habits necessary for school and life success
- College emphasis – opening up life of the mind and academic growth beyond Dubois’s talented tenth and providing a strong elementary foundation for every K-8 student
- Rigor and joy – celebrating hard work and learning are celebrated at every turn through rituals and common language

Nashville Classical’s rigorous curriculum and K-8 educational program prepare students to equal achievement results of their wealthier peers in Williamson County and West Nashville. Students matriculate from eighth grade prepared for entrance to county-wide selective schools such as Hume-Fogg, Nashville School of the Arts and Martin Luther King – schools to which children in the local community currently struggle to gain access due to an insufficient elementary and middle school foundation. Last year, at Glencliff, Stratford, Pearl-Cohn, and McGavock High Schools, 57 students were college ready.¹⁷ At Hillsboro High School, the total number of college-ready graduates was 105, doubling the Class of 2011 at the four (4) comprehensive high schools combined. Some families may choose to build upon their child’s K-8 foundation through access to a private college preparatory option in ninth grade. In support of our backwards planning and ultimate end goal, Lead Founder and Proposed School Director Charles Friedman has met with the Heads of School at Harding Academy and Oak Hill Academy to learn more about their high school application processes, requirements and supports for financial aid students. We also expect that with current educational reform efforts successfully launched within Metro Nashville Public Schools there will continue to be a greater array of college preparatory high schools and

¹⁶ Peterson, Christopher, and E.P. Seligman. *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

¹⁷ College Ready is defined as a score above a 21 on the ACT, the minimum necessary to qualify for a lottery funded HOPE Scholarship. http://www.nashvillechamber.com/Libraries/Education_Reports_and_Publications/2011.

secondary programs as part of Metro Nashville Public Schools in 2022 - the year our first eighth grade class will matriculate to high school. Our foundation, a classical charter school education, will put some of our most currently underserved students in the position to take full access of such options.

What is a Classical School Framework?

Inherent in a classical framework are three concepts—grammar, logic, and rhetoric—and three components—structured learning, Great Books, and the spoken language. Providing a sequenced, standards-driven education and targeted focus on literacy in the youngest grades, these concepts and components of a classical education align fully and well with the TN State Performance Standards, national Common Core Standards, the intent of TN charter law, MNPS priorities to reach all learners, and the ambitious academic goals we outline for our students.

Three Key Concepts of a Classical Education

Stage One: Grammar

The term grammar commonly refers to the structure of a sentence. In the context of classical education, grammar refers to the stage during which “learners acquire the vocabulary of a discipline. This grammatical learning is not restricted to certain age-groups; whenever we learn something new, we have to understand its grammar.”¹⁸ For example, a student must know the events, people, and dates of the Civil War before s/he can effectively discuss its causes. In the primary years, a student needs to spend ample time reading and comprehending a famous story such as “The Myth of King Midas” before answering high-level questions about it. In the primary years, Nashville Classical students engage in the grammar stage throughout the day, focused on vocabulary and phonemic and phonetic facts during literacy instruction, master numeracy and computational facts during their first math block, and use social studies and science to build core content knowledge that enhances their growing vocabularies. Likewise, students need to learn what the school’s character values are (for example, **Focus** is keeping your eye on your goals) before they can consciously decide to show **Focus** or articulate whether someone else has shown it. Work in grammar sets the stage for the next stage of learning: Logic.

Stage Two: Logic

“When students know the grammar of a subject, they can engage it with logical questions.”¹⁹ Once a student knows what the Compromise of 1850 is, then they can ask, “What was the impact of this compromise on fugitive slaves?” For students learning to read, once they know concepts such as predictions and connections, they can answer questions such as “What do you predict King Midas will do with his new powers?” and “What do you predict will happen to King Midas’ daughter?” Throughout the day at Nashville Classical, students move from grammar to logic; students in early elementary school end each day in a class meeting where they ask questions about what they have learned that day – for example, in an end-of-day meeting, the teacher might choose a student by drawing a Classical Stick²⁰ and ask, “Was the story we read this morning, *The Tale of Two Bad Mice*, realistic fiction or fantasy?” Then, when a student identifies the story as fantasy, the teacher would pull out another Classical Stick and ask that student, “Why is this story fantasy?” and, finally, pulling a third Classical Stick, ask another student, “Why do authors write fantasy stories?” These questions include repeated, planned checks for understanding that refer back to a previous text read aloud and grow the logic foundation of students – even in the early elementary grades.

¹⁸ For more details, please see <http://www.ridgeviewclassical.com/index.php?c=172>.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ The Classical Stick is the school’s version of popsicle sticks, which allows teachers to maintain full student engagement and preparedness to answer questions, and continues to build the classical identity of the school.

In math, logical problem solving begins with a word problem that pushes students to apply skills such as counting, addition or subtraction. The period might begin with the teacher having students repeat a story aloud: “Michael has three blue cars. He receives some yellow cars. Now he has eight total cars. How many yellow cars does Michael have?”

Students take different chances repeating the story and testing their memory. Altogether, they might chant, “Let’s act it out” and three students stand at the board to represent Michael’s blue cars. The teacher would ask, “What do we do next?” and wait until a student is able to answer, “Next, we would add.” To really encourage children’s logic, the teacher would ask this same child, “Why do we add?” and make sure the child understands that addition makes the number of cars increase. Together, the class would add cars (children from the classroom and invited to stand at the board) until the total number reaches eight. Then, counting the number of children who represent yellow cars students would answer the word problem. In the early months, students also would engage with the school’s core values using logic. For example, their teacher might present them with a scenario—“India is taking a test but there is a visitor in the classroom. She wants the visitor to know how smart she is and so she stops taking her test and walks over to the visitor. Why isn’t this showing **Focus**?” The logic stage requires children answer these questions and, using teacher prompts, compose questions of their own, leading to the final stage: rhetoric.

Stage Three: Rhetoric

The final stage of classical education is rhetoric and its purpose is to express grammar and logic in clear and compelling ways. Each day begins with a high-energy, whole-school, motivating rhetoric period. In it, children have the opportunity to remember or recapture what they learned the previous day. If the previous day’s kindergarten lesson focused on the sound of the letter “p,” students practice a tongue twister: “Pretty Peggy plants pumpkins in a pleasant patch.” First, students hear the school leader say the tongue twister several times. Next, they practice each word in unison using a choral response strategy. Finally, students practice the entire sentence by whispering to a shoulder partner. Then, a child will have the chance to say the tongue twister in front of the school, earning an enthusiastic “Wow! He’s got it!” from his classmates afterwards. On other days, elementary students might practice reciting the entire date, using a vocabulary word in a complete sentence, describing the weather, or reciting sentences from famous poems and stories. On Fridays, the morning rhetoric leader might ask a question about a story the entire school has read such as, “Would you be happy or sad to have the ‘Midas Touch’?” Student Amir might answer by saying, “I would be happy to have the ‘Midas Touch’.” The leader would shout: “Rhetoric Time!” and the entire school would smile and say “Prove it, Amir!” Now, Amir would have the chance to compose a complete sentence or paragraph that explains his answer. In upper grades, students will recite famous speeches and make presentations on relevant topics from their English, Social Studies, Math and Science classes. In primary grades, students participate in end-of-the-day classroom meetings. Focused on rhetoric, students are invited to reconnect to one of the school’s **FIRST** values (**Focus, Integrity, Resilience, Scholarship, and Team**) and praise another classical scholar for a good deed, learning social emotional skills and oratory.

Afternoon rhetoric follow a structured protocol beginning with the teacher asking, “Who has a scholar holler?” and a child replying, “I have a scholar holler for Xavier.” The whole class would put thumbs up and say, “Xavier.” Then, the teacher asks, “For what?” and the student would name a value, for example “**Focus**.” The class would reply, “We keep our eyes on our goals!” and the child would stand, and using a professional voice, complete sentences explaining exactly what Xavier did. Then, at the teacher’s shout of “Scholar!” children would smile, give two thumbs up, look at Xavier and say “Holler!” As students move into middle school, they complete presentations, exams, and research papers to demonstrate proficiency in rhetoric as part of each

class unit. Each presentation is assessed on a common rubric— incorporating grammar and logic—measuring content and presentation.

Three Key Components of a Classical Education

The three concepts of classical education provide a framework for teachers’ planning across curricula, grade levels, and daily activities. The three components inform teacher inputs for a successful Nashville Classical lesson that leads to high levels of student achievement – and for Nashville Classical, that achievement is aimed at some of our most educationally at-risk communities.

Component One: Structured Learning

The first component that informs a Nashville Classical lesson is a structured learning environment - necessary because when a team of teachers has the same instructional standards, procedures, and expectations for classroom culture, students know what to expect, optimizing their opportunity for success. We build common instructional language, shared vision for classroom culture, and consistent structures for learning during our three-week summer professional development and continue this work during daily afternoon professional development throughout the year. Examples of structures the school will spend significant time planning and collaborating on during professional development include:²¹

- Consistent bulletin board formats to promote school values and student achievement at a high level, blackboard configurations that demonstrate every lesson’s focus on standards-based skills and content, classroom arrangements that promote learning for every child, and expectations for student behavior in common areas (hallways, lunchrooms, outside) that celebrate and reinforce a focus on a high level of learning and respect at all times.
- Common headings, formats, fonts and organization for all student activities and assignments that provide a common set of expectations and a consistent approach most critical to the needs of our target community.
- Consistent rubrics for all open-ended student tasks that calibrate high expectations for writing across the curriculum – critical as part of Tennessee’s movement to the Common Core and central to our college preparatory mission.
- Shared language for students to employ choral responses, compliment a classmate, express excitement, show agreement or disagreement, raise their hands, or wait for an individual turn – all part of the success of similar schools with equally ambitious missions for our prioritizes community and ambitious academic goals.

Component Two: Great Books

Nashville Classical balances two dapproaches for teaching children to read. We use programs that build key language skills - phonics, decoding, spelling, and handwriting - while at the same time, emphasizing “the need for children to be nourished on a rich diet of poetry, fiction, and non-fiction. [We] focus attention on the meanings and messages conveyed by written words and [we insist] that children be given frequent opportunities to use language in creative and expressive ways.”²² Nashville Classical uses the Junior Great Books program and a two-teacher literacy model in grades K-4 that minimizes the student-to-teacher ratio during all literacy instruction and to balance time spent building comprehension skills with time practicing foundational language skill. Likewise, Great Books are essential to our school design because they provide a grammar for students—Great Books include enriching vocabulary, timeless morals, and key facts about

²¹ More information on Nashville’s extended calendar and its impact on professional development can be found on page 60.

²² Hirsch, E.D. 1928-, E. D. 1928- Hirsch, and John Holdren. What Your Kindergartner Needs to Know: Preparing Your Child for a Lifetime of Learning. New York: Delta Books, 1997.(From the Foreword).

important people and new cultures—along with the opportunity for logical discussions framed around essential questions selected by students and teachers, and the basis for rhetoric as students respond with increasing insight to literature. Our implementation of the Junior Great Books Program is supported by the Great Books Foundation whose mission is “[t]o empower readers of all ages to become more reflective and responsible thinkers. To... teach the art of civil discourse through the Shared Inquiry method and publish enduring works across the disciplines.”²³

At Nashville Classical, the school will use four different Great Books Programs: Junior Great Books Read-Aloud (grades K-1); Junior Great Books Series 2 (grade 2); Junior Great Books Series 3-5 (grades 3-5); and Junior Great Books Roundtable (grades 6-8).

In K-1, the program focuses on providing engaging literature from multiple cultures and builds the skill of “Sharing Questions.” Students engage in Read Alouds as a whole class and complete the program activities in small, homogenous groups during Reading Comprehension. Facing each other at a kidney-shaped table, students share questions and engage in discussions focused on reading strategies aligned to the Common Core Standards that include: “Ask questions; generate ideas with a clear focus in response to questions; [r]efer to characters, settings, and plots when referencing a text; and [s]upport ideas with relevant evidence.”²⁴ Junior Great Books lessons follow a four-lesson format wherein students conduct a first-reading of a story led entirely by the teacher and conclude with a generative response period and dramatic play to retell the story; during the second session, students post and generate questions about the story guided by their teacher. Every child participates confirming their valuable part in the classroom and the learning process. From there, the teacher guides students through more formal, open-ended questions from the story. In the third lesson, students complete original artwork and activities related to the story both to build their comprehension and enhance their creativity. The fourth lesson is for a discussion. In this fourth lesson, students practice speaking, listening, responding, and disagreement, building skills they need to succeed in high school, college and life.

In Series 2 of Junior Great Books, students require approximately 200 minutes per story unit and complete a story unit every two weeks. Students read thematically organized stories and begin structured discussions that invite them to “Move! Say! Share!” while engaging them kinesthetically as they build habits that prepare them for future grades. Beginning in third grade, students participate in shared inquiry discussions. Moving from small group post-reading activities to whole class discussions, students apply questioning, listening, and speaking skills they have built since kindergarten for a weekly 45-minute discussion about a text every class member has read twice – once together and once in a small group. Discussions begin with a mini-lesson on a skill (i.e. how to respectfully disagree) and, through multiple discussions, the teacher facilitates over 25 learning goals aligned to the Common Core, including but not limited to: “Revise ideas and evidence based on Shared Inquiry discussion; [m]odify an argument to incorporate other students’ ideas; [q]uestion other students’ perspectives.”²⁵ In Series 2, students spend one 30-minute session reading a story aloud, a second 20-minute session rereading excerpts of the story with the class, and then a third session engaged in a short 15-minute response to the literature. Finally, the class moves to their shared inquiry discussion, which lasts 45 minutes.

In grades 3-8, students’ desks are arranged in a u-shape so that all students can easily look at the individual speaking and engage in a discussion that builds a shared language as students structure, explore, and challenge their own thinking. This is essential to the success of the shared inquiry approach. Program components look similar in grades six to eight but text level changes as anchor texts are longer, richer in literary elements and devices, and include authors familiar to

²³ <http://www.greatbooks.org/about/>.

²⁴ <http://www.greatbooks.org/fileadmin/pdf/K-1learninggoals.pdf>.

²⁵ <http://www.greatbooks.org/fileadmin/pdf/2-8scope.pdf>.

adults with a college degree, enabling students to join a conversation about Great Books sure to continue for the rest of their educational careers and personal lives.²⁶

Component Three: Spoken Language

Lessons at Nashville Classical contain a high ratio of student discussion, response, and presentation to teacher talk. In alignment with our mission and alignment to successful pedagogical practices recently outlined in *Read Tennessee*,

. . . teachers promote oral language through their use of content area vocabulary and through intentional exposure of high levels of conversation and questioning. Students are asked to respond to a wide variety of questions concerning common types of text that have been read aloud to students and/or that the students have read. Students are also given the opportunity to express themselves through drawing, dictating, and writing in response to what has been read aloud or what they have read. Students are encouraged to use new words in oral conversation and in their written work. Teachers are purposefully engaging in the ongoing use of new vocabulary as they interact with their students in numerous settings throughout the school day.²⁷

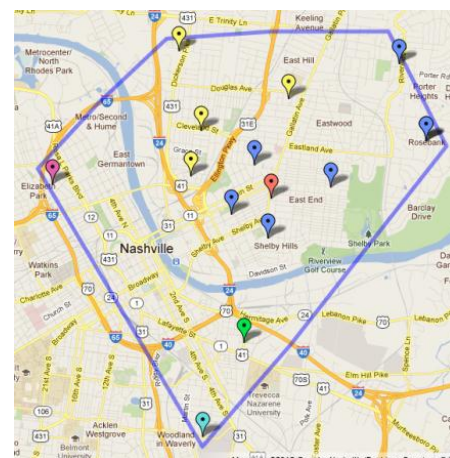
Consistent with this model, teachers are trained during expanded summer professional development to incorporate oral language development into their classrooms and enter each school year with clear expectations for how children are grown, supported, and expected to show their spoken language proficiency. Examples for a kindergarten classroom might include:

- Appropriate volume (whisper during turn and talks; loud/proud during share-outs)
- Appropriate expression during Read Alouds to reflect feelings and mood
- Correct pronouns in speech (includes subject/object and gender agreement)
- Correct use of words of being (i.e. was and were used correctly in speech)
- Correct use of possession (i.e. “mine” and not “mines”)²⁸

Why an Elementary School?

We propose a rigorous, classical K-8 education for some of Nashville’s most underserved, underperforming students. The need for a high quality public educational option is particularly strong in areas of southeast and northeast of downtown Nashville. Nashville Classical has agreed to lease the East Head Start building on 217 South 10th street from the Tennessee Charter School Incubator for two years (see Letter of Agreement **APPENDIX B**). This facility was recently renovated and currently houses Liberty Collegiate Academy (red marker in **Figure 2.02**). Our analysis of academic need, enrollment trends, and demographics indicate that the building’s central location will create significant enrollment opportunities and access for the prioritized need that exists within contiguously located communities, currently zoned to a variety of schools.

Figure 2.02 – Proposed Enrollment Zone



²⁶ Several studies demonstrate impact of discussing literature on reading skills including Allington, R.L. (2002). “What I’ve learned about effective reading instruction from a decade of studying elementary classroom teachers.” *Phi Delta Kappan*, 83(10), 740–747.

²⁷ http://www.readtennessee.org/teachers/teacher_toolkit/oral_language.aspx.

²⁸ Adapted from Edward Brooke Charter School: Boston, MA. Edward Brook educates an urban population and their 8th grade students had the highest MCAS passing rate in the state.

As a public charter school, we will be open to all students living within the district. However, we will target enrollment outreach to serve students living within the 15 sq. mile area specified in **Figure 2.02**. This area includes 13 elementary schools (**Figure 2.03**)²⁹ within 5 MNPS clusters and many of the city’s lowest-achieving children. No point in our enrollment zone is more than a 10-minute drive from our proposed location and we intend to offer at least 1 bus route in Y1 and multiple bus routes in Y2 so that families from these diverse neighborhoods can easily attend the school. We have purposefully included a bus stop in North Nashville to align with MNPS priorities and the high need we have identified in neighborhoods immediately surrounding Buena Vista Elementary. (See **APPENDIX C** for sample bus route.)

The 13 elementary schools located here consist of approximately 84% minority students (compared to 67% in MNPS) and 89% of students live in poverty (compared to 75% in MNPS). Approximately 13% qualify for Special Education services and 9% are English Language Learners. None of the 12 open enrollment elementary schools made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in 2010-11. Middle school performance declines further. Zoned schools include Donelson, Cameron, Gra-Mar, and Bailey Middle Schools, which entered the 2011-12 school year in “School Improvement 1” “Reconstitution” and “Corrective Action” statuses respectively. With schools not progressing toward AYP targets for academic performance, by eighth grade, students struggle to succeed in high school and beyond. Because the majority of eighth graders here struggle to read, they arrive in high school with significant academic deficits, unequipped to success in school and life. In 2011, comprehensive high schools northeast and southeast of downtown achieved an average composite ACT score of 16.2 - significantly lower than the TN average of 19.6 and far below the college ready standard of 21.³⁰

Figure 2.03 Schools in Proposed Enrollment Zone

School Name	# of students	%FRL	%Minority	%ELL	%SPED
Lockeland Elementary	297	25%	25%	0%	7%
Inglewood Elementary	331	95%	83%	9%	6%
Kirkpatrick Elementary	271	95%	91%	0%	13%
Rosebank Elementary	254	94%	73%	3%	16%
Ross Elementary	203	95%	92%	6%	8%
Warner Elementary	313	95%	92%	22%	13%
Napier Elementary	422	95%	99%	8%	12%
Cotton Elementary	331	95%	81%	12%	18%
Caldwell Elementary	237	95%	99%	0%	7%
Glenn Elementary	331	95%	97%	10%	19%
Buena Vista Elementary	433	95%	95%	0%	16%
Fall Hamilton Elementary	259	92%	82%	11%	15%
Shwab Elementary	287	95%	84%	37%	16%
AVG no Lockeland	306	95%	89%	10%	13%
AVG w/Lockeland	305	89%	84%	9%	13%

Within our enrollment zone are five major MDHA housing developments: Cayce Place, the CWA Homes, Napier Place, Sudekum Apartments, and Vine Hill Apartments and a number of smaller Section 8 Housing Apartments. These developments house some of Nashville’s most vulnerable populations. For example, at Cayce Place “2,400 residents are crowded onto 63 acres. 88% of the population is African American; 89% of households are headed by a single woman; 59% of the residents are children under the age of 18.”³¹ Nashville Classical knows how many residents want a college education for their child. Our grassroots community outreach substantiate that belief. According to one resident of the Cayce Homes, “I want my daughter to go to college. I’m going to do whatever I can to make sure that happens.”³²

²⁹ All data comes from MNPS School Data websites. When volatility for ELL/SPED across years, we use highest number to create conservative estimates about our student body and for budget purposes, conservative estimate 85% for Title I population.

³⁰ All data from TN Report Card <http://www.tn.gov/education/reportcard>.

³¹ <http://www.marthaobryan.org/aboutus>.

³² Interview during Family Information Session at 217 S. 10th Street for par Nashville Classical Charter School on 2/1/2012.

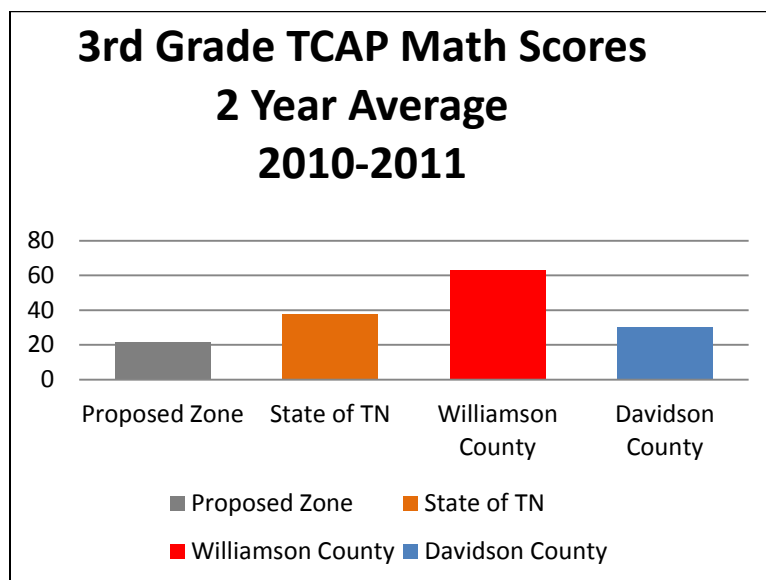
We believe that the best way to fulfill this mother’s aspirations, emblematic of countless others³³, and increase Nashville’s literate and college-ready population is to provide academic success and personal excellence in elementary school, particularly to the city’s most at-risk population. Research shows that “[o]ne in six children who are not reading proficiently in third grade fail to graduate from high school on time.” This statistic is “four times the rate for children with proficient third-grade reading skills.”³⁴ When a child grows up in poverty, the odds that they will learn to read well in the foundational years, and thus have the opportunity to achieve academic excellence, are worse. The same study finds that “[f]or children who were poor for at least a year and were not reading proficiently in third grade, the proportion that [do not] finish school rose to 26 percent. That’s more than six times the rate for all proficient readers.”³⁵

There are some children in East Nashville whose achievement points to a college path. At Lockeland Design Center (demographics in **Figure 2.03**). 73.8% of students scored proficient or advanced on the 2010-11 Reading TCAP and 61.5% of students scored proficient or advanced in math. However, a race-based achievement gap persists within the school.

Last year, 48.8% of African American students scored proficient or advanced in reading and 34.1% scored proficient or advanced in math. Less than 5% of African-American students scored Advanced on the TCAP reading test, 14% of Free and Reduced Priced Lunch participants scored advanced. In contrast, 35% of White students achieved this high rate of mastery.³⁶ Moreover, the school's value-added scores paint a clear picture of what happens to students who do not arrive with a strong background in reading and math. According to TVAAS, Tennessee’s Value-Added Assessment System, Lockeland had the 20th worst composite TCAP scores in the state and the second lowest value-added scores in Davidson County.³⁷

While Lockeland demonstrates that high achievement is possible, it is not the norm. **Figure 2.04** provides a comparative analysis of average math TCAP scores across our target enrollment zone.

Figure 2.04 – Comparative Math Results³⁸



³³ Nashville Classical has over 230 signatures of support from the community.

³⁴ Hernandez, D.J., “How Third-Grade Reading Skills and Poverty Influence High School Graduation,” Annie E. Casey Fndtn, 2011.

³⁵ Ibid.

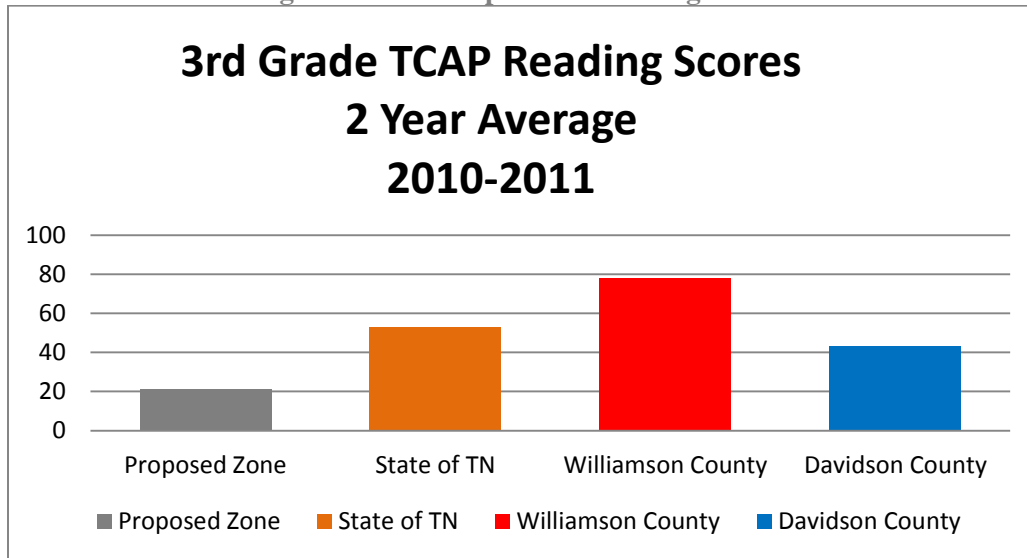
³⁶ <http://www.mnps.org/AssetFactory.aspx?did=12431>.

³⁷ Data uses 4th grade results only and compares composite scores over a 3-year average.

³⁸ Chart reflects % of 3rd graders scoring proficient or advanced. For complete list of schools included in averages, see Figure 2.05.

Current performance results show that 21% of students in our enrollment zone score at a proficient or advanced level on the Math TCAP, indicating that in elementary school, on average, 79% of students, or almost four (4) out of every five (5) children, cannot compute math with proficiency. This is nearly half of the state mathematics proficiency average (38% proficient or advanced) and one third of that in more affluent communities such as Williamson County (63%). Literacy results, as outlined in **Figure 2.05**, indicate an even more alarming trend.

Figure 2.05 – Comparative Reading Results



As **Figure 2.05** outlines, our proposed enrollment zone (21% proficient) features half the achievement level of Davidson County (43% proficient). Students across the state perform 2.5 times as well (53%) and wealthier peers read at levels nearly quadruple (78%). As in math, four (4) out of every five (5) children cannot read with fluency, comprehension and insight. At Lockeland Springs, despite strong academic results, its Black population remains behind state averages in both reading and math. The solution to this challenge lies in an elementary school particularly focused on the needs of and designed specifically towards outcomes for this community. The academic performance of local schools and the unmet academic needs of students dependent upon the quality of local public school options inform every aspect of our school design – and most specifically our strategic decision to attack the achievement gap at its roots – in kindergarten – and to educate our students through eighth grade, fully prepared for the opportunities and demands of a college preparatory high school program.

What does a classical school offer our proposed community?

A classical education is logical, sequenced, and driven by a focus on literacy and core knowledge. It incorporates three concepts—grammar, logic, and rhetoric—and three components—structured learning, Great Books, and the spoken language. We remain inspired by the mandates of W.E.B. Dubois who embraced the value of a classical education to forward the opportunities and conditions of his people: “Now is the accepted time, not tomorrow, not some more convenient season. It is today that our best work can be done and not some future days.”³⁹ We invoke the words of the classical philosopher Plato on the role education has on an individual’s life trajectory: “The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life.”⁴⁰

³⁹ Du Bois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. Chicago: University Press, 1903, page 58.

⁴⁰ Plato, and Benjamin Jowett. “Book IV.” *Plato: The Republic*. Norwalk, CT: Easton, 1980.

For Nashville, classical education holds particular appeal. With the city's proud heritage and classical influences, our belief in democracy, wisdom, and the arts has earned us historical and widespread recognition. Within our classically influenced city, however, a stark achievement gap persists. According to the 2010 MNPS Report Card, 33 public schools failed to make AYP, including 11 elementary schools.⁴¹ At the state level, Tennessee has the largest gap between the percentage of students proficient in reading and math on state assessments and the percentage proficient as measured by the more rigorous National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). In 2007, 90% of TN students were deemed proficient by the TCAP, while 26% were labeled proficient on the NAEP. While these represent state numbers, and while TN has increased the rigor of the TCAP assessments and thus we have seen a lowering of achievement results, we can reasonably extrapolate the local ramifications of such discrepancies and such real underperformance for families raising children in our target communities, the overwhelming majority of whom are dependent upon the quality of local public school options available to them.

Researchers agree that the most critical stage at which to close the achievement gap is in the youngest grades. If left unaddressed, this gap steadily widens each year from kindergarten. Notably, vocabulary size in kindergarten predicts reading comprehension in middle elementary years and orally tested vocabulary at the end of first grade predicts reading comprehension ten (10) years later.⁴² By age three, children in the poorest families have vocabularies one third as large as those from affluent families and, by kindergarten, poor children have cognitive scores 40% below their affluent peers.⁴³ Indeed, "[a]cademic success . . . can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing someone's reading skill at the end of third grade. A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by that time is unlikely to graduate from high school."⁴⁴ To address this challenge, a classical education, with a rich and intense focus on literacy development, is a unique and needed option not currently available in communities northeast and southeast of downtown Nashville.

Students in these communities provide local proof points for this research. Low elementary literacy begets poor middle school achievement, inadequate college readiness, and lack of future life options. Our aim is provide a high quality, public classical educational option for parents of elementary-aged children within communities *without* such options. Our proposal is a response to current achievement levels outlined in **Figure 2.06**. While **Figure 2.04** and **2.05** demonstrate the odds stacked against the average child achieving proficiency, **Figure 2.06** demonstrates the breadth of low achievement and the impact it has across an individual parent or family's options. For parents in our proposed enrollment zone, there is not a single open-enrollment option that will guarantee their children's preparation for a competitive high school or a collegiate future. For evidence of parent desire, we look first at the lengthy waitlist for a kindergarten seat at Lockeland Springs (despite the school's poor track record of value-added achievement almost 150 parents are on the county-wide waitlist for this year's kindergarten class⁴⁵) and most importantly we look to the results of our own grassroots campaigns within which over 230 parents have stated that they support Nashville Classical as a neighborhood option (please see **APPENDIX D**).⁴⁶

Figure 2.06 – TCAP Achievement Data Nashville Classical Enrollment Zone

Grades 3-8: TCAP Academic Achievement

⁴¹ <http://www.mnps.org/Page78983.aspx> .

⁴² Cunningham, A.E., and K. E. Stanovich. "Early reading acquisition and its relation to reading experience and ability 10 years later." *Developmental Psychology*. 1997.

⁴³ Hart, Betty T., and Todd P. Risley, "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap," *American Educator*. Spring 2003.

⁴⁴ Snow, Catherine, M. Susan Burns, and Peg Griffin. "Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children." National Research Council, 1998..

⁴⁵ <http://mnps.sandh.com/lottery/LO1kgW.htm>

⁴⁶ Parental Support Numbers are from March 2012 and do not include continued outreach in April and May.

Proposed Enrollment Zone Elementary Schools								
School	Mathematics		Reading		Social Studies		Science	
	Score	Grade	Score	Grade	Score	Grade	Score	Grade
Inglewood	35	F	35	F	36	F	33	F
Kirkpatrick	40	D	38	F	34	F	32	F
Rosebank	39	F	39	F	38	F	37	F
Ross	42	D	41	D	41	D	38	F
Warner	36	F	35	F	38	F	34	F
Napier	30	F	29	F	27	F	24	F
Cotton	39	F	36	F	34	F	31	F
Caldwell	43	D	41	D	44	D	39	F
Glenn	39	F	40	D	38	F	34	F
Buena Vista	35	F	33	F	35	F	30	F
Shwab	37	F	34	F	36	F	34	F
Fall Hamilton	47	C	45	C	46	C	41	D
STATE	50	B	49	C	52	B	49	C
Lockeland Design	57	A	61	A	58	A	57	A

Our decision to adopt a classically influenced educational philosophy, relatively new to the education reform landscape for urban students, has been embraced by the community and is based on the following over-riding factors.

Factor 1 - Children of low income homes often do not live in educationally rich environments.

Even in extended day schools, students spend about a quarter of their waking time in school. Students lacking an educationally rich home are severely hampered in academic achievement, and time away from school further compromises that achievement. One study finds that the rate of improvement in student achievement during the school year is similar regardless of a student's socioeconomic status (SES). However, during summer recess, when children spend more time at home, high-SES students' test scores continue to rise while low-SES students test scores dropped significantly.⁴⁷ Another landmark study finds that "by the time they are four years old, professionals' children will have accumulated experience with about 45 million words, but children from families on welfare will have accumulated experience with just 13 million words."⁴⁸ Moreover, "[e]normous diversity in what is taught in the nation's schools and the fact that not all children have access to a basic core of knowledge and skills means that large numbers of young Americans cannot compete for future employment or participate fully as citizens."⁴⁹ A classically-influenced, knowledge-based education will benefit disadvantaged youth even more than it benefits those fortunate children whose parents often choose and have the ability to pay for a classical education. Nashville Classical confronts the disadvantages low-income children face head-on by providing them an academically rigorous, vocabulary-rich, strategic, extended time environment, coupled enrichment activities.

Factor 2 - Many of the most successful schools are classical or classically influenced.

In the private sector, economically resourced parents often opt to send their children to the best

⁴⁷ Alexander, Karl L, Doris R. Entwisle, and Linda Steffel Olson. "Lasting Consequences of the Summer Learning Gap." *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 72, No. 2 (Apr., 2007).

⁴⁸ Hart, Betty, T., and Todd R. Risley "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3." *American Educator*. 1995.

⁴⁹ Stevenson, Harold & James Stigler, (1992). *The Learning Gap: Why Our Schools Are Failing and What We Can Learn From Japanese and Chinese Education*. New York: Simon and Schuster. page 137.

schools they can afford, sometimes paying well over \$15,000 per year for an elementary school education. These schools are very often classical in content and philosophy, if not in name, and offer students a structured environment, Latin or Greek study, music, and exposure to great literature. Few elementary schools with a classical education philosophy exist within high poverty communities. We strategically capitalize on the experiences of successful charter schools nationwide, with particular influence from those serving a low income community such as South Bronx Classical Charter School, and bring the benefits of this education to communities northeast and southeast of downtown Nashville. Founded and supported by Building Excellent Schools – the same program that has trained and provided support to the leadership of Nashville Classical - South Bronx Classical provides a classical instructional framework and structured culture for a high poverty community with great success. Earning an “A” from the NYC Department of Education, South Bronx Classical provides strong model of and influence on our classical proposal. The school continues to work closely with Building Excellent Schools, and as member of the Excellent Schools Network, will provide seminal and continuing influence on the growth of Nashville Classical. South Bronx Classical students outperform the local district, city, other New York City charter schools, as well as the state of New York on math and literacy assessments.⁵⁰

Perhaps the most contemporary and seminal proponent of rigorous, urban classical education is Dr. Marva Collins. A strict adherent to high expectations and the use of phonics and classical literature embedded within a classical framework, Dr. Collins argues that “[t]he problem is that some schools cannot strike a balance between ‘progressive’ and ‘traditional teaching methods.’” According to Dr. Collins, “If you teach the basics in a ‘classical’ curriculum, you can still pay attention to a child’s feelings and attitudes. Moreover, it is a mistake to assume that in order to stimulate creativity and critical thinking you must rule out any learning by rote. Memorization is the only way to teach such things as phonics, grammar, spelling, and multiplication.”⁵¹ Starting with one successful school in Chicago in 1975, Dr. Collins worked with several schools that have demonstrated outstanding long-term success. According to Dr. Collins, “Harvard University tracked the progress of eight principals, four who accepted the model enthusiastically and four who did not aggressively promote it in their schools. The results after one year were astounding. The four schools which did the work had an average increase on the Iowa Standardized Test of over 172%. One school almost tripled their test scores. The four schools that did not do the work had an increase of only 10%.”⁵²

While these results demonstrate a strong short-term improvement, in 1995 alumni of Dr. Collins’ initial school, Westside Preparatory in Chicago, were interviewed by “60 Minutes” 20 years after the school had opened its doors. All 33 alumni, people who had grown up on the South side of Chicago, were leading successful lives, choosing professions such as law and education. For each of these individuals, a strong classical education provided the foundation for their success.

In 1996, Dr. Collins worked with two of the lowest performing schools in Chicago. Both schools experienced a doubling in their test scores in at least one area. One school scored the 10th highest increase in Math test scores and the 6th highest increase in Reading test scores in the entire city of Chicago. Marva Collins Preparatory School of Wisconsin (located in Milwaukee and now renamed Milwaukee College Preparatory) was opened in 1997. At their flagship campus, 100% of eighth grade students scored proficient or advanced on the 2010 state reading test.

These examples of schools implementing classical education demonstrate that this framework is particularly impactful for low-resource, diverse student populations. The Nashville Classical

⁵⁰ For more detail, please see www.southbronxclassical.org.

⁵¹ Collins, Marva and Civia Tamarkin. *Marva Collins’ Way: Returning to Excellence in Education*. NY: Penguin, 1982 pg. 37.

⁵² For more detail, please see www.marvacollins.com/biography.html.

vision is one of excellence, founded on the belief that educational excellence can occur within a school with a low income and a high minority, special education, or English Language Learner population. We remain continuously inspired towards this approach by the words of a man who spent his formative college years at Nashville's Fisk University - W.E.B. DuBois: "I sit with Shakespeare and he winces not. Across the color line, I move arm in arm with Balzac and Dumas, where smiling men and welcoming women glide in gilded halls. From out the caves of evening that swing between the strong-limbed earth and the tracery of the stars, I summon Aristotle and Aurelius and what soul I will, and they come all graciously with no scorn nor condescension."⁵³

Why a Charter School?

Seven Core Elements of Successful Charter Schools

The unique school design of Nashville Classical is based upon a classical framework and combines this framework with the study of high performing charter schools serving low income, academically underperforming communities. Each of these schools educates communities whose demographics resemble those in communities northeast and southeast of downtown Nashville; however, their achievement equals or outpaces that of their high performing peers in neighboring, wealthier suburbs. Like these schools, Nashville Classical defines success as measurable academic results for every single child – with dramatic growth and absolute benchmarks specifically illustrating that success. A charter allows Nashville Classical the autonomy of design to bring these elements together and the accountability to turn intentions into results. The combination of autonomy and accountability enables Nashville Classical to best serve the prioritized needs of our community.

Amongst all schools studied and informative of Nashville Classical, shared principles and design elements underpin their success in producing outstanding academic achievement for otherwise underachieving students. Nashville Classical shares these principles and has used them to inform all elements of our school design. **APPENDIX E** describes our school studies in greater detail.

1. **All children can learn. All children will learn.** The evidence is clear: the achievement gap can be closed and we intend to be part of the solution. This belief is non-negotiable for all team members at Nashville Classical and sets the stage for outstanding student learning. We echo Metro Nashville Public Schools' belief that Charters "serve as innovative learning centers where outstanding teachers and experienced administrators and management advance each student's achievement every day, regardless of race, color, national-origin, religion, gender, disability, proficiency in English, academic ability, social capital or family income. Every student in our district deserves a high quality opportunity to learn, grow and achieve to become the gifted and talented individual he or she was meant to be."⁵⁴
2. **To prepare students for advanced work in the upper grades, all students must be reading at or above grade level by third grade.** Every element of Nashville Classical promotes a literacy foundation for students to achieve in later grades and to springboard into success in college preparatory high schools. In grades K-2, two high capacity teachers teach each classroom for 225 minutes of daily literacy instruction, and with the compliment of an adaptive literacy-based computer station, ensures a small student to teacher ratio during the most critical part of instruction in the elementary years, and students engage in the daily study of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. In three rotating sub-groups, nine students work at their level on computer-based modules while each of the two other sub-groups of nine students work with an individual teacher on reading lessons. In grades 3 and 4, two teachers

⁵³ Du Bois, W. E. B. *The Souls of Black Folk*. Cambridge: University Press, 1903.

⁵⁴ <http://www.mnps.org/Page61129.aspx>

continue to teach literacy to maximize small group instruction and opportunities for guided reading, but literacy includes a growing emphasis on writing and discussion.

3. **A mission-driven staff with targeted and individualized professional development delivers exceptional results for students.** We recruit mission-driven staff, pay competitive salaries, and provide 15 days of training in the summer, 10 full days during the year, and daily staff time to grow the team's skill set. A continuous observation/feedback loop builds a culture of continuous instructional improvement for each teacher and exceptional results for each student; professional development in data analysis, action planning, and high impact instruction creates a culture of continuous improvement critical to our mission's execution.
4. **Joy and rigor combined create a culture of achievement.** Nashville Classical provides an achievement-oriented culture focused on academic and personal excellence. We develop students' energy, excitement, and joy for learning as they take the **FIRST** (Focus, Integrity, Resilience, Scholarship, Teamwork) steps to college. Our extended day and unrelenting focus on literacy are joined by an enthusiastic, ritualized celebration of learning through the day, developmentally appropriate across the various grade levels.
5. **Assess student mastery, analyze results, and gear into action.** K–2 interim assessments address math and literacy development; grades 3-8 interim assessments address mastery of skill and content in each subject. During extended summer professional development we write, review and finalize interim assessments – all in place before lessons are planned. Our yearly calendar includes professional development in data analysis and action planning. All assessments are followed by full days of professional development - Data Days - to review results and create action plans to deliver results.⁵⁵
6. **A longer school year, extended school day, and strategic daily schedule maximize student achievement.** Our students enter kindergarten with a wide literacy gap in comparison to their more affluent peers. To provide the instruction and support necessary for strong results, Nashville Classical offers a longer school year (185 days), extended school day (7:30–4:00), and strategic daily schedule with a prioritization on literacy development and a classical foundation in the core disciplines - all to deliver maximum achievement for our student community.
7. **Daily/weekly communication between home/school address behavioral and academic growth; a deep, pro-active partnership between home and school fosters strong learning for every child.** Starting with Home Visits and Family Orientations, we engage families about the aspirations they have for their children and the work it will take together to get there. We provide daily updates on student progress, engage in weekly communication on specific behavioral and academic growth, provide cyclical opportunities to learn and grow as a family and school community, and continue to deepen our partnership all year.

Among the complete list of schools studied in **APPENDIX E**, each educates a similar population to the one we have proposed and each has achieved dramatic academic results on interim (first year schools) and summative assessments that are externally validated.

Nashville Classical's founding team believes that the autonomy and accountability of a charter allows us to draw upon the research from, leadership training within, and full BES network access to successful schools that serve similar populations. Combined with the concepts of classical education and the components of a classical school, such strong practice allows us to

⁵⁵ For more specificity on location of Data Days within our school calendar, please see proposed school calendar on page 59.

offer a unique school design for some of Nashville’s most prioritized students to achieve at high levels unprecedented at current elementary schools serving similar populations.

Curriculum

Unique Curriculum

Nashville Classical offers a unique curriculum with priorities allow us to: (1) Embrace the Diversity of our Learners; (2) Empower and train teachers to focus on the core; (3) Provide a balanced, rich, and unique focus on literacy; (4) Prepare students in foundational and advanced mathematics; (5) Build core knowledge in the physical and social sciences; (6) Develop curriculum in alignment with classical principles and the Common Core; and (7) Create vertical and horizontal alignment in every subject from grades K-8.

Embrace the Diversity of our Learners

Areas northeast and southeast of downtown Nashville are among the city’s most diverse communities and home to some of its lowest income populations. Based on demographics of the thirteen elementary schools in our proposed enrollment zone, our student population will include nearly 85% students of color and 95% low-income students⁵⁶. Based upon local demographics, we anticipate that 13% of our students may be eligible for Special Education services and as 10% may require ELL services. Our school’s instructional methods and classical framework meet the needs of all school students and offer an **Effective Curriculum and Pedagogy** meant to embrace every single learner and a **Focus on Literacy** meant to guarantee each learner’s success.

Effective Curriculum and Pedagogy. All of Nashville Classical’s educational program is built upon the best practices of the highest performing college preparatory charter schools serving low income, minority, and at-risk student populations in various urban cities across the country. All of our curricula have proven results at similar schools including North Star Academy, South Bronx Classical (BES school), Cornerstone Preparatory School (BES trained leadership), and Akili Academy (BES school). Lead Founder and proposed School Director Charles Friedman has completed leadership residencies at both Cornerstone Prep and Akili Academy, has studied at South Bronx Classical, and has continuing network access to leadership at each of these schools. At all schools, low income and minority student populations outperform relevant district and state-wide benchmarks on rigorous state and national standardized exams. Our goal is to make sure that our educational program reflects the rigor of a classical school. Research shows that an aligned curriculum increases student achievement and helps to overcome the usual predictors of socioeconomic status, gender, race, and home language and even some teacher quality variables. Nashville Classical’s curriculum is aligned with college preparatory state learning standards, and offers a coherent and structured approach to delivery of rigorous content and continuous assessment to guide effective instruction for all students.⁵⁷

In addition, our summer professional development focuses on making sure our curriculum leads all students to learn. We intend to arrange training from experts on the STEP Assessment, the American Reading Company, Math Investigations, Kickboard Student Information Systems, and the Taxonomy of Teaching. Furthermore, we intend to bring in representatives from our target communities to discuss both the communities’ history and the context of our school’s mission to educate all students toward academic and personal excellence. Throughout all trainings, we tailor presented material to our specific school population.

⁵⁶ For conservative estimates, we budget our Free Reduced Price lunch population at 85 percent. The average FRL% across neighborhood elementary schools in our enrollment zone is 95%

⁵⁷ Edvantia (2005). Research Brief: Aligned Curriculum and Student Achievement. Nashville: TN.

Focus on Literacy. Nashville Classical believes any student who enters K–2 below grade level, particularly in reading, will need additional supports to ensure they catch up quickly and accelerate ahead. We dedicate significant time to teaching reading and writing, explicitly teaching phonics and comprehension strategies, fostering fluency through extensive practice and inculcating a deep love of reading. These are whole group strategies that will support low-achieving students while simultaneously enriching any child’s growing literacy.

- 3 + hours of daily Literacy instruction in K-2
- Research-proven, balanced literacy program including significant focus on phonics
- K-2 staff with two teachers during 2 + hours of daily literacy; 9:1 student to teacher ratio
- Riverdeep Literacy program, a computer-based, adaptive literacy tool
- K–2 has one teacher designated in each grade level solely as the literacy specialist
- Students read 25 grade-level appropriate books annually
- Well-stocked leveled literacy libraries in each homeroom K – 8
- Daily 15-minute Drop Everything and Read period beginning in kindergarten
- Students trained to always read when they have completed in-class assignments

Summer professional development focuses on how to adapt instructional materials for low achieving students. During these sessions, teachers learn a modification, discuss implementation, and critique each other’s implementation. Curriculum modifications research identified as leading to the success of low achieving, special needs, or ELL students with a rigorous curriculum include: (1) Adjust readability level of written materials; (2) Enhance critical features of the content within the materials themselves; and (3) Design materials with features appealing to sensory modalities other than visual/auditory.⁵⁸ Nashville Classical’s unique curriculum lends itself to these modifications as it enables frequent small group interventions and opportunities for students to read level texts, work from modified worksheets that enhance specific content, and engage in activities that stimulate multiple modalities.

With the exception of Read Aloud, students spend all literacy instructional time in small groups with leveled materials. During social studies and science, students with special needs benefit from instructional strategies specified above in the lesson plan. In addition, Nashville Classical will encourage teachers to modify Science kits and Social Studies textbooks to enhance key text features. These might include: (1) Clear headings created on a poster that guides students through a textbook reading; (2) Guided notes that match direct instruction; (3) Recorded lectures that students can bring home with them; (4) Strategic pairing of students for non-fiction reading activities; (5) Defining key vocabulary words in the textbook at the bottom of the page; and (6) Including pictures with directions or non-fiction text. For example, throughout the small group reading instructions, students use dramatic sounds and gestures to represent words, letters, sounds, and critical thinking strategies. For example, if a student learns the concept of cause and effect, he might tap his knee. This represents a doctor’s check for reflexes, helping the student to remember that every action has a reaction in literature just like at the doctor’s office.

The ultimate goal is to guarantee that as Nashville Classical implements its curriculum, it is consistent with the priorities of MNPS and “provide(s) an environment that embraces the diversity of students and teachers while providing a solid education program that supports high effective teaching and learning.”⁵⁹

Empower and train teachers to focus on the core

⁵⁸ Stainback, S., & Stainback, W. (Eds.) (1996). *Inclusion: A Guide for Educators*. Baltimore: Paul H. Brookes.

⁵⁹ <http://www.mnps.org/AssetFactory.aspx?did=63653p>. 6.

Nashville Classical empowers, trains, and holds teachers accountable for curriculum planning, instructional execution, and assessment development aligned to the TN State Standards, the Common Core and the skills embedded within a balanced literacy framework. By focusing on aligned, standards-based curriculum and effective pedagogy, we work strategically to ensure standards mastery for every student.

Nashville Classical will use a dual approach to develop our curriculum: (1) Research-proven curricula suitable for students with varying learning needs will be used in tandem with internally developed curricula aligned with the TN Standards (in selecting curricula, we have identified programs that can be easily adapted for students with special needs or identified as English Language Learners, align with and/or exceed TN Standards, have strong internal assessments, and come with rigorous professional development); and (2) When research-proven curricula do not fully or adequately align to TN Standards or fully prepare students for success in college, we will supplement these curricula with internally developed curricula.

Three weeks of professional development for staff before the start of school include targeted workshops on curriculum planning and the use of research-based instructional strategies, during which teachers engage in the following process: (1) Study Grade Level Equivalents (GLEs) for their grade and next grade to internalize scope and sequence of student learning. (See **APPENDIX F** for a description of our Internal Standards Process and example templates used to adopt the Common Core in Reading and Math and apply it to Social Studies, Science, Shared Inquiry, Vocabulary, and Character.)⁶⁰; (2) Use TN Curriculum Crosswalks to compare TN Standards and Common Core Standards for an individual course using an assessment (e.g. Terra Nova Sample) to clearly define appropriate level of rigor for a specific standard, using sample item or check for understanding;⁶¹ (3) Create course map using course standards to clearly define outcomes for a course in multi-year scope and sequences (see **APPENDIX G** for scope and sequences) then logically using ordered curriculum to create an annual course map. (See **APPENDIX H** for sample course map.); and (4) Understand how to build unit and lesson plans from a course map and curriculum (See **APPENDIX I** for samples and templates). This process echoes the research-based, proven method of backwards design outlined on page 40. Daily lesson plans document the specific standards, GLEs and course standard units/activities, as well as instructional strategies used and links to the concepts and components of classical education. All content aligns with TN State Standards, the Common Core, and prepares our students for success in high school and in college.

The core classes at Nashville Classical are outlined below:

- **English Language Arts:** We will fully adopt the Common Core Standards, knowing that grades K-2 have already begun implementation. Because literacy is the critical component of our instructional design and we must ensure and demonstrably measure that our students are performing at or above the levels of students across the nation, we supplement these standards with our own scope and sequence as well as clear standards for vocabulary and shared inquiry.
- **Mathematics:** We will fully adopt the Common Core State Standards and supplement these with the organization of the Massachusetts state math standards, which has been praised by the Fordham Institute relative to the Common Core.⁶²

⁶⁰ Note: for brevity's sake, APPENDIX F includes alignment template and examples but not all K-8 reading and math standards, which have been aligned and are available upon request.

⁶¹ <http://www.tncurriculumcenter.org/>

⁶² <http://www.edexcellence.net/publications/the-state-of-state-of-standards-and-the-common-core-in-2010.html>.

- **Social Sciences/History:** We will fully adopt the TN State Standards, draw from the Core Knowledge Frameworks, and supplement the world history curricula with Indiana's World History standards in the sixth and seventh grades. Indiana's World History standards have been recognized as the most rigorous in the nation.⁶³
- **Science:** We will fully adopt TN State Standards, draw from the Core Knowledge Frameworks, and supplement these with Massachusetts standards for science, a state recognized for rigorous science learning standards. Massachusetts science standards received a rating of 94 out of 100 on national rankings.⁶⁴

In addition, we offer enrichment courses in music, art, language, and physical education. Nashville Classical has begun to explore partnerships with local organizations such as Kali Yuga Yoga, Backfield in Motion, Major Movement, Y-Cap YMCA and Fanny's House of Music that might support our enrichment activities. A complete list of potential local partners can be found in **APPENDIX J**. Enrichment is important to child development and we are excited to be able to offer a range of activities from which students can choose to add an individual and creative component to the day outside of the core curriculum. We will develop a strong elective program in the areas of science and social sciences, giving students the opportunity to practice their core subject skills in addition to public speaking, critical thinking, and advancement in areas of interest. We will internally develop a strong character education program to be implemented once per week during a Community Circle on early release Wednesdays.

The unique classical model means we implement all enrichment programs consistent with the concepts and components of classical education and the specific values of Nashville Classical. Our language program builds sequential study of Greek and Latin Roots so that students are ready to take Latin courses in grade 5. We have created a scope and sequence for the study of language roots based on the Word Build Curriculum. Outlined in **Figure 2.07**, this consists of five courses completed in five years from the second half of kindergarten through grade four.

Figure 2.07 – Language Study Scope and Sequence⁶⁵

Word Build Vocabulary Study Scope and Sequence Sample				
Foundations 1	Foundations 2	Element 1	Elements 2	Elements 3

⁶³ <http://www.edexcellence.net/publications/the-state-of-state-us.html>.

⁶⁴ <http://www.edexcellence.net/publications/the-state-of-state-science-standards-2012.html>.

⁶⁵ Scope and Sequence courtesy of <http://www.dynamicliteracy.com/Documents/Scope%20and%20Sequence%20of%20WordBuild.pdf>.

Compound words, and differences between words like doghouse and housedog, fishbowl and catfish.	More advanced prefixes such as <i>dis-</i> , <i>mis-</i> , <i>pre-</i> , <i>pro-</i> , <i>con-</i> .	Prefixes and various assimilated forms	Words built with known prefixes, suffixes, and the next 34 most common roots of English:	Words built with known prefixes, suffixes, and the next 34 most common roots of English: <i>voc</i> , <i>grat</i> , <i>gest</i> , <i>soci</i> , <i>arch</i> , <i>ped</i> , <i>nounc</i> , <i>clud</i> , <i>it</i> , <i>pot</i> , <i>merg</i> , <i>mand</i> , <i>rupt</i> , <i>cur</i> , <i>fess</i> , <i>phon</i> , <i>art</i> , <i>sum</i> , <i>tang</i> , <i>bio</i> , <i>nomin</i> , <i>ordin</i> , <i>centr</i> , <i>cycl</i> , <i>migr</i> , <i>don</i> , <i>cid</i> , <i>grav</i> , <i>viv</i> , <i>sequ</i> , <i>greg</i> , <i>sacr</i> , <i>lud</i> , <i>labor</i>
Simple prefixes such as <i>un-re-</i> , <i>sub-</i> , <i>in-</i> , and <i>ad-</i> .	More advanced suffixes such as <i>-er</i> (agent), <i>-ly</i> , <i>-ship</i> , <i>-ity</i> , <i>-ist</i> , <i>-ment</i> , <i>-ic</i> .	Suffixes and various grammatical roles	<i>quest</i> , <i>val</i> , <i>port</i> , <i>ject</i> , <i>sign</i> , <i>st</i> , <i>act</i> , <i>pel</i> , <i>jur</i> , <i>grad</i> , <i>graph</i> , <i>lect</i> , <i>equ</i> , <i>pet</i> , <i>fund</i> , <i>meter</i> , <i>part</i> , <i>lat</i> , <i>vol</i> , <i>stru</i> , <i>spir</i> , <i>man</i> , <i>mem</i> , <i>claim</i> , <i>leg</i> , <i>loc</i> , <i>serv</i> , <i>capit</i> , <i>gener</i> , <i>flex</i> , <i>sect</i> , <i>par</i> , <i>via</i> , <i>her</i>	
Simple suffixes such as <i>-s</i> , <i>-ed</i> , <i>-ing</i> , <i>-er</i> , <i>-est</i> , and <i>-able</i>	Rules governing spelling: Doubling principle; Change of <i>y</i> to <i>i</i> , and <i>ly</i> to <i>li</i> ; Assimilated prefixes such as <i>con-</i> , <i>ad-</i> , <i>in-</i> (not), and <i>in-</i> (in).	Words built on the 25 most common roots of English: <i>form</i> , <i>pon</i> , <i>vers</i> , <i>fac</i> , <i>mit</i> , <i>cap</i> , <i>mob</i> , <i>log</i> , <i>duc</i> , <i>ced</i> , <i>spec</i> , <i>tend</i> , <i>vid</i> , <i>sens</i> , <i>reg</i> , <i>fer</i> , <i>tract</i> , <i>dic</i> , <i>ten</i> , <i>sedi</i> , <i>ven</i> , <i>plic</i> , <i>pend</i> , <i>fin</i> , <i>scrib</i>		

The chosen curricula evidence current success in other high performing, college preparatory urban charter schools. We are confident that these curricula provide the necessary foundations for our teacher's planning; we will continuously evaluate the effectiveness of our curricula according to assessment results and empower teachers to make data-driven recommendations for curricular changes or additions throughout the life of the school. These recommendations will occur both during Data Days (see school calendar on page 59 for more detail) so that response time is immediate and during end-of-year professional development days so that teams under the guidance of the School Director can effectively plan for the next school year.

Every subject's curriculum is selected in full support of TN content standards and National Common Core Standards and built upon the latest research. In literacy, we have created a rigorous, multi-pronged program to ensure that all students are fluent readers by the end of the third grade. Beyond the third grade, we develop students able to rigorously analyze text using explicit comprehension strategies. A similarly intense and strategic approach is taken in the selection of mathematics curriculum and the design of the academic day. Our mathematics program builds a strong foundation in computation and application, and all students are expected to do advanced math work. Such advancement is dependent upon a solid and comprehensive foundation that ensures strong number sense and strong computational skills in the early grades and full college preparatory math readiness by grade eight.⁶⁶ **Figure 2.08** denotes our primary curriculum choices and reasons for each choice at-a-glance. Every choice is informed by the following guidelines: (1) Is the curriculum aligned with TN and the Common Core Standards? (2) Is it grounded in scientific research/methods successful with similar populations (ELLs)? (3) Are other high-performing urban schools using this curriculum? (4) Are the teaching materials well organized? (5) Are the student materials well organized, engaging, and easy to understand? (6) Is the vocabulary developmentally appropriate and simultaneously demanding? (7) For Science and Social Studies, does the curriculum reinforce grade-level literacy skills?

⁶⁶ This approach of two math classes devoted to computation and application is informed by the curricular models of the highest performing charter middle schools serving a similar population. Such schools include Roxbury Preparatory Charter School in Boston, MA, and North Star Academy in Newark, NJ.

Figure 2.08 – Curriculum at-a-Glance

SUBJECT Focus Source Curriculum	Rationale for Selection
LANGUAGE ARTS Phonics and Word Study McGraw Hill <i>SRA Reading Mastery</i> and <i>Direct Instruction</i>	The <i>SRA Reading Mastery</i> and <i>Direct Instruction</i> program builds students’ phonics, phonemic awareness, and fluency. Used in a small group setting with flexible ability groupings and lessons differentiated by instructional level, the program leads potentially at-risk students to grade-level performance.
LANGUAGE ARTS Guided Reading and Independent Reading UCHICAGO Impact and American Reading Co. <i>STEP, 100 Book Challenge</i>	Guided Reading begins with assessing student reading level and placing them in groups of similar-leveled students. Working with small groups of homogenously grouped students, the teacher guides reading instruction at a student’s level. Reading comprehension, concepts of print, fluency, and accuracy are covered in guided reading groups. Students develop/refine skills including vocabulary knowledge, reading comprehension and literary analysis. Teachers guide students to select independent books, set growth goals, and develop appreciation for literature.
LANGUAGE ARTS Read Aloud, Shared Reading and Novel Study The Great Books Foundation <i>Junior Great Books</i>	All students explore works of literature in shared reading (K-4) and novel study (grades 5-8). Reading Comprehension, literary analysis and vocabulary study in context are included in this study of literature. Coupled with engaging read aloud techniques, this curriculum builds reading comprehension, critical thinking, and speaking, listening, and writing skills.
LANGUAGE ARTS Grammar and Punctuation Write Source <i>Daily Oral Language</i>	Beginning in grade 1, students correct and discuss two sentences daily. Skills covered include punctuation, capitalization, usage, and writing skills. Students practice skills in the context of editing and develop proofreading skills.
LANGUAGE ARTS Handwriting and Writing Heinemann & Handwriting Without Tears <i>Lucy Calkins: Units of Study for Writing</i>	The <i>Handwriting Without Tears</i> curriculum teaches handwriting sequentially. Students master the easiest skills first and the curriculum then builds on prior knowledge. Letters are taught in a sequence that makes sense developmentally, using a multisensory approach. <i>The Lucy Calkins: Units of Study</i> support students through each stage of the writing process—planning, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing—in multiple genres.
LANGUAGE ARTS Vocabulary & Word Work Pearson, Riverdeep, and Dynamic Literacy <i>Words Their Way</i> and <i>Destination Reading</i>	<i>Words Their Way</i> , research-based, teaches word fluency in K-8. Work is reinforced by computer program <i>Destination Reading</i> , which supports student learning in small group instruction and provides additional, adaptive independent practice in fundamental print concepts, alphabet principles, phonemic awareness, phonics, three -letter words and early reading.
MATHEMATICS Math Problem Solving TERC <i>Investigations in Number, Data and Space</i> (K-5)	<i>Investigations</i> is a complete K-5 mathematics curriculum, developed at TERC that helps all children understand fundamental ideas of number and operations, geometry, data, measurement and early algebra. In grades 6-8, we switch to Envision Mathematics to support students in the middle years.

MATHEMATICS Math Procedures Everyday Counts <i>Calendar Math</i> Saxon Math	Everyday Counts <i>Calendar Math</i> provides lessons/activities to preview/review/practice/discuss math concepts and skills to build math understanding during 20-minute lessons. It is supported by extra time for practice during daily math procedures block.
SCIENCE Delta Science <i>FOSS Kits</i> Core Knowledge Foundation <i>Core Knowledge</i>	FOSS science kits combine reading/research/experiments to supplement grade level expectations for TN state Science and MNPS pacing guides. Key benefits of this curriculum are the teachers' guides, which address student misconceptions and give teachers the necessary background knowledge for effective instruction. In addition, FOSS science labs will be completed in small groups to complement skills in communication and oral development. In addition, FOSS will be supported by a focus on core knowledge and the core knowledge science curriculum.
SOCIAL STUDIES Pearson <i>Scott Foresman Social Studies</i>	Scott Foresman curriculum provides teachers with clear scope and sequence ordering standards-based curriculum around thematic questions. Curriculum is supported by textbooks, teachers' resources, and interactive workbooks. Students achieve mastery through reading/hands on activities/technology while literacy development is supported by students' exposure to primary documents and approach to nonfiction incorporating key strategies—previewing/note-taking/summarizing/processing.

Provide a balanced, rich, and unique focus on literacy_____

The foundation of a classical education is literacy. Nashville Classical provides: **a balanced literacy block** that builds access to great literature; **curricula that builds each component of literacy**—reading acquisition, reading comprehension, and writing—and address esall strands of the Common Core Standards – Literature, Informational Texts, Foundational Skills, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language. Nashville Classical offers a **classical education for the 21st century** – access to Great Books, individualized instruction on adaptive computer-based literacy programs, and study of the classical roots for the English language.

Balanced Literacy Block_____

Literacy represents the combination of a grammatical foundation, logical thinking and rhetorical expression – all used to read great literature, think about it, and react to it. Our intention is to serve a population at risk of academic underperformance, with many students arriving to school non-reading ready or reading below grade level. Therefore, additional literacy instruction is critical in K-2. To *not* lose any gains made in the earliest grades, and to continue to accelerate literacy levels in later elementary grades, students in grades 3-8 continue to benefit from extended literacy instruction.

