

New Charter School Application



Proposed Charter Name:
The Dawn Institute

**This full application was submitted to the Provo City School District Superintendent,
Wendy Dau, on November 12, 2025 at 2:37 PM.**

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Required Technical Information:

1. Proposed Charter School Name: The Dawn Institute
2. Name of Applicant(s): Marry Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation
3. Authorized Agent: Susanne (Suzy) Ahlman
4. Mailing Address: 409 N University Ave, Provo, UT 84601
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7. New School Location and Location's School District(s): Provo, UT; Provo School District
8. Date and To Whom Submitted at the District(s) Office:

Governing Board Information:

Name:	Position on Board:	Area of Expertise:	Any Previous or Current Charter Affiliation:
Suzy Ahlman	Board Chair	Special Education, Transition, Autism, Disability and Education Law, Leadership	
Signature:			
Wendy Ahlman	Board Co-Chair	School Leadership, Education, Business, Parent	
Signature:			
Sarah Hampton	Board Member	Education, Parent	
Signature:			
Joseph Johnson	Board Member	Medicine, Parent	
Signature:			
Christina Ellsworth	Treasurer	Accounting	
Signature:			
Signature:			
Signature:			

9. Charter School's Grade Configuration and Maximum Authorized Enrollment: Maximum 100 Students

10. Does the proposed grade configuration match the district of residence grade configuration?

☒ Yes ☐ No

For the 2023-24 school year, the average percentage of students in each grade for public high schools in the Provo Schools District was as follows: 9th, 21%; 10th, 24%; 11th, 26%; 12th, 29%.

Explanation:

The Dawn Institutes grade configuration remains in close alignment with the Provo School District, reflecting the typical distribution of students across high school grade levels.

11. Projected Number of Students to be Served in Each Grade for Annual Projection Counts:

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Max Enrollment:
Year 1										11	12	13	14	50
Year 2										13	15	16	17	61
Year 3										15	18	20	21	74
Year 4										18	22	24	26	90
Year 5 +										22	27	29	32	110

12. Are you proposing waiver(s), special treatment, or priority consideration allowable by statute or rule?

☐ Yes ☒ No

Explanation:

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, do hereby certify that, to the best of my 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: Suzy Ahlman
Signature of Authorized Agent: 

Section 1: Executive Summary

MISSION STATEMENT

The Dawn Institute is a center dedicated to cultivating a culture of belonging—where individuals with developmental disabilities and future advocates come together. A place where academics, behavioral interventions, and advocacy education finally meet. Young adults are often provided with academics in school, but not appropriate social-emotional and independent living skills interventions. Our mission is to create a community of advocacy and independence. An education that focuses on differentiation, individuality, and gaining the knowledge of federal civil rights laws. To provide the opportunity for those with developmental disabilities to pursue post-secondary education, to become self-determined, and create a life of independence, belonging, and inclusion.

VISION OF THE DAWN INSTITUTE

According to the National Institutes of Health December 1 Report in 2022 and the United Nations, individuals with disabilities make up the largest minority group in both the United States and the world, calculating an estimation of over one billion people globally. While decades of legislation such as Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act of 1973, The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) have improved accessibility, equality, inclusion, access to employment, education, health care, and less discrimination rates, inequities remain. For example, according to national data, in 2024, the unemployment rate was 3.8%. Yet, for individuals with disabilities it was nearly double at 7.5%. Utah's rates are more troublesome, with an unemployment rate for those with disabilities being just under 10% (ages 18-64) (Workforce Services).

Research consistently demonstrates that education is one of the strongest predictors of employment and income. Weekly earnings rise and unemployment decreases with every additional level of education achieved (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2023). The Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008 affirms this. With the law's push for Universal Design for Learning (UDL), inclusive postsecondary opportunities, and transition programs, it emphasizes that access to higher education should be attainable for all. These provisions not only expand financial aid eligibility and academic inclusion, but also affirm the importance of preparing students with disabilities for meaningful college and career pathways.

What's more, research indicates that when students with disabilities are taught their rights and given tools to self-advocate, they experience better adjustment in school, work, and social life—including increased confidence in speaking up, obtaining accommodations, and avoiding abusive or unsafe situations. Furthermore, individuals in self-advocacy groups often report greater empowerment, social belonging, and quality of life.

The foundation of the IDEA is to provide a free and appropriate education. The Dawn Institute is founded on this same value. As our mission statement states, our number one goal is to build a community of advocacy and independence—build an access point for young adults with disabilities to become stronger members in society, benefiting them as individuals and

the world at large. When we provide students with an education that's both appropriate and fit to their needs, and enriching in rights, advocacy, and law, there is no doubt that we are setting these students up for success, not only in higher education, but for life.

What the school looks like day to day: If The Dawn Institute is achieving its mission, it will be a vibrant, inclusive high school in Downtown Provo, Utah. Where students with and without disabilities learn side by side, supported through UDL, Person-Centered Planning, and tailored academic and behavioral supports. Classrooms will be places of advocacy and independence, where students know their rights, use their voices, and build the confidence to access college, careers, and community life. Students will graduate not only meeting Utah's academic standards but also equipped with the self-determination and life skills needed to thrive in higher education, meaningful employment, and independent living.

What students look like when they leave: Graduates of The Dawn Institute will be prepared to pursue higher education or meaningful employment with the tools to advocate for themselves and the confidence to live independently. They will leave with strong academic preparation, practical life skills, and a deep understanding of their identity and rights—ready to contribute to their communities and participate fully in society. By centering both academic rigor and advocacy, the school will help close the persistent gaps in employment and post-secondary success for students with disabilities.

What the school means to the wider world: While our goal is to support students in accessing college and other post-secondary opportunities, our mission extends beyond that. We strive to model what true inclusion, belonging, and accessibility can look like in education, and more specifically, K-12. By empowering students to live independently, pursue meaningful employment, and resist patterns of learned helplessness, The Dawn Institute seeks not only to change outcomes for our own students, but also to serve as an example for schools across the state and country—demonstrating how college-preparatory pathways for students with disabilities can and should become the norm.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW AND EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION

The Dawn Institute will be located in Provo, Utah, within the Provo City School District. The facility we hope to acquire will be a one-story building to enhance accessibility. We also recognize the need with our population for the surrounding area to be safe and again, accessible. Because students with developmental disabilities have higher rates of elopement and drowning, the school will be situated near the heart of Downtown Provo rather than near Utah Lake, providing both accessibility and a secure environment. The interior design of the school itself will feature an open-concept layout, natural light, soft colors, and sensory-friendly materials to create an inclusive and calming learning space for all our students' needs. Classrooms will include accessible seating, assistive technology, and alternative formats for both physical and digital coursework. Its central Provo location will also allow students to use the UTA transit system as needed, broadening access for families across Utah County and surrounding districts.

The school is founded on the evidence based practices and philosophies of Learner-Oriented Teaching, Programmed Instruction, Person-Centered Planning (PCP), Specially Designed Instruction (SDI), Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for academics, behavior, and transition, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), and accessible assistive technology. Together, these methods create a college-and-career preparatory pathway that integrates CTE, concurrent enrollment, internships, and community-based instruction—ensuring that students graduate prepared for post-secondary education, meaningful employment, and independent living.

BOARD HISTORY AND FORMATION

The Governing Board of The Dawn Institute originated through the establishment of the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation, a Utah nonprofit corporation formed in May 2024 to support and oversee the school's development. The concept for The Dawn Institute came first—born from a shared recognition among educators, disability advocates, and families that students with disabilities face limited transition options after high school. Each founding Board member had witnessed, in their respective fields, the lack of inclusive, college-preparatory programs that equip young adults with disabilities for higher education, employment, and independent living.

To address this gap, the founding members—Wendy Ahlman and Suzy Ahlman—organized the Foundation to provide a legal and financial framework for launching the school, ensuring long-term sustainability and accountability. From the beginning, the Foundation and the school have shared a single mission: to expand opportunity and inclusion for individuals with disabilities through innovative, accessible education.

What unites our Board is a deeply personal connection to our mission. All members have a loved one with a disability. Together, the Board has worked to ensure that The Dawn Institute reflects the real needs of our community, recognizing that our time, energy, and efforts are dedicated to a cause that is both urgent and meaningful. Since its inception, the Board has expanded to include a treasurer, brought on for her financial expertise and commitment to ensuring fiscal integrity and best practices. Like the founding members, she also has family members with disabilities, reflecting the personal connection and shared mission that form the heart of the Board's work.

Looking forward, the Board is committed to continued growth that reflects the diversity of the community it serves. Plans include adding members who personally identify as having a disability to ensure that lived experiences remain central to governance and decision-making. This commitment to representation is a core belief and guiding principle of the Board's leadership philosophy.

Rationale for Founding The Dawn Institute

The Dawn Institute was proposed in direct response to the persistent gap in educational opportunities for students with developmental disabilities—particularly during the transition from high school to adulthood. As discussed previously, national and state data highlight the continuing disparities in postsecondary success and employment for individuals with

disabilities, especially in Utah, where rates of unemployment and underrepresentation in higher education remain significantly higher than for their peers.

The Board's founding members, each with both personal and professional ties to the disability community, recognized that while legislation such as IDEA and the ADA has expanded access, true inclusion requires more than compliance—it requires intentional design, opportunity, and advocacy. Families across Utah County have expressed frustration at the lack of inclusive, college-preparatory programs that pair academic rigor with meaningful transition supports, such as self-advocacy training, community engagement, and career readiness.

The Board's vision for The Dawn Institute is to bridge that divide—to create a school where individualized instruction, advocacy education, and community partnerships prepare students for successful, self-determined adult lives. The school will not only meet state academic standards but also cultivate a culture where students understand their rights, develop confidence in their abilities, and engage fully in their communities.

Ultimately, The Dawn Institute embodies the Board's belief that inclusion and high expectations must coexist. By combining evidence-based instruction with advocacy and person-centered planning, The Dawn Institute seeks to raise the standard for transition education in Utah and serve as a catalyst for change across the state and nation.

ADVANCING THE UTAH STATE CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION

In conjunction with the Utah State Charter School Board's mission to promote access, innovation, and quality education for all students, the Governing Board strongly believes that The Dawn Institute represents a vital step forward in equitable education. The school will provide opportunities for students who might otherwise lack an adequate or appropriate educational setting.

The Dawn Institute directly advances the SCSB's mission and vision by expanding public school choice and introducing an innovative educational model that integrates academic rigor, advocacy, and individualized supports. The school will ensure that every learner—regardless of ability, income, or language background—has meaningful access to the Utah Core Curriculum and a clear pathway to college and career readiness.

Moreover, The Dawn Institute strengthens accountability by embedding measurable outcomes in both academic and life-skill domains, including graduation rates, postsecondary enrollment, employment, and independent living benchmarks. The school's emphasis on advocacy and self-determination equips students to understand and exercise their rights, improving long-term outcomes and reducing dependency.

Approving The Dawn Institute will not only meet an unmet community need but also serve as a model for inclusive, college-preparatory education statewide. It embodies the principles the State Charter School Board seeks to advance—equity, innovation, and excellence—and

offers a replicable framework that demonstrates what is possible when high expectations, accessibility, and student empowerment come together.

Section 2: School-Specific Elements

ENROLLMENT PREFERENCES

The Dawn Institute will utilize a transparent, random lottery system for student admissions, consistent with Utah Code §53G-6-502 and Utah State Board of Education Rule R277-552. The school will ensure equitable access for all applicants while employing the following legally permitted enrollment preferences:

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students;
2. Children of founding Board members (within the allowable percentage cap);
3. Children of current teachers and staff members (within the allowable percentage cap);
4. Students currently enrolled and continuing into the next school year;
5. Students who previously attended the school but were required to withdraw due to a parent or guardian's military relocation;
6. Students attending an approved feeder charter school, if applicable; and
7. Students residing within the Provo City School District boundaries, where The Dawn Institute is physically located.

All remaining seats will be filled through a public lottery process that ensures equal opportunity for all applicants, regardless of disability, race, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic status. The school will provide clear information about application timelines, lottery dates, and available supports to ensure full accessibility and transparency throughout the enrollment process.

LEGISLATIVE PURPOSES OF UTAH'S CHARTER SCHOOLS

The Dawn Institute will fulfill the fifth legislative purpose: *Establishing new educational models and new forms of accountability that emphasize unique performance measures and innovative measurement tools to measure educational outcomes.*

With a mission grounded in individuality and differentiation, The Dawn Institute has combined philosophies, curriculum, and evidence based practices that emphasize diverse and personalized methods to quantify student growth and achievement. The school will implement evidence-based strategies to create accessible, measurable learning experiences for students with a wide range of developmental disabilities. (See *Educational Philosophy and Framework* section.)

The Dawn Institute's accountability system will extend beyond traditional academic metrics by including transition benchmarks such as self-advocacy skills, community engagement, independent-living readiness, and postsecondary placement. These innovative performance measures will provide a more accurate picture of each student's progress and success.

The school is accessible to all students with varying disabilities and levels of need, including but not limited to those who are nonverbal, selectively mute, deaf, hard of hearing, or blind. Through these inclusive practices and alternative performance tools, The Dawn Institute will serve as a model for redefining educational success for students with disabilities and

demonstrate the effectiveness of differentiated accountability in advancing equity and independence.

INNOVATIVE AND INCLUSIVE BY DESIGN

The Dawn Institute is a first-of-its-kind charter high school in Utah dedicated to preparing students with developmental disabilities for postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. Its defining characteristic is the integration of college-preparatory academics with transition, advocacy, and life-skills education—ensuring that every student graduates ready to participate meaningfully in higher education and the community.

