Ripple Academy

Charter Application

November 14, 2025

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Proposed Charter School Name: Ripple Academy

Name of Applicant: Irene Summers

Authorized Agent: Katie Purinton

Main Point of Contact: Irene Summers

Phone Number: 801-361-9582

Mailing Address: 2858 Village Court Saratoga Springs, UT 84045

Point of Contact Email Address: summersirene6@gmail.com

Proposed Charter Location (city/area): Saratoga Springs/Eagle Mountain

Proposed Charter School Location's School District(s): Alpine School District

Date and To Whom Submitted at the District(s) Office: Rob Smith

November 14, 2025

Governing Board Information

Name	Position on Board:	Area of Expertise:	Any Previous or Current Charter Affiliation:	Signature
Irene Summers	Chair	Elementary Education Administration Curriculum Writing	Canyon Grove Lakeview Academy John Hancock	*Irene Summers*

Katie Purinton	Vice Chair	Psychology/ Business	John Hancock	*Katie Purinton*
Sarah Barnes	Secretary	Elementary Education	Lakeview Academy John Hancock Canyon Grove Academy	*Sarah Barnes*
Jasen Ah You	Treasurer	Higher Education MPA MBA	NA	*Jasen Ah You*
Carlos Alarco	Member	Higher Education	NA	*Carlos Alarco*
Melvin Rodriguez	Member	Architecture	NA	*Melvin Rodriguez*
Tony Castillo	Member	Community Outreach Special Education	Renaissance Arts Academy (Los Angeles, Ca.)	*Tony Castillo*
Holly Clegg	Member	Elementary Education	Canyon Grove Academy	*Holly Clegg*

Charter School's Grade Configuration and Maximum Authorized Enrollment:

Ripple Academy will enroll students in grades K-6. In its first year, Ripple Academy's maximum enrollment will be 375 students, with enrollment increasing by 25 students in year 2 and 50 students in year 3. Maximum authorized enrollment will remain at 450 students after year 3. Projected student enrollment by grade is detailed in the below table.

Projected Student Enrollment by Grade:

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	Max Enrollment:
Year 1	60	60	55	55	49	48	48	375
Year 2	62	62	62	57	57	50	50	400
Year 3	68	68	68	66	60	60	60	450
Year 4	68	68	68	66	60	60	60	450
Year 5 +	68	68	68	66	60	60	60	450

Does this match the district configuration?
Yes, our proposed configuration matches the district resident grade configuration.

Waivers, Special Treatment, or Priority Requests:
Ripple Academy is not requesting waivers, special treatment, or priority consideration allowable by statute or rule.

Authorized Agent Certification:
WE, THE UNDERSIGNED, do hereby certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, the data in this proposal are true and correct. Therefore, this proposal for charter school status and funding is hereby submitted with the full approval and support of the applicants and governing body of the proposed charter school.

Name of Authorized Agent: Katie Purinton

Signature of Authorized Agent: *Katie Purinton*

Name of Charter School Board Chair: Irene Summers

Signature of Charter School Board Chair: *Irene Summers*

SECTION 1 — EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

School Overview (location, population, foundation):

Ripple Academy is a proposed K–6 public charter school located in the Saratoga Springs/Eagle Mountain area of Utah County, opening with an anticipated enrollment of 350 students. Ripple Academy is built on the belief that learning should feel meaningful, relevant, and connected to life, not an abstract practice that will only help students someday in the distant future.

Mission Statement:
Ripple Academy seeks to inspire lifelong learners through life-based learning opportunities! By following a Life-Based Educational Model, we combine academic knowledge, rich social-emotional learning, hands-on career exploration, and essential life skills in a way that cultivates happy, healthy humans who are enthusiastic about their personal interests and skills, excited about being active members of their communities, and optimistic about the limitless possibilities of their futures.

Vision Statement:
Access to a comprehensive, life-based education will equip each student with the knowledge, skills, and intrinsic motivation to become valuable, engaged citizens of their communities. *Students will experience firsthand that education doesn't just prepare them for life; rather, life itself is education.* By fostering *a hands-on, encouraging atmosphere that helps students* identify and strengthen their personal interests, skills, and values, students will invest in themselves as whole humans, while exploring career and vocation options. An education from Ripple Academy will allow students to find their personalized pathway to a life that offers purpose, engagement, variety, meaningful relationships, and healthy home and work environments.

Summary:

At Ripple Academy, students learn academics through real-world application inside Ripple Town, a fully student-operated miniature city. Students take on meaningful roles such as banker, baker, journalist, city council member, engineer, shop owner, or postal worker. Students actively use math to price goods, count inventory, and balance budgets. They build writing skills as they draft business plans, news articles, and public speeches. They learn hands-on social studies concepts through becoming Ripple Town leaders, participating in government meetings, and leading community planning. They explore science through gardening, animal care, weather stations, or engineering solutions to real problems in the town. Students learn the Utah Core Standards through research-based curriculum, but they see, feel, and use their learning every day.

Board Origin:

The Ripple Academy founding board is made up of a diverse group of people who are deeply committed to rethinking how education can serve students—not just in school, but in life. Our team includes classroom teachers, special education professionals, engineers, business owners, and mentors who have supported student-athletes and other hands-on learners. Although our backgrounds vary widely, we've all witnessed the same concern: students who are bright,

capable, and full of potential, yet increasingly disengaged from their learning. Too often, they don't see how school connects to their lives, their passions, or their futures.

We're also joined by parents, community members, and professionals with creative and practical experience in fields like architecture, design, and higher education. Each of us brings a unique lens, but we're united by one belief: that learning should be meaningful, purposeful, and connected to the real world every single day.

Ripple Academy was created in response to that need. Too many students ask, "Why do I need to know this?" We believe school should answer that question, not occasionally, but every day. At Ripple Academy, students will learn fractions by running a bakery, understand civics by serving on Ripple Town Council, practice persuasive writing by proposing local laws, and build financial literacy by managing a student-run bank.

Our approach doesn't revolve around a trendy brand or pre-packaged curriculum. Instead, Ripple blends proven, high-quality instructional tools with immersive, hands-on learning. This ensures that students not only meet academic standards, but also discover how knowledge applies to their lives, families, and communities.

We believe every child deserves an education that lights a spark, inspires purpose, builds confidence, and prepares for a life that's not just successful, but deeply fulfilling.

Alignment with State Charter School Board's Mission and Vision:

Ripple Academy directly advances the State Charter School Board's mission: "Advancing quality choice, innovation, and student success through rigorous authorizing and supportive oversight."

- **Quality Choice:** Ripple Academy offers a public school model rooted in academic rigor, real-world learning, life skills, community simulation, and whole-student development. Ripple Academy seeks to provide a high-quality education for all students, including neurodiverse learners, while equipping them with the skills and knowledge to become successful, contributing members of their communities. Our model includes instruction in life skills and social-emotional learning (SEL) to support personal growth, decision-making, and positive relationships.

  Ripple Academy seeks to provide families with a quality, meaningful, hands-on, holistic, and unique educational choice for students.

- **Innovation:** Ripple reimagines what school can feel like with hands-on, emotionally engaging, academically rigorous, and purpose-rooted experiences.

  The environment at Ripple Academy will foster innovation, as Ripple Town simulates real-world environments and careers while teaching meaningful life skills. Its curriculum, built on a strong academic core and carefully blended with experiential, life-based

learning, will cultivate creativity, purpose, and imagination among students, empowering them to be active, engaged members of their communities and lifelong learners.

- **Student Success:** Ripple Academy strives for high academic achievement and success among all its students. It fosters and assesses student mastery of content and state standards through a combination of rigorous academic classroom learning and application in Ripple Town experiences.

  Students are evaluated on their mastery of the Utah Core Standards through ongoing formative assessments during direct instruction, small-group learning, and targeted intervention blocks, as well as through required school and state assessments. Individualized interventions are provided to ensure each student has the support needed to achieve mastery according to their unique learning needs.

  Ripple Academy evaluates student content knowledge through performance-based assessments embedded in Ripple Town experiences. These authentic, hands-on simulations encourage students to apply and reinforce their classroom learning across varied real-world contexts, promoting deep understanding and long-term retention of core concepts. Through these experiences, teachers gain valuable insight into each student's progress and mastery, while students demonstrate learning in meaningful, applied ways that connect directly to their academic growth and success.

  Ripple Academy also fulfills the State Charter School Board (SCSB) vision: "Every student has access to an excellent education that meets their unique learning needs." Ripple Town and Life-Based Learning allow students to learn through multiple pathways, specifically visual, verbal, kinesthetic, collaborative, entrepreneurial, and creative. Students see themselves as capable contributors with real roles. This fosters success among all types of learners, including neurodiverse learners. Online and distance learning students will be held to Ripple Academy's standards for academic excellence through participation requirements, ensuring Ripple Academy seeks student success for all of its student body. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) helps students develop essential skills for goal setting, decision making, positive relationships, and lifelong learning.

By approving Ripple Academy, the Utah State Charter School Board will open doors for the rapidly increasing number of students in Saratoga Springs/Eagle Mountain, including neurodiverse students and those for whom traditional education models are not a good fit, to access a high-quality, hands-on education. No other school in Alpine School District currently exists that is specifically designed to support multiple, unique learning styles in such an innovative way. Ripple Academy will fill a gap for Utah students and offer a bold approach to fostering both academic and real-world success.

SECTION 2 — SCHOOL-SPECIFIC ELEMENTS

1. **Primary Legislative Purpose(s): Encourage Innovative Teaching**

At Ripple Academy, we utilize a variety of instructional methods to fulfill the purposes of Utah's charter schools. Among the listed methods provided, we most strongly align with *"encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods."* Central to this approach is our Life-Based Educational Model (further described in Section 3), which integrates rigorous academics with hands-on, experiential learning through the Learn, Live, Lead framework. Implementing this model requires educators who are not only skilled in core instruction but also passionate about innovative practices, adaptable in their approach, and committed to learning alongside their students.

Recognizing that academics are just one facet of a well-rounded education, teachers use state standards as guiding markers rather than rigid roadmaps. These standards serve as checkpoints along each student's personalized learning path, providing snapshots of progress, identifying areas for support, and helping anticipate the next steps in their academic journey. By combining creative, experiential teaching with data-informed instruction, Ripple Academy ensures that learning is engaging, purposeful, and responsive to the needs of every student.

2. **Unique Key Elements & Defining Characteristics:**

Ripple Academy is defined by its innovative Life-Based Educational Model, which integrates rigorous academics with hands-on, experiential learning through the Learn, Live, Lead framework. Key elements of the school include a strong academic foundation aligned to Utah Core Standards, thoughtfully blended with authentic, real-world experiences such as Ripple Town simulations and career-focused projects that allow students to apply knowledge in meaningful ways. The school emphasizes whole-child development, incorporating social-emotional learning, life skills instruction, and opportunities for reflection and leadership. Instructors teach and model the cultivation of a growth mindset, encouraging students to embrace challenges, persist through setbacks, and take ownership of their learning. Teachers utilize flexible, innovative instructional methods to meet the needs of diverse learners, including neurodiverse students, while fostering curiosity, creativity, clarity, and agency.

Ripple Academy's defining characteristics are its commitment to purposeful, experiential learning, personalized pathways for student growth, social-emotional learning and whole-child development, and the cultivation of engaged, compassionate, and confident learners prepared to thrive through utilizing their learning in school, community, and life.

3. **Enrollment Preferences (legally permitted):**

Ripple Academy will follow all state and federal laws regarding open enrollment and nondiscriminatory admissions. In accordance with Utah State Charter School Board guidelines, enrollment priority will be given first to siblings of currently enrolled students to help maintain family connections within the school community. Additional priority will be extended to children or grandchildren of the school's founders, governing board members, teachers, and employees, in alignment with state statute.

4. **Mission-Specific Goals:**

Ripple Academy's mission is to provide students with a purposeful, life-based education that connects academics to real-life application while nurturing emotional intelligence and whole child learning. Specific goals include enhancing academic achievement, promoting life skills acquisition, fostering social-emotional learning, encouraging community and family engagement, and integrating experiential learning throughout the curriculum.

1. Enhance Academic Achievement

Objectives:
 a. Implement research-based, Utah Core–aligned curriculum in literacy, math, science, and social studies.
 b. Provide targeted instruction and interventions using formative and summative data.
 c. Utilize mastery-based grading and performance-based assessments to measure learning.
 d. Monitor growth through state and school assessments (RISE, Acadience Reading, Acadience Math).

2. Promote Life Skills Acquisition

Objectives:
 a. Integrate life and career skills instruction through Ripple Town Experiences.
 b. Encourage teamwork, problem-solving, leadership, and communication across all subjects.
 c. Provide life skills experience through life skills classes, similar to a specialty class (music, art, etc.)

3. Foster Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Objectives:
 a. Embed SEL instruction into daily classroom routines and Ripple Town activities.
 b. Reinforce self-awareness, emotional regulation, and resilience through goal setting and reflection.

4. Encourage Community and Family Engagement

Objectives:
 a. Establish partnerships with local businesses, government, and community organizations.
 b. Integrate service-learning projects and civic engagement into Ripple Town.
 c. Host family and community events to strengthen relationships and student learning support.

5. Integrate Experiential Learning Across the Curriculum

Objectives:
 a. Create hands-on, project-based learning opportunities connected to core standards.
 b. Connect classroom instruction to real-world applications through Ripple Town Experiences.
 c. Encourage reflection through journals, portfolios, and presentations.

Realistic Metrics to Measure Progress toward Goals

Ripple Academy recognizes the importance of clear, data-informed measures of success while honoring the flexibility needed to evaluate a life-based learning model. To ensure alignment with both state expectations and the unique mission of the school, a Measurement and Evaluation Committee, composed of teachers, administrators, governing board members, and community representatives, will be established within the school's first semester of operation. This committee will review Utah State Board of Education accountability requirements, assess community and student needs, and develop specific, mission-aligned measurement criteria for each school goal. These criteria will be presented to and formally approved by the Governing Board no later than the end of the first academic year.

Until that process is complete, Ripple Academy will utilize interim indicators aligned with state assessments (e.g., RISE and Acadience benchmarks), attendance, student engagement surveys, and mastery-based evaluations to monitor progress toward its academic and mission-specific goals. This approach ensures both clarity and accountability, while maintaining the growth mindset and adaptive framework that define Ripple Academy's mission to make life itself the education.

SECTION 3 — PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION

1.Educational Philosophy

Ripple Academy's philosophy is that learning is an active, hands-on process that connects students' prior knowledge with new concepts. Rooted in this belief, Ripple Academy's approach combines explicit instruction and experiential learning to foster curiosity, critical thinking, and real-world application. In addition, Ripple Academy builds on decades of research by Bruner (1960), Vygotsky (1978), and Piaget (1952), using the approach that teachers act as guides, helping students build frameworks of understanding, or schemas, that grow with systematic instruction and relevant experiences.

Experiential learning goes beyond knowledge acquisition, enhancing retention and understanding through real-world application (Kolb, 1984; Dewey, 1938). Studies show that active engagement promotes motivation and fosters lifelong learning attitudes (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Teachers blend hands-on learning with explicit instruction, such as systematic phonics in literacy, to strengthen students' mental models and deepen their understanding (Hattie, 2009). Interdisciplinary and thematic units provide context, and social interaction fosters a collaborative, student-centered environment (Vygotsky, 1978; Bandura, 1977).

2. Implementation and Assessment of Utah Core Standards:

Ripple Academy is committed to ensuring that all instruction is fully aligned with the Utah Core Standards. Core academic subjects, including mathematics, literacy, science, and social studies, will be taught using state-approved, research-based programs that provide rigorous, standards-aligned instruction and support mastery for all students. These adopted programs serve as the foundation of classroom learning and guide daily lesson planning to ensure students acquire the essential knowledge and skills outlined in the state standards. All adopted curricular programs will be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors.

In addition to adopted state-approved curricular programs approved by the board, Ripple Academy will develop a supplementary Ripple Town curriculum that integrates hands-on, experiential learning with Utah Core content. These thematic units and simulation-based experiences will be created by the school's curriculum committee, aligned to appropriate grade-level standards, and formally reviewed and approved by the board. Ripple Town lessons will include clearly defined standards, learning targets, and success criteria to ensure academic rigor and curricular coherence. Performance-based evaluations within Ripple Town will allow teachers to measure students' ability to apply academic concepts in authentic, real-world contexts while confirming that each experience meets required state standards.

Students' mastery of the Utah Core Standards will be assessed using multiple measures. Formative assessments will occur during classroom instruction, small-group learning, and

intervention blocks, providing ongoing data to guide instructional decisions. Summative assessments will include classroom-based evaluations, program-specific assessments, and mastery-based rubrics aligned to Ripple Town projects. Students will also participate in required state assessments, including RISE, Acadience, and any additional mandated evaluations, to ensure measurable progress and compliance with state accountability expectations.

Data from all assessment types will be used to guide curriculum and instruction at Ripple Academy. Teachers will analyze classroom assessments, performance-based tasks, and state assessment data during collaboration meetings to monitor student growth, identify areas of need, and adjust instruction accordingly. This data-driven process ensures that each student masters the content and skills defined in the Utah Core Standards and transitions smoothly to the next level of learning.

Through this multi-layered, standards-aligned, and data-informed approach, Ripple Academy ensures that students not only meet state requirements but also retain and apply knowledge in meaningful, real-world contexts that connect directly to the school's mission and educational model.

3. Research or Evidence Supporting Educational Model:

Ripple Academy's Life-Based Educational Model, Learn, Live, Lead, is designed to provide a holistic, experiential education that connects academic learning, life skills, and social-emotional development. Evidence from research on experiential and project-based learning supports this model as highly effective in improving student outcomes. For example, a 2020 study in a Queens, NY elementary school found that hands-on experiments, modeling, and fieldwork significantly enhanced sixth-grade students' understanding of water systems, science concepts, and systems thinking (Levy & Mensah, 2020). Similarly, the 2019 Multiple Literacies in Project-Based Learning (ML-PBL) study in Michigan demonstrated that rigorous project-based learning led to statistically significant gains in science achievement while also strengthening collaboration, persistence, and problem-solving skills (Lucas Education Research, 2019).

Ripple Academy also draws inspiration from successful experiential education models such as Kids Village in Orem, Utah, a private preschool and early-grade program that opened in 2003 and quickly grew from just 13 students to full enrollment, maintaining a waitlist since 2008 (Kids Village, n.d.). Currently serving about 75 students (in grades K–3) with a student–teacher ratio of approximately 15:1, the school has repeatedly been voted "Best Private Preschool in Utah" since 2015, underscoring strong community trust and demand (Private School Review, 2025). These data illustrate how immersive, role-based simulations within an intentionally designed "mini-city" environment can foster curiosity, engagement, and foundational skill development, a model we aim to build upon at Ripple Academy.

Another relevant local example is JA BizTown, a widely recognized experiential learning program that allows upper-elementary students to run a fully functioning simulated town. BizTown's popularity among Utah schools, positive community reception, and consistently strong student feedback demonstrate the impact of connecting academic content to authentic, real-world responsibilities. Research on JA BizTown and similar applied learning environments demonstrates strong, measurable benefits for students. A large-scale study by Brancewicz, Pattison, and Fok (2014) found that participation in JA BizTown significantly improved middle-school students' financial and economic literacy. With a robust sample of 1,329 BizTown participants and a 90-student control group, the study provides compelling evidence that hands-on, role-based simulations help students build essential financial knowledge and practical decision-making skills.

More recent research has also linked BizTown participation to gains in student confidence, communication, and real-world skill development. Mansour (2023) found that the program strengthened students' financial literacy, increased their self-efficacy, and enhanced their ability to connect academic learning with authentic, future-oriented tasks. These findings underscore the value of experiential, role-driven simulations, such as those embedded in Ripple Town as powerful mechanisms for boosting engagement and deepening applied learning.

Foundational educational theorists further support Ripple Academy's approach. Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory emphasizes the importance of concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and experimentation processes mirrored in the Learn, Live, Lead framework. Bruner's theories on scaffolding and the spiral curriculum emphasize the importance of building knowledge through structured exploration, while Vygotsky's social constructivism highlights the role of collaboration, guided learning, and authentic social interaction. Collectively, this evidence base supports Ripple Academy's Life-Based Educational Model as a research-informed approach that promotes deep understanding, critical thinking, and meaningful skill development across grade levels.

4. Educational Priorities:
Ripple Academy's Life-Based Educational Model defines success across four domains: academic achievement, life skills mastery, career exploration, and social-emotional growth. Our model emphasizes that education is not preparation for life; life itself is education. Thus, academic outcomes must reflect real-world readiness and whole-child development.

In alignment with these four domains, Ripple Academy's educational priorities focus on ensuring students achieve academic mastery, develop essential life skills, and engage in social-emotional and experiential learning. These priorities are meaningful because they connect classroom learning to real-world application through the Learn, Live, Lead framework, making education relevant and purposeful. They are manageable because teachers utilize standards-aligned curricula, competency-based grading, and targeted interventions that support student growth.

They are measurable through a comprehensive assessment system that provides ongoing, actionable data.

5. Educational Program–Curriculum and Instructional Methods:

Ripple Academy's unique educational approach draws on various evidence-based educational models–such as Kolb's experiential learning theory and Holland's RIASEC framework–as well as popular local simulation experiences, including Junior Achievement's BizTown. The result is Ripple Academy's proprietary Life-Based Education Model: the Learn, Live, Lead framework. The foundation of this framework is built on educational research and scholarship, while still offering flexibility in specific curriculum choices and allowing individual teachers to tailor instruction to their individual students' needs and learning styles. This unique framework is described below.

The Life-Based Education Model: Learn, Live, Lead

Ripple Academy's Life-Based Education Model is a dynamic framework that integrates academic rigor, real-world application, and reflective growth. It embodies the belief that life itself is education. This means our goal is to provide authentic, meaningful experiences, alongside academic study, that promote the foundation of lifelong learning for our students. This learning values life skill building, academic skill building, knowledge acquisition through teacher-led instruction through accredited programs, and authentic practice gained in designed experiences.

Embedded within this model is an awareness of diverse learner interests and strengths, guided by Holland's RIASEC framework (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional). The RIASEC model outlines six broad personality types and helps students understand how their individual traits, interests, and ways of working can connect to future career paths. By learning about their personality type, students begin to recognize which kinds of roles, environments, and tasks may be a good fit for them, supporting early self-awareness and meaningful career exploration.

This model follows a spiral cycle of Learn, Live, and Lead, inspired by Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (experience, reflection, conceptualization, experimentation) and the constructivist philosophies of Bruner and Piaget. Each phase allows students to build upon prior knowledge, apply new concepts in real-life contexts, and reflect deeply to internalize learning.

Learn: Building Academic and Life Foundations

The Learn phase represents the academic core of Ripple Academy's curriculum. Teachers provide high-quality, standards-aligned instruction using research-based and accredited programs in literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Instructional Design: Teaching is differentiated through RTI/MTSS frameworks, small group instruction, and flexible grouping to meet diverse learner needs.

In addition to differentiation, instruction is enriched through interest-based learning opportunities that draw from RIASEC themes. For example, students may approach a science unit through Investigative and Realistic lenses by engaging in experiments or design challenges, while literacy lessons may incorporate Artistic or Social themes through creative writing, dramatization, or peer collaboration. These subtle integrations ensure that students begin recognizing and valuing different ways of learning, working, and contributing.

Pedagogical Approach: Teachers use explicit instruction, guided inquiry, class discussion, role-playing, and hands-on learning to develop conceptual understanding and higher-order thinking skills.

Life Skills Integration: Students receive explicit instruction in essential life skills including but not limited to communication, collaboration, problem-solving, financial literacy, digital citizenship, nutrition, health and safety, and civic skills. Skills may also include topics like consumer basics, household skills, age-appropriate sewing, age-appropriate cooking and food prep, and early career skills. These are embedded across the curriculum and reinforced through a dedicated life skills specialty class, similar to art, music, or PE.

Within life skills instruction, students are also introduced to the six RIASEC domains in age-appropriate ways, using activities and discussions to explore how different interests, strengths, and work styles contribute to community roles.

Through the Learn phase, students gain foundational academic and interpersonal skills, contextualized through meaningful, real-world perspectives.

Live: Applying Learning Through Ripple Town Experiences

The Live phase transforms classroom knowledge into meaningful, hands-on practice. Students participate in Ripple Town Experiences—immersive simulation days that model real-world systems and community interactions.

Ripple Town is a flexible, stage-like space within the school designed to replicate a functioning community. It hosts rotating themes—such as a bakery, post office, or hospital—allowing students to explore different roles, businesses, and careers.

In this model, learning is not confined to the walls of a classroom; our students step into the vibrant world of Ripple Town, a fully integrated simulation environment that serves as the experiential foundation for our Learn, Live, Lead educational model. Throughout each month, students engage in meaningful roles in Ripple Town, through monthly Ripple Town Experience days, which will at times act as showcases to parents, and opportunities to be evaluated on mastery-based assessments, as well as other scheduled rotations to Ripple Town throughout the month. Teachers are encouraged to role-play in their classrooms, and engage in other activities to prepare for these simulations.