Research regarding the impact of literacy acquisition is unequivocal. Reading skill affects the entire academic life of a student.⁶⁷ Early reading ability predicts reading comprehension ability throughout school.⁶⁸ Students who score in the top five percent on reading tests read 144 times more than students who score in the bottom five percent.⁶⁹ Examining the effects of small class

⁶⁷ Keith Stanovich establishes this fact in his research on *The Matthew Effect in Reading*. Stanovich, Keith E. (2000-04-21). *Progress in Understanding Reading: Scientific Foundations and New Frontiers* (1 ed.). New York:Guilford Press.

⁶⁸ Cunningham, Anne E., and Keith E. Stanovich, "Early Reading Acquisition and its relation to reading experience and ability 10 years later." *Developmental Psychology* Volume 33(6) November 1997, 934-945.

⁶⁹ *10 Components for a Comprehensive Reading Strategy*, Bill Honig, American Assoc. of School Administrators, Sept. 1997.

size, Project Star states that “the [positive] class size effect reaches its maximum very early, in [g]rade 1 and 2.”⁷⁰

Recognizing the costs accompanying lowering student to teacher ratios during instructional time and financial constraints, we capitalize on the opportunity that small instructional groupings provide during early grade literacy instruction. Class size is 27, with two teachers and an adaptive literacy-based computer station utilized during all literacy instruction, thus allowing all literacy instruction to occur in a nine-to-one ratio.⁷¹ This produces three benefits. (1) Small and strategic literacy groupings of no more than nine students allow teachers to plan for specific student needs. For example, a teacher can plan to review key sounds or provide enrichment based on a leveled groups’ progress in the Reading Mastery phonics and phonemics curriculum. (2) Small group size supports teachers’ execution of lessons with frequent opportunities for and feedback on student interaction. Researchers from Project STAR find that young students need to “learn to learn”⁷² and small groups best facilitate teachable moments and develop accountable language to discuss academic concepts. (3) Small group instruction supports frequent student responses and high levels of engagement, particularly beneficial to ELL and students with special needs. Nashville Classical staff can set ambitious benchmarks for the number of times a student practices a letter sound in a Reading Mastery lesson or the number of questions they can create about one of Aesop’s Fables during reading comprehension. At each stage, the small groupings support our mission of achieving academic and personal excellence. Research supports the impact of our decision: “Academic success, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing someone’s reading skill at the end of third grade. A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by the time is unlikely to graduate from high school.”⁷³

“To become good readers, children must develop phonemic awareness, phonics skills, the ability to read words in text in an accurate and fluent manner, and apply comprehension strategies consciously and deliberately as they read. Children at risk of reading failure especially require direct and systematic instruction in these skills, and that instruction should be provided as early as possible.”⁷⁴ We provide a comprehensive literacy program explicitly teaching fluency, decoding, accuracy, and reading comprehension skills with ample student practice to apply these skills.⁷⁵

Throughout the day, literacy instruction reflects the key concepts of classical education—grammar, logic, rhetoric—and the key components—structured learning, Great Books, and the spoken language. **Figure 2.09** outlines our balanced literacy framework and provides a description of each element. Subsequent figures demonstrate the alignment of our program in grades K-8 to our framework and denote the time students spend engaged in rigorous programs.

Figure 2.09 – Balanced Literacy Framework

	Element	Description
Word Study	Phonemic Awareness	Ability to hear and tell difference between words, sounds and syllables when spoken and ability to alter and rearrange sounds to create new words. Four elements: rhyme, hearing syllables, blending, and segmentation.

⁷⁰ Folger, John, and Carolyn Breda. “Evidence from Project STAR about Class Size and Achievement.” *Peabody Journal of Education*. 1998.

⁷¹ In grades K-2, average student: teacher ratio and class size, per SBE Rules, shall not exceed 18:1.

⁷² Folger, John, and Carolyn Breda. “Evidence from Project STAR about Class Size and Achievement.” *Peabody Journal of Education*. 1998.

⁷³ Nat’l Research Council. *Preventing Reading Difficulties in Young Children*. Edited by Catherine E. Snow, Susan Burns, and Peg Griffin. Committee on the Prevention of Reading Difficulties in Young Children. Washington, DC: Nat’l Academy, 1998.

⁷⁴ http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/Press/press_rel_langenberg.htm.

⁷⁵ *Put Reading First: The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children to Read*, by Partnership for Reading, collaborative effort of Nat’l Institute of Child Health and Human Development, Nat’l Institute for Literacy, and US DOE, recommends: explicit instruction in phonemic awareness; direct, systematic teaching of phonics skills; direct teaching and practice in developing fluency; direct teaching of vocabulary; direct teaching of comprehension strategies and skills; sufficient practice of reading connected text.

	Phonics	Instructional approach that focuses on the relationship between letters and the sounds that are used in print.
	Spelling & Sight Words	Teaching pattern and meaning elements of specific high frequency words.
	Fluency	Ability to read with accuracy/inflection at appropriate rate of words per minute.
	Vocabulary	Development of word knowledge.
	Reading Books	Introduction to and reinforcement of concepts of print, structures of a text, and conventions around how to read a book.
Reading Comprehension	Comprehension	Instruction in understanding text's literal meaning and making inferences about deeper meaning. Comprehension skills include: retelling, making connections, making predictions, summarizing, inferring and comparing and contrasting.
	Study of Great Literature	Exposure to important and significant literary works of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, myth, folktale, idioms. Skills include analysis of character traits, author's purpose, and literary devices and elements with extended studies of genres and authors.
	Independent Reading	Students read books of their own choice at their own level. Develops fluency, comprehension skills as well as the ability to select a text and reading stamina.
Writing	Instructional Writing	Students write narrative and expository essays with focus on using the 5-step writing process (pre-writing, planning, drafting, conferencing, editing, revising, publishing). Skills include: organization, explanation of key ideas, syntactic variety, mechanics and standard English conventions.
	Creative Writing	Students write in various genres to express ideas, emotions, and purpose. Skills are the same as those above with different emphases as appropriate.
	Grammar	Learning rules/conventions of English language: punctuation, syntax, capitalization.
	Handwriting	Correct and legible conventions in all printed writing.

Our balanced literacy program provides 225 minutes of daily literacy instruction in K-2, using standards-aligned, research-based curricula including SRA Reading Mastery, Riverdeep Reading and Junior Great Books. Each class includes a 35-minute Read Aloud, with teachers modeling effective reading strategies and explicitly teaching new vocabulary that either explicitly comes from the text read or relates back to it—describing characters or topics from the text—at the end of each read aloud. Read Aloud is complemented by 135-minute small group instruction separated into three 45-minute chunks, during which two teachers per classroom work with students in groups no larger than nine. Students participate in guided reading, differentiated phonics/phonemic awareness and word roots instruction, and independent computer-based reading practice using the Riverdeep Reading Program. After lunch, students participate in a 35-minute Writers' Workshop on the writing process, 6+1 traits of writing, handwriting and grammar. Each day ends with a tutoring period, which includes a 20-minute Drop Everything and Read, during which teachers pull out small groups of students for targeted intervention or enrichment. **Figure 2.10** outlines our execution of the literacy framework in K-2.

Figure 2.10 - K through 2 Balanced Literacy Program

Block	Curriculum Used	Skills Developed	Time On Task
Read Aloud	Junior Great Books, Supplemented by Teacher Created Materials	Vocabulary, Comprehension, Listening, Text Features, Fluency	35 minutes

Literacy Block 1	Destination Reading and Words Their Way	Spelling, Sight Words, Phonics, Phonemics, Grammar	45 minutes
Literacy Block 2	SRA – Reading Mastery Word Build – Greek and Latin Roots	Phonics, Phonemics, Spelling, Rhyming, Fluency, Greek & Latin Roots	45 minutes
Literacy Block 3	STEP, Fountas and Pinnell, Junior Great Books – Shared Inquiry	Comprehension, Text Elements, Shared Inquiry, Logic	45 minutes
Hand-Writing, Writing/Grammar	Handwriting Without Tears, Daily Oral Language, Lucy Calkins	Handwriting, Grammar, Creative Writing, Rhetoric	35 minutes
DEAR	American Reading Company: 100 Book Challenge	Fluency, Comprehension, Text Elements, Vocabulary	20 minutes
TOTAL			225 minutes

In grades 3-8, the literacy program includes a 60-minute Writing and Grammar class and 60-minute Reading and Vocabulary class. Classes begin with a “daily edit” exercise and mini-lesson on grammar rules and writing conventions. Classes use a Writers’ Workshop for students’ composition of fiction and non-fiction works in multiple genres and provides instruction and practice on each of the traits in the 6+1 model. Reading and Vocabulary classes include direct instruction on reading strategies and vocabulary from shared texts, flexible guided reading groups, and Reader’s Workshop. During Reader’s Workshop and DEAR time, teachers pull out small groups of students for guided reading and conferences with the frequency depending on the students’ needs. Reader’s Workshop include daily 15-minute Read Alouds to model reading processes and strategies and expand students’ vocabularies. Students read independently for 20 minutes every morning (DEAR) and then engage in daily study of Greek and Latin Roots for 15 minutes, an explicit part of the day’s schedule. In these grades, some instructional time shifts from Language Arts to Science and Social Studies instruction, in which non-fiction comprehension is emphasized. Literacy instruction comprises a daily total of 155 minutes in grades 3-8. **Figure 2.11** outlines our Balanced Literacy Program in grades 3-8.

Figure 2.11 - Grades 3 through 8 Balanced Literacy Program

Block	Curriculum Used	Skills Developed	Time On Task
Writing and Grammar Workshop	Lucy Calkins Daily Oral Language	Grammar, Editing, Academic Writing, Creative Writing	60 minutes
Readers’ Workshop and Guided Reading	Junior Great Books	Comprehension Strategies, Vocabulary, Fluency	60 minutes
Greek and Latin Roots	Word Build	Vocabulary, Greek & Latin Roots	15 minutes
DEAR	American Reading Company: 100 Book Challenge	Fluency, Comprehension, Text Elements, Vocabulary	20 minutes
TOTAL			155 minutes

Curricula Selected to Build Every Area of Literacy _____

All chosen curricula have proven to produce exceptional results in urban schools, and are suitable for students with special needs, more advanced students, or ELLs. All curricula meet or exceed TN Standards and reflect our commitment to provide a rigorous and balanced approach to literacy for all students. Regardless of academic level or individual subgroup, all students participate in every aspect of the English Language Arts program (supported as needed through our tiered interventions as detailed on page 57), which include each element of literacy instruction.

Word Study and Reading Acquisition

English Language Arts - Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Spelling and Sight Words

Primary Grades. As the core instructional program for phonics and phonemic awareness, we use Reading Mastery, a systematic approach to phonics and phonemic awareness instruction that follows a consistent teaching routine, including modeling/guided practice/individual practice and application.⁷⁶ Students are grouped based on Reading Mastery placement assessments in groups no larger than nine students. Our use of Reading Mastery reflects our belief in the importance of a classical education's grammar stage. By teaching letter sounds and representations through repetition, frequent checks for understanding, targeted intervention, and engaging chants, students are more prepared to apply their literacy skills throughout the day. For additional small group intervention we are considering utilizing the Foundations program. This program is designed for targeted intervention with the lowest 30th percentile of student readers, thus providing students targeted intervention within additional small groups, using differentiated, systematic and explicit phonics instruction.⁷⁷ As students master the first course in the Reading Mastery program, lesson pace shifts and students spend 30 minutes studying phonics and 15 minutes studying Greek and Latin Roots using the Word Build Curriculum. These 15 minutes consist of a weekly style where students are introduced to a prefix or suffix (i.e. un-, explained its meaning, study examples of words with the prefix) and then—in high-intensity chorale response, kinesthetic activities—make the prefix part of their permanent vocabularies.

Intermediate and Middle School Grades. With high quality structured phonics and phonemic awareness instruction and targeted intervention in the primary grades, we anticipate that few students will be in need of remedial phonics instruction by the time they reach the intermediate grades. Focus shifts to more explicit attention on word study (homophones, homographs, word study).⁷⁸ Students memorize necessary language rules to access Great Books throughout the day. For newly entering students (or students who continue to struggle with foundational skills) we provide small group intervention support using Corrective Reading, selected because of its strong alignment with the research on effective phonics intervention in upper elementary and middle school grades. Corrective Reading provides systematic, explicit instruction, with multiple opportunities for students to practice and apply phonics and phonemic awareness skills and concepts. Instruction is differentiated and scaffolded to meet individual student needs.⁷⁹ In addition, instruction is supported by a daily 15-minute block focused on Greek and Latin Roots. Using the Elements Courses from the Word Build Curriculum, students supplement their study of prefixes and suffixes with study of over 30 root words each year. Each week follows a consistent pattern wherein students learn a new root, discuss its history and modern usage, list examples and engage in high-intensity, creative activities where students practice building their own words and making the word roots part of their permanent vocabularies.

⁷⁶ U.S. Department of Education, Institute for Education Sciences, (2006) "What Works." *Clearinghouse Intervention Report* retrieved 6/3/2011 from http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/wwc_reading_mastery_092806.pdf.

⁷⁷ Florida Center for Reading Research, *Foundations*. Retrieved on 6/3/11 from <http://www.fcrr.org/fcrrreports/creportscs.aspx?rep=supp..>

⁷⁸ Bloodgood, J.W., and L. C. Pacifici, (2004, November). "Bringing Word Study to Intermediate Classrooms." *The Reading Teacher*, 58(3), 250-263. doi: 10.1598/RT.58.3.3

⁷⁹ Florida Center for Reading Research, *Corrective Reading*. Retrieved on 6/3/11 from <http://www.fcrr.org/fcrrreports/creportscs.aspx?rep=supp..>

English Language Arts – Fluency

Primary Grades. Younger students begin to develop reading fluency through daily exposure to teacher modeling of fluent reading during 35-minute Read Alouds. Students practice fluency through shared readings of repetitive and rhyming texts such as poems and songs. As students progress and develop the ability to read texts independently, they practice fluency through repeated readings of texts used in guided reading instruction. Fluency instruction and practice in K-2 focuses students on specific goals related to their reading rate (words per minute). During the day's final period, when students Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), teachers work with specific student subgroups to enrich or remediate their reading fluency.

Intermediate and Middle School Grades. As students move into the intermediate and middle school grades, they continue to practice fluency through frequent opportunities for oral reading, including Readers' Theater, poetry recitation, and reading with primary school reading buddies. Fluency instruction shifts from a primary focus on speed to equal attention on the three components of fluent reading – speed, accuracy and prosody. Fluency instruction continues to be supported through the explicit modeling of fluent reading in daily teacher read-aloud lessons.

Assessment and Intervention. We test all students on fluency upon entry and prior to the start of each school year. We utilize the Rate and Accuracy Checks from the Reading Mastery Program to determine group placement and track student progress. For students in need of fluency practice we are considering using the Foundations program for struggling students in K-2. This program incorporates research-based instructional strategies such as explicit modeling and practice using echo and choral reading.⁸⁰ As mentioned above, students who continue to struggle with reading fluency in grades 3-8 are supported with the Corrective Reading program. Corrective Reading utilizes partner reading to support students' fluency development. Teachers provide explicit modeling of speed, accuracy and prosody, and then give students an opportunity for practice with immediate feedback. Students also develop and track their own fluency goals.⁸¹

English Language Arts – Vocabulary

Primary Grades. We incorporate vocabulary instruction into daily Read Alouds and reinforce vocabulary in student literacy centers based on the Junior Great Books Curriculum using four research-based instructional strategies: (1) purposeful exposure to new words, (2) explicit teaching of word meanings, (3) explicit instruction of word learning strategies, and (4) multiple opportunities to use newly learned words.⁸² Research further indicates the need for teachers to intentionally support incidental vocabulary acquisition through oral language and wide reading. In the primary grades, much of this word learning occurs through use of a wide vocabulary in teacher-student interactions and through explicit selection of teacher Read Alouds that include rich and descriptive language. Teachers support student vocabulary development by explicitly helping students relate existing knowledge to words and ideas in stories⁸³, their own writing, and independent reading. Beginning in kindergarten, students complete at least 15 minutes of independent reading each night, for which families sign off on the nightly reading logs.

Intermediate and Middle Grades. Explicit vocabulary instruction continues, but is incorporated more directly into shared texts and novels as opposed to within teacher Read Alouds. In intermediate and middle grades, Nashville Classical utilizes Anita Archer's research-

⁸⁰ Florida Center for Reading Research, *Foundations*. Retrieved on 6/3/11 from <http://www.fcrr.org/fcrrreports/creports/scs.aspx?rep=supp>.

⁸¹ Florida Center for Reading Research, *Corrective Reading*. Retrieved 6/3/11 from <http://www.fcrr.org>.

⁸² Ibid., p. 86.

⁸³ Lehr, Fran et al, *A Focus on Vocabulary*. Pacific Resources for Education and Learning. Retrieved 6/3/11 from http://www.prel.org/products/re_ES0419.htm. p.8.

based framework for explicit robust vocabulary instruction.⁸⁴ Vocabulary words are selected from the teacher Read Aloud books. Teachers select Tier 2 words – words unknown to students, critical to understanding the story, and words that students are likely to encounter in the future. Teachers then follow explicit instructional steps for student acquisition of new vocabulary. Students are encouraged to utilize the newly acquired vocabulary words in speaking and writing. Incidental vocabulary acquisition is increasingly supported through wide reading. Research indicates that once students are able to read on their own, the amount of time they spend reading independently is an excellent predictor of vocabulary growth.⁸⁵ Every student spends at least 30 minutes of every day engaged in self-selected independent reading.⁸⁶ Independent reading occurs during Readers’ Workshop while teachers work with small differentiated guided reading groups. Students begin their day with 20 minutes of Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) time. Students carry a book with them throughout the day, so that they can read independently. All students have independent reading assigned for HW, drawing on developmentally appropriate texts and strategies and including families in the completion of reading logs.

Techniques. Vocabulary is central to our school’s classical curriculum and teachers receive explicit professional development on the best way to teach vocabulary. **Figure 2.12** provides sample strategies Nashville teachers will use and prompts they will employ.

Figure 2.12: Sample Effective Strategies for Teaching/Reinforcing Vocabulary

Technique	Description
Define It	Provide student-friendly definition. Where possible, use “you, someone, or something” in the definition.
Have you ever?	Ask students to associate newly learned words with contexts and activities from their own experiences
Applause, Applause!	Have students clap/signal to indicate how much they would like to be described by the word, engage in the activity described by the word, etc.
Idea Completions	Provide students with sentence stems which require use of vocabulary word’s meaning to complete (e.g., “When might you...? Why might you...?”).
Questions, Reasons, and Examples	Ask students questions which force them to use the definition of the word for their reasoning (e.g., Teacher: “If you do not agree with another student’s comments, what might you do?” Student: “I might <i>dispute</i> his argument.”)
Children Create Examples	Ask students to create examples of what might have happened in a given situation (e.g., “If you had a friend who watched TV all the time, how might you <i>coax</i> him into getting some exercise?”)
Compare, Combine, Contrast	Ask students to distinguish between and/or compare two different words; focus on nuances of meaning, or ask students to describe how and whether they could combine vocabulary words.
Upgrade	Ask explicitly for a better word.(e.g., “Can you use a better word than <i>big</i> ?”).
Picture This	Help students visualize words by giving them a picture that exemplifies a word they have learning or by asking them to act out or personify a word.

⁸⁴ Archer, Anita. *Explicit, Robust Vocabulary: Instruction That Works*. 2008. Presentation for Advanced Coaching Institute III. Houston, TX. Retrieved from <http://www.childrenslearninginstitute.org>.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 9.

⁸⁶ National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000) Report of The National Reading Panel. *Teaching Children to Read: An evidence based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications on reading instruction*. (NIH Publication No. 00-4769) Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Comprehension

English Language Arts – Comprehension, Great Literature, Independent Reading

Primary Grades. While focus in the early grades is primarily on the building blocks that enable students to engage in reading, comprehension instruction begins in kindergarten as students learn that reading is thinking through engaging in interactive Read Alouds. While modeling fluent proficient reading, teachers also model and narrate the thinking skills of proficient readers. Teachers explicitly teach comprehension strategies such as making connections, predictions, and inferences, self-monitoring and visualization. Students respond to texts through oral questioning, drawing and eventually writing to demonstrate their ability to apply comprehension strategies to a range of texts. Beginning in kindergarten, students participate in small group guided reading lessons in which they read instructional level texts with teacher support and guidance. These stories, lessons, and subsequent discussions are built on the Junior Great Books curriculum, which explicitly includes engaging stories selected to build content knowledge and directly teaches inquiry through the process of accountable talk about a story. In the pre-emergent and emergent stages of reading, the primary focus remains reading mechanics (decoding and word solving). As students progress into early and fluent reading stages, teachers focus more on teaching and reinforcing application of comprehension strategies.

Intermediate Grades. As students become more fluent, the focus of reading shifts to comprehension and textual analysis. In guided reading lessons, students participate in differentiated teacher-guided instruction targeting specific areas for growth. During Readers' Workshop, students apply comprehension strategies and textual analysis strategies to independent books and shared novels. Students prepare written textual responses, providing application examples of these comprehension strategies.

Middle School. Middle school students read increasingly complex texts from a range of genres. Students are taught to apply the comprehension strategies they learn in the intermediate grades as they analyze texts for elements such as foreshadowing, flashback, text structure, and stylistic elements. In the middle school grades, students are expected to engage in high level analytical discussions of literature as well as write thorough literary analysis of the texts they are reading.

Assessment and Intervention. Reading comprehension is assessed using the STEP Assessment (K-2) and the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment System (3-8). We track reading levels and identify comprehension skills/strategies for each student. Comprehension intervention begins in grade 3 using the Corrective Reading program.

Writing

English Language Arts – Instructional and Creative Writing, Grammar, and Handwriting

We provide rigorous writing curriculum for students to produce writing with organization, elaboration, and flow in multiple genres. Classes focus on clarity of expression, and students write every day in class and at home. We challenge students to expand their ideas in the revision process to correct the previous ones and to help students become aware of writing for different audiences, create focus within a topic and see the writing from the reader's perspective. Students learn step-by-step how to create strong sentences, paragraphs, and papers using templates and teacher modeling until they are confident enough to tackle the task without scaffolding.

Primary Grades (K-2). Lucy Calkins Units of Study for Primary Writing is the core curriculum for our primary writing program. Students are exposed to a range of mentor texts through which they study the work of many authors. Students learn to generate ideas for writing, plan their writing, draft, revise, edit and publish writing. We supplement this with Handwriting Without

Tears and Daily Oral Language Activities (beginning in grade 1) to ensure students master the craft of writing and have exemplary control of handwriting and the conventions of writing.

Intermediate Grades (3-4). Instruction shifts from a 35-minute Writers' Workshop to a 45-minute daily writing and grammar class. Students continue to use Lucy Calkins Units of Study. Students have practice drafting, writing and revising works of writing in a range of genres that meet the criteria outlined in the 6+1 Traits of Writing. As students enter the intermediate grades, a more explicit focus on grammar is necessary. We continue to engage students in increasingly complex Daily Oral Language exercises and explicit grammar lessons are incorporated into the Writers' Workshop. Teachers provide a series of lessons addressing grade level appropriate grammar skills; students apply the skills through revision and editing of independent work.

Middle School (5-8). Students apply writing skills in a range of contexts. Middle school writing incorporates significant emphasis on research writing. In addition to the 60-minute daily writing and grammar class, we focus on writing across the curriculum. Students are expected to demonstrate proficiency in writing in all curricular areas and are provided with daily opportunities to write in every class.

Assessment. All students complete a monthly writing prompt. Writing is evaluated using the 6+1 Traits Writing Rubric. Teachers collaborate on the scoring of writing prompts and use information to modify instructional planning and provide support for struggling students.

Classical Literacy for the 21st Century

In the 21st century, the connection between education and freedom is best expressed by the economic freedom that comes with a college degree. Recent studies show that the chances of full-time work increase with further education - this boost largest with high school graduation.⁸⁷

An education that emphasizes literacy and content knowledge remains the best preparation for the 21st century. As evidence, we consider research conducted by the Core Knowledge foundation using its Cultural Literacy Test (CLT). A study in *The Community College Journal of Research and Practice* examines the cultural literacy of 1,343 students from three different community colleges. Scores on the CLT "correlated significantly" with GPA, as well as grades in first-semester freshman English courses, history courses, and government courses.⁸⁸

We support students' growing literacy through our emphasis on Great Books and selection of the Junior Great Books curriculum - authentic, well-written literature, rich enough to support extended interpretive discussion, raise genuine questions of meaning for teachers and students, and limited in length to sustain students' engagement and focus during discussion. Selections are age-appropriate and contain a variety of genres, settings, time periods, and themes.⁸⁹ In K-1, Junior Great Books constitutes our Read Aloud curriculum before becoming a reading comprehension curriculum in grades 2-5. Great Books fits our educational vision because of the content it introduces students to and the skills it provides for them. Research demonstrates the Junior Great Books program has led elementary students to improve their: literal and abstract reading comprehension; critical thinking/higher level reasoning skills; expository writing in response to literature; and self-esteem as a result of sharing ideas in a respectful, collaborative atmosphere.⁹⁰ When used by diverse populations or correlated to state achievement tests, research indicates that Junior Great Books is part of a successful literacy program. Junior Great Books

⁸⁷ Swanson, C.B. (2009). "Closing the Graduation Gap: Educational and Economic Conditions in America's Largest Cities." *Editorial Projects in Education Research*.

⁸⁸ Pentony, Joseph F., Paul Swank, and Carole G. Pentony. "The Cultural Literacy Test: A Validation and Factor Analysis." *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, Volume 25, Number 2 (February, 2001), pp. 87-96.

⁸⁹ <http://www.greatbooks.org/programs-for-all-ages/junior/jgbseries/grades-k-2/faqs/#c7697>.

⁹⁰ <http://www.greatbooks.org/programs-for-all-ages/junior/research-effectiveness/scientific-research-on-student-learning/for-grades-2>.

provides audio cassette versions of all stories to enable ELL students to engage in multiple readings and supports all students with strategies they can use when reading independently.

Nashville Classical's overall purpose in using the Junior Great Books program is to enable students to study great literature directly in middle school by possessing the literacy skills to access texts in their original form or with minimal abridgement. A sample of literature students will read in K – 4 is provided in **Figure 2.13**; an example of middle school appropriate Great Books follows in **Figure 2.14**. Teachers play an active role in the planning process and build from the outline below. Texts are organized and sequenced logically so that when students transition into middle school, they have studied creation myths, read a variety of folk tales, and studied abridged versions of famous lives. When students read original versions of speeches by Abraham Lincoln as middle schoolers, they have already studied the president in picture books and abridged texts. Similarly, since students study short stories, novels, and poems in each elementary grade, they are prepared to independently access original work by authors such as Anton Chekhov, Robert Frost, and Martin Luther King in middle school.

Figure 2.13 – Sample Literature for Kindergarten – Grade Four⁹¹

Sample Literature for Kindergarten – Grade Four	
Read Aloud Texts Kindergarten & Grade 1	
The Shoemaker and the Elves Brothers Grimm as told by Wanda Gág The Frog Went A-Traveling Russian folktale as told by Vsevolod Garshin "Night into Dawn" Poetry by Robert Hillyer and John Ciardi, a Mescalero Apache song The Tale of Two Bad Mice Beatrix Potter Bouki Cuts Wood Haitian folktale as told by Harold Courlander Lion at School Philippa Pearce Coyote Rides the Sun Native American folktale, as told by Jane Louise Curry Aesop's Fables (Assortment) King Midas and the Golden Touch Momotaro: Peach Boy (Japanese Folktale) Winnie the Pooh Selections by A.A. Milne "Fantasy" Poems by Sylvia Plath, Edward Lear, Lewis Carrol "Seasons" Poems by Langston Hughes, A.A. Milne, and Robert Louis Stevenson Velveteen Rabbit by Margery Williams The Ugly Duckling by Hans Christian Anderson Mother Goose Poems Different Lands, Similar Stories Lon Po Po (China) and Little Red Riding Hood Issun Boshi (Japan), Thumbelina (Hans Christian Anderson) The Knee High Man (African-American Folktale) Medio Pollito (Spanish Folktale) Picture Book Biographies (Famous Americans) Barack Obama, Martin Luther King, Abraham Lincoln, George Washington, Benjamin Franklin, Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, Thomas Jefferson, Eleanor Roosevelt, Helen Keller by David Adler	
Stories for Grades 2-4	
Shared Reading/Reading Comprehension	Read Aloud

⁹¹ List courtesy of www.greatbooks.org.

The Banza Hatian folktale as told by Diane Wolkstein The Fisherman and His Wife Brothers Grimm It's all the Fault of Adam Nigerian folktale as told by Barbara Walker The Princess and the Beggar Korean folktale as told by Anne Sibley O'Brien The Fire on the Mountain Ethiopian folktale Thank You Ma'am Langston Hughes Thunder, Elephant, and Dorobo African folktale as told by Humphrey Harmanm All Summer in a Day Ray Bradbury Beauty and the Beast Madame de Villeneuve Shrewd Todie and Lyzer the Miser Ukranian folktale as told by Issac Bashevis Singer The Elephant's Child Rudyard Kipling The No-Guitar Blues Gary Soto In the Time of the Drums Gullah folktale	Charlotte's Web E.B. White D'Aulaire's Book of Greek Myths Just So Stories Rudyard Kipling Alice in Wonderland Lewis Carrol Treasure Island Robert Louis Stevenson
	Biographies & Poetry
	<i>Biographies of Famous Artists, Athletes, etc.</i> Van Gogh, Monet, Picasso, Da Vinci, Matisse, O'Keefe, Aaron Copland, John Philip Sousa, Francis Scott Key, Frida Kahlo, Jacob Lawrence, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Ella Fitzgerald, Jackie Robinson, Roberto Clemente <i>Poetry</i> by Shel Silverstein, Langston Hughes, Carl Sandburg, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Edward Lear

Figure 2.14 – Sample Literature for Middle School Students⁹²

Sample Literature for Middle School	
Non Fiction	Fiction
Essays and Autobiographies	Short Stories
Throwing Snowballs (from <i>An American Childhood</i>) Annie Dillard How it Feels to Be Colored Me Zora Neale Hurston Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass Frederick Douglass Colter's Way Sebastian Junger Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl Anne Frank Boy Roald Dahl Chew on This Schlosser Going to School During the Civil Rights Movement Koestler Bad Boy Walter Dean Meyers The Story of My Life Helen Keller Black Like Me John Howard Griffin	Raymond's Run Toni Cade Bambara The Bet Anton Chekhov The First Day Edward P. Jones Poems Poems by Billy Collins, Emily Dickinson, Robert Frost, William Carlos Williams, Sylvia Plath, Edip Cansever, Robert Frost, Elizabeth Bishop
Speeches	Novels⁹³
Farewell Address George Washington Emancipation Proclamation Abraham Lincoln Address to the First Annual Meeting of the American Equal Rights Association Sojourner Truth I Have a Dream Martin Luther King	Maniac Magee Jerry Spinelli Watsons Go to Birmingham Christopher Paul Curtis Kidnapped Robert Louis Stevenson Adventures of Tom Sawyer Mark Twain The Contender Robert Lipsyte Hoot Carl Hiasen A Study in Scarlet Arthur Conan Doyle Monster Walter Dean Meyers

⁹² Informed by Great Books Foundation, Core Knowledge Foundation and Research on local College Preparatory Schools.

⁹³ Reflect a sample of novels students might in a small group, whole class or have read aloud depending on their level.

<p>Jacob Have I Loved Katherine Patterson And Then There Were None Agatha Christie The Count of Monte Cristo Alexandre Dumas Fahrenheit 451 Ray Bradbury</p>

We recognize the importance of technology and innovation to complement our focus on classical literacy. Every K-2 classroom features a computer station to which students have daily access during their literacy block. Riverdeep Destination Reading Program represents the core computer activity; as students become familiar with the computer, available programs increase. Destination Reading is an adaptive literacy computer program that contains three levels of instruction - emergent, beginning, and fluent readers. Utilizing this program in K-2 (in grade 3, students use independent reading as a third literacy station), the program employs steady early intervention through an all-inclusive literacy curriculum. The Destination Reading model is based on research that reveals that students who cannot read at grade level in early elementary grades rarely ever equalize. Rather, the educational divide only widens. The curriculum catches up students who do not have this proper reading base.⁹⁴ In subsequent grades, students access a smaller classroom-based computer station for remediation and, ultimately, take computers as an enrichment class. In enrichment, students use time in a computer lab to increase typing skills, complement work from core subject classes, and build basic knowledge of required technical skills.

Our vision for 21st century literacy is fortified by a focus on vocabulary and language. A Nashville Classical student exits school having read a diverse array of Great Books, having gained nine (9) years of computer literacy, and having studied a classical language.

In K-2, students are introduced to the Basics of Greek and Latin Roots through Read Aloud study, as a supplementary activity during phonics, and as Word Study practice during independent work centers. In grade 3, students continue formal study of Greek and Latin Roots through the Dynamic Literacy Word Build curriculum. Focused on building morphemic awareness, Word Build sequences the most common prefixes, suffixes, and root words into 15-minute daily lessons. Students study Word Build during a 15-minute vocabulary block in grades three through seven, moving through Foundations and Elements courses of study. A student enters eighth grade knowing the 93 most common root words in the English language and prepared to study a full year of the Latin language. The benefits of a classical language pays dividends for a child's literacy throughout their educational career. Studies indicate that "the SAT Verbal average for those taking the Latin Achievement Test . . . was 144 points higher than the national average for all students. . . . Moreover, while national SAT Math averages also dropped slightly . . . , Latin Achievement Test participants scored . . . 122 points higher than the mean for all students."⁹⁵

Once students enter college, the dividends of a classical language background continue. A seminal study by Wiley finds that high school foreign language students "had a cumulative college GPA of approximately 2.80, compared with those students who did not take a high school foreign language (2.38 average)." Latin studies show the students with the highest average GPA of 2.89, higher than French, German or Spanish.⁹⁶ While students will likely have their choice of languages to study in high school and college, Nashville Classical's focus on affixes, root words, and direct Latin study translates well to subsequent English classes and the study of any Romance Language. A sample list of roots and affixes studied can be found in **Figure 2.06** on page 23.

Prepare Students in Foundational and Advanced Mathematics

⁹⁴ Begley, S. 1996. "Your Child's Brain." *Newsweek*. Feb. 19, 1996, 55-61.

⁹⁵ <http://teach.valdosta.edu/whuitt/files/latin.html>.

⁹⁶ <http://teach.valdosta.edu/whuitt/files/latin.html>.

Socrates called mathematics the most pure of all the arts. Indeed, math was held in the highest esteem across the classical world. In the 21st century, the ten college majors that lead to high salaries all require a mathematics background.⁹⁷ Nashville Classical employs research-based curricula such as *Saxon Math*, *Great Source Calendar Math* and *Math Investigations*; we provide 80 minutes of daily math instruction in K-2 and 120 minutes in grades 3-8. All instruction is aligned with the Common Core and TN Curriculum Frameworks, while all assessments are standards-driven. In all grades, math instruction is provided in two daily classes: Foundations (number sense and computation) and Problem Solving (application). Students master middle school math and Algebra I by the end of Grade 8, a critical milestone pursuant to success in advanced mathematics (Algebra II, Geometry, Trigonometry, and Calculus).

Nashville Classical takes this approach because research suggests that success in foundational math is directly connected to future achievement or, in far too many cases, future struggles. Research supports our approach. In fact, beginning first-graders who understand numbers, the quantities those numbers represent, and low-level arithmetic will have better success in learning mathematics through the end of fifth-grade.⁹⁸ Thus, the primary math curriculum begins with *TERC: Investigations in Number, Data and Space* and is supported using worksheets and independent practice from *Saxon Math* and *Calendar Math*.

In grade 6, *enVisions Math* becomes the primary curriculum and is supplemented by *Connected Math* so that students can spend the 7th and 8th grade math years engaged in Pre-algebra and Algebra 1.

In grades K-4, Nashville Classical will begin their first of two math blocks (the Saxon Math block) with a brief math meeting from the *Everyday Counts Calendar Math* program, which provides lessons and activities to preview, review, practice, and discuss critical math concepts and skills focused on place value, measurement, time, money, mental math, geometry, estimation, patterns and functions, graphing, statistics, and algebra. Moreover, *Calendar Math* achieves its goals through a brief math meeting and cooperative learning. Research has shown its ability to impact student achievement even when used for as little as 10 minutes a day. In a case-study used by New Haven Schools with similar demographics to Nashville Classical's community, *Calendar Math* doubles the frequency of hands on activities a teacher used and had a significant impact on student performance on end of year state test. Finally, in teach feedback afterwards, staff singled out the connection between *Calendar Math* and ELL students' ability to talk math.⁹⁹

Students complete their first block of math, moving from *Calendar Math* to completing practice problems from Saxon Math. Practice devices that support student mastery of math skills and knowledge distinguish the direct-instruction Saxon Math program which methodically outlines instruction and evaluation throughout the academic year. The program is efficient and data-driven, separating multiple concepts into connected increments, and acknowledging that small portions of information are easier to teach and to learn. Saxon Math allocates the instruction, practice and evaluation of increments throughout a grade level. Each increment builds on the groundwork of previous increments, guiding students to a deep understanding of math concepts. Foundational research has proven that distributed instruction - teaching which introduces concepts to be comprehended over numerous intervals - results in student achievement superior to that achieved through instruction that is not disseminated.¹⁰⁰ Studies also suggest that spaced or distributed practice results in higher performance than a process of constant mass practice.¹⁰¹ The

⁹⁷ <http://www.payscale.com/best-colleges/degrees.asp> .

⁹⁸ Geary, D. C., Hoard, M. K., Nugent, L., & Bailey, D. H. (2012). Mathematical cognition deficits in children with learning disabilities and persistent low achievement: A five year prospective study. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 104, 206–223..

⁹⁹ <http://www.greatsource.com/GreatSource/pdf/EveryDayCountsResearch206.pdf> p. 16

¹⁰⁰ English, Wellburn & Killian, 1934, from www.saxonhomeschool.com/math/index.jsp p.1.

¹⁰¹ Dhailwal, 1987; Proctor, 1980; from www.saxonmathhomeschool.com/mth/index.jsp p. 2.

common cumulative assessments in Saxon Math measure acquisition and maintenance of concepts. Assessments every fifth lesson assist teachers in measuring student growth, and each evaluation is cumulative, so that teachers are able to observe student skill retention over a period of time. Math Investigations, focusing on exploratory problem solving and critical thinking, supplements the use of Saxon Math by giving students a fundamental understanding in ideas of numbers and operations, geometry, data, measurement and early algebra.¹⁰² We recognize that students need basic fact knowledge and automaticity with procedural computation and understanding of conceptual ideas and the ability to solve complex mathematical problems. We provide a comprehensive mathematics program where students acquire a strong foundation in the basic skills, procedural computation, and conceptual understanding.

The second math block begins with students completing a logic problem in the following way: (1) Repeat the problem. Using high-frequency chants, students repeat teacher's word problem from the beginning making sure they have every detail correct. (2) See the problem. Selected by the teacher, students come to the front of the room and act the problem out (i.e. pretend to be the 2 slices of pizza that Jerome has and the extra slice he gives away). (3) Draw the problem. Using prior information, students draw the problem in their math journals. (4) Solve the problem. Using strategic checks for understanding, the teacher will either select an individual student or ask the whole class to solve the problem (i.e. how many slices of pizza did the teacher give Jerome?).¹⁰³

From there, students enter the math workshop, led by a teacher's use of *TERC Math Investigations*. The math workshop combines small group practice, whole group discussion, individual practice, and engages students using math games and manipulatives. Each curriculum unit of *Math Investigations* provides an intense study of either specific or a thematically linked set of mathematical concepts and skills. The concepts and skills are organized into the same strand as the Common Core Standards and strands are taught either in isolation or two at a time. Each successive unit builds on the previous unit, so students can make connections across strands each year and across grades, remembering prior instruction in a specific strand. Throughout the *Math Investigations* block, teachers are able to differentiate, indicating on their lesson plans how they will pair or group students and which groups they will work with during what times. This planning by the teacher leads to high levels of differentiated support both by student and by skill. Ultimately, all Nashville Classical students will succeed in math because of an approach that combines foundational concepts and skills with advanced strategy.

Build Core Knowledge in the Physical and Social Sciences

Classical Science

In classical education, science represents the opportunity to learn the laws of physical science, biology of our species, and vocabulary of our earth. Science offers students the opportunity to apply literacy and mathematical skills, conduct experiments in chemistry, and explain why experiments work in physics. Starting in kindergarten, we implement a rigorous, standards-based science curriculum that maximizes student learning and engagement with the world. Because of its demonstrated success with implementing a standards-based program to serve the educational needs of urban students, we have selected Full Options Science Systems (FOSS) as a foundational program in our science curriculum.¹⁰⁴ Students develop and master, at a developmentally appropriate pace, scientific knowledge and skills through the study of multiple

¹⁰² <http://investigations.terc.edu> .

¹⁰³ Strategy-based problem solving is especially effective for children with exceptionalities Montague, M., Warger, C.L., & Morgan, H. (2000). Solve It! Strategy instruction to improve mathematical problem solving. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, 15, 110-116.

¹⁰⁴ Kahle, J., J. Meece, K. and Scantlebury.. (2000). "Urban African-American middle school science students: Does standards-based teaching make a difference?" *Journal of Research in Science Teaching* 37, 9. 1019-1041.

scientific fields (earth, physical, environmental, biological, and social), apply the scientific method, conduct experiments of their own design, and present their findings professionally. We continue to develop additional curricula to supplement this research-proven model so that students are receiving a rigorous foundational science curriculum and are fully prepared to enter a more advanced course of study of the sciences at the high school level. The FOSS program fully aligns with the new Tennessee science curriculum.¹⁰⁵

Classical Social Studies

Ancient Athens was home to the world's first classical schools and the first democracy. The purpose of schools was to prepare children to be citizens—equipped to make decisions that would impact the greater public. Nashville Classical believes a social studies education is essential to students building content knowledge for literacy achievement and the historical knowledge necessary to achieve personal excellence. In K-2, social studies concepts are integrated into the literacy block. Students read a range of non-fiction texts during guided and independent reading. Teachers directly connect daily Read Aloud texts to social studies concepts, explicitly building vocabulary and background knowledge students need to comprehend more complex social science content they will encounter in the intermediate grades and middle school years. Every other day, students participate in Social Studies lessons. These lessons, based on the Scott Foresman curriculum, build student knowledge of fundamental concepts and provide opportunities to answer logic-based questions. In grade 3, students have a daily designated social studies class. We strategically draw from the Core Knowledge Sequence. Rather than a particular text, Core Knowledge outlines knowledge a student should know at specific points within their academic development. Grade-by-grade sequencing of topics gives teachers assurance that children come prepared with a shared core of knowledge and skills, and because children learn more effectively when instruction follows the basic psychological principle that we learn new knowledge by building on what we already know.¹⁰⁶ Scott Foresman motivates students to become active, informed citizens in alignment with state standards and provides teachers with the flexibility to design engaging lessons, even as it provides the infrastructure to provide the content and skill development elementary students require. For texts, we supplement the Scott Foresman curriculum as needed. All curriculum provides content aligned with TN state standards and resources meet the needs of all learners.¹⁰⁷

Develop curriculum in alignment with classical principles and the Common Core_____

Strong curriculum is the catalyst for excellent lesson plans and high quality instruction. State standards and the Common Core Standards guide the curriculum and help teachers determine what to teach so that students master expectations for each grade level. Although teachers at Nashville Classical use a variety of purchased curricula to support the teaching of standards-based objectives, all lesson planning is done by teachers with the Common Core Standards, TN State Standards (by looking at the TN Curriculum Frameworks, which align TN and Common Core Standards) as our guide and a scope and sequence aligned to curriculum materials.

At the beginning of the year, teachers plan their yearly units to ensure overall coverage of the standards. Long-term planning is completed before the school year begins and done horizontally and, starting in Y2, vertically to ensure instruction is aligned over the course of a student's years of study at Nashville Classical. The School Director and Dean of Academics train and support staff on using the lesson and unit plan format for Nashville Classical. In Y1, since the school will not have a Dean of Academics, the School Director will offer one of the school's Lead Teachers

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.deltaeducation.com/science/foss/correlations/tennessee.pdf> .

¹⁰⁶ http://www.coreknowledge.org/CK/about/sequence_glance.htm .

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.hmco.com/company/newsroom/newsroom.html> .

the opportunity to begin their employment 1-2 months early and, paying them an hourly rate, train the teacher on lesson plan review and summer professional development. This Lead Teacher will compliment the School Director's efforts, working most closely with Mathematics teachers during summer Professional Development and lesson plan review.

While we intend to recruit the most talented individuals we can and have a detailed, structured process for teacher hiring, we do not consider experience, charisma, or intelligence a substitute for the hard work of lesson planning. Beginning teachers script lessons even if they are modifying a scripted program. Modification develops teachers' awareness of how to best give directions, manage transitions, collect materials, whom to ask certain questions, and what the correct response is. Scripting out plans assists new teachers as they build instructional delivery skills and leads students to master objectives. During Y0, the School Director, along with one of the Grade Level Teachers, orders all packaged curricula and aligns it to TN state standards and Common Core Standards so that teachers can begin the yearly planning process with a scope and sequence to commence yearly planning. **Figure 2.15** provides a full timeline and division of responsibilities. In **APPENDIX I**, Nashville Classical shares its lesson plan templates and a sample unit plan.

Figure 2.15 – Curriculum Timeline and Division of Responsibilities

WHEN	ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PARTY
Before Summer Professional Development	Course Standards derived from TN State Standards and National Common Core Standards. Packaged Curricula is ordered.	Curriculum Support Consultant and School Director in Y0; later years, teachers w/ oversight and approval of Dean of Academics
Before Summer Professional Development	Course Standards aligned to curriculum materials, creating scope and sequence per individual course.	Dean of Academics and School Director in Y0; In later years, teachers w/ oversight and approval of Dean of Academics
During Summer Professional Development	Using course scope and sequence, year-end and interim assessments are created.	Teachers with guidance, support, approval of School Director or the Dean of Academics
During the School Year	Using course scope and sequences, teachers create syllabi (weekly lesson plans) w/ detailed class plans and assessments.	Teachers with guidance, support approval of the Dean of Academics
During Subsequent Summer Professional Development Sessions	Standards adjusted to reflect new information, required skills and knowledge; scope and sequences adjusted reflect changes.	Teachers with the guidance, support, and final approval of the Dean of Academics

We examine student outcomes each year to ensure that our standards are aligned with state frameworks and that students are mastering the necessary content and skills, and adjust our curriculum appropriately. All textbooks and major curriculum resources are reviewed for alignment to high curriculum standards and by the Board's Academic Achievement Committee. In addition, knowing that Y1, the school will not have hired a Dean of Academics, Nashville Classical intends to offer opportunities for Lead Teachers to take responsibility planning lessons for their team. In this model, one Lead Teacher would write all math plans, another all Read Aloud and reading comprehension plans, a third would write all social studies and science plans, and a fourth would write all writing plans. In this scenario, literacy teachers would provide support writing small group and guided reading lesson plans. This strategy creates extra teacher capacity and extra administrative capacity by minimizing the volume of lessons created and reviewed. In addition, it aligns to a school wide instructional priority of consistency across classrooms and structured approaches to learning where lessons are intentionally sequenced.

Create vertical and horizontal alignment in every subject from grades K-8 _____

Each year, content and coursework build sequentially upon what was previously learned. **Figure 2.16** describes a broad scope and sequence every teacher is expected to know and refer to when creating unit plans. This scope and sequence is built upon our research into effective schools, our study of classical education, and our emulation of modern classical school components.

Figure 2.16 – Nashville Classical Scope and Sequence at-a-glance

Nashville Classical K – 8 Scope and Sequence at-a-glance									
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Reading	Junior Great Books Read Aloud and Series 2			Junior Great Books Series 3-5			Junior Great Books Series 6-8		
	Reading Mastery								
	Literacy Centers: Destination Reading, Words Their Way, and American Reading Company			American Reading Company – Reader’s Workshop					
Writing	Lucy Calkins Writing Workshop, Handwriting Without Tears, Daily Oral Language			Lucy Calkins Writing Workshop, Daily Oral Language					
Math	Math Investigations and Calendar Math			Math Investigations and Teacher Created Materials			Envision Math Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1		
Social Studies	Core Knowledge US and Word History					Tennessee History	US History Pre 1865	US History Post 1865	World History
	Scott Foresman Social Studies								
Science	Core Knowledge Science					Earth Science	Life Science	Physical Science	
	FOSS Science Kits								
P.E.	Yoga & Individual Fitness			Introduction to Team Sports			Competitive Sports		
Fine Art	Drawing, Chorus			Painting, Introduction to Instrumental Music			Dramatic Arts		
Foreign Language	Greek & Latin Roots: Foundations		Greek & Latin Roots: Elements		Latin I (Trimester Rotation)				Latin II
Character	Show Core Values in Action		Focus on Achievement and Empathy		Build Excellent Habits, Personal Leadership and a Moral Code				Life after Classical

The core subjects, supplemented by an enrichment focus on physical education, fine arts, foreign language, and character development enable us to achieve our dual mission: personal and academic excellence in high school, college, and life. By eighth grade (**Figure 2.15**), a student at Nashville Classical has accomplished the following:

- Engaged in daily independent reading and individual/small group conferences for nine (9) consecutive years
- Completed coursework in Pre-Algebra and Algebra 1
- Read and discussed over 250 great stories, poems, folk-tales, and biographies
- Studied state, US and World History
- Taken courses in Earth, Life, and Physical Sciences
- Studied yoga, played team sports, and participated in a competitive sport
- Studied three (3) different fine arts

- Learned nearly 100 of the most common English-language roots
- Accumulated two (2) full years of Latin Study
- Built over 75 traits that reflect Focus, Integrity, Resilience, Scholarship and Team

Curriculum is developed and standards are evaluated and broken down before the start of each school year to promote the strategic improvement of materials as opposed to the creation of them.

Instruction

Unique Instructional Approach

The goal of Nashville Classical is academic success and personal excellence for every K-8 student. Given the realities that face children born in our target communities, it will take a unique instructional approach to achieve this goal. We have developed a unique instructional design, unavailable to our target community and in support of our mission, that embodies the classical trivium and prioritize strategies that: (1) Take a **Structured, Sequential Approach** to instruction and curriculum delivery; (2) **Enable Diverse Learners** to close the race-income achievement gap; and (3) Create **Instructional Consistency** across all subjects in all classrooms. Our unique instructional approach allows us to operationalize our classical framework. In selecting strategies, we have relied on those proven to work at similar schools serving similar populations and those which support the concepts and components of classical instruction.

Structured, Sequential Approach

Direct Instruction.¹⁰⁸ Used in elementary grades, Direct Instruction is an explicit, scientifically-based model of effective instruction. Guiding principles are that (1) every child can learn if we teach carefully and (2) all teachers can be successful when given effective programs and instructional delivery techniques.¹⁰⁹ Clear presentation limits misinterpretations, helping students generalize skills across contexts.¹¹⁰ Current MNPS priorities dictate that enrollment preferences are for those students who: (1) come from or are zoned to attend a school that is failing to meet AYP, (2) are failing or at-risk themselves, or (3) who qualify for free or reduced price lunch. We anticipate an enrollment of students behind academically or at risk for academic failure, and who in percentages exceed the district average qualify for free or reduced lunch. Direct Instruction (DI) addresses these academic concerns and the needs of our target community, allowing us to effectively and efficiently move our students up to grade level and beyond, and allowing us to accelerate the learning pace in preparation for college preparatory courses in high school and college. DI's goal is to "do more in less time"—accelerating student learning by controlling the features of curriculum design and instructional delivery.¹¹¹ There are three main components of DI: (a) program design, (b) instructional organization, and (c) teacher/student interactions.¹¹² Program design includes: (a) content analysis that promotes generalization (teaching "big ideas" of instruction); (b) clear communication ("wording of instruction" for sequence and examples); (c) clear instructional formats (what teachers do/say and what responses students should produce); (d) skill sequencing (prerequisites are taught before strategy is taught; easy skills are taught before more difficult skills; strategies/information likely confused are separated; rule-consistent instances taught before exceptions); and (e) track organization (activity sequences targeted to teach skills over multiple lessons).¹¹³ Organization of instruction centers on: (a)

¹⁰⁸ DI is chosen due to its efficiency in closing academic achievement gaps for our target community; we compliment DI with additional instructional strategies as described further in this section in **Enable Diverse Learners and Instructional Consistency**.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ <http://www.newhorizons.org/spneeds/inclusion/teaching/marchand%20martella%20ausdemore.htm>.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Marchand-Martella, N. E., Slocum, T. A., & Martella, R. C. (Eds.). (2004). *Introduction to Direct Instruction*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

¹¹³ Ibid.

instructional grouping (flexible skill grouping as compared to "tracking"); (b) instructional time (increasing academic learning time students engaged with high success rates); and (c) continuous assessment (ongoing to inform instructional practice).¹¹⁴ Teacher-student interactions include: (a) active student participation (increasing opportunities for students to respond and receive feedback); (b) unison responding (increasing students' responding by having them chorally respond); (c) signals (providing cues to evoke unison oral responses); (d) pacing (promoting active student engagement with brisk teacher pacing); (e) teaching to mastery (ensuring firm responding over time); (f) error corrections (minimizing student errors by sequencing instruction; when errors do occur, using error correction procedures—model, lead, test, retest); and (g) motivation (enhancing motivation through high levels of student success).¹¹⁵ Direct Instruction is proven to be highly effective in high poverty schools where students enter school academically behind. A 2003 four-year study by the Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed at Risk (CRESPAR) concludes that DI is a viable whole-school reform.

Spiral All the Time. All students need constant review of standards and skills taught previously – particularly those who lack an educationally rich environment outside of school. In every class, students spiral through previously mastered standards and skills as part of daily practice during morning work. Teachers determine which skills to spiral, and priority is placed on any standard or skill with which students previously showed difficulty or are standards expected to be prioritized on a state assessment. At the start of each day, students have the opportunity to complete a brain breakfast - extra practice on concepts or skills recently taught. Teachers build spiraling into lessons when a new skill is related to a previously taught skill. HW contains spiraling to keep students practicing mastered skills.

Use Data Every Day. Sequential instruction leads students to a standard and a goal, not just to the next topic. Nashville Classical uses data daily to guarantee students make progress to end-of-course, end-of -year, and long-term targets. Although a significant amount of data is generated by school-wide assessments, each teacher uses data to inform their instruction for each objective (Figure 2.17). Exit tickets or checks for mastery are a common practice and student output is analyzed from each of the day's major instructional blocks.

The intentional organization of student work and feedback is essential to the success of Nashville Classical. For example, in a K-2 student's desk are five (5) folders: Writing, Math, Social Studies, Science, and Take Home with one side labeled DO and a second side labeled KEEP. At all three literacy centers, teachers keep folders of student work and Riverdeep organizes computer based-work. Each lesson is strategically designed with a clear output for students to demonstrate their mastery over an objective.

Figure 2.17 – Objective Mastery Checks for Understanding

Subject	Daily Mastery Demonstrated by
Reading Acquisition	Worksheet as part of Reading Mastery curriculum
Reading Comprehension	Journal prompts, individual conferences, shared inquiry discussion
Reading Centers	Computer stations; listening comprehension; word work journals
Writing	Daily writing prompts, weekly published pieces to apply skills
Social Studies/Science	Teacher created worksheet (3-5 questions)
Math	Math Investigations Student Activity Book/Handbook - practice of current content/review past content/enrichment opportunities.

¹¹⁴ <http://www.newhorizons.org/spneeds/inclusion/teaching/marchand%20martella%20ausdemore.htm> .

¹¹⁵ <http://www.newhorizons.org/spneeds/inclusion/teaching/marchand%20martella%20ausdemore.htm> .

In grades 3-8, the process looks similar but teachers use exit tickets more frequently, a formal, teacher-created assessment that contains 3-5 questions directly related to the objective and meant to provide a quick check on student mastery.

Nashville Classical's goal is to create a streamlined process that focuses teachers on the following: data analysis, feedback on student work, remediation, and enrichment. On the front end, teachers submit a rubric or answer key for every daily lesson's check for mastery. For example, a multiple choice question has clear answers and explanations for distractors, an open-ended prompt is graded on specific, focused correction areas (i.e. use of creative vocabulary, periods, correct capitalization) and the standard is clearly posted at the top of the check for mastery. Upon student's completion, teachers alphabetize student work and put it into an "outbox" folder outside the classroom. We expect to employ volunteers (including parents, college interns) and hourly employees as needed to quickly grade assessments using the clear rubrics. During their planning period, teachers enter this information into Kickboard, an online data management system that is easily navigable and can organize assignments by standard.

At the end of each day, during a 30-minute tutoring block, we put two teachers into every classroom, using administrators and volunteers as needed. Students who have mastered the objective, according to the previous week's assessment or, if the objective was successfully retaught, engage in enrichment activities (see **Figure 2.18**), primarily consisting of educational games in K-2 and Independent Reading or Writing in grades 3-8. Students who receive pull-out services receive these services without missing any instruction, and students who require specific remediation work on these skills in small groups. We carefully message that working with the teacher is not a punishment but an opportunity to build a bigger brain and end each tutoring session with an exit ticket to check if student learning has increased as a result of the intervention or additional tutoring (on another day or through homework) is necessary for the student.

Figure 2.18 - Sample Lower Elementary Enrichment Centers

Activity	Description	Skills Practiced
Computer Based Enrichment	Computer based activities focus on using Destination Reading Program, where students have opportunities to listen to stories, identify rhymes and use new vocabulary.	Listening comprehension, phonics, phonemics, and vocabulary
Sandbox	Magnetic letters are scattered in a bucket filled with sand. Working in small cooperative groups, students attempt to spell sight words using the word or a picture clue.	Cooperative work, sight words, letter recognition, spelling, phonics and phonemics
Counting games	Students use playing cards, dice, or spinners to take turns deciding who has the higher number. As students get older, they practice using the 2 numbers for different mathematical operations (addition, subtraction, etc.).	Counting and the Number System; Addition and Subtraction
Chess and Checkers	Younger students play checkers before transitioning to chess – taught to the whole class when centers are introduced at the beginning of the year.	Research demonstrates positive impact on abstract reasoning and problem solving skills of children from diverse backgrounds. ¹¹⁶

On Mondays, because the class has taken a formal literacy or math assessment the prior Friday, teachers take a moment to review data, encourage students to understand their assessment score and reflect upon it and then focus on whole-class re-teaching based on the assessment. Throughout the week, teachers use previous assessment data to identify individual students for

¹¹⁶ Celone, James. (2001) The Effects of a Chess Program on Abstract Reasoning and Problem-Solving in Elementary School Children
Ann Arbor, MI. Bell & Howell Information and Learning Co.

remediation. The leadership team is able to access instructional data through a master log-in to Kickboard and can quickly pull up this information to inform weekly classroom observations or discussions during professional development. For example, a Dean of Academics might notice the teacher has only asked students to raise their hands to answer questions during reading comprehension. After eight to ten well-worded checks for understanding, the teacher believes students understand the material and begins to move to the next topic. The Dean of Academics has Kickboard open on his laptop. He notices three (3) students—all boys— have consistently lower scores on reading comprehension assessments and have not participated in the entire lesson. The Dean politely raises his hand and asks the teacher if we might hear from some of the classroom’s boys. Given the open culture of feedback, improvement, and intervention at the school, the teacher nods and asks each of the three boys a question. Noticing that they have misunderstood the meaning of setting, the teacher notes to reteach this during tutoring and the Dean notes to discuss effective checks for understanding during an upcoming observation debrief. To supplement study of instructional data, the leadership team collects daily data using Kickboard on school operations include attendance, tardiness, uniform compliance, and discipline referrals to strategically manage all school-wide systems so that, by the first snack and restroom break, the office has updated and maintained a chart on a white boards in common space that might resemble **Figure 2.19** and be quickly entered into a spreadsheet at the end of each day.

Figure 2.19 – Sample Common Space Operations Data

Operational Data				
	Attendance	Tardiness	Uniform Compliance	Discipline Referrals
Year-to-Date	94%	6%	91%	3.2 avg per day
Yesterday	92%	3%	94%	2
Today	97%	4%	100%	1

Purposeful Homework (HW). All teachers are trained on using HW to reinforce skills and standards learned in class. Too often HW is busy work or time filler. To prepare students for high performing high schools and college, students learn that HW completion is at the core of their responsibilities. Parents are required to check and sign their child’s HW each night (See **Figure 2.20**). All HW is checked by the school daily, and students who do not complete their HW face consequences like losing Classical Dollars (see **Section VII** for more detail on Classical Dollars) in grades 3-8 or being required to complete unfinished HW during recess or snack break at a specific table in grades K-2. Teachers create structures to collect all HW at the beginning of each day so that students avoid trying to complete HW in other classes and minimal instructional time is lost for logistics. We provide HW as weekly work-packets, and during Y0 will be created by the Leadership team and collated before the first day of school for Y1. In additional years, this pre-planning work will be shared with teachers. The alignment of HW to the scope and sequence and the common HW across classrooms enable teachers to put additional energy into structuring lesson plans and creating additional, differentiated assignments. While teachers check HW daily, they collect it at the end of the week, building students’ responsibility since they must maintain their work for the week to earn credit.¹¹⁷ In different grades, HW contains different expectations, reflecting shifts in the purpose of assignments and responsibility from parent to student and from habit building to remediation to high school preparation.

Figure 2.20 – Operational Data

Operational Data				
Grades	Sample Assignment	Teacher Role	Role of Parent or	Rationale

¹¹⁷ This is based on a practice from Akili Academy (a BES school) of New Orleans. Akili Academy had the highest iLEAP scores in the Louisiana Recovery School District.

			Guardian	
K-2	Nightly reading log with expectation that student reads for 15 minute minutes, draws a picture (and, when ready, writes a summary) of what was read and then parent signs. Supplemented by basic skills work, differentiated by skill-level (counting, handwriting, letter and sound recognition).	Teachers provide families with a weekly syllabus every Monday that details the week's assignments and expectations.	Every night the parent or guardian signs a reading log. Parents who do not sign the reading log will receive a phone call or text message and their students will need to spend 15 minutes of a recess period reading.	Research suggests that 10-20 minutes is appropriate length of time for HW in these grades and we believe our at-risk population benefits from at least 20 minutes. At this stage, families support children in finding time and place to complete HW, remove distractions, organize supplies, and be focused.
3-5	In grade 3, HW increases to 40 minutes per night and grows by 15 minutes each year so that children have one hour of HW in grade 5. In these grades, HW continues to consist of reading logs with expectation that students read for 15 minutes and complete short summary of their reading. In math, students complete differentiated worksheets on skills including complicated addition and subtraction, fractions and decimals, multiplication and division.	Teachers post HW in a common classroom area and students take time at the end of each day to copy HW into agenda books. During the morning, teachers expect student agenda books to see if every HW assignment has been crossed off.	Parents and guardians continue to sign reading logs each night and the expectation is that HW is not complete unless a guardian has signed the reading log. In grade 3, parents also sign a child's agenda every night to scaffold student independence.	Research finds that HW can be a valuable time for students to acquire the extra practice necessary for mastery. In addition, HW can be used in the elementary grades to build study skills and life habits.
6-8	In grades 6 to 8, students' HW prepares them for entry into college preparatory high schools. Students have between 60 and 90 minutes (HW increases by ten minutes each year) of HW each night including independent reading from a shared classroom text, math problems focused on recently learned skills and standards, and	Teachers post HW in a common area of the classroom and collect HW to start each day. Teachers collect all HW during an advisory period to start each day and provide time for students to copy HW into their agendas at the end of each day but do not expect to check and sign the agendas	Parents and guardians continue to sign student reading logs but students are responsible for maintaining their own agenda books and parents do not receive phone calls every time a HW assignment is incomplete.	In college preparatory high schools, a great degree of independence is expected of students and HW typically starts at 1.5 hours per night and grows from there. By incorporating study skills, mastery practice, and extension activities, Nashville Classical

	writing in social studies and science focused on standards-aligned essential questions.	each morning.		teachers preview the methods used at high-performing schools.
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Figure 2.21 illustrates the time students spend on HW each year, consistent with research that has studied the connection between time management, homework, and achievement.¹¹⁸

Figure 2.21 – Homework Assignments Each Year

GRADE	Reading/ELA ¹¹⁹	Writing	Math	Science	Social Studies	Total Min per night
K-1	10		5-10	-	-	15-20
2	15	5	5-10	-	-	25-30
3	15-20	5	5-10	5	5	35-45
4	15	5	15	5-10	5-10	45-55
5	15-20	5-10	15	10	10	55-65
6	20-25	10-15	15	10	10	65-75
7	20-30	15	20	10-15	10-15	75-95
8	25-30	20	20	10-15	10-15	85-100

Enable Diverse Learners

Nashville Classical’s mission is to educate students within an achievement-oriented culture. We define this culture as one wherein all students, regardless of race, class or creed, learn at the highest levels. Aligned to our mission, we therefore prioritize instructional strategies meant to enable diverse learners to achieve. These include: (1) Modality Based Instruction; (2) Small Group/One-on-One Tutoring; (3) Extended Time; (4) Modified Instructional Strategies; (5) Tiered Approach to Instruction; and (6) Enrichment for Advanced Students.