Four Founding Principles

What makes The Dawn Institute truly distinctive is its four founding principles—Advocacy Education, Individuality, Differentiation, and Social-Emotional Wellbeing. Together, these principles create a comprehensive foundation for student success in education, employment, and life. Each principle represents a central focus of the school's philosophy and serves as the basis for measurable goals and outcomes.

Principle 1: Advocacy Education

Teaching students to understand and confidently exercise their rights under the IDEA and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), to self-advocate, and to use their voices confidently in school, work, and community settings. The curriculum embeds rights education, advocacy training, and independent-living preparation as core components, recognizing that empowerment is essential to long-term success. Students are taught not only content knowledge, but also how to understand and assert their rights, communicate their needs, and make informed decisions.

Principle 2: Individuality

Recognizing that each student's path to learning and independence looks different. Students graduate with a clear sense of personal purpose and a plan for meaningful participation in adult life.

Principle 3: Differentiation

Teachers will utilize multiple modalities—visual, auditory, tactile, and digital—to ensure curriculum and instruction are flexible, responsible, and accessible for all students, regardless of learning profile, ability level, learning styles, and communication needs.

Principle 4: Social-Emotional Wellbeing

Embedding behavioral and emotional supports. The school will implement a comprehensive MTSS framework for emotional and behavioral health, ensuring early intervention and consistent support. For students who would benefit, Applied Behavior Analysis strategies will be used as part of individualized behavioral interventions to reinforce positive behavior, improve communication, and build self-regulation skills.

Physical Accessibility

Every element of The Dawn Institute facility—from classroom layout to lighting—will reflect the principles of Universal Design and sensory-informed architecture. Rather than retrofitting accessibility as an afterthought, The Dawn Institute embeds it as a foundational value: accessibility and inclusion are the blueprint, not the renovation plan.

The open-concept layout promotes collaboration, visibility, and natural movement between learning spaces. Classrooms will feature flexible instructional zones equipped with adaptive seating, height-adjustable work surfaces, and quiet sensory spaces that allow students to regulate and refocus as needed. Lighting, color schemes, and acoustic treatments will be intentionally selected to reduce sensory overload and create calm, predictable environments for all learners.

Assistive technologies—ranging from communication devices and interactive displays to visual scheduling systems—will be seamlessly integrated throughout the building. These supports not only enhance access for students with disabilities but also benefit all learners by fostering engagement, autonomy, and independence.

In the design process, The Dawn Institute will consult directly with individuals who have disabilities, as well as experts in occupational therapy, sensory integration, and inclusive design. Their insights will ensure the building truly reflects the needs and strengths of the community it serves.

Community Engagement

Fridays at The Dawn Institute are intentionally designed as “Community Days”—a cornerstone of the school’s philosophy that learning extends beyond the classroom. While Monday through Thursday focus on academic instruction, Fridays provide opportunities for students to engage directly with the community through internships, service projects, and field experiences. These days also invite local partners—including businesses, nonprofit organizations, universities, and public agencies—into the school to share their expertise, offer mentoring, and introduce students to a range of postsecondary and career pathways.

At the heart of Community Fridays is a commitment to breaking the cycle of isolation that too often follows students with disabilities after graduation. Far too many young adults with disabilities are left without meaningful connections or opportunities—often described as the “playing games in my parents’ basement” reality. The Dawn Institute actively rejects this outcome. Instead, the school empowers students to see themselves as vital members of their communities, capable of contribution, leadership, and belonging. Through guided exploration and supported independence, students learn to navigate real-world environments, practice self-advocacy, and build confidence in diverse settings—skills that ensure they can find their place and thrive wherever life takes them.

Closing the Gap

The Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) initiative—established under the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008—has expanded across the country since 2010, offering inclusive college opportunities and demonstrating measurable gains in employment and independent-living outcomes for participants. While

federal initiatives like TPSID are expanding postsecondary access, The Dawn Institute fills the earlier gap—building the skills, advocacy, and independence needed long before college begins.

This model is intentionally structured to soften the impact of the “service cliff”—the sudden loss of educational and related supports that occurs when students with disabilities turn 22 and “age out”. By beginning transition planning early, teaching self-determination, and connecting students to real-world experiences through community partnerships, The Dawn Institute ensures that students develop the tools, confidence, and connections they need before that critical point of transition.

By starting these supports earlier, the school ensures that students enter adulthood not only eligible for postsecondary programs, but fully prepared to thrive in them. Through these elements, The Dawn Institute offers a new educational model—one that bridges the gap between high school and adulthood.

MISSION-ALIGNED GOALS

The Dawn Institute’s goals are intentionally designed to be rigorous, measurable, and attainable, reflecting both the school’s mission and the realities of serving a diverse student body. Each goal—academic, behavioral, and transition-based—is grounded in evidence-based practices.

Key mission-specific goals include:

- Ensuring 100% of students participate in self-advocacy and rights education, with measurable growth in self-determination skills.
- Supporting graduating students in obtaining paid employment, higher education enrollment, or community-based placements within one year of graduation.
- Increasing literacy and numeracy proficiency for all students through differentiated instruction aligned with Utah Core Standards.
- Promoting social-emotional growth, as evidenced by improved self-regulation, peer collaboration, and school engagement indicators.
- Maintaining family and community engagement through consistent communication, transition planning, and feedback structures.

To ensure rigor, the Board has adopted clear benchmarks aligned with Utah Core Standards and postsecondary readiness indicators, while remaining realistic through individualized pacing and data-driven supports. The Governing Board will review schoolwide and student-level data quarterly to evaluate the school’s progress toward these goals—ensuring that priorities remain ambitious yet achievable, and that the school continues to uphold its central commitment: improving outcomes for every student through meaningful, measurable growth in both academics and independence.

Section 3: Program of Instruction

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND FRAMEWORK

At The Dawn Institute, education is not one-size-fits-all. Our model combines Student-Centered Learning (SCL), Programmed Instruction, Specially Designed Instruction (SDI), Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), and Person-Centered Planning (PCP) to ensure that every student's individual strengths, needs, and goals are met. These evidence-based frameworks work together to make learning accessible, structured, and personally meaningful for all students.

Our philosophy is grounded in the belief that college preparation and self-advocacy should be accessible to all individuals, regardless of disability or economic background. Every instructional decision—curriculum, assessment, and transition planning—centers on the whole learner: academic achievement, emotional wellbeing, and lifelong independence.

Student-Centered Learning (SCL)

The Dawn Institute's educational philosophy is rooted in learner-oriented teaching, which emphasizes the individuality and agency of each student. Drawing on the work of theorists such as Jean Piaget, Lev Vygotsky, and Carl Rogers, SCL positions students as active participants in their education.

Rather than relying on traditional lecture-based instruction, teachers guide students in exploring their interests, setting personal learning goals, and reflecting on their progress. Students are encouraged and taught to use their voices to advocate for their preferred learning materials, methods, and pace—building essential self-determination skills that extend beyond the classroom.

Embedded evidence-based instructional practices in the curriculum, philosophy, and frameworks at The Dawn Institute include explicit instruction, task analysis, modeling, guided practice, inquiry-based learning, and scaffolding. These strategies promote independence, critical thinking, and mastery of academic and life skills.

Programmed Instruction

To ensure mastery of the Utah Core Standards, The Dawn Institute uses Programmed Instruction as a key component of curriculum delivery. Developed by B.F. Skinner and later refined by Norman Crowder, programmed instruction involves a structured, self-paced progression through learning sequences that include multiple opportunities for reinforcement and success.

Each student receives a standards-based goal and rubric in every subject area. Teachers provide a menu of instructional options aligned with the student's interests, learning styles, and pace. Through individual planning meetings, teachers and students co-design learning pathways, identifying specific action steps and supports.

Progress is monitored continuously through mastery checks and applied learning tasks. When students meet the learning objectives outlined in their rubrics, they earn both credit and the confidence that comes from setting and achieving individualized goals. This process reinforces advocacy and persistence—two of the school's core mission values.

Specially Designed Instruction (SDI) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

The foundation of The Dawn Institute's instructional model is SDI. Originally defined under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), SDI refers to adapting the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction to meet the unique needs of each learner.

While our model was designed with students with developmental disabilities in mind, SDI benefits all learners—including English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged students, and those needing additional enrichment (see *Meeting the Needs of All Learners and Compliance* section). SDI ensures that instruction is personalized, goal-oriented, and rooted in student strengths, not deficits.

Teachers use the five anchors of differentiated instruction—content, process, product, affect, and learning environment—alongside UDL principles to ensure full accessibility and engagement. UDL provides a proactive framework for designing lessons that give all students equal opportunities to succeed by offering multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression. This means that materials, assessments, and teaching methods are planned from the outset to support diverse learners—rather than retrofitted after barriers appear.

By embedding SDI and UDL strategies in every classroom, The Dawn Institute ensures that inclusion is not an accommodation, but a foundation—making equity and accessibility no longer an afterthought.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)

Building on the SDI foundation, The Dawn Institute embeds MTSS across academics, behavior, and transition. MTSS provides a schoolwide framework that ensures all students receive the support they need through tiered intervention and continuous progress monitoring.

- Tier 1: Universal supports for all students through high-quality, differentiated instruction.
- Tier 2: Targeted small-group interventions based on data and progress monitoring.
- Tier 3: Intensive, individualized interventions coordinated through the IEP or PCP process.

The MTSS framework also extends to behavior and transition supports (see below sections), creating a comprehensive system that addresses both learning and life readiness.

Transition Framework: Person-Centered Planning (PCP)

At the Dawn Institute, PCP is the cornerstone of individualized education and transition readiness. Each student develops a Graduation Plan upon enrollment that outlines academic, behavioral, and postsecondary goals. This plan, reviewed monthly, serves as the student's

personalized roadmap and connects directly to promotion and graduation criteria (see *Advancement and Graduation* section).

The PCP process ensures that all students—whether they have an IEP or not—receive individualized guidance aligned with Utah's graduation standards. It includes annual goal-setting meetings, progress tracking, and active student participation.

Grade-level focus areas guide students toward increasing independence:

- 9th grade: Self-advocacy and self-awareness
- 10th grade: Career and business exploration
- 11th grade: College and school access, including ACT prep
- 12th grade: Independent living and financial literacy

Students are taught to take ownership of their learning while developing real-world skills through internships, service projects, and community engagement (see *Career Education Rationale* section).

Behavior Framework: Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)

Social-emotional wellbeing is central to student success. One of the guiding principles throughout the development of The Dawn Institute has been ABA. ABA practices are integrated into the MTSS framework to promote positive, proactive behavioral supports for all students. Within MTSS:

- Tier 1 strategies focus on school-wide positive behavior expectations;
- Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports are data-driven and individualized, ensuring that each student's needs are addressed with respect and evidence-based care.

As it currently stands, parents are not allowed to bring their child's private Registered Behavior Technician (RBT) or Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) into the school environment without permission. This often leaves parents with a hard choice: school or therapy. The Board believes parents should not have to choose one or the other, but rather, coexist in one environment. Our prospective budget reflects the expense of a BCBA who will oversee schoolwide behavioral interventions, supervise RBTs, and provides ongoing staff training. Parents and private providers are welcomed into the process when appropriate, ensuring consistent, collaborative support across home and school.

Behavioral supports are tiered within the MTSS framework and align with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and Utah's Least Restrictive Behavioral Interventions (LRBI) manual. Core strategies include positive reinforcement, naturalistic interventions, and skill-building through modeling and feedback.

The result of ABA and a social-emotional focus is a culture where behavioral growth is celebrated as much as academic progress—and where every student feels safe, valued, and understood. The school's approach recognizes that behavior is a form of communication and that every student benefits from consistent, compassionate guidance.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF ALL LEARNERS AND COMPLIANCE

Students with Disabilities

The Dawn Institute's entire model is built around serving students with disabilities, grounded in the belief that access, advocacy, and individualized instruction are essential to a high-quality education. The Dawn Institute will fully comply with the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Every student eligible for special education and related services will receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE).

A team of certified special education teachers, related service providers, and support staff will ensure that Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are developed and implemented with fidelity. Speech-language therapy, occupational and physical therapy, counseling, transportation, and other supports will be determined by the IEP team.

By embedding federal compliance and individualized support into every aspect of its instructional and operational design, The Dawn Institute ensures that accessibility and advocacy are not simply program components—they are the very structure upon which the school is built.

English Language Learners (ELLs)

For English Language Learners, The Dawn Institute uses research-based strategies from the National Center on Intensive Interventions at the American Institutes for Research. Instruction emphasizes modeling, visual supports, guided practice, and graphic organizers, while teachers employ culturally responsive pedagogy and scaffolded instruction to support both language acquisition and content mastery.

Economically Disadvantaged Students

Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds receive targeted instruction in executive functioning, self-advocacy, and financial literacy. Research shows that strengthening these areas improves academic outcomes and long-term independence. Through community-based learning, partnerships, and mentoring, students gain both cognitive and practical skills for adulthood.

Advanced Learners

The Dawn Institute is equally committed to supporting students who are ready to extend their learning beyond grade-level expectations. Differentiation and project-based learning allow advanced students to engage in deeper inquiry, problem-solving, and leadership opportunities. Through concurrent enrollment, Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways, and mentorship experiences, students may pursue accelerated coursework and real-world application of skills. These opportunities are designed to challenge advanced learners while modeling collaboration, advocacy, and peer support.

Assistive Technology

In alignment with Universal Design principles, The Dawn Institute ensures that technology and learning tools are accessible to all students. Assistive technology includes

speech-generating devices, picture exchange communication systems (PECS), and computer-aided instruction to support students who are non-verbal or have communication challenges.

A Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) will provide on-site services for qualifying students, ensuring that communication access is built into daily instruction. All classrooms will include adaptive seating, sensory-friendly materials, and technology integration to promote inclusion and participation.

All supports are integrated—not isolated—within the SDI and MTSS frameworks. This ensures that barriers related to disability, language, or income are addressed holistically, allowing every learner to access high-quality, inclusive education.

EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH FOR INSTRUCTION AND POSITIVE STUDENT OUTCOMES

The Dawn Institute's educational model is grounded in a robust body of research that supports its evidence-based instructional and behavioral frameworks. The following research demonstrates how the integrated practices already described directly contribute to improved outcomes for students with disabilities and other educationally disadvantaged populations.

Individualized and Differentiated Instruction

Federal law under the IDEA establishes that instruction must be individualized to meet each learner's unique needs. Decades of research validate this approach: when instructional methods, pacing, and materials are tailored to student strengths, learners show higher achievement and engagement (Coyne et al., 2018; Browder & Spooner, 2014). Likewise, the UDL framework has been shown to increase both access and participation in general education (Meyer, Rose, & Gordon, 2014).

Together, SDI and UDL create a foundation for inclusive education that is both rigorous and responsive, ensuring equitable access to the Utah Core Standards and beyond.

Advocacy Education and Self-Determination

Research also highlights the link between self-determination and postsecondary success for students with disabilities. Grounded in Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Wehmeyer et al., 2020), The Dawn Institute's instructional model integrates advocacy education across all subjects, empowering students to understand their rights, communicate their needs, and take ownership of their learning. Studies consistently show that when students are given structured opportunities for autonomy and goal-setting, they demonstrate greater persistence, engagement, and success in higher education and employment (Ryan & Deci, 2017).

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Behavioral Support

The Dawn Institute's integration of ABA within its MTSS behavioral framework is strongly supported by evidence showing its effectiveness in enhancing communication, adaptive behavior, and emotional regulation (Wong et al., 2015; Leaf et al., 2016). When adapted for adolescents and embedded within a person-centered, schoolwide system, ABA strategies

contribute to meaningful growth in social communication and independence (Hume et al., 2021).

By combining ABA with SEL principles, The Dawn Institute builds an environment where behavioral growth, emotional wellbeing, and academic success are equally prioritized.

Transition and Postsecondary Readiness

National data confirm that early, structured transition planning leads to higher employment and college participation for students with disabilities. The TPSID have demonstrated that inclusive, transition-focused instruction significantly improves postsecondary outcomes (Grigal et al., 2019). The Dawn Institute extends this evidence-based approach into high school, ensuring students build self-advocacy, employability, and life skills well before graduation and services ending.

Small Group and Co-Teaching Models

Evidence supports that small-group learning and co-teaching partnerships increase student engagement and mastery (Elbaum et al., 2000; Scruggs, Mastropieri, & McDuffie, 2007). These models—central to The Dawn Institute’s classroom design—ensure that students receive personalized attention and continuous access to both general and special education expertise. See the *Staffing* section for further elaboration.

Comprehensive Impact

Collectively, these research-based practices demonstrate that accessibility and rigor are not competing priorities but complementary ones. Inclusive education, when built on SDI, UDL, and MTSS, benefits all learners. Studies consistently find that schools implementing these frameworks show gains in achievement, engagement, and sense of belonging across entire student populations (Hehir et al., 2016; Shogren & Wehmeyer, 2020).

The Dawn Institute’s model demonstrates that accessibility is not a modification, but a standard of excellence. Accessibility law has been described as a floor, we’re aiming to make it a ceiling.

TEACHING AND ASSESSING UTAH CORE STANDARDS

The Utah Core Standards are taught and assessed through the integration of SDI, MTSS, and UDL. Instruction is differentiated and scaffolded to ensure that every student—regardless of background or ability—has equitable access to rigorous academic expectations.

Assessment is ongoing and multifaceted, including:

- Formative assessments (e.g., exit tickets, progress monitoring, skill checks) to guide daily instruction;
- Summative assessments aligned to Utah Core Standards and state accountability measures;
- Performance-based assessments and portfolios to measure real-world application of knowledge; and

- Individualized progress monitoring linked to IEP objectives, literacy and math benchmarks, and transition goals.

Teachers collaborate regularly to analyze data, adjust instruction, and align interventions, ensuring continuous progress toward both state and individualized goals. See more regarding formal statewide assessments (eg. RISE, DLM, ACT), IEP progress monitoring, and self-assessments in the *Advancement and Graduation Criteria* section.

COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF CURRICULUM AND METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

Curriculum for The Dawn Institute is fully aligned with the Utah Core Standards and designed to be both rigorous and flexible, ensuring accessibility for all students.

Instruction is delivered primarily through small group settings, a cornerstone of the school's model that ensures intensive, personalized support and strong teacher-student relationships. The school's intentionally small enrollment allows educators to maintain low student-to-teacher ratios, maximizing individualized instruction and frequent feedback. As previously discussed, co-teaching models will be used where appropriate—pairing general education and special education teachers to design and deliver instruction collaboratively, ensuring full inclusion while maintaining academic rigor.

Core academic instruction is complemented by courses in transition education, life skills, and community engagement—integrating academic learning with practical application through real-world projects, experiences, and collaborative problem-solving. This ensures that students not only master essential academic standards but also build the confidence, self-awareness, and independence needed for postsecondary success.

Daily and Weekly School Schedule

Mornings will primarily focus on core academics—English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies—while afternoons will feature electives, transition instruction, and applied learning experiences. Electives will be designed to foster creativity, practical skills, and self-expression, and may include courses such as:

- Digital Literacy and Technology
- Art and Design
- Financial Literacy and Independent Living
- Music and Performing Arts
- Culinary and Nutrition
- Health, Wellness, and Sports
- Advocacy and Leadership Seminar

This balanced schedule allows students to move between rigorous academics, hands-on learning, and self-advocacy development each day, supporting both cognitive and social-emotional growth.

The educational program functions as a seamlessly integrated system, where curriculum, instruction, assessment, and transition experiences reinforce one another. Teachers

collaborate across disciplines to ensure that academic skills are applied in meaningful, real-world contexts and that IEP goals are embedded within daily learning. Progress is tracked through formative and summative assessments, data reviews, and performance-based portfolios, allowing for continuous instructional refinement.

Weekly Community Days (Fridays) provide structured opportunities for students to engage directly in internships, service-learning, and community-based projects. These experiences bridge the gap between classroom learning and adult life, allowing students to apply academic and social skills in authentic settings while developing independence and confidence. (See more in the *Career Education Rationale* section)

By integrating rigorous academics, individualized supports, and community engagement, The Dawn Institute delivers a complete and coherent educational program that embodies its mission.

Types of Curriculum

The Dawn Institute does not rely on a single standardized curriculum, but rather on an integrated framework of evidence-based practices. This approach ensures that all instructional materials and methods are accessible, individualized, and responsive to each student's needs. Research supports this model, with studies demonstrating that explicit instruction, data-driven intervention, and inclusive design significantly improve outcomes for students with disabilities across academic and behavioral domains.

The school will utilize a combination of established, research-supported curricula and teacher-developed supplemental materials to best meet the individual learning needs of its students. Curriculum selection will be guided by three primary criteria:

- Alignment with Utah Core Standards and the school's Four Founding Principles;
- Evidence of effectiveness with diverse learners;
- Flexibility to adapt to each student.

The Dawn Institute may implement multiple curricula simultaneously, depending on student profiles and developmental levels. This adaptive framework allows teachers to personalize instruction and ensure each learner has access to rigorous, relevant content.

Academic Core

- Unique Learning System (ULS) – n2y
A comprehensive, standards-based curriculum designed for students with disabilities, integrating academics with transition-focused lessons and differentiated materials.
- Wilson Reading System
An explicit, multisensory reading intervention targeting decoding, fluency, and comprehension for older students needing literacy support.
- Illustrative Mathematics (IM)
A problem-based, inquiry-driven math curriculum aligned with Utah Core Standards. The Dawn Institute will use IM with accessibility enhancements through SDI, manipulatives, visual supports, and scaffolded instruction to ensure full participation for all learners.

Life Skills, and Advocacy Education

- Life Centered Education (LCE) – Council for Exceptional Children (CEC)
A comprehensive transition curriculum focused on employment, daily living, and interpersonal skills.
- The Self-Determined Learning Model of Instruction (SDLMI) – University of Kansas
A research-based instructional model that teaches students to set goals, make decisions, and evaluate progress—key to building advocacy and independence.
- Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan)
Integrated throughout instruction to foster intrinsic motivation, autonomy, and competence.
- Person-Centered Planning

Social-Emotional Learning and Behavior Support

- Skillstreaming (Adolescent Edition) – McGinnis & Goldstein
A structured SEL curriculum teaching social skills, problem solving, and emotional regulation through modeling and role play.
- Zones of Regulation – Leah Kuypers (adapted for high school learners)
Used for targeted emotional awareness and self-management within the school's MTSS and ABA framework.

College, Career, and Community Readiness

- Project Discovery – CEV Multimedia
A career exploration and vocational training curriculum integrating soft skills, job preparation, and community-based experiences.
- Pathways to Employment Toolkit (NTACT:C)
A nationally recognized transition resource designed to support individualized career development and postsecondary planning.

Through the integration of these evidence-based programs, The Dawn Institute will provide a comprehensive, adaptive, and inclusive curriculum that prepares students for higher education, meaningful employment, and independent living. This multi-curriculum model allows educators to tailor instruction to student strengths and needs while maintaining fidelity to Utah standards and best practices in special education.

Implementation

The Dawn Institute's curriculum is intentionally designed to align with the school's mission, vision, and Four Founding Principles. Every component of the curriculum supports the development of independent, self-determined learners who are prepared for college, career, and community life.

The school's integrated framework ensures that curriculum design and delivery are accessible, equitable, and rigorous for all students. Each learning environment emphasizes multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression, so that all learners can access and demonstrate understanding of the Utah Core Standards.

While The Dawn Institute's mission is grounded in supporting students with disabilities, the school's inclusive design also directly benefits English learners, advanced students, and emerging learners (see *Meeting the Needs of All Learners and Compliance* Section).

The successful implementation of the curriculum is supported through ongoing professional development, collaboration, and coaching. Teachers receive training in UDL, SDI, culturally responsive practices, and data-driven instruction, ensuring that they can adapt materials to the diverse linguistic, cognitive, and social-emotional needs of their students. Regular instructional team meetings are used to align lesson design, review progress data, and refine interventions within the MTSS framework.

By combining these research-based strategies with its inclusive design, The Dawn Institute's curriculum not only fulfills its mission of accessibility and independence but also ensures that all students—whether they are English learners, advanced, emerging, or identified with disabilities—can access, engage with, and excel in a rigorous and supportive educational environment.

Career Education Rationale

Research consistently shows that students who receive structured transition and career education in high school are more likely to achieve competitive employment and postsecondary success (Grigal et al., 2019; Wehmeyer et al., 2020). Yet, transition planning for students with disabilities too often begins too late or focuses narrowly on compliance rather than authentic skill-building.

The Dawn Institute fills this gap by embedding career and transition education throughout its curriculum, beginning in 9th grade. The school's approach integrates academic instruction, work-based learning, and community engagement within a continuum of opportunities that expand as students develop independence and confidence. This structure mirrors the purpose of federal initiatives like the TPSID—but begins earlier, ensuring that students graduate with the advocacy, self-determination, and employability skills to thrive in adulthood.

Career education at The Dawn Institute will be guided by Person-Centered Planning and transition plans aligned with each student's strengths, interests, and postsecondary goals. Students will engage in a progressive sequence of experiences designed to promote independence, workplace readiness, and real-world application of academic skills. These include:

- *Career Exploration and Job Shadowing:* Beginning in grades 9–10, students will explore career clusters through classroom activities, job site visits, and short-term shadowing experiences within the local community.
- *Internships and Apprenticeships:* By grades 11–12, students will have increasing autonomy in identifying and pursuing internship or employment experiences that align with their goals, with guidance and support from teachers, a transition coordinator, and job coaches.

- *Cooperative and Experiential Education:* The school will collaborate with local businesses, government agencies, and nonprofits to provide project-based, service-learning, and cooperative education opportunities.
- *Transition and Postsecondary Readiness:* Seniors and “Super Seniors” (students up to age 22) will participate in community-based instruction, independent living training, and supported dual enrollment opportunities in partnership with local colleges and workforce programs.

Community Fridays

Fridays at The Dawn Institute will be designated as “Community Days,” where students actively engage in internships, service-learning projects, and community-based experiences. These days provide consistent, structured opportunities for students to apply academic learning in authentic environments, develop workplace and social skills, and strengthen connections with local employers and organizations. Community Days are an integral part of the school’s model, ensuring that experiential learning and real-world application occur regularly—not occasionally—throughout the school year.

The Dawn Institute’s transition program is built on a model of mutual collaboration and inclusion with community partners. The school will seek partnerships across a range of industries—including healthcare, hospitality, education, technology, and recreation—to ensure students have diverse, meaningful opportunities that reflect both local workforce needs and individual student interests.

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The Dawn Institute also intends to develop a unique University Partnership Initiative with local higher education institutions such as Utah Valley University (UVU) and Brigham Young University (BYU). Through this initiative, university students in education, psychology, special education, and social work programs will be invited to serve as intern job coaches, supporting The Dawn Institute’s students in their workplace experiences. This collaboration strengthens community ties, provides hands-on training for future educators and service providers, and allows The Dawn Institute to expand high-quality transition support in a sustainable, cost-effective manner.