These simulations and preparatory activities will not be an add-on or occasional project. It is purposefully woven into daily, weekly, and monthly instructional rhythms. Each classroom receives a RIASEC-aligned role that deepens across grade levels while still engaging in cross-role awareness through structured mini-lessons, team-based simulations, and scaffolded challenges. A kindergartener assigned to an Artistic role in a bakery might focus on cake design and color mixing, while a fourth grader in the same RIASEC domain might manage branding, packaging, and customer-facing design presentations. Preparation for such roles can start with projects, readings, and discussions in the classroom that help students make connections to what they are learning in the classroom and how it can or will be applied.

Over the course of six years, students cycle through a diverse set of professional roles anchored in the RIASEC framework (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional). Each role is revisited annually, but increases in complexity and expectation. This intentional spiraling ensures that students not only gain exposure to multiple career pathways but also build real-world competencies like planning, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking in environments that feel playful and purposeful.

Whether calculating bakery inventory, responding to customer concerns, or budgeting for a storefront remodel, students apply academic skills in real-time. This ensures rigorous, joyful learning that is highly engaging for all learners, especially our neurodiverse population, who benefit from structure, predictability, and strength-based application.

Lead: Reflection, Growth, and the Ripple Effect

The Lead phase encourages students to reflect on their learning, take ownership of their growth, and recognize their potential to make a positive impact, the "ripple effect."

Students engage in reflection through journaling, class discussions, peer sharing, and inquiry-based projects that extend learning. These reflections are developmentally appropriate, ranging from guided conversations in early grades to structured writing and research in upper grades.

As part of this reflection, students are guided to identify which types of activities or roles felt most engaging to them, connecting these experiences to RIASEC interest areas. Teachers might ask questions such as, "Did you enjoy organizing, designing, or helping others most today?" or "What kind of work made you curious to learn more?" These conversations nurture self-awareness and plant seeds for future career exploration.

In addition to guided discussions, students participate in the following reflection activities to extend learning and deepen applications of knowledge:

- **Reflection and Extension:** Students may identify questions or curiosities sparked during Ripple Town or during community guest visits and pursue them through mini inquiry projects or service-learning activities.
- **Community Engagement:** Older students may collaborate with community partners to address real community needs or propose creative solutions, reinforcing innovation, leadership, and civic responsibility.
- **Personal Growth:** Reflection supports social-emotional learning and metacognition, helping students identify strengths, interests, and next steps in their personal and academic journey. For example, students may journal about their interest or skills in this area, their opinion about it, how they felt applying what they learned in that setting, and further questions or interests they may have in that career.

Over time, these reflection activities build a personal understanding of how each student's learning connects to their individual interests and strengths, preparing them for more intentional goal setting in later grades.

This reflection process closes the experiential loop and naturally spirals back into new learning experiences, reinforcing lifelong growth.

Building Competence Through Immersive Simulation

Each simulation is intentionally structured to scaffold academic standards. For example, a second-grade Conventional learner assigned to the "Inventory Manager" role in the bakery must practice addition, subtraction, and categorization; meanwhile, a fifth-grade peer in the same role might analyze data trends in customer orders to propose a new budget strategy. Core skills in math, ELA, science, and social studies are applied naturally in these simulated tasks, and teachers explicitly draw connections between classroom instruction and simulation activities.

To maintain novelty and depth year after year, each simulation includes age-appropriate culminating challenges. These challenges might last a week for younger grades and just a day for older students, but all are grounded in essential academic and social-emotional competencies. For instance, students might be tasked with responding to a product recall, redesigning a failing

layout, or budgeting for a pop-up storefront. These culminations function as engaging, standards-based "escape rooms" or case-based group challenges.

Neurodiverse Supports and Predictable Structure

Ripple Town is designed to support the strengths and needs of neurodiverse students. Predictability is maintained through visual schedules, consistent language across grades, and clearly defined roles. Role expectations are pre-taught and scaffolded, allowing for success across varying executive function abilities. Because simulations provide meaningful context for abstract concepts, they serve as anchors for students who benefit from multi-sensory, strength-based, or movement-based learning.

Students with social-emotional goals are also supported through intentional role placement. A student acting as a customer may practice advocacy and communication in a low-stakes environment. A more reserved student may find comfort and confidence in managing backend systems. These choices are not random; rather they're part of an intentional design that ensures each learner has opportunities for growth, mastery, and belonging.

Gamification and Student Ownership

To further engage students, simulations are layered with gamification mechanics. These may include earning badges for collaboration, unlocking "boss level" challenges through mastery, or progressing from intern to lead roles within a RIASEC domain over multiple years. Each student keeps a Ripple Rolebook, a portfolio where they collect achievements, reflect on strengths, and document personal growth. Students take pride in their roles, and role rotations ensure fresh perspectives while building depth of understanding.

Students aren't just passive participants; they are decision-makers. In upper elementary grades, learners may apply for leadership positions (e.g., Ripple Town Mayor, Simulation Supervisor, PR Lead), pitch innovations, or lead tours for younger students. They come to understand themselves not only as learners but as contributors in a system.

Accessibility for Distance and Partner Programs

Ripple Town is intentionally designed to welcome outside participation. Hybrid learners and visiting partner schools may engage in live or digital versions of monthly challenges. Whether remotely budgeting for a storefront or submitting marketing designs digitally, students can participate meaningfully without being on-site. This model extends Ripple Academy's mission beyond our walls and offers a path toward future partnerships and curriculum licensing.

Intentional Role Exposure and Deepening

Rather than "trying on" careers randomly, Ripple Town allows students to deeply explore one RIASEC-aligned role per simulation, while still learning about other roles through instruction and group collaboration. Over the course of a simulation, students experience their primary role daily but receive explicit instruction on other job functions within the simulation to promote broader understanding. By sixth grade, students have experienced all six RIASEC types multiple times at increasing levels of complexity.

This model mirrors real communities. A town needs bakers, designers, marketers, and managers, and every student, regardless of background or ability, has a valued place in the system. Academic rigor is never sacrificed for fun; rather, the two are intertwined through a structure that feels purposeful, lived-in, and joyful.

The Live phase transforms classroom knowledge into meaningful, hands-on practice. Students participate in Ripple Town Experiences immersive simulation days that model real-world systems and community interactions.

Ripple Town is a flexible, stage-like environment within the school that simulates the functioning of a community. It incorporates rotating themes such as a bakery, post office, or hospital that provide students with structured opportunities to engage in diverse roles, explore foundational business concepts, and investigate potential career pathways.

Ripple Town also functions as a platform for RIASEC-aligned exploration. Each rotating theme provides opportunities for students to engage with diverse domains of interest:

- **Realistic:** building, crafting, or operating community systems (e.g., construction, transportation, culinary arts)
  Investigative: inquiry and problem-solving (e.g., environmental testing, health data collection)
  Artistic: creative design, storytelling, or performance (e.g., advertising, set design, artistic displays)
  Social: helping, teaching, or serving others (e.g., healthcare, education, customer service)
  Enterprising: leadership, management, or entrepreneurship (e.g., running a shop, organizing a community event)
  Conventional: organizing, recording, or managing systems (e.g., bookkeeping, scheduling, documentation)

Teachers guide students in rotating through a variety of these experiences to ensure balanced exposure and to help students discover emerging strengths and preferences.

Ripple Town Experiences rotate approximately once per month and provide an opportunity for students to apply academic learning across disciplines in authentic contexts.

Each Ripple Town Experience integrates multiple subjects and fosters creativity and collaboration. Teachers guide reflection during and after the experience, helping students make deep connections between academic knowledge and life skills.

Example: Ripple Town Bakery Experience

- **Mathematics:** Applying computation, fractions, measurement, and financial literacy as cashiers, bakers, or customers.
- **Reading and Writing:** Reading literature or informational texts about baking, writing menus and advertisements, and creating reviews.
- **Science:** Exploring food chemistry, measurement, and temperature.
- **Social Studies:** Understanding commerce, production, interdependence, and community economics.

In this example, students naturally engage across RIASEC domains, including Realistic (hands-on baking), Enterprising (marketing and sales), and Artistic (designing logos and menus), developing both academic and personal insight into different kinds of work.

Community Partnerships

In addition to these instructional strategies, Ripple Academy will cultivate community partnerships that offer enriched learning opportunities beyond the classroom. These may include guest speakers, career mentors, and field trips that allow students to observe authentic work environments (e.g., touring a bakery, visiting a local business, or attending a Utah legislative session). Partnerships with local organizations and professionals will expand Ripple Town experiences, reinforce academic learning, and deepen career awareness.
These partnerships will also intentionally represent a variety of RIASEC career fields, ensuring students are exposed to multiple pathways and can connect classroom learning to authentic, real-world examples of each interest domain.

Alignment with Utah Standards and Accountability

Ripple Academy's Life-Based Education Model aligns fully with the Utah Core Standards across all academic content areas. All curriculum materials used in the Learn phase are either state-approved or accredited and are regularly reviewed to ensure compliance with state benchmarks and charter accountability expectations.

Student progress will be measured through a balanced assessment system that includes:

- Formative assessments during instruction (exit tickets, performance tasks, and class discussions).

- Benchmark and adaptive assessments aligned to Utah's core standards.
   State summative assessments as required by the Utah State Board of Education.

- Performance-based assessments embedded in Ripple Town Experiences and reflection projects.

Data from these assessments will inform instruction, intervention, and curriculum development, ensuring that all students make measurable academic growth. The school will use this data to evaluate program effectiveness and maintain compliance with state accountability systems.

Ripple Academy's Learn–Live–Lead model integrates rigorous academics, hands-on experiences, and reflective leadership to bring the mission, "life itself is education," to life. Students advance from Ripple Academy as capable community members, equipped with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to contribute meaningfully to their communities and futures.

For our students in grades K–6, Ripple Academy integrates early career awareness and exploratory learning through hands-on STEAM activities. Ripple Academy's program incorporates research-based curricula, hands-on experiences, inquiry projects, and community service. Our plan includes using a state-approved literacy and mathematics curriculum that aligns with the science of reading and supports a range of Depth of Knowledge levels (Webb, 1997). For subjects such as science and social studies, the school will select published programs or develop curricula aligned with state standards and our educational goals. These curricula will be organized into thematic units that integrate hands-on learning, inquiry-based projects, and community service. This approach provides flexibility in designing lessons that meet state requirements while supporting our instructional philosophy. In addition, instructional strategies such as differentiated instruction and group collaboration will be used, as these methods enhance engagement and understanding (Tomlinson, 2001), fostering real-world application and lifelong learning.

6. Promotion/Graduation Criteria:

At Ripple Academy, students will advance from one grade level to the next based on the following criteria:

- **Mastery of core standards** (Utah Core Standards for language arts, math, science, and social studies)
   1. Students are expected to show proficiency (70% or higher) in grade-level standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics.
   2. Teachers will use end-of-unit assessments, benchmark tests, and performance tasks to measure progress toward mastery.
   3. Students who do not meet benchmarks will receive targeted intervention (e.g., small-group instruction, RTI supports, or reading intervention programs).

4. Documentation of mastery or progress will be recorded in the student's learning portfolio or progress report each term.

- **Teacher assessments and classroom performance**
  1. Teachers will document engagement and participation as part of the overall evaluation of readiness for the next grade.
  2. Ongoing assessment includes classwork, quizzes, projects, and teacher observations.
  3. Students are expected to complete and turn in at least 80% of the assigned work with satisfactory effort.
  4. Teachers will note academic growth as well as overall performance.
  5. Progress reports and report cards reflect a combination of academic achievement and work habits.
  6. Teachers will submit quarterly progress reports to a Student Information System, which guardians can access.

- **Attendance and participation**
  1. Students should attend at least 90% of school days
  2. Students will be expected to participate in 70% of Ripple Town Experiences, followed by a grade level reflection piece about the experience.

- **Parent/teacher input**
  1. Teachers will notify parents early (typically by mid-year) if a student is not meeting grade-level expectations.
  2. If needed, a student support plan will be developed collaboratively with the parent to address areas of concern.

Students will generally move on to the next grade level unless there are serious academic or developmental concerns that will be addressed in detail with the parent.

Ripple Academy will implement USBE's "Portrait of a Graduate" by intentionally embedding its core competencies, such as collaboration, critical thinking, communication, creativity, and civic engagement, into daily instruction and Ripple Town experiences. Teachers will design learning activities that require students to practice these skills through hands-on projects, problem-solving tasks, and real-world simulations. In addition, classroom routines, schoolwide expectations, and reflection practices will support the development of attributes such as responsibility, resilience, and ethical decision-making. By integrating Portrait of a Graduate skills across content areas and experiential learning opportunities, Ripple Academy ensures that students consistently practice and internalize the competencies needed to become capable, confident, and purpose-driven individuals.

7. Alignment of Methods to Mission:

The alignment between the school's mission and vision and its curriculum is evident in how all elements work together to support student growth. By integrating academics, real-world

application, and reflection, students experience education as an active and connected process. Hands-on, inquiry-driven instruction with thematic units and simulations inspires curiosity and engagement, while social-emotional learning and life skills instruction promote emotional intelligence, balance, and personal growth. Community partnerships, Ripple Town experiences, and service-learning opportunities help students develop civic awareness, collaboration, and a sense of responsibility. Career and life skills exploration further enables students to identify their personal strengths, envision meaningful futures, and pursue purposeful pathways. Together, these elements ensure that every aspect of the Life-Based Education Model advances Ripple Academy's mission to make life itself an education and its vision of preparing whole, capable, and compassionate lifelong learners.

8. Evidence and Research Supporting Method of Instruction

Ripple Academy implements a variety of instructional methods within its Life-Based Educational Model to ensure meaningful, effective learning for all students. The Learn, Live, Lead framework is grounded in Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, which explains learning as a continuous four-stage cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Research shows that when students engage in all four stages, they develop a deeper understanding, improved retention, and a greater ability to apply knowledge in new contexts (Kolb, 1984). Ripple Academy's instructional model also integrates Holland's RIASEC framework, which identifies six career-related personality types and emphasizes the relationship between individual traits, interests, and meaningful learning experiences. Together, these research-based foundations shape Ripple Academy's emphasis on hands-on, purposeful, student-centered learning.

Learn

During the Learn phase, teachers deliver rigorous, standards-aligned instruction through direct instruction, inquiry-based learning, small-group intervention, and differentiated supports. Research consistently demonstrates that high-quality, explicit instruction builds foundational knowledge and improves student outcomes, particularly in literacy and mathematics (National Reading Panel, 2000; Gersten et al., 2009). Inquiry-based learning enhances conceptual understanding and increases student engagement, especially in STEM fields (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Differentiated instruction and targeted small-group approaches further support diverse and neurodiverse learners, providing scaffolding that increases accessibility and mastery for all students (Tomlinson & Imbeau, 2010).

Live

In the Live phase, students transfer academic learning into Ripple Town simulations of hands-on, real-world experiences designed to align with career pathways and RIASEC personality types. Research on experiential and project-based learning shows that students who engage in authentic, applied tasks demonstrate stronger problem-solving skills, increased motivation, and improved long-term retention of academic content (Levy & Mensah, 2020; Lucas Education Research, 2019). Ripple Town simulations promote collaboration, communication, leadership, and critical thinking while supporting students in discovering their strengths and interests. By engaging in career-themed experiences that align with their RIASEC profiles, students build early career awareness and confidence in their abilities.

Lead

The Lead phase focuses on structured opportunities for reflection, journaling, discussion, and goal-setting. Research demonstrates that reflective practices significantly strengthen metacognition, self-regulation, and intrinsic motivation (Zimmerman, 2002; Beach et al., 2020). Students who regularly reflect on their learning show improved problem-solving abilities, increased ownership of their progress, and better social-emotional outcomes. Ripple Academy's emphasis on structured reflection reinforces the values embedded in the R.I.P.L. Pillars and helps students internalize their learning, preparing them to become self-aware, responsible, and purpose-driven individuals.

9. Student Assessment & Evaluation Plan:

The outcomes that will show our model and mission are successful are multi-faceted, encompassing: academics, life skills, career exploration, and social-emotional capacity.

Academic Outcomes

- Students will meet or exceed the state average on RISE assessments in ELA, Math, and Science.
- Mastery-based grading will track personal proficiency in alignment with Utah Core Standards.
- Assessment data (formative, benchmark, and summative) will guide instruction, differentiation, MTSS, and IEP planning.

Life Skills Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate mastery of foundational life skills such as nutrition, hygiene, communication, scheduling, budgeting, and conflict resolution.
- Developmental rubrics and applied learning tasks will document student growth in these

areas, supporting self-sufficiency and independence.

Career Exploration Outcomes

- Students will annually complete RIASEC-based inventories and explore one high-demand career in each of Holland's six domains (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional).
- Students will reflect on career learning through journals, peer interviews, and portfolios, enabling them to form early identity and career connections.

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Outcomes

- A schoolwide culture of "seek first to understand" will be evident through:
  - Student-initiated "Peace Walks" and restorative practices
  - Daily meditation, affirmations, and reflective journaling
  - Reduced behavioral referrals
  - Attendance rates that exceed the state average (75% in 2022–23)

These holistic outcomes will be regularly evaluated using student performance data, program implementation reviews, and stakeholder feedback to ensure that Ripple Academy's life-based education model is effectively preparing students for lifelong success.

Ripple Academy will administer Statewide Assessments as directed by the USBE including RISE, Acadience Reading & Math (K-3), WIDA for English Language Learners (K-6). Additionally, Ripple will incorporate summative, formative, and benchmark testing throughout the school year, including teacher-created and performance-based assessments tied to experiential learning activities such as Ripple Town simulations, to measure student progress towards mastery of learning standards, inform instruction, and evaluate program effectiveness. Rubrics will be used to evaluate student reflections, projects, and demonstrations of applied knowledge, ensuring that assessments capture not only content mastery but also critical thinking, collaboration, and real-world problem-solving skills.

Classroom teachers will use both formal and informal assessment methods including assignments, writing samples, class discussions, projects, end-of-unit tests, etc. Rather than standard letter grades, Ripple Academy will use a competency based grading system to reflect mastery of specific skills using a four point scale as follows: 1)--needs support, 2)--approaching the standard, 3)--proficient, 4)--advanced. Each competency represents an important skill or learning goal that students must demonstrate before moving on to the next skill. Content competencies are closely aligned with the Utah Core Standards as outlined by the USBE.

All data collected from assessments, both statewide and school-based, will guide instructional planning and program evaluation. Teachers and administrators will use this information to

identify gaps, provide targeted interventions, and continuously refine instructional practices. By linking educational priorities directly to assessment outcomes, Ripple Academy ensures that student growth is clearly monitored, instruction is data-driven, and all students are prepared to transition successfully to the next level of learning.

10. Special Education & Disability Services Plan

During enrollment, families will be asked to share whether their child has an existing IEP or 504 Plan. Parents may provide copies of these documents, and Ripple Academy will request records from the previous school to ensure continuity of services. Upon enrollment, the special education team will review the evaluation report and existing IEP, and in collaboration with the parent or guardian, will immediately implement the student's current plan, including any comparable services. A case conference committee will be convened within ten instructional days of enrollment to adopt or amend the existing IEP **(per 511 IAC 7-42-5(a)(3))**. For students with an existing 504 Plan, Ripple Academy will hold a 504 team meeting with the parent or guardian as soon as possible, but no later than thirty days after enrollment. Parents are active participants in all IEP and 504 meetings and are provided with a Procedural Safeguards Notice to ensure they fully understand their rights.

Ripple Academy serves a wide range of learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs), students with disabilities, neurodivergent students, and gifted and talented students, and uses clear, research-based processes to identify and support each group. English Language Learners are identified through the Home Language Survey, which all families complete at enrollment, followed by the state-approved English language proficiency assessment for students whose survey indicates a language other than English. Students with disabilities may be identified through the Child Find process, which includes classroom observations, parent input, MTSS data, and comprehensive evaluations conducted by the special education team. Students transferring with existing IEPs or 504 Plans receive immediate comparable services while documentation is reviewed and finalized according to state and federal guidelines.

Ripple Academy is committed to inclusive excellence. The curriculum and instructional design are intentionally structured to meet the needs of every student through:

- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS): Provides differentiated instruction, targeted interventions, and enrichment based on student data.
- Support for Students with Disabilities: Special education services are fully integrated within the general education setting whenever appropriate, ensuring access to grade-level content through accommodations and individualized supports.
- Support for English Learners: Language development is embedded across content areas using structured literacy, visuals, and academic discourse strategies.
- Support for Advanced Learners: Opportunities for accelerated learning, enrichment projects, and leadership roles in Ripple Town provide depth and challenge.

- Support for Emerging Learners: Small-group instruction, early literacy focus, and hands-on activities build foundational skills and confidence.

Through this comprehensive and inclusive framework, Ripple Academy ensures that all students—regardless of background, ability, or learning profile—have equitable access to rigorous instruction and meaningful learning experiences.

Neurodivergent students, such as those with ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, or processing differences, -+*may be identified through teacher referrals, parent concerns, observations of learning behavior, progress monitoring data, or evaluations conducted by licensed professionals. Ripple Academy's structured, experiential, hands-on learning model provides multiple access points for these students through scaffolded routines, visual supports, flexible pacing, and small-group instruction. Gifted and talented students are identified through a combination of academic data, teacher and parent nominations, creative or problem-solving assessments, and additional evaluation administered by trained staff or licensed evaluators. Identified students receive accelerated instruction, enrichment opportunities, and differentiated learning experiences aligned with their strengths.

To ensure that all students receive appropriate support, Ripple Academy implements a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) that uses classroom assessments, curriculum-based measures, progress monitoring tools, and social-emotional screening data to identify students who may need targeted intervention or greater challenge. Teachers collaborate regularly with specialists and school leadership to analyze data, adjust instruction, and ensure timely, responsive support for each student. Instruction across the school includes differentiated teaching practices, small-group intervention blocks, accommodations and modifications aligned to IEPs or 504 Plans, and research-supported strategies for multilingual learners.

Ripple Academy maintains a full continuum of services and placements to provide a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Related services, such as occupational therapy, physical therapy, counseling, or speech-language therapy, are provided onsite according to each student's IEP. By integrating individualized supports within Ripple Academy's Life-Based Educational Model, the school ensures that every learner can access high-quality instruction, participate meaningfully in Ripple Town experiences, and make steady academic and social-emotional progress.

11. Support for Educationally Disadvantaged Populations:
Ripple Academy recognizes that educationally disadvantaged students include those who are performing below grade level, students who have experienced interrupted or inconsistent schooling, children from low-income households, students experiencing housing instability, and those affected by trauma or adverse childhood experiences. These students may not qualify for special education services but still require targeted academic and social-emotional supports to

thrive in school. Ripple Academy is committed to identifying these students early and ensuring they receive timely, research-based interventions tailored to their individual needs.

Teachers and school staff will identify educationally disadvantaged students through a variety of academic and contextual indicators, including formative classroom assessments, curriculum-based measures, RISE and Acadience data, attendance patterns, classroom engagement, behavioral trends, and family input. When a student demonstrates difficulty meeting grade-level expectations, the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) will be activated immediately. Through this framework, students receive targeted small-group instruction, individualized intervention plans, explicit teaching of foundational skills, and frequent progress monitoring to ensure learning gaps close effectively and efficiently.

Instructional supports may include scaffolded lessons, vocabulary and language development routines, repeated practice opportunities, structured literacy practices, check-ins with teachers, and additional time for skill-building. These strategies are specifically designed for students who may be behind academically due to external factors rather than a diagnosed disability. Ripple Academy's hands-on, engaging curriculum also serves to re-engage students who may have previously felt disconnected from school by grounding learning in meaningful, real-world contexts.

Ripple Academy also understands that academic challenges are often connected to broader life circumstances. Students may face barriers such as food insecurity, family financial instability, homelessness, or exposure to domestic violence, all of which can impede learning. The school's Family Engagement Specialist will proactively collaborate with families to identify needs and connect them with community resources, including food pantries, counseling agencies, affordable housing programs, transportation support, and healthcare providers. Ripple Academy will maintain partnerships with local service organizations so families have access to comprehensive wraparound support that strengthens the child's entire learning environment.

In addition, Ripple Academy will employ a licensed clinical counselor who will provide school-based mental health services, including individual counseling, small-group skill-building, classroom SEL instruction, and trauma-informed supports. Teachers will receive training in trauma-informed practice, de-escalation, and relationship-centered classroom management so they can respond effectively to students experiencing stress, anxiety, or emotional dysregulation.

Through early identification, data-informed instruction, strong family partnerships, and integrated academic and mental health supports, Ripple Academy ensures that educationally disadvantaged students receive the structure, consistency, and encouragement needed to make meaningful academic and social-emotional progress. This approach ensures that students who may not qualify for special education services, however, face significant learning barriers, receive equitable access to the tools and support necessary for long-term success.

12. Curriculum Development Plan:

Ripple Academy will implement a combination of adopted and developed curriculum. Ripple Academy will implement a curriculum development plan through the adoption of high-quality, research-based programs with the creation of innovative, school-designed learning experiences. Core academic subjects, including mathematics, literacy, science, and social studies, will utilize adopted curricula that are fully aligned with the Utah Core Standards and grounded in evidence-based instructional practices. These programs will ensure rigor, consistency, and measurable student progress across all grade levels.