Modality Based Instruction - Rap, Rhythm and Rhyme & Kinesthetic Learning. Chanting and rhyming create excitement about learning and help children to remember key concepts. Research from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana cites the use of music to support the literacy development of young English Language Learners (ELLs). Music effectively supports ELLs with vocabulary acquisition because songs are an effective way of not only helping ELLs acquire new vocabulary, but also teaching the pronunciation of those words. In the *Early Childhood Education Journal*, research finds that “[r]egardless of the musical form and despite a teacher’s level of musical training, the value of ...enhancing literary instruction through music is vital in today’s classroom. This is particularly true for ELL [students].”¹²⁰ Nashville Classical instructional includes daily cheers to reinforce school culture and academic concepts and rhymes and chants which push vocabulary development and accurate pronunciation of less familiar words. Physical activity maintains student engagement. Students learn new concepts with hand signals, finger snaps, and other gestures. Similarly, teachers use cheers and gestures to reward individual or group academic performance while instruction occurs.¹²¹

¹¹⁸ Protheroe, N. (2009). Good homework policy. *Principal*. V89, n1. Warkentien, S., Fenster, M., Hampden-Thompson, G., &Walston, J. (2008). *Expectations and reports of homework for public school students in the first, third and fifth grades*. National Center for Education Statistics. Cooper, H. (2008). *Homework: What the research says*. National Council of Teachers of Mathematics.

¹¹⁹ Includes language study (Greek and Latin Roots, Latin).

¹²⁰ Paquette, Kelli, “Using Music to Support the Literacy Development of Young English Language Learners,” *Early Childhood Education Journal* 36, August 2008,(3) pages 227-232.

¹²¹ International research also indicates kinesthetic instruction results in academic gains for all students. Coffield, F., Moseley, D., Hall, E., Ecclestone, K. (2004). *Learning styles and pedagogy in post-16 learning. A systematic and critical review*. London: Learning and Skills Research Centre.

Small Group/One-on-One Tutoring. Daily targeted interventions provide opportunities to deliver focused instruction in precise areas of concerns for struggling students. Administrators contribute during Literacy Blocks to provide additional small group instruction for the most struggling students. At the end of each day, members of the leadership team partner with teachers to remediate daily concepts.¹²²

Extended Time. We provide 185 days of learning from 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM. Research shows that extended learning has strong impact on low-income, minority student achievement.¹²³ Consistent with Metro Nashville Public School’s adoption of a balanced calendar, we believe extended time benefits the achievement of all students and professional development of all staff, while minimizing the impact of potential disruptions such as tardiness, sickness, and testing. Our calendar complies with all state and, in alignment with research cited by MNPS, we note:

- Students experience summer learning loss and lower income students lose more ground than more affluent peers. Cumulative effects of summer learning loss increase gap between lower income and more affluent students (Harris Cooper et al, 1996).
- RAND Education analysis finds “summer vacation may have detrimental learning effects for many students...[and] disproportionately affects low-income students, particularly in reading...differential learning rates between low-income and higher-income students contribute substantially to the achievement gap” (McCombs, Augustine, 2011).
- The study also finds that “low-achieving students need more time to master material and that spacing learning over time is an effective instructional technique.”
- 2008 study finds “[e]xpanded learning time . . . particularly beneficial for ELLs. . . . Time plays a unique role in the educational career of the English-language learner. Time affects the facility of learning a new language and the likelihood of high school graduation, especially among immigrant ELLs in high school” (Melissa Lazarin, 2008).¹²⁴

Our extended schedule benefits teacher professional development and enables a three week, school-based summer professional development, supplemented by a weekend module in May for all new teachers, which would not be possible on a traditional calendar.¹²⁵ **Figure 2.22** compares time spent at a traditional MNPS elementary or middle school and Nashville Classical. Assuming a seven-hour MNPS school day (8:00 AM – 3:00 PM), Nashville Classical students benefit from the accumulation of one and a half instructional years in school by eighth grade.

Figure 2.22: Time Comparison of Traditional Models vs. Nashville Classical

Time Comparison of Traditional Models vs. Nashville Classical			
Kindergarten – Eighth Grade			
Model	Instructional Days	Average Daily Hours (Includes Half-Days)	Total Annual Hours
Traditional MNPS School	176	7 hours*	1232
Nashville Classical	185	7 hours 51 minutes*	1452.25
*Based on an 8:00 – 3:00 MNPS day, not counting any half-days and a 7:45 – 4:00 Nashville Classical instructional day, accounting for breakfast and morning activities, with 2:00pm dismissal once a week.			

¹²² Research into schools that produce results offers additional evidence for the importance of individualization. Edward Brooke Charter School has identified individualization as one of the qualities an exceptional teacher possesses. <http://www.ebrooke.org/great-teaching/understanding-great-teaching>.

¹²³ Hoxby, Caroline M., Sonali Murarka, and Jenny Kang. “How New York City’s Charter Schools Affect Achievement, August 2009 Report.” Second report in series. Cambridge, MA: New York City Charter Schools Evaluation Project, September 2009.

¹²⁴ <http://www.mnps.org/Page82080.aspx>.

¹²⁵ Importance of extended professional development time before start of school and during school year are outlined in: Odden, A. (2009). *Ten Steps to Doubling Student Performance*. Corwin Press. In it, the author argues for the importance of professional development hours and strategic placement of those hours as critical components of teacher performance in urban schools.

<p>Difference over 1 year= 220.25 hours Difference over nine years = 1982.25 hours = 283 days of Traditional Public School = 1.6 instructional Years</p>

Two-teacher model for Literacy. We have two qualified teachers in every K-4 classroom during literacy instruction. Research indicates that early reading instruction is most effective within small homogeneous groups; a two-teacher model supported by classroom-based and literacy-driven computer stations, allows a 9:1 maximum ratio during rotating blocks.¹²⁶ In grade five to eight, we staff two extra literacy teachers, Each Middle School Literacy Teacher is assigned to two grades and supports the literacy teacher in each grade by managing daily, small group instruction and independent reading conferences and emphasizing classical language exercises. Their support enables students to engage in daily guided reading and to receive at least forty five minutes week of small group (four to five students) instruction with a teacher monitoring instruction.

Modified Instructional Strategies. Nashville Classical believes that instructional strategies must embrace diverse learners and ensure every student fulfills his or her potential. As such, professional development and instructional design support the differentiation of instruction based on student needs. We hold specific professional development during the summer about how to adapt instructional strategies for exceptional, ELL, struggling, or gifted students. During these sessions, teachers learn a strategy, rehearse it as though they were in the classroom, and critique each other's implementation. Strategies research identified as leading to the success of special needs students with a rigorous curriculum include:

- Use an overhead projector with an outline of the lesson or unit.
- Reduce course load for student with learning disabilities.
- Provide clear photocopies of notes and overhead transparencies.
- Provide students with chapter outlines/study guides that cue key points in their readings.
- Provide a detailed course syllabus before class begins.
- Ask questions in a way that helps the student gain confidence.
- Keep oral instructions logical and concise. Reinforce them with a brief cue words.
- Repeat or re-word complicated directions.
- Frequently verbalize what is being written on the chalkboard.
- Eliminate classroom distractions such as, excessive noise, flickering lights, etc.
- Outline class presentations on the chalkboard or on an overhead transparency.
- Outline material to be covered during each class period unit.
- At the end of class, summarize the important segments of each presentation.
- Establish the clarity of understanding that the student has about class assignments.
- Give assignments both in written and oral form.
- Have practice exercises available for lessons, in case the student has problems.
- Have students with learning disabilities underline key words/directions on activity sheets.
- Pace instruction carefully to ensure clarity.
- Present new and or technical vocabulary on the chalkboard or overhead.
- Provide and teach memory associations (mnemonic strategies).
- Support 1 modality of presentation by following w/instruction; then use 2nd modality.
- Talk distinctly and at a rate that the student with a learning disability can be follow.
- Technical content should be presented in small incremental steps.

¹²⁶ Two teacher literacy model is used by multiple schools that close the race and income achievement gap including Elm City College Prep (New Haven, CT); North Star – Vailsburg Elementary (Newark, NJ); Akili Academy (New Orleans, LA).

- Use plenty of examples, oral or otherwise, in order to make topics more applied.
- Use straight forward instructions with step-by-step unambiguous terms.
- Write legibly, use large type; do not clutter board with non-current /non-relevant info.
- Use props to make narrative situations more vivid and clear.
- Assist the student, if necessary, in borrowing classmates' notes.
- Clearly label equipment, tools, materials; color code for enhanced visual recognition.
- Announce readings as well as assignments well in advance.
- Offer to read written material aloud, when necessary.
- Read aloud material that is written on the chalkboard and on the overhead transparencies.
- Review relevant material, preview material, present new material then summarize.
- Suggest that students use both visual and auditory senses when reading the text.
- Spend time on building background for reading selections; create a mental scheme.
- Encourage students to practice using technical words in exchanges among peers.¹²⁷

For example, during Math Investigations, students practice skills through games involving opportunities for repetition, partner work, and kinesthetic learning. Students who struggle with pattern recognition might receive a worksheet and bag of manipulative materials. Their partner would create a pattern then they would attempt to repeat it using manipulative materials. In this activity, students engage multiple modalities and the teacher has the opportunity to both monitor students who work in small groups and specifically target students who might struggle with pattern recognition. If students continue to struggle, the teacher might provide the group with a prepared model of the pattern so that they can continue to look at it while they build their own. Should the student continue to struggle, the teacher might send a quick text message to the Dean of Student Supports. If available, the Dean of Student Supports would arrive in the classroom and remain with the students until they master pattern creation, allowing the instructional lead to continue to circulate or work with a different small group prepared for enrichment.

Nashville Classical's entire design meets the needs of students whose traditional performance puts them at risk of academic failure. Through initial assessments administered including the Terra Nova and STEP, staff analyzes a baseline set of data, informing us of which students are entering below grade level. Our program incorporates elements proven effective in ensuring academic success for students most at risk.

We differentiate instruction for the most at-risk students through tiered grouping. In a traditional setting, tiered groupings are used to deliver interventions to students who are falling behind. Please see **Figure 2.23** for more detail. We will be using this approach at Nashville Classical, however, we know that a significant percent of our students currently attend schools wherein by grade three they qualify for Tier II, meaning that they have achieved below basic on the TCAP and are on a trajectory to fall up to two years below grade level. Our academic program is designed to meet the needs of a majority-Tier II-school, with classroom instruction and interventions delivered to the majority of students. Please see each academic area for more specific information on the tiered approach.

Tiered Approach to Instruction. The tiered approach to instruction as outlined in **Figure 2.23**, also called RTI, is endorsed by the Tennessee Department of Education. "In the RTI approach, all students are screened for educational difficulties. Those students found to be at risk of having problems are monitored on a regular basis after high quality instruction is implemented. Those students who do not respond with adequate progress are given interventions specially geared to correction of the identified problem."¹²⁸

¹²⁷ Lombardi, Thomas P. *Learning Strategies for Problem Learners*. Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Fndtn, 1992.

¹²⁸ <http://www.tn.gov/education/speced/doc/80608SEMManualfinal.pdf>.

Figure 2.23 – Tiered Approach to Instruction

Tier	Benchmark	Intervention	When
Tier I	On grade level Falling behind in mastery of some subject area standards	Differentiation occurs inside classroom and within our Core Curriculum	Student benefits from daily focus on literacy and interventions occur at an individual teacher's discretion
Tier II	Inadequate Progress on bi-weekly assessments Needs additional intervention to remediate uneven prior learning or master missed standards	Supplemental instruction in fundamental skills to remediate learning or practice skills Extra help/tutoring to master standards (repetition of instruction in small group) Weekly ongoing assessment of skills learned to monitor progress	Student receives additional intervention during literacy block i.e. additional practice at computer, retelling of story on audiocassette, 3 rd pull-out with a teacher Student ends day in small group instruction to receive extra tutoring in math Student works with additional teacher at a small group during writing workshop
Tier III	Inadequate Progress on Interim Assessments Needs intensive intervention to either remediate uneven learning or master standards	Small group intensive intervention in fundamental skills One-on-one instruction Daily Assessment of skills learned to monitor progress and if there is no progress, potentially refer for evaluation for learning issues	Pulled for an additional instructional block during literacy centers as often as possible, receives one-on-one tutoring during writing and math at a corner table within a classroom a daily assessment during afternoon tutoring

The advantages of using an RTI approach are numerous: (1) Eliminates inadequate instruction as the reason for the educational difficulty; (2) provides assistance to the student earlier than traditional methods; (3) amount of time a student struggles before receiving help is significantly reduced; (4) traditional methods require identification as student with disability prior to receiving help; (5) likelihood of inaccurate identification is decreased; and (6) progress monitoring data serve as objective, real-time, decision-making tools that can be used to adjust instruction and evaluate the quality of the instruction.¹²⁹

While we would never delay identification of a students' special needs as a result of our tiered intervention process, we do believe it enables a rapid response to student delays in progress. If none of the interventions have a desired impact on student progress, the school will use data from previous tiers to determine the best remedy for the student's struggles.

For students identified as having either special needs or identified as ELL, the Nashville Classical curriculum is still appropriate and our college preparatory mission remains relevant. Students with special needs benefit from a structured curriculum as research demonstrates that specific instructions and clear goals are integral to the success of many students who require either academic or behavioral modifications. ELL student benefit from additional time and multiple opportunities to practice English through reading, writing and speaking in small settings.

Academic Enrichment for Intellectually Gifted Students. Entering students who score in the upper quadrants of Terra Nova are placed on a list of students considered for Gifted and Talented services. Continuing students are identified by scoring advanced on the TCAP, above-grade level

¹²⁹ Ibid.

proficiencies on the STEP assessment, and/or in the upper quadrant on the Terra Nova. Process for identifying students and providing services is offered in more depth in **Section 4**.

Each teacher of a Gifted and Talented student is assigned to monitor the student's progress and recommend adaptations to the student's Advanced Learning Plan. All teachers include an advanced HW section, and work creatively to identify strategies to differentiate lesson plans for more advanced students. Each Plan has a section on acceleration strategies in daily enrichment activities and tutoring opportunities. The day's flexible, final period allow gifted students to be grouped and receive academic enrichment as appropriate: i.e. advanced music theory, Math Counts, and chess club. Since advanced students still participate in daily small group comprehension lesson, teachers can differentiate instruction to provide enrichment by increasing text rigor, planning more complicated checks for understanding, increasing student leadership in literature discussions, and increasing the ratio of individual reading to teacher-led reading.

Instructional Consistency

Instructional consistency supports academic achievement, assists leadership in supporting teachers, and encourages positive student behavior. We achieve instructional consistency through an emphasis on common language and consistent techniques that ensures all staff share common instructional expectations. Prioritized strategies include: (1) The Taxonomy of Teaching; (2) Gradual Release; (3) Classical Board Configuration; and (4) Common Room Design

Taxonomy of Teaching. Nashville Classical uses a variety of academic, behavioral, and advanced instructional techniques as outlined in *Teach Like a Champion* that reinforce student expectations and build high levels of student engagement.¹³⁰ Intentionally using these techniques as part of a school's programming and culture is inspired by Doug Lemov who developed a set of specific and concrete actions, paired with a library of over 700 video clips of highly-effective teachers in action, to provide teachers with actionable tools to drive greater student achievement and a shared language to discuss and support teacher effectiveness. During summer professional development, we select eight core techniques as a school-wide PD focus and differentiate for specific teachers as the year continues. Using a coaching cycle as outlined in **Figure 2.24** based on student achievement data and instructional observations, we continue to use taxonomy techniques to drive teacher professional development using a consistent language and a focus on what will most impact student achievement.

Figure 2.24 - Eight Core Instructional Techniques – SAMPLE

SKILL	TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
Sweat the Details	<i>Behavioral</i>	Approach that encourages teachers to enforce compliance with every expectation, including aspects that may seem minor.	The teacher asks students to raise their hands to answer a question. He expects all raised hands to be as straight as possible. If a student had a wiggling hand or slouched, they would correct it using a verbal reminder or, if a repeated behavior, more formal consequence.
Do It Again	<i>Behavioral</i>	Technique in which a teacher instructs students to complete a procedure or process that has been practiced and demands that students repeat the	During a whole class transition from the rug to the carpet, a silent procedure, three students make noise. The teacher stops the class

¹³⁰ Instructional Techniques taken from *the Teaching Like A Champion: Taxonomy of Effective Teaching Practices* by Doug Lemov. Mr. Lemov is a Managing Director for Uncommon Schools and the founder of Rochester Preparatory Charter Middle School in Rochester, NY. Lead Founder Charles Friedman has attended training with Mr. Lemov on five separate occasions since 2006 and including specific training on how to teach the taxonomy to other teachers.

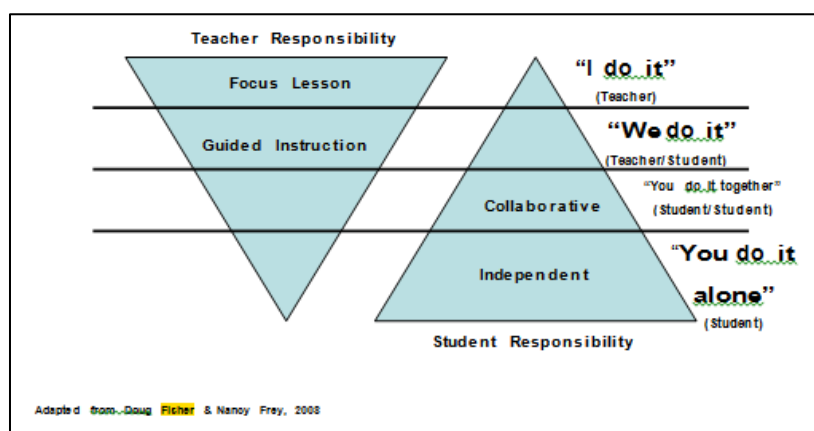
		process if it is not done well or by all students	and asks them to return to the carpet so they can do this transition again. In an excited voice, he says, “Let’s see if we can be at our seats in 15 seconds!”
100 Percent	<i>Behavioral & Academic</i>	Behavior: Method in which a teacher demands everyone’s full participation to complete a task or activity associated with learning and will not continue instruction until all students have complied. Academic: There is a difference between right and partially right. When responding to an answer in class the teacher holds out for an answer that is 100% right. Students should not be told an answer is correct when it is not.	The teacher asks students to sit in STAR to he can give directions and waits to speak for two students whose eyes are not at the front of the room. “When there is 100%, we are ready,” he says in a calm, yet assertive tone.
Stretch it	<i>Academic</i>	Many teachers respond to a correct answer by saying “good” or “right.” With this technique a teacher can push students to higher standards by asking them to “stretch” their answer by explaining how they arrived at an answer or asking them to answer a more complex question that builds on the same concept or standard.	During reading comprehension, students are asked to provide 2 details from the story. A student names 2 details observable in the picture and the teacher says, “What strategy did you use?” expecting the student to name their strategy.
Ratio	<i>Academic</i>	Method in which the teacher purposefully minimizes the time spent talking to afford more opportunities for the class to lead instruction by answering questions as a group or individually.	At the reading comprehension table, teachers script ten questions to ask the class following a story so that the bulk of the comprehension conversation includes student voices.
No Opt Out	<i>Academic</i>	Process in which a student who answers incorrectly is not able to give up on the learning process. We have high expectations for student performance and a teacher should not accept “I don’t know” for an answer. Instead the teacher should prompt the student to attempt to answer. If the student genuinely does not know the answer the teacher will call on fellow scholars to assist, and then the student will be asked the same question or be given a similar question to answer correctly.	For example, a teacher calls on Julio during Reading Mastery and asks him to read aloud the word “bead” during individual turns. ¹³¹ Julio does not know the answer. After prompting, the teacher calls on another student to give the “two vowels go walking rule” (when two vowels go walking, the first one does the talking). The teacher then calls on Julio to do another “two vowels go walking” rule word, “read.” Julio gets the correct answer and gives the rule. The teacher congratulates Julio on his correct answer.
Warm Strict	<i>Advanced</i>	Strategy that combines a caring tone with a ‘no exceptions’ standard of behavioral expectations. Often used by teachers to build culture and set the tone inside their classrooms.	Teachers work to stand still and look students in the eye when providing directions.

¹³¹ “Individual turns” is a portion of the lesson where students split into their small literacy groups (8-10) get to practice the skills individually.

Precise Praise	Advanced	Technique used by teachers to reward students with praise using very specific examples that are meaningful and genuine.	A teacher asks students to recall the setting in a story. Lisa answers in a complete sentence and the teacher replies, "Lisa, you did a great job of turning my question into an answer. Everybody say 'Nice complete sentence, Lisa!'"
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Gradual Release "I do/we do/you do." Echoing the classical framework of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, each lesson begins with the teacher demonstrating the concept/skill – "I do," and then providing opportunities to practice the concept together – "We do." Finally, students practice the concept independently – "You do" until they reach individual mastery.¹³² This process of gradual release as outlined in **Figure 2.25** promotes the growing independence of student in the content. Through the course of a lesson, students are able to complete the assignment independently and at higher levels than when first introduced. As teachers give more guided opportunities for students to practice a skill or concept in smaller and smaller groups, students are provided with both more time and more independence so they can work on problems autonomously.

Figure 2.25 - Gradual Release: I, We, You



Classical Board Configuraton (CBC). All teachers at Nashville Classical use a common board configuration called Classical Board Configuration (CBC). The CBC consists of the Aim, Do Now, Agenda, and HW; it sets student academic expectations and serves as a visual cue to manage instructional pacing. Adapted for more simple use in the lower elementary grades, by middle school, the CBC requires the following

- Class and date is updated and posted on the board.
- Aim indicates broader learning objective for material taught and correlates w/ standards.
- Objectives provide specific goal(s) for the day. Objectives are measurable, ambitious learning goals directly connected to standards developed in the curriculum.
- CQ (Classical Question) is a silent, pen to paper 4-5 minute activity that focuses students immediately on class work and allows teachers to quickly assess student understanding of a specific topic. The CQ begins in third grade.

¹³² Pearson, P.D., & M. Gallagher. (1983) "The Instruction of Reading Comprehension," *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, p. 8.

- Agendas for each class are developed and written by teachers so that the content for the lesson is explicitly listed in small time increments, providing clear expectations for students and holding the teacher accountable for pace.
- Homework is required in all academic classes each day, and provides students with the opportunity to practice and reinforce that day's skill and content knowledge

Common Room Design. Simply stated, Nashville Classical believes the classroom must be a vibrant temple of learning. Every feature should contribute to a simple, but grand mission: educating students for academic and personal excellence in high school, college, and life. At Nashville Classical, student homerooms are subject to change at various points in the year and flexible small groupings require that children occasionally receive instruction in rooms beside their homeroom. The following is a list of features all Nashville Classical classrooms share. This list is not meant to be exhaustive and the features should become less visible as students become older.

- **Homework Guidelines** – Clear expectations and examples of quality homework are laminated and posted next to the white board of every single classroom. These guidelines cover: complete heading; unwrinkled paper; legible writing; using pencil, blue, or black ink only; complete sentences (grade 3 onwards); complete answers for every problem.
- **Monthly Calendar** – Monthly calendars are provided by the school and used by teachers and students to manage time and assignments, and to teach numbers, patterns, days of the week, and months of the year. Students benefit from understanding the routines of the year and use the calendar to forecast what is coming next. The lead teacher is responsible for updating all dates on the calendar and all classroom birthdays.
- **Rules/FIRST Signs** – During professional development, each teacher is provided with several professionally-made, culture-related signs to decorate their room, send important messages, and create a culture of consistency across classrooms.¹³³
- **Word Wall** – All classrooms have a word wall stationed next to the main white board where sight words and new vocabulary words are listed alphabetically.
- **Literacy Rotations** – All students are assigned to a center by a shape on their desk (circle, triangle, square). In easily adjustable pocket-chart student names (in K-2 also pictures) indicate a students' Literacy Rotation Group so that confusion is avoided.
- **Classical Chart** - This chart contains every student's name and five squares (gold, silver, green, yellow, red). Next to each color is a brief description of the relevant rewards or consequences.
- **Classical Block Board** – Two times each day, classes are assessed on their performance as a group. The Classical Block program enables teachers—before lunch and at the end of the day—to post a certain number of color-coded blocks on the magnetic board based on the class's relative fulfillment of the five school expectations: **Focus, Integrity, Resilience, Scholarship, and Team.**
- **Classical Block Magnets** – Before lunch and at the end of the day, teachers determine which blocks (Focus, Integrity, Resilience, Scholarship, Team) the class earned. These magnets are kept in a cup next to the Classical Block Board.
- **Noise Level Meter** – The Noise Level Meter is a tool that allows all Nashville Classical staff members to regulate the level of noise during class and non-class time (i.e. breaks, morning meetings). The meter's volumes are: silent, library level, soft voices, or Classical. Use of Noise Level Meter is practiced during staff orientation.
- **College Paraphernalia of Teacher's Alma Mater** - Each Nashville Classical homeroom is named after a college. Homerooms are always named after the lead

¹³³ We intend to contract with Advanced Business Solutions to create these signs at a minimal cost.

teacher's college, using consistency from year-to-year and the need not to repeat names as a guideline. For example, if a kindergarten teacher's alma mater is Vanderbilt, the homeroom would be known as "Vanderbilt K." This allows children to rally around a particular theme in addition to serving as a constant reminder of the long-term ambitions Nashville Classical holds. Paraphernalia includes t-shirts, hats, large stuffed mascots, banners, flags, blankets, jerseys, and more.

- **Classical Job List** – All members of the school community are responsible for maintaining a clean, organized learning environment. This requires the active involvement of a few students on a daily basis. In each classroom, the teacher posts a list of 5-7 jobs needing to be completed on a daily basis. Jobs included are those that are essential to ensuring the classroom is in good condition, tasks are completed efficiently, and student leadership is fostered. Sample jobs might include: washing the board, handing out snacks, leading the line, resetting the color chart, passing out take-home folders, emptying small trash cans, holding the hand sanitizer before lunch, organizing the class library, and leading the classroom cheer. Only a handful of students will have jobs and students selected for jobs are those who have earned their teacher's confidence.
- **One Blue Crate per Student** – Blue crates, called "Classical Crates," are attached to the wall in the back of each room. Teachers assign each student a crate and label them appropriately. Crates hold backpacks, jackets, books, lunch, etc.
- **Hallway Passes** – During school hours, students should not be in the hallway without a pass from their teacher. Specific, color-coded passes are given to students who need to enter the hallway to go to various locations. Passes are attached to lanyards that students wear around their necks and exist for the following: bathroom during breaks/lunch/centers, errands, tutoring, emergencies.
- **Evacuation Instructions** – This document is distributed during the summer and is posted in every classroom.
- **Classroom Library** – Every classroom provides a culture of literacy and reading. This culture begins with a well-maintained bookshelf filled with Classical books. Books are organized by STEP level and by genre (e.g. books about sports, books about insects, fantasy books) and there is a large bin for books to be returned. One student job is to return books in the return bin to their appropriate place.
- **Library Policies Poster** – A library policies poster (provided by the school) is posted near every bookshelf.
- **Wall Space for Outstanding Student Work** – All classical students pride themselves on completing classical quality work. All teachers post superior work inside and outside their classrooms.
- **Items to be kept in Take-Home Folder List** – All teachers post a list of "items to be kept in a take home folder." This list includes items that do not need to be returned in 24 hours (e.g. a weekly journal).
- **Supply Table** – Every teacher has a small table that includes supplies necessary for teaching and learning (stapler, three-hole punch, scissors, markers, glue sticks, crayons, etc.). Operations Manager checks the supply table every Wednesday and refills it.
- **Folders for Absent Students** – If a Nashville Classical student is not in class, the work that he/she missed is collected systematically. To help facilitate this system, each homeroom has a set of manila folders on the supply table that contain all of the day's materials organized systematically by content and subject and when a student is absent, a folder with his/her name is placed at their table and all distributed materials are placed into the folder as they are distributed to students throughout the day.
- **School Mission** – A framed copy of the school mission is provided to every teacher during the summer and should be placed in a prominent classroom location.

- **Color-Coded Homework Collection Folders** - Homework is collected daily in the morning, prior to the start of the academic day. Collection folders include : Reading logs – Red; Math – Yellow; Writing – Green; Social Studies/Science – Blue
- **Computer Stations** – Each classroom (in grades K-2) has a station with 8-10 laptop computers and headphones for students to use during center time. These computers are cued to directly go to the Riverdeep Learning Program.
- **Phonics Corner** – Phonics corner is named after grade’s literacy teacher (i.e. if literacy teacher attended Duke, it would be the Duke corner.) It contains a set of 10 stackable chairs, dry-erase easel, smaller “Classical Chart,” and Reading Mastery/Roots crate.
- **Reading Carpet** – This carpet is where Read Aloud, rhetoric, and math problem-solving occur. The carpet is named after a relevant area of the lead teacher’s college campus. For example, in the Vanderbilt homeroom, the carpet might be called “The Commons.”
- **Reading Comprehension Table** – K-8 classrooms have kidney bean shaped tables for small group instruction. This table has a teacher chair and at least ten student chairs as well as a crate for instructional materials (books, journals, etc.).

Structure

Annual School Calendar

“[D]emanding that students learn more in the same amount of time is especially counterproductive for students who are behind in grade level, have limited English proficiency, or have special needs.”¹³⁴ The annual school calendar includes the following key elements designed to implement and sustain an achievement-oriented culture and to support a classical curriculum for our target population.

Extended Day and Year. We provide an extended school year of 185 days, extended school day of 8 hours and 30 minutes and multiple blocks of literacy and mathematics instruction daily. All staff members arrive by 7:00 AM. All students must arrive by 7:45 AM and receive 435 minutes of instruction, from 7:45 AM to 4:00 PM (with 75 minutes reserved for breakfast, lunch and break) on M/T/TH/F. On Wednesdays, the school operates with an abbreviated schedule. All students are dismissed at 2:00 PM to provide for 2.5 weekly hours of targeted teacher professional development and collaborative planning to accelerate and increase instruction’s impact on student achievement.¹³⁵ These days provide students with 315 minutes (5.25 hours) of instruction from 7:45 AM to 2:00 PM (75 minutes are reserved for breakfast, lunch, and break).

Six-week Diagnostic, Interim and Final Assessments. At the start of each new academic year, we use Home Visits to assess each student’s reading level using the STEP Assessment. During the first weeks of the year, we assess each incoming student’s reading and math proficiency using the nationally-normed Terra Nova reading, language, and math tests. We use these tests to: (1) obtain a baseline level for each child against which we can measure growth throughout the academic year; and (2) target and pace instruction and academic support programs strategically to ensure all students progress at the rate necessary to reach grade-level proficiency and content mastery by the conclusion of the academic year. The test is administered again in May (at the end of the year) to track, evaluate, and compare student progress over time. Throughout the academic year, as outlined in the proposed calendar, we conduct standards-based interim assessments on six-week cycles to gauge student progress in reading, writing, math, Science and Social Studies while we conduct the STEP Assessment to measure reading level growth.

¹³⁴ Farbman, David, and Clairry Kaplan. *Time for a Chang*. 2020 Education Opportunity. Fall 2005.

¹³⁵ We are working with partner organization(s), including Margaret Maddox YMCA, Backfield in Motion, East Park Recreation Center and East Nashville Y-Cap for additional after school activities for students who need them on this abbreviated day each week.

Data-Driven Professional Development. The school year begins and ends with professional development. Staff have 25 days of development to guarantee everything from a powerful adult culture to strategic student groupings to seamless report card administration and conferences.

Family Orientation and Conferences. Nashville Classical families play an active role in their children's education and are essential to fulfilling our mission of ensuring academic and personal excellence for all students. We cultivate positive and productive relationships with all families and engage them in the life of the school. Following the lottery, or the close of our enrollment process, we conduct **Home Visits** to each new student's family before their child begins at the school. Individualized meetings provide families with an overview of the school's design, including our college preparatory mission, academic program, homework expectations, code of conduct, uniform policy and opportunities for family involvement. Meetings conclude with families signing the **Classical Contract of Excellence** (please see the Nashville Classical Student and Family Handbook in **APPENDIX K**) which articulates what the family can count on from the school and clarifies expectations of families. All families attend **Annual Family Orientation Sessions** held before the start of the school year. Throughout the year, we engage with families through: **Daily Behavior Reports** based on code of conduct; **Weekly Summary of Learning Objectives** and **HW** for all classes each night; **Bi-weekly Phone Calls** to all families to discuss student academic progress and character development; **Monthly Newsletters** of classroom and school-wide news and information. Each year we host three **Classical Nights** to support families in helping their students achieve academic success. Such topics as "How do I effectively help my child with their homework?" and "What are the best techniques for Read Alouds?" are addressed. These nights coincide with **Trimester Conferences** to facilitate family schedules and set them up for engagement and discussion of the academic and behavioral performance of their children. **Trimester Conferences** include a quantitative and qualitative evaluation of student achievement. Each conference includes assets and challenges as well as a concrete plan for moving forward. All conferences are mandatory as articulated in the Student and Family Handbook (please see **APPENDIX K**).

The school calendar is provided in **Figure 2.26** on the next page of this document. It meets the state's requirement for instructional time in public schools (TCA 49-13-105) and will be finalized by March 15th, per the Division of Charter Schools' requested timeline. Please note that there are 2 days of Professional Development and Conferences to end the school year (June 5 and June 6) but June 5 is also Parent Conferences.

Figure 2.26 - School Academic Calendar (Draft)

Nashville Classical Charter School 2013-2014 Academic Calendar (Draft)																											
JULY							AUGUST							SEPTEMBER													
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	
21	22	16	24	25	26	27	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30					
28	29	30	31				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30												
OCTOBER							NOVEMBER							DECEMBER													
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5							1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30	31			24	25	26	27	28	29	30	29	30	31					29	30	31				
JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH													
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4							1														1
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29	30	31		23	24	25	26	27	28		23	24	25	26	27	28	29	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
																					30	31					
APRIL							MAY							JUNE													
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5					1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
27	28	29	30				25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30						29	30					
<div>First Day of School</div> <div>Staff Development Days</div> <div>No Staff/No Students</div> <div>Half Day</div>							<div>6 week Interim Assessments</div> <div>Data Day - No students</div> <div>6 Week Progress Reports</div> <div>Parent Orientation</div>							<div>Natl. ELA/Math Assessments</div> <div>Parent Teacher Conferences</div> <div>New Trimester Begins</div> <div>Trimester Report Due</div> <div>Last Day of School</div>													
<div>185 Days of Instruction</div> <div>25 Days of Staff Development</div>																											
Important Dates																											
JULY							AUGUST							SEPTEMBER													
Jul. 8-29		Staff Professional Development (PD)					Aug. 1-2		Student Orientation (Half Day)					Sept. 2		Labor Day-No School											
Jul. 26		Parent Orientation					Aug. 6-9		Nationally Normed ELA/Math Assessments (August baseline)					Sept. 19		1st 6 week interim assessment											
Jul. 30		First Day of School (Half Day)												Sept. 23		Staff Data Day-No Students											
2							22							19													
OCTOBER							NOVEMBER							DECEMBER													
Oct. 7-11		Fall Break-No School					Nov. 7		2nd 6 week interim assessment					Dec. 2		Staff PD-No Students											
Oct. 7-8		Staff PD Days					Nov. 11		Veterans Day - No School					Dec. 12		3rd 6 week interim assessment											
Oct. 28		New Trimester Begins					Nov. 11		Staff Data Day-No Students					Dec. 16		Staff Data Day-No Students											
Oct. 31		Report Cards are Due					Nov. 14		2nd 6 week progress reports					Dec. 23-31		Winter Recess-No School											
18							Nov. 19-21		Parent/Teacher Conferences																		
							Nov. 27-29		Thanksgiving-No School																		
JANUARY							FEBRUARY							MARCH													
Jan. 1-2		Winter Recess-No School					Feb. 17		Presidents' Day-No School					Mar. 3		Data Day-No Students											
Jan. 3		Staff PD-No Students					Feb. 27		4th 6 week interim assessment					Mar. 4		4th 6 week progress reports											
Jan. 14-17		Nationally Normed ELA/Math												Mar. 5-7		Parent/Teacher Conferences											
Jan. 13		Report Cards Due												Mar. 10-14		Spring Break - No school											
Jan. 20		MLK Jr. Day-No School												Mar. 17		Staff PD Day											
Jan. 21		New Trimester Begins												14													
APRIL							MAY							JUNE													
Apr. 17		5th 6 week interim assessment					May 19-22		Nationally Normed ELA/Math Assessments (End-of-year)					Jun. 4		3rd Trimester report available											
Apr. 21		Data Day-No Students					May 26		Memorial Day - No School					Jun. 4		Last Day of School											
Apr. 24		5th 6 week progress reports												Jun. 4-5		Parent/Teacher Conferences											
Apr. 29		Parent Orientation												Jun. 6		Staff PD Day											
														Jun. 9-30		Summer Vacation - No School											

Daily School Schedule

Monday, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays our doors open day at 7:30 AM for breakfast, students arrive by 7:45 and the day ends at 4:00 PM; Wednesdays we operate until 2:00 PM.¹³⁶

Nashville Classical provides an additional 5.25 hours per week and an additional 267 hours per year, or 39.5 standard MNPS school days. The daily schedule maximizes student learning and teacher collaboration during highlighted blocks, two fully certified teachers during all literacy instruction in grades K-4 are in each classroom to support our college preparatory mission for all students and to train teachers to effectively execute on that mission. In addition, we have specifically designed our schedule to support ELL students, students with special needs and to increase the capacity of our staff. During instruction of core subjects, there are two instructors in the classroom in grades K-4. We leverage administrators and office staff to make this possible when necessary. In addition, during literacy, the lowest performing students in each class receive an additional pull-out during literacy and receive a third block of direct instruction, enabling both smaller groups across the entire classroom and an additional intervention for teachers. During literacy rotations, writing, remediation, and end of day rhetoric, we put two teachers in every classroom in grades K-2 in order to maximize both teacher capacity and opportunities for small group intervention. During math, teachers use a math workshop format to focus their instruction on small groups. At the end of each day, the school's entire staff is mobilized to support students during an enrichment block, enabling small group instruction based on the previous week's assessments.

Staff have 165 planning minutes per day, with administrators and office staff covering all breaks and lunch periods and literacy teachers taking responsibility for enrichment and lead teachers taking responsibility for social studies and science. Staff plan a maximum of two core subjects. Morning Meeting, Reading Comprehension, Saxon Math, Math Investigations, Destination Reading, Read Aloud, Writing, and Social Studies/Science are divided among Lead Teachers while Literacy Teachers are responsible for Reading Mastery, Classical Roots and Enrichment. Afternoon Rhetoric is centrally planned by an administrator and modified as appropriate by teachers. In Y2 and beyond, when grade teams decrease, staff builds upon previously created lesson plans.

Figures 2.27 and 2.28 illustrate the two different schedules that Nashville Classical will concurrently offer. Primary grades have an “A” schedule or a “B” schedule. This complimentary schedule allows us to have 1.5 FTE teachers for every set of two classrooms, and to schedule teachers such that all literacy instruction has two teachers in the classroom working with small groups of nine students while the third group of nine students works at individualized computer-based literacy stations. These schedules enable the school to use a two-teacher model for literacy in an economically viable manner. The second teacher per each set of two classrooms is a Literacy Teacher, and focuses on literacy instruction—specifically phonemics, phonics, fluency and Classical Roots. Literacy Rotations can run with complimentary schedules across the two classrooms.

In addition, the schedule provides multiple opportunities (at least three per day) for staff to insert joyful cheers, breaks, structured games, and rest.

¹³⁶ On Wednesdays, a character building lesson will replace writing and the day will end at 1:55 pm. We recognize that an early dismissal day may be a burden for some parents. For those parents who cannot pick up their student(s) at 2:00 pm on Wednesdays, we will work closely with neighborhood and community partners to ensure all students have a safe environment to which they can go following dismissal.

Figure 2.27 “A” Schedule

Homeroom Name: Harvard
Arrival and Optional Breakfast (7:30 – 7:45) ¹³⁷
Morning Rhetoric (7:45 – 7:55)
Morning Classroom Meeting (7:55 – 8:05)
Read Aloud (8:05 – 8:35)
Math Block I: Saxon Math (8:35 – 9:15)
Math Block II: Math Investigations (9:15 – 10:00)
Literacy Rotations (10:00 – 12:30) Reading Mastery Break, Snack, Bathroom (10:45 – 11:00) Junior Great Books Destination Reading
Writing (12:30 – 1:15)
Lunch & Recess (1:15 – 1:55)
Enrichment (Art, Music or PE) (1:55 – 2:30)
Break and Bathrooms (2:30 – 2:40)
Social Studies/Science (2:40 – 3:15)
DEAR Time & Tutoring (3:15 – 3:45)
End of Day Rhetoric (3:45 – 3:55)
Pack Up and Dismissal (3:55 – 4:00)
Teacher Meetings and Additional Planning Time (4 – 5)

Figure 2.28 “B” Schedule

Homeroom Name: Vanderbilt
Arrival and Optional Breakfast (7:30 – 7:45) ¹³⁸
Morning Rhetoric (7:45 – 7:55)
Literacy Rotations (7:55 – 10:10) Reading Mastery Junior Great Books Destination Reading
Break, Snack & Bathroom (10:10 – 10:25)
Morning Meeting (10:25 – 10:35)
Read Aloud (10:35 – 11:05)
Math Block I: Saxon Math (11:05 – 11:45)
Math Block II: Math Investigations (11:45 – 12:30)
Lunch & Recess (12:30 – 1:10)
Writing (1:10 – 1:55)
Social Studies/Science (1:55 – 2:30)
Break and Bathrooms (2:30 – 2:40)
Enrichment (Art, Music or PE) (2:40 – 3:15)
DEAR Time & Tutoring (3:15 – 3:45)
End of Day Rhetoric (3:45 – 3:55)
Pack Up and Dismissal (3:55 – 4:00)
Teacher Meetings and Additional Planning Time (4 – 5)

To demonstrate the alignment of our schedule and our mission, we provide a day at Nashville Classical through the eyes of a student and a teacher.

Typical Student Day

At 7:30, Marcos holds his mother’s hand, walking confidently to school with a backpack containing last night’s Homework (HW).¹³⁹ Approaching the building, Marcos spots the School Director, a face he has grown accustomed to each morning and throughout the day. “Que pase un buen dia,” his mother wishes. Marcos’ excitement is apparent in his stride and smile as he receives a warm greeting. “Good morning, Marcos. Are you ready for an enthusiastic day of learning?” asks the school leader. “Enthusiastic and ready,” replies Marcos. In full uniform, Marcos is welcomed into the school building.

Walking past two teachers who greet him, Marcos walks through the halls and enters an orderly and inviting space. Students are sitting in advisory groups, eating and completing Brainwork. Prior to joining, Marcos walks to his cubby, hangs his coat, removes his HW and reading book. He places the rest of his items in the cubby using the organized technique modeled for him by his teacher. Heading to his common room seat—labeled with his name and picture—with his cohort named after Vanderbilt University, Marcos is greeted by his advisor who flashes a warm smile and extends a handshake. “Good morning, Marcos.” “Good morning, Ms. Turner,” responds Marcos, looking his teacher in the eye who compliments his handshake. Marcos hands Ms. Turner his HW folder, finds his place at the table and starts eating. Upon completing his morning meal, Marcos pulls out his Brainwork folder and begins to eat breakfast. Waiting at his seat is a

¹³⁷ Students are required to arrive by 7:45 AM and breakfast services continues until this time .

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ In kindergarten, homework (HW) includes a short reading log and several basic questions about numeracy and counting along with the experience on crossing off HW on an agenda-type document teachers create for students.

carton of milk, a bagel, and an apple. One of Marcos' friends quietly helps him open his milk and Marco eats his breakfast while Classical Music plays in the background. At 7:40, he puts his napkin on top of his food, just as his teacher have taught him, and moves it in front of his Brainwork folder. Now, it is time for him to work out of a packet created specifically for him. Marcos' packet contains extra practice on lowercase letters, identifying rhyming sounds, and addition of single-digit numbers. He enjoys the Brainwork because it activates his brain and he gets to work at his own pace. The student next to him is on a math page and so is Marcos. They whisper count together to solve the last addition problem before the music stops and the teacher claps three times; morning rhetoric is just around the corner but first it is time to clean up. The teacher puts up one finger and students all sit up straight with their hands in their laps. Next, the teacher puts up two fingers. Now, students push their chairs out but remain sitting. Once three fingers are up, students stand. Four fingers is a sign to push in their chairs and five fingers means it is time to move. Students carry their trays around the table in a circle and carefully place their trash into the garbage. Marcos is back at his seat in less than a minute and excited for morning rhetoric. Also, as a young child still learning English, he appreciates that the teachers use hand signals, gestures, and music to communicate behavior expectations in the lunchroom.

A clapping chant led by the School Director lets everyone know that brainwork and breakfast are over and time for morning motivation. *"Getting our blood flowing, it's how we start the day, pumping up our brains, for learning all the way."* Staff and students repeat the chant in unison.

Following a 10-minute combination of stretches and aerobics mixed with songs that represent the core values of the school, the school leader claps three times. Students clap back and sit up straight in learning position. It is 7:55 AM and time for Marcos to enter his classroom.

"Here we are to start our day, doing it right, the Classical Way, The Classical Way demands hard work, each minute, each day... We're here to prep for our college degree, who's going to get one...you and me!" Students burst with excitement as they enter the classroom and recite their daily lines. Ms. Turner praises the classroom for their **SCHOLARSHIP** because she can see that they really do love to learn.

Marcos and his classmates quietly find their assigned seats on the rug. Ms. Turner takes attendance by calling every student and they respond by saying good morning in the language of their choice. At the end, she asks the class how many students are present and absent. Marcos makes the stretch it gesture with his teacher when she encourages a classmate to use a complete sentence. The class sits in a circle and Ms. Turner tells them the value of the day, **INTEGRITY**, and reviews the schedule and chances that they will have to show integrity. Then, she hits a bell and students rise, chanting *"Read Baby Read"* as they shift to the literacy sections of the day. The posted daily schedule illustrates a breakdown of the more than three hours of language arts instruction that Marcos receives every day. Knowing that literacy acquisition in the early grades is the make or break of future academic success, a second teacher, Mr. Garcia, the kindergarten literacy teacher, enters the room. Ms. Turner transitions Marcos and his classmates to three locations to start their 45-minute literacy rotations. Dividing into three groups of nine students, two of the groups move to tables on opposite sides of the room, each joined by one teacher. A third group of nine scholars works on class computers using student-adaptive literacy software.

Following his first literacy block, Marcos and his group quietly move to Mr. Garcia's table. For the next 45 minutes, Mr. Garcia uses Direct Instruction with Reading Mastery to build students' phonics, phonemic awareness, blending and decoding skills. Moving between individual students and the whole group, Mr. Garcia is assessing students while using effective pacing to keep the group excited and engaged. Near the end of thirty minutes, students put their Reading Mastery Books down. "Show me your roots!" says Mr. Garcia and everyone stands up and pretends to be a tree and Mr. Garcia readies some flashcards for Greek and Latin roots. Students are studying the

prefix un- and identify words that contain it. They make an “X” every time they find it and then Mr. Garcia reads the root and has students guess what the word might mean. When they get to unhappy, Marcos correctly explains that the word means “Not happy!” He makes a sad face to show he understands the meaning and Mr. Garcia laughs at his enthusiasm. As a result, he moves Marcos up on the class color chart and he cannot help but smile even as he tries to show the meaning of the new word. Soon, the 45 minutes is over and daily work with phonetics is done.

During guided reading, Ms. Turner instructs students on key elements of reading comprehension. Today scholars are learning how to make text predictions. The class is reading *The Golden Touch* about King Midas. Yesterday, Ms. Turner read the entire story during Read Aloud and today she is rereading it but pausing to show how she would make predictions. Because students know what is coming, the predictions lead to even higher engagement. Ms. Turner makes a hand-motion where she taps her brain with one finger every time she makes a prediction. “I wish I had stopped here when reading yesterday,” she says. “I predict that turning everything into gold will not make King Midas a happy man.” The class taps their brains and Marcos raises his hand. “Ms. Turner, it is important to stop when you read,” he says. “You need to use your brain!” Ms. Turner smiles and uses the last section of guided reading for students to work in independent texts. Marcos, who recently moved from one group to another as a result of his rapid progress, gets to read one-on-one with Ms. Turner first. She quizzes him on sight words and asks him to make a prediction about the book he is reading. Marcos, who relies heavily on picture clues still, has understood the pattern of *No, David!* and predicts David will get in trouble on the next page. “Stretch it out,” says Ms. Turner. “Give me a classical answer.” He nods and looks her in the eye and says, “I predict David will get in trouble on the next page.” She smiles and he feels instantly proud.

During his three 45-minute literacy blocks, Marcos has been grouped by his reading ability based on analyzed data from the last six-week STEP assessment. The flexible grouping allows his teachers to differentiate instruction to a level appropriate for each group while maintaining the same academic outcomes. It is clear that Marcos is deeply engaged in learning not only because of the enthusiasm and presence of his teachers and the quality of their instruction, but by the appropriate level of support and challenge he receives in each lesson. When his group moves to the computer station and literacy center, Marcos is pulled by the Dean of Student Supports. The Dean provides him with an additional phonics lesson focused on spelling CVC words and b, d, f, p, and t sounds because Marcos’ most recent STEP assessment showed he had been using sounds when he saw the letter but confusing them when they were part of the word. Marcos is part of a very small group now, only four students, and the teacher pauses every time somebody says the wrong sound and provides almost 40 opportunities for each individual to practice.

After 2 hours and 15 minutes of exciting and demanding learning, Vanderbilt takes a 15-minute break for snack and bathroom. The Dean of Student Supports returns Marcos to the room and gives tables a cue to open their snacks and then encourages them to answer questions like “What’s your favorite food?” and allows students who have earned the privilege to work with blocks, the whiteboard, or checkers at their table. After Ms. Turner returns, Marcos and his fellow scholars dive back into learning.

Transitioning to the carpet, the class cheers “*S! T! O! R! Y! Story! Story!*” and Ms. Turner resumes the chapter book the class has been reading all week. Continuing to read about myths, she starts the story of Orpheus and Eurydice. When she gets to the section where Orpheus is warned to never look back, she pauses. “I am going to make a prediction,” she says. “Prediction,” repeats the class, tapping their brain and using a skill they have seen her use in small group instruction and practiced with their own leveled texts. Later, Marcos correctly uses one of the class’ vocabulary words “confidence” and beams when everybody turns to him, points, and cheers, “You go, Marcos!”

When Ms. Turner closes the chapter book and the students return to their desks, they do it with a song – “*Think, think, think of a word,*” Marcos sings tapping his brain. “*Think of a word that starts with...What?*” The song ends with scholars in a ready to learn position, eagerly waiting for the teacher’s next cue. Today, the teacher is building on a previous science vocabulary word carnivore by teaching students that carno means meat. Marcos asks the Ms. Turner, “Is that why sometimes my mom says she is making carnitas?” Ms. Turner tells Marcos to kiss his brain for being so smart. Greek and Latin root study ends with students writing three words that use carno, and getting to draw a picture that represents “carne” and meat. Marcos then practices saying the word out loud several times and whispering it to a friend. He struggles with the “n” sound and confuses it with the “m” sound but before the class transitions to Math, Ms. Turner has everybody go around the room and say “carnivore” out loud. Picking Classical Sticks, she calls students one at a time and rapid fire. By the time its Marcos’ turn, he has heard the word almost twenty times and has no problem saying it. The exercise takes less than a minute but Ms. Turner is sure the whole class can say the word and she intends to push them to use it in a sentence tomorrow.

At the end of the Check For Understanding, Ms. Turner calls attention back to the front of the room. It is time for math. Students stand at their desks and wait for the signal to transition into the new subject. Ms. Turner leads a chant to get students ready. To the tune of “Surfing Safari,” they sing “*Let’s do Math Right Now, everybody’s leaning wow, come on Math safari with me!*” And then, in the silliest voice they can, scholars repeat, “*Come on Math Safari with me!*” Combining a healthy dose of math terminology with kinesthetic movement, students do a series of math chants and repeat a story problem. It is an electrifying catalyst to each math lesson.

“Today we are going to learn about sequencing. Everybody say that word with me, ‘Sequencing.’” Pausing, the class repeats “Sequencing” as Ms. Turner points to the word in bold letters on the board. “Another word for ‘sequencing’ is ‘order’,” continues Ms. Turner, moving her hand to the word “order” fixed directly below “sequencing.”

“Let’s read a short story about Liliana and see how she prepares for her day of school and look at the pictures that accompany it. Then we can talk about the ‘sequence’ or ‘order’ of her morning. The most important words we are going to use in describing the sequence are ‘first, next, and last.’ Let me hear those words all together.” Students articulate each word as Ms. Turner points to them on the board. “I think we are ready for the story. Are you ready to hear about Liliana’s morning routine?” The class responds with a loud, “Absolutely.” “That’s it,” says Ms. Turner. “That’s the Classical Way.”

Marcos is full of excitement because Ms. Turner has reached for a cup with Classical Sticks. She calls this the Classical Cup and it has all of the students’ names in it. Marcos has practiced saying “first,” next,” and “last” several times with the whole class and is confident he can answer the questions correctly when it is his turn from the Classical Cup. Ms. Turner takes out three pictures—of a student brushing his teeth, getting on a school bus, and arriving at school. She pulls the next stick and Marcos has all eyes tracking him. “First, you brush your teeth. Next, you get on the school bus. Next, you get to school.” Ms. Turner says, “Marcos, I would like to see you use all three of our sequence words.” Marcos corrects himself immediately “Last, you get to school!” Ms. Turner smiles: “Great **FOCUS**, Marcos. You stuck with that question. Let’s give Marcos two classical claps!” she says and all the students clap twice in unison.

After 45 minutes, students move from their desk to the carpet for Math Investigations. In a circle, Ms. Turner explains the rules of today’s “Math Game.” Working in partners, students each have a bag of manipulatives—tiny plastic bears. One scholar empties their bag and the other keeps his manipulatives in the bag. Then, a scholar takes three bears out of his bag slowly. His partner’s job is to find three matching bears in his pile and put them in order. “*Remember, when you do this, you say ‘First, you found orange.’*” The scholars make a “W-O-W” by putting up three fingers on

both sides of their open mouths because Ms. Turner had just used a “WOW” word for math. Finally, students move into their pairs. Practicing **TEAM**, Marcos asks his partner, “Would you like to go first?” They laugh and learn until the full period has passed and it’s time for them to put manipulatives away and eat lunch.

The school leader and supporting, non-teaching staff supervise lunch period where they engage tables of students in “library level” discussions about books they are reading. As students finish eating, they are dismissed outside, where the school’s Dean of Student Supports (DSS) is waiting. Staff members transition outside with students as more Universities are dismissed. Marcos and his classmates had spent the first week of school “practicing recess” and learning about different play stations. Now all of the students are having fun with their free time, but there is also a clear sense of organization and shared expectations. At the end of recess, the DSS praises Marcos for putting his station back just as he found it. “That’s **INTEGRITY**,” he says. “You did the right thing and I didn’t even have to tell you to do it.” Ms. Turner is smiling at Marcos and escorts a silent line back to learning. Other classmates wave their fingers to show Marcos support and appreciation because he has been recognized for a core value of the day.

Class transitions back to the rug for a whole-group writing activity. Mr. Garcia returns and asks students if he can hear their daily writing chant because it gets him excited for his final lessons. Harnessing students’ energy, Ms. Turner praises their choral chant and asks for three claps and stomps on three, “1, 2, 3.” Clap, Clap, Clap. Stomp, Stomp, Stomp. With a non-verbal gesture, students sit down on the rug. Ms. Turner provides a topic, and students help brainstorm an illustration, which she draws on chart paper. She asks students to formulate a sentence describing the picture. Marcos shares his sentence, spelling the words as his teacher writes them the way he tells her, including mistakes. Afterward, she edits the sentence explaining the correct spellings. Students move to their desks and begin their own illustrations for the topic. Circulating around the room and engaging students in discussions about what they are drawing and writing, Ms. Turner and Mr. Garcia edit their mistakes, just as they had edited the model for the group.

Mr. Garcia waves goodbye to the class because now it is time for social studies, and today it is geography. Ms. Turner leads the class through instruction on how to find North, South, East and West on maps. Starting with a review of what students know about maps, the class brainstorms everything they know as their teacher lists out ideas on chart paper. The lesson flows from brainstorming into direct instruction and includes a sticky cheer with hand motions. Students practice it several times before they can perfectly recite “North-South-East-West. Nashville Classical is the best!” Ms. Turner praises their **RESILIENCE**. “You kept trying that cheer until we got it perfect,” she said. “Good job, you.” The class smiles and points to themselves “Good job, us!” they say. The period finishes with students labeling a blank map with a North, South, East and West. One map is of the United States and the other shows their neighborhood, including landmarks like the school, Shelby Bottoms Park, and the TN State Fairgrounds. The lesson ends with a logic check. “What would happen if you did not know which was East and which was West?” Students answer these questions and articulate the importance of directions. “I don’t think we just *know* what the directions are,” said Ms. Turner “We know *why* we use them, *too*. That’s the Nashville Classical Way!” Students tuck their work into their social studies folders and Marcos is proud of the sticker he earns for labeling his map with exceptional penmanship. He checks the class color chart and smiles to see himself on gold. He knows the day is almost over and he cannot wait to earn his stars for the day.

During the bathroom break, Ms. Turner walks students outside to Mr. Garcia who is waiting to lead students in physical education. During “Movement” class, students are provided with physical activity while classical music plays and they learn the proper way to stretch key muscles. The period ends with an exciting game of red light-green light-one-two-three. Mr. Garcia blows a

whistle and students drop all their materials to form a perfect straight line. In HALL (Hands at your sides, All eyes forward, Lip zipped, and Legs soft) students return to the classroom.

After taking exactly 90 seconds to clean and organize their desks, Ms. Turner asks students to track her as she provides instruction for the final 30 minutes of the day - structured DEAR and remediation time. Marcos knows that Mr. Garcia will be by shortly to bring him to the bean table with a few of his classmates, joining other students from the other kindergarten classes, who need more reading support. Last Friday, they took a reading comprehension assessment and so this week they do reading during intervention. Next week, they will do math. The room is orderly and calm as students engage in their activities, some mandated and others optional based on academic needs and daily behavior. Some students leave the room to work with a speech therapist but Marcos is called to the table to work with Mr. Garcia and receive additional practice in text elements. He uses a text with two lines on each page and practices one-to-one tracking, first while Mr. Garcia reads the text and next by himself. Students then partner practice, checking each other's reading to make sure they say every word and don't skip. At the end of each line, Marcos thinks "sweep" and moves his finger to the next line. Mr. Garcia taught them this trick today and it helps Marcos make his one-to-one tracking automatic. He finds it easier to think about what he is reading when he does not have to worry about his finger. Mr. Garcia rotates through the group, listening to each child practice reading a page and checking their one-on-one tracking. Soon, Marcos hears Ms. Turner clap three times and he moves to the carpet with urgency.

It is 3:45 PM and class returns to the rug for their daily closing. Even Mr. Garcia joins Vanderbilt on the floor for afternoon rhetoric. For the last minutes of the day, Ms. Turner leads discussion about the class's major learning, some highlights, and what to expect tomorrow. Students share their takeaways while praising one another for any experiences that have exemplified a core school value. Ms. Turner shouts out three students for exemplifying **INTEGRITY** when they worked independently during tutoring time. She said that doing the right thing while nobody is watching is true Classical behavior. Marcos receives a shout out for his **FOCUS** earlier in the day as Ms. Turner cites his exceptional work using the exactly right transition words. "You sounded like a college student today, Marcos," beams his teacher. "It is wonderful to see how smart you are!" Marcos is elated as his teacher's praise means the world to him. Ms. Turner ends the day by naming the number of stars students earned for finishing part of the day on silver or gold. After each one, students say "Way to go!" Marcos earned five (5) stars today and cannot wait to be part of the celebration tomorrow afternoon. He beams with joy at the great day of learning. A five-year-old, receiving a classical education, on his way to a college degree, the young scholar is in the midst of developing deep pride in himself and his school for all the right reasons.

As Marcos exits the building and sees his mother waiting, he walks towards her feeling a bit taller. Marcos has had a big day for such a tiny boy and he knows tomorrow, along with the other 184 days of school, will be no different. At his school, the teachers, parents and students live by one mission: educating *every* student for success and excellence in high school, college, and life.

Typical Teacher Day

Arriving at 7:00 AM, Ms. Martinez enters the school, walking past the main office where she is greeted by the School Director. Spending the first 10 minutes of her day checking emails in the staff office, including the daily morning message, Ms. Martinez' preparation for the day ahead is minimal as she is all ready to go from yesterday, including all learning outcomes and detailed agendas posted in class.

At 7:15 Ms. Martinez heads to the common room, positioning herself at her table. Harvard University students file in from the morning greeting ritual outside. Unpacking their belongings

into cubbies, some students reach Ms. Martinez, where she offers another warm greeting and oversees HW collection and ensures scholars are eating quietly and completing their Brainwork.

At 7:45 AM, morning motivation and morning meeting ensue. Ms. Martinez models behavior for her kindergartners and redirects them as needed. She raises her hand during shout outs, excited to praise one of her students for their exhibition of core values. Following her articulation of why she is praising her student, Ms. Martinez leads the school in a “boom sizzle” chant, claps and snaps that excites the room. At morning meeting’s end, Ms. Martinez gestures for Harvard to rise, and they file to class silently, their teacher modeling professional hallway walking.

Harvard’s teacher brings students to the carpet for a Calendar Math and a Read Aloud. Ms. Martinez sits next to the board with sight words student have been practicing. This week’s “Classical Words” are highlighted on the board. Sharing with students what is happening in her head as she reads the pages, Ms. Martinez models what effective readers do as they engage with text. Referring to the sight words on the board as they come across them in the text, Ms. Martinez asks questions and tests memories. Conscious of “ratio,” the Classical teacher balances teacher talk with student talk, keeping student engagement at the highest levels possible. Wrapping up Read Aloud, Ms. Martinez leads a summary of the roots for the word temperature—one of their college words. She pulls students to think of other examples and has to hold back a hug when one student says, “Ms. Martinez, you never ever lose your temper,” since she knows it’s true. The class finishes this challenging lesson with a cheer and, since they keep a timeline, Ms. Turner is proud to show off their **SCHOLARSHIP** and adds today’s section to their giant visual display.

It is 8:45 AM and Ms. Martinez leads students through the math safari cheer, her personal favorite. Once the giggles have stopped, she shares the day’s AIM – students will learn how to count by multiples of two. Using a variety of manipulatives, Ms. Martinez models how to count by twos with concrete examples. She hands students materials to practice with as she demonstrates for the whole class. Ms. Martinez models a practice worksheet that students use to work on counting by multiples of two. They are all the way to 20. After modeling how to go through the sheet and asking questions to make sure students understand, she dismisses students to their desks where they work independently and practice their new skill. With seven students working with the School Director who has joined the class, Ms. Martinez has 75% of her class size to ensure everyone is picking up the new skill. She moves around the room, knowing her students well and checking in with those most likely to struggle, ensuring by the end of practice time that she has seen each student. There are two students with IEPs in the class and they receive extra kinesthetic practice. Ms. Martinez has set aside special manipulative materials for them where blocks representing one are taped together to represent two. They are also practicing counting to 10 as opposed to twenty. This helps them better understand numeracy, since two is represented, and count at the same speed as the students around them. Ms. Martinez offers them extra praise and before the practice time ends, she writes a note to herself that this strategy was very successful so she can use it when planning future math lessons. She also knows she will need to make sure they receive support at the end of the day so they practice counting all the way to 20. The Classical way expects all students to achieve and Ms. Martinez takes this to heart.

At 9:30 AM, Ms. Martinez calls students back to the rug for problem solving. She praises the **FOCUS** of her group because they made it to the carpet in 28 seconds. This is a new record for the class and they all do a silent cheer for themselves. From there, she plays the shifting game on the rug for five minutes and begins her math lesson. Students begin to apply what they have been learning to meaningful situations. With students discussing problems and their reasoning behind how they approach a difficult question, this section of math is focused on critical thinking skills, communication and proving the ability to apply what you know to new situations. Ms. Martinez tells her class that a “Classical Student knows how to solve problems, why they solve them that

way, and can tell a friend about it, too!” Students are excited to work with the manipulatives and time each other. Over time, they begin to realize that it is faster to count to 20 by 2s and, applying the concept of number conservation, they all know that they have the same amount as when they count by ones. After this block of problem solving, it is time for a break, which is perfect timing since Ms. Martinez needs to run to the ladies room.