In addition, the school will partner with:

- Utah Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD) and Vocational Rehabilitation (VR): for coordinated transition and employment supports;
- Utah Valley University (UVU): for concurrent enrollment, CTE pathways, and transition-to-college supports;
- Provo City and Utah County Chambers of Commerce: to connect with local business partners for job placements and mentorships;

- Community-based organizations specializing in supported employment, volunteerism, and skill-building for youth and adults with disabilities; and
- Local employers and nonprofits such as Provo Recreation Center, Intermountain Healthcare, local libraries and schools, or businesses aligned to student interest areas.

Career education is not an auxiliary program at The Dawn Institute—it is the core expression of the school’s mission to build advocacy, independence, and self-determination. By linking classroom learning with real-world experiences, the school ensures that students not only meet Utah Core Standards but also leave prepared to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

The overall goal of implementing a comprehensive career and transition education program is that each student will graduate with a fully developed résumé, documented work experience, and employability skills that give them a competitive edge. Whether students choose to pursue postsecondary education, enter the workforce, or continue developing independent living skills, they will do so with confidence, experience, and a clear record of accomplishment. This approach ensures that even students who opt not to continue into higher education still have meaningful pathways forward—equipped with the knowledge, experience, and self-advocacy skills to thrive as independent adults.

Through individualized planning, inclusive partnerships, and creative collaboration with local universities, The Dawn Institute will model what true transition-focused education can achieve—students who graduate ready to pursue higher education, gainful employment, and independent adult life.

ADVANCEMENT AND GRADUATION CRITERIA

Promotion and graduation decisions are guided by each student’s PCP Graduation Plan. The PCP process ensures that promotion decisions are collaborative, data-driven, and student-centered, allowing each learner to advance at a pace that reflects authentic growth rather than arbitrary timelines. In this way, The Dawn Institute honors both the rigor of state standards and the individuality of every student’s educational journey. Progress is reviewed collaboratively with input from teachers, families, and the student’s support team.

Students demonstrate advancement through:

- Proficiency in Utah Core Standards
- Measurable progress on IEP or PCP goals
- Growth in executive functioning and social-emotional skills
- Participation in community-based learning experiences

Graduation requires completion of state credit requirements, a Graduation Transition Plan, and a Senior Capstone Portfolio that documents academic, vocational, and advocacy accomplishments. Students who require additional time to meet their goals may remain enrolled through age 22, with continued access to transition programming and community-based instruction.

Formal Assessments and Statewide Accountability

In alignment with Utah State Board of Education (USBE) requirements, The Dawn Institute will administer all formal statewide assessments, including:

- Utah Aspire Plus (Grades 9–10) combining ACT Aspire and Utah Core tests;
- Utah RISE assessments for applicable grade levels;
- ACCESS for ELLs for English language proficiency (for all identified English learners);
- Dynamic Learning Maps (DLM) for students with the most significant cognitive disabilities, as determined by IEP teams; and
- ACT testing for Grade 11 students.

These formal assessments provide standardized measures of progress and allow for meaningful comparison across the state. Results will be analyzed by staff, discussed in data team meetings, and reported to the Governing Board to guide instructional decisions and resource allocation.

In addition, The Dawn Institute will supplement statewide testing with informal, performance-based measures that capture the full scope of student learning. Teachers will utilize:

- Project- and portfolio-based learning assessments;
- Rubrics for social-emotional learning (SEL) and advocacy skills;
- Teacher-created formative assessments and progress monitoring tools; and
- Transition and career-readiness portfolios documenting community engagement and work experiences.

Together, these systems ensure that data is both comprehensive and actionable—supporting instructional alignment and student growth across academic and transition domains.

Other Forms of Assessment

IEP Progress Monitoring

For students with disabilities, IEP goals will be measured using both formal progress reports and ongoing classroom data, consistent with IDEA and USBE guidance. The Special Education Director will oversee compliance and ensure that data is collected, analyzed, and communicated to families at least quarterly.

IEP and MTSS teams will meet regularly to review progress, identify patterns of success or concern, and adjust interventions or services as needed. Progress reports will be shared with families in accessible, easy-to-understand language, reinforcing the school's commitment to transparency and partnership.

Self-Assessments

True to The Dawn Institute's mission of fostering independence and self-advocacy, students will take an active role in evaluating their own learning. Through student-led conferences, reflection journals, self-evaluation rubrics, and data notebooks, students will monitor their goals and advocate for the supports they need.

This process not only enhances metacognition but also reinforces The Dawn Institute's long-term vision: that every student graduates as a confident, capable self-advocate prepared for college, career, and community life.

SUMMARY: ALIGNMENT OF INSTRUCTION WITH MISSION AND VISION

The Dawn Institute's instructional methods are intentionally designed to bring the school's mission and vision to life. The school's mission—to empower students through advocacy, autonomy, and independence—relies on teaching approaches that are individualized, inclusive, and skill-building. Every method used in the classroom is selected to ensure that students are not only learning academic content but also developing the self-awareness, confidence, and advocacy skills needed for lifelong success.

The school's vision of creating a community where students of all abilities learn side by side is reflected in its commitment to UDL, SDI, and a MTSS framework. These practices ensure that instruction is accessible to all students, allowing each learner to engage with content through multiple pathways and demonstrate understanding in diverse ways.

Through small group instruction, teachers are able to tailor lessons to individual learning styles, support differentiated pacing, and build strong teacher-student relationships. Co-teaching models, pairing general education and special education teachers, reflect the school's belief in inclusion and collaboration—ensuring that every student has access to rigorous academic content in a supportive environment.

Instruction emphasizes active learning and advocacy education. Students are encouraged to set personal goals, make choices about their learning, and reflect on their progress—practices rooted in Self-Determination Theory, which supports autonomy, competence, and relatedness. These strategies align directly with The Dawn Institute's founding principle that students must be participants in their education, not passive recipients of it.

Additionally, SEL and behavior support are integrated into every classroom, fostering self-regulation, communication, and empathy. Teachers use data-driven practices within the MTSS framework to monitor progress, identify needs, and adjust supports, ensuring that instruction remains both rigorous and responsive.

Together, these methods create a learning environment that reflects the heart of The Dawn Institute's mission—a community and school where instruction is not one-size-fits-all, but one-size-fits-one; where accessibility is built in, not added on; and where education is the pathway to independence and empowerment.

Section 4: Market Analysis

PROPOSED LOCATION AND RATIONALE

The Dawn Institute proposes to locate in or adjacent to Downtown Provo, Utah—a centrally positioned, highly accessible area within Utah County. Provo is the third largest city in the state, with a population of approximately 112,000 residents and a rapidly growing educational and service economy. The city's well-established public transit system, including Utah Transit Authority (UTA) bus and FrontRunner commuter rail access, provides essential connections for students with and without transportation independence.

Given the elevated risks of elopement and water-related incidents among students with developmental disabilities, The Dawn Institute will be intentionally situated in the heart of Downtown Provo rather than near Utah Lake or other large bodies of water. This central location balances accessibility with a focus on student safety and community connection.

Downtown Provo offers proximity to key community resources—public libraries, higher education institutions, workforce training centers, and social service agencies—that align directly with The Dawn Institute's mission of preparing students for postsecondary education, employment, and independent living. This location supports the school's transition-based learning model, which emphasizes community integration, work-based learning, and public accessibility.

Provo was intentionally selected for its combination of population density, service infrastructure, and demonstrated need for specialized secondary programming. Despite strong overall academic performance across the district, students with disabilities remain significantly underrepresented in postsecondary enrollment and overrepresented in dropout and underemployment statistics. Local families and educators have repeatedly expressed concern about the lack of transition-focused, college-preparatory options for students with developmental disabilities.

By establishing in Downtown Provo, The Dawn Institute positions itself at the intersection of education, accessibility, and community engagement—ensuring that students can participate fully in civic, academic, and employment experiences while preparing for life beyond high school.

EDUCATION LANDSCAPE AND COMMUNITY CONTEXT

The Provo City School District serves a diverse population of students across its two main high schools and several alternative and charter programs. Individuals aged 14–19 comprise approximately 10% of Provo's population—roughly 11,780 residents—and, based on national prevalence rates, an estimated 1,080 students in this age range have a documented disability.

During the 2023–24 school year, Provo City School District reported 483 students with disabilities enrolled in public high schools, representing 9% of the total student body. According to data from USBE, the graduation rate for students with disabilities during the

2022–23 school year was 68.66%, with only 18.29% of those students pursuing higher education or trade certification programs.

While several schools in Provo provide specialized or inclusive supports, none are specifically designed to integrate college preparation, advocacy education, and individualized transition programming for students with disabilities. The Dawn Institute seeks to fill this unmet need, bridging the divide between traditional high school and postsecondary readiness through a comprehensive, inclusive model.

DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DAWN INSTITUTE

While several local schools share partial overlap in serving students with disabilities or offering nontraditional learning environments, The Dawn Institute's integrated model of inclusion and college preparation sets it apart in both design and purpose.

Comparative Landscape

Independence High School serves students who struggle in traditional settings, with small class sizes (10–12 students) and robust behavioral and academic supports. Approximately 40% of its student body has a documented disability, and its graduation rate for these students was 95% in 2023, exceeding the state average. However, only 25% of its graduates pursued higher education. While Independence High provides crucial safety and structure, its focus remains on remediation and completion rather than college or career advancement.

Walden School of Liberal Arts follows the Montessori philosophy, emphasizing inclusion and individualized learning. Approximately 25% of students have IEPs and an additional percentage have 504 Plans. The 2023 graduation rate for students with IEPs was 100%, with zero dropouts. However, none of these graduates enrolled in higher education programs post-graduation, underscoring a systemic gap between emotional support and postsecondary readiness.

Freedom Preparatory Academy is a college-preparatory charter school serving primarily neurotypical learners, achieving a 95–98% graduation rate and a 100% postsecondary enrollment rate. However, students with disabilities represent fewer than 5% of its total population. While Freedom Prep demonstrates the potential of strong college preparation, its limited inclusion of students with disabilities highlights the absence of fully inclusive, high-expectation models.

Spectrum Academy, located in Pleasant Grove, serves primarily students with autism and has earned a strong reputation for providing high-quality, individualized education. Due to extremely high demand, the school maintains a long waiting list, with some families waiting years for enrollment and traveling over 45 minutes each way from throughout Utah County. This demonstrates both the success of Spectrum's specialized approach and the unmet need for similar programming closer to Provo.

The Dawn Institute seeks to include the best and most successful aspects of these local schools. Having a choice, such as The Dawn Institute, will be a great benefit to these students and their families.

In essence, The Dawn Institute fills a critical void in Provo's educational landscape by offering a pathway that merges inclusion, transition readiness, and academic rigor. It provides a model of what true accessibility and empowerment can look like in secondary education.

EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN THE TARGET AREA

The educational landscape in Provo demonstrates both strong academic institutions and a persistent gap in inclusive, transition-focused programming for students with disabilities. Data from USBE shows that while graduation rates for students with disabilities in the Provo City School District hover around 68%, only 18% of those graduates pursue postsecondary education or vocational training. This pattern suggests that while schools have improved in retention and graduation, they remain limited in preparing students for life beyond high school.

At present, families seeking specialized support for students with developmental or learning disabilities must choose between limited in-district services, alternative high schools that focus on remediation rather than transition, or specialized charter schools like Spectrum Academy located outside the immediate area. Each option addresses a part of the need—but none provide a comprehensive, college-preparatory model integrated with advocacy, transition training, and community inclusion.

The Dawn Institute fills this critical gap by blending high academic standards with evidence-based transition and advocacy instruction. It will provide equitable access to inclusive education for students who are too often overlooked—those capable of pursuing higher education and independent living when given appropriate supports.

CHALLENGES IN LOCATING

Provo's rapid growth and central urban location create both opportunity and challenge. Downtown Provo is an ideal setting for accessibility, public transportation, and community partnerships—but affordable and appropriately zoned educational facilities are limited. Additionally, many existing buildings require upgrades to meet e-occupancy, ADA accessibility, and sensory-friendly design standards.

The Dawn Institute's Governing Board has identified potential properties within or adjacent to the downtown corridor that could be renovated to meet school facility requirements. The Board plans to collaborate with local architects and contractors experienced in educational and accessibility design, ensuring full compliance with state and federal standards. Furthermore, the school's phased enrollment plan—from 50 students in Year 1 to 110 by Year 5—allows for scalable facility investment, aligning physical growth with student demand and budget sustainability.

ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS AND PROGRAM MODELING

Enrollment projections are grounded in demographic data, community surveys, and the significant, ongoing demand for specialized and inclusive education in Utah County. With over 1,000 high school-aged individuals with disabilities in Provo alone—and waitlists at comparable schools such as Spectrum Academy that stretch for years—the projected Year 1 enrollment of 50 students is deliberately conservative.

The Dawn Institute's founding Board recognizes that the school is designed to serve only a portion of the students who could benefit from this model. This is by choice: maintaining small enrollment ensures a low student-to-teacher ratio, individualized attention, and meaningful relationships between staff, students, and families. The school's gradual growth plan—expanding by approximately 22% annually to a maximum of 110 students by Year 5—reflects a commitment to quality over quantity.

Rather than attempting to serve every eligible student in the region, The Dawn Institute seeks to model what true inclusion, belonging, and accessibility can look like in K–12 education. By empowering students to develop independence, pursue meaningful employment, and challenge patterns of learned helplessness, the school's purpose extends beyond its own student body. The long-term goal is to demonstrate a replicable framework for inclusive, college-preparatory education that can inform and inspire other schools across the state and nation.

This approach ensures that growth remains mission-aligned, financially sustainable, and responsive to both student need and community demand.