In addition, Ripple Academy will develop its own curriculum for Ripple Town Experiences, our signature hands-on learning component. These teacher-designed units will directly connect to concepts taught in the core academic programs, allowing students to apply their knowledge in authentic, experiential settings that reinforce understanding and relevance. This combination of structured, standards-based instruction and creative, real-world application reflects Ripple Academy's Life-Based Learning Model. It ensures that students experience a cohesive, engaging, and purpose-driven education.

13. Curriculum Selection

Ripple Academy's curriculum is intentionally designed to reflect the school's overarching goals of cultivating lifelong learners through rigorous academics, hands-on real-world experiences, and meaningful opportunities for reflection and personal growth. This approach ensures that learning is purposeful, connected, and responsive to the diverse needs of all students.

The adopted curricula for literacy, mathematics, science, and social studies provide the academic foundation needed to ensure rigor and alignment with Utah Core Standards. These programs support our vision of developing capable, curious learners who possess strong foundational skills. The *Ripple Town* and *Life Skills* components of the Life-Based Education Model extend this vision by providing experiential learning opportunities that connect academic concepts to real-life contexts, promoting leadership, social-emotional growth, and lifelong learning habits.

Curriculum Integration and Implementation Strategies

Ripple Academy's curriculum integrates research-based instruction, project-based learning, and experiential application. Implementation will be guided by:

- Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Teachers collaborate regularly to align instruction, share best practices, and ensure consistency across grade levels.

- Data-Informed Instruction: Ongoing formative and benchmark assessments guide differentiation, intervention, and enrichment.

- Spiral Learning Approach: Concepts are revisited and expanded across grades, ensuring mastery and deep understanding.

- RIASEC Career Exploration Integration: Students engage in interest-based experiences within Ripple Town that connect academic learning to real-world professions and personal strengths.

- Community Partnerships: Local organizations, mentors, and professionals provide authentic contexts for applied learning and civic engagement.

These strategies ensure fidelity of implementation while allowing flexibility for teacher creativity and innovation within the Life-Based Learn, Live, Lead framework.

Ripple Academy is committed to inclusive excellence. The curriculum and instructional design are intentionally structured to meet the needs of every student through:

- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS): Provides differentiated instruction, targeted interventions, and enrichment based on student data.
- Support for Students with Disabilities: Special education services are fully integrated within the general education setting whenever appropriate, ensuring access to grade-level content through accommodations and individualized supports.
- Support for English Learners: Language development is embedded across content areas using structured literacy, visuals, and academic discourse strategies.
- Support for Advanced Learners: Opportunities for accelerated learning, enrichment projects, and leadership roles in Ripple Town provide depth and challenge.
- Support for Emerging Learners: Small-group instruction, early literacy focus, and hands-on activities build foundational skills and confidence.

Through this integrated approach, Ripple Academy's curriculum ensures that all students, regardless of background, ability, or learning style experience a coherent, relevant, and empowering education that prepares them to thrive academically and personally.

Additional Considerations (if applicable):

- **Online/Distance Education:**

Ripple Academy is dedicated to providing a flexible and supportive learning environment tailored to the unique needs of each student and family. Our hybrid model combines on-campus instruction with a comprehensive home-based learning option, allowing students to thrive in the setting best suited to their individual learning styles.

Our distance learning program will further support families choosing home-based education by providing virtual instruction, access to school resources, and opportunities for social engagement and periodic in-person activities.

Ripple Academy's distance learning option is designed to mirror the quality, engagement, and community connection of our on-campus program. Each online student will be assigned to a classroom teacher from their grade level, ensuring consistent communication, instructional continuity, and inclusion in classroom activities. Teachers will record and upload lessons, assignments, and instructional materials through a secure online platform such as Google Classroom, allowing students to access learning at their own pace while maintaining structure and accountability. Attendance will be based on participation and completion of weekly assignments, providing families the flexibility to schedule learning around individual needs while ensuring students remain active and progressing academically.

To maintain the hands-on and experiential components central to Ripple Academy's Life-Based Learning Model, online students will be required to participate in a designated percentage of Ripple Town Experience Days throughout the school year. These in-person opportunities allow students to engage in collaborative, project-based learning that reinforces academic concepts and social interaction. Families will also receive at-home learning kits and activity packets containing materials aligned with classroom lessons, enabling students to fully participate in hands-on projects from home.

This hybrid approach ensures that every student whether attending in person or learning remotely, benefits from Ripple Academy's commitment to personalized, meaningful education. By blending digital access with experiential, community-based learning, Ripple Academy provides a flexible yet connected educational experience that supports student growth, family choice, and equitable access to high-quality instruction.

SECTION 4 — MARKET ANALYSIS

Proposed Location:
The proposed Ripple Academy charter school will be located in the **Eagle Mountain/Saratoga Springs** area.

1. **Education Landscape, Community, and Surrounding Schools:**

Eagle Mountain/Saratoga Springs is characterized by a diverse and evolving educational landscape, catering to a rapidly growing population. The growth in this community is evident, with over 23,000 permits for new homes not yet under construction. Currently, the area is served by five charter schools:
- John Hancock Charter School (K-8)
- Ranches Academy (K-6)
- Ascent Academy (K-6)
- Lakeview Academy (K-8)
- Mountain Sunrise Academy (K-8)

These charter schools provide alternative educational options, focusing on innovative teaching methods and community involvement. In addition to the charter schools, Eagle Mountain/Saratoga Springs has fourteen elementary schools operated by Alpine School District, offering a solid foundation for early education. These schools include:

- Blackridge Elementary (PK, K-6): 1,182 students
- Brookhaven Elementary (PK, K-6): 1,031 students
- Desert Sky Elementary (Preschool-6): 994 students
- Eagle Valley Elementary (Preschool-6): 797 students
- Hidden Hollow Elementary (Preschool-6): 861 students
- Mountain Trails Elementary (Preschool-6): 779 students
- Pony Express Elementary (Preschool-6): 1,013 students
- Silverlake Elementary (Preschool-6): 800 students
- Harbor Point Elementary (PK, K-6): 704 Students
- Harvest Elementary (PK, K-6): 1,108 Students
- Riverview Elementary (PK, K-6): 968 Students
- Sage Hills Elementary (PK, K-6): 902 Students
- Springside Elementary (PK, K-6): 747 Students
- Saratoga Shores Elementary (PK, K-6): 735 Students
- Thunder Ridge Elementary (PK, K-6): 991 Students

The overall student enrollment in Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs is significant, with existing elementary schools nearing or exceeding capacity. This overcrowding in many local schools has prompted families to seek alternatives that provide smaller class sizes and more personalized attention for their children. The anticipated growth in the community, combined with the projected opening of new educational facilities, highlights the necessity for a school that can address these challenges and meet the needs of families looking for quality educational options.

In summary, the education landscape in Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs is marked by a mix of charter and district schools, with a focus on expanding capacity to accommodate a growing and diverse student body. The current offerings, while robust, underscore the community's need for additional educational opportunities that prioritize individualized learning experiences and foster a strong sense of community involvement.

2. Proposed School's Viability:

According to the Alpine School District's potential split analysis, the Eagle Mountain area has experienced a remarkable growth of 102% over the past 11 years. Census.gov reports that Eagle Mountain's population has grown by 30.5%, increasing from 43,618 in 2020 to 56,932 in 2023. The World Population Review estimates that the population of Eagle Mountain will reach 61,037 in 2024. Notably, 25% of residents were aged 5-14 in the 2020 census. If this trend has continued over the past four years, it stands to reason that the school-age population has also grown by 30.5%, despite the addition of only two schools in the area.

To determine whether families would support a new school and be interested in enrolling, we launched a community interest survey in November 2025. The response was immediate and substantial: approximately 120–130 families submitted interest forms representing more than 180 K–6 students in just a few days. The majority of these families reside in Eagle Mountain, with additional responses from Saratoga Springs, Cedar Fort, Lehi, American Fork, Orem, and other nearby communities, indicating that demand extends beyond a single neighborhood. Of these entries, roughly 90–100 students (about half of all responses) selected "Very Interested – Ready to Enroll," while another 70–80 students indicated "Interested – Want to Learn More." Only a small portion—approximately 20–25 students—reported that they were still "Exploring Options," demonstrating overwhelmingly positive early intent to enroll.

Families consistently cited smaller class sizes, life-based learning, neuro-diverse support, social-emotional learning, innovative teaching methods, and career-exploration opportunities as their primary reasons for interest. Several parents noted that they have already withdrawn their children from traditional schools or begun homeschooling and would "enroll immediately" if Ripple Academy opens. Others, including current educators, expressed interest in both enrolling their children and joining the school's staff. This early outreach clearly demonstrates strong community buy-in, validates the need for an additional school in the area, and indicates a robust initial enrollment pipeline for the proposed Ripple Academy.

3. Unique Charter School Characteristics:

Ripple Academy adopts a unique educational model centered on hands-on experiential learning while also valuing strategic, explicit instructional practices. This approach encourages students to take an active role in their education through real-world applications, simulations, and community-integrated projects. By blending structured instruction with immersive, authentic learning experiences, Ripple Academy ensures that students build strong foundational skills while applying their knowledge in meaningful, practical ways. Because experiential learning offers multiple entry points for understanding, this model is especially supportive of

neurodiverse learners and students with varied learning styles, allowing them to access content through visual, kinesthetic, collaborative, and reflective pathways.

By integrating community involvement both inside and outside the classroom, Ripple Academy creates opportunities for students to engage with local organizations, businesses, and community partners, further enriching their learning experience. These partnerships strengthen the community and provide families with an educational option focused on purposeful learning experiences that prepare students for future careers and lifelong learning.

Additionally, Ripple Academy distinguishes itself from other charter schools in the target area through its intentionally small class sizes. Ripple Academy's targeted class sizes are 1:20 for grades K–3 and 1:25 for grades 4–6 smaller than the ratios found in many neighboring schools, which often exceed 1:30 in the upper grades. Smaller class sizes allow for more personalized attention, differentiated instruction, and deeper relationships between teachers and students. This approach fosters strong academic engagement, individualized support, and meaningful connections that benefit all learners, including those who may need additional scaffolding or enrichment.

Together, these characteristics set Ripple Academy apart and create a dynamic, inclusive, and supportive educational environment that prepares students for success in an interconnected world.

4. Meeting the Local Educational Needs:

To effectively address the educational needs in the targeted area, it's crucial to emphasize the demand for small class sizes, which facilitate more individualized instruction and hands-on learning opportunities. This approach caters to diverse learning styles, including IEP and 504 plans, and fosters more robust relationships between students and teachers, enhancing academic engagement and support.

Ripple Academy is explicitly designed to meet these needs by maintaining small class sizes, enabling personalized attention, and offering tailored lesson plans. Additionally, the curriculum will incorporate hands-on learning experiences, ensuring that students can actively engage with the material. By focusing on these critical aspects, Ripple Academy aims to create an environment that supports each student's unique educational journey and better prepares them for future success.

According to Alpine School District's potential split analysis, the Eagle Mountain area has grown by 102% in the last 11 years. Eagle Mountain's population in 2024 will be **61,037**. Eagle Mountain is currently growing at a rate of 7.21% annually, and its population has increased by 36.81% since the most recent census, which recorded a population of **44,616** in 2020. Saratoga Springs has a 2024 population of **57,278**. Saratoga Springs is currently growing at a rate of 9.03% annually and its population has increased by 49.57% since the most recent census, which recorded a population of **38,294** in 2020.

	FY13				**FY24**							
City	K-6	7-9	10-12	Total	K-6	7-9	10-12	Total	Growth	% Growth	% of Growth	% of + Growth
Cedar Fort	32	29	24	85	44	16	14	74	(11)	-13%	0%	0%
Eagle Mountain	4,321	1,271	898	6,490	7,281	2,985	2,813	13,079	6,589	102%	48%	33%
Fairfield	10	7	4	21	11	6	6	23	2	10%	0%	0%
Saratoga Springs	3,797	1,180	887	5,864	6,211	2,697	2,596	11,504	5,640	96%	41%	28%
Total	8,160	2,487	1,813	12,460	13,547	5,704	5,429	24,680	12,220	98%	88%	62%

According to Alpine School District Enrollment and Projections from November 28, 2023, in 2018 there were **11,049** Alpine District Elementary age students in Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs and that number is **projected to grow to 14,151 by 2028** (see charts below).

Saratoga Springs Schools 2018-2028

WESTLAKE HIGH (AND FEEDERS) ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

	ACTUAL						*** PROJECTION**				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*	2025*	2026*	2027*	2028*
Elementary											
Brookhaven 40%	745	850	313	377	394	412	418	423	431	430	423
Harbor Point 100%				635	670	704	725	760	794	814	864
Harvest 100%	968	969	943	1,017	997	1,018	1,052	1,059	1,099	1,137	1,144
Riverview 100%	994	958	934	948	971	968	979	973	1,000	1,002	1,029
Sage Hills 100%	1,036	1,152	1,033	908	916	902	863	858	800	801	778
Saratoga Shores 100%	879	888	825	697	719	735	732	725	717	725	703
Silver Lake 100%			601	690	715	746	775	765	773	770	768
Springside 100%	877	903	871	678	729	747	777	828	869	916	967
Thunder Ridge 100%	660	751	715	948	981	991	994	994	1,007	998	967
Total Elementary	6,159	6,471	6,235	6,898	7,092	7,223	7,315	7,385	7,490	7,593	7,643

-Alpine School District Enrollment and Projections 11-28-2023

Eagle Mountain Schools 2018-2028

CEDAR VALLEY HIGH (AND FEEDERS) ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

	ACTUAL						*** PROJECTION**				
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*	2025*	2026*	2027*	2028*
Elementary											
Black Ridge 100%	1,102	1,140	1,070	1,182	1,189	812	778	764	765	744	723
Brookhaven 60%	438	499	469	566	592	619	627	634	646	645	634
Cedar Valley 100%	112	96	89	103	118	111	101	96	91	84	75
Desert Sky 100%						994	1,085	1,175	1,251	1,319	1,366
Eagle Valley 100%	699	753	752	854	906	798	806	819	825	822	802
Hidden Hollow 100%	964	988	997	1,044	1,065	861	855	847	849	849	866
Mtn. Trails 100%	690	770	832	1,087	1,235	779	798	851	908	956	1,002
Pony Express 100%	885	965	915	1,036	1,046	1,013	1,013	1,022	1,024	1,029	1,040
Total Elementary	4,890	5,211	5,124	5,872	6,151	5,987	6,063	6,208	6,359	6,448	6,508

-Alpine School District Enrollment and Projections 11-28-2023

Eagle Mountain Schools 2018-2028

Cedar Valley High (and Feeders) Enrollment
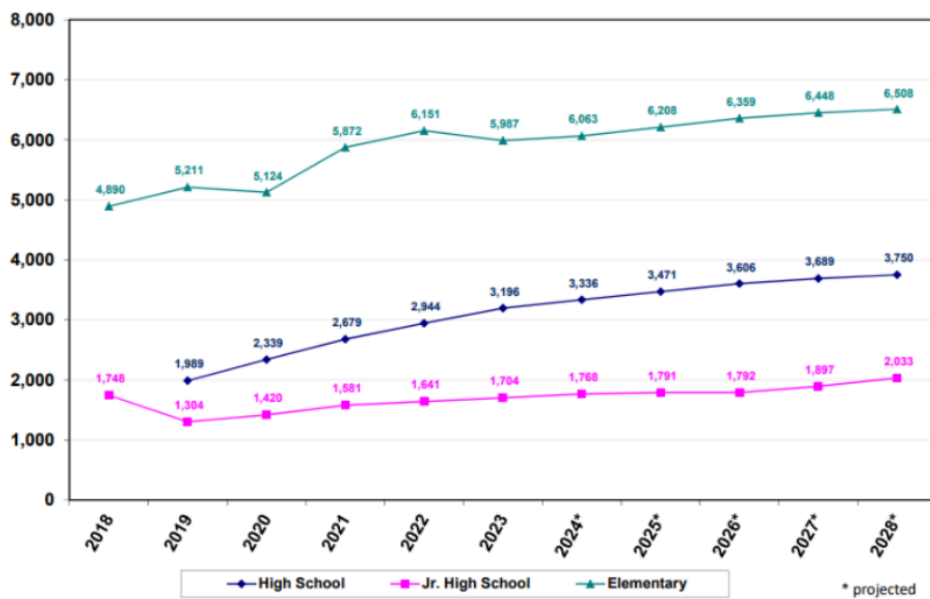
*Alpine School District Enrollment and Projections 11-28-2023

Saratoga Springs Schools 2018-2028

Westlake High (and Feeders) Enrollment
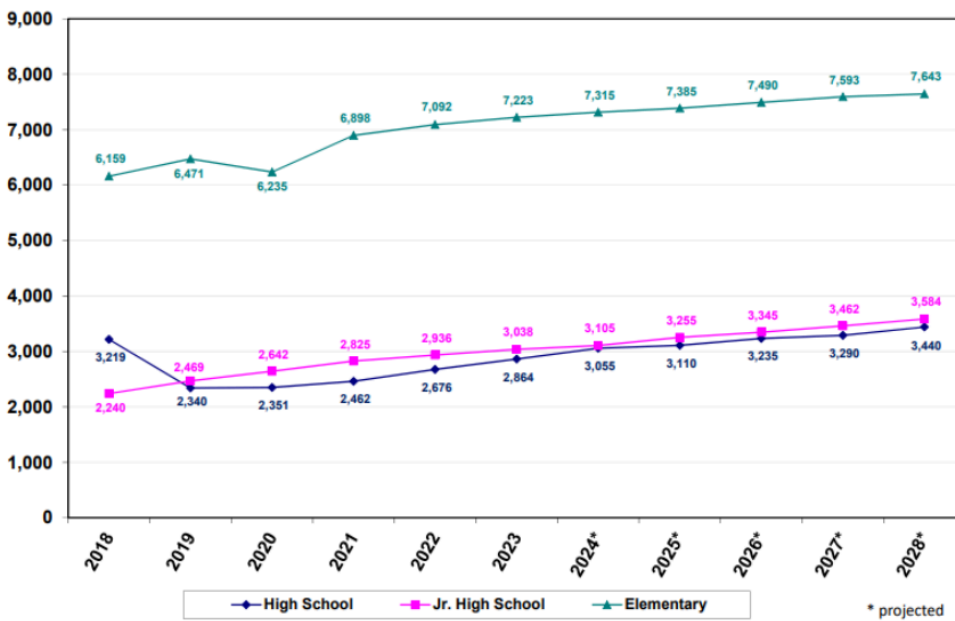
-Alpine School District Enrollment and Projections 11-28-2023

The charts below represent the growth percentages by schools in the area.

Eagle Mountain Elementary School Enrollment Estimates

School Name	2023 Estimate	2027 Estimate	Growth	% Growth
New Elementary (Overland)	790	1,074	284	36%
Mtn Trails	773	930	157	20%
Eagle Valley	817	846	29	4%
Hidden Hollow	844	906	62	7%
Black Ridge	887	934	47	5%
Cedar Valley	117	115	-2	-2%
Brookhaven	1,075	1,379	304	28%
Pony Express	1,056	1,107	51	5%

Saratoga Springs Elementary Schools Enrollment Estimates

School Name	2013 Estimate	2027 Estimate	Growth	% of Growth
Harvest	997	1,037	40	4%
Riverview	977	990	13	1%
Springside	775	945	170	22%
Thunder Ridge	1,046	1,269	223	21%
Saratoga Shores	736	782	46	6%
Sage Hills	931	938	7	1%
Harbor Point	703	811	108	15%
Silver Lake (EM)	744	889	145	20%
Total	8,160	12,460	4,300	53%

The data in these tables demonstrate clear evidence indicating that enrollment projections are increasing in this region, and that Ripple Academy's enrollment projections are realistic.

The proposed school in Eagle Mountain/Saratoga Springs is designed to serve a rapidly growing and diverse student population, particularly those aged 5-14, who comprised 25% of the area's residents in the 2020 census.

As local schools face overcrowding, families increasingly seek environments where their children can thrive academically and socially. The demand for smaller class sizes is critical for personalized learning, allowing teachers to focus on individual student needs and foster strong relationships. Additionally, students' diversity in academic abilities, backgrounds, and socio-economic statuses necessitates a school equipped to provide differentiated instruction and support. Ripple Academy will meet the target population's specific needs in the following ways:

- **Smaller Class Sizes:** The school will prioritize smaller classes (1:20 (K-3), 1:25 (4-6) teacher-student ratios) to ensure individualized attention, enhancing student engagement and achievement.
- **Community and Relationships:** A community-oriented approach will create a welcoming environment where students feel valued. Promoting parental involvement and community partnerships will further enhance this sense of belonging.
- **Tailored Curriculum:** The curriculum will meet state standards and incorporate student interests and real-world applications, fostering motivation and engagement.
- **Comprehensive Support Services:** Recognizing diverse needs, the school will provide academic tutoring, counseling, and unique education resources to support all students, including those with learning disabilities.
- **Safe and Inclusive Environment:** The school will emphasize a safe and respectful atmosphere, with programs promoting social-emotional learning and conflict resolution, contributing to a positive school culture.

Students in the Eagle Mountain/Saratoga Springs area will choose this school over others due to its smaller class sizes and the opportunity to avoid overcrowding, which is increasingly common in many local schools. Eagle Mountain's significant growth from 43,618 in 2020 to 56,932 in 2023 and Saratoga Springs' growth of 49.57% from 38,294 in 2020 to 57,278 highlight the need for educational facilities that can accommodate new students without sacrificing quality.

In 2022, a local bond was slated to support the opening of a new middle school in Eagle Mountain, four elementary schools in Eagle Mountain, Saratoga Springs, and Lehi, and a high school in Saratoga Springs, among other projects. However, since this bond did not pass, existing elementary schools in the area have struggled with overcrowding and operating overcapacity, many adding multiple trailers at each school to accommodate the increasing number of students. Only two new elementary schools (Desert Sky and John Hancock) have opened in Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs during this population surge. In contrast, a new or less crowded school in Eagle Mountain/Saratoga Springs can provide a more personalized

learning environment where students receive the individual attention they need to succeed. This appeal is powerful for families seeking a supportive educational atmosphere.

To effectively promote Ripple Academy and reach a diverse population of families, the school will implement a comprehensive marketing strategy that blends digital outreach, community connections, and targeted engagement with local organizations. Our approach is designed to be inclusive, legally compliant, and responsive to the educational needs of the Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs communities.

- Digital Outreach: Ripple Academy will maintain an accessible, user-friendly website that provides clear information about the school's curriculum, enrollment process, and instructional model. The website will include translation features for multilingual families and ADA-compliant formatting to ensure broad accessibility. Social media will be used to share updates about school development, curriculum highlights, introductions of staff as they are hired, and announcements of upcoming community information nights. Because the school has not yet opened, posts will focus on our instructional approach, mission, community partnerships, and FAQs rather than student success stories.
- Community Engagement: Ripple Academy will actively participate in local events such as Eagle Mountain's Pony Express Days, Saratoga Springs Splash Days, fall festivals, and community fairs. These events allow staff and volunteers to meet families, answer questions, and share informational materials. The school will also host information nights at the public library, recreation centers, and community gathering spaces to ensure families have multiple opportunities to learn about Ripple Academy.
- Partnerships With Local Organizations: To reach families of neurodiverse children and other educationally diverse populations, Ripple Academy will build relationships with local organizations and support networks such as pediatric therapy clinics, early intervention programs, parent support groups, after-school programs, community mental health providers, and nonprofit agencies serving children and families. Examples may include local occupational therapy and speech clinics, Autism support groups in Utah County, family resource centers, and parent co-ops. These partnerships will help ensure that families who may benefit from Ripple Academy's small class sizes, structured routines, and hands-on learning model are aware of the opportunity, without targeting individuals directly.
- Collaboration With Schools and Counselors: Ripple Academy will connect with counselors and administrators at local preschools, daycare centers, and early childhood programs to share general information about the school. While we will not request or receive personal student information, these educators can help share enrollment information with families who may be seeking smaller learning

environments or additional support. Ripple Academy will also provide informational flyers to local elementary schools for inclusion in community resource areas or digital community boards, as appropriate.

- Printed Materials and Public Visibility: Ripple Academy will distribute flyers, brochures, and postcards at community centers, libraries, recreation facilities, churches, pediatric clinics, and family-focused businesses throughout Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs. These materials will highlight Ripple Academy's hands-on learning model, small class sizes, and inclusive supports for diverse learning needs without directing outreach to any specific subgroup.
- Community Feedback: Ripple Academy will gather community feedback through interest surveys, informational sessions, and public Q&A events. Families will be encouraged to share their needs, expectations, and questions, which will help refine ongoing recruitment efforts and ensure that communication remains responsive and accessible to the full diversity of local families.

This multi-layered recruitment approach ensures that Ripple Academy's marketing efforts are inclusive, equitable, and designed to reach families from diverse racial, linguistic, socioeconomic, and learning backgrounds including those seeking greater support for neurodiverse learners.