After the break, the Harvard teacher directs students to reading group stations and is assisted by her associate teacher. Ms. Martinez sits at the center of a table with easel by her side and nine Harvard scholars join her. “Are we ready?” exudes Ms. Martinez. “Yes, we are,” reply the excited students. “Are you sure?” “100%!” “Excellent. Let’s get to it.” Students have been grouped according to their STEP levels and Ms. Martinez receives extra capacity from the Dean of Student Supports who pulls three ELL students—one at a time—for a 45-minute rotation during the 2 hours and 15 minutes. This not only reduces the group size but also means that these students receive the outstanding individualized instruction they need.

During a 45-minute literacy block with her group of nine students, Ms. Martinez walks students through the Junior Great Books Curriculum, providing direct instruction on strategies that allow students to better understand one of Aesop’s fables. Today, students are learning about characterization and discuss different traits for the tortoise and the hare. Since **RESILIENCE** is one of the school’s values, Ms. Martinez sees a perfect time to reinforce culture during instruction and asks students who seems to show more **RESILIENCE**. She is delighted when they each use a silent thumb gesture to select the tortoise and then, told to put the answer in a friend’s brain, whisper into a partner’s ear that the tortoise never gives up. At another table, the kindergarten literacy teacher leads a Reading Mastery lesson and students work on phonemic awareness, blending and decoding. Incorporating visual, auditory and tactile cues, the 45 minutes go quickly. Following a two-minute transition, the next group of nine joins Ms. Martinez followed by a third group. Before she knows it, it is 12:35 and the School Director is at her door. Now it is time for lunch and recess while Ms. Martinez has 35 minutes to eat lunch with the teacher next door and their shared literacy teacher. During her lunch period, Ms. Martinez reviews students’ reading work to check understanding and to ensure that everyone is retaining key information. She notes a few students continuing to struggle, knowing she can check in with them at the day’s end. She notes her high flyers who have perfected the new skill and need more challenge; 35 minutes later she is down in the cafeteria to collect her students from lunch and recess, bringing them back to class in a quiet and efficient manner to start the afternoon of learning.

With a non-verbal gesture, Ms. Martinez has students sit on the rug and starts today’s writing instruction. Providing the class with a topic, Ms. Martinez draws on chart paper as Harvard scholars brainstorm an illustration. Again, she is thrilled to have a second literacy teacher in her room because he is able to help small groups of students with their brainstorming. In fact, some of the class’ more gifted students have shown an ability to brainstorm with words right away rather than needing to draw a picture. The literacy teacher works with them to push their brains to think in words and then use a picture to embellish their ideas. Ms. Martinez is thrilled to see this small group of students start writing so quickly. She thinks they will probably be able to write a multiple sentence story by the end of the year if they continue to receive this type of support and, since two teachers are in the room for writing every day, Ms. Martinez knows that they will. Soon, Ms. Martinez gives the non-verbal gesture for pencils down and gives the next direction. She asks students to formulate a sentence to describe the picture. An eager student shares his sentence with the class, spelling the words as his teacher writes them the way he tells her, including mistakes. Afterward, she edits the sentence explaining the correct spellings. The students move to their desks and begin their own illustrations. Circulating around the room and engaging students in discussions about what they are drawing and writing, Ms. Martinez edits their mistakes, just as she had edited her own while modeling for the whole group.

At 1:45 PM, students put their writing materials away to begin Science. The point of Science is to build content knowledge and then answer “WHY” questions. Students take five minutes to organize their desks before bringing their attention back to Ms. Martinez for Science lesson. She details the day’s learning outcome: “At the end of today’s science class, you will be able to sort a group of items based on observable characteristics. Those are some really big college words, ‘observable characteristics.’ Let’s talk about what those words mean.” Working through a hands-on activity, students engage with the learning outcome, sorting types of animals into two buckets. Students eagerly volunteer how and why they have sorted the animals. Ms. Martinez is thrilled when she hears a student use a recent Nashville Classical vocabulary word “carnivore” and sees two students share a glue stick by insisting that their partner get to use it first. “Everybody stop,” says Ms. Martinez, “I need to give a scholar holler for **TEAM** to Jasmine and Michelle. They are working so well together . . . Scholar” shouts Ms. Martinez. “Holler!” shouts the class, giving a thumbs up signal to the two scholars.

It is now 2:30 PM, and students are putting their work in their Science folders as Ms. Martinez begins her common planning period with the kindergarten teacher. She feels fortunate to have the School Director in her room during break and lucky to have such a smart teacher next door. They discuss ways to amplify the rigor in the subsequent week’s math lessons and additional ways to connect the Junior Great Books lesson, class vocabulary, and upcoming Science standards. They also discuss how to make sure they push all ELL students to participate in the next shared inquiry discussion. Ms. Martinez suggests giving every student a chip as a reminder that they need to speak and, when they do, they get to put the chip in the bucket. The teacher adds to her idea—we can even pull a chip for a prize at the end to really incentivize them to be brave when they speak! Ms. Martinez remembers that their previous Professional Development focused on supporting ELL students through sentence stems. She tells her co-teacher, “Let’s support them when they start to compare stories. We can model it several times with the frame. The _____(story) has _____. The _____(story) does NOT have _____.” Her co-teacher says, “That’s great.” She also remembers the PD and adds, “Some of them should be ready to just say ‘This story is different because_____.’ So we should provide that stem, too.” Both teachers are excited and realize that their diverse classrooms are making them better teachers with all children.

At 3:15 PM, Ms. Martinez has returned to her room and signals the class to clear their desks. During the next 30-minute period, she knows that some students will stay with her during this block and ELL students will be pulled by the Literacy Teacher for targeted intervention. Likewise, two SPED students will receive support in speech. Staying in the room with the majority of students, she oversees students who sit in the reading corner and continue to read young, classical books. They have talked about what it would mean to be a carnivore in the library and even her pre-readers love to make themselves comfortable and talk through the pictures they see. After one student sees that the bookshelf has become messy, he starts to organize it. On the action plan her School Director encourages all teachers to use, she writes herself a note. She will be sure to spotlight his **INTEGRITY** at tomorrow’s morning rhetoric. For the final ten minutes, she asks a couple of students to join her at the table so that she may discuss some challenges they were having in the science lesson. Even though the remediation focuses on reading and math skills, Ms. Martinez knows that 10 minutes with a few struggling students can make all the difference in science. Her ELL students have struggled with oral language in the science class and so she has them repeat the words carnivore and herbivore while looking at pictures of a lion eating meat and a rabbit eating vegetables. Focused more on vocabulary than content, they excel and, by the end of ten minutes, she is using more challenging photos. The students take turns whispering their answer to a partner and she is pleased when one student emphasizes the “v” sound to his partner, showing him how to make it by exaggerating his mouth and creating a “v” with his fingers.

At 3:45 PM, Ms. Martinez's timer goes off and she claps three times. Everybody freezes and the students who had left for targeted intervention return from their small group instruction. The whole class prepares for the end of day. "Two classical claps on three, 1, 2, 3 . . . CLAP. CLAP." Ms. Martinez has the room's attention and leads Harvard's eager scholars in a summary of the day and provides complimentary remarks to two students who "exemplified," as she says, their core values. She details concrete behaviors in two students, looking for nods of acknowledgement so she knows the class is following her. Concluding the day with a college chant, students gather their backpacks and she lines them up at the door in an orderly fashion. The School Director comes to pick them up and walks them through dismissal. Ms. Martinez is done with students for the day, but has a planning period from 4:00 – 5:00 PM. Following a 30-minute kindergarten team meeting focused on best practices during Read Alouds, she spends another hour planning and preparing next week's lessons. Her level of detail and precision in planning and constant checks for understanding ensure that she runs an exceptional class and is always giving students what they need. It is nearly 6:00 PM. Although she is a bit tired, she reflects on how **RESILIENCE** is not just important to the scholars but the staff, too. Ms. Martinez is energized thinking about tomorrow as she walks to her car. As she will say to her colleagues, "I do this work for one reason...to get our students to college."

Staffing

"More than any other variable in education – more than schools or curriculum – teachers matter."¹⁴⁰ We are dedicated to (1) **Recruitment** of outstanding staff, (2) **Training** staff to achieve excellence, and (3) **Evaluating and Retaining** staff to propel the mission and serve the needs of all students.

Recruitment

Utilizing such resources as Teach For America and the wide teaching network of the proposed School Director and the founding team, we will access any and all effective pipelines in scouting talent. Other organizations such as the TN Charter School Incubator, The New Teacher Project, and education students at Fisk, TSU, Belmont, Lipscomb, and Peabody will be accessed on behalf of Nashville Classical. To pro-actively recruit staff members representing racial and ethnic minorities, the board hopes to continue work with individuals such as Yuri Cunza, President and CEO of the Nashville Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and Sonnye Dixon, Lead Pastor at Hobson United Methodist Church. We have budgeted \$10,000 per year to recruit any individual who best fits our school model and we recognize the importance of recruitment from a diverse pool of talent. We use the recruitment fund to travel to conferences and candidates, fly individuals to Nashville and subsidize certain expenses for out-of-state candidates. Moving forward, we will continue to consult practitioners and experts who have a clear sense of the school we are establishing, including our wide network of Building Excellent Schools and, in turn, talent that aligns with our philosophy and are representative of the community.

A rigorous interview process, including resume screening, phone interview, demonstration lesson with feedback, re-teaching based upon feedback, and in-person interview will be utilized to ensure the quality of candidates prior to offering a position. (A full document detailing the start to finish of our hiring practices may be found in **APPENDIX M**.) The hiring process is designed to ensure we are inviting candidates to join our organization who match the following criteria:

- Alignment – believes in school mission and our core values
- Intelligence - demonstrates capacity to learn and achieve
- Coachability - takes and implements feedback
- Initiative - is action oriented, exudes a sense of energy/urgency

¹⁴⁰ Ripley, Amanda. "What Makes a Great Teacher?" *The Atlantic Online*. January/February 2010.

- Strong communication – has strong verbal/written skills
- Mission alignment – keeps highest expectations, relentlessness/grit, no excuses
- Content knowledge – develops literacy skills in lower grades, content in upper grades
- Classroom skill – has strong behavior management
- Classroom skill – delivers strong instruction (rigorous lesson plans/assessments)
- Team orientation – works well with other, mindset that team trumps individual

In addition, we: meet all federal requirements of “highly qualified” for each position; verify transcripts, test scores, and other data related to “highly qualified” status; complete a criminal background check before finalizing employment contracts; and maintain files with up-to date documentation for each teacher. Full job descriptions for teachers, with hiring criteria, are provided in **Section VIII (Personnel)**. While no teachers are identified at the time this document was finalized, the Lead Founder has conducted professional development with Teach For America on multiple occasions with the goal of identifying talented candidates, and is actively maintaining close professional ties in preparation for vigorous, immediate teacher recruitment.

Recruitment for Y1 will begin immediately following authorization. All employees will be hired on an “at will” basis. All hiring and firing decisions are the responsibility of the School Director. A performance tool is used during six annual observations, formally reviewed during summer professional development, addressed during a mid-year evaluation and an end-of-year evaluation and a copy of all evaluations are maintained within personnel files. With daily feedback and constant support provided to teachers by leadership, the six annual observations and debrief conferences lead to a formal and written annual evaluation that represents a culmination of teacher effectiveness rather than a mere snapshot in time.¹⁴¹

Administrators receive concrete performance goals and reviews. At the start of the year, any Dean or Office Manager agrees to concrete metrics and schedules six official performance-based conversations. At the midpoint and end of year, administrators receive a formal performance evaluation from the School Director.

The School Director is hired and evaluated annually by the Board of Directors with specific, measurable benchmarks assessed regularly throughout the academic year. (Please see Performance tool in **APPENDIX N** for details regarding School Leader Evaluation.)

Training

“If children are to achieve at levels demanded by the high standards that states and districts have adopted, teachers will have to help them do so. Teachers are at the center of reform, for they must carry out the demands of high standards in the classroom.”¹⁴² Our time and resources are leveraged to ensure the development of game changers - teachers who change their students’ academic and life trajectories. We know that teacher quality is the single most important factor in driving student achievement and closing the achievement gap; our entire year, from Summer Institute to weekly professional development, is designed to support our teacher’s growth.¹⁴³

One of Nashville Classical’s founding beliefs is that quality professional development is the key to attracting and retaining talented individuals as well as key to increasing student achievement levels. As part of our team, all teachers at Nashville Classical are signing up for individualized professional development that will grow them as teachers able to deliver measurable results for all students and all types of learners. Because of this belief, Nashville Classical’s personnel

¹⁴¹ See Section VIII (Personnel) for more details.

¹⁴² Garret, Michael S. “What Makes Professional Development Effective? Results From a National Sample of Teachers.” *American Educational Research Journal*. Winter 2001, Vol. 38, No. 4.

¹⁴³ Haycock, Kati. “Good Teaching Matters – How Well Qualified Teachers Can Close the Gap.” *Education Trust*. 1998.

includes multiple individuals who will be a resource for a teacher's instructional needs. The School Director, who brings proven background as teacher coach and leader, supports the growth of all teachers in Y1, and a Dean of Academics (hired in Y2) supports teachers in unit and lesson planning, observes classrooms daily, and plans small group professional development. In Year 1, we have set aside hourly salaries and will consider hiring a part-time curriculum specialist to support the School Director's efforts to review Lesson Plans, video footage, and develop curriculum. The Dean of Student Supports assists teachers in writing differentiated plans for special needs students, providing supports for ELL students, assists teachers as they execute daily interventions, and leads small group meetings about specific students.¹⁴⁴ In all years during the term of the charter, the School Director is in classrooms regularly giving feedback.

With our strong classical framework, we expect outstanding instruction in every Nashville Classical classroom and support it using the following strategies: (1) Individualized Professional Development; (2) Annual School Visits and Study; (3) Summer Professional Development; (4) Monthly Professional Development; (5) Weekly Professional Development; (6) Daily Professional Development; and (7) Curriculum-Based Professional Development.

Individual Professional Development. One month into the school year, the School Director and Dean of Academics meet with each teacher to create a Personal/Professional Development Plan that specifies teacher's strengths and areas for growth and outlines 2-3 goals for that individual. The PDP also outlines what types of support that teacher should expect from his/her supervisors.

The Dean of Academics follows up (the School Director will do this in Y1) and monitors implementation of the Personal/Professional Development Plan. The Dean of Academics meets with each individual teacher every two weeks to give feedback and set small goals to ensure that the teacher is meeting the larger goals set forth in the professional development plan. The Dean of Academics is in each teacher's room a minimum of three times per week and more as needed to give informal feedback and observes for an extended period of time every two weeks for feedback on instructional delivery and curriculum implementation.

Every two weeks, the School Director and Dean of Academics conduct instructional rounds during which they observe lessons throughout the school. These rounds serve as an opportunity for the School Director to develop the instructional team as well as allow for calibration regarding an understanding and strategic growth of high quality instruction. Every two weeks, the School Director and Dean of Student Supports conduct similar instructional rounds, monitoring and reviewing the instructional strength provided within individual student support groups.

The School Director and Dean of Academics formally revisit each teacher's PDP twice per year, once at a mid-year meeting (January 3 in 2013) and again at an end-of-year meeting (June 6 in 2013). In that mid-year meeting, teachers receive a formal, written mid-year evaluation, stating how they are performing as compared to the rubric. At the end of the year in June, the teacher meets with both the School Director and DCI to receive a formal, written annual evaluation, again based on the rubric.

Annual School Visits and Study. Each new hire spends, at minimum, one day analyzing a high performing urban elementary charter school serving similar population and with similar mission and vision. Prior to summer PD, the School Director will leverage the Building Excellent Schools network in Tennessee and nationally so that each new staff member gains experiences in the schools on which we are modeled.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ We recognize the distinct and legally protected rights of our students with disabilities and those who are ELL students. We train the Dean of Student Supports in both the legal protections and the distinct strategies for each group, and the School Director monitors closely that each group's needs are being appropriately met and the school remains in full compliance with all federal regulations.

¹⁴⁵ South Bronx Classical in New York, NY; Elm City College Prep in New Haven, CT; Edward Brooke Charter School in Boston, MA; North Star Academy in Newark, NJ; Akili Academy in New Orleans, LA, five of the highest performing urban schools in

Summer Professional Development. “Professional development that focuses on academic subject matter (content) gives teachers opportunities for “hands-on” work (active learning), and is integrated into the daily life of the school (coherence), is more likely to produce enhanced knowledge and skills.¹⁴⁶” In Y1, teachers engage in 15 summer PD days, on School Culture, Assessment and Data, and Curriculum and Instruction. In many ways, this summer combines both a basic orientation to the school with a basic training on the skillsets a Nashville Classical Teacher needs. For sample Summer PD Agendas, see **APPENDIX O**.

- **School Culture.** Training emphasizes systems and procedures as well as rituals and routines illustrated in the Instructional Approach section of the charter application.
- **Assessment and Data Analysis.** We review our accountability plan and staff learns and practices how to implement assessment tools and action plan from results.
- **Curriculum and Instruction.** Using the TN Standards, Internal Standards and the Common Core, staff develop detailed curriculum analysis guided by the use of Curriculum Alignment Templates (CATs), along with sample assessment items. (For a sample CAT, please see **APPENDIX F**.)

Monthly Professional Development. We provide eleven PD days throughout the calendar year. Five occur on Mondays (and one on a Tuesday after final Terra Novas) following six-week assessments and support staff in analyzing achievement data and constructing action plans for moving forward. Sample questions to be addressed include: On which standards are my students demonstrating mastery? Are there any students who are in need of additional supports or interventions outside of the classroom? Are there standards in which the class is nearly reaching mastery, but not quite there? What can I spiral into my curriculum and instruction moving forward to address this? Are any of our subgroups, ELL, Special Education, etc., achieving below the school averages? If so, what evidence supports this claim and how can we address this lack of efficacy in our teaching practices?

Congruent with the TN Department of Education and TN Educator Acceleration Model, we believe that “[a]ll professionals can benefit from self-reflection, evaluation and guidance toward improvement. When strong teachers become even better, the impact can be life-changing for their students.”¹⁴⁷ While we have requested a waiver from the TEAM framework to even more closely manage our small staff, we agree with its emphasis on frequent observations, timely conversations, and constructive feedback. By scheduling assessments for Thursdays, providing time during professional development on Fridays to grade assessments, and then a full professional development Data Day on the Monday after assessments, Nashville Classical (a) provides school administrators with the opportunity to schedule strategic classroom observations and (b) offers teachers the necessary time to grade, analyze, and action plan from student results.

On days not focused on data analysis and action planning, the focus is on areas of growth for the whole school. This may include the use of effective ELL strategies to support math instruction, reflection on overall school culture and areas where we need to improve, observations of high performing schools to benchmark student progress, or how to increase the frequency and quality of family engagement.

Weekly Professional Development. Each Wednesday students dismiss at 2:00 PM¹⁴⁸ and staff has two hours of dedicated , targeted PD. The professional development always includes a 30-

America where students achieve at levels equal to wealthy peers and over 80% of enrolled students are eligible for free or reduced priced lunch. For more detail, see **APPENDIX E**

¹⁴⁶ Garret, Michael S. “What Makes Professional Development Effective? Results From a National Sample of Teachers.” *American Educational Research Journal*. Winter 2001, Vol. 38, No. 4.

¹⁴⁷ http://team-tn.org/assets/how-team-works/Frequent_and_Constructive_Feedback.pdf

¹⁴⁸ We are working with partner organization(s) to provide afternoon activities for students as needed during this abbreviated day.

minute video study. In this time, the school will study brief video footage of 2-3 classroom teachers and offer praise or critique. Video study will end with shared reflection and commitment to completing a next step – for example, increasing the efficiency of transitions during literacy centers. Early in the year, the rest of professional development time will largely be used to examine and constantly improve the effectiveness of our school-wide practices and systems. For example, we have a system for HW collection at the beginning of each day that includes gathering the work, inputting the data for whether or not assignments have been completed and contacting families. If three weeks into the school year we find that a system is ineffective or overly time consuming, we will revise and improve it, immediately practicing and implementing the new practice. As a school built on continuous improvement, it is our obligation to analyze the effectiveness of everything we do, and when necessary, modify and adapt. As the year progresses, weekly PD transitions between whole staff work to smaller focus groups such as grade level teams and literacy instruction inquiry groups.

Daily Professional Development. Teachers have 60 minutes of individual daily planning time each day, and each teacher at the school has an additional 50 minutes of daily planning from 4:10–5:00 PM¹⁴⁹, allowing for daily collaboration which is used for a variety of purposes: restructuring reading groups based on recent assessment data; sharing effective instructional strategies for individual students with the Dean of Student Supports; co-planning upcoming lessons; and scheduling classroom observations and coverage with leadership. Every Monday and Tuesday, teachers use this hour to rehearse lessons with teachers who teach the same content. These rehearsals will focus on implementing strategies from the previous week’s professional development. Each Thursday and Friday, teachers either meet with the Dean of Student Supports or work in a small group to discuss plans for the next week’s lessons. Meetings with the Dean of Student Supports focuses on specific students, particularly those with Special Education plans, ELL needs or identified as gifted.¹⁵⁰ The meetings will follow a specific protocol for 35 minutes:

- Teachers given list of students and Classical chart data. Teachers have 4 minutes to review list and highlight students for discussion. Teachers nominate categories as “homeroom culture issues” or “class culture issues” for discussion. (4 min. total)
- Each teacher has 30 seconds to read list of suggested agenda items and note whether nominated students are quick fix or require serious discussion. If necessary, the Dean includes as discussion topics follow-up on students from previous weeks. (1 min. total)
- Protocol for student discussion includes: describe concerns; identify causative factors; suggest interventions (the bulk of the time); phase interventions as next steps (15 min.)
- Roll Call of previously identified SPED/ELL/GIFTED students and follow similar protocol to above (10 min.)
- Review of next steps and entrance into data management system (5 min.)

Curriculum Based Professional Development. Several of the curricula we have selected offer professional development on their implementation. This includes SRA Reading Mastery, Junior Great Books, the STEP Assessment, Math Investigations and Core Knowledge. The intention of Nashville Classical is to send administrators to conferences on these materials every year, including Y0 in order to offer in-house turn-key professional development whenever possible. At the same time, recognizing the importance of implementing curriculum with fidelity and training teachers, we intend to use Summer Professional Development to invite experts on these materials and, when possible, to combine our sessions with other schools who use the same program both to save cost and impact as many students as possible. The goal is always to align this schedule to

¹⁴⁹ Times not including 35-minute break during Lunch & Recess (40 minutes on schedule includes time to drop-off /pick-up students.)

¹⁵⁰ We recognize the distinct and legally protected rights of our students with disabilities and those who are ELL students. We train the Dean of Student Supports in both the legal protections and the distinct strategies for each group, and the School Director monitors closely that each group’s needs are being appropriately met and the school remains in full compliance with all federal regulations.

the natural rhythms of the week. Lesson rehearsals come after teachers have submitted and received feedback on lesson plans. Each teacher submits draft lesson plans 2 weeks in advance by 9am Sunday and receive feedback by 4pm on Monday. Final lesson plans for the next week are due Friday at 6am. Longer strategic meetings are saved for abbreviated days. Collaborative lesson planning comes as teachers prepare to submit lesson plans and meetings about specific students come after teachers have collected a full week of data and can use the weekend to prepare new interventions. During a typical week, afternoon professional development might follow the routine outlined in **Figure 2.29**.

Figure 2.29: Nashville Classical Weekly Afternoon Professional Development

Weekly Afternoon Professional Development Schedule					
Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Focus	Collaborative Lesson Rehearsal	Collaborative Lesson Rehearsal	Video Protocol/Weekly PD	Collaborative Lesson Planning	Grade Team Level Meetings with Dean of Student Supports

Evaluation of Effectiveness. As a 100% results-oriented school, professional development is evaluated for its effectiveness based on our student achievement data. The School Director is responsible for ensuring the efficacy of teacher support systems and for implementing modifications when satisfactory results are not being achieved. In later years, this responsibility becomes shared with the DCI. Our institutional commitment to professional development is demonstrated by our use, prioritization, and quantity of dedicated time. Comprehensively, over the course of each year, Nashville Classical spends 457 hours improving the impact of our craft on student achievement. At two points each year, we provide staff with a seven-point survey on the quality of professional development and ask staff to identify two things they find successful about professional development and two things they wish they could change. These data points will be used to make a bi-annual report to the Academic Achievement Committee and an annual report to the Board of Directors on PD efficacy. Then, as the administration plans for the next year's professional development, this feedback will inform any changes.

Figure 2.30 - Nashville Classical Professional Development Topics

Classroom & School Culture		Curriculum & Instruction		Assessment	
Mission & Vision	SD	Academic Expectations	SD	Assessment Design	SD
Non-Negotiable School Rules	SD	NCCS's Academic Goals	SD DA	Informal Assessment	SD
Establishing Routines	SD DSs	NCCS's Approach to teaching the TN Academic Standards	SD	Normed Grading expectations	SD
Behavior Classification Grid	SD DSs	Direct Instruction Teaching Framework	SD DA	Creating Rubrics for Performance-Based Assessments	SD
Developmentally Appropriate Discipline	SD DSs	Lesson Plan Submission & Feedback Process	SD DA	Analyzing Assessment Data	SD
Positive Reinforcement of Behavior Techniques	SD DSs	Reinforcing Reading Strategies across the Curriculum	SD DA	Tracking Individual Student Progress	SD
Consistent Use of Consequences/Rewards	SD	Identifying, Assessing & Teaching ELL	DA DSs	Tracking Whole Class Progress	SD

		Students			
Entrance & Dismissal Routines	SD	Collaboration between Classroom Teachers & Special Education Teachers	DSs	Assessing Open-Ended & Constructed Response Questions	SD
Rules for Student Transitions	SD	Differentiating Instruction for Students with IEPs	DSs	Implementing Reading Mastery	EX
Behavioral Techniques from Lemov's Taxonomy	SD	Collaboration between Classroom Teachers & Special Education Teachers	SD DA	Implementing Math Investigations	EX
Communication Strategies that Work	SD	Homework Protocol	SD DA	Implementing the STEP Assessment	EX
Using a Token Economy System in the Classroom	SD	Using Oral Literacy Strategies across the Curriculum	SD DA	Implementing the 100 Book Challenge	EX
Creating Effective Traffic Flow in Classrooms	SD	Reaching Gifted Students	DSs	Implementing Junior Great Books	EX
School Pledge, Song & Chants	SD	Implementing Riverdeep	EX	Greek & Latin Roots	EX
	SD				

DO = Operations Manager; DA= Dean of Academics; EX = External Trainer; SD = School Director; DSs = Dean of Student Supports

Specifically, in Y0 and Y1, we focus our Professional Development in the following areas: (1) Introduce and implement systems that strengthen a positive school culture; (2) Promote a collaborative, professional learning environment for the team and the school; (3) Complete planning cycle by creating curriculum frameworks for kindergarten students; (4) Create unit/lesson plans/assessments for kindergarten, specifically in literacy and math; and (5) Meet needs of all students, particularly low-income, SPED, ELL and Gifted students.

The community we propose to serve contains a high number of students from low income backgrounds and a significant percentage of SPED, ELL, and Gifted students is also possible. Research shows that in diverse schools teacher quality is directly tied to success of the school in providing flexible learning experiences for staff and individualization for students.¹⁵¹ In addition, we have based our school design and structure on successful urban schools that serve similar populations of students. We believe that economically disadvantaged students, as well as students with disabilities and ELL students can achieve at the same level as any other group of students with a more extensive system of supports. We offer a multitude of these supports to meet the needs of all students. We will work to meet the social needs of students and will also consider the financial burdens that schools can place on families in regard to uniforms, school supplies, field trips, etc. We will work with families to accommodate these economic needs.¹⁵² We do not, however, expect to make specific instructional modifications for students from low-income homes outside of coordinating extended day supports for enrichment and homework help. Our PD

¹⁵¹ http://www.edsource.org/assets/files/convening/JusticeMatters_brief.pdf.

¹⁵² Please note that our budget accounts for this cost.

schedule will reinforce the need to offer high academic standards for children from disadvantaged backgrounds and we will use our schedule to visit high performing schools in Nashville that serve students from more advantaged backgrounds to benchmark rigor and behavior expectations.

In accordance with federal and state mandates, we introduce teaching and managing individuals with disabilities during professional development annually. In addition to hiring Special Education Certified teachers, we have a full time Dean of Students Supports certified in Special Education and specializing in IDEA case management. This employee is charged with ensuring that individuals with disabilities are held to a high standard of achievement with appropriate supports to accommodate the disability in the whole classroom and small group settings.

All teachers are trained to work with Limited English Proficient students to ensure that the designed immersion program is effective in meeting students' needs while holding students to a high standard. Professional development activities addressing literacy development for ELLs and culturally responsive teaching is integrated in the school's overall educational program, including professional development in, first and second language acquisition, methods for teaching content to English Language Learners, and differentiated instruction strategies.

Professional development also includes a focus on gifted students. In these sessions, staff discuss and receive training on: identification of gifted students, needs of gifted students, interventions available for gifted students, how to support gifted students during whole group instruction.

Evaluating and Retaining Staff

Evaluation. Because academic success is central to the mission of the school, Nashville Classical bases teacher evaluations heavily upon results of student performance. Continuation as a professional staff member is tied inextricably to academic performance and not to tenure, advancement of professional degrees, or other considerations. Every member of the professional staff is hired exclusively because of his/her demonstrated capacity to participate in meaningful, measurable ways to the ongoing academic success of the school and all of our students. Nashville Classical is deeply committed to acting decisively when a staff member demonstrates unsatisfactory performance and to celebrating the success of the team. When the staff member demonstrates unsatisfactory performance, the School Director provides immediate, direct, and written feedback, informing the staff member about his/her underperformance and setting up an immediate meeting to discuss next steps. The result of the meeting is a highly specific action plan whose targets are measured and time-oriented and aligned to any aspect of underperformance. Should the staff member fail to meet the outlined goals, the School Director explores others options including, but not limited to, the creation of a further action plan, and/or dismissal.

It is the goal of Nashville Classical to retain the majority of its staff and provide the necessary structures and trainings that stop occurrences of underperformance before they begin. There will be times, however, when turnover does occur. One of the goals of the professional development program of Nashville Classical is to encourage career options at the organization for staff members so that most vacancies can be filled from within. For example, a Literacy Teacher will be receiving support and feedback all year that can prepare him/her to take the role of lead teacher the following year or sooner if necessary. Office managers receive feedback and training to possibly take on positions managing operations or leading fund development for the school. If a vacancy does arise that cannot be filled internally, Nashville Classical will reach out to the same networks used to recruit teachers and staff members. We will post vacancies with Teach For America, Nashville New Teacher Project, in newspapers and at institutes of higher education.

We have requested a TN TEAM Waiver, described fully in Section VIII (Personnel) and have drafted an evaluation tool that aligns more closely with our mission, vision, curriculum and instructional design.

Retention. Nashville Classical believes that teacher quality matters and, therefore, we recruit, develop and reward our teachers in accordance with this belief. A Nashville Classical teacher is expected to work an extended school year, to include three weeks of summer professional development and 11 professional development days during the year. They also work a 10-hour day, which is approximately one hour longer than the work-day of a teacher at an enhanced option MNPS school. Comprehensively, our teachers work at least 10% more hours than a teacher at an MNPS school.¹⁵³ We are conscious of retaining our staff and honoring their commitment to the teaching profession. Although every contract is individual and at-will, we have calculated our pay system to reflect the extended work time we require and the high quality teachers we expect to attract. **Figure 2.30** demonstrates how we reward teachers, using two common profiles for a Literacy Teacher and Lead Teacher. In addition, we budget a generous \$1K per FTE for professional development and include an annual \$10K per year for teacher recruitment, even though, in years 2-10 our growth plan calls for adding only 4-5 teachers per year. We expect that the professional culture, high quality professional development, and feeling of success all lead teachers to continue their careers at Nashville, we believe our salaries reflect our sincere belief in the importance of teacher quality and the need to reward excellence.

Figure 2.31 Salary Scale¹⁵⁴

Nashville Classical vs. MNPS Teacher Salary Scale			
	MNPS Teacher	Nashville Classical	Difference
Bachelors 0 Yrs	\$34,474	39,000	13% more than MNPS (2011 – 2012)
Masters 5 Yrs	\$42,829	\$48,000	13% more than MNPS (2011 – 2012)

¹⁵³ We believe that the best teachers commit far more than their contractual hours to the classroom and so this is a challenging estimation to make.

¹⁵⁴ <http://www.hr.mnps.org/Page50417.aspx>.

3. ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

One quality common to all high performing schools that serve low income populations is “frequent assessment of student progress and multiple opportunities for improvement.”¹⁵⁵ Nashville Classical believes that students’ academic progress relies on the successful implementation and use of data generated from standards-based assessments. We come to this belief both from national research and our study of the nation’s strongest charter schools. We support this belief by recognizing frequent assessments and opportunities for data-based problem solving as a core element of our school design.

Plans for Evaluating Student Performance

At Nashville Classical, each teacher plans every lesson with clear end-of-year student goals, a vivid picture of current learning, and strategic benchmarks that connect the two.

For students with special needs or for English Language Learners, our detailed assessment program supports the rapid identification of areas of particular strength or weakness. Using this assessment data, we assign students to small groups, develop tailored instructional plans, and provide additional small group supports. For more detail on the relationship between assessment and special needs students, please see **Figure 4.01** on page 92.

Prior to the start of the school year, we conduct a diagnostic assessment of each student using the STEP (Strategic Teaching and Evaluation of Progress)¹⁵⁶ Assessment system to measure instructional and independent reading levels and the nationally normed Terra Nova assessments to measure initial literacy and math proficiency. The results of these diagnostic assessments provide a benchmark against which we measure student progress and inform instructional planning. This information is sent home to parents as well as presented to the Governing Board. Below is a detailed list of other assessments we intend to use. The list aligns closely to our calendar, which includes dates during the first week of school to deliver Terra Nova assessments and days set aside during Summer Professional Development to administer assessments on reading level (the STEP Assessment).

Daily Exit Tickets/Checks for Understanding. Teachers use exit tickets at the end of class as a formative assessment to measure which students master the objective and which need additional support. Exit tickets inform adjustments to lesson plans, student groupings, and tutoring needs. Often, exit tickets are more informal through checks for understanding during whole group instruction and specifically during the phonics block.

Interim Assessments (Math and Literacy). We use common, standards-based assessments and administer them every six weeks to measure student learning and student growth. These assessments are created and then refined during summer professional development by teachers, and administrative staff reviews them weekly. Each question and writing prompt indicates the standard(s) being assessed. For example, a question that asked students to recognize end punctuation mark would be labeled according to an internal curricular substandard such as **NCCS 0001.1.1**. Following each interim assessment that concludes on a Thursday, staff come to Monday Professional Development with tests graded and prepared for analysis. These Data Days equip staff to determine what standards need to be re-taught and identify which students need additional support. Every student receives a six-week progress report that is sent home to families and must be signed and returned to school. In grades K-2, interim assessments are teacher-created and meant to mirror state standards and the form of the Terra Nova. In grade 2, the school begins

¹⁵⁵ <http://www.sjboces.org/nisl/high%20performance%2090%2090%2090%20and%20beyond.pdf> .

¹⁵⁶ The STEP assessment is used in many of the highest performing schools we studied and in no current Nashville charter schools. STEP is a “developmental literacy assessment, instructional tool, and data management system that defines the pathway and tracks the progress of pre-kindergarten through third grade students as they learn to read using research-based milestones.”

using the Achievement Network to produce assessments. The Achievement Network provides three (3) tools: (1) Assessments aligned both by standard and format, (2) Professional services to conduct data analysis and (3) Network collaboration with other schools using to problem solve around gaps, share successful strategies, and benchmark performance.¹⁵⁷

Nationally Normed Assessments: We administer the Terra Nova, a nationally normed assessment, to students in the fall upon entry into the school and each spring thereafter to gauge student performance and growth over time. We are also acutely aware of Tennessee’s adoption of the Common Core and intention to use online PARCC Assessments. Our use of Nationally Normed Assessments aligns to Tennessee’s NCLB Waiver and adoption of the Common Core.

Criterion-Referenced State-Mandated Assessments: We administer annual state managed assessments, the TCAP, beginning in grade three to measure students’ mastery of grade-level standards and to assess annual progress.

STEP Assessments. The STEP Assessment System has gained significant support from high performing charter schools as it provides accessible formative assessment data, identifies struggling readers early, offers clear intervention strategies, high-quality professional development, safeguards against bias, and includes a data management system that informs teachers about student strengths and weaknesses.¹⁵⁸ The test is administered six times per year in K-3 to gauge student’s reading progress and implementation of the Common Core standards. Our use of the STEP Assessment as opposed to other Early Literacy assessments (i.e. DIBELS or Fountas and Pinnell) is for two reasons. First, the STEP has been demonstrated as useful by charter schools that serve a similar population to Nashville Classical. The STEP’s list of clients includes a number of schools closely studied during the BES Fellowship and listed in **APPENDIX E**.¹⁵⁹ In addition to accessible data, a manageable data tool, and high-quality professional development, the STEP also aligns closely to Nashville Classical’s mission and vision. Its emphasis on “early identification” of students who require support in reading across both reading acquisition and reading comprehension as well as its clear intervention strategies provide a gateway to Great Books and the conversations that Great Books inspire. **Figure 3.01** explains our assessment plans and philosophy in additional detail.

Figure 3.01 Assessments At-a-Glance

	Interim Assessment	Norm-Referenced	State Assessments	Reading Level
Type of Test	MNPS DEA Assessments (Grades 3-8), In-house created tests for K-2	Terra Nova	TCAP	STEP (grades K-3) Fountas and Pinnell (4-8)
Definition	Periodic tests that are standards-based, measure mastery of standards, and use questions that mirror standardized test format (Terra	Compares one test taker’s performance against the performance of same-grade peers nationally	A comprehensive assessment that measures student progress on state standards.	Measures student reading level and gives information about student reading skills in the areas of fluency, accuracy, phonemic awareness, and reading

¹⁵⁷ Research supports the use of frequent assessments and the alignment of professional development and assessment: Odden, Archibald, Fermanich, & Gallagher. (2002). A Cost Framework for Professional Development. *Journal of Education Finance*. Vol. 28, No. 1. 104 Wayman, J.C. & Stringfield, S. (2006). —Data Use for School Improvement: School Practices and Research Perspectives. *American Journal of Education*. Vol. 112.

¹⁵⁸ Based on interviews w/ School Leaders at Nashville Classical (CA), Memphis College Prep (TN), North Star Elementary (NJ).

¹⁵⁹ <http://www.uchicagoimpact.org/step/clientlist.shtml>

	Nova, TCAP)			comprehension
Score Expression	Mastery of Standards	Percentile Rank Grade Level Equivalent Normal Curve Equivalent	Raw Score Proficiency Bucket	Students test at a particular level (pre to 12 or Aa-Z) which correlates with text level (Can show grade but most specific when shown by text level)
Purpose	<p>Inform Instruction (based on what standards students know or do not know)</p> <p>Predict standardized test performance</p> <p>Aid in student selection for extra assistance</p> <p>Prepare students for success in state testing</p> <p>Familiarize teachers with level of rigor on state tests</p>	<p>Compares students to peers nationally</p> <p>Measure growth of a student, class, grade, school over time (a school year or multiple years)</p> <p>Measure effectiveness of teaching against student learning</p>	<p>Compare students to peers across the state</p> <p>Measure growth of a student, class, grade, school over time using TVAAS</p> <p>Measure effectiveness of teaching against student learning</p>	<p>Match students to appropriate texts for them to read at their grade level</p> <p>Place students in differentiated guided reading groups and determine placement in intervention</p> <p>Set goals for student growth and measure student progress</p> <p>Deepen teacher's understanding of reading instruction and each individual child's progress</p>
Format	Questions mirror the criterion referenced test (TCAP) and test length may vary	Includes questions vastly more difficult than a typical student in that grade level can answer in order to rank students	<p>Math, Reading, Language Arts, Science, Social Studies 3-8 Writing 5,8</p> <p>Every question is aligned to state standards and test is taken as a whole class</p>	One-on-one assessment involves students reading aloud a variety of passages at different levels to determine their reading level
Nashville Classical Practice	<p>Given at least four times per year, ideally six times per year</p> <p>Should be administrator-generated (as opposed to teacher-generated) to ensure students are seeing test items that are standards-based</p> <p>Link to teacher</p>	<p>Administer test at student entry and at end of the year in all grades K-8</p> <p>Yearly school results should use a matched cohort analysis (students who took initial test at same time are included in same cohort)</p> <p>Yearly goal-setting for the school</p>	<p>Administer per TNDOE calendar</p> <p>Yearly school results should compare both student growth over time and student proficiency as an absolute measure.</p> <p>Yearly goal-setting for the school should reflect awareness of</p>	<p>Given at least four times per year</p> <p>Since students progress through levels quickly, only use it to place students in fluid (not fixed) reading groups</p> <p>Students should know their level and their goal for the year; student levels posted in the classroom are</p>

	long-term plans so teachers know what standards will be assessed Follow with intensive teacher data meetings, determining which topics to re-teach and familiarizing teachers with TCAP-like question stems	should reflect awareness of the end goal, which is on or above grade level compared to wealthier peers and awareness of starting point.	benchmarks set in the TN NCLB waiver.	motivating All teachers should be aware of reading levels of the students they teach; Science and Social Studies materials consider reading levels
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Appropriateness of Assessments to the Curriculum

Reading Curriculum and Reading Assessment. The most effective reading instruction increases both a child’s reading level as well as achieving standard mastery. A number of programs are research-proven to raise reading levels; the best practice in this area includes reading assessments administered in person while listening to a student read aloud. In addition, reading assessments must match students with text, so that teachers can select readable texts for students and so students may select independent reading texts. Both the STEP and Fountas and Pinnell assessments meet these criterion and will augment Nashville Classical’s literacy program.

The STEP and Fountas and Pinnell assessments inform and establish the foundation of our literacy program. In all grades, guided reading and Junior Great Books’ shared inquiry are essential teaching strategies. In these practices, matching students to appropriate texts is necessary to receive the maximum benefit from the curriculum. Students are able to progress faster through the reading levels when they are reading appropriate text, and STEP and Fountas and Pinnell allow us to determine that level at multiple times over the course of the year. All year, teachers tailor text and instruction to a child’s individual needs as a reader.

In addition, and as previously described, the ongoing training provided by STEP is a key factor in our selection of this assessment program. STEP aligns its levels to milestones students must meet as they develop early literacy skills. The training provides teachers with solid instructional strategies—including question stems, text-selection strategies, and cross-curricular connections—for every level and milestone so that every single students makes rapid progress. STEP and Fountas and Pinnell assessments support other aspects of our literacy program. As the Junior Great Books program moves from Read Aloud to shared reading in K-3 and independent reading in grades 4-8, alignment between Fountas and Pinnell levels and Common Core Standards informs instruction and our independent reading program so that texts closely match the reader.

Interim Assessments and Standards-Based Curriculum. Though we are using a variety of curriculum to support the teaching of standards-based objectives, all lesson planning is ultimately completed by teachers with the TN State Standards and Common Core as a guide. At the beginning of the year, teachers plan their yearly units to ensure coverage of the standards.

Teachers study released TCAP test items and assessment guides to determine which skills and knowledge are assessed most frequently and what kind of rigor is necessary to master the standards tested. Rather than suggesting teachers “teach to the test,” this practice enables teachers to prepare students appropriately so at the end of the year, the TCAP truly assesses standards and skills students have learned all year rather than familiarity with test formats or question stems. With trimesterly interim assessments, teachers immediately identify students that need extra help towards particular standards. Teachers identify what standards need to be re-taught or reviewed

more rigorously. No matter the curriculum used, the state standards guide instruction and level of rigor on the TCAP guide the problems students see in their classrooms throughout the year.

Results from interim assessments are transformed into data to use in teacher conversations following test administration. A full Data Day follows assessments and is built into the schedule so teachers have time to analyze the data, reflect on teaching practice, and take action to reteach standards, remediate with small groups or students, or provide targeted enrichment. We look forward to learning more about the Discovery Education Assessment (DEA), provided by MNPS and used as a predicted measure towards the Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

To successfully implement our assessment program, Nashville Classical recognizes the following priorities: (1) Know the Pitfalls; (2) Strategic Goal Setting; (3) Academic Student Groupings; (4) Consistent Cycle –Collection, Reporting, Analysis, Action; and (5) Make Data Public.

Know the Pitfalls. In *Driven By Data*, Paul Bambrick-Santoyo outlines eight common pitfalls that prevent effective assessment, analysis, and data action and the creation of a truly data-driven culture. We note these pitfalls and incorporate training on how to avoid these as part of our professional development:

1. **Inferior interim assessments.** Schools fail to get results when they use interim assessments that set the bar too low, do not align to other tests, or neglect to include open-ended questions.
2. **Secretive interim assessments.** Interim assessments are useful if teachers and schools see them before they teach. For assessments to drive rigor, teachers know goals pre-planning instruction.
3. **Infrequent assessments.** Some schools give these assessments only once every three to four months. This is not frequent enough to provide the data needed to improve instruction.
4. **Curriculum-assessment disconnect.** A common mistake occurs when curriculum does not match content of interim assessment. Results have nothing to do with what happened in class.
5. **Delayed results.** Interim assessments are useless unless they are graded and analyzed promptly so teachers can make adjustments.
6. **Separation of teaching and analysis.** Another problem occurs when teachers hand over data analysis to data team. Teachers need to analyze results to take ownership over the process.
7. **Ineffective follow-up.** One shortcoming is when there is vague commitment to make adjustments after analyzing results. If there is no specific plan for improvement scheduled to happen at a specific time, no real changes will be made.
8. **Not making time for data.** Some schools fail to make time for assessments, data analysis, and follow-up. Schools are busy places and if no time has been set aside in the calendar to make data-driven improvement a priority, it simply will not happen.¹⁶⁰

To avoid these pitfalls, and to facilitate effective data collection and reporting, we outline a clear process to use assessment to set goals, plan curriculum, and drive instruction.

Strategic Goal Setting. At the outset, our assessments are used to set goals for student achievement. Class level, grade level, and whole school goals motivate students and help teachers to plan. Goals are set for students based on initial assessment. The initial STEP assessment occurs

¹⁶⁰ http://media.wiley.com/assets/3006/19/DrivenbyData_TheMainIdea.pdf.

during a June or July Home Visit so that it represents an appropriate baseline while the Terra Nova diagnostic will occur whole-school in August.

Nashville Classical recognizes goal setting must both represents students hitting absolute benchmarks and making progress on current achievement. Benchmark goals allow teachers and students to make and measure progress to a common standard that can also drive instruction. Even when a student arrives in kindergarten far behind, without knowing their letters and numbers and reading orientation, for example, and with limited English speaking ability, Nashville Classical believes that a benchmark must remain constant. For example, when a student arrives as a pre-reader and we anticipate that a large number of students will arrive as such, the expectation remains that they can reach a STEP 3, or grade 1 readiness, by the end of kindergarten. By setting a plan backwards from the goal, staff decides the best way to accelerate their students' instruction. STEP benchmarks can be found in **Figure 3.02**.

If a student does not meet the benchmark, we need progress goals to ensure that, along the way to the end goal, significant progress is being achieved. Progress is tracked on the way to meeting that standard to ensure that, while a student is significantly far behind, equally significant milestones are met along the way. For example, if a student joined the school in grade 1 at a STEP 1, we would need the student to make at least three levels of progress to stay on track to reaching STEP 12 by grade 3. If progress is not being achieved, we can tailor intervention help for the student.¹⁶¹ Similarly, we provide the STEP for ELL students, even if English is not their home language or they are learning multiple languages concurrently and one language in a non-sequential manner. Research suggests “The aim of [assessment] accommodations is to remove sources of difficulty for ELLs without negatively impacting the intent of measurement, while still maintaining the test construct and without giving ELLs an advantage over other students.”¹⁶²

While potential interventions include modifying the assessment, providing the assessment in a child's home language, including additional manipulatives, allowing children to point as opposed to provide an oral response, and using an audio recording for directions. We choose the STEP knowing that these interventions are available, but confident that the assessment was intentionally developed to be used and valid for ELL students who are emerging as readers.¹⁶³

Figure 3.02 – STEP Benchmark Goals

	STEP (Reading)	Fountas & Pinnell	Terra Nova	Interim Assessments
End of K	STEP 3		75 th percentile	End year with 80% Standards Mastery.
End of 1	STEP 6 (or three levels)		75 th percentile	End year with 80% Standards Mastery.
End of 2	STEP 9 (or three levels)		75 th percentile	End year with 80% Standards Mastery.
End of 3	STEP 12 (or three levels)	P (or five letters)	75 th percentile	End year with 80% Standards Mastery.
End of 4		S (or five letters)	75 th percentile	End year with 80% Standards Mastery.
End of 5		V (or five letters)	75 th percentile	End year with 80% Standards Mastery.

¹⁶¹ We emphasize STEP by grade 3 because Kerbow and Bryk's 2005 report shows that students who achieve STEP 9 benchmark by the end of grade 2 and STEP 12 by the end of grade 3 are substantially more likely than other children to perform at or above grade level on external standardized assessments in reading. <http://fed-us.org/sites/default/files/Lit%20Tech%20Report.pdf> p. 17.

¹⁶² *Ibid*, p. 11.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 12.

End of 6		X (or five letters)	75 th percentile	End year with 80% Standards Mastery.
End of 7		Y (or five letters)	75 th percentile	End year with 80% Standards Mastery.
End of 8		Z (or five letters)	75 th percentile	End year with 80% Standards Mastery.

Academic Student Groupings. Assessments determine placement in appropriate instructional groups. Reading level assessments help the school create reading groups tailored to a child's reading level, and throughout the year repeated assessments drive flexible responses to progress. Because each student will progress through the reading levels at a unique pace, teachers use frequent assessments to re-frame groups inside the classroom and make sure every student is reading texts at their specific level.

Trimester interim assessments help teachers and school leadership design extra instructional help for students or standards, especially when the need exceeds the classroom setting. The day ends with a brief opportunity for independent reading and small group instruction. Small group instruction is a structured, daily way for the school to work on specific skills within homogenous groupings. Students are in small groups according to their skill level, need and work for 20 minutes. This early intervention allows students to make rapid progress toward standard mastery and reading level growth. Likewise, it permits teachers to take immediate action on data, whether a check for understanding during the mornings' reading comprehension lesson or a more major gap from a students' quarterly performance.

Consistent Cycle - Collection, Reporting, Analysis and Action. Since teachers use assessments to inform their teaching, assessment is an integral part of a classroom teacher's planning each week and year. When teachers turn in their agendas to school leadership each Monday, they are required to have written their exit ticket or weekly assessments. Teachers use assessments to determine their own instructional progress as well as the progress of their students.

Teachers use a similar tool to isolate STEP levels and conduct analysis of reading behaviors. All teachers will share a common spreadsheet, created using google documents, to enter STEP Assessment Data. The spreadsheet (**Figure 3.03**) will isolate an individual students' errors and strengths in reading and provide a complete picture for analysis.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ This design template was inspired by Uncommon Schools. Lead Founder Charlie Friedman attended a workshop on data analysis with Uncommon Schools in March, 2012

Figure 3.03 – Reading Data Sample

MONTH	Level		Letter Identification						Accuracy					Comprehension			
			Name			Sounds			Step 2					Step 2			
	Homeroom	Last Step		Letter ID total	Capital	Low Case	Sound ID TOTAL	Consonants	Vowels	# of Errors Words	SC (self-correct)	M Error: Relied on Pictures	S Error: Word sounds right incorrect	V Error: sound out letters but doesn't check if word makes sense	# of Reading Comp Errors	Fact	Inference
F & P																	
Student Name	2		50	25	25	21	15	6	7	4	6	0	1	1		1	

In the example above, the student is building strong word skills but not using them when he/she reads. The teacher would analyze this data and might conclude the focus for next week's guided reading lesson needs to be to check if the word read matches the letters on the page. If the student is continuing to struggle with this skill, the teacher might ask the DSS to deliver this mini-lesson in a smaller group setting or might consider whether it is worthwhile to change the child's seats or provide the mini-lesson using pictures and gestures to support growing knowledge of the English language. In each case, the teacher's decisions are rooted entirely in the data.

Similarly, teacher grade book organization reflects the state standards. Each portion of students' assessments are graded and entered separately and by standard. We will strive to use donated staff—likely university interns and perhaps parent volunteers to support speedy data entry. Their work will occur on Thursdays, after student assessments have been taken and graded on Wednesdays, and at the end of the day during the tutoring block. Teachers see mastery by class, student or standard at-a-glance. This eliminates confusion for parents, worried about whether their child's grade reflects adequate preparation for the next grade. Since student performance on homework and student behavior are outlined within the weekly and daily paycheck, student grades truly reflect mastery of grade level content outlined in the trimester report card. A sample report card can be found in **APPENDIX P**.

As demonstrated in both examples, assessment cycles impact lesson design. A Data Day is built into the calendar after each assessment cycle and re-teaching week follows each Data Day. Re-teaching weeks allow teachers to conduct whole class and small group review for material not yet mastered. This cycle of teach-assess-reflect-take action gets to the core of our instructional program and is executed using the reporting and responsibility framework in **Figure 3.04**.

Figure 3.04 – Data and Collection Reporting and Responsibilities

School Director	Operations Manager	Dean of Academics	Teachers
Sets dates for assessment creation, revision, approval, facilitation, analysis.	Creates copies of all assessments and puts student supplies in rooms.	Reviews and approves all assessments during Summer PD.	Create assessments with help from Dean of Academics
Analyzes results for school-wide trends.	Collects tests and enters data.	Reviews Unit and Lesson Plans to look for trends.	Write lesson and unit plans aligned to assessments.
Reviews plans for Data Days.	Produces reports for Data Days.	Creates plans for data days.	Participate actively in Data Days.
Uses action plans to set school goals and inform observational data.	Organizes action plans to encourage collaboration.	Reviews and assists teachers as they write action plans.	Create action plans during data days and implement action steps in classroom.
Shares data, analyses, and school goals with Board of Directors.			

Make Data Public. High performing schools share data with students, families, and the community. In both the entrance to the school and every classroom, schoolwide achievement data is posted.¹⁶⁵ Nashville Classical will share Terra Nova, STEP, and Interim data in a school-wide common space, such as a bulletin board outside the front office, and when we have grown students into the state testing grades, will publicly post TCAP results as well. Within classrooms, teachers will display data that shows the class' progress on the STEP assessment using a STEP through history timeline. Students' goals are to move three STEPs each year. This child-friendly visual rewards improvement and effort and does not discourage students who might arrive at school with limited reading proficiency. The larger community can access the school's data through an up-to-date section on the school's web site. By following a Results tab, an individual can access a detailed description of current achievement results.¹⁶⁶ The Governing Board will operate with a standing Academic Achievement Committee and receive a monthly dashboard with data that covers student recruitment, enrollment and attendance, state assessment data, national assessment data, interim assessment data, report card data, and cultural data (e.g. HW completion, Suspension, etc.). Please see **APPENDIX Q** for an example Academic Dashboard.

All assessment results are provided to the authorizer and the larger community through publication and distribution of the school's Annual Report. In the Annual Report, Nashville Classical will provide data on all exceptional populations as well as by demographic and for English Language Learners.

Additional Interventions. Assessment data is regularly analyzed and then used to plan interventions. The role of the Dean of Student Supports in this process is to closely analyze the data of low-performing students and determine if additional assessments or additional interventions are necessary. Example steps the Dean might suggest a teacher take or take alongside the teacher might include:

¹⁶⁵ This best practice comes from Achievement Preparatory Charter School, a BES school in Washington, D.C. It was the only charter school in Washington D.C. to earn an EPIC award in 2011.

http://aprepacademy.org/uploads/2/8/3/6/2836998/apa_epic_award_2011_pr.pdf.

¹⁶⁶ We have hired a firm to design our website based on an example from Memphis College Preparatory Charter School in Memphis, TN. An example of their results page is here: <http://memphiscollegeprep.org/Year1.aspx?pid=12&spid=4>.

- Schedule additional small group learning – the DSS will pull groups of 3-5 students during Literacy Blocks to provide daily instruction in an even smaller ratio. This strategy aligns most closely to interpretations of STEP data.
- Schedule Tutoring Lessons – Based on assessment data, the DSS might design a lesson and select students to participate during end of day tutoring. The DSS, another administrator, a literacy teacher, or Lead Classroom Teacher could all offer this support.
- Differentiate Homework – The DSS might use student assessment data to create daily, weekly or monthly packets that provide additional HW for students who either require enrichment, support learning the English language or extra practice on basic skills.

If, after a round of assessments and interventions, a student has still not made progress then the tiered supports will continue. These supports and their timeline for implementation are described on page 92 in **Figure 4.01**.

Accountability is a strong driver of student achievement and requires clear, measurable, data-driven goals that fully align with the school’s mission. A comprehensive and transparent assessment system best supports student achievement, ensuring all stakeholders are aware of individual, class-wide, subgroup, and school wide performance results. Nashville Classical’s goals and objectives fully support, as outlined in T.C.A. §49-13-102, the state-mandated requirement that the school meet or exceed minimum state standards and improve student learning. Goals and objectives correlate with our mission to provide a school that is rigorous, structured, and supportive of all learners.

Academic and Organizational Goals. Nashville Classical proposes a series of performance-based academic goals using absolute, comparative, and longitudinal measures that support the goals of Metro Nashville Public Schools, the state of Tennessee, and federal NCLB legislation. A detailed and rigorous Accountability Plan guides our academic and organizational goals for the term of the charter. Students take criterion-referenced and norm-referenced standardized tests to assess and evaluate academic progress in the core content areas. Pursuant to T.C.A. §49-13-120, Nashville Classical provides data on student performance and growth, as well as comparative and trend analyses; reporting includes all subgroups. Annual Reports are distributed to the chartering authority, sponsor, and TN Department of Education. Additional reports provided include AYP mid-cycle and End-of-cycle reports. Current goals are based on draft MNPS Frameworks and include absolute measures, growth measures, comparative measures, and indicators for both organizational and academic progress.

GOAL 1: Students achieve mastery in Reading Language Arts.

- **GROWTH Measure 1.01:** Each subgroup makes AYP in Reading/Language Arts as defined by NCLB and as measured by the TCAP.
- **ABSOLUTE Measure 1.02:** 90% of all students who have attended the school for two or more years score Proficient or Advanced in Reading/Language Arts on the TCAP.
- **COMPARATIVE Measure 1.03:** All students who have attended the school for two or more years, on average, attain proficiency rates in Reading/Language Arts 5% higher than the surrounding district average, similar school average¹⁶⁷, and state average as measured by TCAP.
- **GROWTH Measure 1.04:** In cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, average annual increase of percentiles among students in Reading Comprehension on the Terra Nova, or

¹⁶⁷ Similar schools will be identified by Nashville Classical’s Board of Directors, and will include a minimum of three local, similarly graded schools serving students with similar rates of students eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch.

similar nationally norm-referenced test, averages a minimum of five (5) percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

- **ABSOLUTE Measure 1.05:** 90% of 5th graders score 4 or higher on TCAP Writing Assessment.
- **COMPARATIVE Measure 1.06:** On average, 5th grade students attain proficiency rates in writing 5% higher than the surrounding district average, similar schools average¹⁶⁸, and state average as measured on the TCAP Writing Assessment.

GOAL 2: Students achieve mastery in Mathematics.

- **GROWTH Measure 2.01:** Each subgroup makes AYP in Mathematics as defined by NCLB and as measured by the TCAP.
- **ABSOLUTE Measure 2.02:** 90% of all students who have attended the school for two or more years score Proficient or Advanced in Mathematics on the TCAP.
- **COMPARATIVE Measure 2.03:** All students who have attended the school for two or more years, on average, attain a proficiency rate in Mathematics at least 5% higher than the surrounding district average, similar school average¹⁶⁹, and state average as measured by the TCAP.
- **GROWTH Measure 2.04:** In a cohort analysis of longitudinal growth, average annual increase of percentiles among students in Mathematics on the Terra Nova, or similar nationally norm-referenced test, averages a minimum of five (5) percentiles of growth per year until the average percentile score reaches 75.

GOAL 3: Students achieve mastery in the Sciences.

- **GROWTH Measure 3.01:** Each subgroup makes AYP in Science as defined by NCLB and as measured by the TCAP.
- **ABSOLUTE Measure 3.02:** 90% of all students who have attended the school for two or more years score Proficient or Advanced in Science on the TCAP.
- **COMPARATIVE Measure 3.03:** All students who have attended the school for two or more years will, on average, attain a rate of proficiency in Science at least 5% higher than the surrounding district average, similar school average¹⁷⁰, and state average as measured by the TCAP.

GOAL 4: Students achieve mastery in Social Studies.

- **ABSOLUTE Measure 4.01:** 90% of all students who have attended the school for two or more years score Proficient or Advanced in Social Studies on the TCAP.
- **COMPARATIVE Measure 4.02:** All students who have attended the school for two or more years will, on average, attain a rate of proficiency in Social Studies at least 5% higher than the surrounding district average, similar school average¹⁷¹, and state average as measured by the TCAP.

Organizational Goals. The school's organizational viability is measured and reported to ensure that fiscal and financial controls are effectively implemented and that the school remains a

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

financially strong and healthy organization. To ensure the continuing need and demand for the school, we also measure enrollment, retention and parent satisfaction.

GOAL 5: Nashville Classical demonstrates fiduciary and financial responsibility.

- **Measure 5.01:** External, annual audit reports demonstrate that the school meets or exceeds professional accounting standards.
- **Measure 5.02:** Budgets for each academic year demonstrate effective allocation of financial resources to ensure effective execution of mission as measured by yearly balanced budgets submitted to MNPS. Finance Committee reviews budget monthly.

GOAL 6: The school is fully enrolled, with high levels of attendance and re-enrollment.

- **Measure 6.01:** Waiting list equals 50% of kindergarten enrollment annually.
- **Measure 6.02:** 90% of students who begin the school year remain throughout the year.
- **Measure 6.03:** 90% of students completing the school year re-enroll the following year.
- **Measure 6.04:** School averages 95% (+) daily student attendance annually.

GOAL 7: Parents are satisfied with school's academic program and communication.

- **Measure 7.01:** Parent satisfaction with clear, open communication by staff, as measured by annual survey at end of school year, on average exceeds 85% with a minimum of 80% of families responding.
- **Measure 7.02:** Parent satisfaction with academic program, as measured by annual survey conducted at end of school year, on average exceeds 85% with a minimum of 80% of families responding.

GOAL 8: Board of Directors provides effective school oversight.

- **Measure 8.01:** Board conducts formal annual review of school leader.
- **Measure 8.02:** Board conducts annual self-evaluation to assess strengths/weaknesses.
- **Measure 8.03:** Board conducts formal annual review of By-laws and policies.
- **Measure 8.04:** Board conducts formal annual review of school's strengths/weaknesses.

Each goal correlates to our school's mission of achieving academic success and personal excellence and with MNPS goals for growth, absolute, and comparative measurement of student achievement. We recognize that no single assessment provides a comprehensive picture of student academic progress. In addition to the standardized measures noted above, we use a series of formal interim assessments appropriate to the grade level and in direct support of literacy development in early grades and college preparatory school studies in middle grades.

4. SERVING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Overview and Legal Requirements

Nashville Classical ensures all students receive robust support within the school community for them to excel and meet high academic performance standards, which lies at the heart of Nashville Classical's mission and vision for every student. In serving students who have been identified as having disabilities under the law or whom we suspect may have such disabilities, we provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) and comply with all applicable state and federal statutes, including Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974. We educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (LRE) and with their non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). We do not discriminate in admission and enrollment practices against students having or suspected to have disabilities. To the greatest extent possible, Nashville Classical educates disabled students alongside their non-disabled peers in the regular education classroom and only removes them from the classroom if the severity of their disability requires.