UNDERSTANDING THE TARGET POPULATION

Many of the neighborhoods surrounding downtown Provo, where The Dawn Institute will be located, qualify as economically disadvantaged areas. Families in these communities often face compounding barriers to accessing appropriate educational supports—particularly those raising children with disabilities. The financial burden of out-of-pocket costs for therapies, adaptive equipment, or medications can make enrollment in private or specialized schools unattainable for many. As a tuition-free public charter school, The Dawn Institute exists to close that gap—offering high-quality, individualized education without imposing additional financial strain.

The school recognizes that its mission naturally intersects with the goals of Title I programming, as many of the students it seeks to serve will likely qualify for federal support. Its small class sizes, tiered academic interventions, and wraparound behavioral and transition supports are designed to address the opportunity gaps that disproportionately affect students from low-income households and those with disabilities.

The Dawn Institute's instructional model provides a framework that ensures every learner has equitable access to academic rigor, postsecondary preparation, and real-world skill development. This approach not only meets the needs of its students but also contributes to a more inclusive and just educational landscape for the broader community.

WHY STUDENTS WILL CHOOSE THE DAWN INSTITUTE

Families will choose The Dawn Institute because it represents a bridge between special education and college-preparatory education—a gap not currently filled within the Provo City School District. While schools such as Timpview High School and Provo High School offer strong academic programs, extracurricular opportunities, and diverse student populations, they are designed to serve large numbers of students through traditional instructional models. These environments, while successful for many, can be overwhelming for students who require smaller class sizes, structured behavioral supports, or individualized transition planning.

Both Timpview and Provo High Schools serve populations exceeding 1,500 students, with average class sizes of 30–35. Their special education departments provide important services under the IDEA, yet these supports must function within large, fast-paced school settings that may not allow for the consistent, one-on-one guidance and advocacy instruction many students with disabilities need to thrive.

By contrast, The Dawn Institute will maintain a maximum enrollment of 110 students, ensuring a low student-to-teacher ratio and highly personalized attention. Each student will receive a Person-Centered Graduation Plan, integrating academic goals, transition preparation, and self-advocacy training.

Additionally, The Dawn Institute's weekly "Community Fridays" provide structured, hands-on experiences that directly connect classroom learning to postsecondary and employment readiness. This approach is not available within the larger district high schools, which primarily focus on traditional academic schedules.

The Dawn Institute also provides an accessible, sensory-friendly campus environment designed with Universal Design principles. While both Timpview and Provo High Schools meet ADA accessibility standards, The Dawn Institute intentionally incorporates adaptive materials, flexible seating, and quiet spaces to reduce sensory overload and foster comfort for all learners.

In short, students will come to The Dawn Institute because it offers what large, traditional high schools cannot: an inclusive, small-scale, individualized program that merges academic rigor with self-advocacy, independence, and community integration. For families seeking a school where their child is known, supported, and challenged to reach their fullest potential, The Dawn Institute offers a truly distinctive and necessary alternative within the Provo education landscape.

RECRUITMENT AND MARKETING PLAN

The Dawn Institute's recruitment and marketing strategy is intentionally community-centered, equitable, and accessible. The school's mission guides every outreach decision. Given the unmet demand for inclusive, transition-focused programs in Utah County, The Dawn Institute's targeted recruitment approach is both realistic and sustainable.

Recruitment Approach and Target Audience

Our goal is not to compete with existing schools for enrollment, but to reach families whose students are underserved by traditional high school models. We anticipate most families will come from Provo City and neighboring areas such as Orem, Springville, and Spanish Fork, particularly from economically disadvantaged neighborhoods surrounding downtown Provo. Many of these families face barriers to accessing specialized education or private programs due to cost, transportation, or lack of awareness.

To reach these families, The Dawn Institute will engage in:

- Direct outreach and community partnerships with local disability coalitions, parent advocacy groups, therapy centers, and service organizations such as ScenicView Academy, Utah Parent Center, and Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Collaboration with local public schools (Provo, Timpview, and Independence High Schools) and district transition coordinators to ensure families of students with disabilities are informed of alternative charter options available to them.
- Community presentations and open houses at public libraries, community centers, and local colleges to raise awareness among educators, parents, and students.
- Multilingual materials and translation services to ensure that all outreach—flyers, social media, information nights, and enrollment forms—is accessible to families whose primary language is not English.

Marketing Plan and Communication Channels

Marketing will rely on a combination of low-cost, high-impact strategies that emphasize inclusivity and transparency:

- *Digital outreach:* A professional, ADA-accessible website; social media engagement across Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn; and targeted online ads through community networks.
- *Print and local media:* Flyers distributed through Provo City recreation centers, churches, clinics, and local businesses, as well as partnerships with neighborhood newspapers and community newsletters.
- *Word-of-mouth and community trust:* Building relationships through parent networks, disability resource fairs, and local nonprofits to create a strong reputation based on authenticity and success stories.

Diversity and Accessibility in Recruitment

The Dawn Institute is committed to reflecting the diversity of its community. All recruitment efforts will intentionally include families of varying racial, ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Materials will highlight the school's inclusive philosophy, individualized supports, and commitment to equitable access.

We also recognize that families of students with disabilities often face additional financial and emotional burdens due to costs associated with therapies, medical needs, or equipment. By positioning The Dawn Institute as a tuition-free, public charter school that provides individualized supports without financial barriers, we ensure families understand that high-quality, inclusive education is not reserved for those who can afford private options.

Through these strategies, The Dawn Institute ensures that recruitment efforts are not only effective, but equitable—reaching families who have historically been left out of specialized educational opportunities, and offering them a place where their students can belong, thrive, and prepare for meaningful futures.

Section 5: Governance

ENTITY OVERSIGHT AND Board TRANSITION

The charter for The Dawn Institute will be held by the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation, a Utah nonprofit corporation established in May 2024 to support, develop, and sustain educational opportunities. The Foundation will remain the legally responsible entity and charter holder throughout both the development (startup) and operational phases of the school, in accordance with Utah Code and SCSB regulations.

During the startup period, the Foundation's Board of Directors will provide direct oversight of all pre-operational activities, including facility acquisition, financial management, policy development, and compliance with the SCSB. At all time, the Foundation Board will ensure that all startup decisions align with The Dawn Institute's mission, fiscal accountability standards, and state requirements.

Upon the school's opening, governance responsibilities specific to educational operations will be delegated to The Dawn Institute Governing Board, a distinct body operating under the authority of the Foundation. The Governing Board will oversee academic performance, school leadership, compliance, and community engagement, while the Foundation retains ultimate fiduciary and legal responsibility as the charter holder.

This two-tiered governance model—with the Foundation providing legal and fiduciary oversight and the Governing Board managing school-level operations—ensures both stability and accountability. The structure balances continuity, inclusivity, and transparency, aligning with the school's founding mission and Utah's standards for effective charter governance.

LEGAL ORGANIZATION AND COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

Upon approval and execution of a charter agreement with the Utah State Charter School Board, The Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation, as the charter holder, will remain the legally recognized Utah nonprofit corporation under Title 16, Chapter 6a of the Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act.

The Foundation will delegate day-to-day governance and operational oversight of The Dawn Institute to the school's Governing Board, which will operate in compliance Bylaws, the charter agreement, and applicable law. Both Boards will adhere to all provisions of the Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act and SCSB requirements, including open and transparent governance, fiduciary responsibility, and accountability.

The Foundation and Governing Board will each maintain their own bylaws, conflict of interest policies, and operating procedures that clearly define roles and responsibilities. This ensures effective checks and balances between financial oversight, academic accountability, and mission integrity.

See appendix C for The Dawn Institute's Bylaws and Appendix D for the approved minutes from the meeting at which these documents were approved.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FOUNDING ORGANIZATION AND ITS ROLE

The Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation was established with the purpose of advancing inclusive education, community engagement, and leadership development. The Foundation is named in honor of Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough, the several-times great-grandmother of the founding members, who opened the first school in Salt Lake City's Marmalade District in the mid-1800s.

Following in her legacy, education has remained a core value across generations. Co-founders Wendy Ahlman and Suzy Ahlman have both dedicated their professional lives to education—Wendy having founded a private school in Provo in 2004, and Suzy continuing that tradition through her own work in special education and advocacy. Together, they recognized a significant gap in inclusive, college-preparatory programs for students with disabilities in Utah County. This shared recognition led to the formation of the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation as a means to design, support, and sustain The Dawn Institute.

While the Foundation's current primary focus is on the development of The Dawn Institute, it operates with broader functions independent of the school. In the future, this will include supporting educational innovation, fostering partnerships with community and higher education institutions, and advancing public awareness of inclusion and accessibility in education. Through community initiatives and partnerships, the Foundation aims to strengthen educational opportunities for all students—particularly those with disabilities and those from underrepresented backgrounds.

The relationship between the Foundation and The Dawn Institute is both structural and mission-driven. The Foundation serves as the founding and supporting entity, ensuring fiscal oversight, accountability, and mission fidelity during both the development and operational phases of the school. However, The Dawn Institute's Governing Board functions as a separate and independent body, responsible for day-to-day operations, academic programming, and personnel decisions.

Two founding members, Suzy and Wendy Ahlman, currently serve on both the Foundation Board and The Dawn Institute Governing Board. This dual service allows for continuity and alignment during the school's startup phase and ensures that the Foundation's philanthropic and financial efforts directly support the school's mission. To maintain transparency and avoid conflicts of interest, both Boards hereby adhere to a Conflict of Interest and Dual Service Policy, which requires recusal from any decision or vote that could create a real or perceived conflict. In accordance with Utah nonprofit and charter school governance standards, each Board also maintains a majority of independent, non-overlapping members to ensure appropriate checks and balances.

Together, the Foundation and The Dawn Institute embody a shared vision—to expand inclusive educational opportunities, empower students with disabilities, and promote advocacy as an integral part of lifelong learning. This structure not only ensures legal and ethical compliance but also establishes a sustainable framework for long-term mission success.

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION ASSURANCE

The Articles of Incorporation for The Dawn Institute will include the following required legal provisions to ensure compliance with Utah State Charter School Board and federal nonprofit regulations:

Liability Clause:

Neither the Utah State Charter School Board, the State of Utah, nor any agency or political subdivision of the State shall be liable for the debts, obligations, or financial liabilities of The Dawn Institute or any persons or entities operating or managing the school.

Nonprofit and 501(c)(3) Status Clause:

The corporation is organized exclusively for educational purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of its exempt purposes.

Debt and Financial Authority Clause:

The Governing Board of The Dawn Institute shall have the authority to incur debt or financial obligations on behalf of the corporation, subject to approval by a majority vote of the Board, and in compliance with all applicable laws, fiscal accountability standards, and charter requirements. Under no circumstance shall such obligations be construed as debts of the State of Utah or its agencies.

Dissolution Clause:

Upon dissolution of the corporation, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose.

CURRENT AND FUTURE Board MEMBERSHIP

The Dawn Institute's Board was formed through a shared commitment to improving transition outcomes for students with disabilities, united by each member's personal connection to the disability community. Together, they bring both lived experience and professional expertise. See Appendix A for a Background Information Sheet for each named individual:

Board Chair

Susanne ("Suzy") Ahlman, MLS

- Current Positions: College Instructor & Program Manager, Wolverines Elevated; Special Education Student Teaching Supervisor, Utah Valley University; and Co-Chair, Autism Resources of Utah County Council (ARUCC)
- Location: American Fork, Utah

Suzy Ahlman is a licensed special educator and disability advocate with experience across K–12 and higher education settings. She holds a Master of Science in Legal Studies with an emphasis in Education and Disability Advocacy from the University of San Diego School of Law, and a Bachelor of Science in Special Education with a minor in Autism Studies from Utah Valley University.

Her professional background includes directing special education services for K–12, teaching self-determination and advocacy courses at the university level, and supervising future and current teachers. She currently serves as Program Manager for Wolverines Elevated, an inclusive postsecondary education program for students with intellectual disabilities.

Suzy has worked with students of all ages and ability levels, including those with complex behavioral needs, and is deeply committed to fostering independence and advocacy skills through education. Her passion for disability inclusion is also personal—she has three brothers with disabilities, each with varying levels of support and ability, which informs her understanding of the individual and their families.

She is also an active presenter on topics such as procedural safeguards, combating ableism, and inclusive college preparation. As the founding Board Chair of The Dawn Institute, Suzy brings both professional and personal insight into the unique challenges students with disabilities face in achieving independence and postsecondary success.

Board Co-Chair

Wendy Ahlman, M.Ed.

- Current Position: Owner and Director, Chrysalis Preschool and Kindergarten
- Location: Provo, Utah

Wendy Ahlman is an experienced educator, administrator, and community leader with over three decades experience in early childhood and elementary education. She is the founder and director of Chrysalis Preschool and Kindergarten in downtown Provo, where she has designed and implemented curriculum aligned with the Utah Early Childhood Core Standards and best practices. Wendy holds a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from Brigham Young University, and a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Utah Valley University.

Her professional focus includes inclusive instruction, literacy development, and the cultivation of self-regulation and confidence in young learners. She is also the creator of the Chrysalis Curriculum and Chrysalis Books series, a literacy program developed to support emerging readers. In addition to her work in education, Wendy is an active community volunteer.

As a mother of six children, three of whom have developmental and intellectual disabilities, Wendy brings both personal insight and deep compassion to her work as an educator and advocate. As Co-Chair of The Dawn Institute's Governing Board, she combines decades of classroom experience and school leadership with a lifelong dedication to inclusive, individualized education that empowers every student to thrive.