Our website will include multilingual translation options, for instance, Spanish, Portuguese, Samoan, and Arabic, which are among the most commonly spoken languages in the region, ensuring that families who speak languages other than English can easily access enrollment information. The website will also feature ADA-compliant formatting and clear explanations of the school's learning model, small class sizes, and support structures for diverse learners. Social media content will highlight staff introductions, curriculum examples, school values, community partnerships, and event reminders rather than student success stories, as the school has not yet opened.

Ripple Academy will engage directly with local organizations that serve families across the community. These include the Eagle Mountain Library, Saratoga Springs Library, local recreation centers, the Utah Parent Center, Kids Who Count Early Intervention, Roots Therapy, Utah Autism Academy, ScenicView Academy, and local pediatric therapy clinics that support occupational, speech, and behavioral needs. By sharing informational materials with these groups, hosting joint information nights, and participating in community fairs and parent workshops, Ripple Academy will ensure that families who may benefit from our small class sizes and structured, hands-on learning model are aware of this new option.

To reach multilingual and economically diverse families, Ripple Academy will collaborate with community churches, neighborhood associations, and local food pantries to distribute flyers, postcards, and translated information sheets. The school will participate in

events such as Pony Express Days, Splash Days, library story times, and cultural celebrations throughout the year. These in-person touchpoints are essential for building trust, increasing awareness, and ensuring families from all backgrounds feel welcomed and informed.

Ripple Academy will actively seek community feedback through parent interest surveys, both online and at in-person events. We will also host open houses, virtual Q&A sessions, and small focus groups to understand family needs and refine recruitment efforts. Families will have opportunities to share their preferences regarding communication methods, event locations, and language access, ensuring that our marketing approach remains responsive to the diverse population we aim to serve.

Through these targeted partnerships, accessible communication strategies, and continuous community engagement, Ripple Academy's marketing plan is intentionally designed to reach and genuinely include a wide range of students and families across Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs.

The proposed school in Eagle Mountain/Saratoga Springs is strategically designed to address the unique needs of a rapidly growing and diverse student population. By focusing on smaller class sizes, the school will create an environment that fosters individualized attention, promoting academic success and personal development. Committing to a community-oriented approach will help cultivate strong relationships among students, families, and educators, ensuring every child feels valued and supported.

The tailored curriculum will meet state standards and engage students through relevant, real-world applications, enhancing their motivation and connection to learning. Comprehensive support services will be in place to assist all students, including those with diverse learning needs and backgrounds.

Through a robust marketing strategy that integrates digital outreach and community engagement, Ripple Academy aims to attract a diverse array of families and ensure that the school is accessible and welcoming to everyone. By prioritizing inclusivity and actively seeking feedback from the community, Ripple Academy is poised to become a cornerstone of educational excellence in Eagle Mountain.

Ultimately, this proactive and thoughtful approach makes Ripple Academy ideal for families seeking a supportive, high-quality educational environment in a thriving community. The school stands ready to make a meaningful impact on the lives of its students and their families, setting the stage for a bright and prosperous future

Community Interest & Marketing

Ripple Academy has actively gathered interest from families within our target enrollment area. As of November 14, 2025, we have received **191 completed interest forms** from families across Saratoga Springs, Eagle Mountain, and nearby communities. These responses reflect preliminary demand for a school that offers hands-on, life-based learning.

SECTION 5 — GOVERNANCE

       1) **Founding Board and Board of Directors:**

The Founding Board will provide greater oversight during the school's start-up and preoperational phase. The board will then move into a traditional governance role. Any member of the Founding Board may serve indefinitely, provided they are willing, capable, and fulfilling their responsibilities.

The current members of the Founding Board recognize the importance of maintaining a diverse and skilled governing body that reflects a broad range of expertise. It remains committed to sustaining this diversity and continuing to recruit individuals whose expertise will further strengthen the governance of Ripple Academy as needed. Priority will be given to candidates with professional experience in areas such as business management, law, finance, and other disciplines that support the effective oversight and long-term success of the school.

Following charter approval, the Founding Board will formally transition to the Board of Directors, which will assume full governance responsibilities for Ripple Academy and continue to assess and expand its membership as the school's needs evolve. When a position on the Board is deemed available, elections will be held to fill it. Board seats will be three-year positions unless they are one of the founding members' seats, which are indefinite. A Board member may serve two consecutive terms if reelected by the Board before vacating their position. The Executive Director will serve as an advisor to the Board of Directors.

       2) Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act:

After entering into a charter agreement, Ripple Academy will be organized and managed under Title 16, Chapter 6a, Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act.

       3–5) Background Information, Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and Approved Minutes:
See Appendices A through D, as follows:

Background Information	Appendix A
Articles of Incorporation	Appendix B
Bylaws	Appendix C
Approved Minutes	Appendix D

5) Board of Directors Organization and History

Ripple Academy is a collaborative initiative formed by dedicated educators and other professionals in the community who share a common vision and mission for innovative and effective student learning. The Founding Board organization was established to create a charter school that aligns with our educational philosophy, emphasizing academic excellence, character development, life skills, real-world knowledge and application, and community engagement.

We combine diverse experiences from various educational backgrounds, including administration, elementary teaching, higher education, and distance learning, along with experience in business, finance, community outreach, and architectural design. This collaborative effort allows us to draw from our firsthand experiences to craft a charter that addresses the unique needs of Ripple Academy.

Currently, the Founding Board is actively engaged in planning and developing the Ripple Academy Charter School. We aim to implement a curriculum grounded in research-based practices and aligned with the Utah State Core Standards. Our organization prioritizes a holistic educational approach incorporating rigorous academics, social-emotional learning, and experiential opportunities.

The proposed Ripple Academy Charter School will directly reflect our organization's values and goals. By leveraging our collective expertise and commitment, we intend to create a nurturing environment that fosters academic achievement and personal growth for all students. Our established collaboration ensures that the school will meet and exceed our community's educational expectations.

9)

Governing Board Information

Name	Position on Board:	Area of Expertise:	Current Employment	Relevant Experience or Qualifications for serving on the board.
Irene Summers	Chair	Education	New Focus Academy	**Dean/Administrator** John Hancock Charter School **Kindergarten Teacher** John Hancock Charter School **Kindergarten Teacher** Lakeview Academy **Team Lead** Lakeview Academy **First Grade Teacher**

				Canyon Grove Academy **Curriculum Specialist** Canyon Grove Academy **Academic Director** New Focus Academy
Katie Purinton	Vice Chair	Psychology/ Business	Southall Farm & Inn	**Teacher** John Hancock Charter School **Aftercare Team Lead** Operation Underground Railroad **College Club President** Turning Point
Sarah Barnes	Secretary	Education	Literacy Tutor	**1st Grade** Logan School District **Kindergarten Teacher** Lakeview Academy **Kindergarten/ Music Teacher** John Hancock Charter School **1st Grade** Canyon Grove Academy
Jasen Ah You	Treasurer	Education MPA MBA	BYU	**Associate Athletic Director- Built4LIFE and Football Academics** BYU
Carlos Alarco	Member	Education M.Ed Online Learning	UVU	**Higher Ed** **Associate Director** Global Engagement UVU **Adjunct Instructor** Earth Science UVU **Instructional Designer** UVU and UofU **Student Club** **Advisor/Mentor** Multiple

Melvin Rodriguez	Member	Architecture & Real Estate Development Non Profit/Social Entrepreneurship	Self Employed	**Teacher** Teens Act **Board President, Owner** Teens Act **Partner** Knighton Architecture **Founder** Saltus Ventures **Founder/President** Esai Designs
Tony Castillo	Member	Community Outreach Education	Self Employed	**Provo City School District** Mild/Moderate Special Education Teacher **University of California, Los Angeles** College Access Liaison **Renaissance Arts Academy** Special Education Facilitator **Alpine School District District** Gang Prevention and Intervention program coordinator/ Community School Coordinator
Holly Clegg	Member	Education	Illuminate Early Learning Academy	**Music Specialist** Barratt Elementary (ASD) **5th Grade Teacher** Hybrid Elementary **Program Supervisor** Canyon Grove Academy **Early Childhood Learning Director** Illuminate Early Learning Academy

1) **Board Recruitment Plans:**

To ensure a diverse and effective governing board, Ripple Academy will implement a comprehensive recruitment strategy involving parents, professional educators, and community members. Our specific plans include:

1. **Community Outreach:**
   We will host informational meetings and forums to engage the community and allow potential board or committee members to learn about the school's mission and governance needs.

2. **Parent Involvement:**
   We will actively solicit parent participation by sending invitations to join the board as we survey parents to gather data regarding school success. This ensures that parents have a voice in school governance and can provide valuable insights into student needs.

3. **Professional Educator Recruitment:**
   We will continue contact with local educational institutions and professional networks to identify qualified educators or leaders who are passionate about our mission and can contribute their expertise to the board.

4. **Expertise in Key Areas:**
   We have invited an individual with a background in law to join our board and are actively seeking other individuals with expertise in finance, business, and law, which will ensure a well-rounded board capable of making informed decisions.

5. **Diversity Considerations:**
   We will prioritize diversity in our recruitment efforts to reflect the demographics of our student population and community. This will include actively seeking candidates from various cultural backgrounds and individuals with a wide variety of professional experience and lived experience with disabilities and/or neurodiversity.

6. **Term Limits and Rotations:**
   To encourage ongoing engagement and new ideas, we will establish three-year term limits for board members and rotate positions regularly, providing opportunities for new members to join. We will also require board members to provide a conflict of interest document.

By fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment, we aim to build a governing board that effectively represents our community and supports Ripple Academy's mission.

10) Background Check Requirement:

Within 30 days of authorization to join the governing board, Ripple Academy will complete a background check on each member of the governing board per the requirements outlined in Utah Code 53G-5-302. This process will ensure the integrity and safety of our school community.

11) Professional Development Plan:

1. Ongoing Professional Development:

- **Workshops and Training:** The governing board will participate in regular workshops and training sessions focused on best practices in governance, legal responsibilities, and financial oversight. These sessions will be facilitated by experts in education governance and nonprofit management, including our local charter organizations in the state of Utah.

Topics may include effective board leadership, compliance with state regulations, and strategic planning.

- **Networking Opportunities:** Board members will be encouraged to join professional organizations related to education and charter school governance, which will provide access to resources, conferences, and peer support. This will foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among charter schools.
- **Online Learning Modules:** To ensure flexibility, board members will have access to online courses covering essential topics in governance, finance, and educational leadership.

2. Self-Evaluation and Evaluation of School Management:

- **Annual Self-Evaluation:** Board members will conduct an annual self-evaluation to assess their effectiveness in fulfilling its responsibilities. This will include surveys and reflective discussions to identify strengths and areas for improvement.
- **Management Evaluation:** The board will implement a systematic process for evaluating school management, focusing on performance metrics, adherence to the school's mission, and overall educational outcomes. This evaluation will inform decisions regarding leadership support and development.

3. Organizational Chart:

- Ripple Academy's organizational chart is included below in response to question 12 of Section 5.

By prioritizing professional development and implementing a robust evaluation process, the governing board of Ripple Academy will be well-equipped to lead effectively and support the school's mission of providing high-quality education.

12) Governing Board's Role, Relationships, and Organizational Chart:
The governing board of Ripple Academy has a thorough understanding of its governing role and ultimate responsibility in ensuring the school's success and alignment with its mission. The board recognizes its primary duties include setting strategic direction, approving school policies, overseeing financial and academic performance, and evaluating the school's leadership while refraining from daily management tasks. This clear division of responsibilities allows the school's executive leadership team to manage day-to-day operations while the board focuses on high-level oversight.

Ripple Academy Organizational Chart:

Below is an organizational chart that demonstrates the relationships between the governing board, school management, and other key stakeholders.

RIPPLE ACADEMY
ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
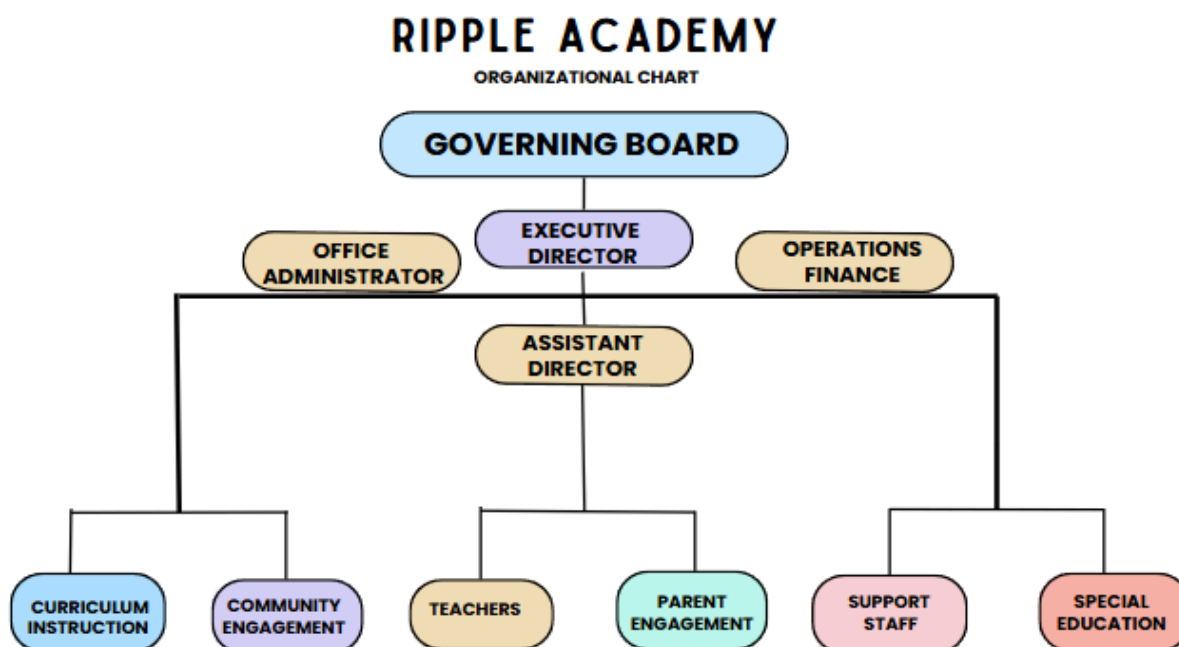
1. **Governing Board:** Oversees the school's strategic, financial, and academic performance. Holds the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the school meets educational standards and fulfills its mission.

2. **Executive Director (School Leader):** This person reports directly to the governing board and is responsible for implementing the board's strategic direction, managing daily operations, and achieving academic goals. The Executive Director acts as a bridge between the board and the rest of the school's staff and stakeholders.

3. **Key Employees (Assistant Director, Special Education Coordinator, Curriculum Director, Department Heads, etc.):** These individuals report to the Executive Director and are responsible for supervising teachers, implementing curriculum, managing departments, and addressing student needs.

4. **Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO):** This organization acts as a liaison between parents and the school administration, promoting family engagement, assisting with school events, and providing feedback to the Executive Director and board.

5. **Community Organizations:** Local businesses and community-based organizations may collaborate with the school to support student success and community involvement. Partnerships may include mentoring, internships, and enrichment programs.

6. **School Groups (Parent Advisory Councils, Student Committees, etc.):** These groups provide input and feedback on school policies, foster a collaborative school culture, and ensure the board and administration are responsive to community needs. These committees also allow stakeholders to participate and help shape the school and culture.

This structure empowers Ripple Academy's governing board to maintain oversight, delegate appropriate responsibilities to school leadership, and ensure accountability across all levels of the organization.

13)Governing Board's Capacity to Develop and Implement Proposed Education Program:

The governing board of Ripple Academy is committed to ensuring the successful development and implementation of our educational program through diverse expertise, structured oversight, and collaborative practices.

1. Diverse Expertise:

- **Board Composition:** Board members bring expertise in education and community engagement, business, architectural design, and finance. This diverse array of skill sets enables us to tackle challenges from various perspectives, allowing us to make informed decisions that benefit both the school and its students.
- **Commitment to Professional Development:** The board will actively engage in ongoing training and workshops focused on educational best practices, governance, and the latest research in pedagogy. This commitment ensures that board members remain knowledgeable about current educational trends and can effectively guide the school's mission.

2. Structured Oversight:

- **Regular Monitoring:** The board will establish a framework to routinely monitor the educational program's implementation, including setting clear performance indicators aligned with Utah State Core Standards. Monthly meetings will include reviews of progress reports from the school director, highlighting student outcomes and instructional effectiveness.
- **Evaluation Processes:** We will implement systematic evaluation processes to assess the educational program and its alignment with our mission. This will involve collecting data from assessments, surveys, and feedback from teachers, students, and parents to inform decision-making.

3. Collaborative Practices:

- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement:** The board recognizes the importance of community involvement in the educational process and will establish multiple, accessible

opportunities for stakeholder input. These include parent forums, listening sessions, annual surveys, focus groups, and open board meetings with designated public comment time. The board may also form advisory committees, specifically a Parent Advisory Council or a Community Partnership Committee, to gather feedback on curriculum implementation, school culture, and family engagement. These structured opportunities ensure that parents, teachers, and community members have a meaningful voice in shaping the school's academic program and overall direction.

- **Support for School Leadership:**
  The board will work closely with the school director and administrative team to provide the support and resources necessary for effective implementation of the educational program. This includes participating in strategic planning, monitoring progress toward academic goals, ensuring adequate resource allocation, and supporting ongoing professional development for staff.

4. Accountability Framework:

- **Transparent Reporting:** The board will ensure accountability through transparent reporting mechanisms, sharing progress and challenges with stakeholders. The community will receive regular updates regarding the educational program's effectiveness and any adjustments made based on evaluation findings.

By leveraging our diverse expertise, establishing structured oversight, and fostering collaboration, the governing board of Ripple Academy is well-positioned to oversee the successful development and implementation of our educational program and ultimately ensure positive outcomes for all students.

14) Governing Board's Capacity to Oversee Management of Funds:

The governing board of Ripple Academy is committed to effective and responsible management of public funds, ensuring that all financial resources are allocated and utilized with the utmost integrity and accountability. With board members having extensive backgrounds in financial oversight and a understanding of regulatory compliance, the board upholds transparent reporting practices, rigorous budgetary controls, and routine audits to track all expenditures. Ripple Academy's board members bring diverse expertise in education, finance, and community engagement, enabling them to make informed decisions that support the academy's mission while adhering to ethical standards and fiscal responsibility. The governing board demonstrates its capacity to steward public funds to maximize educational outcomes and public trust through these measures.

15) Governing Board's Capacity to Oversee Legal Compliance:

The governing board of Ripple Academy is dedicated to ensuring the school operates in full compliance with all legal obligations at the local, state, and federal levels. Our approach to oversight and accountability is multifaceted, emphasizing proactive measures and continuous education.

1. Diverse Legal Expertise:

- **Board Composition:** Our board includes members with backgrounds in business, finance, architectural design, community outreach, and education. Our board is also seeking to add individuals with backgrounds in law for a solid foundation for understanding complex legal frameworks. This diversity will enable us to navigate business and legal requirements effectively and make informed decisions that adhere to regulations.
- **Legal Counsel:** We will engage legal counsel with expertise in education law to provide ongoing guidance on compliance issues. This partnership will help the board and school administration know current laws and regulations affecting charter schools.

2. Comprehensive Compliance Framework:

- **Policy Development:** The board will develop and regularly review policies and procedures to ensure they align with legal requirements. This includes policies related to student rights, employee conduct, financial practices, and health and safety regulations.
- **Regular Audits and Reviews:** We will conduct regular audits of school operations to assess compliance with legal obligations. These audits will cover financial practices, student enrollment and records, and safety protocols, ensuring any issues are identified and addressed promptly.

3. Training and Professional Development:

- **Board Education:** The governing board will participate in training sessions on legal responsibilities and compliance matters. This ongoing education will empower board members to stay informed about changes in laws and best governance practices.
- **Staff Training:** We will ensure that all staff members receive training on relevant legal obligations, including special education requirements, student privacy laws (such as FERPA), and employment laws. This training will promote a culture of compliance throughout the organization.

4. Accountability and Transparency:

- **Monitoring and Reporting:** The board will establish precise and transparent mechanisms for monitoring compliance, including regular reports from school leadership

on compliance issues. This will include updates on any legal challenges, changes in regulations, and the status of ongoing compliance efforts.

- **Community Communication:** We are committed to transparency with our stakeholders. We will maintain regular communication with parents, staff, and the community regarding compliance initiatives and any legal matters affecting the school.

5. Corrective Action Plans:

- **Responsive Measures:** In the event of compliance issues, the board will implement corrective action plans to address the situation promptly. This proactive approach ensures we take necessary steps to rectify non-compliance and prevent future occurrences.

By leveraging our board's diverse expertise, implementing a comprehensive compliance framework, and committing to ongoing education and transparency, the governing board of Ripple Academy is well-equipped to oversee and ensure the school's compliance with all legal obligations, fostering a safe and legally sound educational environment.

16) Governing Board's Capacity to Represent the Community:

The governing board of Ripple Academy is deeply rooted in the Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs communities, reflecting a strong commitment to representing the interests and needs of local families and students. Our diverse backgrounds and extensive involvement in the community empower us to understand and advocate for the values and priorities of the families we serve.

1. Community Engagement:

- **Local Residents:** Many board members reside or have taught within the Eagle Mountain/Saratoga Springs community, ensuring that we have a firsthand understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by families in the area. This proximity fosters solid connections and a sense of responsibility to our neighbors and community.
- **Active Participation:** Ripple Academy is enriched by a governing board and founding team with deep roots in youth development and community engagement. One board member currently operates a nonprofit organization that supports teen leadership, resilience, and personal growth. Others have extensive experience volunteering within their communities, mentoring youth, and leading educational and service-based programs. This lived experience directly informs Ripple Academy's professional development culture, ensuring that staff learning is grounded in practical strategies, community responsiveness, and values-based leadership. Ripple Academy will continue to draw on board member expertise for guest sessions, leadership training, and school-wide culture building. Board members will actively engage in community initiatives, including serving on local boards, participating in Parent-Teacher

Associations (PTAs), and volunteering in schools. This involvement will provide us with insight into the educational landscape and community expectations.

2. Collaboration with Local Organizations:

- **Partnerships:** We have established relationships with local organizations and community groups, allowing us to collaborate on projects that benefit students and families. We can align our school's mission with community goals and resources by partnering with these entities.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** The board will implement feedback mechanisms like community surveys and forums to gather input from families and community members. This will ensure that our decision-making process reflects the needs and preferences of those we serve.

3. Representation of Diverse Perspectives:

- **Inclusive Governance:** Our board values diverse perspectives and actively seeks to include voices from various backgrounds within the community. This approach enhances our ability to make informed decisions considering all families' varied experiences and needs.
- **Advocacy:** Board members advocate for educational policies and practices that align with community values. We are committed to ensuring that our educational program meets state standards and resonates with local culture and priorities.

4. Commitment to Transparency:

Ripple Academy is committed to maintaining transparency and accountability to its community. The Board of Directors will conduct its business in accordance with the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act (Utah Code Title 52, Chapter 4), ensuring that all board meetings are publicly noticed, open to the public, and accessible to community members. Meeting agendas, minutes, and recordings will be posted in accordance with state requirements and available to the public through the Utah Public Notice Website and the school's official website. The Board welcomes stakeholder input and encourages families, staff, and community members to participate in the governance process to ensure decisions reflect the needs and values of the Ripple Academy community.

By embodying the values of community service, collaboration, and transparency, the governing board of Ripple Academy is well-positioned to effectively represent and advocate for the needs of the Eagle Mountain and Saratoga Springs communities. Our commitment to active engagement and inclusive practices ensures that the school will truly reflect the community it serves.

17) Governing Board's Capacity to Found and Sustain a Quality School:

The founding board of Ripple Academy demonstrates its capacity to establish and sustain a high-quality school through its collective expertise, strategic planning, and commitment to educational excellence. Our board comprises seasoned education, business, finance, governance, and community engagement professionals, each bringing valuable insights and skills to ensure the school's success. One unique aspect of our school is its need for an original architectural design to incorporate Ripple Town simulations. One of the founding board members has an architectural background, providing us with professional expertise in this design from someone intimately familiar with our mission and vision. With a detailed, data-driven approach to curriculum development, budget management, and operational planning, the board has developed a sustainable financial model and robust support system to prioritize student outcomes and organizational resilience.

The board's commitment to transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement further ensures that Ripple Academy will deliver a high-quality education that meets the needs of our community for years to come.

1. Collective Expertise:

The Board of Directors at Ripple Academy brings together a diverse range of expertise essential to the successful establishment and governance of the school. The board's educational backgrounds, ranging from elementary to higher education and remote learning, support the development of a rigorous curriculum aligned with best practices and Utah State Standards. A member with a background in architecture provides valuable insight into designing a school facility and environment that reflects and supports the mission of Ripple Academy. Members with expertise in community outreach strengthen our commitment to fostering community partnerships and engagement within our academic program. Our finance and business professionals ensure fiscal responsibility and the creation of a sustainable financial model, while those with experience in governance and business offer the knowledge necessary to ensure regulatory compliance and effective organizational oversight.