Students with Special Needs

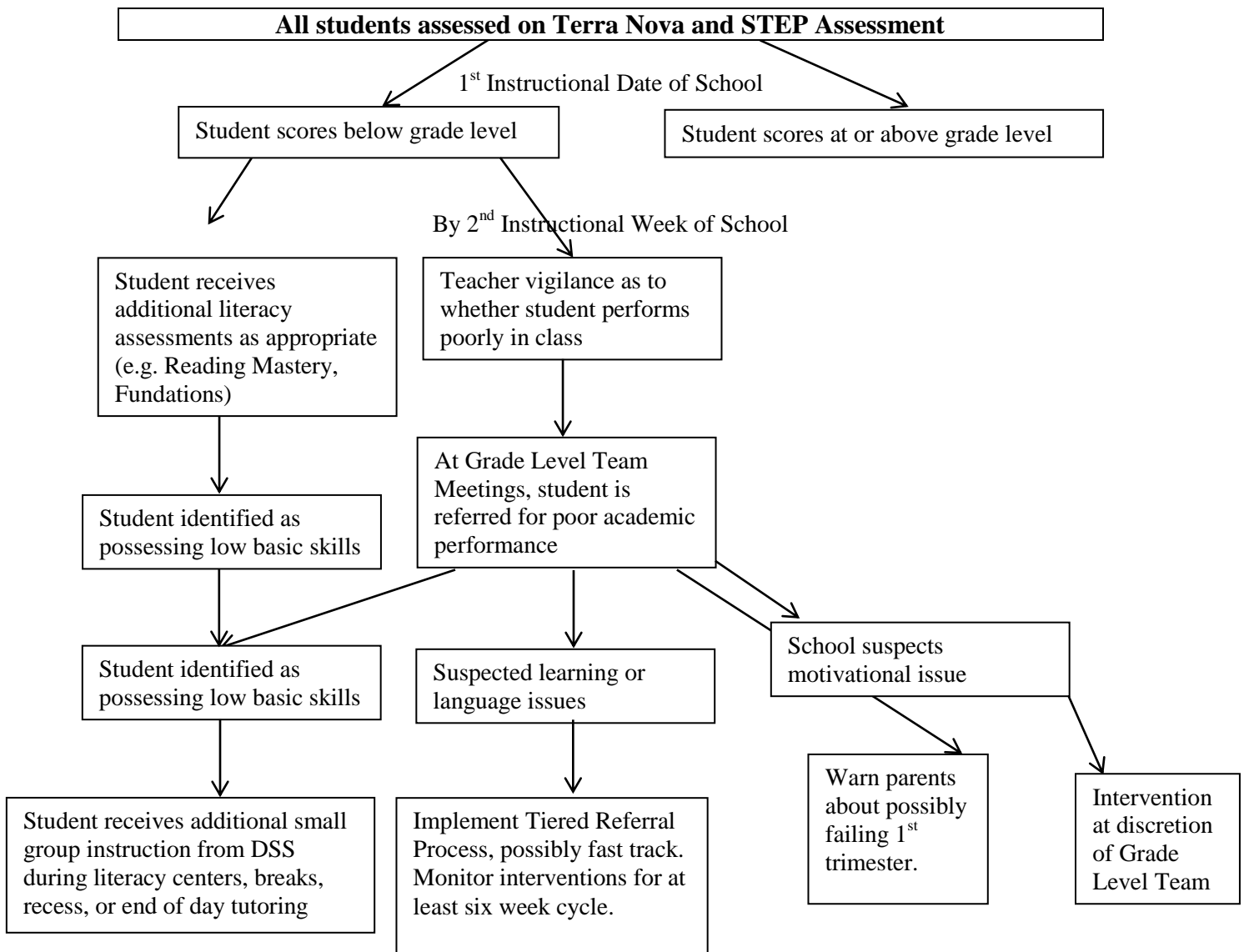
Identification and Avoiding Misidentification. Upon enrollment we conduct intake activities including Home Visits, during which we discuss whether or not the enrolling student has an existing Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Though we do not anticipate receiving many children with a SPED classification at such early grades of their schooling, we do want to identify any incoming students with an IEP. This practice applies to students enrolling in the school after the lottery or beyond kindergarten.

To identify students with exceptionalities who do not have an existing IEP, school leaders train all teachers to carefully monitor individual student performance via daily and weekly classroom assessments, qualitative observation, and ongoing analysis of student-level performance data. The Nashville Classical Dean of Student Supports (DSS) holds formal training for all staff at the beginning of each school year during staff orientation to review tips and guidelines for the determination of student eligibility for special educational services, as outlined in the National Association of State Directors of Special Education Primer. The DSS has ongoing professional communication with staff on proper identification and avoidance of misidentification of all potential student exceptionalities. Weekly, grade teams and whole-school staff meet every Friday, allowing teachers, with guidance from the DSS, to monitor, discuss, and remain updated on the academic and social progress of each student. If a student is not meeting the appropriate expectations of academic or social progress, we will interpret this as an important indicator of a potential larger issue and move to address the potential issue as quickly as possible.

Nashville Classical's frequent internal assessment program provides an efficient means to identify students struggling academically and to take action proactively and immediately to reach the needs of each student. Weekly, each teacher reviews the progress of his/her students based upon their performance on HW, class work, tests, quizzes and projects. School leaders monitor student assessment data at regular intervals, allowing students who are struggling with the course material to be identified quickly. If a student is not making sufficient academic progress, the DSS, in consultation with the Dean of Academics, develops a pre-referral strategy, Response to Intervention, that may include tutoring and/or other supports. The flow chart in **Figure 4.01** provides a draft example of the school's response to student achievement and the process Nashville Classical uses to implement its tiered intervention strategy. This approach is completely tailor to the mission of the school because of its focus on academic achievement and attention to motivational issues that may prevent personal excellence. At the same time, it aligns to our

instructional program and allows the school to take advantage of both our personnel, calendar, and instructional day.

Figure 4.01 - Nashville Classical – Special Needs Assessment First Response for RTI



The effectiveness of the pre-referral strategy on the student's progress is carefully monitored for up to six (6) weeks, and is a vital element of meeting students' needs within the regular education classroom as promptly as possible and avoiding unnecessary misidentification of students into special education. We use school-wide data days as a chance to step back and evaluate the success of a pre-referral strategy. This strategy guarantees that any evaluation of the effectiveness of an intervention is entirely rooted in student achievement and any necessary larger adjustments to our instructional program can occur during a full-day step-back. If pre-referral strategies are unsuccessful, the student is not progressing academically, and classroom teachers or special education faculty believe a disability may exist, the student is referred, in writing, to the DSS for individual evaluation and determination of eligibility for special education programs and services. Such referrals include: (1) reasons for referral, test results, records/reports on which referral is based; (2) attempts to remediate performance prior to referral, including supplementary

aids or support services; and (3) description of parental contact or involvement prior to the referral. A copy of the referral along with the procedural safeguards notice is sent to the student's parents. The Dean of Students Supports and the Dean of Academics convene a meeting with the student's parents to discuss the option of psycho-educational testing to determine the child's special education eligibility and to secure written parental consent to conduct such testing. The school conducts such testing, either in-house or via consultant services. Once tests have been conducted and results are received, an eligibility meeting is reconvened with the parents, the DSS, student's teacher, and other appropriate staff. At that time, a decision is made as to the student's eligibility for special education services. If the student is eligible for special education services, an IEP is developed. With parental consent and support, Nashville Classical seeks to re-evaluate students and consider revising an IEP if we do not believe that the current IEP allows the student free and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. Each IEP is reviewed at least once in each school year and each student is re-evaluated at least every three years. We remain vigilant about student growth so that we are ensuring that our support is appropriate to meet the required needs.

Section 504 requires schools to provide students with disabilities appropriate educational services designed to meet the individual needs of such students to the same extent as the needs of students without disabilities are met. Section 504 prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability. Nashville Classical adheres to all obligations under IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) and Section 504. We immediately evaluate and identify any students protected under Section 504. This includes any student determined to: (1) have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, (2) have a record of such impairment, or (3) be regarded as having such impairment. The DSS serves as the Section 504 coordinator to ensure that students' legal rights are met and that their special needs are effectively served.

Research-based Instructional Programs, Practices, and Strategies. Nashville Classical implements an inclusive, heterogeneous educational model that serves all students in a manner that maximizes their academic potential and prepares all of them for achievement in high school, graduation from college, and leadership in the community. Our approach and design emulate high performing urban schools serving similar students with disabilities, language proficiency barriers, and/or special circumstances that put them at risk for academic failure. Based upon the research of Special Education expert Thomas Hehir of Harvard University and others, we provide an educational program that maximizes accommodations and minimizes modifications.

Assessing and Monitoring Progress and Success. We look to assessments of students with disabilities receiving special education services, including improvements in performance on the Terra Nova, STEP, Fountas and Pinnell grade level equivalencies, TCAP, and teacher-created assessments and in grades 2-8 Achievement Network interim assessments to determine our program's effectiveness in improving ELL students' English proficiency levels and ensuring that they are meeting or exceeding TN standards across the curriculum. We will disaggregate assessment results by ELL and non-ELL students and use that data for continuous improvement and to test the efficacy of our program. The Board, first through its Academic Achievement Committee and then as an entire Board, will evaluate the efficacy of our special education program monthly and more formally annually through performance results provided in the Academic Dashboard disaggregated by subgroup, and the School Director will work with the leadership team and instructional staff, formally during the planning period of the summer and training period of summer staff orientation and ongoing through the year as part of weekly professional development and data analysis days, to implement and support any changes as needed to ensure the success of all students.

Graduation of Students with Special Needs. As a K-8 school, this section is N/A.

Qualified Staff and Budget. Nashville Classical opens the school with a full time special education position budgeted and a contingency expressed in both a cash surplus and money reserved for hourly employees should Nashville Classical students require additional supports. In Y3, we add an additional Special Education Teacher and in Y5, we add a second Special Education Teacher to focus on the Middle School. At all times, Nashville Classical will consider the needs of its English Language Learner population when staffing these three (3) positions and positions school-wide.

The Dean of Student Supports (DSS) is charged with coordinating and monitoring the school's special education programming and performance. Specifically, the DSS: participates in the engagement of qualified and where appropriate, licensed personnel to compose the school's multidisciplinary teams which will conduct special education assessments and evaluations; ensures all services are provided in direct accordance with each student's IEP in as efficient and effective manner possible – extending to ensure that any subsequent reevaluations are performed and all required special education and related services are provided and that all IEPs are appropriate; trains and supports instructional staff on issues relevant to special education; ensures all special education reporting requirements are met; retains, monitors, and secures all relevant data in a confidential manner in strict compliance with prevailing federal and state laws. Professional training and development of staff involved with the education of students with disabilities includes attention to the following: referral process to Dean of Students Supports, development of a student's IEP, implementation of a student's IEP, evaluation of a student's progress toward meeting IEP goals and objectives, meeting reporting requirements to parents, and discipline of students with disabilities. Summer training includes specific focus on supporting our special education students, and ongoing weekly faculty development allows for support of teachers providing accommodations and modifications in support of students' IEP goals.

Nashville Classical employs at least one full-time special education certified professional to serve as our Director of Student Supports (DSS) in our first year of operation. This individual is charged with overseeing learning interventions and supports for all students, including those with disabilities. The DSS works closely with the Dean of Academics and coordinates with any outside resources (speech therapists, counselors, etc.) as required by IEPs. For each student referred to as a child with a disability, we appoint an IEP team consisting of the school's Dean of Academics, Dean of Students Supports, staff member(s) who teach the student, special education teacher (Y3 forward), and the child's parents/guardians. Each year, this IEP team develops a special education plan that demonstrates appropriate staffing levels and an integrated comprehensive services approach to serving our students with special needs.

Nashville Classical will hire, as needed, any providers of speech language, occupational, physical, or other therapy to work with students to ensure their success at the school.

Nashville Classical believes that frequent and consistent parental communication regarding special education students is absolutely critical to ensuring that student progress as expected and that parents are able to support the work of the school to the greatest extent possible. During the school's various intake activities, staff members devote special attention to ensuring that parents are made aware of the school's expectations around parental involvement and understand the school's philosophy of special education. Beyond that, the Dean of Students Supports (DSS) is responsible for providing annual training to families on the TEAM and IPE process, and making every effort to ensure that one or both of a special education student's parents is present at every IEP meeting of the child. This includes at least one week's notice before scheduling an IEP meeting. Should parents be unable or unwilling to attend an IEP meeting, the school moves forward with the meeting, but the DSS retains written records of the school's attempts to set an IEP meeting with parents present at a mutually agreeable time and place. Parents of students with

exceptionalities receive regular reports of student progress in the general education program and IEP objectives through the school's school-wide monitoring and reporting process, including quarterly parent-teacher conferences and report cards. In addition, the DSS is responsible for making special phone calls home on a regular basis, no less than once per month, to update parent(s) on a special education student's academic and behavioral performance in the regular education performance, including updates of actual performance against benchmark goals set in the student's IEP, when applicable. Parental involvement is an integral part of Nashville Classical's educational program for every child, and students with exceptionalities receive priority attention from all staff to go above and beyond the school's standard expectations and policies for involvement of every child's parents or legal guardians.

Alignment with Mission, Vision, Curriculum, and Instructional Approaches. Nashville Classical's mission of academic success and personal excellence influences our approach to all students with special needs. We believe that students with special needs are able to achieve at high levels and our vision of providing an achievement oriented culture for all students includes every child we enroll with special needs. Our curriculum's focus on teaching all components of core subjects supports students with special needs and our instructional approach provides multiple opportunities for intervention including small group instruction during literacy, pull-out services from hourly employees or the Dean of Student Supports, and an afternoon tutoring block focused on differentiation so children do not miss instructional time to receive services.

English Language Learners

We anticipate that approximately 10-15 percent of our students will be English Language Learners (ELLs), as outlined in our Needs statement in **Section II**, and most specifically in the Warner and Schwab school zones. Our school design is well suited to the language acquisition needs of ELLs, as outlined in **Section II** of this application, and most specifically our approach to literacy, focused on small group instruction, individualized computer adaptive software, and simultaneously teaching reading acquisition and reading comprehension. Nashville Classical complies with all applicable federal laws related to the education of language minority students as stated under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Education Opportunities Act of 1974. We follow the TN Board of Education ESL Program Policy (3.207), designed to set the minimum standards for TN school districts in providing services to non-English language background. English Language Learner (ELL) students are provided with equal access to and full participation in school activities. ELL students study the same content and are held to the same standards as other students. While all classes are taught in English, the level of English used for instruction, verbal and written, is modified as needed to facilitate ELL students' acquisition of English. Reading programs such as Reading Mastery and computer based programs such as Riverdeep, both outlined in **Section II** and which focus on and are grounded in phonics, are shown particularly effective for low income and ELL students. For students identified as English Language Learners (ELL), we use Structured English language immersion to accelerate academic progress. We eliminate or limit the separation of English Language Learners from the mainstream classroom, acknowledging the immersion method of language acquisition as the most expedited effective manner to educate ELL students.¹⁷² If a student's English language proficiency is so severely limited as to render the student incapable of following the activities in a regular classroom, the school provides instruction in English to speakers of other languages (ESOL) for a certain period of time every school day. Because the objective is for the student to transition to fully English classes, the ELL student is expected to participate in part of the regular classroom schedule, where all students have the opportunity to hear and use English.

¹⁷² Arizona Department of Education, July 2004, "The Effects of Bilingual Education Programs and Structured English Immersion Programs on Student Achievement: A Large-Scale Comparison" located at http://www.public.asu.edu/~macswan/ade/ade_document.pdf.

Identification and Avoiding Misidentification. We use Home Language Surveys to screen all new enrollees for potential limited English proficiency. If the home language is other than English or the student's native language is other than English, appropriate Nashville Classical staff or a hired interpreter conducts an informal interview in the student's native language and English. If the student speaks a language other than English and/or the student speaks little or no English, we administer the Comprehensive English Language Learner Assessment (CELLA). Results from these assessments are used to provide identification of and avoid misidentification of ELL students, inform instruction, and ensure all students can access academic content and master performance and content standards. Teachers are responsible for observing each student throughout the class day with an eye toward detecting limited English proficiency. All teachers receive professional development training in techniques for detecting whether a student has English language deficiencies and in communicating with students designated as ELL students. Any student suspected of having limited English proficiency is tested to determine what level of services, if any, are necessary.

Research-based Instructional Programs, Practices, and Strategies. The *Doing What Works* web page established by the federal Department of Education¹⁷³ lists five strategies proven to be highly effective for supporting ELL students; we incorporate these strategies during language arts, math, science, and social studies instruction:

- **Screen and monitor progress.** An effective program for ELLs includes well developed assessments for identifying student needs. This corresponds with Nashville Classical's data-driven instruction. We assess student progress frequently and use results to drive overall instruction as well as identify students in need of individual intervention. The School Director and/or Dean of Academics oversee this process while working closely with teaching staff. In data and assessments and evaluation section, reference benefit to ELLs and this resource
- **Provide reading intervention.** Recognizing that ELLs are often at risk for reading problems, the strongest programs respond quickly to the results of formative assessments by offering small group reading intervention for struggling readers that augments the core reading program. Each day there are four different opportunities for ELLs to receive a small group reading intervention- the three literacy rotations and the final tutoring block. As outlined previously, a key element of our educational program is the daily small-group tutoring for students struggling in reading. The DOE recommends that interventions "utilize fast-paced, engaging instruction,"¹⁷⁴ aligning with an instructional approach infused with urgency.
- **Teach vocabulary.** One important component in language acquisition is vocabulary development. To read and understand grade-appropriate material, elementary students need to learn 3,000-4,000 new vocabulary words each year (≈ 70 new words per week).¹⁷⁵ In the most effective schools, students are taught vocabulary through formal instruction and learn words through use in language rich settings in and out of the classroom. We provide formal vocabulary instruction using essential word lists and words in context. Our structured vocabulary program features child-friendly definitions and cumulative assessments to ensure regular review of all words learned. For ELL students, our focus on Greek and Latin roots enables them to make connections to their native language while building a framework to consider unfamiliar English words.

¹⁷³ http://dww.ed.gov/topic/topic_landing.cfm?PA_ID=6&T_ID=13&Tab=2 .

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ Honig, Bill. *Teaching Our Children to Read*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2001.

- **Develop academic English.** For ELLs to have academic success, they must develop cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP), and not simply the basic interpersonal communication skills (BICS) of social language. CALP includes the content area vocabulary specific to academic subjects and the sophisticated use of language necessary to carry out higher-order academic tasks such as comparing, synthesizing, and inferring. We integrate vocabulary development into instruction in all subject areas not only English language arts—and include explicit scaffolding of higher-order academic tasks. In earlier section per instruction, make this link to ELL’s development of academic English and use this reference. Although language acquisition experts predict that it could take ELLs five years or longer to become truly proficient in CALP¹⁷⁶, we expect that our extended school day will dramatically accelerate this process.
- **Schedule peer learning.** Students improve mastery of language through use. The DOE recommends that a minimum of 90 minutes a week should be dedicated to activities that allow students to work together on practice and extension of language skills. We implement a “turn and chat” practice in which the class is given a question or prompt and instructed to discuss the topic with a partner. Although interactions are brief, lasting from 30 seconds to three minutes, when used frequently throughout the day, there is significant cumulative increase in authentic language practice.
- **Assessing and Monitoring Progress and Success.** Students identified as ELL are assessed annually to determine improvement in English proficiency. Students scoring above the established cut-off point are designated as exited from the ELL program. Those scoring below the cutoff point continue to be classified as ELL. Evaluations are informed by performance on the Comprehensive English Language Learner Assessment (CELLA) and ongoing teacher observations with the consultation of the Dean of Academics and the School Director. Performance is be assessed in the following ways: (1) ELL students are making strong academic progress as measured by instructor-developed assessments; (2) ELL students are proficient in English in three years or less; (3) ELL students are proficient in English/Language Arts as evidenced by proficiency on state and standardized exams; and (4) ELL students are advancing from grade level to grade level, evidencing mastery of core subjects on par with native speaking students.

All ELL students learn with all other students in the classroom for instructional time. Our direct-instruction program is geared to all literacy learners, especially ELL students. In addition, ELL students have tutoring time in small like-skilled groups, homework tutors, and adequate homework time. Teachers utilize the Destination Reading program to support ELL students. Destination Reading targets our kindergarten through grade 2 students in three levels with individually paced daily instruction.¹⁷⁷ ELL students who require supplemental instruction in English to fortify their core English language skills receive sheltered instruction and tutoring as appropriate. If students are not making sufficient academic progress, we modify our ELL program as needed.

The proficiency of an identified ELL student receiving pull-out services is measured at least twice a year to determine whether continued special services are warranted. All pull-out and special services continue until a student attains fluency in English language proficiency as measured by the CELLA. We evaluate performance in academic content areas to measure student’s progress in core subjects. If an ELL student continues to struggle, modifications to the instructional program are made. Any student classified and receiving educational services as an ELL student who subsequently tests high enough to exit the program is deemed to be no longer in need of ELL

¹⁷⁶ Cummins, J. (1981a) “Age on arrival and immigrant second language learning in Canada: A reassessment.” *Applied Linguistics*, 2, 132-149.

¹⁷⁷ For more detail, please see **Section II** of this application.

services. No student is exited from the ELL program unless they can read, write, and comprehend English well enough to participate fully in Nashville Classical's academic program.

To determine the need for programmatic modifications, Nashville Classical evaluates the progressive growth of its ELL students on standardized assessments and non-standardized assessments in comparison to that of non-ELL students. We track students longitudinally throughout their matriculation to determine if there is significant variation in the academic achievement of students who were once classified ELL and non-ELL students as measured by standardized assessments and non-standardized assessments. Nashville Classical tracks the number of students who are declassified as ELL and the number of instructional years it takes for this declassification to occur. The Board, first through its Academic Achievement Committee and then as an entire Board, will evaluate the efficacy of our ELL program monthly and more formally annually through performance results provided in the Academic Dashboard disaggregated by subgroup, and the School Director will work with the leadership team and instructional staff, formally during the planning period of the summer and training period of summer staff orientation and ongoing through the year as part of weekly professional development and data analysis days, to implement and support any changes as needed to ensure the success of all students.

Qualified Staff. We place a priority on hiring teacher(s) that speak Spanish and English and who can provide strong instruction within a Structured English Immersion classroom. Teachers receive extensive professional development on appropriate support for students designated as ELLs. Outside experts are hired to provide this PD during our teacher summer training and throughout the year as appropriate and we hope to work with organizations such as Conexion Americas and Stand for Children to enable our school to effectively partner with ELL families.

Students Below Grade Level _____

We expect that even as an elementary school, many if not the majority of our students will arrive below grade level, and thus all elements of our school design are geared specifically to address their needs. Should student enrolling after kindergarten demonstrate gaps in their learning as evidenced by intake benchmark and interim assessments, we will use the elements of our extended day to address those concerns promptly in a targeted manner.

Intellectually Gifted Students _____

Nashville Classical is committed to providing a free appropriate public education to all of its students, including those that are identified as gifted and talented. While we do not anticipate that a large majority of our students will be academically advanced when they enter the school, Nashville Classical will follow the same diligent, customized, and rigorous identification strategy for students determined to be intellectually gifted as we will with all students with exceptionalities.

Research-based Instructional Programs, Practices, and Strategies. Research indicates that Intellectually Gifted students require challenge and support to further develop their interests and capacities, and that these should be provided in a systematical and targeted manner. Entering students who score in the upper quadrants of the Terra Nova are placed on a list of students considered Intellectually Gifted. Continuing students are identified by scoring advanced on the TCAP, above-grade level proficiencies on the STEP assessment, and/or in the upper quadrant on the Terra Nova. Identified students receive an Advanced Learning Plan developed by the grade level team. The plan focuses on challenging the student in his/her core subjects. All teachers include an advanced homework section, as well as work creatively to identify strategies to differentiate lesson plans for more advanced students. Each plan includes a section on

acceleration strategies in daily enrichment activities and tutoring opportunities. Enrichment activities may change regularly and allow for a variety of experiences – music, theater, dance, art, sports, etc. The flexible nature of enrichment allows for differentiation for Intellectually Gifted students as appropriate: i.e. advanced music theory, a Math Counts program, and chess club.

Qualified Staff. Lead teachers, highly qualified and experienced, are responsible for monitoring the growth and success of Intellectually Gifted students.

Assessing and Monitoring Progress and Success. Each teacher of the Gifted and Talented student is assigned to monitor the student's progress and recommend adaptations to the student's Advanced Learning Plan.

5. BUDGET AND FINANCE

Annual Budget

Annual Budget

Below is a budget narrative for Nashville Classical Charter School that details revenues and expenditures for the school from startup through year five. The budget and accompanying narrative align to the mission, academic program and priorities of Nashville Classical, and demonstrates the financial viability of the school.

We have taken the following steps to guarantee that we build a conservative and accurate budget.

- **Aim for Surplus after Y1.** Nashville Classical understands that during the first three years of operation, in which the school is continuing to grow grade levels, it will experience operating deficits. This is largely due to the high startup costs around staffing and facilities (with fewer students). The school has accounted for these early deficits by maintaining a healthy cash balance during and at the end of each fiscal year. For example, although the school will have a \approx \$135K deficit in year one, the school will have \$208K in startup funds left over from the planning year, leaving \approx \$73K on the balance sheet at the end of year one.
- **Build up a Cash Reserve Over Time.** Nashville Classical will be locating in a temporary facility for its first two years. In the longer-term, the school will possibly need to purchase a building and complete extensive renovations. Because the school may need to take on debt in the future, the school thinks it is critical to build up a cash reserve over time – for later use as equity and/or credit enhancements. In addition, the school thinks it is financially responsible to have a healthy cash reserve to address unforeseen expenses and cash flow fluctuations.
- **Include Quotes When Possible.** To the extent possible, we have secured a quote for services. These quotes include facility, curriculum, follow-on support services, food contracts, and bus contracts. In circumstances when quotes were unavailable or non-applicable, we have used information provided by local charter schools.
- **Account for Attrition.** We intend to continue to enroll new students through grade 2 and assume a 7% rate of attrition each year thereafter. In this scenario, and for fiscally conservative planning, our original class of 108 has reached 70 students by grade 8 and an entering class of 54 reaches 35 students. Although in grades 3 to 8 we staff the school to reflect attrition, we include an extra .5 FTE teacher in grades 3 and 4 and budget for hourly employees for such needs as contracted special education providers and tutors for small groups as needed to support the middle school. In all cases, if increased enrollment requires an additional classroom of children, the subsequent increase in BEP funds (we have assumed a conservative 1% annual increase in BEP revenue stream during the term of the charter for purposes of fiscal conservancy) would support our hiring of an additional FTE. Likewise, should community demand, facility space, or financial necessity require or allow the school to add children in grades 3-8, we would be open to this possibility and be prepared to aggressively pursue it.
- **Estimate Teacher Salaries Conservatively.** All contracts at Nashville Classical are at-will contracts. As such, salaries will not be directly proportional to experience or degree. However, in every case, we have estimated that the majority of teachers in each grade will earn a salary representative of Nashville Classical's highest salary band and we have

increased salaries by 2% each year to reflect cost-of-living increases. Should BEP revenue streams increase and/or federal charter school start-up money become available, we would increase the 2% COLA to 3%, but remain conservative for purposes of long-range financial planning. Likewise, we estimate that BEP revenue streams do not increase proportionately to expenses.

- **Staff the School Strategically.** In the middle school, our small cohort size means the school is unable to sustain full-time teachers for every subject to teach solely on one grade level. By staffing certain positions as .5 FTE (e.g. .5 FTE grade 7 science and .5 FTE grade 8 science and thus 1 FTE Science person to teach across the two grade levels), the school maintains a positive fund balance. In addition, while our mission and vision's emphasis on teacher quality inspires us to hire as many full-time employees as possible, we also reserve a significant fund for hourly specialists to ensure we provide the individual support needed for all learners. Used to support special needs students, office, support, ELL students and enrichment programs in Y1-Y4, this fund could also support a Classical Fellows program for the middle school. A Classical Fellow is an individual who recently graduated from college and shares Nashville Classical's mission, but might not have the experience or capacity to serve in a full-time role. In Y1 and Y2, we budget \$20K for hourly employees, in Y3 and Y4, we budget \$40K, in Y5, the budget for hourly specialists increases to \$60K and in Y7 it increases to \$80K and in Y9 increases to \$100K. These amounts provide funds for two middle school Classical Fellows and additional reserves for part-time special education, enrichment, and operations support.
- **Alignment to Educational Design.** Our educational design matches our budget estimates and budget narrative. Each element of our design is included in the budget document and narrative below including: recruitment and development of our high capacity staff; On-Going Support from Building Excellent Schools (Y0, Y1); a back-office-service provider (with a 10% increase each year); use of the Achievement Network, an academic service provider, starting with our inaugural grade 2 (Y3-Y10) is included in Back Office estimates; and contributions from hourly employees (described above). In addition, we budget generously for staff professional development and teacher recruitment, setting aside \$10K each year, while our average staff increase is less than 3 FTE per year.
- **Assume Zero Federal Start-Up Grants and Minimal Fundraising.** The school intends to hire a Development Director in Y5, and throughout the life of the charter we will be a fundraising and fully giving board. **APPENDIX R** details our board's giving commitment and our conservative budget assumes zero fundraising revenue beyond Y1, when our original board—who have signed letters of commitment—would begin to stagger off their board service. We believe a high-capacity Development Director would raise at least 2x the cost of their salary and benefits, supporting the hiring of an additional FTE. We intentionally do not include this revenue.
- **Use all Raised Dollars to Support Instructional Program.** In contingency versions of the budget (available in **ATTACHMENT 7**), we assume Nashville Classical's Board of Directors raises \$100,000 by Y3 of the school, which is consistent with our current goals. Any dollars acquired from fundraising would support the growth of the school's instructional team or increase the school's accessibility from low income families (e.g. adding a second bus route in Y1, a full-time office manager in Y3, and add a full-time position to recruit and enroll students, partnering with families in Y4).
- **Aim to Operate on Public Funds.** By Y2, revenues exceed expenditures. However, due to student attrition and a growing faculty to support special populations, high school placement and a robust Physical Education and Fine Arts Program, these numbers are almost equal by the end of our charter. In other words, by Y10, Nashville Classical would operate solely on public funds, sustain its student population and staff structure, and

retain a 90-day expense reserve in its bank account. At full capacity, in Y10, our budget spends approximately 66% on personnel, 16% on operating expenses, 6% on transportation, 9% on facilities, and 3% on technology. We reserve a cash balance each year to accommodate potentially unforeseen costs, most likely related to the debt service or renovation of a facility or additional transportation for families.

- **Plans for Cash Flow Shortfalls.** Nashville Classical understands the importance a line of credit can provide with regards to a steady cash flow during lean start-up years. To that end, we have begun to research banks that may provide this credit and are eager to enter robust conversations with Pinnacle Bank, which has already provided lines of credit to schools supported by Building Excellent Schools and the Tennessee Charter School Incubator. In addition, our landlord, the TCSI, has agreed to start lease payments in September rather than July to support the school's cash flow.

Revenues

The primary source of revenue for Nashville Classical Charter School will be funds received from Metro Nashville Public Schools for the Basic Education Program (BEP). This school has budgeted \$8,100 per student per guidance from the LEA. The annual revenue from the BEP is calculated as the per pupil funding amount (\$8,100 per student) multiplied by the enrollment at the school in each fiscal year. The budget conservatively assumes a 1% annual increase in the BEP for the term of the charter.

In addition to BEP Funds, the school has budgeted to receive approximately: \$400 per student in Title I funds for qualifying students; \$1,997 per student in IDEA funds for special needs students; and reimbursement funding for the federal breakfast and lunch programs. Each of these funding streams also has a conservative 1% increase built into the annual projections. Nashville Classical understands that funding from Title I, SPED, and the federal breakfast and lunch program work on a reimbursement basis, and has structured its cash flow projections accordingly.

To supplement BEP and federal funds, Nashville Classical will apply to the Walton Family Foundation for a startup grant of \$220,000 immediately upon authorization. The Walton Family Foundation has a partnership with Building Excellent Schools (BES), in which each BES Fellow is eligible to for \$250,000 in startup grants from the Walton Family Foundation. The grant is paid in two installments: \$30,000 is awarded prior to authorization and \$220,000 upon approval of the application. To date, all BES applicants who have had their charter applications approved have received Walton Family Foundation Funding, and is a recognized partner to Building Excellent Schools, thus, the school feels highly confident about this revenue source. Nashville Classical applied for and received the first installment of this amount in a \$30,000 pre-authorization grant in December 2011 and will also receive \$50,000 in startup support from the Tennessee Charter School Incubator. (See **APPENDIX S** for TCSI letter of commitment.)

Though historically Tennessee charter schools have received startup grants from the Tennessee Department of Education's Planning and Implementation Grant Program, it is the school's understanding that those funds are no longer available to new charters and may not be available in the future. As such, Nashville Classical has not budgeted for any revenues from this grant program. Should that program become available in the next few years, the school will apply for these funds.

All funds received during the pre-operational year will be used to cover personnel expenses including expenses for the School Director and part-time curriculum and operations support, as well as for recruitment of students and staff, office and instructional supplies, furniture, and facility acquisition costs prior to opening. Nashville Classical will engage in further fundraising

efforts in the startup year and each year thereafter, to supplement public funding sources and funding provided by the Walton Family Foundation and the Tennessee Charter School Incubator.

Expenditures

The expenditures of Nashville Classical are divided into three main categories: personnel (salaries and benefits), school operations, and facilities. All expenditures are driven by the school's mission of preparing all of its students for success in college and life.

Personnel

Personnel expenses comprise a significant portion of Nashville Classical's annual budget. The school views high-quality administrators and instructors as critical to the success of the school. The school will be staffed in the following manner from startup through year five.

Figure 5.01 – School Staff Y1 – Y5

Year	Staffing	
	Administrators	Teachers
Startup Year (2012-2013)	All salaries part-time	NA
Year 1 (2013-2014)	School Director Dean of Student Supports Operations Manager 3 total	4 Grade Level Teachers (K) 2 Literacy Teachers (K) 6 total
Year 2 (2014-2015)	School Director Dean of Student Supports* Operations Manager Dean of Academics 4 total	4 Grade Level Teachers (1) 2 Literacy Teachers (1) 2 Grade Level Teachers (K) 1 Literacy Teacher (K) 9 total
Year 3 (2015-2016)	School Director Dean of Student Supports* Operations Manager Dean of Academics 4 total	4 Grade Level Teachers (2) 2 Literacy Teachers (2) 2 Grade Level Teachers (1) 1 Literacy Teacher (1) 2 Grade Level Teachers (K) 1 Literacy Teacher (K) 1 Sp. Education Teacher 13 total
Year 4 (2016-2017)	School Director Dean of Student Supports* Operations Manager Dean of Academics Office Manager	4 Grade Level Teachers (3) 1 Literacy Teacher (3) 2 Grade Level Teachers (2) 1 Literacy Teachers (2) 2 Grade Level Teachers (1) 1 Literacy Teacher (1) 2 Grade Level Teachers (K) 1 Literacy Teacher (K) 1 Sp Education teacher* 1 Art/Music/PE

	5 total	16 total
Year 5 (2017-2018)	School Director Dean of Student Supports* Operations Manager Dean of Academics Office Manager Director of Development *holds special educator license	4 Grade Level Teachers (4) 1 Literacy Teacher (4) 2 Grade Level Teachers (3) 1 Literacy Teacher (3) 2 Grade Level Teachers (2) 1 Literacy Teachers (2) 2 Grade Level Teachers (1) 1 Literacy Teacher (1) 2 Grade Level Teachers (K) 1 Literacy Teacher (K) 2 Sp Education teacher* 1 Art/Music/PE
	6 total	20 total

The Board of Directors of Nashville Classical will determine a competitive compensation package based on education, experience, and skill sets and will include an annual 2% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA). Staff salaries are over 10% higher than comparable MNPS salaries and competitive with all local charter school salaries. Our staggered, slow-growth enrollment plan provides a strategic pipeline to grow teachers from Literacy Teacher positions to Grade-Level Teacher positions to Lead Teacher and Administration, minimizing future staff recruitment costs.

In accordance with the Tennessee charter statute T.C.A. § 49-113-119, teachers of Nashville Classical will participate in the group insurance plans of the LEA (Metro Nashville Public Schools). The school has properly accounted for all staffing costs in regard to Social Security and Medicare, health benefit plans, state retirement, life insurance, and unemployment.

A bonus plan may be implemented, based on school-wide academic performance, depending on the financial resources of the school. The school's Board of Directors will determine bonus allocations and amounts. However, given the generous salaries Nashville Classical has budgeted, we believe we offer a competitive hiring package even without a bonus program.

School Operations

Nashville Classical has budgeted for expenditures related to the general operation of the school, including professional development, student and staff recruitment, instructional and assessment materials and supplies, printing and postage, field trips, transportation, athletics, food costs, and legal and audit fees. For reference, State Budget Form account numbers are noted next to each item.

Professional Development

Quality professional development is essential to developing and maintaining a high caliber team of administrators, teachers, and staff. The school has allocated \$1,500 per FTE per year, which includes travel and professional fees. Nashville Classical administrators, teachers, and staff will have the opportunity to visit and study at least one high performing urban charter school as well as attend at least one conference and workshop on effective teaching and learning practices. This

plan is reflected by the professional development days embedded into our calendar's fall break. (Account No. 72210 524)

Teacher and Student Recruitment

- *Student Recruitment and Marketing* – Includes funds allocated for student recruitment and fundraising/marketing efforts, which are led by the School Director. Approximately \$8,000 has been allocated for the School Director in the pre-operational year and each year thereafter to engage in student recruitment and fundraising efforts. We have developed a relationship with Advantage Business Solutions, a print design and marketing company, to create brochures, promotional t-shirts, business cards, and intent to enroll forms. (Account No. 72810 599)
- *Staff Recruitment* – Due to the Nashville Classical's strong emphasis on ensuring high-quality administrators, teachers, and staff members, the school has budgeted \$10,000 per year in recruitment costs, including the cost of marketing and interviews. Based upon our study of high performing charter schools, we anticipate conducting in-person interviews with a minimum of five candidates for each position and conducting national searches whenever possible. We intend to develop an ongoing relationship with a local hotel in order to minimize travel costs for non-local candidates. (Account No. 72810 599)

Instructional and Assessment Materials and Supplies/Student Supplies and Materials

- *Classroom Supplies* – Includes supplies and classroom decorum purchased by faculty for their classrooms and students and also includes school-wide decorum (a full-list can be found under common classroom design on page 56). This amount is based on historical costs at other local charter schools (approximately \$2,500 per year for general building decorum, \$300 per instructional FTE for classroom supplies, and \$30 per student for student supplies). (Account Nos. 71100 429; 71200 429; 72620 499)
- *Instructional Materials* – These funds primarily include curricular materials such as textbooks, student workbooks, and teacher guides. The conservative assumption is that the average cost of instructional materials per student is \$300 per year. The school will plan to replace textbooks every four years (due to updated information and normal wear and tear). Textbooks the school intends to purchase and current costs per vendor websites are included in **APPENDIX T**. In all cases we strive to minimize textbook costs by purchasing used editions on Amazon.com and sharing editions across classrooms. (Account Nos. 71100 449; 71200 449)
- *Student Assessment Materials* – Nashville Classical will administer state-mandated tests as well as a nationally norm referenced test, and internal assessments. This line item is based on historical costs, current projections, and conservative estimates (approximately \$50 per student per year). A summary of assessment costs are included in **APPENDIX T**. Note: the Tennessee Charter School Incubator has agreed to a grant covering 50% of the costs of follow on support for the STEP Assessments (Account No. 71100 429; 71200 429) (**APPENDIX U**)
- *Printing and Paper* – Includes all costs associated with printing and copying for instructional purposes, including paper. This line item is based on historical costs (approximately \$30 per student per year). (Account No. 71100 429; 71200 429)
- *Publications/Library Expense* – Nashville Classical will build its library over a period of time. The school will seek in-kind donations as well as purchase books annually for its library. The school has budgeted \$25 per student per year to cover expenses related to the purchase of books for the library. Given that the school will not have physical space for a library room, each classroom will have a take-home section of books for this

- purpose. These books are separate from the books purchased from the American Reading Company, which will be only used for in-classroom reading. (Account No. 72210 432)
- *School Uniforms* – Nashville Classical has budgeted \$30 per new student and \$10 per returning student annually for a school uniform. We are working with both Advantage Business Solutions and Parker Uniforms to create the most cost-effective uniform selection possible. (Account No. 71100 499)
 - *Health Supplies* – Nashville Classical has allocated \$6 per student per year for first aid and other basic medical supplies. This line item is based on historical costs of other local charter schools. (Account No. 72120 499)
 - *Postage and Shipping* – Includes routine postage and shipping. This line item is based on historical costs of other local charter schools (approximately \$10 per student per year). (Account No. 72410 348)
 - *Student Furniture* – Nashville Classical has budgeted approximately \$200 per student (\$21,600 for the 2013-2014 academic year) for student furniture, including desks, tables, and chairs. In all cases, we will aim to purchase cost-effective and possibly used furniture. We have established relationships with local private schools including Harding Academy, who will be undergoing renovations and is prepared to donate furniture, for this purpose. (Account No. 71100 722; 71200 725)
 - *Gifts and Awards* – Nashville Classical believes strongly in rewarding students and faculty and staff for its accomplishments and hard work. As such, the school has budgeted for gifts and awards (approximately \$10 per student per year and \$200 per FTE per year). (Account No. 72210 499)

Office-Administration

The primary cost drivers are office supplies, furniture for faculty and staff, expenses associated with faculty and parent meetings, and insurance.

- *Office supplies* – Includes central office supplies. This line item is based on historical costs (approximately \$500 per month). (Account No. 72410 435)
- *Furniture* – Nashville Classical has budgeted approximately \$500 per FTE for furniture. (Account No. 71100 722 71200 725)
- *Faculty and parent meetings and activities* – Includes costs for faculty working meetings as well as parent meetings. This line item is based on historical costs (assumes an annual expense of \$1,500 – driven primarily by food costs). (Account No. 72410 599)
- *Insurance* - Includes insurance expense for general liability, umbrella, school board professional liability, building contents, employer's liability for workers compensation, surety bond, and physical/sexual abuse and molestation liability. The school has budgeted \$12,466 per year for insurance and anticipates a 3% COLA. (Account No. 72610 502).

Communications

- *Cell phones* – Nashville Classical will cover the cost of a cell phone device and a monthly service plan with data package for school administrators. The school has budgeted a one-time \$150 per device cost and \$100 in monthly service charges. (Account No. 72410 307)
- *Telephones (School Facility) and Internet* – Nashville Classical building is already installed with phones and internet but we have included this monthly cost in our utilities as \$750 per month for telephone and Internet service at the school facility. (Account No. 72620 307)

Technology & Equipment

- *Computers* –Nashville Classical has budgeted to purchase 30 desktops for each grade level, beginning with the 2013-2014 academic year at an average cost of \$700 per computer (which would include all necessary hardware costs). The school assumes an average computer life of four (4) years. **Figure 5.02** reflects a sample computer price from Dell Education that includes warranty, tech support, monitor, and keyboard. The school may receive in-kind donations or computers at a significantly lower price and has explored Tennessee’s refurbished computer program which would have a favorable impact on the budget. (Account No. 71100 722; 71200 725)
- *Administrator/Teacher/Staff Laptops* – Each Nashville Classical administrator, teacher, and staff member will be provided with a laptop at an average cost of \$1,200 per computer, including software costs. The school assumes it will need to replace laptops every four (4) years to keep pace with technological upgrades. The school may receive in-kind donations or computers at a significantly lower price, which would have a favorable impact on the budget. (Account No. 71100 722; 71200 725)
- *Software* – Nashville Classical will purchase Destination Reading software from Riverdeep. The school has budgeted \$50 per student per year for education software. Riverdeep typically charges a \$500 base fee and then a school license fee. We have based our estimate on costs from local charter schools. (Account No. 71100 499)
- *Copiers* – Nashville Classical will lease one copier per 107 students. The school has budgeted \$750 per month per lease and a usage fee of \$30 per student. (Account No. 72410 701)

Field Trips

Nashville Classical believes it is essential for its students to have educational experiences outside the classroom (cultural, arts, college visits, etc.) Nashville Classical will likely schedule one local trip per grade per month and has budgeted \$3,000 per grade level per year for these trips. These trips help students gain a broader perspective on their education and life goals. Students will earn the right to participate on trips by meeting academic and behavioral expectations. (Account No. 71100 599)

Food Costs

Nashville Classical estimates having 85% of its students qualify for free and reduced lunch and expects this percentage to stay constant through the first five years of charter operations. (Food costs that are reimbursable through federal funds are reflected in Account 99100 590 – Transfers Out.)

Contracted Services

- *Accounting* – Nashville Classical has budgeted \$10,000 per year for an annual audit to be conducted by a CPA firm. TN charter statute requires an annual audit. (Account No. 72510 399)
- *Legal* – Nashville Classical has budgeted \$10,000 for legal expenses each year (when/if the need arises). We anticipate an increase by 10% each year. (Account No. 72510 399)
- *Back Office Services* – Nashville Classical plans to contract with an outside firm to handle finance, accounting, budgeting, and cash flow management. The school has budgeted \$35,000 for these services in Y1, and has included a 5% annual cost increase to account for COLA and the addition of academic services from Achievement Network. All quotes and estimates reflect most recent reports from local charter schools. (Account No. 72510 399)

- *Building Excellent Schools Follow-On Support* – Nashville Classical has budgeted \$15,000 in the pre-operational year and Year 1, and \$10,000 in Year 1 for BES On-Going Support, for a total of \$25,000. (Account No. 71100 399)
- *Payroll Services* – Nashville Classical has budgeted \$10 per FTE per payroll period for payroll services, or \$20 per month. (Account No. 72510 317)

Facilities

Nashville Classical has agreed to lease 217 South 10th Street from the Tennessee Charter School Incubator for two (2) years at a rate of \$114,750 per year or \$9,562 per month. We have estimated utilities and custodial costs based on estimates from the facility's current tenant, Liberty Collegiate Academy Charter School and included a COLA for Y1.

Budget Summary

Figure 5.02 is a budget summary of revenue and expenditures including the startup year through year five. Nashville Classical's YR 1 cash flow is included as **ATTACHMENT 7**

Figure 5.02 – Budget Summary

	PLANNING	YR 1	YR 2	YR 3	YR 4	YR 5
	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018
Number of Students	0	108	162	216	262	306
Number of Employees	0	9	13	16	21	26
REVENUE						
Basic Education Program	\$0	\$874,800	\$1,325,322	\$1,784,767	\$2,190,177	\$2,576,116
Title I	\$0	\$43,200	\$65,448	\$88,137	\$108,157	\$127,216
Federal Breakfast Program	\$0	\$25,644	\$38,466	\$51,289	\$62,316	\$72,571
Federal Lunch Program	\$0	\$46,024	\$69,036	\$92,048	\$111,838	\$130,243
IDEA	\$0	\$28,038	\$42,057	\$56,076	\$68,132	\$79,344
Snacks	\$0	\$12,907	\$19,361	\$25,814	\$31,364	\$36,526
Charter start-up funds (Title Vb)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Walton start-up funds	\$250,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
School level fundraising	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Student fees	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Investment Income	\$0	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000
Private fundraising (foundations, corporate)	\$50,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Private fundraising (individuals)	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL REVENUE	\$310,000	\$1,043,613	\$1,562,690	\$2,101,130	\$2,574,984	\$3,025,015
EXPENSES						
Personnel	\$60,000	\$613,919	\$878,000	\$1,100,976	\$1,433,959	\$1,810,235
General Operating Expenses	\$41,625	\$262,718	\$307,393	\$378,034	\$444,236	\$538,966
Transportation	\$0	\$47,360	\$94,720	\$142,080	\$142,080	\$189,440
Athletic Program	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Facilities	\$0	\$160,366	\$160,740	\$217,980	\$275,246	\$293,804
Technology & Equipment	\$0	\$94,190	\$84,110	\$86,580	\$111,983	\$131,138
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$101,625	\$1,178,553	\$1,524,963	\$1,925,650	\$2,407,503	\$2,963,584
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$208,375	(\$134,940)	\$37,727	\$175,480	\$167,480	\$61,431
<i>Per student</i>		<i>-\$1,249</i>	<i>\$233</i>	<i>\$812</i>	<i>\$638</i>	<i>\$201</i>
Ending Fund Balance	\$208,375	\$73,435	\$111,162	\$286,642	\$454,122	\$515,553

The following narrative provides additional details on funding categories allocated in each account on the State Budget Form.

Revenue Categories

Account No. 44000 Other Local Revenues

- 44110 Investment Income – funds received from earned interest in the school’s money market account.
- 44570 Contributions & Gifts – funds received from private donors (foundations, corporations); donations from individuals; proceeds from fundraising events and school fundraisers.

Account No. 46800 Other State Revenues

- 46980 Other State Grants – funds received from the Planning & Implementation Grant for Tennessee Public Charter Schools.

Account No. 47000 Federal Government

- 47143 Special Education Grants to the States: IDEA – funds received for the delivery of special education services.

Account No. 49800 Other Sources

- Transfers in – total of funds received from Metro Nashville Public Schools for the Basic Education Program (BEP); funds received from Metro Nashville Public Schools for Title I; and funds received from Metro Nashville Public Schools for the Federal School Breakfast and Lunch program and snacks (students qualifying for free and reduced lunch). Nashville Classical will use Title I funds for expenses that can be reimbursed under the Title I program (employee salaries, professional development, supplies and educational materials, etc.).

Account No. 30000 Reserves and/or Fund Balance

- Undesignated Fund Balance – represents accumulated funds from budget surplus, which will be used to cover unanticipated expenses and future liabilities. Reserves are calculated in the first year from surplus funds carrying over from Pre-Opening Year added to the deficit or surplus in the following year. For example, Nashville Classical will have a surplus of at least approximately 208,000 after the pre-opening year. These funds will go into the undesignated fund balance for Year 1. The fund balance will increase if there is a surplus in the following year(s) or decrease if there is a deficit(s).

Expense Categories

Account No. 71000 Instruction: Regular Instruction Program (71000)

- 71100 116 Teachers – salaries for grade level teachers
- 71100 201 Social Security – includes the school’s match for social security (7.65% of salary).
- 71100 204 State Retirement – includes school’s match for State Retirement (15.416% for Support Employees and 8.88% for Certified Employees).
- 71100 206 Life Insurance – includes the school’s match for Life Insurance (\$3.00per pay period).
- 71100 207 Medical Insurance – includes school’s match for Health Benefits Plan. Employees can choose different options, including single coverage, employee/spouse, or family coverage. Based on insurance information provided by Metro Nashville Public Schools, Nashville Classical is assuming single employee plans will cost approximately \$7,500 per year and family plans will costs approximately \$15,000 per year. The school assumes at least 75% of its employees will choose the single plan and the school plans to pay 75% of each employee’s annual premium. Not

knowing with certainty which plan each employee will choose, the school has calculated a weighted average cost per employee based on the assumptions above. The weighted average cost per employee is calculated at \$9,375, of which the school will pay 75% or about \$7,000.

- 71100 210 – Nashville Classical has budgeted \$240 per FTE for unemployment insurance (based on historical costs from other charter schools).
- 71100 399 Other Contracted Services – includes salaries for part-time specials (Art/Music) teachers, and BES Follow-on Support
- 71100 429 Instructional Supplies and Materials – includes costs for classroom supplies and materials for all faculty, paper, and assessments
- 71100 449 Textbooks – includes costs for textbooks and other curriculum materials for all students.
- 71100 499 Other Supplies and Materials – includes costs for educational software and student uniforms.
- 71100 599 Other Charges – includes costs for field trips of all students.
- 71100 722 Regular Instruction Equipment – includes costs for classroom computers, furniture for all students and all staff, including office staff, and teacher/staff laptops.

Account No. 71200 Instruction: Special Education Program (71200)

- 71200 116 Teachers – salaries for special education teachers.
- 71200 201 Social Security – includes the school's match for social security (7.65% of salary).
- 71200 204 State Retirement – includes school's match for State Retirement (15.416% for Support Employees and 8.88% for Certified Employees).
- 71200 206 Life Insurance – includes the school's match for Life Insurance (\$3.00 per pay period).
- 71200 207 Medical Insurance – includes school's match for Health Benefits Plan. Employees can choose different options, including single coverage, employee/spouse, or family coverage. Based on insurance information provided by Metro Nashville Public Schools, Nashville Classical is assuming single employee plans will cost approximately \$7,500 per year and family plans will cost approximately \$15,000 per year. The school assumes at least 75% of its employees will choose the single plan and the school plans to pay 75% of each employee's annual premium. Not knowing with certainty which plan each employee will choose, the school has calculated a weighted average cost per employee based on the assumptions above. The weighted average cost per employee is calculated at \$9,375, of which the school will pay 75% or about \$7,000.
- 71200 210 - Nashville Classical has budgeted \$240 per FTE for unemployment insurance (based on historical costs from other charter schools).
- 71200 429 Instructional Supplies & Materials – includes pro rata expenses for special education program supplies and materials.
- 71200 449 Textbooks – includes pro rata expenses for special education program.
- 71200 725 Special Education Equipment – includes pro rata instruction equipment expenses for special education program.

Account No. 72000 Support Services: Health Services (72120)

- 72120 499 Other Supplies & Materials – includes basic medical supplies (at approximately \$6 per student per year).

Account No. 72000 Support Services: Instructional Staff (72200): Regular Instruction Program (72210)

- 72210 189 Other Salaries & Wages – includes salary for full-time specialist teachers (art, music, PE).
- 72210 201 Social Security – includes the school's match for social security (7.65% of salary).
- 72210 204 State Retirement – includes school's match for State Retirement (15.416% for Support

Employees and 8.88% for Certified Employees).

- 72210 206 Life Insurance – includes the school’s match for Life Insurance (\$3.00 per pay period).
- 72210 207 Medical Insurance – includes school’s match for Health Benefits Plan. Employees can choose different options, including single coverage, employee/spouse, or family coverage. Based on insurance information provided by Metro Nashville Public Schools, Nashville Classical is assuming single employee plans will cost approximately \$7,500 per year and family plans will cost approximately \$15,000 per year. The school assumes at least 75% of its employees will choose the single plan and the school plans to pay 75% of each employee’s annual premium. Not knowing with certainty which plan each employee will choose, the school has calculated a weighted average cost per employee based on the assumptions above. The weighted average cost per employee is calculated at \$9,375, of which the school will pay 75% or about \$7,000.
- 72210 210 - Nashville Classical has budgeted \$240 per FTE for unemployment insurance (based on historical costs from other charter schools).
- 72210 432 Library Books/Media – includes cost of library books for school library.
- 72210 499 Other Supplies & Materials – includes cost of teacher and student gifts and awards.
- 72210 524 In Service/Staff Development – professional development for all teachers and staff (\$1,500/FTE).

Account No. 72000 Support Services: School Administration (72400): Office of the School Director (72410)

- 72410 104 Principal – salary for school Principal (School Director).
- 72410 119 Accountants/Bookkeepers – salary for Business and Operations Manager
- 72410 139 Assistant Principal – salary for Assistant Principal (Dean of Student Supports & Dean of Academics).
- 72410 161 Secretary – salary for Operations Manager.
- 72410 162 Clerical Personnel – salary for Office Manager.
- 72410 189 Other Salaries & Wages – salaries for Director of Development.
- 72410 201 Social Security – includes the school’s match for social security and Medicare (7.65% of salary).
- 72410 204 State Retirement – includes school’s match for State Retirement (15.416% for Support Employees and 8.88% for Certified Employees).
- 72410 206 Life Insurance – includes the school’s match for Life Insurance (\$3.00 per pay period).
- 72410 207 Medical Insurance – includes school’s match for Health Benefits Plan. Employees can choose different options, including single coverage, employee/spouse, or family coverage. Based on insurance information provided by Metro Nashville Public Schools, Nashville Classical is assuming single employee plans will cost approximately \$7,500 per year and family plans will cost approximately \$15,000 per year. The school assumes at least 75% of its employees will choose the single plan and the school plans to pay 75% of each employee’s annual premium. Not knowing with certainty which plan each employee will choose, the school has calculated a weighted average cost per employee based on the assumptions above. The weighted average cost per employee is calculated at \$9,375, of which the school will pay 75% or about \$7,000.
- 72410 210 - Nashville Classical has budgeted \$240 per FTE for unemployment insurance (based on historical costs from other charter schools).
- 72410 307 Communication – includes expenses for cell phones and services for administrative team.
- 72410 348 Postal Charges – includes expenses for postage and shipping.
- 72410 399 Other Contracted Expenses – includes costs for Building Excellent Schools Follow-On Support Services and a fund for potential back office service provider.

- 72410 435 Office Supplies – includes expenses for general office supplies.
- 72410 599 Other Charges – includes expenses for staff and parent meetings.

Account No. 72000 Support Services: Business Administration (72500): Fiscal Services (72510)

- 72510 317 Data Processing Services – includes payroll services.
- 72510 399 Other Contracted Services – includes expenses for annual financial audit from a CPA firm; legal services, and back office services for finance and accounting.
- 72510 599 Other Charges – includes expenses for bank fees.

Account No. 72000 Support Services: Operation and Maintenance of Plant (72600): Operation of the Plant (72610)

- 72610 328 Janitorial Services – includes expenses for custodial services.
- 72610 351 Rentals – includes expenses for lease and/or debt service
- 72610 415 Electricity – includes expenses for all utilities.
- 72610 502 Building and Content Insurance – includes insurance expense for general liability, umbrella, school board professional liability, building contents, employer's liability for worker's compensation, surety bond, and physical/sexual abuse and molestation liability.

Account No. 72000 Support Services: Operation and Maintenance of Plant (72600):
Maintenance of Plant (72620)

- 72620 307 Communication – includes expenses for telephone systems for the school building and Internet access for the school building.
- 72620 499 Other Supplies & Materials – includes cost for general building decorum 72620 599 Other Charges – includes expenses for alarm system set-up and monthly monitoring. **Note: 217 South 10th Street already has an alarm system installed.**

Account No. 72000 Support Services: Student Transportation (72700): Transportation (72710)

- 72710 314 Transportation – includes expenses for student buses.
-

Account No. 72000 Support Services: Other Support Services (72800): Central and Other (72810)

- 72810 599 Other Charges – includes expenses for staff and student recruitment and marketing.

Account No. 73000 Operation of Non-Instructional Service (73100)

- 73100 422 Transportation – includes costs for snacks and food for Saturday school.

Account No. 99900 Other Uses

Transfers (999100)

- 99100 590 Transfers Out – Lunch Payments. Nashville Classical has included all costs for meals served during the academic year. The school will be reimbursed for students qualifying for free and reduced lunch. The school has recorded these funds as revenue under Transfers In. (See 49800 Other Sources: Transfers In.)

Contingency

Nashville Classical has created an additional budget, which reflects a more aggressive fundraising goal of \$25K per year for our first four years for a total of \$100K raised by 2016. In this scenario, we offer a second bus in Y1, hire an Office Manager in Y3, and a Students, Families and Parents Coordinator in Y4.

While Nashville Classical has built a conservative budget with considerable cash reserves each year, which will allow for more flexibility, we also appreciate the importance of contingency planning. Given the current commitment for start-up funds and facility space, the greatest financial contingency to plan for is low enrollment. Our enrollment strategies and our demonstration thus far of successful community engagement and mobilization indicate that such a contingency would be unnecessary; however, we believe in thinking through this challenge as experienced by other schools should it occur. Should we predict enrollment at 25% or greater below our target, we will staff the school in the following manner in Year 1: 1 School Director; 3 Kindergarten Teachers; 1 Kindergarten Literacy Teacher; 1 Special Education Teacher. We allocate additional funds for hourly employees to staff the office and assist during lunch and recess and end the year with a 7% or \$67K surplus. In this scenario, we would also consider purchasing a more robust set of services from our back-office provider. In subsequent years, we would add the following administrative positions: Dean of Academics (Y2); Office Manager (Y3); Dean of Student Supports (Y3); - This need in the interim would be filled by a full-time special education teacher, hired in Y1 (see above); Operations Manager (Y4); Director of Development (Y5)

We would add the following specialist and elective teachers

- Special Education (Y1, Y6)
- Art/Music/PE (Y4, Y6)

We would elect to hire a Dean of Academics earlier in this budget because of the small school size and the stretch caused to School Director capacity from lack of full-time operations support. Likewise, we would staff classrooms with the same mode, using lead teachers and literacy specialists in each grade and sharing a literacy specialist across grades 3 and 4. In this scenario, we would aim to remain at 217 South 10th street for at least three years and possibly even a fourth, saving significant costs on rent and furniture.

Financial Management and Accounting

Nashville Classical recognizes that as a publicly supported entity, it has a responsibility to manage its financial resources in a manner that ensures the public's confidence and the integrity of the school. Nashville Classical will develop internal financial controls and policies that are aligned with the requirements of Metro Nashville Public Schools and that provide Nashville Classical with the foundation to properly safeguard its assets, implement the board's and management's internal policies, provide compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, and produce timely and accurate financial information.

Financial Oversight from the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors, which is accountable for the academic, financial, and operational success of the school, is responsible for providing financial oversight of the school. As such, the Board will select a Treasurer with professional experience in finance and/or accounting, and will create a Finance Committee. At present, the board includes one accountant, one individual from the financial services industry, and three attorneys. Each of these individuals possesses experience to support the school's financial oversight policies and the Finance Committee.

The Treasurer and the Finance Committee will ensure that the Board monitors the school's finances as well as ensure that the school has robust financial and accounting systems and procedures in place. The Finance Committee will work with the School Leadership team to develop an annual budget (by May of the previous year) and present it to the full Board for review and approval. Monthly financial reports with analyses of actual revenues and expenses versus budgeted amounts will be submitted to the Board along with an income statement and balance sheet. At the end of the fiscal year, the Board will contract with a CPA firm to conduct an audit – as required by the charter statute.

School Leadership Management of Finances and Accounting

While the Board will be responsible for financial oversight, the School Leader will be responsible for the day-to-day financial management of the school. Nashville Classical intends to contract with a third party back-office service provider (EdTec) to help manage the financial and accounting systems and reporting for the school. (Please see **APPENDIX V** for an overview on EdTec) and the services they provide.

The School Director and Board Treasurer – in partnership with EdTec -- will issue monthly financial reports to the Board, and the School Director and Treasurer will hold monthly meetings with the Finance Committee. EdTec will provide continuous support to the school in analyzing, reconciling and adjusting the budget and cash flow projections and account balances, and to ensure the records are maintained in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). EdTec will also have a staff member attend each Nashville Classical board meeting.

Budgeting Process

The School Director, with the assistance of EdTec, will work with the Board Treasurer to prepare and propose to the Finance Committee in May of each year, a detailed budget for the following fiscal year that shows line-item revenues and expenses and includes an analysis of the budget's relation to the school's mission and academic program. The budget will include a monthly cash flow analysis to help manage cash flow and monitor actuals vs. budget projections. The Finance Committee will present the proposed budget (in May) to the Board for review and vote. The School Director will then present a variance report of revenues and expenses in monthly meetings with the Finance Committee and Board.

Financial Audit

After the end of the fiscal year (June 30), Nashville Classical will furnish to Metro Nashville Public Schools, the Special Joint Oversight Committee on Education, the Commissioner of Education and the Comptroller of the Treasure, an annual audit prepared by certified public accountants.

The Finance Committee and School Leadership team will be responsible for selecting an auditor to assess the financial affairs of the school each year. The selection of the auditing firm will take place through a competitive RFP process, in which the school will assess the experience, expertise, and fees of the auditing firms. At the commencement of the auditing process, the Finance Committee will make sure that the auditor will have access to all necessary financial information and records as well as non-financial records and documents maintained by the school. Preparation for the annual audit by the school will begin with the preparation, approval and adoption of the budget and continue throughout the year. The list of documents prepared, collected and provided to auditors to enhance the performance of the annual audit is subject to the request of the auditor. At the auditor's request, these documents may include income and cash flow statements, balance sheets, and budget versus actual statements, and other relevant financial documents and/or statements.

At the first Board meeting following the end of the academic year, the auditing firm will provide the Board with an overview of the audit process and the timetable for completion, and respond to any comments or questions. This approach ensures that everyone involved is aware of the auditor's needs and expectations, and also helps avoid miscommunication or unnecessary disruptions of the daily operations of the school.

After the audit is completed, the Finance Committee will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve the deficiencies. An audit finding shall be considered major if it indicates a deliberate act of wrong doing, reckless conduct causes a loss of confidence in the abilities or integrity of the school, or jeopardizes the continued operation of the school. An audit finding shall be considered minor if it indicates that problems can be addressed via

existing mechanisms. When relevant, the Board will report a corrective plan to Metro Nashville Public Schools regarding how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved.

Administrative and Program Audit

The Board of Directors will conduct an annual internal administrative audit, consisting of: Board of Directors self-review; Board of Directors review of the School Leader; Board of Directors review of the academic program and operations of the school

This internal review will involve a performance review and an opportunity to discuss ways of improving administrative structure and policies.

Nashville Classical plans to hire Building Excellent Schools to provide administrative and program operation support and audit for the school. After chartering and during the initial operational years, Nashville Classical will receive support from Building Excellent Schools in the form of follow-on services focused on successful start-up and early operation. The follow-on services will include, but not be limited to, school culture, curriculum development, recruitment and hiring and governance

6. OPERATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

GOVERNANCE

Nashville Classical believes Charter school governance is an extremely important aspect that, along with the academic program, determines the success of a charter school. The school has adapted policies, identified people, and organized structures so that Nashville Classical's mission will drive the school's governance. To illustrate this, we describe the following elements

- Legal status
- Governing Board Biographies and Skills
- Board Recruitment
- Transition, Structures, Roles and Composition
- Organizational Chart
- Plan for Parental and Community Involvement
- Policy Development
- Draft Board Policy Book¹⁷⁸

Legal Status

Nashville Classical registered its name in January, 2012 and filed Articles of Incorporation with the State of TN under Nashville Classical Inc. Articles of Incorporation were filed by the organization on March 31, 2011. Please see **ATTACHMENT 2** for Articles of Incorporation. The bylaws of Nashville Classical Charter School can be found in the **Draft Board Policy Book**.