Board Treasurer

Christina Ellsworth, MAcc

- Current Position: Senior Associate, Croft CPA & Associates
- Location: Springville, Utah (remote associate)

Christina Ellsworth is an experienced accountant and nonprofit leader with a strong background in financial management, tax advisory, and organizational operations. She currently serves as a Senior Associate at Croft CPA & Associates, where she provides tax preparation, accounting, and financial consulting services to individuals and businesses. Christina holds a Master of Accountancy (MAcc) from Southern Utah University, and a Bachelor of Science in Business Management from Brigham Young University–Idaho.

Her prior experience includes serving on the Board for Rim Family Services, a nonprofit agency in Skyforest, California, where she oversaw fiscal operations, compliance, and community partnerships. She also held key financial and administrative leadership roles with The Myers Law Group, Kadtec Engineering, and Arrowhead Lake Association, managing budgets, human resources, and staff development.

As Treasurer of The Dawn Institute's Governing Board, Christina brings extensive experience in financial stewardship, budget management, and nonprofit accountability. Her combined background in accounting, governance, and human resources ensures that the school operates with transparency, fiscal integrity, and compliance with state and federal nonprofit standards.

Board Members

Sarah Hampton

- Current Position: Special Education Co-Teacher, Provo City School District
- Location: Provo, Utah

Sarah Hampton is an experienced paraeducator and special education professional with more than ten years of hands-on experience supporting students with diverse learning and behavioral needs. Currently serving as an elementary special education co-teacher in the Provo City School District, Sarah brings deep expertise in differentiated instruction, student-centered supports, and collaboration with general education teachers to create inclusive classroom environments.

Known for her intuitive understanding of individual student needs, Sarah specializes in developing and adapting instructional strategies that foster growth, confidence, and independence for every learner. She is currently pursuing her degree in Special Education, reflecting her ongoing commitment to professional development and lifelong learning.

As a mother of three children—some of whom have special needs or require higher levels of care—Sarah brings both professional and personal insight to her role on The Dawn Institute's Governing Board. Her experience as a parent and educator uniquely positions her to advocate for individualized education, accessibility, and compassionate support for students and families alike.

Dr. Joseph Johnson, M.D.

- Current Position: Pediatrician & Owner, Johnson Pediatrics
- Location: Provo, Utah

Dr. Joseph Johnson is a Board-certified pediatrician and small business owner serving children and families in Utah County. He earned his Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) from Emory University School of Medicine and completed his pediatric residency at the University of Colorado in Denver. Prior to establishing his independent practice in 2006, Dr. Johnson worked as a staff pediatrician and has since become a trusted and respected healthcare provider in the Utah County community.

In addition to his clinical practice, Dr. Johnson serves on the Board of Directors for Brade's Place, a nonprofit organization based in Orem, Utah. His professional expertise includes family-centered care, developmental medicine, and collaboration with multidisciplinary teams to ensure that children with diverse needs receive coordinated, compassionate care.

As a father of four, including one child with autism, Dr. Johnson brings both personal understanding and professional experience to his role on The Dawn Institute's Governing Board. His perspective as a healthcare provider and parent informs his commitment to whole-child wellbeing.

Board Expansion

The current Governing Board recognizes the importance of continued growth and diversification to ensure strong representation, accountability, and alignment with the school's mission. As part of our expansion plan, the Board intends to recruit a qualified Board Secretary to support documentation, compliance reporting, and public transparency.

Additionally, consistent with The Dawn Institute's commitment to authentic representation and intersectionality, the Board is actively seeking to expand membership to include individuals who bring diverse perspectives and lived experiences. This includes prioritizing the addition of a member who personally identifies as having a disability, as well as individuals from varied cultural, linguistic, and professional backgrounds. By intentionally broadening representation, the Board ensures that governance decisions are informed by a range of experiences and identities—reflecting the inclusive values and community-centered mission at the heart of The Dawn Institute.

Background Check Assurance

The Governing Board of The Dawn Institute hereby assures that, in compliance with Utah Code §53G-5-408, the school shall complete a comprehensive background check on each Governing Board member within 30 days of charter authorization.

All background checks will be conducted in accordance with state law and Utah State Charter School Board requirements to ensure the safety, integrity, and ethical governance of the school. Verification of completed background checks will be maintained on record and made available to the SCSB upon request.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Governing Board of The Dawn Institute recognizes that effective governance requires ongoing learning and reflection. All Board members will complete an initial orientation within 60 days of appointment, covering charter governance, Utah open meeting and ethics laws, special education requirements, fiscal oversight, and the roles and responsibilities of charter school Boards as defined by SCSB.

Ongoing professional development will occur at least annually, including:

- Training through required SCSB workshops on governance, compliance, and fiduciary responsibility;
- Specialized sessions on inclusive education, transition planning, and disability law, aligned with the school's mission;
- Collaborative learning with peer charter Boards and education partners; and
- Annual strategic planning, mission alignment, and Board development.

The Board may also invite experts in nonprofit management, finance, and inclusive education to provide targeted sessions as needed. New members will receive individualized onboarding, mentorship, and access to the school's mission, vision, and proposal.

Governance Philosophy and Evaluation Procedures

The Governing Board's role is one of oversight, guidance, and support—not control. The Board recognizes that the School Director and administrative team are hired for their expertise and professionalism. Therefore, the Board does not engage in daily operations or management of staff, curriculum, or student issues. Instead, it provides the structure, resources, and accountability necessary for the school to achieve its mission and sustain long-term success.

To ensure effective governance, the Board will conduct an annual self-evaluation using a rubric aligned with SCSB's framework for effective charter governance. Results will be used to set governance and strategic goals for the following year.

Additionally, the Board will perform an annual evaluation of the School Director, focusing on measurable objectives in four areas:

1. Academic growth and student achievement;
2. Financial stewardship and operational compliance;
3. Organizational health, leadership, and staff retention; and
4. Community partnerships and mission fidelity.

This process ensures that oversight remains supportive, collaborative, and outcome-focused, rather than administrative or supervisory.

Governing Board ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Governing Board of The Dawn Institute fully recognizes that it holds the ultimate legal, fiduciary, and strategic responsibility for the success, integrity, and sustainability of the school. While the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation serves as the charter holder and legal entity, the Governing Board ensures that The Dawn Institute operates in full compliance with its charter agreement, state and federal law, and SCSB standards.

Board Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board provides strategic leadership and oversight to ensure that the mission of advocacy, inclusion, and independence is upheld in all aspects of school operation.

Specifically, the Board is responsible for:

- Defining and protecting the mission and vision of the school;
- Adopting policies and budgets that guide long-term operations;
- Ensuring financial stability and legal compliance through regular monitoring and audits;
- Selecting, evaluating, and supporting the School Director;
- Engaging stakeholders—students, families, and community partners—in meaningful collaboration;
- Overseeing and collaborating with standing committees, including Finance, Academic Oversight, Diversity/Equity/Inclusion/Accessibility (DEIA), Community Partnerships, and Student Advisory, which provide recommendations to the Board; and
- Measuring progress toward academic, operational, and cultural goals.

The Board governs through policy, oversight, and accountability, not day-to-day management. The School Director and administrative team are empowered to manage daily operations—including curriculum implementation, staff supervision, and student programming—within the framework of Board policy and strategic priorities. See *Staffing* section.

Organizational Structure

The governance framework clearly delineates roles and responsibilities between governance and management:

- The Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation serves as the charter holder and legal entity.
- The Governing Board provides strategic direction, fiscal oversight, policy approval, and mission accountability.
- The School Director oversees all daily operations, including academics, staff, and student support.
- Board Committees—Finance, Academic Oversight, DEIA, Community Partnerships, and Student Advisory—strengthen transparency, ensure stakeholder voice, and

support the Board's continuous improvement efforts. (See Article V of The Dawn Institute Bylaws approved on November 5, 2025.)

This structure promotes autonomy, accountability, and collaboration, allowing the administrative team to focus on instructional excellence while the Governing Board maintains strong oversight and fidelity to the school's mission.

Governing Board CAPACITY AND OVERSIGHT

Educational Program Development

As previously stated, the Governing Board of The Dawn Institute possesses the collective expertise, leadership experience, and operational structure necessary to ensure the successful development and implementation of the school's educational program.

Suzy Ahlman, Wendy Ahlman, and Sarah Hampton bring nearly 50 years of combined experience, expertise, and commitment in education, special education, compliance, curriculum design, and supervision. Dr. Joseph Johnson provides essential insight into health and student well-being, informed by his years serving families and individuals with developmental and medical needs.

Most importantly, each Board member brings a deep personal commitment to serving students with disabilities. Together, this Board provides a balanced foundation of educational leadership, mission alignment, and community advocacy—equipping it to guide both the successful launch and sustainable growth of The Dawn Institute.

Financial Management and Public Funds

The Governing Board of The Dawn Institute recognizes its fiduciary responsibility to ensure that all public funds are managed with integrity, transparency, and full compliance with state and federal regulations. The Board has both the expertise and systems in place to safeguard financial resources, maintain accountability, and ensure funds are used exclusively to advance the mission of the school.

The Board brings together complementary expertise to ensure the responsible and transparent management of public funds. Christina Ellsworth, Board Treasurer, holds a Master of Accountancy and has extensive experience in nonprofit and corporate financial management, tax compliance, and audit preparation. Her background provides the technical foundation for accurate reporting and compliance with state and federal fiscal standards.

Suzy Ahlman, Board Chair, adds a deep understanding of educational law, budgeting, and fiscal oversight gained from her experience as a K-12 Special Education Director, where she managed IDEA Part B funding, hiring budgets, and compliance with both state and federal education regulations. Additionally, Wendy Ahlman, Co-Chair, contributes over two decades of experience in school leadership, where she successfully administers budgets and aligned financial priorities with instructional outcomes and programmatic needs.

Together, the Board's combined expertise ensures that every fiscal decision is made with both educational integrity and regulatory accountability. The Board also recognizes its obligation to expand and strengthen its capacity as the school grows, and will add additional members or advisors with specialized expertise in public finance, audit, or risk management when necessary to maintain the highest standards of fiscal stewardship.

The Governing Board will implement a comprehensive financial control framework, including but not limited to:

- Adoption of Board-approved fiscal policies covering budgeting, procurement, expense authorization, payroll, and record retention;
- Segregation of financial duties to prevent conflicts of interest and misuse of funds;
- Monthly financial reporting to the Board, reviewed and approved in public meetings;
- Quarterly audits by the Finance Committee and an annual independent audit conducted by a certified public accountant (CPA);
- Compliance with state procurement requirements;
- Regular review of cash flow projections, enrollment-based funding, and budget-to-actual performance;
- Implementation of a whistleblower policy allowing staff or stakeholders to report concerns related to financial integrity.

These systems ensure that all financial activities are transparent, well-documented, and aligned with SCSB fiscal compliance standards.

Finance Committee — The Finance Committee, which may be chaired by the Treasurer, includes members with accounting, education, and nonprofit backgrounds. The committee shall:

- Reviews all financial statements and reports prior to presentation at Board meetings;
- Monitors compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP);
- Oversees annual budgeting and recommends adjustments as necessary;
- Ensures timely filing of required financial documents, including state reports, audits, and IRS Form 990.

School Director — The School Director is responsible for daily financial management and reporting, while the Board provides ongoing oversight and approval authority. This separation of duties maintains clear accountability and prevents conflicts of interest between governance and management.

All financial decisions, reports, and budgets are subject to open meeting requirements under Utah's Open and Public Meetings Act (OPMA). The Governing Board will make annual financial statements, audit results, and key fiscal documents available on the school's website and will hold at least one annual public financial review meeting to share results and receive stakeholder feedback.

With its experienced Treasurer, active Finance Committee, and established policies for oversight and transparency, The Dawn Institute's Governing Board demonstrates the capacity, structure, and commitment necessary to manage public funds effectively,

responsibly, and in full compliance with Utah law. These systems ensure that every public dollar is used to advance the school's mission—providing inclusive, high-quality, and equitable education for all students.

Legalities and Compliance

The Governing Board of The Dawn Institute fully recognizes that it holds ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the school operates in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws, regulations, and charter requirements. This includes, but is not limited to, compliance with the IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, ADA, Utah Code Title 53G (Public Education System – Charter Schools), and the OPMA.

The Board's approach to compliance is both proactive and systematic, built around prevention, oversight, and accountability. Suzy Ahlman, Board Chair, holds a Master of Legal Studies from the University of San Diego School of Law and has professional and direct expertise in education law, compliance, and governance. While completing her degree, she interned with a pro bono law firm, gaining hands-on experience in research, compliance, and case management. She later served as a K–12 Special Education Director, where she managed IDEA budgets, ensured compliance with federal and state regulations, and oversaw programmatic accountability. Her combined background in law and special education provides the Board with a deep understanding of the regulatory frameworks that govern public education, including IDEA, FERPA, Section 504, and Utah's public education code.

The Dawn Institute recognizes that effective compliance depends not only on governance oversight but also on strong administrative leadership. Accordingly, the school will employ a qualified Special Education Director, licensed in accordance with Utah State Board of Education standards, who will oversee all IDEA-related programming, IEP development, and service delivery. The Special Education Director will collaborate closely with the School Director and Governing Board to ensure all policies, procedures, and instructional practices meet federal and state requirements while maintaining the highest standards of individualized support and documentation fidelity.

The Board will also work with qualified legal counsel and compliance advisors as needed to ensure all policies, contracts, and procedures align with SCSB requirements and relevant federal law.