2. Strategic Planning:

The board has established clear goals and metrics for success through comprehensive strategic planning. We employ a data-driven approach to curriculum development and operational planning, allowing us to adapt and respond effectively to the needs of our students and the community. Our focus on measurable outcomes ensures we continually assess and improve our educational offerings.

3. Sustainable Financial Model:

- The board has developed a robust financial plan that includes diversified funding sources, careful budget management, and strategic resource allocation. Fiscal stability is crucial for sustaining the school's operations and providing high-quality educational experiences for all students.

4. Commitment to Student Outcomes:

- The heart of our mission is prioritizing student success. The board is dedicated to creating a supportive environment that fosters academic achievement and personal growth. We will implement continuous assessment practices, enabling us to monitor student progress and adjust our strategies to ensure all learners thrive.

5. Transparency and Accountability:

- The board is committed to maintaining transparency in our operations and decision-making processes. Regular communication with stakeholders, including parents and community members, will foster trust and ensure that the school remains responsive to community needs. Accountability measures will be in place to track our performance and uphold high education standards.

6. Continuous Improvement:

- Our commitment to continuous improvement will drive ongoing professional development for board members and staff. We will regularly evaluate our programs and practices, seeking feedback from all stakeholders to enhance the educational experience.

In summary, the founding board of Ripple Academy possesses the expertise, strategic planning capabilities, and dedication necessary to establish and sustain a high-quality school. Our comprehensive approach ensures that we will effectively meet the educational needs of our community, fostering a culture of excellence that will endure for years to come.

By fostering partnerships, maintaining rigorous standards, and adapting to educational advancements, the board is well-prepared to guide Ripple Academy from a strong launch through its continued growth as a pillar of academic excellence in our region.

SECTION 6 — STAFFING

1. Organizational Structure and Day-to-Day Operations

- **Overview**: Ripple Academy will have a clear organizational structure that supports efficient day-to-day operations. The leadership team will consist of the School Leader (Executive Director), Assistant Principal(s), Curriculum Coordinator, Special Education Coordinator, and Administrative Staff.
- **Daily Operations**: The school will operate from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and a typical day includes classroom instruction, lunch, and enrichment activities, including Ripple Town Experiences, and specialty classes, including a life skills class. Staff meetings will be held weekly to ensure alignment on instructional goals and professional develop.

2. Management Roles and Responsibilities

- **School Leader (Executive Director)**:
  - **Responsibilities**:
    - Oversee instructional leadership, curriculum development, and implementation.
    - Manage personnel decisions, including hiring, evaluations, and professional development.
    - Develop and manage the school's budget and financial resources.
    - Ensure legal compliance with state and federal regulations.
  - **Required Skills and Qualifications**: Master's degree in education administration or related field, at least 5 years of teaching experience, proven leadership skills, and familiarity with curriculum standards.
- **Assistant Director**:
  - **Responsibilities**:
    - Support the School Leader in daily operations and instructional leadership.
    - Manage student discipline and safety protocols.
    - Assist with staff evaluations and professional development initiatives.
  - **Required Skills and Qualifications**: Strong interpersonal skills, conflict resolution, and experience in educational leadership.
- **Independent ESP/ Financial Manager**
  - **Responsibilities:**
    - Oversee the financial operations of the school or educational program.
    - Develop and manage budgets, financial forecasts, and reports.
    - Ensure compliance with financial regulations and policies.
    - Collaborate with school administrators on financial planning and resource allocation.

- ■ Provide financial guidance and support to staff and stakeholders.
    - ○ **Required Skills and Qualifications:** Strong analytical skills, financial acumen, and experience in budgeting and compliance management.
- ● **Curriculum Coordinator**:
    - ○ **Responsibilities**:
        - ■ Lead curriculum development and implementation.
        - ■ Provide professional development for teachers on instructional strategies.
        - ■ Ensure alignment with state standards.
    - ○ **Required Skills and Qualifications:** Expertise in curriculum design, knowledge of assessment practices, and experience in teacher training.
- ● **Special Education Coordinator**:
    - ○ **Responsibilities**:
        - ■ Oversee the implementation of IEPs and compliance with special education laws.
        - ■ Collaborate with teachers, parents, and other related service providers to support students with disabilities.
    - ○ **Required Skills and Qualifications:** Knowledge of special education laws, Utah State Special Education License, strong advocacy skills, and experience in individualized instruction.
- ● **Teacher Aides:**
    - ○ **Responsibilities:**
        - ■ Assist teachers with instructional tasks and classroom management.
        - ■ Support students with their learning and provide one-on-one assistance.
        - ■ Prepare classroom materials and resources.
        - ■ Help supervise students during activities and transitions.
        - ■ Assist in maintaining a positive learning environment.
    - ○ **Required Skills and Qualifications:** Strong communication skills, patience, and the ability to work collaboratively with teachers and students.
- ● **Custodial Personnel:**
    - ○ **Responsibilities:**
        - ■ Clean and maintain classrooms, restrooms, and common areas.
        - ■ Ensure that school facilities are safe and hygienic.
        - ■ Perform minor repairs and maintenance as needed.
        - ■ Manage waste disposal and recycling.
        - ■ Assist with set-up and take-down for events and activities.
    - ○ **Required Skills and Qualifications:** Attention to detail, time management, and knowledge of cleaning protocols and safety standards.
- ● **Nutrition Personnel:**
    - ○ **Responsibilities:**
        - ■ Prepare and serve meals according to dietary guidelines.

- ■ Maintain cleanliness and safety in the kitchen and dining areas.
            - ■ Ensure compliance with health and safety regulations.
            - ■ Assist with inventory management and ordering supplies.
            - ■ Promote healthy eating habits among students.
        - ○ **Required Skills and Qualifications:** Knowledge of nutrition and food safety, strong organizational skills, and the ability to work in a fast-paced environment.
- **Office Administrator:**
    - ○ **Responsibilities:**
        - ■ Oversee daily office operations and administrative functions.
        - ■ Provide support and coordination for staff training and professional development.
        - ■ Ensure compliance with organizational policies and procedures.
    - ○ **Required Skills and Qualifications:** Strong organizational and multitasking abilities, proficiency in office software, and excellent communication skills.

4. Staffing Plan

- **Anticipated Staffing Needs**:The school anticipates hiring personnel for the administrative roles of Executive Director, Assistant Director, Curriculum Director, and Special Education Director. The school anticipates hiring 17 teachers for the initial year to maintain the 25:1 student-to-teacher ratio. In addition to 17 regular education teachers, the school anticipates the needs of 2-3 special education teachers. We will be adding additional staff as enrollment grows. The school anticipates hiring 7 classroom aides in the first operational year. Positions will include administrative staff, subject area teachers, special education teachers, and support staff (custodial, food services, secretarial, and financial personnel). The school also anticipates the need for 3-5 specialty teachers including a Life Skills instructor. The Life Skills instructor will also aid in directing Ripple Town experiences.
- **Recruitment Strategies**: Recruitment of teachers and other support staff will focus on local universities, educational job fairs, and online platforms. The school will also utilize networks and partnerships with other academic institutions.

5. Teacher Skills and Professional Development

- **Desired Skills and Experience**: Teachers must hold a valid Utah educator license with the appropriate subject area or grade-level endorsement **or** be actively engaged in the process to obtain full licensure in accordance with Rule R277-309. Applicants should demonstrate relevant subject-area expertise and experience in diverse classroom settings. In cases where candidates are employed while completing licensure, the school will provide structured support, mentoring, and a clear timeline for achieving full endorsement.

- **Professional Development**: Ongoing training will be provided in instructional strategies, classroom management, and technology integration.

6. Strategies for Recruiting and Retaining Effective Teachers

- **Recruitment:**
  Ripple Academy will recruit highly qualified educators who share the school's mission of providing purposeful, experiential, life-based learning. The school will promote a positive, collaborative culture that values teacher creativity and innovation. Competitive salary and benefits packages will be offered within available funding to attract and retain top talent. Candidates who demonstrate alignment with the school's educational philosophy and commitment to growth mindset and whole-child development will be prioritized.

- **Retention:**
  To ensure long-term teacher success, Ripple Academy will implement a structured mentoring program for new teachers, facilitate professional learning communities (PLCs), and provide ongoing, mission-aligned professional development. Teachers will be supported in pursuing advanced endorsements, leadership opportunities, and professional growth within the school, according to its resources and ability to do so. Ripple Academy will also foster a culture of collaboration, open communication, and work-life balance, recognizing that teacher well-being directly impacts student success. Regular feedback cycles and recognition of excellence in teaching will further promote job satisfaction and retention.

7. Budget Assumptions

- **Alignment with Educational Needs**: Staffing-related budget assumptions will align closely with projected enrollment, instructional models, and programmatic needs to ensure high-quality education and sustainability. The budget will assume appropriate student–teacher ratios that support individualized learning and small-group instruction. Allocations will include funding for certified teachers, paraprofessionals, and related services professionals, such as special education, counseling, and support staff. Salaries and benefits will be set at competitive levels to attract and retain qualified educators while maintaining fiscal responsibility, as the school is able.

8. Enrollment and Growth

- **Staffing Plan**: The staffing plan will adjust based on anticipated enrollment growth, with an explicit formula for scaling staff as student numbers increase. As enrollment grows, staffing levels will be adjusted proportionally to preserve instructional quality and operational efficiency, ideally a student-to-teacher ratio of 25:1.

9. Non-Certificated Instructional Personnel

- Criteria for Selection: Non-certificated instructional personnel will be evaluated based on their relevant experience, training, and skills to ensure they contribute effectively to our educational program.

- The school may employ individuals under Utah's LEA-specific educator licensing provisions when other licensing routes are untenable or unreasonable, provided the individual meets benchmark qualifications, and the school obtains the appropriate LEA-specific license in accordance with Utah Admin. Rule R277-301-7.

- In all cases, the school commits to providing structured mentoring, professional learning plans, and performance monitoring for non-certificated and LEA-licensed instructional staff to ensure instructional quality and compliance.

10. Employer–Employee Relationship

Ripple Academy recognizes that strong governance, transparency, and compliance with state law are essential to maintaining a professional and ethical working environment.

- Employee Evaluations: All licensed educators at Ripple Academy will participate in an annual evaluation process aligned with the Utah Educator Evaluation Framework as required under Utah Code §53G-11-501 through §53G-11-518 and Utah Admin. Code R277-533. Evaluations will include multiple measures of teacher effectiveness, for instance, classroom observations, professional growth goals, and student learning outcomes. The evaluation process will emphasize continuous improvement, support individualized professional development, and inform personnel decisions when necessary. Non-licensed staff will also receive annual evaluations based on clearly defined performance expectations related to their role and responsibilities.

- Employment of Relatives Policy: To prevent conflicts of interest, the school will adopt and enforce a policy prohibiting the hiring or supervision of relatives in direct-reporting relationships. This policy will align with the charter's obligations under Utah Code §53G-5-407, which requires each charter school to establish its own employment policies, including procedures regarding the employment of relatives.

- Licensing and Background Check Compliance: Ripple Academy will ensure that all licensed educators hold valid Utah teaching credentials and that all non-licensed staff, contractors, and volunteers undergo comprehensive background checks as required under Utah Code §53G-11-402 and Utah Admin. Code R277-316-6. Ongoing monitoring and adherence to ethical and professional standards will be maintained throughout employment.

These practices, combined with strong oversight by the Board of Directors, will ensure that Ripple Academy maintains a safe, compliant, and high-performing educational environment where professionalism, integrity, and accountability are upheld at every level.

Policies

1. Compliance with Criminal Background Check Requirements Policy:
Ripple Academy is committed to ensuring a safe environment for all students and staff. In accordance with state law, all employees, board members, contractors with direct student contact, and volunteers working regularly in the school must undergo a comprehensive criminal background check prior to beginning service. Background checks will be conducted through state-approved agencies, and results will be reviewed by the school director before employment or assignment is finalized. Any individual who does not meet state eligibility requirements will not be permitted to work or volunteer at the school.

2. Employee Evaluation Policy:
To promote continuous professional growth and instructional excellence, Ripple Academy will conduct annual performance evaluations for all employees. Evaluations will include multiple measures such as self-reflection, classroom observations, peer input (when appropriate), and supervisor evaluations. Goals for professional improvement will be established collaboratively between employees and supervisors, and follow-up coaching or training will be provided as needed. Evaluation results will guide decisions regarding professional development, contract renewal, and employee support.

3. Employment of Relatives (Nepotism) Policy:
Ripple Academy is committed to maintaining fairness, transparency, and integrity in all hiring and supervisory decisions. To avoid conflicts of interest, no employee may be directly supervised or evaluated by a relative. For the purposes of this policy, "relative" includes spouses, domestic partners, parents, children, siblings, in-laws, grandparents, grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, or any individual residing in the same household.

Relatives of board members may apply for employment; however, board members will recuse themselves from all discussions and votes associated with the hiring or supervision of their relatives. The school will not create new positions or adjust roles specifically to employ relatives of staff or board members. All hiring decisions will be based solely on qualifications, merit, and the needs of the school.

These guidelines ensure that Ripple Academy upholds ethical hiring practices and maintains public trust.

SECTION 7 — BUSINESS PLAN

Budget Section

Ripple Academy will address its initial operational expenses through a strategic combination of state and federal funding, a state startup grant, and a state revolving loan. Our budget accounts for significant payments on both the startup loan and the building loan facilities, which represent a substantial portion of our financial commitments. Both payments are accounted for in the break-even and 100 % enrollment budgets.

In addition to these essential expenses, a top priority for Ripple Academy is the compensation of our employees. We are dedicated to fostering a school environment where faculty members feel valued and appreciated. By prioritizing competitive salaries, we aim to attract and retain the best candidates in the field, ensuring that our students receive high-quality education and support.

Pre-Operational Year Summary:

Total Revenue	**$300,000.00**	
State Revolving Loan	$300,000.00	
Total Expenditures	**$300,000.00**	Detail
Executive Director	$60,000	1099 Employee
Office Manager	$36,000	1099 Employee
Finance Mgmt Company	$40,000	
Website	$7,000	
Office Expenses	$2,000	
Furniture and Fixtures	$70,000	
Marketing	$20,000	
Insurance	$2,000	
Board Travel and Expenses	$8,000	
Reserves	**$55,000**	

Operational Year One Summary: Enrollment 375

Total Revenue	$4,320,127
Total Expenditures	$3,946,561

Excess of revenue over expenditures	$373,566

Operational Year One Summary: Enrollment 375

Total Revenue	$4,320,127	Source
Local Sources	$187,898	Food Services Sales to Students & Student Activities
State Source	$4,018,473	State Funding & Start Up Grant
Federal Source	$113,756	Federal Child Nutrition Program, IDEA & ESEA

Operational Year One Summary: Enrollment 375

Total Expenditures	$3,946,561	Detail
Salaries	$1,976,840	39 Full or Part-time Employees
Employee Benefits	$546,638	
Professional & Technical Services	$120,000	Business Management & CPA
Purchased Property & Services	$648,333	Includes Property Services of $25,000
Other Services	$40,000	
Supplies & Material	$215,000	
Property	$130,000	
Debt & Misc	$269,750	Revolving loan payment included

Operational Year Two Summary: Enrollment 400

Total Revenue	$4,567,383
Total Expenditures	$4,224,303
Excess of revenue over expenditures	$343,080

Operational Year Two Summary: Enrollment 400

Total Revenue	$4,567,383	Source
Local Sources	$200,424	Food Services Sales to Students & Student Activities
State Source	$4,253,203	State Funding & Start-Up Grant

Federal Source	$113,756	Federal Child Nutrition Program, IDEA & ESEA

Operational Year Two Summary: Enrollment 400

Total Expenditures	**$4,224,303**	**Detail**
Salaries	$2,036,146	
Employee Benefits	$563,037	
Professional & Technical Services	$120,000	Business Management & CPA
Purchased Property & Services	$804,170	Includes Property Services of $25,000
Other Services	$40,000	
Supplies & Material	$220,000	
Property	$153,000	
Debt & Misc	$287,950	Revolving loan payment included

Contingency Plans for Financial Challenges in the Early Years of Operation:

The school will establish a contingency fund and implement a flexible staffing model to mitigate financial risks. We will also seek a flexible lease agreement with the school's building developer to allow for gradual rent increases as enrollment grows. Lastly, we will diversify revenue through fundraising, grants, and partnerships with local businesses.

Ripple Academy will proactively address potential enrollment challenges to ensure a strong start. This includes targeted recruitment efforts, building community partnerships, and effective marketing strategies. Several board members have been a part of the community for 20+ years. We have solid roots and relationships in the community and are confident that those relations will help in our marketing of Ripple Academy. We will take advantage of city-wide events to have an information booth and introduce Ripple Academy to the community. We will showcase the school's unique offerings to attract families and help build our enrollment.

 If budget shortfalls stem from our enrollment numbers, an assessment will be made before hiring permanent staff. Because employment costs represent such a large portion of the school's costs, it is an area that can be regulated to match enrollment needs. If enrollment is not met, the school will reduce the number of classroom teachers. Enrollment risk could also impact the number of specialty teachers the school uses, resulting in the need to hire only part-time specialty teachers or for classroom teachers to teach the extra classes namely PE and art.

Break-even Enrollment:

Our break-even enrollment is 362 students. With 362 enrolled students, projected revenue will be $4,178,111 and projected expenses will be $3,856,261, allowing for an 8 % reserve of $321,850.

Financial Priorities:

Recognizing that our staff is the cornerstone of our school, we will offer competitive salaries to attract and retain the most qualified educators in the region. We will allocate resources for ongoing professional development, including workshops on experiential learning methodologies and curriculum integration, to support our staff's growth. It is a priority to us to offer our students the best of best and so that is why the majority of our total expenses are allocated to support teacher salaries and professional development.

At Ripple Academy, we are committed to enhancing experiential learning through strategic investments in facility enhancements and technology. We will invest in hands-on learning materials, tools, and resources that promote interactive education, ensuring alignment with our curriculum goals. Additionally, we will budget for the design of flexible classroom spaces that cater to diverse learning styles, including areas for collaboration, creativity, and individual study. We plan to invest in multipurpose rooms and creative spaces that foster diverse learning activities and collaborative projects. Technology is also a priority; we will ensure that classrooms are equipped with up-to-date technology to facilitate innovative teaching practices.

Facility enhancements are essential as well. We plan to invest in multipurpose rooms and creative spaces that foster diverse learning activities and collaborative projects, alongside ensuring that classrooms are equipped with up-to-date technology to facilitate innovative teaching practices.

Community engagement is another key focus. We will create initiatives that encourage parental and community involvement in school programs, fostering a supportive learning environment.

Finally, we will regularly assess the effectiveness of our experiential learning initiatives to ensure they meet educational goals, allowing for data-driven adjustments to funding allocations. Through these comprehensive strategies, Ripple Academy aims to align spending plans with our overall goal to create an enriching educational experience for both students and staff.

Facilities Acquisition and Financing

After consulting with experienced local realtors, we've determined that no suitable existing facilities are available for acquisition and repurposing to meet Ripple Academy's needs. As a result, we've initiated discussions with charter school developers to construct a facility during the pre-operational year tailored to our specific requirements. We will exclusively partner with developers who offer both financing options and flexible leasing terms. Additionally, the Board intends to include a purchase option in the development contract.

Commitment to Maintaining the Financial Viability of the School

At Ripple Academy, we are committed to ensuring our long-term financial viability. We will focus on strategic financial planning, transparent budgeting, and responsible resource allocation

to support high-quality education.

Our dedication to fiscal responsibility ensures that Ripple Academy can continue to provide exceptional educational experiences for our students now and in the future.

Reserve Funds

Ripple Academy commits to keeping a minimum of 5% in reserve funds each fiscal year.

Finance Section

Financial Plan & Facilities

7.1 Financial Management Systems

Ripple Academy aims to kick off its inaugural academic year with a skilled financial team well-versed in Utah charter school legislation, accounting, bookkeeping, compliance, and financial management, all while upholding fiscal responsibility and sound fiduciary practices. To achieve this, the Academy plans to explore contracting with an experienced Education Service Provider (ESP) or a Financial firm specializing in Utah Charter Schools. If that option proves unviable, alternative avenues for securing essential business management services will be considered.

Should it be determined that engaging an ESP or financial firm is in the best interest of Ripple Academy, the anticipated services may encompass but are not limited to board training, state compliance, special education consulting, director mentoring, finance training, monthly and annual budget preparation, bookkeeping, employee recruitment, human resource management, payroll, preparation of grant applications, building maintenance, and additional special projects and research as directed by the school's Governing Board and Executive Director. The budget allocated for a financial firm is estimated at $100,000 per year.

Ripple Academy will continue researching ESP / Financial firms, so we are ready to proceed when the charter is approved. No contracts will be awarded or signed until the Academy has conducted a thorough RFP process, including interviews and evaluations of all applicants. The Governing Board will carry out this process following state laws and board regulations for procurement.

The Executive Director will oversee the timely submission of reports and ensure compliance with reporting requirements to the necessary parties. The performance of the ESP / financial firm will be reviewed monthly to confirm adherence to school operational and state reporting standards.

Ripple Academy will also provide recommended liability insurance to cover potential financial losses from tort claims for the school, its board, staff, and teachers.

Accounting Practices

Ripple Academy recognizes its responsibility as a steward of public funds and assets. The school

will adhere to all applicable laws and regulations to ensure sound fiscal practices. Financial procedures will be aligned with generally accepted financial management standards. The school will also ensure that all purchasing requirements outlined in the Utah State Procurement Code are followed.

To secure expert guidance, Ripple Academy will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit bids for management services. This will ensure that the school has robust internal controls and expertise in accounting, auditing, and bookkeeping.

Policies and Procedures

Ripple Academy will comply with all relevant state and federal regulations regarding the tracking and identification of student enrollment data. Upon admission, parents will need to fill out an enrollment questionnaire. This document will collect essential information, including names, phone numbers, emergency contacts, and addresses. Additionally, it will request prior school enrollment history, health details, and any previous diagnoses. This information will be reviewed by the teacher on an annual basis. The teacher will assess whether a student qualifies for enrollment as a student with a disability or as an English Language Learner (ELL). The relevant details will be entered into the school's student information system, and the teacher will verify the accuracy of this information during student/parent meetings.

For students on an IEP or 504 plan transferring to Ripple Academy from another school, the special education department will review the records within thirty days (or sooner, as required by law). They will then proceed with one of the following actions:

- If the transfer is from within the state, the team will either adopt the existing IEP or create a new one that adheres to federal regulations and USBE SER rules.
- If the transfer is from out of state, the IEP team will evaluate the need for an assessment and, if necessary, develop a new IEP that complies with federal and state laws.

Transferring students will continue to receive services as outlined in their previous IEP until the review process is complete and a new or adopted IEP is in place. All student data will be entered into the school's information system, which will have appropriate security measures to protect privacy and ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Ripple Academy will uphold all FERPA regulations, ensuring the confidentiality of personally identifiable information during its collection, storage, sharing, transfer, and destruction. The Executive Director, along with the special education teacher, is responsible for maintaining this confidentiality.

Insurance, Annual audit, Audited Financial Report (AFR)

Ripple Academy recognizes the Board's responsibility to ensure compliance with all state-mandated reports and deadlines. To mitigate risks, the school will contract with an independent CPA firm to conduct an annual audit. A budget of $20,000 has been allocated for audit services. An additional $1,800 will be reserved to have the CPA firm complete the necessary annual form(s) for Ripple Academy.

Grants and Federal Programs

The Executive Director will oversee fundraising efforts. Grant applications submitted by Ripple Academy directors or other staff will be reported to the school's management company for accurate accounting. The management company will receive all grant funds, account for them, and distribute them to the school. Inventory accounting, retention, and disposal policies will be implemented to ensure proper tracking of items purchased with federal or restricted funds, adhering to relevant regulations.

Facilities

Once approved, Ripple Academy will go through the process of hiring a developer who specializes in the building and design of charter schools. A new, custom-built facility is the best route for RA. We plan to follow the recommended practice of about 80 /sq ft per student. Our ideal facility would be approximately 40,000 square feet on a 5-acre parcel, accommodating up to 450 students and room for a cafeteria/gymnasium. However, the final size may be adjusted based on land availability, construction costs, and market conditions. We anticipate the cost to be about $11,000,000.

We want our classrooms to have enough space to accommodate the experiential and cognitivist principles that accompany our mission. A standard classroom is about 600-700 square feet. We desire to expand that as much as possible within the budget's limits. Ripple Academy feels it is essential to include a cafeteria/gymnasium with a common area for assemblies, student interactions, and space for certain academic activities, incorporating movement and active learning. Accessibility is a priority for us. Our facility will be designed to ensure that all students, regardless of ability, can fully participate in the learning experiences.

Acquisition of a facility is financially viable

Ripple Academy has communicated with a realtor experienced in our target area. We've also researched developers with proven track records in charter school construction in Utah. A new, custom-built facility is the optimal solution for Ripple Academy. To make this a reality, we will work with one of the research developers who offers financing and a flexible leasing option to allow rent to grow as the school does. Ripple Academy intends to have an option to purchase in the contract. In talking with developers, we have concluded the following:

The cost to build our school will be about $11,000,000.00, with an 8.5 % cap rate. The developer will help structure our loan so that our first year will have only eight (8) payments, the second year will have ten (10) payments, and the third year will have twelve (12) payments with a 2% increase. We've carefully adjusted our budget to these estimates and are confident this is a strong financial move.