Governing Board

The Nashville Classical Board of Directors will serve as the governing body of Nashville Classical. The control and governance of Nashville Classical is vested in the Board of Directors and all management decisions will be delegated to the School Director who will be hired by, report to, and evaluated by the Board. The Board and its individual members are charged with upholding and overseeing fulfillment of the mission and purpose of Nashville Classical. As the critical volunteer leadership of the school, Board members commit to:

- Developing and providing oversight of policies and procedures for the school
- Managing resources effectively
- Monitoring educational program, ensuring alignment with mission and goals
- Selecting, supporting and evaluating the School Director
- Ensuring effective long-term business and organizational planning
- Supporting the organization financially
- Taking initiative in connecting the organization with opportunities for funding
- Enhancing the school's image in the community

The founding group has nine members, eight of whom intend to serve on the Governing Board and one whom we intend to name as School Director. This group has reviewed, contributed to, and supported all aspects of the charter application and school design. The Board continues to develop its membership, and is in productive discussion with additional candidates for the founding team.

Our Founding Board Members (**Figure 6.01**) include a diverse array of Nashville's civic leadership. Their skills include school leadership, curriculum, instruction, assessment, operations, accounting, finance,

¹⁷⁸ Includes Complaint Process, Bylaws, and Conflict of Interest with signatures and specifically found on page 124.

community relations, law, finance, real estate, marketing, education policy, human resources and governance. The group first began meeting in April 2011 and has engaged in over 60 hours of formal training since that first meeting. A full scope and sequence of training can be found in figure 6.01. All resumes, including that of our proposed School Director, can be found in **ATTACHMENT 4**.

Figure 6.01 – Founding Board Members: Nashville Classical Charter School

Founding Board Member	Area of Expertise	Committee Assignment and Officer Status
Charles Friedman Fellow Building Excellent Schools 1110 Forrest Ave Nashville, TN 37206	School Leadership Curriculum Instruction Assessment	Lead Founder <i>Non-voting, Ex-Officio</i> <i>Proposed School Director</i>
Leslie Hayes Director South Nashville Family Resource Center 601 Benton Ave. Nashville, TN 37204	Operations Community Relations	Governance Committee
Anton Jackson Attorney Mckenzie & Jackson PLC 201 4th Ave. N. Suite 1130 Nashville, TN 37219	Law Community Relations	Finance Committee Secretary
Rob Lineberger Principal Diversified Trust 3102 West End Ave. Suite #600 Nashville, TN 37203	Law Finance Real Estate Governance	Finance Committee
David Mansouri Director of Advocacy & Communications Tennessee SCORE 1207 18th Ave. South #326 Nashville, TN 37212	Marketing Community Relations Education Policy	Academic Achievement Committee Vice-Chair
Jane Meneely Senior Accountant PICA Group 3000 Meridian Boulevard Suite 400 Franklin, TN 37067	Marketing Operations Accounting Community Relations	Finance Committee Treasurer
Heather Stewart Assistant General Counsel TN Board of Regents 1001 Clifton Lane #8 Nashville, TN 37204	Education Policy Law Finance	Academic Achievement Committee
Lolita Toney Pharmaceutical Sales Specialist AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals 131 Settlers Way Hendersonville, TN 37075	Governance Community Relations Human Resources	Finance Committee
Marcus Williamson President, Neospine Division	Operations Finance	Governance Committee Chair

Symbion Health Care 40 Burton Hills Blvd. #500 Nashville, TN 37215	Governance	
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Charlie Friedman - Building Excellent Schools Fellow

Mr. Friedman began his education career with Teach For America and his students demonstrated more than two years of growth within one year on externally validated reading and math assessments. After two years, he was named as a TFA Program Director in which he managed the summer program for 1000 students and the training of 100 new teachers at Philadelphia's largest comprehensive high school. In 2010, Mr. Friedman piloted a new TFA position: turnaround specialist. In 2011, Mr. Friedman was accepted into the prestigious Building Excellent Schools Fellowship, during which he completed leadership training at high performing urban schools – Akili Academy Charter School (BES school) in New Orleans (highest performing non-selective public school in the city), Capitol Collegiate Charter School (BES school) in Sacramento, CA (in Y1 kindergarten students averaging two years of academic growth) and Cornerstone Preparatory (BES-trained leaders) in Memphis, TN (in Y2, inaugural cohort on average exceeding grade level expectations in the core subjects as measured on nationally normed assessments).¹⁷⁹ Mr. Friedman earned a BA from Yale University and MEd from the University of Pennsylvania and is the school's proposed **School Director** for Nashville Classical.

Leslie Hayes - Director, South Nashville Family Resource Center, Vanderbilt University

Since September 2009, Ms. Hayes has been the Director of Vanderbilt University's South Nashville Resource Center. Through her leadership, the Family Resource Center operates in full accordance with priorities outlined by the organization's Advisory Council. As part of her executive responsibilities, Ms. Hayes analyzes data from partner agencies in compliance with United Way policies while writing grant and contractual proposals towards securing additional funding sources for South Nashville programs. She is responsible for the strategic creation and maintenance of partnerships with agencies in South Nashville, increasing programmatic accessibility to residents within that community. Ms. Hayes brings executive management experience as well as deep connections to people and programs within South Nashville. Ms. Hayes earned a BA from TN State University and intends to serve on the **Academic Achievement** Committee of the Nashville Classical governing board.

Anton Jackson - Attorney, McKenzie Jackson PLC.

Anton Jackson, a Nashville native, is the founding partner of McKenzie Jackson PLC and a member of the Metropolitan Beer Permit Board for Davidson County. Mr. Jackson served as an Assistant District Attorney General for the Office of the District Attorney General for the 20th District. As an Assistant District Attorney, he has prosecuted a vast array of cases, both misdemeanor and felony, in General Sessions and Criminal Court. Mr. Jackson is licensed to practice in the State of Tennessee and is member of the American Bar and Nashville Bar Associations. Mr. Jackson earned a BA from Tennessee State University and JD from the University of Tennessee College of Law, and intends to serve as a member of the **Finance Committee** and as **Secretary** of the Nashville Classical governing board.

David Mansouri - Director, Advocacy and Communications, SCORE

As Director of Advocacy and Communications at SCORE, a non-profit chaired by former US Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, Mr. Mansouri manages the non-profit's communications shop as it works with TN state and local governments to encourage sound policy decisions in K-12 education. He directs all advocacy initiatives, from state legislative outreach to statewide advocacy campaigns centered on education reform issues. Previously working with the RJD Group, a public relations and political consulting firm, Mr. Mansouri provided clients and candidates with campaign consulting, issue advocacy work, and public affairs and communications strategy guidance. A Tennessee native, Mr. Mansouri

¹⁷⁹ Detailed academic results can be found on individual schools' websites (www.akiliacademy.org; www.capitolcollegiate.org; www.southbronxclassical.org) and Letters of Support can be found in APPENDIX CC.

brings keen political acumen and vital organizing skills. Mr. Mansouri earned a BA from Rice University and intends to serve on the **Academic Achievement Committee** and as **Vice-Chair** of the Nashville Classical governing board.

Jane Meneely - Business/Finance Analyst PICA

Proud graduate of MNPS and a Nashville Emerging Leader, Ms. Meneely understands the importance of a high quality public education. A financial analyst managing multiple accounts including tax filings for national companies, Ms. Meneely manages Sarbanes-Oxley compliance – one of the most prestigious legislative mandates for regulatory oversight of the financial industry. Former Metropolitan Educational Access Corporation Board Chair and Nashville Emerging Leaders Board member, Ms. Meneely has served as Mayor Karl Dean's Scheduling Director, addressing community needs within a high priority, fast-paced environment. Through personal contacts and professional colleagues, she brings access to a wide community network. Ms. Meneely earned a BA from Stephens College and intends to serve as Chair of the **Finance Committee** and as **Treasurer** of the Nashville Classical governing board.

Heather Stewart - Assistant General Counsel, TN Board of Regents

For the past six years, Ms. Stewart has represented municipal and county governments in employment, constitutional, and tort litigation as attorney with Farrar & Bates, LLP. In 2012, she began a new career as the Assistant General Counsel for the TN Board of Regents. She has filed successful pleadings with the United States Supreme Court in employment law and with a focus on entertainment practices has negotiated seven-figure contracts with major publishing house. President of the Board of Directors of the Nashville Adult Literacy Council 2008-2010, Co-Chair of the Leadership Council of McKendree United Methodist Church and participant in the Young Leaders Council, Ms. Stewart brings profound involvement in Nashville's civic life and governance skills. Ms. Stewart holds BA and JD from the University of TN and intends to serve on the **Academic Achievement Committee** of the Nashville Classical governing board.

Lolita Toney - Pharmaceutical Sales Rep, AstraZeneca

Ms. Toney built a successful career in higher education, working in community relations and fund-raising positions at Meharry Medical College, Belmont University, Tennessee State University and Fisk University. Most recently, Ms. Toney was Managing Director at a local recruiting firm, an affiliate of a global executive search firm, where she focused on executive searches for government, education and non-profit organizations and middle management technical recruiting. Her prior board experience includes work at CABLE, Nashville Cares, and Leadership Nashville. Ms. Toney earned a BA and MBA from Nashville's Trevecca Nazarene University and intends to serve on the **Finance Committee** of the Nashville Classical governing board.

Marcus Williamson. President, NeosSpine Division, Symbion

Mr. Williamson is a professional with 23+ years of experience in surgical facilities, hospitals and ambulatory surgery centers. Mr. Williamson served as the Director of Operations for AmSurg Corp., a Nashville-based owner and operator of outpatient surgical facilities where he was responsible for partnership board governance, acquisition due diligence, strategic planning, as well as leadership training and development. Mr. Williamson's projects included growth within challenging national markets and he spent 9+ years working specifically with physician practice partnerships at AmSurg. Before AmSurg, Mr. Williamson served in director roles with Prudential HealthCare, Cigna, Focus HealthCare and United HealthCare with a concentration in physician services, network development and executive level contract negotiation, and he brings vast management experience, governance, and finance experience. Mr. Williamson earned a BA from Northwestern University and intends to serve on the **Governance Committee** and as **Chair** of the Nashville Classical governing board.

Board Recruitment

The Board represents a cross section of highly respected leaders from the Nashville community, education, nonprofit, and business sectors. Individually and collectively, they have committed their professional reputations and expertise to oversee the governance responsibilities associated with overseeing the successful start-up and operation of a charter school. Per TN State Charter Law and our bylaws, within six months of the school's opening date, we will add a parent representative to our board.

In addition, described in Section XIII, the founding group has a vast network of connections across Nashville's education, business, and non-profit community. Board Member recruitment will begin among connections that already exist and individuals who add to the board's diverse skill-sets (specifically those who possess education experience, community knowledge, or fundraising capacity) will be prioritized. A sample policy for Board Development can be found in the **Board Policy Book**. Formally approved at the board's organizational meeting, the policy will guide subsequent Board Member Recruitment.

Their total experiences and dedication will be instrumental in providing support and guidance to and oversight of the School Director in achieving the goal of operating a rigorous elementary school that prepares Nashville students for academic excellence success and personal excellence.

Transition, Structures, Roles, Composition

A Board of Directors will govern Nashville Classical. This Governing Board, which will have no fewer than seven (7) and no more than fifteen (15) members, will hold the charter of Nashville Classical and ensure accountability to its mission, financial viability, and adherence to the terms of the charter. The board will maintain an odd number for voting purposes.

Upon approval of the charter, the board will hold an organizational meeting and officially transition to a Board of Directors. Following a clear and transparent board election process, decision making process and policies for membership terms (described in **Board Policy Book**), Nashville Classical will elect officers, hire its chief executive, approve key policies, and approve the upcoming calendar of meetings. The board will immediately share the calendar to comply with Open Meeting laws and consider community participation during the school's start-up year. From that point forward, the board's work will be led by its officers and executed largely through its committee structure.

Officers are elected by the Board and include Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. New officers may be added and filled at any meeting of the Board. The Board will work efficiently through a committee structure. The initial standing committees include Governance, Academic Accountability, Finance, with a sub-committee dedicated to Resource Development. The Board may establish other committees or task forces as it deems necessary.

A majority vote of those present at a Board meeting will constitute action by the Board. The Board may not act unless a quorum of the Directors is present. In drafting and approving school policies, the Board of Directors will adhere to the following decision-making process: conduct Board level discussion; assign member to draft policy; write first draft of policy; and present policy to Board for approval.

Nashville Classical will implement financial policies and practices to ensure the long-term viability of the school, including maintaining a balanced budget and conducting an annual audit of financial statements. The Board will create and maintain a comprehensive budgeting process and a system of fiscal checks and balances. As one of the standing committees of the Board, the Finance Committee will work closely with

the School Director and any external finance back office providers as appropriate to develop and execute responsible fiscal policies and practices. Every month, the Finance Committee will report to the Board on the financial health of the school.

Organizational Chart

Nashville Classical's organizational chart (Figure 6.02-6.03) describes a relationship wherein both management and governance are accountable to the mission of Nashville Classical Charter School. In Y1 and each year thereafter, no individual besides the School Director will report directly to the Board of Directors. Committees will not formally manage any individual at the school. The School Director will be hired immediately upon charter authorization. Through December 2012, the School Director will manage all operations with the close guidance and support of the board. At that point, the school intends to begin to search for an Operations Manager and a part-time Dean of Academics. Without Start-Up Grants the school will be unable to hire a full-time Dean of Academics until Y2 but hires part-time individuals during Y1 and takes advantage of the talents of our Lead Founder as well as the flexibility offered by the Dean of Students Supports and Lead Teacher positions to fulfill the duties of a Dean of Curriculum position in Y1. In Y10, at capacity, the school supports 38 staff.

Figure 6.02 – Organizational Chart (Y1)

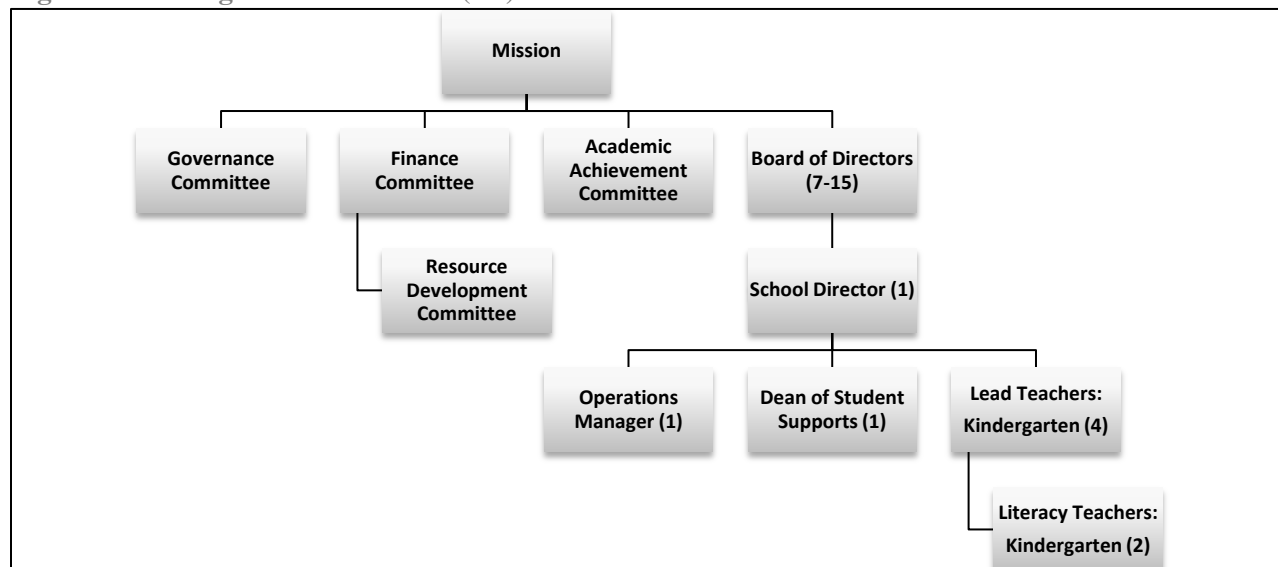
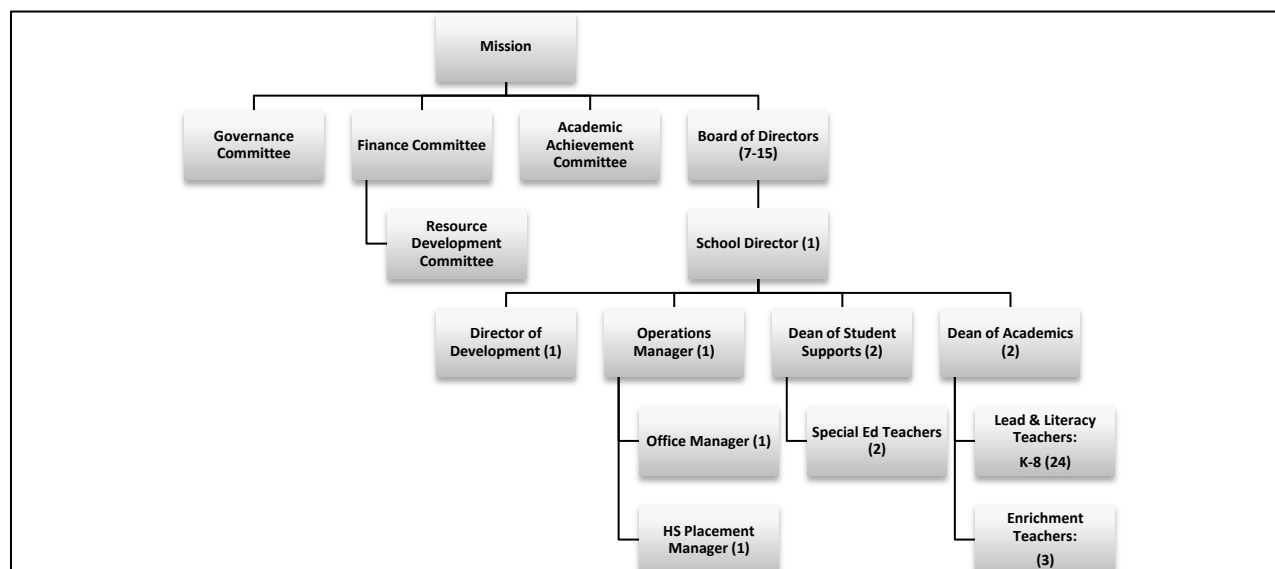


Figure 6.03 – Organizational Chart (Y10)



Parental and Community Involvement

Research has shown that “[w]hen families are involved in their children's education, children earn higher grades and receive higher scores on tests, attend school more regularly, complete more homework, demonstrate more positive attitudes and behaviors, graduate from high school at higher rates, and are more likely to enroll in higher education than students with less involved families . . . [I]ncreasing family involvement in the education of their children is an important goal for schools, particularly those serving low-income and other students of failure.”¹⁸⁰ There are many challenges to successfully involving families in their children’s academic lives. Families may have competing demands on their time and attention. Some may not have positive feelings about schools or teachers based on their own school experiences. Some avoid involvement in their children’s schoolwork because their own academic skill deficits make them feel unable to help. Moreover, many school-parent relationships suffer because the first time that the parent hears from the school is when there is a problem to discuss. We provide a clear plan to support meaningful involvement of parents and community members in the life of the school and specifically in its governance.

Despite potential challenges, active family involvement in school and learning is essential to meeting our mission of preparing students to succeed in college preparatory secondary schools and college. In support of T.C.A. §49-2-305 addressing parent communication and involvement in public schools and our commitment to communicating with families, we create a dynamic in which we partner with families in the promotion their children’s academic success. We build these relationships by conducting comprehensive information sessions during the application process and for all new families after the lottery, should a lottery be required; conducting home visits for all enrolled students before the beginning of the school year; providing document that inform families of the school’s commitments to them and clarifies the school’s expectations of students and families;¹⁸¹ sending home daily (K-2) and weekly (3-8) behavioral and reading logs to parents which they review, sign and return to the school; providing periodic evening or weekend workshops, “Classical Nights,” designed to help families hone the skills

¹⁸⁰“ Did You Know: About Families and Schools as Partners?” adapted from Adapted from J.E. Funkhouse. & M.R. Gonzales: Executive Summary in “Family Involvement in Children’s Education: Successful Local Approaches” <http://www.urbanschools.org/pdf/Linkages/Partners.pdf> .

¹⁸¹ See sample Classical Contract in Student and Family Handbook in **APPENDIX K**.

they need to be effective teachers for their children; these nights coincide with report card conferences to reduce the potential burden of multiple events on families where parents work evenings or multiple jobs¹⁸²; Creating cyclical rituals and events in which families are invited into the school to celebrate student work, for example the end of the year promotion ceremony.

Figure 6.04 details additional levels of communication parents can expect at Nashville Classical.

Figure 6.04 – Plan for Parental and Community Involvement

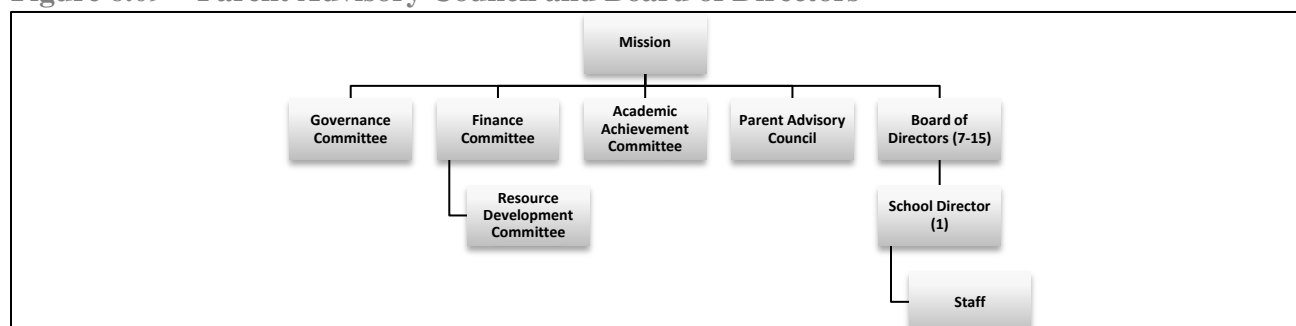
Parent Communication and Involvement	Who is Responsible
Multiple information sessions before and during the enrollment period and after the lottery should one be necessary	School Director
Home visits for all enrolled students before beginning of the school year	School Director
Family Orientation sessions following enrollment period and the week before the first day of school	School Director
Classical Contract with each parent/guardian	Teachers, Parents, Students
Weekly syllabi for each class including Homework Assignments, with the expectation that parents/guardians will sign off on homework daily	Teachers with supervision from the School Director, Parent The Board, first through its Academic Achievement Committee and then as an entire Board, will evaluate the efficacy of our special education program monthly and more formally annually through performance results provided in the Academic Dashboard disaggregated by subgroup, and the School Director will work with the leadership team and instructional staff, formally during the planning period of the summer and training period of summer staff orientation and ongoing through the year as part of weekly professional development and data analysis days, to implement and support any changes as needed to ensure the success of all students. Parent/Guardian signatures
Daily behavior logs for K-2 students, and weekly logs for 3-5 students	Teachers, with support from Office Manager
Three formal quarterly trimesterly reports and three formal trimester report cards	Administrators, Teachers, Office Manager
Three teacher/family conferences (minimum) each year	Parents/Guardians, Teachers, Administrators
Monthly Newsletters to all families	School Director, Office Manager

Finally, Nashville Classical intends to ask a parent to serve on its Board of Directors in full compliance with TN Charter Law. This parent will, as every other member of the board, be accountable to the

¹⁸² For more information on “Classical Nights,” see our Calendar on page 59..

school’s mission, bylaws, and organizational goals. He or she will also serve as a member of a “Parent Advisory Council” whose relationship to the Board of Directors is shown in **Figure 6.09**.

Figure 6.09 – Parent Advisory Council and Board of Directors



The duties of the Parent Advisory Council will include providing ongoing feedback to management; Supporting the distribution and collection of Parent Satisfaction Surveys; planning and assisting to facilitate “Classical Nights;” joining canvassing and student recruitment events; organizing an emergency parent phone chain; facilitating car pool and child care on early dismissal days; designing volunteer projects to support the school. While they will have ample opportunities to provide feedback and community with school management, the parent advisory council will not be responsible for developing or implementing school policies

Policy Development

The Founding Board of Nashville Classical will develop policies and guidelines to ensure the viability and productivity of the school. When the Founding Board transitions to the Governing Board upon authorization, it will move forward to adopt proposed Bylaws under which it will operate. From there, the Governing Board will maintain a minimum of seven members with no more than fifteen members. The School Director will report and be directly accountable to the Board. A copy of the proposed Bylaws, Conflict of Interest Policy, and draft versions of Initial Board Policies can be found in the **Board Policy Book** found within this section. The Board has identified a number of policies to be drafted¹⁸³, approved, and implemented including Board specific, ethics related, financial, personnel, and student specific policies. **Figure 6.06** outlines the full slate of policies we have identified drafting and approval upon authorization.¹⁸⁴ In drafting and approving school policies, the Board of Directors will adhere to a decision-making process described in **Section 2.04** of the **Board Policy Book** (below).

Figure 6.06 – Sample Board Policies

Board Specific	Ethics	Financial	Personnel and Students	Student-Specific
Attendance Board Giving Chief Executive Compensation Expense Reimbursement Fundraising	Confidentiality Conflict of Interest General Ethics Nepotism	Acceptance of Gifts Borrowing Money Capital Expenditures Check Signing Endowment Funds Investments Risk Management	Grievances Internet Acceptable Use Nondiscrimination Sexual Harassment	Attendance Discipline Dress Code Enrollment Expulsion Promotion Suspension

¹⁸³ Many of these policies have already been drafted and reviewed by the Founding Board and will be reviewed and approved upon authorization.

¹⁸⁴ **APPENDIX W** includes draft agendas for the Board of Director’s Organizational Meeting and Retreat, scheduled for Summer 2012, upon authorization.

Nashville Classical Charter School



**NASHVILLE
CLASSICAL**
CHARTER SCHOOL

DRAFT POLICY BOOK (March, 2012)
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Definitions

As used in this Policy Manual, the terms set forth below shall have the following meanings:

- “Board” shall mean the Board of Directors of Nashville Classical Charter School.
- “Nashville Classical” shall mean the Nashville Classical Charter School.
- “District” shall mean the Metropolitan Nashville Public School District.
- “School Director” shall mean the Board appointed School Director of Nashville Classical.
- “Parent” shall mean a parent or legal guardian of a Nashville Classical student.

Section 1 – The School

1.01 –Mission Statement and Core Beliefs

Mission Statement

Nashville Classical Charter School educates K-8 students through a classical curriculum and within an achievement-oriented culture, providing a strong foundation for academic success and personal excellence in high school, college and life.

Core Beliefs

In support of every student who enters our school doors, Nashville Classical is passionately committed to seven Core Beliefs:

- All children can and will learn.
- All students must be reading at or above grade level by third grade.
- All staff receives targeted, mission-driven and individualized professional development.
- Joy and rigor create a culture of achievement.
- K–2 interim assessments address math and literacy development; grades 3-8 interim assessments address mastery of skill and content in each subject.
- A longer school day/year and strategic daily schedule maximize achievement.
- A deep, pro-active partnership between home and school fosters strong learning for every child.

1.02 – School Legal Status

Nashville Classical Charter School is a Tennessee charter school organized pursuant to the Tennessee Charter Schools Act. Nashville Classical operates pursuant to a charter granted by the Board of Education on XX, YY, ZZ.

Under the Charter Schools Act, Nashville Classical is a public school within the District, and its status as a nonprofit corporation does not affect its status as a public school. However, for governance, finance and administrative purposes, Nashville Classical operates as a Tennessee nonprofit corporation. The non-profit’s Articles of Incorporation and non-profit status are provided as addendum to this manual.

1.03 – Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of Nashville Classical to recruit, hire, train, educate, promote, and administer all personnel and instructional actions, without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, disability, need for special education service, marital status, or public assistance. We will not tolerate any discrimination, and any such conduct is prohibited. The school also prohibits any form of discipline or retaliation for reporting incidents.

Section 2 – The Board

2.01 – School Bylaws

ARTICLE I

Name, Location, Mission and Objectives

Section 1: The name of the organization will be Nashville Classical Charter School (“Nashville Classical”).

Section 2: The initial School Director location of Nashville Classical shall be 1110 Forrest Avenue, Nashville, TN 37206. Nashville Classical may also have offices at such other places as its Board of Directors (the "Board") shall determine the business of Nashville Classical requires; provided, however, that the registered office shall be registered with the Secretary of State of Tennessee and the agent so registered shall be located at the same address, or otherwise as provided by the Board.

Section 3: The purposes for which the Nashville Classical is organized are to establish and run a Charter School (the "School") in Nashville, Tennessee, pursuant to the Tennessee Public Charter Schools Act of 2002 (as amended, supplemented or replaced, "The Charter Schools Act"), under its Charter Agreement with The Metropolitan Board of Education of Nashville and Davidson County, Tennessee (the "Charter Agreement"), with a stated mission of preparing students in grades five through twelve to enter, succeed in and graduate from the college of their choice.

Section 4: If, for any reason, Nashville Classical should dissolve, upon dissolution its assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

ARTICLE II

Members

Nashville Classical shall not have members. The Board shall have all powers and duties for the conduct of the activities of Nashville Classical. While persons who associate with, or attend programs of, participate in, contribute to, or benefit from Nashville Classical may be referred to as “member,” no rights, voting or otherwise, will inure to any such persons.

ARTICLE III

Board of Directors

Section 1: The Board shall consist of at least seven (7) Directors and no more than fifteen (15) Directors. All Directors shall have identical rights and responsibilities. The School Director will be an advisory, non-voting member of the Board (*ex officio*). As required by law (currently, TCA § 49-13-104), The Board shall contain at least one (1) parent representative whose child is currently enrolled in the School. The parent representative shall be appointed by the Board within six (6) months of the School's opening date

Section 2: Board members shall be sought who reflect the qualities, qualifications and diversity determined by the Board delineated in the Job Description of the Board of Directors.

Section 3: The Nashville Classical Governance Committee, shall present a slate of potential Directors and officers for election by the Board. This slate shall be presented at the annual meeting of the Board.

Section 4: Directors shall serve staggered terms to balance continuity with new perspective. Except as provided in Section 5 of this Article III, Directors shall serve a term of either two (2) or three (3) years from the dates of their appointment, or until their successors are seated. A full two (2) year term shall be considered to have been served upon the passage of two (2) annual meetings following election. A full three-year term shall be considered to have been served upon the passage of three (3) annual meetings following election. After election, the term of a Director may not be reduced, except for cause. No Director shall serve more than two (2) consecutive, three (3) year terms.

Section 5: The initial Board shall consist of at least two (2) Directors who will serve a one (1) year term (ending in Spring 2013), at least two (2) Directors who will serve a two (2) year term (ending in Spring 2014), and at least two (2) Directors will serve a three (3) year term (ending in Spring 2015).

Section 6: Any vacancy occurring in the Board, and any position to be filled by reason of an increase in the number of Directors, may be filled, upon recommendation of a qualified candidate by the Governance Committee, by vote of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the seated Directors. A Director elected to fill the vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of his, or her, predecessor in office.

Section 7: A Director may resign at any time by filing a written resignation with the Chair of the Board.

Section 8: The Board may remove any Officer or Director by majority vote of the Board at any meeting of the Board, provided that a statement of the reason or reasons shall have been mailed by Registered Mail to the Officer or Director proposed for removal at least thirty (30) days before any final action is taken by the Board. This statement shall be accompanied by a notice of the time when, and the place where, the Board is to take action on the removal. The Officer or Director shall be given an opportunity to be heard and the matter considered by the Board at the time and place mentioned in the notice.

Section 9: Members of the Board:

- a. Shall receive no payment of honoraria, excepting reimbursement for expenses incurred in performance of voluntary Nashville Classical activities in accordance with Nashville Classical policies.
- b. Shall serve Nashville Classical with the highest degree of duty, loyalty, and care and shall undertake no enterprise to profit personally from his, or her, position with Nashville Classical.

- c. Shall be bound by the Board's Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality policy statements.
- d. Shall have no direct or indirect financial interest in the assets or leases of Nashville Classical; any Director who individually or as part of a business or professional firm is involved in the business transactions or current professional services of Nashville Classical shall disclose this relationship and shall not participate in any vote taken with respect to such transactions or services.
- e. Shall be covered by Directors and Officers Insurance provided by Nashville Classical in amounts required by the Board in its reasonable discretion.

ARTICLE IV

Officers

Section 1: There shall be four (4) elective Officers of the Board: a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Secretary, and a Treasurer.

Section 2: The Governance Committee shall present a slate of Officers to the Board. The nominated Officers shall be drawn from among the members of the Board. The election of Officers shall be held at the annual meeting of the Board.

Section 3: The newly elected Officers shall take office on July 1 following the close of the meeting at which they are elected and their term of office shall be one (1) year, or until respective successors assume office. A Director may serve more than one (1) term in the same office, but not more than three (3) consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 4: In the event that the office of the Chair becomes vacant, the Vice-Chair shall become Chair for the unexpired portion of the term. In the event that the office of Vice-Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer becomes vacant, the Chair shall appoint interim Officers to fill such vacant offices until a scheduled meeting of the Board is held.

ARTICLE V

Meetings

Section 1: The annual meeting of the Board shall occur in the last quarter of the Nashville Classical fiscal year. There shall be at least ten (10) other regular meetings of the Board held each year. Notice shall be given to each Director not less than thirty (30) days prior to the date of every regular meeting of the Board.

Section 2: Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chair or by a majority of the Board filing a written request for such a meeting with the Chair and stating the object, date, and hour therefore, due notice having been given each Director at least five (5) calendar days prior to the meeting.

Section 3: One-half of the Directors then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Board, except where otherwise required by these Bylaws.

Section 4: The Board shall select its own meeting format in any method allowed by the laws of the state of Tennessee. Any such meeting, whether regular or special, that complies with Sections 1 or 2 of this

Article VI shall constitute a meeting of the Board and shall subscribe to the policies, procedures, and rules adopted by the Board. The meetings of the Board are deemed to be "public business" and must be held in compliance with TCA §§ 8-44-101 et seq.

Section 5: Notice of all regular and special meetings of the Board, an agenda of all items to be discussed at such meetings, and agenda support materials shall be circulated to all Directors prior to the meeting. Any Director may waive notice of any meeting. The attendance of a Director at any meeting also shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a Director attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened.

Section 6: An absentee Board member may not designate an alternate to represent him, or her, at a Board meeting. A member of the Board may be deemed to be present for purposes of achieving a quorum and may cast a vote if he, or she, grants a signed, written proxy to another Board member who is present at the meeting. The proxy must direct a vote to be cast with respect to a particular proposal that is described with reasonable specificity in the proxy. No other proxies are allowed.

ARTICLE VI

Committees and Task Forces

Section 1: A Board resolution may appoint committees or task forces of the Board, except the Governance Committee. In addition, the Chair may appoint task forces to advise or inform the Chair. Committees and task forces may be composed of Directors or community members, or both. The Board may prescribe the need and/or the composition of such committees.

Section 2: There shall be a standing nominating committee, known as the Governance Committee. This committee shall be composed of at least two (2) persons elected by the Board at its annual meeting. Each committee member shall serve a term of two (2) years, and these terms shall be staggered to ensure continuity of committee membership. The Board Chair shall serve as chair of this committee.

Section 3: There shall be a standing committee known as the Finance Committee. This committee shall be composed of at least two (2) persons elected by the Board of Directors at its annual meeting. Each committee member shall serve a term of two (2) years, and these terms shall be staggered to ensure continuity of committee membership. The Treasurer will serve as chair of this committee.

Section 4: There shall be a standing committee known as the Academic Achievement Committee. This committee shall be composed of at least three (3) persons elected by the Board of Directors at its annual meeting. Each committee member shall serve a term of two (2) years, and these terms shall be staggered to ensure continuity of committee membership. The committee shall elect its own chair.

Section 5: There shall be no quorum requirements for any committee.

ARTICLE VII

Fiscal Year and Check Signing

Section 1. The fiscal year of the Nashville Classical shall begin on July 1 of each calendar year and terminate on June 30 of the following year.

Section 2. The signatures of both an Officer and the School Director shall be required on any check in excess of \$5,000.

ARTICLE VIII

Rules of Order

In case of conflict or challenge, the rules of order in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of all Board meetings of Nashville Classical.

ARTICLE IX

Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended at a regular meeting by a two-thirds vote of all Directors then in office; provided that notice of the proposed amendment, together with a copy thereof, is mailed to each Director at least fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting at which the amendment is to be considered.

ARTICLE X

Indemnification

Nashville Classical shall indemnify each member of the Board to the full extent permitted by the Tennessee Nonprofit Corporation Act. Each Board member shall enjoy the protection and immunity provided by TCA§ 48-58-601, as (and if) limited by The Charter Schools Act. A Board member or Officer shall not be personally liable to Nashville Classical for damages for breach of any duty owed to Nashville Classical, its beneficiaries, or the Board, except that nothing contained herein shall relieve a Board member or Officer from liability for breach of a duty based on an act of omission: (a) in breach of such person's duty of loyalty to the Corporation; (b) not in good faith or involving a knowing violation of law; or (c) resulting in receipt of an improper personal benefit.

2.02 - Decision Making

Nashville Classical Charter School has been created to serve students. All decisions by the Board of Directors and the administration should be made within the parameters of the mission and vision of the school, always keeping in mind the interest of students.

2.03 – Public Attendance at Board Meetings

1. Nashville Classical desires to provide opportunities for any member of the community to express interest in and concern for the school. Accordingly, the public is cordially invited to attend all open meetings of the Board. A pre-scheduled time for public comment shall be a part of every regular Board meeting. The Board reserves the right to establish reasonable time limits for such public comment.
2. Meetings are closed to the public only when the Board is meeting in executive session. An executive session may be called only to discuss matters not appropriate for public discussion. An executive

session may be called only upon the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the quorum present. No formal action of the Board may be taken in any executive session.

3. Persons who wish to make requests, presentations, or proposals to the Board should direct any inquiry to the School Director, who will respond according to the following procedures:
 - (a) The School Director will consult with the Board Chair and, if appropriate, other Board members about including the request on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Board meeting.
 - (b) If the item is included on the agenda, the Board will receive in their packet for the next regularly scheduled meeting written information directly from the person making the request. If specific Board action is being requested, that action should be in the written document.
 - (c) The person may present their information orally to the Board when the agenda item is discussed. The Board reserves the right to establish reasonable time limits for public comment and presentations.
4. Notice of meetings of the Nashville Classical Board shall be posted in the school offices and on the school website at least two days prior to the meeting in full compliance with all public meeting laws in the state of Tennessee.

2.04 – Policy Making

1. The Board shall be solely responsible for adopting, repealing or amending policies for Nashville Classical Charter School. Action by the Board shall be accomplished as set forth in the bylaws.
2. Proposals for adopting, repealing or amending policies for Nashville Classical may be made in writing by any member of the Board or by any parent or student submitted through an administrator of the schools. When appropriate policy change proposals shall include adequate information concerning potential fiscal impact on the school.
3. Except in cases of special need, the Board shall follow the following procedure in adopting, repealing or amending policies at Nashville Classical:
 - (a) The First Reading. The proposed policy shall be submitted for approval on first reading at a regular or special meeting of the Board called for that purpose. The proposed policy shall be contained in the Board packet distributed prior to the meeting. At first reading the Board shall receive public comment and comments from the sponsor of the proposed policy. A vote of the Board will be taken after the reading, and if the amendment receives a simple majority vote of the Directors present at the meeting, it will be placed on the agenda for a second reading at the next meeting of the Board.
 - (b) The Second Reading. If the proposed policy is approved on first reading, it will be placed on the agenda and considered at the next regular or special meeting of the Board called for that purpose. No amendment shall be adopted at second reading unless the amendment receives a two-thirds vote of the Directors present at the meeting. If the proposed policy is adopted upon second reading it shall become a policy of Nashville Classical, and the Policy Manual shall be amended accordingly.
 - (c) Special Need. Upon a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Directors present at a regular or special meeting called for that purpose, a special need may be declared. If a special need is declared, a policy may be adopted on first reading.
 - (d) Proposed policies should reference the policy provision it will be amending. Ideally, the entire policy will be reprinted with new language in all caps, and language to be deleted lined out. New policies should include the proposed table of contents policy title and code number.

2.05 – Board Member Conflicts of Interest

1. Board members shall serve without compensation, but may be reimbursed, with prior approval, for any necessary expenses incurred by them in performing their duties as members of the Board.

2. Any contract with the school involving a member of the Board, the Board member's family, or the Board member's place of work shall be approved by the full Board with the interested member abstaining. Each Board member is responsible to make known to the Board any circumstances that could involve a potential conflict of interest.
3. Salary and other remuneration received from the school by ex-officio Board members shall not be considered a conflict of interest for the purposes of this policy. However, *ex-officio* members shall abstain from votes involving the level of such remuneration.
4. A full Conflict of Interest Policy containing Board Member signatures shall be on file at all times.

2.06 - Board Review of Administrative Procedures _____

1. The Board recognizes that its role is to ensure that Nashville Classical is well managed, not to manage Nashville Classical. The School Director shall be responsible for the day-to-day administration of affairs of Nashville Classical and shall manage all activities of the school as prescribed by the Board. As a result, the Board need not review administrative policies and regulations in advance of issuance except as required by law. However, the Board should approve in advance any highly sensitive matters of policy and/or regulations that have the potential to impact its duties and obligations to Nashville Classical and/or the Metropolitan Nashville Public School Board. To that end, the School Director shall exercise his or her discretion to identify and bring to the Board's attention any such policies and regulations prior to issuance.
2. Administrative policies and regulations should reference existing Board policy when applicable.
3. The Board reserves the right to review administrative policies and regulations at its discretion. However, the Board shall revise or veto such regulations only when, in its judgment, such regulations are inconsistent with the Board's policies.

2.07 – Special Task Forces to the Board _____

1. The primary purpose of any special task force to the Board is to contribute to the overall mission of the school by conducting studies, identifying problems, or developing recommendations to assist the Board in making decisions. The ultimate authority to make those decisions, however, will be the Board's as required by law.
2. A special task force may be formed by the Board at such times and for such purposes as the Board may deem necessary. They will be given a clear objective, and will be dissolved upon accomplishing that objective.
3. Members of a special task force will be chosen by the Board and should include individuals who have shown an interest or who have special knowledge or expertise related to the task force's objective.

2.08 – Standing Committees _____

1. **Academic Achievement Committee** – responsible for reviewing school assessment policies and procedures and ensuring that those policies conform to district and state standards. Also responsible for reviewing results of school assessment programs, reporting findings to the Board and, when applicable, proposing changes in policy indicated by assessment findings
2. **Finance Committee** – responsible for reviewing and submitting an annual balanced budget to the Board and, after Board approval, making the budget available to the public. The Finance Committee will also oversee preparation of the annual report, including audited financial statements, and other exhibits required by the Metropolitan Nashville Public School district, and make them available to the public. A

Resource Development Committee will serve as a standing sub-committee of the Finance Committee whose responsibilities include fundraising, building relationships in the community and facility study.

3. **Governance Committee** - The Governance/Nominating Committee will be responsible for setting criteria for Board election, and identifying and evaluating candidates for the Board of Directors. The Governance/Nominating Committee will present a slate of candidates for election to the Board at least once annually. Election will be by a simple majority of the sitting Board. The Governance/Nominating Committee will also conduct the Board self-evaluation, described in **Section 2.10**.

2.08 – Board Election Procedures

The Governance/Nominating committee shall prepare and submit to the Board a report of the nominees it recommends for election. The number of seats available shall be determined in accordance with the by-laws. Whenever possible, nominated board member credentials will be presented one meeting prior to their election. Board members will be elected by a simple majority of the quorum present at the meeting during which elections are held. Each director shall serve from the next scheduled Board meeting after the election until the end of his or her term as determined by the Board.

2.09 – Board Self Evaluation

The Board believes that efficient and effective performance of the Board itself can have a significant impact on the overall success of the school and is an essential component of good governance. Therefore, the Board will conduct an annual evaluation of its own work. The Governance Committee will conduct the evaluation. This Committee shall determine the format of the evaluation, but it must include a formal written evaluation. The evaluation process should be designed to encourage constructive feedback aimed at improvement.

Section 3 – Administration

3.01– Administrative Structure

1. The Board shall rely on its Chair and the School Director to provide professional and administrative leadership. The School Director shall be hired by and report directly to the Board of Directors.
2. The School Director will, directly or indirectly, supervise all other staff members employed by the school. He or she will be ultimately responsible for selecting staff members, conducting staff reviews and recommending compensation levels.
3. Annually, the board will compose a School Director Evaluation Committee, to consist of three members that include the Board Chair.

Section 4 – Enrollment

4.01 – Enrollment and Waiting List

Nashville Classical will recruit students in a manner that ensures equal access to the school and does not discriminate against students of a particular race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, disability, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

All students residing within the jurisdiction of the authorizing LEA may attend Nashville Classical assuming they are the right age.

Subject to T.C.A. § 49-13-113, if the number of applicants exceeds the capacity of the school, then preference must be given to students in the following order:

- Pupils in attendance in previous school year at any public school that converts to a charter school;
- Pupils attending public schools within the school district in which the charter school is located, if those pupils would otherwise be included in the area in which the public charter school will focus;
- Children residing within the school district but who are not enrolled in public schools;
- Children residing outside the school district whose needs are included in the area in which the charter school will focus.

In December of each year, the school will release a simple application which asks only for basic contact information and verifies that students will enter kindergarten in the fall of the next year. A specific description of the school program will accompany the application. This application will be mailed to parents who completed letters of intent to enroll, distributed throughout the community, and posted on the internet. An application window of at least 30 days will be made available.

Applications will be received by the school and all information will be collected in a central database. Date of receipt will be tracked.

Should there be more applicants than seats available, Nashville Classical will hold an admissions lottery within seven days of the application deadline that complies with lottery regulations outlined in Tennessee Rules and Regulations 0520-14-01-.04.

After all seats have been assigned, a waiting list will be established for the remaining students who have registered in the event that a seat should open up. If there are still seats available after the application deadline, we shall accept applications on an ongoing basis, and students will be admitted to the school on a first come-first served basis until all seats are filled.

Section 5 – Finances and Accounting

5.01 Accounting Policies

It shall be the policy of Nashville Classical Charter School (“Nashville Classical”) to create and maintain accounting, billing, and cash control policies, procedures and records which are consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and which meet the requirements of state and federal statutes and regulations.

These accounting, audit, and financial management policies are designed to:

1. Protect and secure the assets of Nashville Classical;
2. Ensure the maintenance of accurate records of Nashville Classical's financial activities;
3. Ensure compliance with governmental and private funder reporting requirements.

Nashville Classical shall engage the services of persons or entities which will provide necessary financial and accounting serviced required by these policies (the "Accounting Specialist").

Cash

1. Bank accounts are established as required by donors and funding requirements.
2. All checks for \$5,000 or more written on Nashville Classical accounts require two signatures.
3. Individuals authorized to sign checks may include the School Director of Nashville Classical (the "School Director"), the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Treasurer of the Board, and such other persons who have been authorized to sign checks by formal approval of the Board of Directors.
4. Banks are promptly notified of all changes of authorized check signers.
5. All checks are to be pre-numbered and accounted for (used, voided, not used).
6. Voided checks are to be properly defaced and maintained.
7. Bank reconciliations to the general ledger are to be done monthly and provided to the School Director and Treasurer.

Petty Cash

1. Petty cash should be used for such things as small and odd jobs, local travel and sundry items. It is not intended for purchases that can be made with designated suppliers. Activities or needs should be planned ahead so necessary funds will be available in the petty cash account.
2. Whenever petty cash is used, a pre-numbered "Petty Cash Request/Cash Advance" form must be filled out. A completed slip will include date, the amount taken and returned, the cash category and the total spent. When a staff person receives cash, he/she will sign on the "Received By" line of the petty cash log. Items purchased should also be listed on the log, unless the receipt that must always be clipped to the log lists items purchased. The School Director or his/her designee will sign on the "Approved By" line of the petty cash log.
3. The Accounting Specialist will be responsible for the reconciliation and replenishment of the petty cash fund.

Cash Receipts

1. Someone other than the person making deposits is responsible for opening the daily mail, making a log of cash receipts, restrictively endorsing the payment, making note of any restrictions on the log entry, and account coding the receipt by receivable or revenue account.
2. The School Director or designee prepares a bank deposit slip, listing each item.
3. Receipts are deposited daily. The bank's stamped duplicate deposit slip is attached to the remittance documentation.
4. The daily deposit log and duplicate deposit slip are forwarded to the Financial Officer for verification and data entry.
5. Cash is deposited in the appropriate bank account based on funding restrictions.

Cash Disbursements

1. Cash disbursements are made by check (with the exception of petty cash).
2. The School Director approves all invoices for payment.
3. Vendor invoices are recalculated on site to ensure accuracy. This recalculation must occur prior to the preparation of a check to pay the invoice. After the recalculation is complete, the employee who performed the recalculation must initial the vendor invoice, indicating that the amount is correct and the invoice can be paid.
4. Checks for payment are signed only when supported by approved invoices (checks will not be processed and signed in advance of proper invoicing approval procedures).
5. Check signers compare data on supporting documents to checks presented for their signature.
6. Bank transfers are scheduled and investigated to ascertain that both sides of the transaction are recorded.

7. The employee responsible for mailing checks will not be responsible for recording cash disbursements. These two functions must be handled by different employees to ensure that the appropriate checks and balances are in place.
8. Supporting documentation is noted as paid, check number, date paid, and general ledger account code. Supporting documentation is noted as approved for payment.
9. Account codings for each payment are reviewed for accuracy.
10. Finance and accounting staff and/or the Accounting Specialist will ensure that all costs paid through the utilization of external funding sources are recognized as ordinary, necessary, within the budget, are arm's length transactions, and do not deviate from established practices of the organization.

A cost will be considered reasonable if, in its nature or amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs.

General Ledger Account Coding

1. All cash receipts and disbursements are account coded and reviewed by the School Director.
2. A policy will be followed that documents the rationale used to allocate shared expenses among functions, grants, and/or contracts and reviewed periodically.
3. Funding from multiple sources may be kept in an account with other funding; however, it must be tracked independently.

Revenue

1. Revenue is earned using the accrual basis of accounting.
2. Cost reimbursement grants or contracts earn revenue when the expenses are incurred (not committed).
3. When the Nashville Classical Charter School Board of Directors deems it either necessary or prudent to do so, the Board of Directors may, to the extent permitted by applicable law or regulation, remove restrictions placed on any revenue by the donor(s) of that revenue.

Expenses

1. Expenses are charged directly to programs when specific identification is available.
2. Expenses are charged to programs based upon a shared cost rationale when the direct charge cannot be established.
3. Expenses are prohibited to be used for any purpose that is ineligible under a funding award.
4. Expenditures for each grant, loan, or contract are to be recorded according to the budget categories for that particular funding source. For each funding award, Nashville Classical Charter School will maintain records that allow for a comparison of outlays with approved budget amounts.
5. When there are government funds involved, Nashville Classical Charter School will follow applicable OMB cost principles.
6. When there are government funds involved, programs and grants will not be charged for items which are un-reimbursable under applicable OMB principles or policies such as, but not limited to: entertainment, fundraising expenses, bad debts, fines or penalties or interest on debt.
5. Before Nashville Classical seeks reimbursement from a funder, it will ensure that the costs for which it is seeking reimbursement are allocable to that funder. A cost will be considered allocable to an external funding source (unless otherwise prohibited) if it is treated consistently with other costs incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances and if:
 - a) the cost is incurred specifically for the award.
 - b) The cost benefits both the award and other work and can be distributed in reasonable proportion to the benefits received, or

- c) Is necessary to the overall operation of the organization, although a direct relationship to any particular cost objective cannot be shown.
6. Any cost allocable to a particular award or other cost objective may not be shifted to other awards to overcome funding deficiencies, or to avoid restrictions imposed by law or by the terms of any award of funds.

Collection of Delinquent Accounts

1. Nashville Classical Charter School may utilize outside collection agencies if diligent efforts to collect money due have been unsuccessful.
2. The School Director has discretionary authority to submit delinquent debts (over 90 days) to an outside collection agency.

Write-off of Delinquent Debts/Charges

1. Records must indicate that diligent efforts to obtain payment have been exercised before the decision is made to write off any debt.
2. The request for approval of a write-off must include a short narrative of actions taken to collect and the rationale for the debt being considered uncollectable.
3. The School Director has the discretion to approve debt write-offs of a board-authorized amount. Any amount above the board-authorized amount that is requested to be considered a write-off must be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Board of Directors. Reference to this action will be included in the board packet for the next regularly scheduled Board of Directors Meeting.
4. The budget line item for fees and collections must be updated by means of a budget revision to reflect uncollectable fees/debts.
5. If collection is made of a debt previously written-off as uncollectable, it will be recognized as revenue in the current period.

Fixed Assets

1. Fixed assets refer to Nashville Classical Charter School tangible properties that have useful lives that benefit the school over a period of years. These properties include all equipment, textbooks, computers, and vehicles.
2. Purchase of fixed assets should be made in accordance with account payable procedures.
3. It is the policy of the school to capitalize fixed assets with cost of \$500 or more with the useful life benefiting the school of three years or more.

5.02 – Financial Reporting Procedures

1. The Accounting Specialist will be responsible for compiling monthly and year-to-date reports on all cost centers by revenue source, expense code, and asset and liability account balances.
2. Financial reports are reconciled to the general ledger and accounting records prior to submission to the funding source.
3. If an expenditure is different from an external funding source's approved budget, prior approval must be obtained from the funding source prior to the submission of the financial report.
4. Monthly financial reports which analyze Nashville Classical Charter School's financial position and the effectiveness of its management and programs will be presented to the Finance Committee of the Board of Directors and also reported within the board packets.

5. Periodic reports will be provided to all funding sources as requested or required by contract.
6. Finance and accounting staff and/or the Accounting Specialist will maintain records that identify adequately the source and application of funds for all activities. These records shall contain information pertaining to awards, authorizations, obligations, assets, outlays, income and interest. Records to be maintained include copies of contracts, invoices, proof of payments and allocation tracking when costs are distributed among several funding sources.

5.03 – Investment Policy

The Nashville Classical Board of Directors will approve the placement of assets not needed for immediate operations assuring compliance with all contractual requirements and using the principles identified below.

Principles

1. Minimize Risk: The Board will define a minimum risk strategy that will be reviewed annually to ensure appropriate discharge of responsibilities to donors, lenders, and contractual relationships.
2. Maximize Investment Return: Within the parameters defined as “minimum risk,” funds will be invested at the highest area interest/return available at the time of decision.
3. Support Local Banks and Institutions if Economically Feasible: “Local” is defined as having a physical presence for customer service within Davidson County, Tennessee, service area.

Procedures

1. Each month, the School Director or his/her designee will review with the Finance Committee the projected cash needs of the corporation and the assets available for investment.
2. Each month, the Finance Committee will provide the School Director or his/her designee with guidance regarding investment and institutions.
3. The Finance Committee will designate a representative to consult with the School Director or his/her designee between meetings on such matters as investment period timeliness and institutional issues.
4. The School Director or his/her designee will contact local institutions as needed to determine the best rate of return for investments.
5. The Board of Directors will define, annually, a policy for minimizing risk.

5.04 - Banking Policy

1. Nashville Classical Charter School will keep all funds available not already invested in a federally insured bank.
2. Support Local Banks if Economically Feasible: All assets kept in bank accounts will be in banks defined as local. “Local” is defined as having a physical presence for customer service within the Davidson County, Tennessee, service area.

5.05 - Budget Principles/Procedure

Structure of the budgetary process shall evolve from the mission and by-laws of Nashville Classical Charter School with consideration given to the requirements of any of the organization’s funding partners.

Budget Principles

1. The budgetary process shall comply with the organization’s funding partners and in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and with Nashville Classical Charter School’s charter.

2. The budgetary process shall comply with the guidelines and principles set forth by the Board of Directors.
3. Annually, each program area shall identify and develop a plan for its operation. The budgets needed to execute the plan shall be developed by appropriate personnel, with concurrence from the School Director.

Procedures

1. The organization's School Director will prepare and submit an operating budget to the Board of Director's 30-60 days prior to the beginning of the new fiscal year and prior to submission to funding sources.
2. If budget submission is due to funding sources prior to 60 days before the beginning of the fiscal year, the organization's Board of Directors will review a preliminary budget and adopt it if necessary.
3. The approved preliminary or final operating budget will become the blueprint for the budget submission to all outside funders.
4. Differences in budget line items between the organization's operating budget and a funder's approved budgets will be resolved in negotiations between the School Director and the funding agency.

Adjustments in Budget/Spending Plans

1. Any adjustments or changes in spending policies/budget plans which vary by more than 10% from the original approved budget will be initialed by the School Director and submitted for approval to the Board of Directors.
2. These changes will be communicated in writing to funding sources as required by contractual agreements.
3. If proposed changes are unsatisfactory to the funder, the School Director will communicate this response to the Board of Directors, who may authorize:
 - a. Changing the budget/plan to one which is satisfactory to the funder, or
 - b. Entering into negotiations to develop a compromise satisfactory to the funder and the Board of Directors.
4. After approval of the changes by all parties, the changes will be communicated in writing to all affected management staff.

5.06 - Audit Procedure

1. Nashville Classical Charter School will contract for an independent audit to be performed by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) at the conclusion of each fiscal year.
2. The auditor(s) will complete the audit within four months of the conclusion of the fiscal year.
3. The auditor(s) will test accounting mechanisms in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards for not-for-profit organizations and as contractually required by funding sources.
4. If during its established fiscal year, Nashville Classical Charter School expends over \$300,000 in federal funding, it will contract for an audit that meets the requirements of applicable OMB guidelines or policies.
5. A formal written report of the audit will be presented to the Board of Directors and to each funding source to whom delivery is either prudent or required.

OPERATIONS

The Board will ensure that Nashville Classical has the resources, governance, and leadership in place to deliver on its mission, meet rigorous accountability goals, remain true to the terms of the charter, and ensure that the school is a financial and academic success. To build a successful operational plan for Nashville Classical, we describe our:

- Reporting Structures
- Action Plan
- Board Training Plan

Reporting Structures

Nashville Classical understands the close relationship between its organizational goals, reporting obligations and organizational performance. Therefore, Nashville Classical intends to use the **Reporting Calendar (Figure 6.07)** below, which guides subsequent action planning to build the strongest operations possible.

Figure 6.07 Reporting Calendar

Reports and Documents		
Due Date	Requirements	Submit to:
March 15 (Year Prior)	School Calendar	Charter School Office
July 27	Annual Operating Budget on state budget form	MNPS Business Office
	Annual Operating Budget for upcoming school year on template to be provided by the Charter School Office.	Charter School Office

Quarterly Reports	
Due Dates: August 15, November 15, February 15, May 15 Submit to: Charter Office	
Staff Roster of teachers and staff that includes licensure/certification status and highly qualified status (NOTE: If staff has not changed, can indicate for Nov, Feb, May report periods) Background clearances for new staff	Student Student enrollment (include explanation if Chancery numbers are different) Student Mobility (list of students who voluntarily transfer from the charter school, including evidence of parental consent and the name) Waitlist – maintained in SAS database
Financial Report with balance sheet and statement of activities, including assets, sources of income, and liabilities current through the due date of the report Documentation of loans and other incurred debt, including a repayment schedule	Board Schedule of meetings Roster including qualifications, experience and contact info (if this does not change after the August 15 reporting period, may indicate)

Approved budget amendments	Conflict of Interest Disclosure signed for each new board member (only necessary for August 15 report unless there are new board members)
	Board minutes and accompanying documents presented at meetings
Compliance	Evidence of board meetings held in compliance with the Open Meetings Law.
Monthly Fire Drill Report	

Annual Reports	
Due Dates: Before September 1 Submit to: Charter Office	
Student Assessment	Enrollment Stability
Student performance on standardized assessments	Student Enrollment
Discovery assessments (or other formative assessments with results)	Student Mobility Counts/Attrition by grade level and subgroup
TCAP or End of Course results	Student Attendance
Annual Financial Audit	High School Accreditation Process (NA)

Report Changes in the following Within 5 days of occurrence
Students at risk of expulsion Governing board by-laws Facilities: Physical plant, certificate of occupancy, health and safety related certifications, etc. Rosters: departures or addition of administrators and board members Applications, filings or state determinations related to seeking and maintaining the Sponsor's not-for-profit status Applications, filings, or Internal Revenue Service Determinations related to seeking and maintaining the Sponsor's tax-exempt status

Action Planning

In order to create all the necessary systems, protocols, documents, and meet other responsibilities of start-up, Nashville Classical has designed an action plan (**Figure 6.08**) that divides tasks among the Board and individual members of the management team and external support providers.

BC = Board of Directors Chair; SD = School Director; DA= Dean of Academics; OM = Operations Manager; BES = Building Excellent Schools Support; DSS= Dean of Student Supports

This action plan puts Nashville Classical in position to maximize its time to organize during Y0. It delineates tasks that will create the necessary staffing, enrollment, and academic plans for a successful opening in Year 1. Finally, it builds the protocols and systems that the school will need to become an

enduring institution and part of Metro Nashville Public School's growing, successful portfolio of charter schools.

Figure 6.08 – Operational Action Plan

Category	Who	Date
Board Development and Governance		
Pre-charter, secure high capacity, diverse founding board members	SD	10/2011
Pre-charter, hold monthly founding board meetings	SD	Ongoing
Secure COI, resumes, biographical information for charter	SD	March 2012
Post-charter, ensure all Board Members attend all meetings, retreats, and trainings	BC	Ongoing
Post-charter, establish regular board meeting times, agenda templates, and process to ensure compliance with open meeting laws	BC and SD	June 2012
Post-charter, approve financial policies and procedure manuals	BOD	June 2012
Post-charter, approve HR manual	BOD	August 2012
Post-charter, approve management goals for SD for year 1	BC and BOD	August 2012
Post-charter, develop tools/processes to report progress relative to goals to the board	BC and BES	June 2012
Post-charter, establish Board Committees and establish goals for each	BC and BES	June 2012
Post-charter, approve Student and Parent Handbook for School	BOD	Sept 2012
Instructional		
Determine instructional vision for the school	SD	March 2012
Create plan to ensure instructional program aligned with mission/values	SD	March 2012
Finalize all instructional staff job descriptions	SD	March 2012
Recruit and select all instructional staff	SD	June 2012 on
Develop standards/scope/sequence for each grade served in Y1 – Y5	SD and DA	February 2013
Determine interim assessments for each grade level and subject area	SD and DA	February 2013
Determine data analysis protocols for school building	SD and OM	February 2013
Determine unit planning and lesson plan expectations for teachers	SD and DA	February 2013
Determine/purchase materials needed for implementation of curriculum	SD, OM, DA	June 2013
Determine/purchase supplemental curriculum decisions	SD, OM, DA	June 2013
Determine homework norms and expectations	SD, DA	March 2013
Determine grading system and purchase any necessary software	SD, DC, OM	March 2013
Create standards-based report cards	SD, DA	April 2013
Determine school wide instructional expectations and create instructional handbook	SD, DA	April 2013
Create training for staff on using data to create action plans	SD, DA	May 2013
Create summer professional development plan	SD, DA, OM	June 2013
Create teacher observation and feedback process	SD, DA	June 2013
Identify special education population	SD, DSS	July 2013
Contract with special education services	SD, DSS, DA	July 2013
Culture and Behavior		
Determine school wide behavioral expectations	SD	March 2012

Determine expectations for routines around common student behaviors (lining up, hallway expectations, classroom transitions, bathroom use, celebrations, rewards, and consequences)	SD	March 2012
Develop positive behavior system	SD	March 2012
Finalize student and family handbook	SD	Sept 2012
Write staff handbook	SD	Sept 2012
Create staff cultural binders defining all routines and systems	SD, DA, OM	March 2013
Create student culture orientation	SD, DA, OM, DSS	May 2013
Operational		
Apply for employer identification number from federal government	SD	April 2011
Obtain 501c3 status	SD	April 2011
Open Bank Account	SD	January 2012
Select payroll vendor	SD	June 2012
Finalize job descriptions for non-instructional staff	SD and DA	March 2012
Recruit and select Operations Manager	SD	Dec 2012
Create students recruitment strategy	SD and OM	Dec 2012
Define enrollment policy and timeline	SD	March 2012
Recruit students and hold lottery if necessary	SD and OM	Jan 2013
Create benefits package for school employees	SD and OM	Dec 2012
Determine facility placement	SD	January 2012
Select transportation vendor	SD and OM	January 2013
Select key vendors and place orders	SD and OM	March 2013
Select food service provider	SD and OM	March 2013
Train on Drop the Chalk	SD and OM	March 2013
Create transportation plan	OM	May 2013
Create emergency management plan	SD and OM	May 2013
Create move in plan	SD and OM	May 2013
Comply with all TN DOE and MNPS requests	OM	Ongoing
Conduct criminal background checks on new staff	OM	Ongoing
Financial		
Open Bank Accounts	SD	January 2012
Research and select accounting firm to conduct audit	SD and OM	May 2013
Select accounting software	SD	July 2012
Ensure proper fund accounting systems are in place	SD	July 2012 on
Apply for credit card for school	SD	July 2012
Identify tax requirements and timelines	OM	January 2013
Research options for securing line of credit	SD, OM	January 2013
Receive training on accounting software	OM	January 2013
Develop proper school filing systems	OM	January 2013
Create internal controls process to ensure proper segregation of duties	SD	June 2012
Determine regular financial reporting to the board	SD, BOD	June 2012

Finalize Year 1 and Year 5 budgets	SD, BOD	Sept 2012
Fundraising Grant Applications	SD	
Determine requirements, timeline, and process for any start-up grants	SD	June 2012
Write and submit application	SD	June 2012
Complete and submit WFF post-authorization Grant Application	SD	June 2012

Board Training and Evaluation

Building Excellent Schools has provided training to enable the board of Nashville Classical to meet its goals. When operating at the highest possible level, a charter school board optimizes the school's mission, cultivates organizational sustainability, and achieves outstanding results. High performing boards operate strategically, have strong working relationships with management, build institutional memory, measure success quantitatively, and align committee work to organizational goals.¹⁸⁵ While securing final board members and creating an initial draft of the application, the founding board of Nashville Classical completed approximately 65 hours of training (**Figure 6.09**) These sessions have included studies of effective governance, discussions of effective school missions, and canvasses of the community. It has included training on Open Meeting Law and Open Record Law, which we will revisit at an annual organizational meeting to start the fiscal year.