To maintain ongoing compliance, the Board will:

- Adopt and maintain governance policies aligned with SCSB standards and federal education law;
- Conduct annual reviews of school policies to ensure updates reflect any new legislation or state rules;
- Ensure that student records, confidentiality, and data protection comply with FERPA and state data privacy laws;
- Oversee compliance with IDEA, Section 504, and ADA through the School Director and Special Education Director, ensuring all students receive appropriate services and accommodations;

- Maintain compliance with employment law, including background checks, staff licensure, and workplace safety standards;
- Review all major contracts and legal documents to verify alignment with Board policy, state procurement rules, and insurance requirements.

The Board will document all compliance activities, including annual policy audits, required reporting to the SCSB, and public posting of governance materials in accordance with Utah's transparency standards.

Newly appointed Board members will receive comprehensive onboarding that includes training on governance responsibilities, conflict of interest laws, and applicable sections of the Utah Code related to charter schools. Continuing members will complete annual refreshers through SCSB-approved sources to stay current on policy changes and best practices.

The Board will also conduct annual self-evaluations to assess its compliance performance, reviewing its adherence to legal standards, conflict-of-interest policies, and charter obligations. Any findings from audits or state reviews will be addressed promptly through corrective action plans and public reporting.

Through its combination of legal and educational expertise, structured compliance systems, and commitment to transparency, The Dawn Institute's Governing Board demonstrates full capacity to oversee and ensure compliance with all legal obligations. The Board's proactive approach—emphasizing prevention, accountability, and continuous training—ensures that the school operates with integrity, adheres to state and federal law, and protects the rights and well-being of all students and staff.

Representing and Serving the Community

The Governing Board of The Dawn Institute is deeply rooted in the Utah County community and is composed of individuals whose personal and professional lives reflect the very population the school aims to serve. Every member of the Board brings not only expertise but also lived experience with disability, education, or caregiving—ensuring that decisions are grounded in real understanding of community needs.

The majority of our Board members are parents or siblings of individuals with disabilities who have spent their careers serving children, families, and individuals with disabilities across Utah. This uniquely personal understanding of the barriers families face when navigating education, transition, and access to opportunity is what makes our Board strong and realistic. This blend of professional knowledge and personal connection drives a governance philosophy centered on belonging, accessibility, and empowerment.

Beyond governance, the Board is committed to partnership and participation. Members are actively engaged in community organizations. Their involvement spans participation in advocacy and disability non-profits and counsels, public commissions such as the Provo City Landmarks Commission, and professional and alumni connections with Utah Valley University and Brigham Young University. Through these partnerships, the Board not only listens to the voices of parents, educators, and students but also brings those voices into

policy and planning discussions—ensuring that community perspectives and needs directly inform the school's development and priorities.

The Board also plans to formalize these connections through its Community Partnerships Committee, which will strengthen relationships with local agencies, universities, and employers; coordinate service-learning and internship opportunities; and ensure the school remains a visible, responsive, and valued part of the community fabric.

In every decision, the Board's guiding question is: "Will this decision expand access, learning, belonging, autonomy and independence for every learner and our broader community?" This commitment—rooted in both heart and practice—ensures that The Dawn Institute is not only a school within Utah County but a partner to the entire community, modeling how inclusion and advocacy can thrive at every level of education and society.

High-Quality and Long-Term School Success

As presented, the Governing Board of The Dawn Institute possesses the collective expertise, structure, and long-term commitment necessary to found and sustain a high-quality, inclusive charter school. Shared commitment among the Board ensures that The Dawn Institute will not only be launched with integrity but sustained with vision and heart.

To guide the startup phase, the Board has established a phased implementation plan that includes securing an accessible facility, aligning policies with state and federal law, recruiting highly qualified educators, and developing partnerships that expand transition and employment opportunities for students. The Board will oversee the school's launch through its established committees, each chaired by members or advisors with relevant expertise.

The Board also recognizes that sustainability depends on continuous improvement and accountability. To that end, the Board will:

- Conduct annual self-evaluations to assess its effectiveness and governance performance;
- Review and update strategic goals each year to ensure alignment with student outcomes and fiscal health;
- Ensure continued Board learning and renewal through annual professional development, evaluation, and strategic planning;
- Engage external auditors and evaluators as needed to ensure transparency and continuous improvement;
- Strengthen community partnerships to maintain a strong enrollment base and responsive educational model.

By uniting professional expertise, community connection, and an unwavering belief in inclusion, the Governing Board of The Dawn Institute demonstrates full capacity to found, govern, and sustain a charter school that will serve as a model of excellence for years to come.

Section 6: Staffing

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS

The Dawn Institute is designed to operate as a collaborative, student-centered learning community that emphasizes inclusion, accessibility, and individualized support. The school's organizational structure provides clear lines of authority while encouraging communication and teamwork across all levels of staff.

At the top of the school's leadership structure is the School Director, who reports directly to the Governing Board and is responsible for the day-to-day management of the school.

Supporting the School Director are key leadership and operational roles, including:

- **Special Education Director**, who oversees all compliance with IDEA and state regulations, manages IEP meetings and related audits, supervises special education personnel, and ensures that every student receives appropriate accommodations and individualized supports.
- **School Counselor**, who serves as the Section 504 Coordinator and supports students' academic planning, mental health, and social-emotional development.
- **Behavior Specialist**, ideally a Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA), who provides behavioral consultation, develops Positive Behavior Support Plans, and trains paraeducators as RBTs.
- **Transition Coordinator**, responsible for developing and maintaining programs that prepare students for postsecondary education, employment, and independent living.
- **Office Manager and Registrar**, who handle administrative functions including enrollment, records management, scheduling, and front-office operations. The Office Manager may also serve as an assistant to the School Director.

During the first year, The Dawn Institute will employ five general education teachers responsible for core academic instruction for approximately 50 students, alongside one special education teacher whose primary responsibilities include co-teaching and supporting instructional differentiation. The Special Education Director will manage IEPs and compliance while the special education teacher supports progress monitoring and data collection within the first year. The special education teachers focus on hands-on student support in the first year will be a crucial focus to ensure general education teachers, paraeducators, and other support staff receive that special education support from the beginning—this collaboration and structure will ensure students are receiving all-around quality support.

The special education team will include three to five paraeducators, providing in-class assistance and community-based support. In addition to co-teaching between general and special education teachers, paraeducators may also serve as co-teachers (with the appropriate supervision). Therefore, co-teaching will be implemented wherever appropriate, and collaboration among all teachers will be encouraged through weekly team meetings and shared planning time to promote inclusive practices and differentiated instruction.

To further enhance staffing capacity and provide real-world experience to future educators, The Dawn Institute will partner with local universities to host student teachers, interns, and education practicum students. These partnerships will not only help offset personnel costs in the school's early years but also foster a pipeline of highly trained educators who share the Institute's commitment to inclusion, autonomy, and advocacy.

Transition planning is a cornerstone of The Dawn Institute's mission. A Transition Coordinator, working in collaboration with the Special Education Director and School Counselor, will develop partnerships with local businesses and community organizations to provide work-based learning, internships, and service-learning opportunities. By year three, the school will also employ Job Coaches, who may also serve as paraeducators, to help students navigate internships and career-readiness experiences within the community.

Fiscal, human resources, and facility management will be handled collaboratively by the School Director and office manager, in coordination with the Governing Board and, as needed, external providers specializing in school finance and operations. This model ensures compliance, transparency, and accountability in all operational functions.

The Dawn Institute's daily operations are guided by a student-centered philosophy that emphasizes modeling at all levels. Staff collaboration is not only a strategy for supporting student success—it is also an intentional demonstration of the teamwork, communication, and problem-solving skills that students are encouraged to develop themselves. All staff work together across disciplines—academic, behavioral, and social-emotional—to ensure each student receives a personalized, well-rounded education. The school culture prioritizes open communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to student growth, inclusion, and belonging.

ADMINISTRATIVE ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND QUALIFICATIONS

The leadership structure of The Dawn Institute is intentionally designed to ensure strong instructional leadership, legal and fiscal compliance, and a supportive, collaborative environment for staff and students. Each administrator's responsibilities and qualifications reflect the school's mission to provide inclusive, individualized education that prepares students for postsecondary success and independent living.

School Director

The School Director serves as the chief administrative officer and instructional leader of The Dawn Institute, reporting directly to the Governing Board. The Governing Board has not yet identified the founding School Director but has established a clear plan for recruitment and selection. The Board will conduct a statewide search to identify a mission-aligned leader who demonstrates both educational expertise and a commitment to inclusive practices. The selection process will include formal interviews, reference checks, and a review of leadership philosophy to ensure alignment with The Dawn Institute's mission, vision, and founding principles.

The Director is responsible for the overall management and day-to-day operation of the school, including:

- Overseeing curriculum development and instructional quality;
- Supervising and evaluating all staff, ensure licensure and that they meet the high-qualified teacher standard;
- Leading general education hiring processes (in collaboration with the Special Education Director for specialized staff);
- Managing the school's budget, purchasing, and financial operations in coordination with the Governing Board and Finance Committee;
- Ensuring compliance with state and federal education laws, including FERPA, Section 504, and the ADA;
- Overseeing school-wide behavior management in collaboration with the Behavior Specialist and School Counselor; and
- Maintaining communication with parents, the community, and the Governing Board.

Qualifications:

The School Director will hold at least a Master's degree with experience in education, leadership, management, and oversight. Preferred candidates will have demonstrated success in instructional supervision, team leadership, and compliance with state and federal education regulations. The ideal candidate will also possess a strong understanding of SDI, UDL, and transition planning for students with disabilities.

Special Education Director

The Special Education Director is responsible for all aspects of special education programming, compliance, and service delivery. Key responsibilities include:

- Overseeing all IDEA compliance, including IEP development, monitoring, and documentation;
- Supervising all special education staff, including case managers and paraeducators;
- Managing hiring and professional development for all special education personnel;
- Developing and overseeing systems for progress monitoring, data collection, and reporting;
- Managing the special education budget and ensuring fiscal compliance for all IDEA-related expenditures;
- Coordinating with the School Director, Behavior Specialist, and School Counselor to ensure comprehensive student support; and
- Serving as the primary liaison for all state and federal audits related to IDEA.

Qualifications:

The Special Education Director will hold a Master's degree and valid licensure as a Special Education Educator in Utah, with a minimum of three years' experience managing IEPs and demonstrated skill in instructional leadership, compliance, fiscal management, and data-based decision-making.

School Counselor

The School Counselor plays a key role in student support, advocacy, and mental health, serving as both the 504 Coordinator and the leader of the school's social-emotional and transition programs. Responsibilities include:

- Providing academic, career, and social-emotional counseling to students;
- Coordinating 504 plans and ensuring compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act;
- Supporting transition planning in collaboration with the Transition Coordinator and Special Education Director;
- Promoting mental health awareness and implementing school-wide wellness initiatives; and
- Serving as a crisis intervention and support resource for staff and students.

Qualifications:

The School Counselor will hold a Master's degree in School Counseling or related field and possess the credentials required to provide mental health and counseling support in a school setting. Licensure as a School Counselor or Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) is preferred.

Behavior Specialist

The Behavior Specialist ensures that behavioral supports are proactive, positive, and evidence-based. Responsibilities include:

- Developing and implementing Behavior Intervention Plans (BIPs) and Positive Behavior Support Plans;
- Providing consultation and modeling for classroom staff and paraeducators;
- Leading staff training on behavioral interventions, crisis management, and de-escalation strategies;
- Collecting and analyzing behavioral data to guide program improvements; and
- Collaborating with the School Director and Special Education Director on disciplinary procedures and tiered supports.

Qualifications:

The Behavior Specialist should have experience in Applied Behavior Analysis and behavior intervention, with BCBA certification strongly preferred. Additional experience in special education or school-based behavioral health is desirable.

Transition Coordinator

The Transition Coordinator leads all career, college, and community-readiness programs. Responsibilities include:

- Developing and implementing transition plans that prepare students for postsecondary education, employment, and independent living;
- Building partnerships with community agencies, employers, and local universities;
- Supervising Job Coaches and coordinating work-based learning opportunities;
- Collaborating with the School Counselor and Special Education Director to align transition services with student IEPs and goals; and
- Tracking student outcomes and maintaining data on postsecondary placements.

Qualifications:

The Transition Coordinator will have a background in special education, vocational rehabilitation, or workforce development, with demonstrated experience in program coordination, partnership building, and transition planning for individuals with disabilities.

Office Manager

The Office Manager ensures the efficient operation of the school's administrative and support functions. Responsibilities include:

- Managing day-to-day office operations, including scheduling, communications, and correspondence;
- Supporting payroll, HR documentation, and basic compliance reporting;
- Assisting the School Director with administrative and logistical needs; and
- Serving as a first point of contact for families and visitors.

Qualifications:

The Office Manager should have strong organizational, communication, and technology skills, with prior experience in office management or administrative support, preferably in an educational or nonprofit setting.

Registrar

The Registrar manages student enrollment, academic records, and data reporting.

Responsibilities include:

- Maintaining accurate student information and transcripts;
- Coordinating enrollment and withdrawal processes;
- Supporting compliance with state reporting requirements; and
- Assisting the Office Manager and School Director with administrative tasks as needed.

Qualifications:

The Registrar should have experience with student information systems, attention to detail, and strong organizational skills. Prior experience in a school administrative role is preferred.

Leadership Rationale

This organizational model ensures that leadership responsibilities are clearly defined, accountability is distributed appropriately, and all operations—from instruction to compliance—are guided by qualified professionals. The School Director, Special Education Director, and School Counselor together form the school's core administrative team, collaboratively leading academic, behavioral, and social-emotional initiatives while ensuring that every student receives the individualized support they need. The Behavior Specialist, Transition Coordinator, Office Manager, Registrar, and instructional and support teams serve as the administrative support network—working collaboratively with the core administrators to ensure smooth operations, consistent communication, and student-centered decision-making. Collectively, this unified team approach ensures that The Dawn Institute maintains a strong foundation for inclusive, effective, and sustainable school management.