Pre-Opening Plan

2026		Lead

February		
	RFP & hire Management Company (MC)	Board
	RFP & hire of Executive Director (ED) & Business Manager (BM)	Board
	Land Acquisition Plans	Board, ED, BM

2026		
Feb- Apr	RFP & hire of Building Developer (DEV)	Board
	Apply for irs entity	JA
	Submit Public Charity 501c3 app to the IRS – 1023	JA
	Apply for State Startup Grant	Board
	Apply for State CS Revolving Loan	Board
May- Aug	Trainings	Board, BM, ED
	Marketing Plan	Board, BM, ED
Aug - Sept	Begin School Construction	ALL
2027		
Feb	Hold Lottery, identify founding members (preferential 5% max), follow-up process each month forward	Board
	Develop School Calendar - first year, include 180 days, 990 instructional hours, testing schedule	Board, Director
April- July	Finalize Staffing Complete hiring for all teaching and support staff

All staff are entered into CACTUS, ARL and authorizations have been discussed | ED |

	Obtain necessary licenses and permits Ensure all regulatory requirements are met	BM
	Develop Policies and Procedures Establish school policies, including code of conduct, discipline, and safety protocols	BM
	Launch Marketing Campaign Promote the school through community events, social media, and local outreach	ALL
	Prepare for Opening Set up classrooms, order supplies, furniture, and finalize logistical details.	ALL
	Staff Training Conduct professional development for teachers and staff Secretary & Receptionist receive training and follow GRAMA and FERPA records-keeping laws	Governing Board Executive Director Curriculum
	School Construction Completion	ALL
August	Host Orientation for Students and Families Familiarize families with the school's mission, policies, and expectations.	ED
	All staff are entered into CACTUS, ARL, and authorizations have been discussed	ED
	Hold benefits meeting, have staff fill out all new hire paperwork	Board
	Background Check complete	SB

Closure Plan

This plan outlines key tasks and procedures to be followed in the event of the school's charter being terminated by the State Charter School Board or the Utah State Board of Education, or if the school voluntarily surrenders its charter.

In the event of a closure, it is crucial to inform staff, families, and stakeholders promptly to ensure clear communication and address any concerns. A structured transition plan must be developed to facilitate the smooth transfer of students to new schools, outlining key steps and support systems to aid this process.

Additionally, careful management of student and employee records is essential to ensure that all documentation is handled properly and remains accessible. Lastly, a thorough financial review should be conducted to assess closure reserves and understand the budget implications, ensuring that all financial aspects are managed effectively during this transition period.

Performance Evaluation

The school will utilize established performance standards to conduct self-evaluations against targets set by the board. The Executive Director and Board Chair will lead the evaluation process annually. If any targets are missed, a corrective action plan will be created to address the issues. Additionally, the school will inform its authorizer of any potential missed targets at least 60 days before state reviews.

Dissemination of Evaluation Results

Evaluation results will be communicated to stakeholders, including staff, families, and the community, via school newsletters, board meetings, and informational sessions. Results will be shared within two weeks after each evaluation period.

Transition Support

The school will offer guidance and resources to assist families in finding suitable new schools. Dedicated staff will help with the registration process, ensuring a smooth transition. All student records will be securely transferred to the new schools in compliance with FERPA regulations. Additionally, staff will follow up with families in the following school year to ensure successful enrollment.

Employee Assistance Plan

The school will provide a range of Employment Transition Services, including career counseling and job placement assistance, as well as access to resume writing workshops and letters of recommendation. To ensure a smooth transition, we will also make sure that all final paychecks and benefits are processed in a timely manner.

Record Management Plan

The school's Office Administrator will be responsible for maintaining and archiving essential records, including student files, attendance records, transcripts, employment records, and an inventory of assets. All records management practices will comply with state regulations (53G-5-403 and 34 CFR 80.32). Records will be securely archived for a minimum of five years, with digital copies stored in a secure system to ensure their integrity and accessibility.

Reporting Plan

The school will continue to submit all required reports, including annual audits, grant reports, and end-of-year reports. The Office Administrator will oversee the preparation and submission of

these documents, ensuring they are completed and submitted by established deadlines. This ongoing reporting process is vital for maintaining compliance and transparency.

Closure Reserves

The school's budget will clearly label closure reserves, providing a detailed explanation of their intended use.

Ripple Academy will establish and maintain strong financial management systems that ensure transparency, accountability, and alignment with Utah State Charter School Board requirements. Financial operations will be led by a licensed Business Administrator, overseen by the Board Treasurer, and supported by a third-party financial services provider during the start-up phase.

All financial activity will be governed by board-approved policies and internal controls, including:

- Dual signature requirements for checks and expenditures over $5,000

- Monthly bank reconciliations and financial reports to the Board

- Use of a cloud-based accounting platform that complies with GAAP

- Clear delineation of roles between financial oversight (Board), financial management (Administrator), and operational execution (School Leader)

1. Closure Plan: Key Tasks and Procedures

If closure becomes necessary, the Board of Directors will immediately activate the School Closure Committee, consisting of the Board Chair, Executive Director, Business Manager, and Office Administrator. The committee will oversee:

- Immediate notification to SCSB and USBE
- Public announcement to families, staff, and community partners
- Creation of a closure timeline
- Coordination of student transfers
- Finalization of academic, financial, and operational obligations
- Management of assets and inventory
- Protection and transfer of records
- Communication with vendors, landlords, and contracted service providers
- Final audit and financial reconciliation

A detailed closure calendar will be provided to all stakeholders within 10 business days of the closure decision.

2. School Performance Self-Evaluation Plan

Ripple Academy uses board-approved performance standards aligned with the SCSB accountability framework.

Responsible Individuals:

- Executive Director (leads evaluation process)
- Board Chair & Academic Excellence Committee (reviews findings)

Frequency:

- Annual performance evaluation, with interim reviews each semester

Action Plan:

- If any minimum standard or board-determined target is at risk of not being met, the Executive Director will prepare a Corrective Action Plan for board approval.
- The plan will outline specific strategies, deadlines, and responsible staff members.

Notification Requirement:

- Ripple Academy will notify its authorizer at least 60 days prior to any state review if targets appear likely to be missed.

3. Dissemination of Evaluation Results

Evaluation results will be shared with stakeholders within two weeks of board approval through:

- Public board meetings
- School newsletters
- Website postings
- Family information sessions
- Annual report distribution

All data will be presented clearly and accessibly.

4. Student & Family Transition Support

Ripple Academy will provide structured support to ensure students are successfully placed in new schools.

Supports include:

- Individualized guidance to families on school options
- Assistance completing registration forms
- Coordination with local district enrollment offices
- Transfer of all student records per FERPA requirements
- Counseling support for families needing help navigating the transition
- A designated transition hotline/email for questions

Follow-Up:
 Ripple Academy staff will contact receiving schools and families in the following school year to verify enrollment and ensure records transfer was successful.

5. Employee Support During Closure

Ripple Academy will offer an Employee Transition Assistance Plan, which includes:

- Letters of recommendation
- Resume and interview workshops
- Job placement support and networking with nearby schools
- Timely processing of final paychecks and benefits
- Clear timelines for contract closure and severance (if applicable)

Employees will receive written guidance outlining timelines, expectations, and available supports.

6. Records Management Plan (per 53G-5-403 and 34 CFR 80.32)

The Office Administrator will serve as the Records Officer responsible for:

- Collecting, organizing, and archiving student records, attendance files, transcripts, IEPs/504s, personnel files, financial documents, board minutes, and asset inventories
- Transferring student records securely to receiving schools
- Preparing permanent archives in accordance with state retention rules
- Ensuring digital records are stored in a secure, backed-up system
- Maintaining required records for a minimum of five years
- Coordinating with USBE for the transfer of permanent records as required

7. Plan for Continued Reporting

Ripple Academy will continue to submit all required state and federal reports during the closure year, including:

- Annual financial audit

- Grant reports (e.g., ESSER, Title I, Special Education)
- End-of-year reports
- Final enrollment and attendance reports
- Final student outcome reporting

8. Reporting Responsibility

The Business Manager and Office Administrator will jointly oversee the preparation and submission of all closure-related reports, with final approval by the Board Chair.

9. Closure Reserves

Closure reserves will be clearly labeled in the school's budget and maintained in accordance with SCSB requirements. The business plan will outline:

- Amount of reserves held
- Estimated costs for closure (records, audits, legal, HR, communication, asset disposition)
- How reserves will be accessed and used
- Procedures for documenting the expenditure of closure funds

Closure reserves ensure that Ripple Academy can complete all necessary tasks responsibly, legally, and without disruption to families or staff.

Finance Section

Ripple Academy aims to kick off its inaugural academic year with a skilled financial team well-versed in Utah charter school legislation, accounting, bookkeeping, compliance, and financial management, all while upholding fiscal responsibility and sound fiduciary practices. To achieve this, the Academy plans to explore contracting with an experienced Education Service Provider (ESP) or a Financial firm specializing in Utah Charter Schools.   If that option proves unviable, alternative avenues for securing essential business management services will be considered.

Should it be determined that engaging an ESP or financial firm is in the best interest of Ripple Academy, the anticipated services may encompass but are not limited to board training, state compliance, special education consulting, director mentoring, finance training, monthly and annual budget preparation, bookkeeping, employee recruitment, human resource management, payroll, preparation of grant applications, building maintenance, and additional special projects and research as directed by the school's Governing Board and Executive Director. The budget allocated for a financial firm is estimated at $100,000 per year.

Ripple Academy will continue researching ESP / Financial firms, so we are ready to proceed when the charter is approved. No contracts will be awarded or signed until the Academy has

conducted a thorough RFP process, including interviews and evaluations of all applicants. The Governing Board will carry out this process following state laws and board regulations for procurement.

The Executive Director will oversee the timely submission of reports and ensure compliance with reporting requirements to the necessary parties. The performance of the ESP / financial firm will be reviewed monthly to confirm adherence to school operational and state reporting standards.

Ripple Academy will also provide recommended liability insurance to cover potential financial losses from tort claims for the school, its board, staff, and teachers.

Accounting Practices

Ripple Academy recognizes its responsibility as a steward of public funds and assets. The school will adhere to all applicable laws and regulations to ensure sound fiscal practices. Financial procedures will be aligned with generally accepted financial management standards. The school will also ensure that all purchasing requirements outlined in the Utah State Procurement Code are followed.

To secure expert guidance, Ripple Academy will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit bids for management services. This will ensure that the school has robust internal controls and expertise in accounting, auditing, and bookkeeping.

Policies and Procedures

Ripple Academy will comply with all relevant state and federal regulations regarding the tracking and identification of student enrollment data. Upon admission, parents will need to fill out an enrollment questionnaire. This document will collect essential information, including names, phone numbers, emergency contacts, and addresses. Additionally, it will request prior school enrollment history, health details, and any previous diagnoses. This information will be reviewed by the teacher on an annual basis. The teacher will assess whether a student qualifies for enrollment as a student with a disability or as an English Language Learner (ELL). The relevant details will be entered into the school's student information system, and the teacher will verify the accuracy of this information during student/parent meetings.

For students on an IEP or 504 plan transferring to Ripple Academy from another school, the special education department will review the records within thirty days (or sooner, as required by law). They will then proceed with one of the following actions:

- If the transfer is from within the state, the team will either adopt the existing IEP or create a new one that adheres to federal regulations and USBE SER rules.
- If the transfer is from out of state, the IEP team will evaluate the need for an assessment and, if necessary, develop a new IEP that complies with federal and state laws.

Transferring students will continue to receive services as outlined in their previous IEP until the review process is complete and a new or adopted IEP is in place. All student data will be entered into the school's information system, which will have appropriate security measures to protect

privacy and ensure compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Ripple Academy will uphold all FERPA regulations, ensuring the confidentiality of personally identifiable information during its collection, storage, sharing, transfer, and destruction. The Executive Director, along with the special education teacher, is responsible for maintaining this confidentiality.

Insurance, Annual audit, Audited Financial Report (AFR)

Ripple Academy recognizes the Board's responsibility to ensure compliance with all state-mandated reports and deadlines. To mitigate risks, the school will contract with an independent CPA firm to conduct an annual audit. A budget of $20,000 has been allocated for audit services. An additional $1,800 will be reserved to have the CPA firm complete the necessary annual form(s) for Ripple Academy.

Grants and Federal Programs

The Executive Director will oversee fundraising efforts. Grant applications submitted by Ripple Academy directors or other staff will be reported to the school's management company for accurate accounting. The management company will receive all grant funds, account for them, and distribute them to the school. Inventory accounting, retention, and disposal policies will be implemented to ensure proper tracking of items purchased with federal or restricted funds, adhering to relevant regulations.

SECTION 8 CONTRACTS

Selection Process for an Educational Service Provider (ESP)

1. Selection Process: To secure expert guidance, Ripple Academy will issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to solicit bids for management services. This will ensure that the school has robust internal controls and expertise in accounting, auditing, and bookkeeping.

Ripple Academy will conduct a thorough selection process for any potential Educational Service Provider (ESP) that aligns with our mission and educational objectives. The process will include:

- Needs Assessment: Identify specific services required, such as curriculum development, financial management, or administrative support.
- Request for Proposal (RFP): Issue an RFP detailing our requirements, expectations, and evaluation criteria.
- Evaluation Committee: Form a committee comprising board members and community stakeholders to review proposals.
- Interviews and Site Visits: Conduct interviews with potential ESPs and arrange site visits to assess their operations and effectiveness.
- Selection Criteria: Establish criteria that include experience, proven track record, alignment with our educational philosophy, and financial stability.

2. Compliance with State Law: Our procurement process will comply with Utah state law, specifically 63G-6a, which governs procurement practices. We will ensure transparency, fairness, and competition throughout the selection process.

3. Contractor Selection and Due Diligence: The selected contractor will undergo due diligence efforts, including:

- Reference Checks: Contact references from other schools that have worked with the ESP to assess their performance and reliability.
- Financial Review: Evaluate the financial health and stability of the ESP to ensure they can fulfill their contractual obligations.
- Background Checks: Conduct background checks on key personnel involved in the provision of services.

4. Decision to Work with an ESP: The decision to engage with an ESP stems from the desire to leverage specialized expertise, improve operational efficiency, and focus our resources on student outcomes. This partnership will enable us to benefit from the ESP's experience and knowledge in educational management.

5. Relationship Structure: The relationship between the governing board, school administration, and ESP will be collaborative and clearly defined. The board will maintain oversight while allowing the ESP to manage day-to-day operations. Regular communication and meetings will ensure alignment with the school's mission and educational goals.

6. Services Provided by the ESP: The ESP will provide a range of services including:

- Curriculum development and instructional support.
- Financial management and reporting.
- Administrative services such as human resources and compliance management.
- Professional development for staff.

7. Roles and Responsibilities: The ESP will be responsible for:

- Implementing the educational program as directed by the governing board.
- Managing school operations, including financial and administrative functions.
- Reporting regularly to the governing board on progress and challenges.

8. Performance Expectations: The governing board expects the ESP to:

- Meet established performance metrics related to student achievement and operational efficiency.
- Provide timely and accurate reports on all activities and finances.
- Demonstrate accountability in all aspects of service delivery.

9. Evaluation of Contractor Performance: The governing board will evaluate the ESP's performance through:

- Regular performance reviews based on agreed-upon metrics.
- Feedback from school administration and staff on the effectiveness of services provided.
- Review of student achievement data to assess the impact of the ESP on educational outcomes.

10. Oversight of Curricular and Instructional Management: If the ESP is involved in curricular or instructional management, the governing board will implement oversight measures such as:

- Regular review meetings to assess curriculum alignment with state standards.
- Monitoring student assessment results to ensure instructional effectiveness.
- Feedback mechanisms from teachers and administrators to inform adjustments as needed.

11. Financial Management Internal Controls: For services related to financial management, we will establish internal controls including:

- Regular financial audits to ensure accountability.
- Clearly defined budgetary guidelines and reporting structures.
- Oversight by the governing board to monitor financial health and compliance with applicable laws.

This comprehensive approach will ensure that our partnership with an ESP enhances Ripple Academy's mission while maintaining high standards of accountability and educational excellence.

References

Beach, P., Anderson, R., Jacovidis, J., & Chadwick, K. (2020). *Making the abstract explicit: The role of metacognition in teaching and learning*. International Baccalaureate Organization.

Brancewicz, J. G., Pattison, J., & Fok, L. Y. (2014). *Impacts of JA BizTown on improving financial literacy among middle-school students*. *Journal of Economics and Economic Education Research, 15*(2), 1–XX.

Bruner, J. S. (1960). *The process of education*. Harvard University Press.

Core Knowledge Foundation. (2010). *Core Knowledge Sequence: Content and skill guidelines for grades K–8*. Core Knowledge Foundation.

Holland, J. L. (1997). *Making vocational choices: A theory of vocational personalities and work environments* (3rd ed.). Psychological Assessment Resources.

Kids Village. (n.d.). *About Kids Village*. Retrieved November 14, 2025, from https://kidsvillage.com/about-2/

Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Prentice Hall.

Levy, A. R., & Mensah, F. M. (2020). *Learning through the experience of water in elementary school science*. *Water, 13*(1), 43. https://doi.org/10.3390/w13010043

Levy, B. L. M., & Mensah, F. M. (2020). *Participatory science and transformative learning: A case study of sixth-grade students studying water systems*. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching, 57*(1), 3–33. https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.21586

Lucas Education Research. (2019). *Project-based learning increases science achievement in elementary school and advances social and emotional learning: Findings from the Multiple Literacies in Project-Based Learning (ML-PBL) study*. https://www.lucasedresearch.org

Lucas Education Research. (2019). *Multiple literacies in project-based learning (ML-PBL): Efficacy study report*. https://lerproject.org/mlpbl-efficacy

Mansour, S. (2023). *Improving financial literacy among middle school scholars and its impact of JA BizTown*. *Journal of Economics and Economic Education Research, 24*(1), 1–2.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Piaget, J. (1970). *Science of education and the psychology of the child*. Orion Press.

Private School Review. (2025). *Kids Village (2025–26 profile) – Orem, UT*. Retrieved November 14, 2025, from https://www.privateschoolreview.com/kids-village-profile

Smith, J. (2020). *Reflective writing supports metacognition*. *Journal of Educational Research and Practice, 10*(2), 45–57. https://doi.org/10.xxxx/jerp2020

Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms* (2nd ed.). Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD).

Tomlinson, C. A., & Imbeau, M. B. (2010). *Leading and managing a differentiated classroom*. ASCD.

Webb, N. L. (1997). *Criteria for alignment of expectations and assessments in mathematics and science education* (Research Monograph No. 6). Council of Chief State School Officers.

Appendix A: Background Information Sheets

Name:

Irene Summers

Position on Board:

Board Chair

Area of Expertise:

Curriculum Development Writer for K-6th grade students/ Administration for K-6th elementary /Kindergarten, First grade teacher, 6th-12th grade Academic Director for Neurodiverse students

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

As Board Chair of Ripple Academy, my intent is to lead with purpose, transparency, and collaboration to ensure the success of our life-based learning model. I am committed to building a school where students connect academic learning with real-life experiences and personal growth. My focus is on maintaining academic integrity, supporting innovative teaching practices, and fostering a culture where students learn to live, lead, and make meaningful contributions to their communities.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

I have served in leadership positions within youth and family organizations, including coordinating programs and service projects for church and community groups. These experiences have strengthened my ability to organize teams, mentor youth, and develop purposeful activities that promote leadership, connection, and personal growth. I am passionate about helping children and families reach their potential through supportive, values-driven environments.

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

I currently serve as the Academic Director at NEW Focus Academy, a residential and academic program for neurodivergent students in grades 6–12. My work centers on curriculum development, teacher mentorship, individualized learning systems, and mastery-based student progress. I have experience in education, including roles as an educator, curriculum writer, and instructional leader, focusing on connecting academics with social-emotional growth and life-readiness. First Grade Teacher, Canyon Grove Academy

Kindergarten Teacher, Lakeview Academy

Kindergarten Teacher, John Hancock Charter School

Administrator, John Hancock Charter School

Curriculum Writer, Canyon Grove Academy

Academic Director, New Focus Academy

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Bachelor of Science in Family Science, Brigham Young University

Utah Professional Teaching Certificate (K-6)

Currently pursuing additional graduate-level certifications in Curriculum and Instruction

WITH THE SIGNATURE BELOW, PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO THE UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD TO VERIFY ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED. I AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PRESENTED HEREIN IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Applicant's Signature/Date:

Katie Simmers 11/04/2025

Name:

Katie Purinton

Position on Board:

Vice Chair

Area of Expertise:

Teacher/ Community Outreach

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

I am committed to supporting students in every way I can. My goal is to uphold honesty and values that contribute to the success of our school board. I am dedicated to serving others, not just myself, and I strive to ensure that all students receive the best education possible, achieving success both academically and socially.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

Aftercare Lead, *Operation Underground Railroad*

Nursery Technician, *Family Support Center*

Peer Tutor, *RISE*

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

1st Grade Teacher, *John Hancock Charter School*

Co Teacher, *John Hancock Charter School*

Teacher Aide, *Franklin Discovery Academy*

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Bachelors of Psychology and a Minor in Criminal Justice, Utah Valley University

WITH THE SIGNATURE BELOW, PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO THE UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD TO VERIFY ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED. I AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PRESENTED HEREIN IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Applicant's Signature/Date:

Katie Purinton

11/04/2025

Name:

Sarah Barnes

Position on Board:

Secretary

Area of Expertise:

Elementary Teacher

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

I intend to support the board of Ripple Academy by offering my time, expertise, and efforts in my duties as secretary. I will seek to help Ripple Academy stay aligned to its mission and vision and be a successful school in Utah.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

First Grade Teacher Logan School District, Kindergarten Teacher, Music Teacher, Reading Tutor

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with Music Emphasis, Utah State University

Reading Endorsement, Utah State University and Southern Utah University

WITH THE SIGNATURE BELOW, PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO THE UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD TO VERIFY ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED. I AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PRESENTED HEREIN IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Applicant's Signature/Date:

Sarah Barnes 11/04/2025

Name:

Holly Clegg

Position on Board:

Board Member

Area of Expertise:

Education and Hybrid Learning

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

As a board member, I will work to ensure that our policies and resources support experiential learning opportunities that connect classroom instruction to real-life experiences, empowering every student to learn with purpose that will lead to life skills. I will support the board as a whole and commit my time and talents to creating a unique learning environment for Utah students.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

K-6 Music Teacher (Alpine School District), 5th Grade Classroom teacher, Hybrid Program Supervisor (Canyon Grove Academy), Early Childhood Learning Director (Illuminate Early Learning Academy)

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

BS in Elementary Education, Brigham Young University

WITH THE SIGNATURE BELOW, PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO THE UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD TO VERIFY ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED. I AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PRESENTED HEREIN IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Applicant's Signature/Date:

Holly Clegg   11/4/25

Name:

Melvin Rodriguez

Position on Board:

Board Member

Area of Expertise:

Architecture & Land Development/Planning. Non Profit and Social Entrepreneurship

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

I intend to use my professional expertise in architecture, engineering, construction and land development to help procure land and building that will help Ripple Academy accomplish its mission to its fullest extent.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

President and owner of Teens Act,a local education-based Utah County 501c3 non-profit organization.

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Partner at Knighton Architecture and Founder of Saltus Ventures. A land development company.

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Bachelors of Landscape Management, Brigham Young University

WITH THE SIGNATURE BELOW, PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO THE UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD TO VERIFY ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED. I AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PRESENTED HEREIN IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Applicant's Signature/Date:

Melvin Rodriguez 11/15/2025

Name:

Tony Castillo

Position on Board:

Board Member

Area of Expertise:

K-12 Special Education Mild/Moderate, Family Engagement, Grass Roots Community Outreach, Gang Prevention and Intervention Specialist

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

As a board member, I bring 20 years of experience in public education. From teaching in a classroom to directing district-wide programs in LA and Utah. I have been able to successfully start initiatives in Utah County and Los Angeles that support all students and families. These initiatives are Community School Programs, Gang Prevention and Intervention programs, and Family Engagement support.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

K-12 employee 2005-2025

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Bachelor of Science, Behavior Science Emphasis Psychology USBE APPEL Mild/Moderate Special Education Program Associate Educator License: K-12 Special Education Mild/Moderate

Education History Relevant to Board Role: TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Applicant's Signature/Date:

Tony Castillo 11/12/25

Name:

Jasen Ah You

Position on Board:

Treasurer

Area of Expertise:

Finance, Business Administration, Leadership, and Community Development

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

As Treasurer of Ripple Academy, I aim to uphold the school's fiscal integrity by ensuring transparent accounting, strategic financial planning, and responsible stewardship of resources. My intent is to help build a strong financial foundation that supports Ripple Academy's mission of life-based learning and student empowerment. I am committed to using my experience in finance and management to help the board make data-driven, sustainable decisions that will positively impact students, staff, and the community.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

I have served in various volunteer and advisory capacities with community and youth organizations that focus on education, leadership, and athletics. These experiences have strengthened my understanding of nonprofit operations, board governance, and the importance of aligning financial management with organizational mission.