To fully comply with Open Meeting Law and Open Record Law, Nashville Classical will attend a mandatory training with the Tennessee Charter School's Association and implement a plan whose strategies require the board consider:

- Meeting dates: review for governmental and religious holidays
- Meeting preparation: time needed for preparation and distribution of materials for consideration at meeting. All materials will be sent two weeks in advance.
- Agendas: clearly identify issues on which actions need to be taken – all board agendas will contain a short-hand column that denotes whether an agenda item has “action needed,” what the item is, who proposed it, what materials are required, and the time allotted.
- Record keeping: The secretary will promptly prepare minutes, circulate timely for review among the board and then post onto the school website.
- Notice: Nashville Classical will post its board meetings on the school's website, in its monthly newsletters, a bulletin board within the school, and a public advertisement at the start of the fiscal year.
- Physical Layout: All board meetings will contain a physical layout conducive to guests present including guests with disabilities
- Voting: All votes will be open to the public and will comply with state laws regarding quorum and electronic participation.

Building Excellent Schools On-Going Support, budgeted in Y0, Y1 and will support the board during its organizing stage and the Tennessee Charter School Incubator will financially support the board's training in subsequent years per its agreement in **APPENDIX S**. An annual self-evaluation will occur, supported by Building Excellent Schools. This tool will come at the end of each fiscal year and evaluate a board member's attendance, committee participation, contributions to fund development, and feedback to increase the overall effectiveness of the Board of Directors contributing to the school's achievement of academic, fiduciary, and organizational goals.

¹⁸⁵ Research on high performing charter school boards comes from http://www.reachthehighbar.com/images/downloads/ReachingTheHighBar_StepsToExcellence.pdf

Figure 6.06

Title	Time	Sample Agenda Items
Orientation to Vision for the School	2 hours in April 2011	Introductions of team members; Study of the achievement gap in Nashville; Definitions of —90, 90, 90 schools and the core elements of high performing charter schools
Orientation to Governance	2 hours in July 2011	Definitions of management and governance; Discussion of articles on corporate and non-profit governance; Training on Open Meeting Law
Founding Board Retreat I	6 hours total – 3 hours in September 2011, 3 hours in December 2011	Comprehensive training on the core elements of high performing charter schools studied within the BES Fellowship; Exercise on what will define Nashville Classical; Study of charter school budgets and finance; Discussion of various management and governance scenarios
Orientation to excellent schools	2 hours total starting October 2011	Study of academic achievement in high performing charter schools; Discussions of tools and resources high performing charter school boards use to
Orientation to the Community	16 hours total – 4 hours in January 2012, 6 hours in February 2012, 6 hours in March 2012	Studying the achievement gap in South and East Nashville, Meetings with local leaders in the faith, non-profit, and education community; Creating an elevator pitch for Nashville Classical; Canvassing neighborhoods including the Vine Hall Apartments, Napier and Sudekum Neighborhood, Casey Homes and CWA Homes
Training in Accountability & Authorization: Board role in understanding, overseeing and upholding promises of charter application	12 hours in March 2012	Approving bylaws; Discussing essential policies including Conflict of Interest, the MNPS charter process, application, application rubric, and interview.
Individual coaching and troubleshooting around board structure, roles and responsibilities and governance vs. management	15 hours starting March 2012	Individual coaching on issues of governance, organizational management, financial policy, academic policy, and common charter school board scenarios.
Preparation for Authorizer Interview	4 hours in March 2012	Role-play sample authorizer questions on issues including mission, vision, community need, academic policy, board development, and financial management,
Excellent Governance Observation	1 hour in March 2012	Observation of local charter school board
Full Day Board Retreat	6 hours Upon Authorization	Approval of Bylaws Approval of officers Appointment of Executive Director Approval of budget Approval of policies: Conflict of interest, Chief executive, Attendance, Financial

		Approval of calendar Training on Open meeting law Chief Executive's Report Further business Public Comment
TOTAL = 65 Hours of Training and Professional Development for Nashville Classical Founding Board		

7. STUDENT DISCIPLINE, EXPULSION OR SUSPENSION

Student Discipline

The Nashville Classical Code of Conduct is based on the philosophy that classroom respect and order are essential for academic progress and success. We believe in the classical definition of discipline, which means to teach someone how to do and be good. We believe that personal excellence stands next to academic excellence as the mission of our school. We believe our mission is to educate students within an achievement oriented culture; we define an Achievement Oriented Culture (**Figure 7.01**) as one where academic rigor and individual joy work in unison. Culture, in the corporate world, has been identified as a key to organizational strength. Peters and Waterman, in their 1982 classic *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies* found “without exception, the dominance and coherence of culture proved to be an essential quality of the excellent companies.” The study continues, “Moreover, the stronger the culture and the more it was directed toward the marketplace, the less need was there for policy manuals, organization charts, or detailed procedures and rules.”¹⁸⁶

Schools are different from corporate business but culture is no less critical. Years of research have demonstrated that classroom culture has a critical impact on student achievement, teacher retention, and overall school strength.¹⁸⁷ According to Gallup, public perception has historically cited classroom management as among the most major issues facing educators.¹⁸⁸

We provide a disciplined, structured, and engaging educational environment that enables teachers to teach and students to learn. It is imperative that the school environment be safe and supportive and that the school culture and climate be conducive to the rigorous pace of instruction and learning that will take place at the Nashville Classical. Therefore, we provide a setting that is free from disruption, misbehavior and lost instructional time.

Our two primary disciplinary strategies will be to (1) proactively teach students how to behave well as a member of our school community and (2) effectively address potential behavioral issues before they escalate to a level where more serious disciplinary interventions are necessary. These strategies are accomplished by explicitly teaching and positively modeling correct behaviors and utilizing consistent and uniform instructional practices that maximize students' time on task to promote achievement. We consider time in the classroom as valuable and irreplaceable; therefore, classroom teachers have the responsibility and training needed to effectively and pro-actively enforce our school-wide code of conduct that is based on our character development program and the school's **FIRST** values.

Since most of our incoming kindergarteners have not had any formal schooling outside of possible enrollment in a day care or other child care facility, it is our responsibility to ensure we employ a developmentally appropriate student disciplinary plan. For example, an unwanted behavior exhibited by a kindergarten student would not be treated in the same manner as similar behavior exhibited by a fifth or eighth grade student. Whatever the grade, however, Nashville Classical offers students a unique school culture that will allow them to achieve personal excellence alongside academic excellence.

¹⁸⁶ Peters, T.J. & Waterman, R.H. (1982). *In search of excellence: Lessons from America's best-run companies*. New York: Harper & Row, p. 75.

¹⁸⁷ Research that supports the impact strong classroom culture has on a school includes Evertson, Carolyn M. and Alene H. Harris, *Classroom Organization and Management Program*. Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN. 1994; Marzano, Robert, et al, *A Different Kind of Classroom: Teaching with Dimensions of Learning*. ASCD, Alexandria, VA. 1992; Marzano, Robert. (2001). *Classroom Instruction that Works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum.

¹⁸⁸ Elam, Stanley M., Rose, Lowell C., and Gallup, Alec M.(1993). "The 25th Annual Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public's Attitudes Toward Public Schools." *Phi Delta Kappan* 75, no. 2 (1993): 137-154.

Professional Development: Student Discipline

Prior to the start of each school year, teachers will participate in a series of professional development sessions. Closely aligned to our vision for student discipline, this series of professional development is designed to ensure teachers will be able to:

- Establish and maintain a structured, disciplined, achievement-focused school and classroom environment that upholds high academic and behavioral expectations for every student and embodies the school's college-preparatory mission.
- Hold each student accountable to meeting behavioral and learning expectations, including following and implementing policies for uniforms, homework, and academic support.
- Execute discipline policies, using role playing, practice of scenarios, and video-taped rehearsals.
- Utilize Tennessee State Content Standards, Common Core, and standards-based and internal standards to develop unit assessments, unit plans, and lesson plans that enable students to access and master age-appropriate skills and content each year.
- Craft standards-based lesson plans following a logical "I do, You do, We do" format that are appropriately rigorous for the grade level and that include sufficient time for independent practice and concrete checks for understanding to assess to what degree each student met the lesson objective and prevent misunderstandings that may lead to misbehaviors.
- Serve special needs students appropriately and effectively to ensure they reach ambitious academic goals in accordance with their Individualized Education Plans.
- Provide strategic, targeted English Language Development for ELLs so they are equipped to meet the same ambitious academic goals as native-English speakers.
- Participate in a professional learning community in which each educator is responsible for seeking and accepting critical feedback and support and committed to improving professional practices in order to advance student achievement.
- Commit to upholding the school-family-student commitment and expectations defined in the staff handbook and the family handbook.

Unique School Culture

We build school culture around common, research-based values¹⁸⁹ and offer a highly structured school environment, balancing the rigor of educational excellence with the joy that comes from high achievement. Cultural elements include:

- **FIRST Values**
- **Moral Development**
- **Sweat the Details**
- **Behavior Management Cycle**
- **Family Involvement**
- **College Emphasis**
- **Joy and Rigor**

FIRST Values. With a clear and strict Code of Conduct as one important foundation for academic achievement, Nashville Classical will build a school-wide and classroom culture that rewards and teaches positive behavior. Our culture of positive behavior is based upon the teaching and practice of our Core Values of **FIRST: Focus, Integrity, Resilience, Scholarship, and Team.**

¹⁸⁹ Peterson, Christopher; Seligman, Martin E. P.. *Character strengths and virtues: A handbook and classification*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

- **Focus** - We keep our eyes on our goals.
- **Integrity** - We do the right thing because it's the right thing to do.
- **Resilience** - We know that hard work makes anything possible.
- **Scholarship** - We care about learning and we care about what we learn.
- **Team** - We work with all scholars to achieve.

In various courses, including social studies, science, and reading, students study a diverse array of modern, historical, and literary figures exemplifying our core values and use the values as common language to discuss their lives. Examples include: Thomas Edison, Sojourner Truth, Oprah Winfrey, Benjamin Franklin, Peyton Manning, Abraham Lincoln, Frederick Douglass, Sonia Sotomayor, Stephen Hawking, Mother Teresa, Thomas More, Plato, Gandhi, Buddha, Jackie Robinson, Characters from Fables, Myths and modern stories, e.g. Dr. Seuss's *The Giving Tree*, *The Lorax*, and Horton the Elephant.

Examples of individual actions correlated to the core values are included in **Figure 7.01**

Figure 7.01 – FIRST Values Examples¹⁹⁰

ACTION	VALUE
I am alert and engaged during class.	FOCUS
I keep my body still during learning so that my body shows focus.	FOCUS
I use time well. I don't dawdle or go to the bathroom or nurse unless I really need to.	FOCUS
I tell the truth immediately any time someone asks me a question, even if the truth is hard.	INTEGRITY
I make good choices in the bathroom. I use it, flush, wash my hands with one squirt of soap, dry my hands with one paper towel, throw away the paper towel, and leave, and I do not talk in the bathroom.	INTEGRITY
I do my own homework and do not copy other's work or let others copy mine.	INTEGRITY
I can receive a consequence without pouting or becoming upset.	RESILIENCE
I can do my homework every night even when an adult doesn't remind me to do it.	RESILIENCE
I show that I control my moods when I am in a positive mood.	RESILIENCE
I keep my papers, folders, coat, bag, and homework folder neat and in the right place.	SCHOLARSHIP
I use my learning tools carefully.	SCHOLARSHIP
I can walk silently in the hallway by myself like a scholar.	SCHOLARSHIP
I say "good morning," "please," and "thank you."	TEAM
I can walk in a straight line and I do not cut people or bump into people.	TEAM
I can play with or talk to anybody in my class.	TEAM

Each day ends with a brief classroom rhetoric period. During this time, the classroom teacher revisits one of the **FIRST** values and provides concrete examples of how students did or did not meet that value's spirit. In addition, the class is evaluated on all five values and earns **FIRST** blocks based on their ability to demonstrate core values. Grade level teams work together during Summer Professional Development to scope and sequence actions correlated to the school's values so that all students in the school are learning to walk in the hallways like scholars at the same time.

Moral Development. The goal of **FIRST** values is for students to exit Nashville Classical with a moral code that can serve them as they achieve personal excellence in high school, college, and life. This end goal is reflected by a child's growth according to Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development, as outlined in **Figure 7.02**, which provides a framework for actions that fulfill our core values.

Figure 7.02 – Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development

¹⁹⁰ These examples are informed by Edward Brooke Charter School's Character Education Standards

Stage	Behavior Orientation
Level I Pre Conventional	Children at this stage are focused on an obedience and punishment orientation, and conform to avoid “getting in trouble”. Students respond most strongly to explicit provision or denial of privileges.
Level II Conventional	Children at this stage are focused on conforming to acceptable roles in a given social structure. They do not want to be singled out as being bad and are concerned about pleasing others. Students respond most strongly to being acknowledged as being an exemplary member of their social group.
Level III Post Conventional	Children at this stage are internalizing beliefs about what is right and wrong, based upon recognition that mutual respect and acceptable behavior are necessary to maintain order in society. Students at this stage are more intrinsically motivated and will respond most strongly to opportunities to engage in self-reflection and opportunities to modify their own behavior.

Level I (Pre Conventional). In K-2, students are most likely to be operating at Level I behavior orientation. These students receive ongoing feedback about their behavior, so that they will know if they are “in trouble,” and adjust their behavior accordingly. Parents are sent daily behavior reports that exhibit a visual symbol to advise them of their child’s behavioral status. Happy face icons indicate that students met or exceeded the standard of behavior, plain-faced icons show that behavior was acceptable but not exemplary while sad face icons will indicate that students did not meet the standard of behavior. Students in these grades are granted or denied privileges such as recess or choice time based on their adherence to the school’s behavioral norms. During the day, students at the pre conventional stage will have behavior tracked using a color-coded behavior system. Similar to a traffic light, there are several colors in the system: gold and silver denote excellent behavior; green denotes good behavior; yellow denotes acceptable behavior; orange denotes unacceptable behavior; and red denotes chronic misbehavior. These visual cues will be particularly effective for our youngest students.

Level II (Conventional). In grades 3-6, students are most likely to be operating at Level II behavior orientation. Students in these grades receive behavioral feedback once per week, unless a behavior occurs of such gravity or is of such a highly positive nature that it warrants immediate parental notification. Students’ behavior reports integrate information on academic and social behaviors. The report is modeled after Excel Academy’s PREP reports.¹⁹¹ Students with a positive FIRST Report have special privileges in the school community. For example, they lead community circle or be given other visible, desirable jobs within their classrooms and grade level.

Level III (Post Conventional). In grades 7-8, students continue to receive FIRST Reports. It is our expectation that students are developing into a post conventional orientation where the focus is no longer on intrinsic rewards for desired behavior but rather on their identification with a core set of community values which they have internalized. As such, the primary reward for students comes from the internalized notion that they are contributing as committed citizens to their school community. We continue to recognize strong members of the school community, but do not include the frequent rewards that are part of the Level I and Level II stages.

We will use a token economy system starting in grade 3, wherein students will begin each week with \$100 of Classical Cash. They will keep cash based on the extent to which they exhibit positive social and academic behavior throughout the week. “Classical Cash” is usable to purchase desired, mission

¹⁹¹ Excel Academy in Boston, MA is a BES school with few disciplinary problems and is the highest performing urban middle school in the city. They use an elaborate system with an Excel database to track classroom behaviors, homework completion and socially acceptable acts within the school.

appropriate objects. Classical Cash can be used to purchase school supplies, books, and educational games as well as to defray the cost of elective weekend trips sponsored by the school. This is modeled after the system used by noted educator Rafe Esquith¹⁹² and later adopted by the Knowledge Is Power Program (KIPP) Schools. Students earn Character Cash individually, however their collective totals yield benefits for their entire class. Students lose Character Cash for exhibiting behaviors that do not uphold the school's FIRST values (i.e. unprepared for class, not paying attention, disrespect). Student paychecks are tallied at the end of the school day on Thursday and sent home for parental review and signature on Friday, to be returned to school on Monday. Paychecks tell families how students have done in the previous week with regard to attendance, behavior, and homework.

Sweat the Details. A child's ability to achieve post-convention moral development requires the utmost intentionality on the part of every teacher. Because of the demanding nature of our academic standards and our ultimate goal of preparing students to excel in middle school, high school and college, we believe it is essential that we create a culture and environment of order and respect in which our students can focus on academics. By establishing a high standard of behavior and addressing all minor infractions immediately, we can head off more serious offenses before they occur.¹⁹³ Creating this culture requires us to make our expectations clear to students in very detailed ways. We will focus on constant, consistent, and specific positive reinforcement of correct behaviors that will maximize instructional time. Likewise, Nashville Classical expects teachers to create a detailed playbook, as outlined in **Figure 7.03**, for their day that specifies exactly what happens and where at any given moment.¹⁹⁴

Figure 7.03 – Sweat the Details Example

Morning Preparation Prior to Student Arrival	End of Day Preparation Prior to Teacher Departure
<p>The teacher will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure breakfast area is neat and organized • set up breakfast • lay out Brain Work folders • places homework bin in student check in area • ensure classroom is neat and organized, including all chairs tucked in and all desks straightened • turn on computers • ensure Reading table is neat and all materials organized • set up for first block of Reading Mastery - this includes all books and materials in proper place (under the chair, on the chair, or on the table) • make sure math manipulatives are laid out and ready to go (on top of the windowsill) • make sure graphic organizer are made, ready to go • prepare classroom for Read Aloud lesson • make sure question of day posted and student cards are set • put out bin of books students bring from home (student book bins) 	<p>The teacher will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • post lesson plans on clipboard for all classes • reset the behavior chart back to green • make sure all photocopies are organized and ready to go • write up the objectives for the day (SS/Science, Read Aloud, Math) • make sure that every student has 3 sharpened pencils on their desk or in their pencil case (freshly sharpened pencils) • make sure classroom is neat and organized, including straightening the desks and filing papers in the proper location • make sure that their desk in the teacher work room is neat and organized • make sure that extra pencils, Reading Mastery pencils, and Guided Reading pencil bins are replenished and sharpened. • prepare any materials/graphic organizers used for next day's lesson. • hang any instructional signage from lessons.

¹⁹² Taken from Esquith's book, *There are No Shortcuts* New York: Random House, 2003.

¹⁹³ This concept is based on an article titled "Broken Windows" by James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling, which appeared in the March 1982 edition of *The Atlantic Monthly*. The theory states that attending to relatively minor problems, such as a broken window, will prevent larger problems from ever occurring.

¹⁹⁴ The playbook is borrowed from North Star Elementary in Newark, NJ where 100% and 96% of 3rd grade students scored proficient/advanced on the Math and Reading NJ Ask tests.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • put out snack bin for students who bring in their own snacks in the check in area • put out book baggie bin Monday mornings in the student check in area. 	
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Behavior Management Cycle. Executing a detailed cultural plan requires positively motivated students. Nashville Classical expects to systematically implement elements of *The Behavior Management Cycle* developed by Lee Canter. The Canter model is a tool to help teachers consistently and positively motivate all students to follow directions. The sequence is divided into three steps:

1. Teachers clearly communicate the explicit directions they need the students to follow.
2. Teachers use “Behavioral Narration” of positive support to students complying with directions.
3. Teachers take corrective action with students still not complying with teacher given directions.

Lead Founder Charles Friedman has attended Professional Development with Lee Canter on using the Behavior Management Cycle and implementing “Real-Time-Coaching.” As a result, Mr. Friedman was named Teach For America’s first “Real Time Coach” and used simple technology – walkie talkies and an ear-bud in the teacher’s ear—to train novice and veteran teachers in Philadelphia, PA, Camden, NJ, and Wilmington, DE to effectively use the Behavior Management Cycle.

Family Involvement. Parents are educational partners with the school, and we work hard to engage every family in the learning of their child and the life of the school. Beginning with initial enrollment, the administrative team meets individually with each family to welcome them to the school community and sign a Classical Contract of Excellence holding students, families, and the school accountable to attendance, performance, and behavioral expectations Please see **APPENDIX K** for our draft Classical Contract of Excellence, included in our Student and Family Handbook. Our commitment to continue to engage parents and families continue with a Family Orientation just prior to the beginning of the academic year as well as a Family Classical Night during each trimester of school. At Family Classical Nights, parents and guardians receive in-depth training on how they can be most effective in helping their children gain the foundation necessary for future academic success. Communication and involvement continues throughout the year in the form of conferences and progress reporting in the form of written daily and weekly reports (daily for conduct, weekly for homework and other assignments), as well as trimester report cards. We conduct annual family surveys to collect key information about parents’ evaluation of the school and their input regarding the school’s growth and development over time. Families are provided with a Student and Family Handbook, which outlines our approach to discipline and other school expectations. Please see **APPENDIX K** for a draft of the Handbook.

Each of the above strategies are described in more detail below.

- **Classical Contract.** Students, parents, and teachers together sign a Classical Contract of Excellence that articulates the clear expectations for behavior at the family orientation prior to the start of school. The purpose of this contract is to bring absolute clarity to the expectations and consequences of student behavior so that miscommunication never is the reason for student misbehavior. The Classical Contract is specifically cited when addressing all infractions,.
- **Home Visits.** Following the lottery, or the close of our enrollment process, we visit each new student’s family before their child begins at the school. Individualized meetings provide families with an overview of the school’s design, including our college preparatory mission, academic program, homework expectations, code of conduct, uniform policy and opportunities for family involvement. During meetings, families indicate formal support for school policies by reviewing

and signing a Classical Contract and staff uses the opportunity to assess student reading levels using the STEP assessment. For families that have limited English Proficiency, all documents are provided in the family's native language and the School Director is joined by a native speaker or translator from either the school's staff or a local community organization (e.g. South Nashville Family Resource Center, Conexions, etc.).

- **Classical Nights.** At minimum, we will host four Classical Nights throughout the year geared towards supporting families in helping their children achieve academic success. Classical nights are scheduled for
 - Before the first instructional day of school
 - During the first trimester report card period
 - During the second trimester report card period
 - At the end of the school year

Topics addressed will include: “How do I effectively help my child with their homework?” “What are the best techniques for Read Alouds?” and “How do I avoid a reading loss during summer or winter break?”

We also use these evenings to welcome families, provide them with an inviting environment to socialize with one another, and share the school's accomplishments. Leslie Hayes, Director of the South Nashville Family Resource Center, is a member of our Founding Board and will share her organization's best-practices in working with families to provide concrete strategies for supporting their children.

- **Frequent Communication.** We engage with families in the following ways on a regular basis.
 - Daily behavior report based on code of conduct
 - Weekly summary of learning objectives and HW for all classes each night
 - Bi-weekly phone calls to discuss student academic progress and character development
 - Monthly newsletter of classroom and school-wide news and information
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences.** Following each trimester, families are invited to the school for a parent-teacher conference to discuss the academic and behavioral performance of their children. These meetings include quantitative and qualitative evaluation of student achievement. Each conference includes assets and challenges as well as a concrete plan for moving forward. Conferences are mandatory; this requirement is articulated in the Student and Family Handbook.

College Emphasis. We “want every student college- and career- ready, prepared to compete globally... and promote a college-going culture.”¹⁹⁵ Sitting in a family's home during our first conversations, we articulate our goal of educating *every* student for academic and personal excellence in high school, college, and life. All expectations are framed as necessary components on the road to college.

- During morning rhetoric all students perform college chants.
- Banners, signs and information detail the college attended by their teacher.
- Starting in kindergarten, students visit two universities per year.
- Family members are encouraged to join all college field trips.
- By the time a student is in grade eight, they have visited a minimum of 20 college campuses and are able to articulate the necessity of a college degree, what is unique about a variety of colleges, and where they are thinking they may want to attend upon high school graduation.

¹⁹⁵ TN Diploma Project - <http://www.tn.gov/education/TDP/index.shtml>.

- Throughout the hallway are inspirational quotes about the importance of college and relevant role models who possess college degrees.

We recognize that students leave our doors and that we are not the college entry point; simultaneously, we see the power we possess to embed a college mindset in students and families from the beginning of their educational years. In the schools most successful with our target population, “[f]rom day one [they] create a college-going culture.”¹⁹⁶

Joy and Rigor. A strong school culture is the foundation from which our students will excel. Along with building character through our Core Values of **FIRST (FOCUS, INTEGRITY, RESILIENCE, SCHOLARSHIP, TEAM)**, and a uniformly enforced Code of Conduct, our academic program will be continuously infused with a strong element of joy. We believe that a school design focused sharply on high student achievement and character education can also be fun. The Joy Factor at Nashville Classical will be seen during Community Meetings, in the classroom, in the hallways, and during transitions. It taps into the overflowing energy of our students and embrace that energy in school. Elements of the Joy Factor include school chants, claps, cheers, and songs.¹⁹⁷

Example songs and cheers are included in **Figure 7.04** and **APPENDIX X**, which contains excerpts on

Figure 7.04 – Joy and Rigor Examples

Context	Example
During Morning Rhetoric	School sings: (To the tune of “We Will Rock You”) Nashville, Nashville, CLASSICAL! CLASSICAL! Nashville, Nashville, CLASSICAL! CLASSICAL! Teaches you RIGHT So you’re not WRONG Teaches FOCUS and makes you STRONG. College for you! College for me! Change the world and make history! Nashville, Nashville, CLASSICAL! CLASSICAL! Nashville, Nashville, CLASSICAL! CLASSICAL!
Within The Classroom	Teacher leads the class in one of the following cheers: The Roller Coaster Raise the Roof High-Five / Air Five Kiss Your Brain (say I’m so smart) Truck Driver Firecracker Good Job Me Silent Cheer Seal of Approval (Barking like a seal) Train Whistle Hip, Hip, Hooray (touch each hip and shout hooray!) Oreo (pretend to lick palms and stick them together) Saturday Night Fever (Ah, ah, ah, ah, we did a good job, we did a good job!) Cowboy Cheer (use pointer finger like a lasso and say “yee haw!”)

¹⁹⁶ Whitman, David. *Sweating the Small Stuff: Inner City Schools and the New Paternalism*. Thomas B. Fordham Institute. June 2008. p.266.

¹⁹⁷ The “Joy Factor” and the “Joy Factor Bible” are a critical part of the success of Leadership Prep Charter School in Brooklyn, NY.
<http://www.uncommonschools.org/lpcs/home/>.

	Snap, Crackle, Pop – (Snap, rub hands, clap) Rattlesnake (ssssss) Ketchup bottle (hit fist like it's ketchup) WOW– (3,"o", 3 w/ fingers & mouth) Spiderman Cheer (pretend to shoot web out of wrists 4 times) Touchdown Cheer (throw the ball and show touchdown sign)
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Consequences for Negative Behavior

While our approach to student discipline is focused on proactive strategies and positive reinforcement, there are specific, succinct consequences for student infractions of the Code of Conduct. These consequences are consistently enforced without discrimination across the entire school. We understand the need to have a school-wide approach to discipline, as quality instructional time must be maximized.

If a student commits an infraction and the consequence called for is anything other than suspension or expulsion, staff members are authorized to address the infraction and invoke the consequence according to their professional judgment. The School Director and Dean of Academics are responsible for ensuring through professional development that teachers are applying the Code of Conduct in a uniform and equitable way. Teachers notify school leaders of any significant or repeated discipline issues and seek support from school leaders in finding ways to modify student behavior where needed. Slight, or low-level, misbehaviors are addressed within the classroom by the classroom teacher. Teachers implement a common conduct system that visually shows where students are behaviorally at any given time. For slight misbehaviors, students may move from "green" to "yellow," and as they move further they may lose classroom privileges such as Choice Time at the end of the day. If the consequence imposed is not effective, staff members may ask school leaders to intervene. If repeated interventions by school leaders are not effective, parents or guardians are asked to come to school to discuss the issue and design further interventions. The school reserves the right to insist upon parent or guardian involvement in resolving the disruptions before the student will be allowed to return to class.

School Rules and Code of Conduct. We believe that a common system of rules and consequences consistently and fairly enforced by all staff maximizes student time on task and academic achievement. This system is adopted from the school-wide discipline plan at STAR Academy Charter School in Memphis, TN.¹⁹⁸

School-wide Behavior Expectations

- Focus on the directions of school staff the first time given.
- Integrity means you respect yourself, others, and school property.
- Resilience requires you react appropriately if and when you receive a correction
- Scholarship matters - complete work as directed and in a timely manner.
- Teammates keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves.

Rewards

Kindergarten to Grade 2 - Classical Color Chart

Each classroom will contain a simple Color Chart system with the names of every child written onto a card-chart that contains the colors below. The wheel will contain 6 colors and is used both to reward

¹⁹⁸ Former STAR Academy Principal Kia Tate met with Lead Founder Charlie Friedman in August 2011 to discuss student culture and student achievement. Under her leadership, the school was awarded a Title I Distinguished Award from the state of Tennessee.

students who show FIRST values and as a consequence for **Level 1 Misbehaviors** (See below). The colors are: Gold, Silver, Green, Yellow, Orange, and Red.

All students begin the day at green and return to green during Morning Break, Afternoon Break, and the end of the day. Likewise, every child's desk contains a STAR tracker with thirty boxes. A child earns 1 star (a simple stamp) for reaching Silver and two Stars for reaching Gold. While children can move down at any time, they cannot move back up to Silver or Gold. Instead, they can only reach green.

Students always receive one warning before their card changes and, using a dry-erase marker on the laminated chart, teachers will put a check on the student's pocket as a visual reminder of the warning.

During Break, teachers stamp 0, 1 or 2 stars onto a child's stamp sheet and the teacher notes the color with one letter (e.g. G = Gold) on a personal tracker. The personal tracker is returned to an intern who enters all student behavior into the school's data information system, Kickboard. Children bring their stamp sheet home each day and receive new stamp sheets on Wednesday morning and earn stamps to participate in a variety of incentives (**Figure 7.05**).

An additional advantage of the stamp system is it prepares children for the token economy in middle school and builds counting skills (Counting by ones and base-tens, conservation of number, principles of addition and subtraction) for primary students. Teachers might use a child's stamp sheet during their Math Block to teach that addition means add or to explain that 10 always means 10 and cannot turn into 8 without taking something away from it.

Grades 3 - 8

Beginning in grade 3, Nashville Classical utilizes a Paycheck System. Closely resembling the stamp system, this token economy encourages middle school students to track their own behavior and work towards rewards (earned through Classical Cash) and consequences (the result of demerits). Incentives are described below and look similar for all grades K-8. The exception being that Classical Cash replaces the Classical Chart system in grade 3 and the two groups will hold separate celebrations: the Classical Lunchbox, Classical Crown, Classical Wednesdays, etc.

Figure 7.05 - Incentive System (Elementary Focused)

Nashville Classical Incentive System		
Daily	Weekly	Long-Term
Treasure Box - Any child who earned 3 or more stamps in a day earns the Treasure Box, a box that contains small prizes such as pencils, erasers, and pens.	Classical Wednesdays - Any child who earned more than 10 stamps in a week has the opportunity to join Classical Wednesdays, a 15 minute celebration with the whole school that includes music and games.	Classical Prize Closet - Any child who receives more than 20 stamps is allowed to enter "The Classical Prize Closet." Off-limits to anybody else, this room contains large toys and prizes donated to the school.
Green, Silver, and Gold Game Breaks - Any child on Green or Above can choose to play a game during his or her break.	Classical Crown - The class that earned the most stars will receive the Classic Crown. This fun, child friendly crown lives in their classroom for the week and can be worn by teachers or different students.	Classical Family Raffle - At each Classical Night, families will receive raffle tickets that correspond to the number of stars their children earned that Trimester. They will then be entered into a school-wide raffle for prizes that might include extra uniforms, gift certificates to bookstores, or educational computer games.

Note Home to Parent/Guardian – A daily report on a child’s paper that lists the # of stamps a child received that day and explains any of the day’s misbehaviors.	Treasure Box – Small prizes (e.g. erasers, pencils, pens) will transition into a weekly prize at the end of the first trimester.	
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Building out rewards into daily, weekly, and long-term components helps students to achieve personal excellence as specified by Kohlberg’s Moral Development.

Non Academic Periods

The classroom system will continue when students leave their classroom for non-academic classroom periods including Physical Education, small group instruction, Art, etc. During lunch, classrooms will compete for the **Classical Lunchbox** by earning daily points that are visibly tracked. Each week, during Classical Wednesdays, students from the class with the most lunchbox points will also enjoy a small treat.

Consequences

The committing of a disciplinary offense by a student on school grounds before, during, and after school hours, while traveling for a school activity, and during field trips or other school functions will result in a consequence as outlined in **Figures 7.06 – 7.09** below. Consequences are administered at the discretion of the teacher and administration. In all cases, they are meant to fit the students’ action and offer the structure required for all decisions to be fair and the flexibility required to treat all children as equal.

Figure 7.06 Level One Offenses - Mild Student Misbehavior

Level One Offenses	Level One - Possible Consequences
Failure to comply with school expectations Dress code violation Unexcused absences/unexcused or excessive tardiness Being in unauthorized area/not having hall pass Having unauthorized food, gum, etc. Littering	Yellow - Loss of game privileges for half of snack, break, etc. Student receives one warning before their clip is moved down to yellow. Orange – Loss of full privileges for snack, break, etc. Student receives one warning before their clip is moved from yellow to orange. Red – (multiple Level 1 consequences) Loss of playtime during recess (if A.M.) or loss of playtime during next day’s recess and teacher calls home to parent. Occurs after child is on Orange and has received one warning. Demerit – Grades 3-8.

Figure 7.07 Level Two Offenses – More Serious Student Misbehavior

Level Two Offenses	Level Two - Possible Consequences
Multiple Level One Offenses (Two Consecutive times put on RED in one day or 3 Demerits in a single day). Threatening peers False accusations Cheating/plagiarism/forgery Offensive behavior/use of profanity or obscene language toward peers (for students in kindergarten and first grade)	Student conference and administrator conference. Administrator makes parent contact. Loss of multiple classroom privileges or recess and parent observation of student (K-2). Lowering of grade/assignment of failing grade and parent contact (for cheating/plagiarism/forgery) Conduct grade will be lowered

Possession of obscene materials Unauthorized or inappropriate use of the Internet, computers, or software Gambling Theft (for students in K-3) Damaging or destroying school supplies/property (for students in kindergarten through second grade) Disrespectful language/behavior towards peers	
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Figure 7.08: Level Three Offenses - Severe Student Misbehavior

Level Three Offenses	Level Three Consequences
Continued Level One or Level Two misbehavior (3 or more consecutive days where a child earned Red in conduct; 15 or more demerits in a week.) Fighting/violent behavior (resulting in minor injury) Threatening peers (for students in third through fifth grade) Bullying and harassment of peers Bus related misbehavior/disruptive behavior in a motorized vehicle Disrespectful/defiant behavior toward school personnel Theft (for students in Grades 4-8) Damaging or destroying school supplies/property (for students in third through fifth grade) Offensive behavior/use of profanity or obscene language toward peers	Disciplinary office referral and administrative parent contact Conduct grade will be lowered Administrative consequences include, but will not be limited to: Parent/student conference Behavior contracting In-school suspension (loss of classroom privileges and recess) Out-of-school suspension

Figure 7.09: Level Four Offenses - Zero Tolerance Behavior

Level Four Offenses	Level Four Consequences
Fighting/violent behavior resulting in serious injury or with the use of a weapon Assault and battery against a school community member Possession of a weapon or explosive device of any kind Possession, use, or distribution of illegal or unauthorized prescription drugs	Disciplinary office referral and administrative parent contact Conduct grade will be lowered Administrative consequence: School expulsion (for a maximum of one year)

Expulsion or Suspension

At the discretion of the staff of Nashville Classical, students may be required to issue a verbal or written apology to the community as a consequence for their behavior. Parents are notified immediately if a student commits a moderate infraction or any more serious infraction. Parents are fully informed at all stages of any disciplinary decision.

Short-term Suspension. If a student commits an infraction that calls for a consequence of short-term suspension (ten days or fewer), such action will be taken at the discretion of the School Director. According to TN State Law 49-6-3401:

(a) Any principal, principal-teacher or assistant principal of any public school in this state is authorized to suspend a pupil from attendance at the school, including its sponsored activities, or from riding a school bus, for good and sufficient reasons. Good and sufficient reasons for suspension include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Willful and persistent violation of the rules of the school or truancy;
- (2) Immoral or disreputable conduct or vulgar or profane language;
- (3) Violence or threatened violence against the person of any personnel attending or assigned to any public school;
- (4) Willful or malicious damage to real or personal property of the school, or the property of any person attending or assigned to the school;
- (5) Inciting, advising or counseling of others to engage in any of the acts enumerated in subdivisions (a)(1)-(4);
- (6) Marking, defacing or destroying school property;
- (7) Possession of a pistol, gun or firearm on school property;
- (8) Possession of a knife and other weapons, as defined in § 39-17-1301 on school property;
- (9) Assaulting a principal or teacher with vulgar, obscene or threatening language;
- (10) Unlawful use or possession of barbitol or legend drugs, as defined in § 53-10-101;
- (11) Two (2) or more students initiating a physical attack on an individual student on school property or at a school activity, including travel to and from school;
- (12) Making a threat, including a false report, to use a bomb, dynamite, any other deadly explosive or destructive device, including chemical weapons, on school property or at a school sponsored event;
- (13) Any other conduct prejudicial to good order or discipline in any public school; and
- (14) Off-campus criminal behavior that results in the student being legally charged with a felony and the student's continued presence in school poses a danger to persons or property or disrupts the educational process.

Likewise, law states:

Any principal, principal-teacher or assistant principal may suspend any pupil from attendance at a specific class, classes or school-sponsored activity without suspending the pupil from attendance at school pursuant to an in-school suspension policy adopted by the local board of education. Good and sufficient reasons for in-school suspension include, but are not limited to, behavior:

- (A) That adversely affects the safety and well-being of other pupils;
 - (B) That disrupts a class or school sponsored activity; or
 - (C) Prejudicial to good order and discipline occurring in class, during school-sponsored activities or on the school campus.
- (2) In-school suspension policies shall provide that pupils given an in-school suspension in excess of one (1) day from classes shall attend either special classes attended only by students guilty of misconduct or be placed in an isolated area appropriate for study. Students given in-school suspension shall be required to complete academic requirements.
- (c) (1) Except in an emergency, no principal, principal-teacher or assistant principal shall suspend any student until that student has been advised of the nature of the student's misconduct, questioned about it and allowed to give an explanation.

In such cases, the school will adhere to the following procedure, which is consistent with applicable federal and state case law (see *Goss v. Lopez* (419 U.S. 565)):

- The School Director shall make decisions regarding school suspensions.
- Student shall be informed of the charges and the evidence for those charges; where applicable, student will have the opportunity to explain his or her side of the events.
- School Director or his or her designee(s) will immediately notify a guardian of the child, in person or on the phone, and will send written confirmation by personal delivery or express mail within 24 hours of the decision to suspend a student.
- Guardians of the student will have the opportunity to have an informal discussion of the suspension with the School Director or his or her designee(s).
- School Director or his or her designee(s) may require the guardians to meet with representatives of the school before the student may return to classes.
- Alternative will be provided within 24 hours of any short-term suspension.

Long-term Suspension or Expulsion. Long-term suspension refers to the removal of a student from the school building for disciplinary reasons for more than ten days. Expulsion refers to the permanent removal of a student for disciplinary reasons. The following procedure, which again complies with applicable case law, is followed:

- The School Director will make decisions regarding any long-term suspensions or expulsions.
- Student is immediately removed from the class or the school, as needed.
- Student shall be informed of the charges and the evidence for those charges; where applicable, the student will have the opportunity to explain his or her side of the events.
- School Director or his or her designee(s) will immediately notify a guardian of the child, in person or on the phone, and will send written confirmation by personal delivery or express mail within 24 hours of the decision suspend or expel.
- School Director or his or her designee(s) will set a date for a formal hearing and notify guardians in writing of the date, time, and place of the hearing, as well as:
 - The charges against the student;
 - A summary of the supporting evidence; and
 - Their right to be represented at the hearing (at their own expense) by an attorney, present evidence, and question witnesses.
- After the hearing, the School Director or his or her designee(s) presiding at the hearing will issue a written decision, which will be sent to the student's guardians and the Board of Directors and placed in the student's permanent file.
- If the School Director or his or her designee(s) find that long-term suspension or expulsion is indicated, the guardians of the student may appeal this decision to the Board of Directors within ten days of the decision to suspend or expel.
- Such appeal will be heard at the discretion of the Chair of the Board by a Director sub-committee (one or more Directors designated by the Chair); in such cases, the guardians will be again notified in writing of the date, time, and place of the hearing, as well as:
 - The charges against the student;
 - A summary of the supporting evidence; and
 - Their right to be represented at the hearing (at their own expense) by an attorney, present evidence, and question witnesses.
- Alternative will be provided within 24 hours of any short term suspension.

Providing Instruction During Removal. In order to ensure academic progress, alternative instruction will be provided to students who have been suspended or removed. The method and form of this alternative instruction will be determined on a case-by-case basis. In all situations, the method and form will be selected with the goal of maximizing the student's academic progress. It will enable the student to master material, complete assignments, and participate in assessments. Instruction will commence within one day of a student's being removed or suspended. In such cases, instruction will occur within the school facility, at the student's home, or at a contracted facility reasonably accessible to the student. It will occur during the school day, before school hours, or after school hours. Instruction will be provided by teachers, teaching aides, trained volunteers, individuals within a contracted facility, or tutors hired for the purpose. Staff will receive professional development on how to best educate students who have been removed from the classroom due to discipline issues. Immediately, teachers will receive professional development on positive behavior support in order to avoid future incidents and, for staff supporting the disciplined students, professional development will focus on how to organize curriculum to minimize missed content. Typically, these sessions will include weekly one-on-one meetings with the School Director or Head of Academics during a teacher's planning period or after school. In school-wide sessions, teachers will compliment discussions of individual student misbehaviors with neutral discussions of data. Looking at behavioral data collected by an administrator during walk-throughs that describes the number of students whose clips were moved down, what the clips were moved down for (objective or subjective behaviors), and organizes misbehaviors by demographic and subgroup, will support teacher's ability to build positive classroom culture in the future. This is, indeed, a step recommended by the DoE to reduce the number of removals and minimize missed instruction.¹⁹⁹

Policy for Infractions which Constitute a Violation of Law. Infractions that are violations of municipal, state, and federal law (such as weapons possessions, assaults, thefts, and possession of controlled substances) will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement authorities.

By focusing on the "small" infractions, we intend to create a culture that is orderly and conducive to learning and in which more serious offenses do not occur. Should they occur, however, we stand prepared to ensure the educational success and safety of all students by applying our Code of Conduct according the policies outlined above, investigating the facts, obtaining witness statements, and ensuring adherence to due process procedures.

If the School Director believes it is warranted, the student will be expelled. The School Director shall report to the Nashville Police Department any documentable or suspected incident involving illegal drugs, firearms, explosives, or other weapons outlined in TCA 39-17-1309.

Appealing an Expulsion

The School Director will give written or actual notice of the expulsion to the parent/guardian within 24 hours, including giving notice that the parent/guardian or student has five (5) days to file an appeal. All appeals must be filed, orally or in writing, within five (5) days after receipt of the notice of expulsion. The parent/guardian, the student, or a teacher requested by the student can appeal the decision. Absent a timely request for appeal, the decision of the School Director will be final. The appeal will be filed with the Governing Board of Directors. The hearing will be held no later than 10 days after the beginning of the expulsion. Notice of the time and place of the hearing will be provided to the parent/guardian, the student, the School Director and a teacher, if applicable, who chose to file an appeal.

¹⁹⁹ Sugai, G., & Horner, R. H. (2002). Introduction to the special series on positive behavior support in schools. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 10, 130-135. And Sugai, G., Horner, R. H., Dunlap, G., Hieneman, M., Lewis, T., Nelson, C. M., et al. (1999). *Applying positive behavioral support and functional behavioral assessment in schools. Technical assistance guide #1*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs.

The Governing Board of Directors may affirm the decision of the School Director, order removal of the expulsion unconditionally or upon such terms and conditions as it deems reasonable. The action of the Governing Board of Directors is final.

State Reporting

Nashville Classical Charter School shall include in each application to the Tennessee Department of Education for assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Act the following report of expulsions imposed in accordance with this policy as it applies to the Gun Free Schools Act:

1. the name of the school concerned,
2. the number of students expelled from the school, and
3. the types of weapons concerned.

Nashville Classical Charter School policies and administrative rules and regulations pertaining to student conduct shall be filed with the Commissioner of Education.

Discipline and Special Education Students

In the case of a special education student, or a student who receives 504 accommodations, Nashville Classical will ensure that it makes the necessary adjustments to comply with the mandates of Tennessee and federal laws, including the IDEA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Plan of 1973, regarding the discipline of students with disabilities. Prior to recommending expulsion for a Section 504 student or special education student, the School Director will convene a review committee to determine whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his or her disability; whether the student was appropriately placed and receiving the appropriate services at the time of the misconduct; and/or whether behavior intervention strategies were in effect and consistent with the student's IEP or 504 Plan. If it is determined that the student's misconduct was not a manifestation of his or her disability, that the student was appropriately placed and was receiving appropriate services at the time of the misconduct, and that the behavior intervention strategies were in effect and consistent with the students IEP, the student may be expelled.

8. PERSONNEL

Employment Policies

Nashville Classical believes teacher quality drives our school and every employee is part of a team dedicated to academic success and personal excellence in high school college and life. The relationship between Nashville Classical and its employees is described in the Staff Handbook in **APPENDIX Y** and includes the details below.

- **Equal Opportunity Employer.** Nashville Classical will not discriminate against any potential or current employee based on the basis of ethnicity, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, disability, or any other protected classification, in accordance with applicable law.
- **No Child Left Behind.** Nashville Classical will comply with the provisions of the No Child Left Behind Act as they apply to highly qualified certificated personnel and paraprofessional employees of charter schools.
- **Credentials.** Teachers of core content areas at Nashville Classical (English Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social sciences) will be required to hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold. Nashville Classical will work to minimize our use of Emergency Credentialed Teachers.
- **Employee Records.** Nashville Classical will comply with all State and Federal laws concerning the maintenance and disclosure of employee records. Copies of each teacher's credentials will be kept on file in the main office and will be readily available for inspection. School administration will review teacher credentials annually.
- **Background Checks.** Nashville Classical will comply with **Tenn. Code 49-5-413** regarding the requirement to fingerprint and obtain background clearance of employees. Prior to the first day of work with students, Nashville Classical will process all background checks. In addition, all employees must provide: Up-to-date medical clearance of communicable disease and a negative Mantoux Tuberculosis (TB) test; A full disclosure statement regarding a prior criminal record; Documents establishing legal employment status; Contact information for at least two (2) professional and one (1) personal reference.
- **Employee Welfare and Safety.** Nashville Classical will comply with all Local, State, Federal, and relevant District policies concerning employee welfare, health, and safety issues. These include, but are not limited to, the requirement for a drug- and tobacco-free workplace.
- **Exempt vs. Nonexempt Employees.** Nashville Classical may hire hourly employees to support the school's enrichment program or office staff. All teachers are classified as full-time employees. All contracts will comply with TN and Federal Law and, in all cases, the school's preference will be to hire a full-time employee.
- **Terms and Conditions of Employment.** All employees of Nashville Classical will be at-will employees. The terms and conditions for employment at Nashville Classical will be reviewed in detail during the interview process and reiterated in an offer of employment.

Hiring Process

As outlined in our Educational Philosophy in **Section II**, we believe that quality teachers and staff are necessary to achieve outstanding results. It is upon this results-driven philosophy that we make all policies and decisions – and most particularly regarding personnel. All faculty and staff of Nashville Classical Charter School must have a deep, focused alignment and commitment with the mission and vision of the school. In addition to hiring great teachers, there are additional beliefs upon which the school bases its culture, and a shared understanding of these beliefs is essential. These include: **(1)** All

children can and will learn. (2) All students must be reading at or above grade level by third grade. (3) All staff receives targeted, mission-driven, and individualized professional development. (4) Joy and rigor create a culture of achievement. (5) K–2 interim assessments address math and literacy development; grades 3-8 interim assessments address mastery of skill and content in each subject. (6) A longer school day/year and strategic daily schedule maximize achievement. (7) A deep, pro-active partnership between home and school fosters strong learning for every child.

Highly Qualified and Compliance. To guarantee all employees meet standards and licensing requirements, we have developed a detailed hiring process described below and in **APPENDIX M**. This process is true for both teachers and leadership team members with an emphasis added on data analysis, leading adults and case studies for the leadership team.

In addition, **Figure 8.01** describes sample logistics that will guarantee all employees will be highly qualified and how statuses are verified and progress is tracked along with basic compliance.

Figure 8.01 – Sample New Hire Steps

Step	Due By	Notes
Signed Letter of Agreement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Please print off and officially sign your Letter of Agreement ○ Mail to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nashville Classical Attn: Ops 217 South 10th Street Nashville, TN 37206 	ASAP (if not done already)	
Payroll and Tax Forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct Deposit Form (with check) • Form I-9 • Form W-4 • TCRS Form Certified ○ Mail to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nashville Classical Attn: Ops 217 South 10th Street Nashville, TN 37206 	6/10/13	Forms enclosed.
Personnel and MNPS Forms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Hire Sheet • Classical Team bio • Personnel Form ○ Email to Ops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ops@NashvilleClassical.org 	6/10/13	Forms enclosed. Your classification is “certified.”
Certification Transfer Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Depending on your level of experience and certification in another state, fill out forms as needed. 	6/15/2013	Personalized forms included.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If applicable, register for and take all applicable PRAXIS tests (save your receipt and NCCS will reimburse you). 		
Background Check and Fingerprinting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Read <i>Background Check Procedures</i> for specific instructions on how to complete this process. ○ Please drop off or mail receipt to NCCS Nashville Classical Attn: Ops 217 South 10th Street Nashville, TN 37206 	7/15/13	The MNPS office is open Mon-Fri 8-4, but avoid Mondays as lines tend to be long. Cost is \$48.
Set Up Benefits Meeting w/ MNPS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Call ahead 615-259-8484 to schedule ○ During your meeting you'll review your options for medical coverage and select your package. 	7/18/13	Consider scheduling at the same time as your background check as they are in the same location.

At all times in Y0, the Academic Achievement Committee's dashboard will indicate teacher licensure breakdown and make sure that no matter the profile—graduate from an in state education program, graduate from an out of state education program, graduate from a foreign country's education program, or pursuing an alternative route certification— teachers are appropriately highly qualified.

Staff Recruitment. We will recruit and hire staff who possess the qualifications to work successfully with the target student population, deliver the education program effectively, and support and sustain the school's college-going culture. To ensure selection of the highest quality staff, we will implement the following selection process:

- Posting of job openings (career and education websites, newspapers, Schools of Education, referrals, and email)
- Request of a resume, cover letter, and short essay responses
- Brief screening interview (in-person or by phone)
- Sample teaching lesson followed by debrief with School Director (for instructional positions)
- Extensive in-person interview with members of the school's current staff
- Verification of credential and previous employment, State and Federal background checks, and professional and personal reference checks
- The School Director will make offers of employment to the strongest candidate

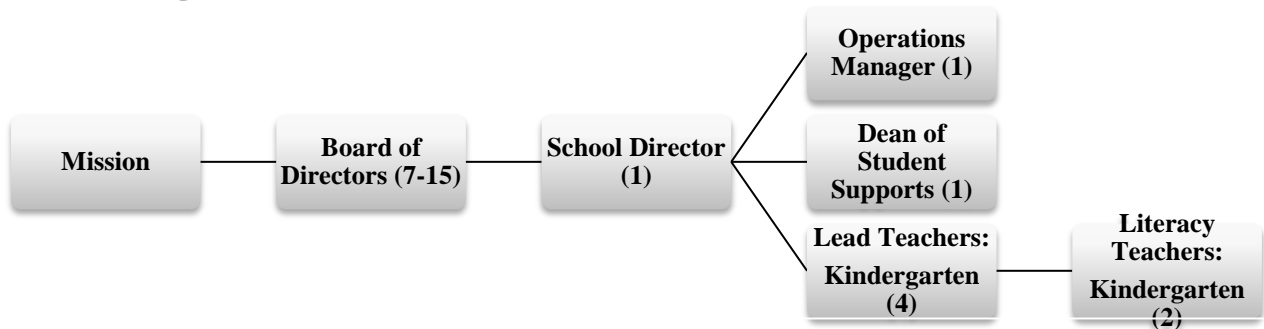
The school's organizational chart as seen in **Figures 8.02-8.06** outline the reporting relationships of the board, the school leader, and all school staff in Y1 – Y5.

Staff positions include: School Director; Dean of Student Supports; Dean of Academics; Lead Grade Teacher; Grade-Level Literacy Teacher; Special Education Teacher; Full-Time Specialist Teacher; Operations Manager; Office Manager; HS Placement Manager. In addition, we intend to secure an independent bookkeeping and accounting firm, hired by the School Director, to provide back-office services. We have budgeted for the services of an established firm to provide back-office support to stand-alone, start-up charter schools.

In the charts below, Lead Teachers represent a classroom-based Grade-Level teacher. Literacy teachers are either shared across two classrooms within a grade or are shared across two grades

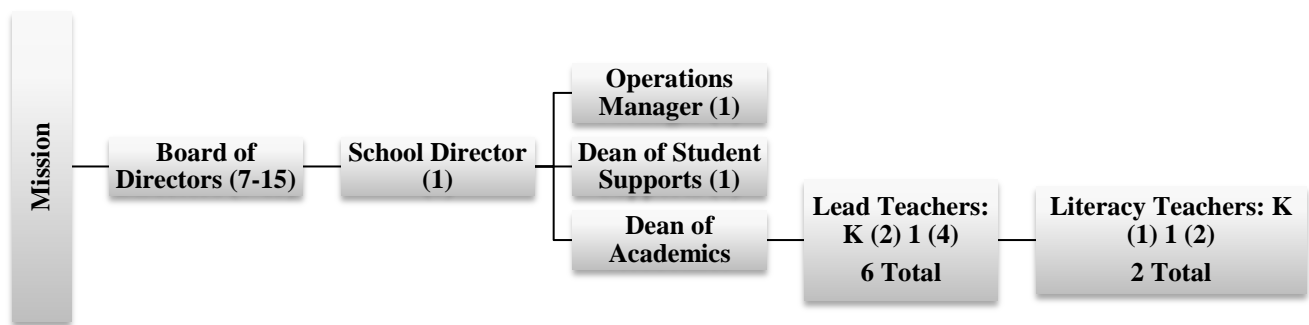
in the intermediate years. They teach enrichment and provide additional support and instruction during literacy blocks focused on basic literacy skills and Classical Roots.

Figure 8.02 – Organizational Chart: Year 1



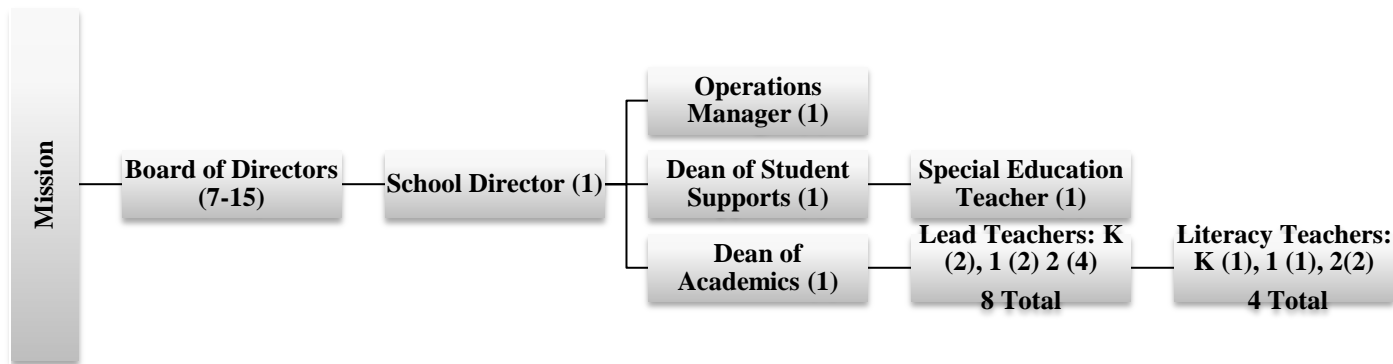
Nashville Classical will open with three (3) administrators: School Director, Dean of Student Supports, and Operations Manager. The school will also use an intern or part-time employee to man the front desk, who will be managed by the Operations Manager. In Y1, the staff to student ration is 1:12 and the teacher to student ration is approximately 1:18. Additionally, we reserve an additional 20k for hourly employees to assist the school’s ELL and Special Education programs as necessary.

Figure 8.03 – Organizational Chart: Year 2



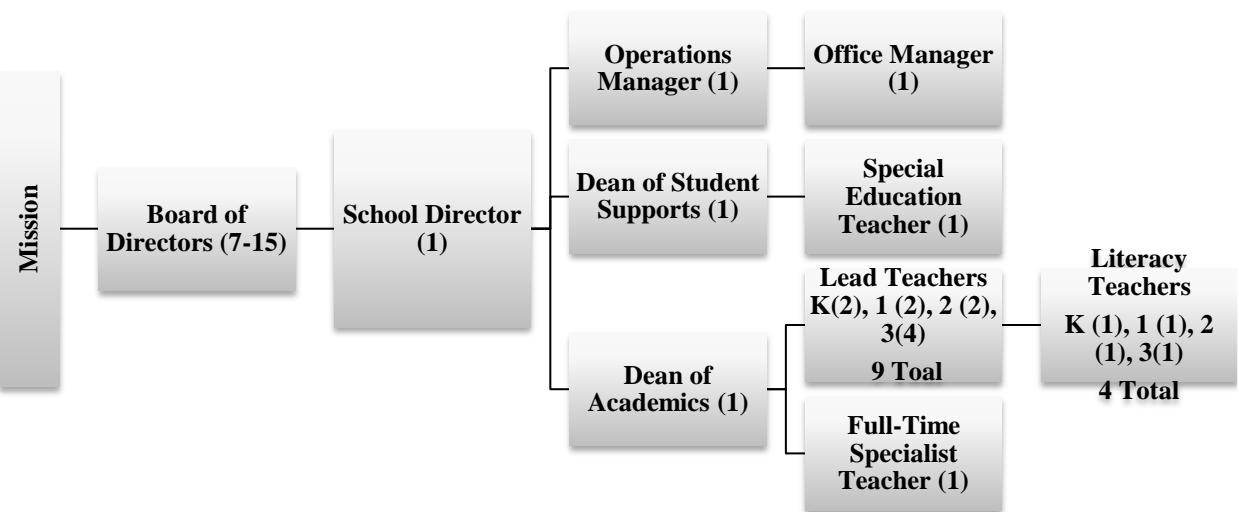
In Y2, the school adds a first grade teaching faculty. In addition, we add a Dean of Academics to review lesson plans, provide instructional leadership to staff and create capacity, in part so the School Director can facilitate our likely transition to a new facility. Without attrition in the school’s original class, the staff to student ratio is 1:13.5 and the teacher to student is 1:18. The instructional ratio during literacy remains at most 9:1 and during math workshop and writing workshop, the ratio averages 13:1. In Y2, we continue to reserve an additional \$20K to support the school’s ELL and Special Education populations.

Figure 8.04 – Organizational Chart: Year 3



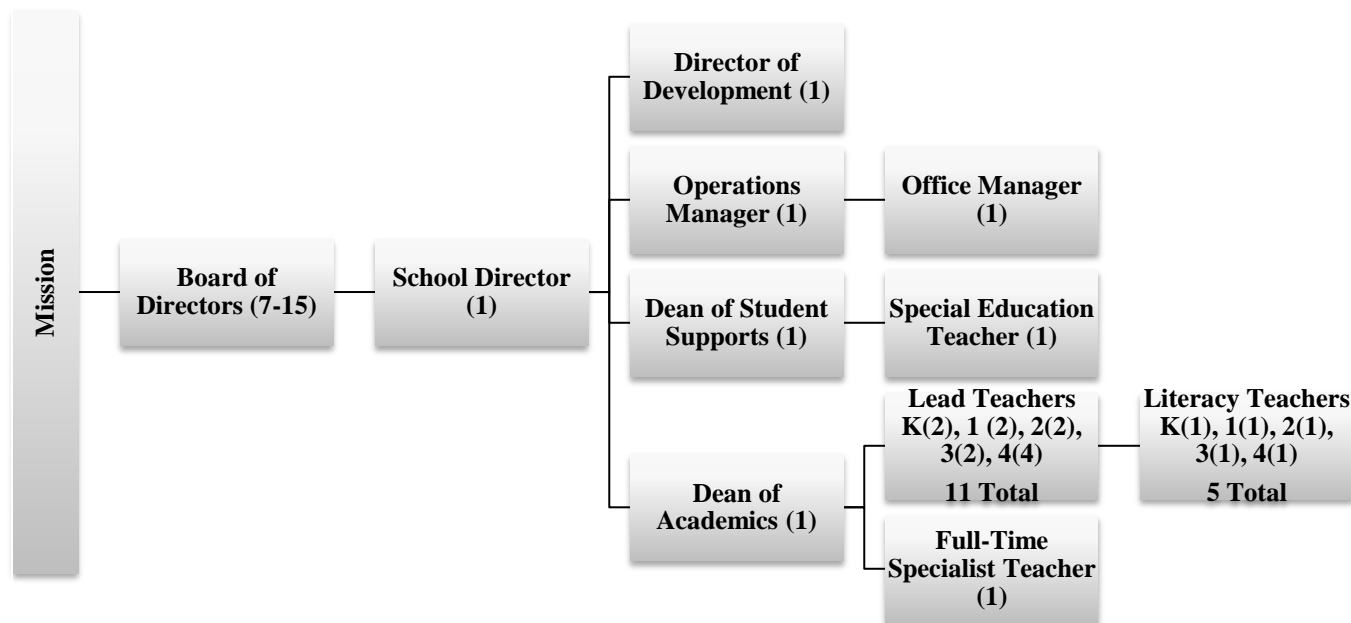
In Y3, we add a Special Education teacher to support a growing Special population. IN Y1-Y2, those serviced has been provided by the Dean of Student Supports, who is licensed in TN to provide special education. The Dean of Student Supports will manage the Special Education Teacher and the Dean of Academics will manager all 8 Lead Teachers. Student to staff ratio is 13:1 and the student to teacher ratio is 18:1. During literacy instruction, the student: teacher ratio is no greater than 9:1 and during writing and math workshop the ratio is 13:1. The school reserves \$40K for hourly employees to help manage special education, ELL, and enrichment programs.

Figure 8.05 – Organizational Chart: Year 4



In Y4, we add a full-time specialist teacher to teach Music and Physical Education and an Office Manager to assist with growing record keeping, compliance, facility and enrollment needs. The specialist teacher is managed by the Dean of Academics and the Office Manager is managed by the Operations Manager. In addition, we add a literacy specialist to offer extra support to the third grade classes. The student to staff ratio is 13.5:1 in this year and the instructional ratio during literacy is 9:1 in K-2 and 13:1 in grade 3. Finally, we reserve \$40K in hourly salaries for employees to support enrichment programs, ELL and special education needs.

Figure 8.06 – Organizational Chart: Year 5



In Y5, the school adds another four (4) teachers for the fourth grade and a full time teacher for literacy support in the fourth grade. In addition, the fourth grade team shrinks to reflect our enrollment plan, regardless of student attrition. We add a full time Director of Development whose salary is reflected in our budget assumptions and whose fundraising we anticipate will allow the school to repay facility debt or staff an additional instructional position. Finally, we have reserved \$60K for hourly employees, to staff additional capacity for enrichment, ELL, and Special Education. In Y5, with zero attrition, the school enrolls 324 students, staffs five (5) Leadership positions, one (1) office positions, one (1) Special Education Teacher, 11 Lead Classroom Teachers, one (1) Full-Time Specialist Teachers, and five (5) grade-level Literacy Teachers. The highest possible student to staff ratio is 13:1. The student: teacher ratio is 18:1. During literacy instruction, the ratio is 9:1 in K-2 and 15:1 in grades 3 and 4.

Supervisory Relationships

Each year's organizational chart indicates supervisory relationships while specific qualifications for each position are outlined below. The organizational chart will expand and add roles to support the growth of the upper elementary grades and recognize the fiscal realities of current revenue streams at that time.

While the Dean of Academics coaches and supports Grade Level Teachers and, in each grade level, one Lead Teacher coaches and supports the Literacy Teachers, the responsibility to hire, evaluate, and terminate employees belongs solely to the School Director. Likewise, in all years, the responsibility to hire, evaluate and terminate the School Director belongs to the Board of Directors.

Employee Benefits, Qualifications, and Responsibilities

Leadership, office staff, and teachers will be allowed to participate in the health benefits of the local LEA— in this case, Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools. Nashville Classical is prepared for MNPS to bill the charter schools for to employer portion of those benefits. Likewise, Nashville Classical is prepared for all of its teachers must participate in the Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (TCIRS). These requirements have been considered in the budget and budget narrative. All employees on the organizational chart above must meet qualifications (Figure 8.07) specific to their position and will exist as full time, exempt employees of Nashville Classical Inc.

Figure 8.07: Teacher Qualifications Summary

Position	Qualifications
Lead Teacher, Literacy Teacher, Enrichment Teacher Enrichment)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong commitment to, belief in, and alignment with mission and vision of school.• Tennessee state teacher credential or certification eligibility.• Minimum of a Bachelor's degree.• Minimum of one year working in urban education with a history of significant gains in student performance and/or growth (preferred).• Excellent verbal and written skills.• Experience or familiarity analyzing data and using data to inform decisions and/or instruction.• Strong organizational skills.• Openness to feedback, desire to continue development as professional, and willingness to take responsibility for student outcomes and achievement.
Special Education Teacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong commitment to, belief in, and alignment with mission and vision of the school.• Tennessee state teacher credential or certification eligibility.• Minimum of a Bachelor's degree.• State certification in special education.• Minimum of one year working in urban education with a history of significant gains in student performance and/or growth.• Experience in writing excellent Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and communicating the contents in an accessible way to multiple audiences.• Experience compiling and managing special education reporting data.• Excellent verbal and written skills.• Experience or familiarity analyzing data and using data to inform decisions and/or instruction.• Strong organizational skills.• Openness to feedback, desire to continue development as professional, and willingness to take responsibility for student outcomes and achievement.

Administrators

Role Descriptions: Administration

Qualifications and Certifications – School Director

Position Summary

The Board of Directors will hold the School Director of Nashville Classical accountable with regard to all aspects of the school's academic program, financial management, and organizational health. The School Director is entrusted with advancing the school's mission, maintaining the financial viability of the organization, and determining the future direction of the school in accordance with the mission.

Qualifications

- Strong commitment to, belief in, and alignment with school's mission and vision.
- Experience in leadership and management of both adults and students.
- Minimum of Bachelor's Degree; Master's or Advanced Degree preferred.
- Ability to assess data, find trends, and use information to make strategic decisions.
- Knowledge of or experience in education, school finance, governance, management, or law.
- Experience in budgetary planning, accounting, and effective allocation of school resources.
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills.
- Strong organizational skills and ability to multi-task.
- Ability to approach situations with optimism and perseverance, willingness to take personal responsibility, open to and interested in feedback on performance, eagerness to continue to improve in effectiveness, and steady determination to pursue excellence regardless of the situation.

Responsibilities

- Create, monitor and sustain school culture of academic excellence through consistent implementation of systems, and structures to maximize student learning.
- Manage and work closely with the Dean of Academics on all job responsibilities associated with the positions.
- Manage the Dean of Academics, Dean of Student Supports, Operations Manager as well as all other staff including representatives of all outsourced business functions.
- Lead all student community meetings in coordination with the Dean of Student Supports
- Lead all staff development and administrative meetings in coordination with the Dean of Academics.
- Manage and direct recruitment, hiring, and retention of all staff members, including salary, contract, and benefit orientations.
- Draft and provide evaluations of all staff members.
- Coordinate lottery, admissions, enrollment, and waitlist procedures for the school.
- Lead orientation, training and evaluation of all staff members.
- Implement all student discipline, code of conduct, and behavior standards in conjunction with other administrative and teaching staff.
- Review all student report cards before disbursement to families, or delegate to appropriate staff upon school growth.
- Serve as primary spokesperson for school to both internal and external constituents including media, community members, parents, political leaders and representatives, and visitors.
- Support and work with all Board committees as well as provide information, data, reports, and context necessary to assist in effective governance of the school.
- Manage and allocate school resources, including financial resources, in alignment with values of school; work with external back office providers and Operations Manager to evaluate the accuracy of all financial documents.
- Supervise and monitor daily inputs and outputs of school including accounts payable and receivable, cash receipts and disbursements, payroll/benefits, taxes, staff, and school supplies.
- Work with Operations Manager and Dean of Academics to prepare or oversee and submit required reports, evaluations, and data to all external and funding sources.
- Continue to develop a financial plan for school's capital needs in order to secure permanent facility for school.
- Inspire staff and student body to remain focused and determined in work of fulfilling the mission of school.

Qualifications and Certifications – Dean of Academics²⁰⁰

Position Summary

The Dean of Academics will be held accountable by the School Director with respect to teacher performance and growth, student achievement, and quality of curriculum. The Dean of Academics is entrusted with advancing the mission of the school through the management and development of a standards-aligned curriculum; participation in the evaluation, support, and development of teaching staff; and collaboration with the School Director on areas of instructional and/or curricular need at the school.

Qualifications

- Strong commitment to, belief in, and alignment with mission and vision of school.
- Minimum of three years working in urban education with history of significant gains in student performance and/or growth.
- Bachelor's Degree Required, Master's Degree preferred.
- Tennessee state teacher credential or certification eligibility.
- Experience in leadership and management of both adults and students.
- Ability to assess data, find trends, and use information to make strategic decisions.
- Strong knowledge of Common Core, Tennessee State Performance Indicators, and Tennessee Standards in all relevant grades and subjects.
- Knowledge of national content standards.
- Exceptional verbal and written communication skills.
- Strong organizational skills and ability to multi-task.
- Ability to approach situations with optimism and perseverance, willingness to take personal responsibility, open to and interested in feedback on performance, eagerness to continue to improve in effectiveness, and steady determination to pursue excellence regardless of the situation.

Responsibilities

- Embody mission, vision, core beliefs and strategic direction of the school.
- In consultation with School Director, help to develop and monitor a curriculum (scope and sequence, planning, etc.) that maximizes and enhances student learning in all core subjects.
- Plan and run staff professional development sessions as needed, and coordinate professional development sessions from outside resources.
- Serve as instructional coach for the faculty through regular observations, feedback, meetings, and additional metrics of support in order to provide a quality instructional program to students within the context of a disciplined school culture.
- Research and develop best practices to be implemented and supported in school.
- Analyze student achievement data as well as teacher performance data on variety of metrics, both quantitative and qualitative, and use information to collaborate with School Director on strategic plan and short- and long-term vision for school.
- Coordinate and manage administration of all standardized student assessments and evaluations, including state assessments, interim assessments, and nationally normed assessments.
- Review report cards for every student and provide feedback to teachers before review by School Director.
- Co-manage assigned aspects of school-wide routines such as lunch procedures, bus timetables, and before and after-school plans.

Qualifications and Certifications – Dean of Student Supports

²⁰⁰ This position is not hired until Y3.

Position Summary

The Dean of Student Supports will be held accountable by the School Director in regard to their performance and growth, student achievement, and quality of curriculum. All Special Education staff members are entrusted with advancing the mission of the school through the development of a rigorous, standards-aligned curriculum, responsiveness to feedback provided and collaboration with the Dean of Academics on areas of instructional and/or curricular need at the school, especially in relation to those students with special needs. This potential position will be determined by the needs of the students.

Qualifications

- Strong commitment to, belief in, and alignment with mission and vision of the school.
- Tennessee state teacher credential or certification eligibility.
- Minimum of a Bachelor's degree.
- State certification in special education.
- Minimum of one year working in urban education with a history of significant gains in student performance and/or growth.
- Experience in writing excellent Individual Education Plans (IEPs) and communicating the contents in an accessible way to multiple audiences.
- Experience compiling and managing special education reporting data.
- Excellent verbal and written skills.
- Experience or familiarity analyzing data and using data to inform decisions and/or instruction.
- Strong organizational skills.
- Openness to feedback, desire to continue development as professional, and willingness to take responsibility for student outcomes and achievement.

Responsibilities

- Draft and revise IEPs as necessary to ensure needs of special education students are being served.
- Deliver instruction using variety of targeted learning modalities in order to develop necessary skills (motor, language, cognitive, memory) using methods to enhance student achievement.
- Maintain detailed student IEP and 504 records according to state and federal guidelines.
- Provide daily tutoring to special education and other students, in individual or small group settings.
- Embody mission and vision of school.
- Create standards-aligned curriculum including scope and sequence, annual plan, unit plans, and lesson plans; develop interim, midterm, and final assessments as needed.
- Develop and implement ambitious, and standards-aligned lesson plans targeted with end goal of student performance at or above grade level expectations.
- Teach and enforce school-wide systems, rules and consequences, disciplinary codes, and rewards at all times.
- Provide engaging, motivating, and rigorous instruction in whole-class and individual settings.
- Provide academic support and tutoring to small groups or individual students as needed/scheduled.
- Analyze student achievement data in collaboration with Dean of Academics and School Director.
- Implement data tracking system and use data to inform instructional development and delivery.
- Communicate regularly and proactively with students and families.
- Draft student report cards and revise as required.
- Collaborate with other staff members and actively participate in all professional development and learning activities.
- Work to continuously improve effectiveness on in all instructional practices, using school's teacher performance rubric as a guide.

- Use feedback to make productive changes in performance.
- Complete all administrative requirements before given deadlines.
Participate in additional activities including field trips, intensive academic support sessions, and other required programs as needed throughout the year.
- Modeling the school's PRIDE values and setting the standard for professional behavior
- apologies and school culture messages at morning circles, town meetings, etc ...
- Keeping extremely accurate student discipline records, documenting all conferences, suspension, and cell calls for behavior.

Qualifications and Certifications – Operations Manager

Position Summary

The School Director will hold the Operations Manager accountable in regard to his/her performance and growth. The Operations Manager is entrusted with advancing the mission of the school through the development and implementation of a budget, coordination of external and internal operations, and fundraising and grant writing all of which will be done in collaboration with the School Director.

Qualifications

- Strong commitment to, belief in, and alignment with mission and vision of school.
- Possession of, at minimum, a Bachelor's degree.
- Minimum of five years of experience in operations and finance preferred.
- Proficiency or advanced knowledge in Microsoft Excel and Access, Quick Books and other financial management and human resources software (required).
- Knowledge of school finance, budgetary planning, and accounting principles (required).
- Excellent data management and reporting abilities.
- Demonstrated ability to multitask effectively and prioritize strategically.
- Prior leadership roles with demonstrated strong results.
- Ability to approach situations with optimism and perseverance, willingness to take personal responsibility, open to and interested in feedback on performance, eagerness to continue to improve in effectiveness, and steady determination to pursue excellence regardless of the situation.

Responsibilities

- Create and maintain high standards of financial management and oversight with regard to budgets, cash flow statements, expenditures and revenues.
- Ensure compliance with generally accepted accounting principles as well as all other requirements (federal, state, local, and suggested).
- Provide bookkeeping services to school using provided financial and accounting software.
- Provide regular feedback to School Director on tools and resources that may strategically improve financial management.
- Supervise daily accounting of school including accounts payable and receivable, cash receipts, payroll and benefits, general ledger, taxes, and allocation of non-financial resources.
- Research and apply to grants in accordance with general school guidelines, and manage disbursement and reporting of activities in collaboration with School Director.
- Prepare and submit all relevant reports, evaluations, and data to both internal and external agencies, funding sources, and parties.
- Report to and collaborate with School Director and interface with external back office support throughout budgetary process including establishment of priorities and maintenance of financial outputs on daily and/or weekly basis.

- Coordinate food service bids and contract for all student meals and snacks in conjunction with vendor selected and with School Director.
- Coordinate and implement strategy for teacher and student recruitment in collaboration with School Director.
- Oversee resources provided to all staff, including classroom resources, copy machines, phones, computers and technology.
- Provide verbal and written financial report at all Board of Directors Finance Committee meetings, in coordination with School Director.
- Serving as the liaison to the school's parent organization.

Qualifications and Certifications – Development Director²⁰¹

Position Summary

The Director of Development will be held accountable by the School Director in regard to his/her performance and growth. The Director of Development is entrusted with advancing the mission of the school through the development and implementation of a fundraising and grant writing program, all of which will be done in collaboration with the School Director. The starting salary for the Development Director will be commensurate with experience, education, and needs of the school.

Qualifications

- Strong commitment to, belief in, and alignment with mission and vision of school.
- Possession of, at minimum, Bachelor's degree.
- Experience in development, fundraising, and strategic planning.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Detail-oriented, strong organization skills, and clear adherence to time sensitive deadlines.
- Strong influencing and motivating skills and ability to engage diverse audiences.
- Proficiency in Excel, website maintenance and desktop publishing.
- Open to feedback, and willingness to take responsibility for raising funds, even in challenging economic contexts.

Responsibilities

- Strong commitment to and alignment with mission and vision of school.
- Set clear, ambitious, and feasible fundraising goals for school.
- Plan and implement strategy to meet fundraising goals.
- Research and write private, foundation, and government grant proposals successfully.
- Initiate and work towards successful stewardship of potential donors and build strong relationships with all school stakeholders.
- Develop marketing and communication strategy to create strong brand recognition and positive publicity in local, state, and national settings.
- Disseminate information to interested parties, as requested and as outlined in school plan.
- Develop and adhere to detailed, clear action plan to track grant proposal, reporting, funding, and solicitation deadlines.
- Prepare and manage all tools related to development including reports, marketing documents, and web site materials.
- Work with School Director closely on all job responsibilities.

Qualifications and Certifications – HS Placement Manager²⁰²

²⁰¹ This position will not be hired until Y5.

Position Summary

The HS Placement Manager leads the school's efforts to create a positive, structured, disciplined school culture. The HS Placement Manager is also responsible for coordinating efforts to place our scholars in high performing secondary schools and maintain contact with our alumni.

Qualifications

- Strong commitment to, belief in, and alignment with mission and vision of the school.
- Tennessee state teacher credential or certification eligibility.
- Minimum of a Bachelor's degree.
- At least one year of experience managing student needs as a counselor or similar role.

Responsibilities

- Providing leadership to all staff and students in establishing a positive, structured, achievement-oriented, and fun school culture.
- Leading the school's efforts to cultivate "the J-Factor" (Joy) in the Middle School.
- Coaching teachers to improve their instructional practice, especially as it relates to issues of preparing Middle School students for High School.
- Ensuring that ALL students have excellent attendance and come to school on time; keeping extremely accurate attendance records and working aggressively with students and parents to ensure excellent attendance.
- Being highly present and visible during school hours, relentlessly ensuring the school has an amazing school culture.
- Coordinating efforts to place our scholars in high performing secondary schools.

Qualifications and Certifications – Office Manager²⁰³

Position Summary

The School Director will hold the Office Manager accountable in regard to his/her performance and growth. The Office Manager is entrusted with advancing the mission of the school through the organization and running of all administrative tasks including phone calls, copies, newsletter drafts, filing, and record-keeping.

Qualifications

- College degree preferred but may be substituted for relevant experience.
- Three or more years of customer service or administrative experience.
- Strong organizational abilities.
- Detail oriented.
- Experience in clear, respectful communication with both adults and children.
- Preferred experience working in urban settings.
- Knowledge of office equipment and services including computers, printers, copiers, fax machines, phones, and software.
- Familiarity with Microsoft Office, especially Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.
- Open to feedback, willingness to take personal responsibility.

Responsibilities

- Strong commitment to, belief in, and alignment with mission and vision of school.

²⁰² The HS Placement Manager is not hired until Y8.

²⁰³ This position is not hired until Y4.

- Maintain accurate, complete, neat, and organized files for every student.
- Collects, enters, and maintains school data in administrative database.
- Creates purchase orders, tracks shipments, and follows-up on administrative needs with vendors, including ordering, receipt and maintenance of supplies.
- Maintains accurate attendance records and follows-up with families when students are not present at school.
- Coordinates all school mailings.
- Ensures strict confidentiality of personal student and staff records and data.
- Makes copies as needed.
- Supports Business and Operations Manager in operational duties, including lunch distribution, bus schedules, and inventory and distribution of supplies.
- Maintains enthusiastic greetings of all school stakeholders (in person, by phone, through email, and through mail) and provides information and directs communication thoughtfully.
- Communicates to all school stakeholders in thoughtful, calm, and knowledgeable way.
- Remains familiar with school policies, procedures, and operations.
- Drafts and edits documents, as needed.
- Completes other responsibilities as requested by School Director

Relationships within the Organization

In addition to the job descriptions outlined above, we have assembled a decision tree to ensure clarity of responsibility for teachers, staff, and leadership and to illustrate relationships within the organization. **Figure 8.08** outlines a sample internal decision tree for common school occurrences and operations in Year 5.

Figure 8.08: Sample Decision Tree

Responsibility of Question	First Line	Second Line
Supplies	Operations Manager	Office Manager
Teacher duties – bus, lunch, uniform line....	Operations Manager	School Director
Payroll	Operations Manager	School Director
Benefits	Operations Manager	School Director
Reimbursements	Operations Manager	School Director
Curriculum	Dean of Academics	School Director
Classroom instruction delivery	Dean of Academics	School Director
Instructional resources – academic	Dean of Academics	School Director
Grading policies/procedures	Dean of Academics	School Director
Benchmarking	Dean of Academics	School Director
Scope and sequence	Dean of Academics	School Director
Test prep implementation	Dean of Academics	School Director
Questions about lesson Plans	Dean of Academics	School Director
Testing	Dean of Academics	School Director
Schedules	Dean of Academics	School Director
Tests, assessments, analyzing data	Dean of Academics	School Director
Progress report distribution	Operations Manager	School Director

Alternate scheduling	School Director	Dean of Academics
Certification	School Director	Operations Manager
Purchasing approval requests	School Director	
Personal issues with students	Dean of Student Supports	School Director
Difficult parent phone calls	Dean of Student Supports	School Director
Teachers and students dress code	School Director	Operations Manager
Purchasing/Budgets	School Director	Operations Manager
Teacher Absences and Tardies	School Director	
Operations – buses, food, facility	Office Manager	Operations Manager
Maintenance of staff room	Office Manager	Operations Manager
Technological issues	Office Manager	Operations Manager
Internet problems	Office Manager	Operations Manager
Google documents – disc database	Office Manager	Operations Manager
Student Academic Difficulties	Dean of Student Supports	Dean of Academics

Teacher Quality, Professional Development, and Evaluation

Evaluation

Our Teacher Observation Rubric and Teacher Evaluation Cycle are informed by the successful framework of Uncommon Schools (North Star Academy); the KIPP Framework for Teaching Excellence; Teacher for America's Teaching As Leadership framework; and Doug Lemov's Taxonomy of Teaching as well as the TN TEAM Framework. All teachers are highly qualified (see **Figure 8.01**) and staff has been recruited aggressively and experienced a detailed vetting process (see **APPENDIX M**); however, we do not believe teachers will walk in the door ready to fulfill our mission. Instead, they require meaningful professional development and evaluation. For more detail on professional development, please see **Section II** and **APPENDIX O**.

Our Evaluation Cycle is built in two layers – one short cycle feedback, inspired by the work of Kim Marshall, and one of longer cycle feedback, which includes prioritized focus areas. The theory of our Evaluation cycle is that teachers should always be developing and working toward both longer and shorter term goals in order to increase effectiveness on multiple levels. Our cycle (**Figure 8.09**) covers multiple opportunities for feedback, spans the entire year, and is collaborative.²⁰⁴

Figure 8.09 – Teacher Evaluation Cycle

Teacher Evaluation Cycle Stage	Activity	Timeline
Set Expectations and Outline Teacher Evaluation Process	Introduce Teacher Evaluation Process and Expectations	Summer Professional Development (07/2013)
Set Professional Development Goals and Focus Areas	Set Initial PD Goals	Summer Professional Development (07/2013)
	Determine Focus Areas for Improvement	Ongoing (in cycles of 3-6 weeks)
Observe and Document Performance Provide Feedback and Coaching	Formal Whole Class Period Observation	Each Trimester
	Informal Whole Class Period Observation	Each Trimester
	Informal Short Observations	Weekly (2-3)

²⁰⁴ Note – We have also built this cycle based on successful pilot alternative evaluation process. Nashville Classical understands that the State Department of Education would need to approve our evaluation model. We are grateful for their research and evaluation design – it has also informed our own methods – and anticipate submitting a robust application to pilot our evaluation process post-authorization.

	Interim and Comprehensive Assessment Data	Each Trimester
	Teacher Self-Evaluation	Each Trimester
	Teacher and Dean of Academics Check-Ins	Bi-Weekly
	Review feedback of Lesson Plans and Curriculum Materials	Weekly
	Formal Debrief (following formal observation)	Each Trimester
	Live Instructional Coaching during Informal Short Observations	Weekly (2-3_
Year End Performance	Formal Evaluation	Each Trimester
	Comprehensive Evaluation	Yearly

Definition of Terms

Whole Class Period Observation. Whole Class Period Observations are at least 45 minutes at Nashville Classical. During the observation the Dean of Academics or the School Director will take time-stamped, neutral notes regarding teacher and student actions in relation to key elements outlined in our Teacher Evaluation Rubric. Each teacher will receive a minimum of three Whole Class Period Observations each year (1 per trimester). In addition to the three formal Whole Class Period Observations, the Dean of Academics or School Director will conduct an additional three 45 minute observations (more informal in nature) of each teacher. Feedback from the informal observations will come in the form of prioritized notes that outline strengths and areas for growth based off of evidence from the observation and supporting curriculum materials.

Self-Evaluation. All teachers at Nashville Classical engage in self-evaluation throughout the year. This occurs more informally through bi-weekly check-ins with the Dean of Academics in which teachers are evaluating their progress toward focused areas of improvement, but also through self-reflections and evaluation using our Teacher Evaluation Rubric. At least once a trimester, teachers will rate themselves on the rubric. The teacher ratings will be taken into account, and will be used to inform focus areas. A sample check-in agenda is below:

- How much and well are Students Learning– Review recent assessment data (4 min)
- Progress – What are they doing right? (3 min)
- Progress – What are YOU doing right? (3 min)
- Gaps – What do they need to do better? (5 min)
- Gaps – What do YOU need to do better? (5 min)
- Practice – What will this look like in your classroom? (5 min)
- Next Steps – How can we share accountability? (5 min)

Short Observation. The Dean of Academics or School Director will observe each teacher for short increments of 10-15 minutes at least twice per week. The goal of these observations is to look for evidence of growth in individualized focus areas (a sample focus area for school-wide professional development can be found in **APPENDIX Z** of this document). The Dean of Academics will provide feedback to teachers in one of two ways – a brief email detailing strengths, areas for growth and a question, or through a quick loop conversation, with the expectation of immediate implementation and change in either the next instructional period or the next lesson of the same content. We appreciate the ambitious nature of this schedule and have prioritized the use clearly developed and trained systems to maximize the efficiency of all other staff as well as the leader time schedules of other schools successfully managing a similar observation and feedback cycle.

Comprehensive Evaluation. All the components outlined above inform the Overall Performance Evaluation of teachers. This cumulative evaluation will be shared with teachers in the third trimester of the school year. All teachers will receive a written evaluation outlining the trends in their growth and development over the course of the year prior to engaging in a conversation with the Dean of Academics or School Director to discuss their Overall Performance Evaluation.

Decision to Terminate. While all Nashville Classical employees are at will, the Evaluation Cycle creates a fair, transparent process wherein teachers have regular updates on their progress and their standing with regards to continued employment. In cases where an instructional concern may lead to termination, employees will have received frequent observations, feedback and opportunities to improve. Our full teaching rubric can be found in the **APPENDIX AA**.

Achievement Data. Student achievement is central to our mission and the key to academic success and personal excellence. In the TN TEAM model, quantitative data represents 50% of a teacher's effectiveness score. We include Achievement as one of five rubric domains; however, knowing that the Department of Education is aggressively determining how to best measure non-TCAP grades and that multiple years of TCAP data is required to effectively determine a value added measure, we require current latitude and future study to fully define this domain. In grades K-2, we will use the Terra Nova and STEP assessment to grade the Student Achievement domain. In grades 3-8, we will use the TCAP, Terra Nova or (when evaluating non-tested teachers) a separate, pre-defined measure. For Deans, a separate rubric, using the same domains will be employed and quantitative student achievement will continue as a domain, used in a relevant and agreed manner (e.g. looking at achievement data for students with Individualized Education Plans for the Dean of Student Supports or looking at student achievement data for specific cohorts and teacher rubric growth for the Dean of Academics).

9. TRANSPORTATION AND FOOD SERVICE

Transportation

Charter schools are not required to provide transportation. However, to ensure that as many eligible and interested students as possible have access to Nashville Classical Charter School, the school has plans to offer limited transportation services to students, based on a to be determined radius from the school along with other factors such as proximity to main public transportation. To achieve the greatest cost and operational efficiencies while also properly distributing risk, Nashville Classical will contract with an established school bussing/transportation company in the Nashville area to provide transportation services to the school. The Board of Directors will solicit competitive bids for the contract with local companies in compliance with the purchasing requirements outlined previously in this application. Other parameters including types of vehicles and the qualifications of drivers will be confirmed with the contracting transportation company and will be submitted to MNPS for inspection and approval prior to implementation.

We do not anticipate offering after school activities or Saturday school and therefore will have buses run for morning drop-off and afternoon pick-up only. For early dismissal on Wednesdays, we intend to work with families so that they are able to arrange adequate childcare for their children. Please see **Section XII** for partners who can assist with the provision of after-care. Families will also have the option to drive or walk their children each day.

Special transportation will be provided when necessary for students with disabilities. As per state and federal laws and regulations, all personnel directly involved in providing transportation of students with disabilities will have training regarding the needs of students with disabilities.

Should Nashville Classical determine the need to purchase or lease vehicles, all vehicles will be covered by auto liability insurance of the following minimum amounts:

- \$1,000,000 per person
- \$5,000,000 each accident
- \$50,000 property damage
- \$5,000 medical/death payment

Vehicles will be inspected monthly by authorized service personnel and go through annual inspection by the TN Department of Safety.

We intend to work with charter schools currently operating to identify a vendor. Currently, Grayline Tennessee provides bus service in North, East and South Nashville. Please see **APPENDIX C** for examples of a sample route and note that our budget reflects a cost of approximately 47k for bus service in Y1. This cost would support one large bus that could hold approximately fifty total students. If we were able to raise funds, we would add a second bus in Y1 to run multiple routes at a cost of approximately \$94K.

Food Service

Nashville Classical Charter School intends to create an “invitation to bid” for meal services and require that all meal preparation, serving, and documentation must meet the guidelines of the national school lunch and school breakfast program. We will offer all students the opportunity to participate in the School Breakfast and National School Lunch Program but do not have the facilities to prepare meals for these

programs. As such, we will request local food providers to submit bids. In all bids, the price per meal will include: a reimbursable meal including milk, condiments applicable to the menu, serving utensils if applicable, packaging and containers needed to transport food in a sanitary manner, and transportation to and from the school. Any vendor must submit milk in a variety of fat contents as defined by current regulations of the National School Lunch Program.

Sample contract provisions and expectations include:

- Maintaining Tennessee Health Department Bi-Annual Inspection with a Passing Score
- Having a HACCP program in place and be able to provide proof of such
- Maintaining Daily Individual Meal Food Production Records
- Maintaining Daily Individual Meal Component Documentation
- Maintaining a “Buy American” Provision
- Maintaining 21-day Monthly Cycle Menus
- Making accommodations for Food Allergies
- Insuring hot meals maintained at 140 degrees or above and cold meals at 40 degrees or below prior to and during transport and delivery
- Providing meals that are individually packaged and sealed.
- All meals will be priced as a unit, which meet USDA requirements
- Any provider shall implement the “Traditional Menu Planning Approach”
- All meals and menus will be appropriate to the age of Nashville Classical’s students
- The provider substitute food components for a student with disabilities (7 C.F.R. Section 15b) if their disability restricts their diet.

Our budget builds assumptions that any revenue from the School Breakfast or School Lunch Program is spent on our food program and submitted as a reimbursement. Managing this process will be the responsibility of the Operations Manager.

10. FACILITIES

Beginning in July 2013, Nashville Classical intends to lease space from the Tennessee Charter School Incubator (TCSI) at 217 South 10th Street in East Nashville (East Head Start). Please see **APPENDIX B** for a letter of intent from TCSI. There is 4,500 square foot building (4 classrooms, administrative offices, food prep area) on the site as well as two modular buildings which have an additional 6 classrooms, administrative space, storage, and a third modular that contains a multipurpose room large enough to hold our entire first class of students. The space is currently being occupied by a charter school, Liberty Collegiate Academy, which intends to move out by June 2013.

The property is being leased by TCSI from Metro Nashville for a 10-year period (2011-2020) and will be sub-leased to NCA under substantially the same terms. The school will pay approximately \$115,000 in rent per year for the two-year period as well as operating and maintenance costs for the building (excluding capital improvements). The budget of Nashville Classical reflects these costs.

In early 2014, Nashville Classical will determine if the site can be used beyond 2015, in which case the school will negotiate a renewed lease term with TCSI. If the space does not meet the needs of the school beyond year two, Nashville Classical will seek other facilities options (purchasing or lease).

Facilities Options after Year Two

The most central priority Nashville Classical will have throughout the process is to select a long-term facility that is consistent with its mission and the needs of Metro Nashville Public School's families. As such, we would hope to secure a long-term facility option in East Nashville or downtown Nashville and accessible to families from North Nashville, East Nashville and South Nashville (to the fairgrounds).

In seeking a long-term facility option for Nashville Classical, the school and TCSI recognize that there are a number of challenges in securing an affordable and functional facility:

- Public space is not consistently available for lease by charter schools.
- Charter schools typically locate in low-income areas where the quality of potential buildings is often poor (requiring extensive renovations to meet the needs of the school as well as to meet code requirements).
- Few lenders are willing to loan to new and early-stage charter schools without outside support (i.e. credit enhancements, loan guarantees).
- Charters do not receive public funding for capital expenditures (acquisition and/or improvement of facilities).

To address these challenges, TCSI is establishing a Facilities Fund ("Fund") that would help new and existing Nashville charter schools, including Nashville Classical, access affordable facilities financing to secure space. The Fund would be used to back loans for charter schools to purchase, build, and/or renovate properties – public or commercial. More specifically, the Fund would serve as equity, credit enhancements, and/or loan loss reserves for facilities financing transactions. This type of risk mitigation is critical in enticing lenders to work with relatively new charter schools like Nashville Classical that have a limited track record. TCSI has been in active discussions with national and local foundations to provide resources for the Fund as well as national and local lenders who are interested in working with Nashville charter schools. While Nashville Classical will look for opportunities to lease public space (if available) or space from a private owner (i.e. former private school buildings or community buildings) for the longer-term, the school thinks it is likely that it will have to pursue commercial space.

In evaluating each facility opportunity, the school will work with the Tennessee Charter School Incubator and real estate and architectural partners to assess whether the facility can meet the space requirements of the school (i.e. number of classrooms, common areas, teacher work rooms, recreational space). Below is a table (**Figure 10.01**) that outlines specific space requirements that Nashville Classical will have years three through seven.

Figure 10.01 – Space Requirements in years three through seven

Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Office Space • Teacher work room • 9 classrooms • 1-2 rooms for pull-out, tutoring, and testing. • Food prep area • Restrooms (number of restrooms dependent on code) • Multi-purpose room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Office Space • Teacher work room • 13 classrooms • 1-2 rooms for pull-out, tutoring, and testing. • Food prep area • Restrooms (number of restrooms dependent on code) • Multi-purpose room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Office Space • Teacher work room • 15 classrooms • 1-2 rooms for pull-out, tutoring, and testing. • Food prep area • Restrooms (number of restrooms dependent on code) • Multi-purpose room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Office Space • Teacher work room • 17 classrooms • 3-4 rooms for pull-out, tutoring, and testing. • Food prep area • Restrooms (number of restrooms dependent on code) • Multi-purpose room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Office Space • Teacher work room • 19 classrooms • 3-4 rooms for pull-out, tutoring, and testing. • Food prep area • Restrooms (number of restrooms dependent on code) • Multi-purpose room

For budgeting purposes, Nashville Classical has projected annual costs for several facilities options:

Leasing option

In a leasing scenario, Nashville Classical is budgeting to lease space with the square footage increasing as the school grows (e.g. leasing a district building or a school building that is privately owned). This might also include a commercial space which is renovated by a private developer and leased back to Nashville Classical. In developing assumptions (**Figure 10.02**), the school considered industry standards on space requirements, and comparable costs in the local market for lease rates and operating expenses. To create conservative estimates, the school assumed enrollment with minimal attrition to determine the maximum space that could be required.

Figure 10.02 – Leasing Option

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Enrollment	216	270	316	360	400
Square feet per student (1) (2)	75	75	75	75	75
Required space	16,200	20,250	23,700	27,000	30,000
Lease rate (\$7 per square foot)	\$113,400	\$141,750	\$165,900	\$189,000	\$210,000
Operating costs (\$4 per square foot)	\$64,800	\$81,000	\$94,800	\$108,000	\$120,000
Insurance costs	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Total facilities costs	\$193,200	\$242,750	\$285,700	\$327,000	\$360,000
<i>Per student cost</i>	<i>\$894</i>	<i>\$899</i>	<i>\$904</i>	<i>\$908</i>	<i>\$900</i>

Annual Costs for Leasing Option

- (1) According to Self-Help, a national charter school lender, schools should plan for at least 75 square feet per student (though 100 square feet per student is ideal).
- (2) The school will most likely not have a gymnasium or auditorium due to the costs of developing this type of space. Nashville Classical will look for opportunities to partner with community organizations such as the YMCA, local centers, Y-CAPs or public parks for recreational space.

Purchasing Option

Nashville Classical will consider purchasing and renovating commercially-owned space (an example would be former big box retail space, office space, or fitness centers) that can be renovated to accommodate the needs of the school. In developing assumptions (**Figures 10.03 and 10.04**), the school considered industry standards on space requirements, comparable costs for purchasing and renovating commercial space for school use (using data from other cities and the local market), and comparable charter school facilities costs from similar transactions.

To enable the school to realistically service debt as it grows, the school is assuming space can be renovated in stages.

Figure 10.03 - Example Transaction

Facility size	40,000	
Purchase Price (per square foot)	\$30	
Renovation costs (per square foot)	\$50	Building would be renovated in stages based on the space requirements of the school.
Interest rate	6.0%	
Amortization (years)	20	
Equity	20%	Provided through the Tennessee Charter School Incubator Facilities Fund

Figure 10.04 - Annual Costs For Purchase Option

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Enrollment	216	270	316	360	400
Renovated space	20,000	30,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
Debt service (1)	\$151,310	\$187,098	\$222,885	\$222,885	\$222,885
Operating costs (\$4 per square foot)	\$80,000	\$120,000	\$160,000	\$160,000	\$160,000
Insurance costs	\$15,000	\$20,000	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Total facilities costs	\$246,310	\$327,098	\$407,885	\$412,885	\$412,885
<i>Per student cost</i>	<i>\$1,140</i>	<i>\$1,211</i>	<i>\$1,291</i>	<i>\$1,147</i>	<i>\$1,032</i>

- (1) The model assumes that renovation costs will come in stages as the school grows. The debt service; therefore, increases as additional space is renovated. The financing assumptions remain constant throughout the five year period.

To be conservative in its budget estimates, Nashville Classical has created a summary table below to average the costs of the leasing and purchasing options. For budget purposes, we have used the median to make estimates and kept a constant estimate in Y7-Y10. Nevertheless, we believe these numbers are on the high side when compared to the facilities costs current Tennessee charter schools incur. (In a report to be released by the Tennessee Charter Schools Association in partnership with the Colorado League of

Charters and the Tennessee Charter School Incubator, survey data indicated that the state's charter schools are paying, on average, \$805 per student.

A summary table (Figure 10.05) of these two options is included:

Figure 10.05 - Summary Table

	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Facilities Costs					
Lease	\$193,200	\$242,750	\$285,700	\$327,000	\$360,000
Purchase	\$246,310	\$327,098	\$407,885	\$412,885	\$412,885
Average	\$219,755	\$284,924	\$346,793	\$369,943	\$386,443
Median	\$219,755	\$284,924	\$346,793	\$369,943	\$386,443
Per Student Facilities Costs					
Lease	\$894	\$899	\$904	\$908	\$900
Purchase	\$1,140	\$1,211	\$1,291	\$1,147	\$1,032
Modulars					
Average	\$1,017	\$1,055	\$1,097	\$1,028	\$966
Median	\$1,017	\$1,055	\$1,097	\$1,028	\$966

Timeline

Nashville Classical Charter School plans to execute a lease agreement with the Tennessee Charter School Incubator for the East Head Start space upon the approval of its charter application. Longer term facility solutions will be analyzed beginning in 2014.

11. WAIVERS

Nashville Classical Charter School (“Nashville Classical”) shall operate in compliance with all Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools policies and regulations and all applicable federal, state and local laws, rules and regulations, unless specifically waived. In order for Nashville Classical to ensure its students meet or exceed local, state and national academic standards, it must provide its students with a greater amount of time on task. Nashville Classical’s governance and leadership need flexibility in its initial structure to overcome potential barriers in fulfilling our mission and goals. We use this autonomy to pursue academic success and personal excellence and formally request a waiver from the laws, rules and regulations listed below. If necessary, we are happy to provide additional detail or produce additional documents. This request includes all laws, rules and regulations covering the same subject matter as those listed below and a waiver of all rules and regulations that come into force following the date of submission of this charter proposal.

In addition to the specific waiver requests listed below, we request waivers of any additional rules and regulations that are waiver for existing or future charter schools authorized by the District. We also reserve the right to supplement this request or make additional waiver requests in the future.

1. PERSONNEL WAIVERS

A) COMPENSATION

AREA: Licensed Personnel Salaries

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-3-306(a)

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-1-2-.02

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: While we ensure that public monies will be used properly to ensure personnel will be paid adequately, it is critical to our program that Nashville Classical’s payroll system reflects the individual school’s purpose and philosophy. Teachers may be given incentive pay that will compensate them for years of consistent student performance, not just years of service.

B) HOURS & BENEFITS

AREA: Teacher Assignment

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-5-401

STATE BOARD RULE:

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: Nashville Classical will utilize an extended schedule, including increased instructional, as well as professional development hours. Teachers will receive compensation commensurate with the increased work hours.

AREA: School Term Vacations and Other Non-Instructional Days

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-6-304A (2) – D

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-1-3-.03(4)

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: Nashville Classical will operate with an extended school year of 185 days and an extended school day from 7:30 – 4:00 PM.

C) PROMOTION & EVALUATION

AREA: Career Ladder

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-5-5002-5010, 49-5-5206-5209, 49-5-5301, 49-5-5305-5306, 49-5-5401, 49-5-5405, 49-5-5406, 49-5-5501, 49-5-5504-5506

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-2-2

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: No need or funding is currently available for career ladder initiatives.

AREA: General Requirements for Evaluation

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-5-5205

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-2-1-.01

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: The key to our success is being able to attract and retain a staff that is committed to our vision and to provide them with the motivation necessary to get the job done. It is essential that we be able to design hiring, pay, benefits, promotion and evaluation systems that are aligned with our mission and goals. The guidelines and performance expectations are outlined specifically in the yearly contracts that are developed for personnel. For more information on evaluation, see Section VIII.

AREA: Evaluation of Third-Year Apprentice Educators

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-5-5205

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-2-1-.03

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: The key to our success is being able to attract and retain a staff that is committed to our vision and to provide them with the motivation necessary to get the job done. It is essential that we are able to design hiring, pay, benefits, promotion and evaluation systems that are aligned with our mission and goals. The guidelines and performance expectations are outlined specifically in the yearly contracts that are developed for Nashville Classical personnel.

AREA: Evaluation of Principals, Assistant Principals, and Supervisors

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-5-5302, 49-5-5402, 49-5-5408, 49-5-5502

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-2-2(2)

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: The key to our success is our ability to attract, train and retain a staff committed to our mission, sharing our vision, and provided with the motivation and support necessary to succeed. It is essential that we are able to design hiring, pay, benefits, promotion, and evaluation systems that are aligned with our mission and goals. The guidelines and performance expectations are outlined specifically in the yearly contracts that are developed for Nashville Classical personnel.

D) TENURE

AREA: Evaluation Contracts and Termination of Contracts

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-5-408-409

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-2-2(2)

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: The key to our success is our ability to attract, train and retain a staff committed to our mission, sharing our vision, and provided with the motivation and support necessary to succeed. To that end, it is essential that we are able to design hiring, pay, benefits, promotion and evaluation systems that are aligned with our mission and goal. Every teacher will be assessed based on their performance. Teachers who attain the require levels of performance, as outlined in their previous year contracts, will be offered another contract.

AREA: Tenue

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-5-501-512

STATE BOARD RULE:

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: As a charter school, Nashville Classical puts student achievement first. Therefore, all employees of Nashville Classical will be “at-will.”

E) STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

AREA: Library Information Center Personnel

TN EDUCATION STATUTE:

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-1-3-.07(2)

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: All Nashville Classical classrooms will contain a library whose books are age-appropriate, diverse in content, and rotate on a regular basis. Therefore, library information center personnel are not necessary.

AREA: Licensed Principals

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-5-101(A)

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-1-2-.03(6)

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: Nashville Classical would like to be able to recruit the most qualified school leaders around the country to fulfill its mission.

AREA: Library Information Center Personnel

TN EDUCATION STATUTE:

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-1-3-.07(2)

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: A substantial library will be available to students at the nearest public library. This facility will be augmented by classroom libraries.

2. SCHOOL MANAGEMENT/OPERATIONAL WAIVERS

AREA: School Year Commencement

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-6-3004

STATE BOARD RULE:

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: Nashville Classical will utilize an expanded school year calendar. For this reason, the school year will start before Labor Day.

AREA: Local Fiscal Accounting

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-3-316

STATE BOARD RULE:

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: While we ensure that public monies will be used properly, that all non-waived regulations will be met and that all of our operations will stand up to a financial audit, it is critical to our program that our management systems reflect our individual school's purpose and philosophy.

AREA: Formulation and Administration of Behavior and Discipline Codes

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-6-4012(B)

STATE BOARD RULE:

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: While parents and students will always undergo due process, it is important that all discipline practices of Nashville Classical provide a safe, effective, achievement-oriented learning environment for every single student.

AREA: Approval of Routes

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-6-2106

STATE BOARD RULE:

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: Nashville Classical intends to use bus routes to guarantee that we enroll students who will most benefit from our curriculum and mission. We do not want lack of a bus stop to preclude a family from enrollment in the school.

3. EDUCATIONAL WAIVERS

A) CURRICULUM

TN EDUCATION STATUTE:

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-1-3-.05

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: Students will be involved in physical education activities each week. The School Director, Dean of Student Supports, and Dean of Academics will oversee these classes and work to ensure that the PE curriculum meets state content standards, despite the potential use of non-certified instructional personnel.

AREA: Fine Arts Curriculum

TN EDUCATION STATUTE:

STATE BOARD RULE: 0520-1-3-.05

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: Students will be involved in fine arts activities each week. Fine arts classes may be taught by volunteers. The School Director, Dean of Student Supports and Dean of Academics will oversee these classes and work to ensure that fine arts curriculum meets state content standards despite the potential use of non-certified instructional personnel.

AREA: Use of Unapproved Textbooks

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-6-2206

STATE BOARD RULE:

RATIONALE FOR WAIVER: To meet the potential of our school, it is essential that we tie our curriculum and instructional approaches to our individual school's mission and goals. Nashville Classical will use both state-approved textbooks and other unapproved instructional materials.

AREA: Capital Outlay

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-3-311

STATE BOARD RULE:

RATIONALE FOR EWAIVER: Preparing a charter school facility will be one of our greater challenges. Because we finance our own buildings and do not have the power to raise taxes to fund capital outlay, it is critical that we gain freedom from non-health and safety standards for the school site and have control of the facility vested in our board, rather than the city board of education. Having this freedom will allow us to use our school site resources most efficiently and effectively and align our building choices with our mission and goals.

AREA: Bicycle Safety Curriculum

TN EDUCATION STATUTE: 49-6-1003

STATE BOARD RULE:

RATIONALE FOR EWAIVER: We do not intend to offer a separate bicycle safety curriculum although we do intend to incorporate safety and physical wellness in our physical education curriculum.

12. INSURANCE

Establishing and maintaining an environment that promotes wellness, health, and safety is a primary responsibility and priority of the school's board and leadership. The Board will develop policies in accordance with all applicable health and safety laws and regulations of federal and state government as they pertain to public school operation. The School Director will be responsible for seeing that day-to-day practice of safety is a part of the school, including the instructional program. Prior to beginning instruction, we will adopt and implement a comprehensive set of health, safety and risk management policies. These policies will be developed and overseen by the School Director, Operations Manager, approved by the Board, and supported by our insurance carriers. At a minimum, all policies will address the following topics:

- Ensuring that students have physical examinations prior to enrollment. Proof of a student's recent physical examination and immunizations will be collected at the time of enrollment. The information will be reviewed, maintained, and monitored by the school nurse, and will be maintained as part of the student's health record.
 - Ensuring that required immunizations and screenings (lead, TB) are in compliance.
 - All new school enterers, school employees, substitutes, student teachers, contract employees shall provide documentation of a Mantoux tuberculin skin test or show proof of being tested within the past 12 months during the first 15 working days of employment or school entry. Written documentation of screening following the American Academy of Pediatrics may be provided for students in lieu of the skin test.
 - Administering medications and medical treatments, including first aid. The Office Manager, or other designate, will administer medications and all medical treatments in accordance with all appropriate governmental regulations or professional guidelines.
 - Screening for health problems (vision, hearing, postural/gait, etc.).
 - Monitoring student health and maintaining health records.
 - Ensuring emergency care for known and unknown life-threatening health conditions.
 - Ensuring health representation on IEP teams when student's needs require. The school nurse will serve as a member of IEP team when medically related issues are discussed.
- The school will also provide relevant medical information during the evaluation process.

The School Director is directly responsible for ensuring that criminal background checks are initiated/completed prior to an individual staff member's employment, and the results will be documented in the employees personnel file. The School Director or his/her designee will be responsible for ensuring proper documentation is posted and open to authorized audit compliance. Procedures to adequately protect school property shall include, but not be limited to:

- Controlling issuance of building and master keys, access cards and security cards
- Permitting access to classrooms, laboratories, gymnasiums or other school facilities or equipment only to times when there is appropriate faculty supervision
- Procedure for securing teacher work areas when left unattended or at the end of the day

The School Director shall secure assistance from law enforcement officials when deemed necessary in order to maintain order or security during the school day or during extracurricular activities at school. The School Director shall call the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department in cases involving illegal entry, theft or vandalism. The School Director shall also notify the Board of Directors within 24 hours after each case of vandalism, theft, building damage and illegal entry. The Board of Directors is authorized to sign a criminal complaint and to press charges against perpetrators of vandalism against school property. Please see a relevant insurance quote from Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance in **APPENDIX BB**. Please note all insurance costs as reflected in our Budget Template as attached and Budget Narrative in Section V.

13. PARENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

School Development

To date, we have engaged in over 300 conversations about the details of the charter proposal for Nashville Classical, and we have engaged families in discussion of the hopes and dreams they have for their children.

We share the belief of Metro Nashville Public Schools that outreach and recruitment of students and parents who are most at risk of not being able to fully participate in school choice – families who do not speak or read English well, at-risk students and parents in low-income areas, and families that traditionally may not be aware of their options due to economic circumstances—is especially important and have strived to engage the community through multiple venues. Thus, since July 2011, we have engaged the community in the following ways:

- Individual Meetings with Local Leaders
- Small Group Information and Input Sessions
- Boots on the Ground Community Engagement Events

Individual Meetings. Communities northeast and southeast of downtown Nashville contain active community organizations and leaders who are among the most vocal in the city for adequate public schools and equal opportunities. Thus far, Nashville Classical has been fortunate to be the beneficiary of support from educators, students, business leaders, and community leaders. Their support has translated to input into the school’s vision and added capacity to our ability to achieve academic success and personal excellence. A number of these leaders, joined by leaders across the country, have put their pen to paper and written letters of support for Nashville Classical. To date, we have received nearly forty different letters (**Figure 13.01**) documenting the deep desire for classical education taught in an achievement oriented culture. Letters of Support can be found as **APPENDIX CC**.

Figure 13.01 – Letters of Support

Community Leaders	
Brian C. Adams	Assistant District Attorney General Davidson County
Tom Appel	Neighborhood Organizer Neighborhood Resource Center
Juan Borges	El Protector (Ex-Officio) Metro Nashville Police Department
Barbara Clinton	Director Center for Community Health Services
Anthony Davis	Metro Councilman District 7
Kristen Gillespie	Special Projects Manager The Salvation Arm
Pastor Stephen Handy	Pastor Mckendree United Methodist Church
Maurice Hopkins	Program Director Time to Rise, USYDC
Dr. Maromy Samuel	Pastor of Haitian Congregation First Church of the Nazarene

Mark Scrivener	Board Chair Margaret Maddox YMCA
Colby Sledge	Board Chair South Nashville Action People
George Thomas	President Education Equal Opportunity Group
Dr. Kevin Ulmet	Senior Pastor Nashville, First Church of the Nazarene
Yvonne Wood	Chair Tennessee Economic Council on Women
Business Leaders	
Bob Davis, Jr.	President RJD Group, Inc.
Joyce McDaniel	Founding Partner The Ferrell McDaniel Company
Kevin O'Hara	CEO Syus Inc.
Tracy Rode	President Vision3Interactive
Eric Satz	Managing Director TN Community Ventures Fund
Tom Sherrard	Founding Partner Sherrard & Roe Founder, Nashville Public Education Fund
Laura Smith Tidwell	VP, Corporate Relations NES Power
Local Education Leaders	
Ian Craig	Head of School Harding Academy
Brian Gilson	Manager, Teacher Leadership Dev. & Alumni Affairs Teach For America - Nashville
Elizabeth Friedland	Teacher Metro Nashville Public Schools Thurgood Marshall Middle School
Jill Freiberg Grifenhagen	Graduate Student Peabody School of Education, Vanderbilt
Shani Jackson Dowell	Executive Director, Teacher For America – Nashville
Linda Lentz	Founding Principal, Liberty Collegiate Academy
Sara Lynch	Teacher Metro Nashville Public Schools Stratford High School
Bess Milner	Teacher Metro Nashville Public Schools Stratford High School
Andrea Neff	Manager Teacher Leadership Development Teach For America – Nashville
Suezette Yasmin Robotham	Ex Officio Site Director Nashville New Teacher Project
Greg Thompson	CEO Tennessee Charter School Incubator

Ali Wilson	Manager Teacher Leadership Development Teach For America – Nashville
National Education Leaders	
Sean Gallagher	Founder Akili Academy of New Orleans New Orleans, LA
Lester Long	Founding Executive Director South Bronx Classical Charter School New York, NY
Penny Schwinn	Founding Head of School Capitol Collegiate Academy Sacramento, CA
Daniel Maguire and Donald Stuart	Associate Heads of Recruitment Uncommon Schools New York, NY
Shantelle Wright	Founding Head of School Achievement Prep Washington, D.C.

In addition to the individuals above, Nashville Classical has compile a robust list of potential partners to pursue aggressively upon authorization. We have, thus far, engaged over 25 different organizations (**Figure 13.02**) and they have expressed strong support for our proposal, provided critical insight into our work, and suggested we pursue a more developed partnership upon authorization. In addition, leaders of these organizations have expressed interest in volunteering with Nashville Classical and completing the work of founding a school at our side.

Figure 13.02 – Community Organizations and Potential Partners

Schools and Child Care Providers	Bethlehem Centers Head Start Mcneily Center Child Care Margaret Maddox YMCA Pre-K Fannie Battle Child Care Wayne Reed Child Care Metro Action Commision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Berry Hill Head Start Frederick Douglass Head Start Dudley Head Start Center Tom Joy Head Start North Head Start Backfield in Motion Harding Academy Liberty Collegiate Academy KIPP Academy Nashville
Faith-Based	Catholic Charities of Tennessee New Song Church, Our Lady of Guadalupe Free Will Baptist Church Eden’s Gate Church First Church of the Nazarene Hobson United Methodist Church Mckendree United Methodist Church Free Will Baptist Church
Community	South Nashville Action People (SNAP)

Activist/Engagement Groups	South Nashville Family Resource Center Vanderbilt Center for Health Services Nashville International Center for Empowerment (NICE) Margaret Maddox YMCA Historice Edgefield Neighborhood Association Stand For Children – Nashville Neighborhood Resource Center MiHOW (Maternal Infant Health Outreach Worker) Program United Way of Metropolitan Nashville 100 Black Women – Nashville Napier-Looby Bar Association
Recreation Centers	Coleman Rec Center East Park Rec Center
Business/Neighborhood	La Campana Connexion Americas TN Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Nashville Cares CABLE Kali Yuga Yoga Snapshot Interactive Advantage Business Solutions, Incorporated Nashville Public Television Salvation Army Nashville Emerging Leaders TNInvesco Vine Hill Neighborhood Clinic Southside Family Clinic Family Dollar and Dollar General (Local Stores and Managers) The Housing Fund – Nashville

Communication with Parents

Involvement of and communication with parents is an integral part of our school design. In *Home Advantage: Social Class and Parental Intervention in Elementary Education*, research indicates that social class is a key determinant of the extent to which parents advocate for their children in school settings. Too often, parents feel that they are unable to navigate the landscape of school. As a result, they disengage from the schooling process, to the detriment of their children's achievement.²⁰⁵ Nashville Classical will engage in deliberate efforts to welcome parents into the school community, provide frequent communication, and encourage reciprocal engagement between home and school.

Nashville Classical has already begun extensive communication with families, even though enrollment will not begin for an entire year. Consistent with MNPS priorities, we believe that Nashville Classical has the obligation to share information about the school with local families, particularly families from a low income or limited English proficiency background. As such, we have undertaken a strategy that includes info sessions, community partnerships, and home visits. **Figure 13.03** outlines a sampling of locations where we have conducted conversations about support for Nashville Classical Charter School. Conversations in July to December included

²⁰⁵ Lareau, Annette. *Home Advantage: Social Class and Parental Intervention in Elementary Education*. Location: Rowman and Littlefield, 2009.

sharing our mission, polling parents on their own hopes and dreams for children, and asking for feedback on current educational options. Conversations in January, February, and March built upon previous conversations by including updates on our plans, facility, and more detailed information about our academic program. Sample Parent Letters of Support can be found in APPENDIX D.

Figure 13.03 – Community Presentations about Nashville Classical

July 26, 2011	Coleman Recreation Center 384 Thompson Lane
July 26, 2011 & July 28, 2011	Nashville International Center for Empowerment 3221 Nolensville Pike #103
December 8, 2011	Bethlehem Centers of Nashville 1417 Charlotte Avenue
December 10, 2011	Cameron Middle School – Teach for America Event 1034 1 st Ave S
January 26, 2012	Vine Hill Community Clinic 625 Benton Avenue
February 2, 2012	Liberty Collegiate Academy 217 South 10 TH Street
February 25, 2012	Vine Hill Apartments 625 Benton Avenue
	Napier Place 648 Claiborne Street
	Sudekum Apartments 101 University Court
	Wedgewood – Houston Neighborhood Association 1224 Martin Street
March 24, 2012	Cayce Place 701 South 7th Street
	CWA Apartments 500 Shelby Avenue
	Howe Garden Apartments 1921 Greenwood Avenue
	Shelby Hills Apartments 209-B South Tenth Street
	Trinity Hills Village Apartments 400 East Nocturne Drive
	Berkshire Place Apartments 1500-U Porter Rd
	Roberts Park Apartments 720 Lenore Street
March 24 2011	Family Literacy Day E.S. Rose Park 1000 Edgehill Avenue
March 27 2011	Wayne Reed ChildCare 11-B Lindsley Avenue
March 31, 2011	Free Will Baptist Church 210 S 10th St

All conversations allowed us to grow our own learning about community and to notify families about our intentions. The cornerstone of these efforts were our “Boots on the Ground Days.” On February 25, 2012 and March 24, 2012 a total of 20 volunteers knocked on hundreds of doors, spoke to over 300 families and collected over 200 signatures of support, representing a parent, guardian, or neighbor who supports Nashville Classical. Moving forward, one of the top priorities of both Nashville Classical’s governing board and its management will be to continue to canvass homes and community organizations. To support our efforts in East Nashville’s Latino Community, Nashville Classical has partnered with Rosie Villa, a parent at Liberty Collegiate Academy. Ms. Villa is fluent in Spanish and she has joined Nashville Classical canvassing events, translated presentations, organized information sessions, and conducted phone calls. In addition, Board Member Leslie Hayes is currently completing a class to become certified in Teaching English as a Second Language and has offered to translate at events, as necessary.

Communication during the Year

We believe that parental support is an integral part of a student’s education, and will make every effort to ensure that parents are an active part of our community. Parents will be engaged through immediate outreach upon enrollment of their child, and the school will hold annual family orientation meetings in the summer (see **APPENDIX L** for sample powerpoint)—with multiple sessions scheduled at different times and make-up sessions offered—and a Classical Family Night during each report card period to encourage attendance and share school and student progress²⁰⁶

Classical Family Nights will emphasize children’s accomplishments and celebrations to encourage family attendance. A sample agenda might include a kick-off speech, student performances, 4 different workshops from Lead Teachers on supporting a specific subject at home (literacy, math, social studies/science), and then a chance for families to mingle with each other, their children, and staff while enjoying complimentary pizza and soda. To guarantee that every Classical Family Night is as welcoming and well-attended as possible, we take the following steps:

- Offer translations and interpreters for any family who needs one
- Utilize parent ambassadors to make reminder calls, greet parents, and introduce the evening
- Offer complimentary food (coffee and pastry if morning; pizza and soft drinks in the evening)
- Accommodate families with young children, by offering childcare (in the Multipurpose room, staff will provide child care to children 0-4)
- Hold all events in the middle of the week and send multiple reminders home first
- Provide all written communication in a family’s home language
- Incentivize attendance using raffle drawings for children’s books or Gift Certificates
- Follow up with any parent who does not attend immediately
- Provide a reminder phone call to any parent who did attend most recent session

Overall, we will communicate proactively and frequently with families, inviting them into the life of the school and the success of their student. Parents will be taught how to be a successful

²⁰⁶ Please see **Annual Calendar** with dates identified for Report Card Conferences.

Nashville Classical parent, and any document they will be asked to sign will include a version written in the child's home language – for example, the Classical Contract, written to support their children and the educational mission of the school, will have a Spanish version. These parental commitments include ensuring that their child is at school and on time, in their uniform each day, helping with homework and ensuring that it is complete, reading with their child each night, assisting their child in contacting the teacher regarding any problems or questions on an assignment, providing a quiet place with light for their child to study at home, and being available to meet with the teachers at home or at school if the need arises. Parents understand that they may get a phone call from the school for any reason regarding their child. In return, they receive each teacher and administrator's cell phone number at their first orientation and are encouraged to call between 7am and 9pm 5 days a week and between 9am and 9pm on Sundays. Family input will be sought in multiple ways throughout the year, including through an annual family survey. Once the school has developed a strong and active parent body during its first year of operation, we will work to identify one parent to join the Board of Directors of Nashville Classical. Parents who join the Board of Directors will enjoy the same responsibilities and rights as all other members of the board.

Nashville Classical intends to change the trajectory of its students' lives and create a viable and sustainable organization in the community. Therefore, we believe in the importance of transparent communication about our progress with the broader Nashville Community and intend to:

- Publish an annual report of academic and organizational progress and present the report to community stakeholders through a press release
- Share the annual report at an annual banquet to report the achievements of scholars, discuss broader implications for our community, and champion the right for families to access high quality educational choice.
- Invite community leaders, business leaders, and potential advocates to see the school and speak to the School Director on a trimester basis. A Nashville Classical Board Member will lead this tour alongside a Nashville Classical parent and provides the opportunity to see our scholars up close, provide feedback and champion our progress.

Recruitment and Enrollment

Recruitment. Nashville Classical Charter School has designed a comprehensive recruitment plan to guarantee that our student enrollment matches projections and targets. Given our school design's emphasis on community support from neighborhoods Northeast and Southeast of downtown Nashville, we will target populations who live in between Trinity Lane and the Nashville Fairgrounds, regardless of race, disability, ethnicity, home language, or gender. We are in close contact with currently operating charter schools and are of the potential enrollment challenges that face a new school. Our outreach will begin with the groups listed above and continue to focus on the vast network of daycare and early childhood education centers in Nashville. Additional strategies may include:

- "Open House" Sessions at our facility, 217 South 10th Street
- A presence at major events central to our community i.e. East Nashville Tomato Fest, Flat Rock Festival, SNAP Community Day
- Distribution of enrollment materials through "Boots on the Ground" days aimed at direct interactions with families in their own homes and local stores.

- Press releases and advertising in The Tennessean, City Paper, Nashville Scene, the Tennessee Tribune, La Campana, East Nashvillian, Google Groups, and Community Newsletters.
- Mailing to all preschool scholars in our enrollment zone and presentations at preschools including Fannie Battle, the McNeily Center, Wayne Reed Child Care, and Bethlehem Centers.
- Visits to community churches such as Mckendree United Methodist, Hobson United Methodist, First Nazarene, and Free Will Baptist.
- Home Visits to potentially interested parents and families.
- Partnerships with local charter schools who start in Middle School, including Liberty Collegiate Academy and KIPP Academy Nashville.

In addition, we will establish a website at www.NashvilleClassical.org so families can read about our education plan, access our contact information, and access Intent to Enroll forms.

Enrollment. Nashville Classical intends to begin operation in August 2013 with 108 kindergarten students. Each year after that, we intend to enroll a new class of 54 kindergartners. Nashville Classical will replace scholars who do not remain enrolled through the second grade. Starting with kindergarten and growing one grade at a time allows us to address the needs of scholars and families, ensuring our mission and leading to a small school size²⁰⁷ whose effectiveness has been supported by research on achievement and parental satisfaction. Upon reaching K-8 capacity, the school wide enrollment will be 450 students and 415 students every year thereafter, all on track to academic success and personal excellence in high school, college and life. **Figure 13.04** below depicts school enrollment over time and includes a 7% attrition beginning in grade 3.

Figure 13.04 – Nashville Classical Enrollment

Academic Year	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
2013-2014	108									108
2014-2015	54	108								162
2015-2016	54	54	108							216
2016-2017	54	54	54	100						262
2017-2018	54	54	54	50	93					295
2018-2019	54	54	54	50	47	87				346
2019-2020	54	54	54	50	47	43	81			383
2020-2021	54	54	54	50	47	43	40	75		418²⁰⁸
2021-2022	54	54	54	50	47	43	40	38	70	450

²⁰⁷ At full enrollment, Nashville Classical's K-4 cohort is 15% smaller than the average elementary school and its 5-8 cohort is nearly half the size of local Middle Schools.

²⁰⁸ Using a 7% attrition rate across cohorts leads us to a total number of 418 even though adding whole numbers reflect a total enrollment of 417.