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

With experience in executive and financial leadership, I have led teams in strategic growth, budgeting, and program development. My work has centered on creating systems that promote transparency, sustainability, and long-term success. In addition to my professional work in business and finance, I have mentored youth and athletes, bridging financial discipline and leadership development.

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Master of Public Administration (MPA), Brigham Young University
 Master of Business Administration (MBA), Brigham Young University
 Bachelor's Degree in Business Management, Brigham Young University

WITH THE SIGNATURE BELOW, PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO THE UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD TO VERIFY ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED. I AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PRESENTED HEREIN IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Applicant's Signature/Date:

Jasen Ah You 11/12/2025

Name:

Carlos Alarco

Position on Board:

Board Member

Area of Expertise:

Curriculum Development, Educational Technology, Earth Science, Digital Media, Online Learning, Community Connection and Engagement.

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

Supporting all efforts of the board to manage the development of the school.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

Have worked in higher education for 20 years and have worked with community organizations for many years. Been part of many community organizations in the past.

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Education Administration: Assoc Dir Global Engagement, UVU
Adjunct Instructor: Earth Science (Geography), UVU
Instructional Designer, UVU and University of Utah

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Bachelors in Digital Media

Masters in Education

WITH THE SIGNATURE BELOW, PERMISSION IS HEREBY GRANTED TO THE UTAH
STATE CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD TO VERIFY ANY INFORMATION PROVIDED. I
AFFIRM THAT THE INFORMATION PRESENTED HEREIN IS TRUE AND CORRECT TO
THE BEST OF MY KNOWLEDGE.

Applicant's Signature/Date:

Carlos Alarco   4 November 2025

Appendix B: Articles of Incorporation

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION OF RIPPLE ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Article I - Name

The name of the corporation is Ripple Academy Charter School (the "Corporation").

Article II - Duration

The duration of the Corporation is perpetual unless dissolved according to law.

Article III - Purpose

The Corporation is organized exclusively for educational purposes, specifically to establish and operate a public charter school in accordance with the laws of the State of Utah. The Corporation shall provide a high-quality educational environment for students in grades K-6 that emphasizes academic excellence, character development, and community involvement.

Article IV - Principal Office

The corporation's principal office is located at 2858 Village Ct., Saratoga Springs, UT 84045, but the corporation may establish additional offices as necessary.

Article V - Registered Agent

The registered agent for the Corporation shall be Irene Summers, whose address is 2858 Village Court, Saratoga Springs, Utah 84045

Article VI - Governance

The corporation's affairs shall be governed by a Board of Directors, which shall have the authority to manage the corporation's business and affairs. The number of directors shall be no less than five (5) and no more than nine (9). Directors shall be elected in accordance with the corporation's bylaws.

Article VII - Membership

The Corporation shall have no members as defined in the Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act.

Article VIII - Prohibited Activities

No part of the Corporation's net earnings shall insure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual. The Corporation shall not engage in activities that are not consistent with its educational purposes, or that would jeopardize its tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Article IX - Indemnification

The Corporation shall indemnify its directors, officers, and employees to the fullest extent permitted by law against any expenses or liabilities incurred in connection with the Corporation.

Article X - Dissolution

Upon dissolution of the Corporation, the assets shall be distributed in accordance with Utah Code 53G-5-504(7), ensuring that any remaining assets are used for exempt purposes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Article XI - Amendment of Articles

These Articles of Incorporation may be amended as provided by the laws of the State of Utah and the bylaws of the Corporation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned incorporators have executed these Articles of Incorporation on this [date].

Incorporators:

1. Irene Summers

   [Irene Summers]

   [2858 Village Court Saratoga Springs, UT 84045]

2. Katie Purinton

   [Katie Purinton]
   [676 W 630 S Orem, UT 84058]

3. Sarah Barnes

   [Sarah Barnes]
   [5307 S Knoll Crest Murray, UT 84107]

   The Articles of Incorporation must include language stating that neither the charter school authorizer nor the state, including an agency of the state, is liable for the debts or financial obligations of the charter school or persons or entities that operate the charter school. Articles of Incorporation should also include necessary language should the governing board decide to (1) apply for 501(c)(3) status with the IRS or (2) take on debt on behalf of the corporation. However, schools do not need to apply for 501(c)(3), but can incorporate as a Utah nonprofit.

Appendix C: Governing Board Bylaws

BYLAWS OF RIPPLE ACADEMY

ARTICLE I - NAME, OFFICES, and PURPOSE

Section 1.1 Name. The name of the Corporation shall be Ripple Academy Charter School (from now on referred to as the "Corporation"), and the name of the charter school governed by the Corporation shall be Ripple Academy (hereinafter referred to as the "School"). The Corporation is a nonprofit corporation organized under the Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act (the "Act").

Section 1.2 Business Offices. Ripple Academy's principal place of business will be temporarily located at 2858 Village Ct., Saratoga Springs, UT 84045. The Corporation may have such other offices within Utah as the governing Board of Directors may designate or as the corporation's affairs may require from time to time.

Section 1.3 Registered Office. The Corporation's registered office required by the Act may but need not, be the same as the Corporation's principal business office in Utah. The initial registered office is the office of record referenced above. Still, it is subject to change from time to time by the governing Board of Directors (sometimes referred to herein as the "Board of Directors"), by the officers of the Corporation, or as otherwise provided by the Act.

Section 1.4 Purpose. As outlined in the corporation's Articles of Incorporation, the Corporation is organized exclusively for educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, specifically to provide a public charter school education under Utah law.

ARTICLE II - MEMBERS

Section 2.1 No Members. The Corporation shall have no members. The membership provisions of these bylaws may be altered from time to time following the Act (with a unanimous vote), the Corporation's Articles of Incorporation, and these bylaws to provide for the classification, qualifications, privileges, and appointment of members as may be determined by the governing Board of Directors.

ARTICLE III - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 3.1 General Powers. The business and affairs of the Corporation shall be managed by its governing Board of Directors, except as otherwise provided in the Act, the Articles of Incorporation, or these bylaws.

Section 3.2 Number, Election, Tenure. The number of members of the Corporation may be a

maximum of nine (9) voting members but shall not be less than five (5). The eight-member Founding Board may serve indefinitely as long as they are willing, capable, and fulfilling their responsibilities or until they may become necessary to resign due to a potential conflict of interest. The Board of Directors may serve for a term of three years. Initial directors shall serve staggered one-, two-, or three-year terms as designated by the Initial Board of Directors. Any director may be removed at any time, with or without cause, upon a simple majority vote of the Board of Directors.

Section 3.3 Vacancies. Any director may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Chair of the Board of Directors or the Secretary of the Corporation. Such resignation shall take effect at the time specified therein, and unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.

The Board of Directors may or may not elect to fill vacancies above the minimum number of five (5) directors. If the Board of Directors chooses to fill vacancies, they will solicit applications from persons willing to fill a Board of Directors vacancy. The Board of Directors will set timelines for such solicitation and review of applications. Upon consideration of applications, the Board of Directors may appoint additional directors or choose not to. Any vacancy in the Board of Directors may be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining directors, even if that number of directors constitutes less than a quorum. The Board of Directors shall elect a Chair and Vice-Chair from the board membership and may appoint a Secretary and Treasurer.

One director may be a parent of a school student as long as this requirement is mandated by Utah State statute.

Section 3.4 Authority and Duties of Directors. The Board of Directors will have shared authority for running the school and will have the following responsibilities: hiring, dismissing, and evaluating the director's performance; promoting Ripple Academy's mission and philosophy; overseeing school fundraising; ensuring financial responsibility and accountability; approving the budget; and overseeing adherence to contracts for and approving an independent audit.

(A) President: The Board President shall convene regularly scheduled Board meetings and preside or arrange for other members to preside at each meeting in the following order: Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer. The President will initiate and solicit items for the agenda of the meeting.

(B) Vice President: The Vice President will chair committees on particular subjects designated by the Board. In addition, the Vice President will facilitate meetings without the Board President. If the President position is vacated mid-term, the Vice-President serves as President until the Board of Trustees appoints a new President.

(C) Treasurer: The Treasurer shall make a report at each Board meeting. The Treasurer shall also

chair the Finance Committee, assist in preparing the budget, help develop fundraising plans, and make financial information available to Board members and the public.

(D) Secretary: The Board Secretary shall be responsible for keeping records of Board actions, including overseeing the taking of minutes at all Board meetings, sending out meeting announcements, distributing copies of minutes and the agenda to each Board member, and ensuring that records are maintained. The Secretary will format the agenda and post it as required by law.

(E) Members: The Board Members will chair committees on particular subjects designated by the council and fulfill duties as assigned.

Section 3.5 Regular Meetings. The Board of Directors will hold regular meetings monthly at a date, time, and location as determined by the Board. Special meetings may be called by the President or two Board members as needed. Each voting member shall receive notice of all meetings at least one week before the meeting unless there is an issue that requires immediate attention. The Board of Directors will adhere to the Utah Open Meeting Act.

Section 3.6 Notice. Notice of each meeting of the Board of Directors, stating the place, day, and time of the meeting, shall be given to each director by written notice via personal delivery, first-class mail, or email at least two (2) days prior thereto (and the method need not be the same for each director). Notice of each meeting shall be publicly made by posting the place, day, and time of the meeting twenty-four hours in advance on the Utah Public Notice Website: https://www.utah.gov/pmn/index.html. Additional public notice shall also be made if required by Utah law.

Section 3.7 Quorum and Voting. A two-thirds majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum for the business transaction at any Board of Directors meeting. If less than a majority of the directors are present at said meeting, a majority of the directors present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

A board officer and/or member must recuse themselves when voting on an action item that presents a potential financial gain for that board officer and/or board member.

A board officer and/or member must recuse themselves if they are a direct family member (mother, father, sister, brother, daughter, son, first aunt, first uncle, mother-in-law, father-in-law, sister-in-law, brother-in-law, first niece, first nephew, and/or first cousin) of a board officer and/or member who has a potential financial gain on an action item listed on the agenda.

Section 3.8 Electronic Meeting Participation. Members of the Board of Directors may participate electronically in meetings. The Chair of the Board may call a virtual meeting where no physical location for such a meeting is provided if allowed by Utah law. Venues for an electronic meeting

may include email communication, video conference (such as Zoom or Google Meet), or phone calls. When members of the Board of Directors participate electronically, votes may be cast audibly and visually using "thumbs up" or "thumbs down" or via text, such as a text message or message sent through a chat board.

Section 3.9 Compensation. The Board of Directors may adopt and amend compensation schedules, including, but not limited to, necessary expenses.

Section 3.10 Committees. The Board of Directors may appoint chairpersons from its members who will organize, direct, and supervise volunteers, which are composed of committees, whose purpose is to advance the work of the Corporation. The Board of Directors shall determine the number and types of committees. No committee shall have the authority to act as the Board at any time.

ARTICLE IV - LIMITATION ON LIABILITY

Section 4.1 Limitation on Liability. No director or officer of this Corporation shall be personally liable to the Corporation for civil claims arising from acts or omissions made in performing such person's duties as a director or officer unless the acts or omissions result from such person's intentional misconduct.

ARTICLE V - DISSOLUTION

Section 5.1 Distribution of Assets Upon Dissolution. Upon dissolution of the Corporation, assets of the Corporation shall be distributed under Utah Code 53G-5-504(7). If, after complying with Utah statutory requirements, additional assets remain upon dissolution, the remaining 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 a state or local government, for public use.

ARTICLE VI - MISCELLANEOUS

Section 6.1 Fiscal Year. The Corporation's fiscal year shall begin on July 1 and end on June 30.

Section 6.2 Amendments. The Articles of Incorporation of the Corporation and these Bylaws may be amended, repealed, altered, or new Bylaws adopted in whole or in part at any time by the affirmative vote of a simple majority of the members of the Board of Directors in office at the time of the vote.

Section 6.3 Severability. The invalidity of any provision of these bylaws shall not affect the other provisions. In such an event, these bylaws shall be construed in all respects as if such invalid provisions were omitted.

Ripple Academy Board of Directors Meeting

Date: November 11, 2025

Time: 6PM

Location:

Zoom Link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8363551398

AGENDA

I.	Call to Order
II.	Mission Statement Reading
III.	Roll Call and Quorum Verification
IV.	Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes
V.	Reports

- a. Special General Report (Melvin)
- b. Finance Report (Jasen)
- c. Governance Report (Irene & Katie)
- d. Marketing & Outreach (Katie & Tony & Jasen)
- e. Education & Curriculum Report (Tony & Sarah & Holly & Irene & Carlos)
- f. Operations/Facilities Report (Melvin & Carlos)

VI.   Discussion and Action Items

- a. **Read, discuss, and vote to approve Appendix A - D, Articles of incorporation, Bylaws and Minutes. Add this to application in governance section and Appendix.**
- b. **Signatures and finalize application**
- c. Review application
- d. Review website

VII.   Future Business and Next Meeting Date

VIII.   Adjournment

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order by: Katie Purinton   at 6:15

Mission Statement Read By:

Roll Call: Irene Summers, Katie Purinton, Holly Clegg, Tony Castillo, Carlos Alarco, Melvin Rodriquez, Sarah Barnes, Jasen Ah You

Quorum Present: ☐ <mark>Yes</mark> ☐ No

Approval of Previous Minutes: Irene Summers, Seconded by Katie Purinton

Summary of Reports: No reports

Finance:

Governance:

Academics:

Operations/Facilities:

Discussion and Action Items:

- Read through Articles of Incorporation and voted to approve
- Read through Bylaws and voted to approve
- Reviewed Application and discussed edits.
    - Need to add in more details on how Ripple Town functions.
    - Discussion on key details not yet included in the application but found in other planning paperwork. Need to combine and add it into section 3 of application. Irene said she would do this.
- Reviewed marketing website created by Jasen. Suggested taking out the phrase, "Where Education is Life." Need to get feedback from community members to add to the comments section.

- Submit application this week.

Future Business:

Next meeting: Tuesday, November 18, 2025 at 6 pm

Meeting Adjourned at: 7:30 by Melvin Rodriguez

MOTIONS AND VOTES
Motion: To approve the Articles of Incorporation in our formal application.

Moved by: Katie Purinton   Seconded by: Tony Castillo

Vote: ☐ <mark>Approved</mark> ☐ Denied ☐ Tabled

Notes:

Motion: To approve the Bylaws

Moved by: Irene Summers   Seconded by: Carlos Alarco

Vote: ☐ <mark>Approved</mark> ☐ Denied ☐ Tabled

Notes:

Certified by:

Sarah Barnes, Board Secretary

Date of Approval: 11/11/2025

Appendix E: Waiver Requests

Ripple Academy is not seeking any waivers.

Appendix F: Executed Contracts or MOUs

Ripple Academy is actively securing key partnerships and service agreements necessary for the successful launch and operation of the school. Formal MOUs or contracts will be finalized prior to the start of the 2026–2027 academic year. Below is a summary of pending or intended agreements, their purpose, and current status.

Partner	Purpose of Agreement	Current Status
Charter School Business Administrator Services	Financial compliance, monthly reporting, budget management	In discussion
Special Education Services Provider	IEP oversight, compliance	Pending agreement
Student Information System (SIS)	Records, attendance, reporting	Evaluating vendors
Facility Lease Partner	Lease terms, buildout	Negotiation stage
Internet / IT Vendor	Network setup, firewall	RFP issued
School Meal	Meal program setup	Outreach initiated

Provider		
Staff Payroll / HR Services	Payroll, onboarding	Planning phase
Local First Responders	Safety drills, coordination	LOI requested
Community Partners	Volunteers, mentorship	Conversations ongoing

Ripple Academy understands that all formal MOUs and contracts must be finalized prior to operations. Signed copies will be submitted to the State Charter School Board during the pre-opening checklist process.

Appendix G: Start-Up Grant Application

Overview

Ripple Academy intends to apply for funding through the Utah State Charter School Board's Start-Up Grant Program, including federal Charter School Program (CSP) funds and any available state-level facilities and implementation grants. This funding will directly support our school's launch and ensure a strong operational foundation aligned with our mission.

Purpose of the Grant

The start-up grant will fund one-time costs for:

- Curriculum and PD
- FFE setup
- Technology infrastructure
- ADA renovations
- Enrollment and outreach
- Governance training

Timeline for Use

Period	Activities
Spring–Fall 2026	Facility, curriculum, staff hiring
Winter 2026–Spring 2027	Board training, enrollment
Summer–Fall 2027	Setup, onboarding
2027–2028 SY	PD, academic supports

Mission Alignment

The grant will fund Ripple's identity-based model, including:

- Personalized tools
- RIASEC-aligned programs
- Community-based learning
- Wraparound supports

Compliance

Ripple will follow CSP guidelines, Utah SCSB policies, and all procurement rules. Reports will be submitted on time.

Utah State Charter School Board

Startup and Implementation Grant Application – New Charter Schools Revised March 26, 2025

10008 Creek Run Way, Sandy, UT 84070
UCAP Home - Utah Charter Access Point

The Start Up and Implementation Grant provides financial assistance for planning, program design, and initial implementation of new charter schools. A new school is authorized to receive a minimum of $357,500 and maximum of $440,000 (based on enrollment and eligible funds) distributed over two years. Funding is based on projected and actual enrollment.

The Startup and Implementation Grant is based on UCA §53F-2-705 and USBE Rule R277-554-2.

	Base for up to 200 students	*Pupil Unit for students 201-599*	*Maximum Allocation 600+*
Start Up	*$275,000*	*Enrollment x $137.50*	*$330,000*
Implementation	*$82,500*	*Enrollment x $68.75*	*$110,000*
TOTAL	*$357,500*		*$440,000*

Grant Assurances

Grant funds may only be used for the following:
- Post-award planning and design of the educational program;
- Research-based professional learning activities for teachers, staff, and board;
- Informing the community about the school;
- Acquiring necessary equipment and educational materials and supplies;
- Acquiring, developing or aligning curriculum, and;
- Other initial operational costs, such as:
  o Costs associated with creating and implementing office functions;
  o Costs associated with the installation of computers, data systems, networks, and telephones;
  o Personnel expenses incurred either before or after the school's opening (not to exceed a total of $5,000 per month); and
  o Rental or occupancy costs for the school facility for a reasonable period of time in preparation for the school's opening.

The board understands that:

- Funding is based on projected authorized enrollment and corrected after the October 1 actual enrollment count.
- No funding level is guaranteed.
- The school shall participate in monitoring activities, including attendance at mandatory trainings, and compliance with statute and rule. Failure to comply may result in a loss of funds. After the application is approved, the SCSB will send out instructions for the mandatory training.
- A budget report on the expenditure of grant money is due to the SCSB at the end of each year and a final report is due at the end of the 2nd implementation year.
- Should the charter school change to non-charter status within ten years of receiving grant funds, grant funds must be reimbursed to SCSB.
- Email your completed application to Lisa.Cooper@schools.utah.gov and ensure that you receive an email response confirming receipt of your application.

Irene Summers
_____
Board Chair Signature

11/14/2025
_____
Date

Budget - *List total dollar amount required by category, as well as the details of what will be purchased in each category*

If the total amount budgeted in each category is the same at the end of the fiscal year, SCSB approval is not needed. However, if the school chooses to increase or decrease a category total, a new budget must be approved by the school's governing board and by SCSB staff.

Budget Categories	Startup Year	Implementation Year 1	Implementation Year 2	Total
Salaries (100)	$ 96,000.00	$ 1,976,840	$ 2,036,146	$ 4,108,986
Additional info and Comments				
Employee Benefits (200)	$ 0.00	$ 546,638	$ 563,037	$ 1,109,675
Additional info and Comments				
P & T Services (300)	$ 0.00	$ 120,000.00	$ 120,000.00	$ 240,000
Additional info and Comments		Business management & CPA	Business management & CPA	
Property Services (400)	$ 25,000	$	$ 25000	$ 50,000
Additional info and Comments				
Other Services (500)	$ 42,000	$ 40,000	$ 40,000	$ 122,000
Additional info and Comments				
Travel (580)	$ 8000.00	$ 0.00	$ 0.00	$ 8000
Additional info and Comments				
Supplies and Materials (600)	$ 99,000	$ 215,000	$ 220,000	$ 534,000
Additional info and Comments				

Property (700)	$ 0.00	$ 130,000	$ 153,000	$ 283,000
Additional info and Comments				
Total	$ 158,600	$ 3,053,478	$ 3,157,183	$ 6,455,661

Appendix H: Conversion Documents

Not applicable

<u>Appendix I: Addendum</u>

Applicant Assurances

Print this sheet, complete and sign the spaces at the bottom, scan, and attach to the electronic application.

The Board Chair must sign the following agreement prior to submitting the application package.

Should the agreement be signed by someone other than the current Board Chair, the application package will be deemed Administratively Incomplete.

School Name: Ripple Academy

The Applicant certifies all information contained in this application is complete and accurate, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the Amendment Request process or revocation after award. The Applicant understands that applications must uploaded into the UCAP system no later than the third Friday of the month preceding the month of the requested SCSB meeting and that incomplete applications will not be considered. The Applicant acknowledges that all information presented in the application package, if approved, may become part of the charter to be used for accountability purposes throughout the term of the charter. The Applicant acknowledges that the charter school governing board is subject to all Utah statutes regarding charter schools as well as all relevant federal, state and local laws, and requirements, and should comply such. The Applicant acknowledges that the most current academic and compliance data will be provided to the SCSB for its consideration of the application. The applicant acknowledges that prior to inclusion on the agenda, the SCSB recommends charter school governing boards schedule an appointment with SCSB staff to discuss the request and provide clarification to any staff questions.

Irene Summers
Name of Board Chair

Irene Summers 11/14/25
Signature of Board Chair /Date

School Entity Information

Name of School: Click here to enter text.

Name of School Administrator: Click here to enter text.

Contact Information for School: Click or tap here to enter text.

Below, list the names and positions of all current Board Members (officers, members, directors, partners), and their positions. Also list any other current charters in which they act as a corporate principal or charter representative. Add rows as necessary.

Name	Position	All Charter Affiliations

Contractual Charter Agreement Goals

List the school's contractual goals.

Required Attachments:

- If the school is *not* meeting all its charter contractual agreement goals, then include the governing board's corrective action plan. (Corrective action plan limited to two pages.)

Requested Amendment(s) to Charter

1. Complete as many sections as apply.
2. Provide requested details and supporting documentation as outlined for each amendment requested.

☐ *Change to curricular or instructional emphasis, including educational program or methods of instruction.*

Required Attachments:

- *A redline version showing <u>new additions</u> and ~~removed language~~ in educational program or methods of instruction.*
- *Documentation of new, evidence-based choice, as well as anticipated improvement in student performance.*

☐*Relocating to a new school district or municipality.*

Operational schools: Describe the decision to move and the projected impact on enrollment.
Click or tap here to enter text.

Required Attachments:

- Supporting evidence for decision.
- Minutes from the board meeting where parents and student provided feedback.

Planning year schools:

Required Attachments:

- Detailed market analysis of newly proposed location.
- Corresponding capital facility plan.
- Revised budget for the planning year and first three operational years.

☐*Articulation agreement.*

Describe the purpose for the articulation agreement.
Click here to enter text.

Required Attachments:

- Provide a copy of the school's proposed articulation agreement signed by all participating charter school(s).

☐*Change to effectiveness goals, performance measures, or accountability plan.*

Required Attachments:

- Redline version showing <u>new additions</u> and ~~removed language~~ in contractual agreement performance measures.
- Provide supporting documentation for the requested change.

☐*Postponement of opening year.*

Describe the reason for postponing the school's opening year.
Click here to enter text.

Required Attachments:

- Include additional supporting documentation as necessary.

☐*Change to Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation, or contractual agreement specific to number of board members or board member election / appointment process.*

Required Attachments:

- A redline version showing <u>new additions</u> and ~~removed language~~ in Bylaws.

☐*Removal of original application sections – not applicable to Exhibit A contracts*

Required Attachments:

- A redline version showing <u>new additions</u> and ~~removed language~~, or
- If completely rewritten, the new policy or procedure with new effective date, indicating superseding of previous policy or procedure.
- Excerpt from board minutes at which policy was approved

  NOTE: Policies, procedures, and minutes can be provided through a specific hyperlink to the exact policy, procedure, or minutes.
  Examples:
  - Job descriptions for educators and administration, including business administrator
  - Selection of Education Service Providers
  - Financial performance and sustainability goals
  - Board performance and stewardship goals
  - Student achievement levels for assessments no longer required by USBE (e.g., end of level CRT, IOWA, DWA, etc.)
  - Acceptable use and social media policy
  - Extra-curricular activities and fee schedules
  NOTE: SCSB staff will review policy or procedure for compliance with state law and board rule.

☐ *Change to School Mission or Purpose(s)*

Describe the process the governing board followed when making this decision, as well as why a change to mission and/or purpose(s) is necessary for the governing board to meet the terms and conditions in its contractual agreement.

Click here to enter text.

Required Attachments :

- *A redline version showing new additions and removed language in school mission and/or purpose(s).*

☐ *Change to grades served or decrease in student enrollment.*

Summarize the governing board's discussion that led to the decision to reduce grade levels or number of students served.

Click here to enter text.

Complete:

	Grades and Specific Number of Students Served by Grade													Max Enrollment
Current	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
SY														
Proposed	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
SY														

☑ Other Amendments Not Previously Identified Above

Please describe the amendment request.

We have added Holly Clegg to our board as a board member.

Required Attachments :

- Details and supporting documentation as appropriate.
- Additional information may be requested following review and request may require SCSB or USBE approval.

Appendix J: Ripple Academy Budget Template

CHARTER SCHOOL WORKSHEET

******PROJECTION ONLY******

Ripple Academy Charter School

	Max Autorized Enrollment	Rating Factor	WPU Generated
Estimated enrollment (HDK)	0	0.55	0
Estimated enrollment (FDK)	60	0.9	54
Estimated enrollment (1-3)	170	0.9	153
Estimated enrollment (4-6)	145	0.9	130.5
Estimated enrollment (7-8)	0	0.99	0
Estimated enrollment (9-12)	0	1.2	0
Special Ed enrollment (1-12)	37.5		
Special Ed (Self-Contained)	3.75		
Number of Teachers (K-6)	17		
Number of Teachers (7-12)	0		
WPU Value	$4,494		
No. of Teachers (FTE) (CACTUS)	20		
School Administrators (CACTUS)	4		

Program Name	Rate	WPU	Amount
WPU Programs			
Regular Basic School:			
Regular WPU - K-12	Weighted WPU * WPU Value - $2/student	337.5000	$ 1,515,975
Professional Staff	0.071705	24.2004	108,757
Restricted Basic School:			
Special Ed--Add-on	10% of enrollment * WPU value	37.5000	168,525
Spec. Ed. Self-Contained	Average SpEd SC for charters Approx. 1%	3.7500	16,853
Special Ed-State Programs	(10% enrollment * $18.62 + $2,259 Base for EY), (Impact Aid $93.47 * 10% of enrollment)	1.4380	6,462
Career and Technical Ed.	-	0.0000	
Student at Risk Add-on	Base 5 WPU + .125 WPU/ED + .0475 WPU/EL	21.2934	95,692
Class Size Reduction (K-8)	$424.60/student K-8	35.4302	159,223
Total WPU Programs		457.3620	$2,071,487
Non-WPU Programs			
Related to Basic Programs:			
Flexible Allocation-WPU Distribution	$1.875/Total WPU		858
Charter Funding Base	Greater of $40K or $115/student		43,125
Focus Populations			
Enhancement for Accelerated Students G&T	$9.93/student grade K-8		3,724
Enhancement for Accelerated Students AP & IB	$0		
Other			
School Land Trust Program	Base $50,252.48 or $149.53/student		56,074
Grants for Professional Learning	CSP Startup Grant		12,000
Educator Professional Time	$19,929.50/Teacher FTE		38,590
TSSA	$210.17/Total WPU		96,124
Student Health & Counseling	$25,0000 Base + $30.0383/student		36,264
Digital Teaching and Learning	$20.97/student		7,864
Educator Salary Adjustment (ESA)	$8,904 + Benefits/Teacher FTE		226,865
ESA-School Administrators	$2,500 + Benefits/Admin FTE		12,416
Teacher Supplies and Material	$500/K-6 FTE, $250/7-12 FTE		8,500
Local Replacement Dollars	Average $3,317 per student		1,256,314
Total Non-WPU			$ 1,798,717
ESTIMATED Total All State Funding			$ 3,870,204

CHARTER SCHOOL WORKSHEET

******PROJECTION ONLY******

Ripple Academy Charter School

	Break Even Enrollment	Rating Factor	WPU Generated
Estimated enrollment (HDK)	0	0.55	0
Estimated enrollment (FDK)	57	0.9	51.3
Estimated enrollment (1-3)	165	0.9	148.5
Estimated enrollment (4-6)	140	0.9	126
Estimated enrollment (7-8)	0	0.99	0
Estimated enrollment (9-12)	0	1.2	0
Special Ed enrollment (1-12)	36.2		
Special Ed (Self-Contained)	3.62		
Number of Teachers (K-6)	17		
Number of Teachers (7-12)	0		
WPU Value	$4,494		
No. of Teachers (FTE) (CACTUS)	20		
School Administrators (CACTUS)	4		

Program Name	Rate	WPU	Amount
WPU Programs			
Regular Basic School:			
Regular WPU - K-12	Weighted WPU * WPU value - $2/student	325.8000	$ 1,463,421
Professional Staff	0.071705	23.3615	104,987
Restricted Basic School:			
Special Ed--Add-on	10% of enrollment * WPU value	36.2000	162,683
Spec. Ed. Self-Contained	Average SpEd SC for charters Approx. 1%	3.6200	16,268
Special Ed-State Programs	(10% enrollment * $18.62 + $2,259 Base for EY), (Impact Aid $93.47 * 10% of enrollment)	1.4056	6,317
Career and Technical Ed.	-	0.0000	-
Students at Risk Add-on	Base 5 WPU + 125 WPU/ED + .0475 WPU/EL	20.7285	93,154
Class Size Reduction (K-8)	$424.60/student K-8	34.2020	153,704
Total WPU Programs		441.6976	$ 2,000,533
Non-WPU Programs			
Related to Basic Programs:			
Flexible Allocation-WPU Distribution	$1.875/Total WPU		$ 828
Charter Funding Base	Greater of $40K or $115/student		41,630
Focus Populations			
Enhancement for Accelerated Student G&T	$9.93/student grade K-8		3,595
Enhancement for Accelerated Students AP & IB	$0		-
Other			
School Land Trust Program	Base $50,252.48 or $149.53/student		54,130
Grants for Professional Learning	Startup Grant		12,000
Educator Professional Time	$19,929.50/Teacher FTE		38,590
TSSA	$210.17/Total WPU		92,832
Student Health & Counseling	$25,000 Base + $30.0383/student		35,874
Digital Teaching and Learning	$20.97/student		7,591
Educator Salary Adjustment (ESA)	$8,904 + Benefits/Teacher FTE		226,865
ESA-School Administrators	$2,500 + Benefits/Admin FTE		12,416
Teacher Supplies and Materials	$500/K-6 FTE, $250/7-12 FTE		8,500
Local Replacement Dollars	Average $3,317 per student		1,212,762
Total Non-WPU			$ 1,747,612
ESTIMATED Total All State Funding			$ 3,748,145

Ripple Academy Charter School			FY ____			
First Operational Year		**100% Enrollment**			**Breakeven Enrollment**	
Number of Students:		375			362	
Grade Configuration:		K-6			K-6	
Revenue						
Food Services Sales to Students		375	$156,600		362	$151,171
Student Activities		$31,298			$30,213	
Contributions and Donations from Private Sources:						
Source(s) (*specify*)		$0			$0	
Miscellaneous		$0			$0	
Total Revenue From Local Sources (1000)		**$187,898**			**$181,384**	
Estimated Total All State Funding	$	3,870,204.20		$	3,748,145.04	
Charter School Revolving Loan		$300,000				
Charter School Startup and Implementation Grant						
Total Revenue from State Sources (3000)		**$4,170,204**			**$3,748,145**	
Federal Child Nutrition Program		375	$156,600		362	$147,262
Restricted Federal Grants-in-Aid Received via USBE (IDEA)		$57,540			$55,545	
Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)		$56,216			$54,267	
Total Revenue from Federal Sources (4000)		**$113,756**			**$109,813**	
Loan Poceeds (other than revoving loan)		$0			$0	
Commercial		$0			$0	
Other (*specify*)		$0			$0	
Budget from Surplus (For Budgeting Purposes Only)		$0			$0	
Total Revenue from Other Sources & Changes (5000 & 6000)		**$0**			**$0**	
Total Revenue		**$4,471,858**			**$4,039,342**	

Expenditures	Number	Salary/Cost	Total	Number	Salary/Cost	Total
--- SALARIES ---						
10.131 Salaries - Teachers	17.00	$60,000	$1,020,000	17.00	$60,000	$1,020,000
10.132 Salaries - Substitute Teachers	0.00	$0	$0	0.00	$0	$0
10.161 Salaries - Teacher Aides and Paraprofessionals	7.00	$25,000	$175,000	7.00	$0	$0
10.198 Salaries - Other Classified Personnel	2.00	$65,000	$130,000	2.00	$65,000	$130,000
Total **10 (1000)-INSTRUCTION** Salaries (100)			**$1,325,000**			**$1,150,000**
21.141 Salaries - Attendance and Social Work Personnel	0.00	$0	$0	0.00	$0	$0
21.142 Salaries - Guidance Personnel	0.00	$0	$0	0.00	$0	$0
21.143 Salaries - Health Services Personnel	0.00	$0	$0	0.00	$0	$0
21.144 Salaries - Psychological Personnel	0.00	$0	$0	0.00	$0	$0
21.152 Salaries - Secretarial and Clerical	0.00	$0	$0	0.00	$0	$0
21.198 Salaries - Other Classified Personnel	0.00	$0	$0	0.00	$0	$0
Total **- STUDENT SUPPORT** Salaries (100)			**$0**			**$0**
22.145 Salaries - Licensed Media Personnel	1.00	$48,000	$48,000	1.00	$48,000	$48,000
22.162 Salaries - Non-licensed Media Personnel	0.00	$0	$0	0.00	$0	$0
22.198 Salaries - Other Classified Personnel	3.00	$30,000	$90,000	2.00	$30,000	$60,000
Total **- INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF SUPPORT** Salaries (100)			**$138,000**			**$108,000**
24.121 Salaries Principals and assistant principals	2.00	$107,500	$215,000	2.00	$107,500	$215,000
24.152 Salaries - Secretarial and Clerical Personnel	2.00	$45,000	$90,000	2.00	$45,000	$90,000
24.198 Salaries - Other Classified Personnel	2.00	$80,000	$160,000	2.00	$80,000	$160,000
Total **-SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION** Salaries (100)			**$465,000**			**$465,000**
26.181 Salaries - Operation & Maintenance Supervisors	1.00	$40,000	$40,000	1.00	$40,000	$40,000
26.182 Salaries - Custodial & Maintenance Personnel	1.00	$20,000	$20,000	1.00	$20,000	$20,000
Total **-OPERATION & MAINT OF FACILITIES** Salaries (100)			**$60,000**			**$60,000**
31.191 Salaries - Food Services Personnel	1.00	$30,000	$30,000	1.00	$30,000	$30,000
Total **-FOOD SERVICES** Salaries (100)			**$30,000**			**$30,000**
TOTAL - SALARIES (100)			**$2,018,000**			**$1,813,000**
--- EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ---						
10.210 State Retirement - Instruction	10%	$1,325,000	$132,500	10%	$1,150,000	$115,000
21.210 State Retirement - Student Support	0%	$0	$0	0%	$0	$0
22.210 State Retirement - Instructional Staff Support	0%	$138,000	$0	0%	$108,000	$0
24.210 State Retirement - School Administration	10%	$465,000	$46,500	10%	$465,000	$46,500
26.210 State Retirement - Operation & Main of Facilities	10%	$60,000	$6,000	10%	$60,000	$6,000
31.210 State Retirement - Food Services	10%	$30,000	$3,000	10%	$30,000	$3,000
Total - State Retirement			**$188,000**			**$170,500**
10.220 Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	$1,325,000	$132,500	10%	$1,150,000	$115,000
21.220 Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	$0	$0	10%	$0	$0
22.220 Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	$138,000	$13,800	10%	$108,000	$10,800
24.220 Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	$465,000	$46,500	10%	$465,000	$46,500
26.220 Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	$60,000	$6,000	10%	$60,000	$6,000

31.220	Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	$30,000	$3,000	10%	$30,000	$3,000
	Total - Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment Insurance			**$201,800**			**$181,300**
10.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Instruction	12%	$1,325,000	$159,000	12%	$1,150,000	$138,000
21.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Student Support	0%	$0	$0	0%	$0	$0
22.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Instructional Staff Su	0%	$138,000	$0	0%	$108,000	$0
24.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - School Administratio	12%	$465,000	$55,800	12%	$465,000	$55,800
26.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Operation & Mainten	12%	$60,000	$7,200	12%	$60,000	$7,200
31.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Food Services	12%	$30,000	$3,600	12%	$30,000	$3,600
	Total- Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life			**$225,600**			**$204,600**
10.290	Other Employee Benefits *(specify)* - Instruction	8%	$1,325,000	$101,363	8%	$1,150,000	$92,000
21.290	Other EmployeeBenefits *(specify)* - Student Support	0%	$0	$0	0%	$0	$0
22.290	Other Employee Benefits (specify) - Instructional Staff Support	0%	$138,000	$0	0%	$108,000	$0
24.290	Other Employee Benefits *(specify)* - School Administration	8%	$465,000	$37,200	8%	$465,000	$37,200
26.290	Other Employee Benefits *(specify)* - Operation & Maintenance of Facil	8%	$60,000	$4,800	8%	$60,000	$4,800
31.290	Other Employee Benefits *(specify)* - Food Services	8%	$30,000	$2,400	8%	$30,000	$2,400
	Total - Other Employee Benefits			**$145,763**			**$136,400**
	TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (200)			**$761,163**			**$692,800**
	--- PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL SERVICES ---						
10.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Instruction			$17,000			$17,000
21.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Student Support			$0			$0
22.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Instructional Staff Support			$0			$0
24.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - School Administration			$6,000			$6,000
26.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities			$0			$0
31.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Food Services			$0			$0
	TOTAL - PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL SERVICES (300)			**$23,000**			**$23,000**
	--- PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES ---						
26.400	Purchased Property Services			$0			$0
26.441	Rental of Land & Buildings			$0			$0
26.450	Construction Services			$25,000			$25,000
	TOTAL - PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES (400)			**$25,000**			**$25,000**
	--- OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES ---						
27.510	Student Transportation Services (To/From School)			$0			$0
24.520	Insurance (other than employee benefits - e.g. D&O)			$0			$0
45.521	Property Insurance			$0			$0
45.522	Liability Insurance			$0			$0
10.530	Communication (telephone and other) - Instructional			$0			$0
21.530	Communication (telephone and other) - Student Support			$0			$0
24.530	Communication (telephone and other) - School Administation			$0			$0
26.530	Communication (telephone and other) - Operation and Maintenance of			$0			$0
24.540	Advertising			$4,000			$4,000
10.550	Printing and Binding - Instruction			$0			$0
21.550	Printing and Binding - Student Support			$0			$0
24.550	Printing and Binding - School Administration			$0			$0
10.560	Tuition			$0			$0
21.570	Food Service Management			$0			$0
21.580	Staff Travel/Per Diem - Student Support			$0			$0
24.580	Staff Travel/Per Diem - School Administration			$0			$0
26.580	Staff Travel/Per Diem - Operation and Maintenance of Facilities			$0			$0
10.590	Inter-educational, Interagency Purchased Services			$0			$0
	TOTAL - OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES (500)			**$4,000**			**$4,000**
	--- SUPPLIES & MATERIALS---						
10.600	Supplies & Materials - Instruction	1	$10,000	$10,000	1	$10,000	$10,000
10.641	Textbooks	1	$10,000	$10,000	1	$10,000	$10,000
21.600	Supplies & Materials - Student Support	0	$0	$0	0	$0	$0
22.640	Books and Periodicals	0	$0	$0	0	$0	$0
22.644	Library Books	0	$0	$0	0	$0	$0
24.600	Supplies & Materials - School Administration	1	$3,000	$3,000	1	$3,000	$3,000
26.600	Supplies & Materials - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities	0	$0	$0	0	$0	$0
31.600	Supplies & Materials - Food Service	0	$0	$0	0	$0	$0
31.630	Food - Food Service			$0			$0
	TOTAL - SUPPLIES & MATERIALS (600)			**$23,000**			**$23,000**
	--- PROPERTY ---						
10.700	Property - Instruction			$0			$0
21.700	Property - Student Support			$0			$0
24.700	Property - School Administration			$0			$0
26.700	Property - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities			$0			$0

31.700	Property - Food Services			$0		$0
31.790	Depreciation and Amortization (Kitchen Equipment)	$ -	7	$0	$ -	7	$0
49.710	Land and Site Improvements			$0		$0
49.720	Buildings			$0		$0
27.732	School Buses			$0		$0
10.733	Furniture and Fixtures - Instruction			$15,000		$15,000
21.733	Furniture and Fixtures - Student Support			$0		$0
24.733	Furniture and Fixtures - School Administration			$3,000		$3,000
10.734	Technology Related Hardware - Instruction			$20,000		$20,000
21.734	Technology Related Hardware - Student Support			$0		$0
24.734	Technology Related Hardware - School Administration			$5,000		$5,000
10.736	Technology Sofware - Instruction			$0		$0
21.736	Technology Sofware - Student Support			$0		$0
24.736	Technology Sofware - School Administration			$0		$0
27.735	Non-Bus Vehicles			$0		$0
10.739	Other Equipment - Instruction			$0		$0
21.739	Other Equipment - Student Support			$0		$0
24.739	Other Equipment - School Administration			$0		$0
	TOTAL - PROPERTY (700)			**$43,000**		**$43,000**
	--- DEBT SERVICE & MISCELLANEOUS ---					
10.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures - Instuction			$0		$0
21.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures- Student Support			$0		$0
24.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures- School Administration - Closure Reserve Fund			$0		$0
26.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities			$0		$0
31.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures - Food Services			$0		$0
45.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures - Facilities, Acquisition, & Constructuon Services			$0		$0
10.810	Dues & Fees - Instruction			$0		$0
21.810	Dues & Fees - Student Support			$69,750		$69,750
24.810	Dues & Fees -School Administration			$0		$0
26.810	Dues & Fees - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities			$0		$0
	Total - Miscellaneous			**$69,750**		**$69,750**
45.830	Interest on Debt			$200,000		$200,000
45.840	Redemption of Principal			$0		$0
	Total Debt Service			**$200,000**		**$200,000**
	TOTAL - DEBT SERVICE & MISCELLANEOUS (800)			**$269,750**		**$269,750**
	Total Expenditures	**$3,141,913**			**$2,893,550**	

1000	Local			$187,898		$181,384
3000	State			$4,170,204		$3,748,145
4000	Federal			$0		$109,813
	TOTAL REVENUES			**$4,358,102**		**$4,039,342**
100	Salaries			$2,018,000		$1,813,000
200	Employee Benefits			$761,163		$692,800
300	Purchased Professional &Technical Services			$23,000		$23,000
400	Purchased Property Services					$25,000
500	Other Purchased Services			$4,000		$4,000
600	Supplies & Materials			$23,000		$23,000
700	Property			$43,000		$43,000
800	Debt Service & Miscellaneous			$269,750		$269,750
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES			**$3,141,913**		**$2,893,550**
	Excess or Deficiency of Revenues over Expenditures			**$1,216,189**		**$1,145,792**
	Other Sources of Funding (5000 & 6000)			**$0**		**$0**
	Net Asset Balance (Fund Balance)			**$1,216,189**		**$1,145,792**
	Reserves as Percentage of Total Revenue (Net Assets / Total Revenue)			**28%**		**28%**
	Percentage of Funding Contributed to Reserve Balance (Ttl Rev - Ttl Exp / Ttl Rev = >5%)			**28%**		**28%**

<u>Appendix K: Performance-Based Evaluation in Ripple Town Simulations</u>

Performance-Based Evaluation in Ripple Town Simulations

Ripple Academy evaluates student learning through both traditional and performance-based assessments. Within the school's signature *Ripple Town* simulations, students demonstrate mastery of Utah Core Standards and the school's R.I.P.L. Pillars—**Resilience, Integrity, Purpose, and Leadership**—through authentic, hands-on performance tasks.

Performance-based evaluations allow students to apply academic concepts, social-emotional skills, and workplace competencies in real-world contexts. Each simulation (for example, the Bakery, Vet Clinic, or City Hall) includes embedded performance assessments aligned to Utah Core content standards, SEEd and ELA integration, and the Utah SEL Framework. These assessments provide evidence of student mastery that extends beyond multiple-choice or written tests.

Performance Task Design

Each *Ripple Town* unit culminates in a **Performance Task** in which students plan, create, or solve a problem related to their simulated role. Examples include:

- Calculating budgets, change, or ingredient ratios (Mathematics Standards).

- Writing advertisements, signage, or reflection journals (ELA Standards).

- Demonstrating collaboration and communication during group decision-making (SEL Competencies).

- Exhibiting responsible citizenship, creativity, and leadership within their community roles (Social Studies Standards).

Teachers design rubrics in advance to align each task with grade-level outcomes and state standards.

Evaluation and Evidence

Performance evidence is collected through:

- **Teacher Observation Rubrics** rating application of academic, collaborative, and self-management skills (scored 1–4: Emerging → Mastery).

- **Student Reflections** describing problem-solving processes, teamwork, and personal growth.

- **Artifacts of Learning** such as menus, receipts, design plans, or short videos documenting participation.

- **Peer and Self-Assessments** that reinforce metacognition and goal setting.

Each rubric domain maps directly to academic and SEL indicators, ensuring evaluations remain objective and standards-based.

Scoring and Reporting

Teachers record rubric scores in the school's learning management system, which aggregates performance data by standard and by R.I.P.L. Pillar.
Results inform:

- **Student Portfolios**, showcasing mastery across multiple simulations.

- **Progress Reports** shared with families each term.

- **Instructional Planning**, as staff analyze trends to identify areas for reteaching or enrichment.

Performance assessments count toward students' overall mastery grades alongside formative and summative academic measures.

Reliability and Consistency

To ensure reliability, grade-level teams co-create rubrics, calibrate scoring through peer moderation, and review examples of student work.
This collaborative process guarantees consistency across classrooms and simulations.
Data from performance evaluations are included in school-wide reports to demonstrate progress toward Ripple Academy's academic and life-based learning outcomes.

Mission Alignment

Performance-based evaluation in *Ripple Town* embodies Ripple Academy's Life-Based Learning Model by turning standards into experiences.
Through these authentic assessments, students show not only what they know but how they apply learning to solve problems, serve others, and lead with purpose—living out the very skills and values the school seeks to cultivate.

Ripple Town Performance-Based Evaluation Rubric

Purpose

This rubric is used to evaluate student performance within Ripple Town simulations.
 It measures applied mastery of academic standards, problem-solving, collaboration, and reflection while aligning with Ripple Academy's R.I.P.L. Pillars—**Resilience, Integrity, Purpose, and Leadership.**

Scores range from **1 (Emerging)** to **4 (Mastery)** and reflect both content knowledge and the ability to apply learning in real-world contexts.

Ripple Town Performance-Based Evaluation Rubric

Category	Emerging (1)	Developing (2)	Proficient (3)	Mastery (4)	R.I.P.L. Pillar Connection
Academic Application	Struggles to apply academic concepts even with support.	Applies basic skills with occasional errors or reminders.	Accurately applies grade-level standards in context.	Extends and transfers academic knowledge to new situations independently.	*Purpose*
Problem Solving & Creativity	Needs continuous guidance to identify or solve problems.	Attempts solutions with support; limited creativity.	Identifies problems and uses strategies to reach workable solutions.	Innovates, adapts, and creates original solutions demonstrating deep understanding.	*Resilience*
Collaboration & Communication	Has difficulty cooperating or sharing ideas with others.	Participates when prompted; communication sometimes unclear.	Works productively with peers; communicates clearly and respectfully.	Leads or mentors peers, demonstrates empathy, and models effective communication.	*Leadership*
Integrity & Responsibility	Often needs reminders to stay on task or act responsibly.	Demonstrates basic responsibility with occasional redirection.	Consistently acts responsibly, completes assigned tasks accurately.	Takes initiative, models honesty, and supports group success without prompting.	*Integrity*

| Reflection & Growth | Provides minimal or incomplete reflection. | Identifies one area for improvement with prompting. | Reflects thoughtfully on progress and next steps. | Demonstrates deep self-awareness and applies feedback independently to future work. | *Purpose / Resilience* |

Scoring Guide

- **4 – Mastery:** Demonstrates independent, consistent, and creative application of skills.

- **3 – Proficient:** Meets grade-level expectations and applies learning accurately.

- **2 – Developing:** Approaches proficiency with some teacher support.

- **1 – Emerging:** Requires significant support to meet expectations.

Evaluation Process

- Teachers observe and record rubric scores during or immediately following each Ripple Town simulation.

- Students complete a short **self-reflection** aligned to the same five rubric domains.

- Rubric data are entered into Ripple's learning management system and reviewed during **biweekly academic team meetings**.

- Artifacts of student work, reflection journals, and teacher notes are stored in each student's **Ripple Town Portfolio** to show longitudinal growth.

Mission Connection

Performance-based evaluations within Ripple Town authentically demonstrate Ripple Academy's mission to *inspire lifelong learners through life-based learning opportunities.*
 This rubric ensures that every student can demonstrate knowledge, skills, and character through meaningful, hands-on experiences that prepare them to live, learn, and lead with purpose.