STAFFING PLAN AND RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

The Dawn Institute's staffing plan is intentionally designed to align with its mission of accessibility, advocacy, and individualized learning. Because the school prioritizes small-group instruction, intensive supports, and co-teaching, staffing levels are structured to maintain low student-to-teacher ratios and ensure personalized attention for every learner.

Anticipated Staffing Needs

Year 1 (50 students):

The school will open with approximately:

- 1 School Director
- 1 Special Education Director
- 1 School Counselor
- 1 Behavior Specialist / BCBA (part-time to start)
- 1 Office Manager (part-time, if needed)
- 1 Registrar (part-time, if needed)
- 5 General Education Teachers (full- and part-time)
- 1 Special Education Teacher
- 3–5 Paraeducators (part-time employees)

Year 3 and Beyond (up to 110 students):

As enrollment increases, additional staff will be added strategically to maintain individualized support and program quality, including:

- 1 Transition Coordinator (Year 2)
- Additional General Education and Special Education Teachers and Paraeducators (as enrollment and IEP caseloads grow)
- Job Coaches (as part of the transition program's expansion)

This staffing structure ensures that each component of the school's educational program—academic instruction, social-emotional development, and transition readiness—is supported by qualified professionals with specialized expertise.

The Dawn Institute's goal is to maintain a low staff-to-student ratio, ideally averaging 1:8–1:10 in core classes. This allows for individualized instruction, meaningful relationships, and effective behavior and transition support. As enrollment grows, staffing levels will expand proportionally to maintain these ratios and uphold program integrity.

The Governing Board will review staffing levels annually as part of the school's strategic planning and budgeting process, ensuring that staffing continues to meet program needs and fiscal sustainability.

Recruitment

The Dawn Institute is committed to hiring educators and staff who are highly qualified and deeply aligned with the school's mission. The school's approach to teacher recruitment centers on three pillars: mission-driven culture, professional growth, and sustainable support.

Recruitment materials and interviews will emphasize:

- The school's individualized and mission-driven model;
- Expectations for collaboration, innovation, and data-informed instruction;
- A culture of inclusion and respect for all students, staff, and families; and
- Opportunities for professional growth, mentorship, and leadership development.

Ideal candidates will have previous experience in inclusive or alternative settings, familiarity with transition planning for students with disabilities, and a passion for preparing students for postsecondary success and independent living.

Recruitment will prioritize professional diversity, experience working with students with disabilities, and a demonstrated commitment to equity and accessibility.

Recruitment strategies will include:

- Posting on statewide and national education job Boards, including Utah Education Network (UEN), Indeed, and HigherEdJobs;
- Partnering with local universities such as Utah Valley University, Brigham Young University, and the University of Utah to recruit education and special education graduates and student teachers;
- Outreach to professional organizations including the Utah Council for Exceptional Children, Utah School Counselor Association, and Utah Association of Special Education Directors;
- Collaboration with community-based and disability advocacy organizations to attract candidates experienced in inclusive and person-centered practices; and
- Offering referral incentives for current employees who recruit highly qualified, mission-aligned candidates.

All recruitment processes will follow non-discrimination and equal employment opportunity guidelines, ensuring fair consideration for applicants regardless of disability, race, gender, or background.

HIGH QUALITY TEACHER STANDARDS, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (PD), AND CONTINUED LEARNING

By cultivating a team of reflective, student-centered educators and investing in their professional development, the school ensures that every classroom is led by a teacher prepared to deliver rigorous, accessible, and empowering instruction. Teachers at The Dawn Institute must embody a balance of pedagogical expertise, flexibility, and compassion. Because the school serves a diverse population, teachers at The Dawn Institute will demonstrate:

- Strong knowledge of differentiated instruction and the ability to implement UDL and SDI across all content areas—or a demonstrated willingness to learn and apply these frameworks;
- Experience with MTSS and data-driven instructional decision-making;

- A proven ability to differentiate instruction, collaborate across disciplines, and maintain high expectations for all learners, ensuring that every student is challenged and supported appropriately;
- Commitment to inclusion and teamwork, including co-teaching and working closely with special education staff, counselors, and paraeducators;
- Proficiency in classroom management rooted in positive behavior supports and trauma-informed practices;
- Skill in integrating technology and assistive tools to make curriculum accessible to all students;
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills, fostering positive relationships with students and families;
- Commitment to continuous professional learning, reflection, and alignment with the school's mission of advocacy and independence;
- A positive, strengths-based mindset toward students with disabilities, grounded in dignity, high expectations, and the rejection of ableism in all forms; and
- A demonstrated growth mindset, embracing feedback, innovation, and the belief that all students and educators are capable of ongoing learning and progress.

By recruiting reflective, student-centered educators and investing in their continued professional growth, The Dawn Institute ensures that every classroom is led by a teacher who can successfully deliver rigorous, accessible, and empowering instruction.

Highly Qualified Teachers Standard

The Dawn Institute seeks to employ highly qualified, licensed teachers who bring both instructional expertise and compassion to their practice.

- All core academic teachers will hold a secondary teaching license with appropriate subject-area endorsements (e.g., mathematics, English language arts, science, social studies).
- Special education staff will hold valid Utah Special Education (K-12) endorsements and at least a bachelor's degree.
- Teachers may be hired under an associate or LEA-specific license, provided they are actively pursuing full licensure in compliance with USBE regulations.
- Related service providers (e.g., speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists) will maintain appropriate state licensure or certification.
- CTE and elective teachers may hold industry certifications or CTE endorsements aligned with their specialty areas (e.g., career skills, life skills, technology).
- Paraprofessionals will meet ESSA qualification standards through college coursework or competency testing.

Professional Development

The Dawn Institute is committed to fostering a culture of continuous professional growth that mirrors the individualized, student-centered philosophy guiding its classrooms. Staff will receive ongoing professional development to ensure continued licensure, instructional excellence, and adherence to evidence-based practices. This intentional structure ensures that every educator is fully equipped to meet the diverse academic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs of all students.

Professional Development Framework

The school's professional development program is designed to ensure that every educator can effectively implement The Dawn Institute's instructional model. PD will be ongoing, data-informed, and collaborative, incorporating both internal and external expertise. Sessions will be facilitated by school leadership, contracted specialists (such as a Board Certified Behavior Analyst), and higher education or community partners.

Core PD topics will include:

- UDL and accessibility practices;
- SDI and progress monitoring;
- Differentiated assessment methods and formative evaluation;
- Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and de-escalation strategies;
- Transition planning, self-determination, and advocacy education; and
- Cultural competence, diversity, equity, and accessibility in education.

Teachers will also engage in peer mentoring, co-teaching observation cycles, and professional learning communities to promote collaboration, reflective practice, and shared problem-solving. Through these ongoing structures, PD becomes part of the daily rhythm of the school—integrated into planning, instruction, and reflection rather than existing as a stand-alone requirement.

Commitment to Excellence

By recruiting reflective, student-centered educators and investing in their sustained professional growth, The Dawn Institute ensures that every classroom is led by a teacher capable of delivering rigorous, accessible, and empowering instruction. In this way, the professional development and evaluation systems (see *Employee Evaluation* section) work hand-in-hand to create a culture of accountability, innovation, and lifelong learning.

Non-Certificated Instructional Personnel

At The Dawn Institute, we believe learning extends beyond students—it includes the adults who teach, support, and serve them. The school is proud to serve as a center of learning not only for students, but also for professionals. With our described ongoing professional development, mentoring and real-world experience is made to help increase both the number and quality of skilled educators and support personnel in the field of education. Whether or not staff remain at The Dawn Institute throughout their careers, our goal is to inform, train, and educate more people—strengthening inclusive education practices throughout the state and beyond.

The Dawn Institute recognizes that non-certificated instructional staff play a vital role in implementing IEPs, supporting differentiated instruction, and ensuring inclusive access to learning. To maintain high standards of quality and compliance, all non-certificated personnel will be carefully screened, trained, and supervised under clear, evidence-based criteria.

Hiring and Qualification Standards

The school will establish defined minimum qualifications for all non-certificated positions. These standards include:

- A high school diploma or equivalent (minimum), with preference given to candidates who have completed some college coursework or earned an associate's or bachelor's degree in education, psychology, social work, or a related field;
- Demonstrated experience working with individuals with disabilities;
- Evidence of strong interpersonal skills, professionalism, and a positive attitude toward individuals with disabilities, consistent with The Dawn Institute's belief in dignity and respect for all learners; and
- For certain positions (e.g., Behavior Technician, Job Coach, Paraeducator), completion of or willingness to complete relevant professional certification or training, such as RBT certification or transition/job-coaching training through USBE-approved programs.

Initial and Ongoing Training

The Dawn Institute provides a structured onBoarding and ongoing training program designed to prepare these team members to work effectively within inclusive classrooms and community-based learning environments.

Initial training will include orientation on school policies, confidentiality, student safety, and disability awareness, as well as direct instruction in areas such as positive behavior support, data collection, and effective communication with students and families. Each new staff member will receive guided mentorship from certified teachers and the Special Education Director to ensure fidelity to instructional and behavioral frameworks.

Ongoing professional learning will occur throughout the year through workshops, coaching, and participation in PLCs alongside teachers. Topics will include implementing SDI strategies under teacher direction, supporting UDL-based instruction, facilitating community-based learning, and promoting social-emotional growth. Paraeducators working under the supervision of a BCBA may also receive RBT training to strengthen behavioral and social-emotional support capacity.

This layered approach ensures that all staff—regardless of certification status—are knowledgeable, confident, and aligned with the school's mission of fostering inclusion, advocacy, and independence.

Supervision and Accountability

All non-certificated staff will work under the direct supervision of licensed teachers or administrators:

- The Special Education Director supervises paraeducators and manages special education training, including oversight of data collection and IEP progress monitoring.
- The Behavior Specialist supervises staff responsible for implementing behavior intervention plans.
- The Transition Coordinator oversees job coaches and community-based learning programs.

Pathways for Professional Growth

The Dawn Institute is committed to supporting ongoing staff growth and certification advancement. Both aspiring general education and special education teachers who are working toward full state licensure will have the opportunity to participate in the Utah APPEL program. Under the direct supervision and mentorship of the School Director and Special Education Director, teachers enrolled in APPEL will receive guidance in lesson design, data-based decision-making, and compliance with state and federal standards. This structured pathway ensures that educators not only meet credentialing requirements but also develop deep expertise in inclusive, evidence-based instruction.

Beyond licensure, The Dawn Institute actively invests in long-term professional growth by encouraging teachers to pursue advanced degrees, endorsements, and specialized training aligned with the school's mission. Educators are supported in attending relevant conferences, completing university coursework, and engaging in collaborative leadership opportunities such as mentoring peers, leading PLCs, or facilitating community partnerships.

This commitment to professional growth strengthens teacher retention, supports career advancement, and ensures that every educator—regardless of entry point—has a clear, supported pathway to mastery. By investing in teachers' development, The Dawn Institute builds a thriving community of professionals dedicated to inclusion, advocacy, and lifelong learning.

RETAINING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

The Dawn Institute recognizes that the success of its mission depends on the retention of passionate, skilled, and mission-aligned educators. The Dawn Institute's retention philosophy is based on the belief that effective teachers remain in environments where they feel valued, supported, and continually growing.

Key retention strategies include:

- *Collaborative Culture:* Staff will work in an environment grounded in empathy, teamwork, and shared advocacy. Teachers will be supported through collaborative planning time, peer mentoring, and co-teaching models.
- *Professional Growth Opportunities:* Every teacher will receive structured professional development, including workshops, coaching, and the chance to pursue leadership roles such as mentoring or curriculum coordination. The school will provide professional development stipends to encourage participation in external learning opportunities.
- *Work-Life Balance:* Recognizing the demands of high-quality teaching, The Dawn Institute offers flexible scheduling options for roles that permit off-site work (e.g., one day per week for IEP writing or community coordination).
- *Competitive Compensation:* The school will offer pay scales that are competitive with neighboring districts and charter schools, recognizing the specialized skills required for inclusive education.

- *Supportive Leadership*: School leadership will emphasize open communication, transparency, and recognition. Teachers will have access to regular feedback, administrative support, and wellness resources.
- *Values-Aligned Environment*: The Dawn Institute maintains a culture that rejects ableism and promotes dignity, equity, and a growth mindset—for both students and staff. Teachers who thrive here will do so because they feel part of a collective mission that matters.

The Governing Board and School Director will track retention data annually and conduct staff satisfaction surveys to identify areas for improvement. By fostering a culture of respect, professional trust, and shared purpose, The Dawn Institute aims to establish itself as a destination school for educators who are passionate about inclusive, student-centered learning.

STAFFING-RELATED BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

The Dawn Institute's budget is structured to prioritize staffing as the foundation of its inclusive, student-centered educational program. Based on conservative funding projections the school has intentionally designed its financial plan to invest in personnel, training, and program infrastructure before expanding enrollment.

Approximately 70–75% of total expenditures will be dedicated to personnel costs, including salaries, benefits, and professional development. This reflects the school's belief that highly qualified, mission-aligned staff are the single most important factor in student success.

The school's inclusive instructional model requires a team of professionals with expertise in special education, mental health, transition services, and accessibility. Budget allocations are strategically aligned with The Dawn Institute's educational framework and operational priorities, including:

- Low staff-to-student ratio (1:8–1:10) to enable personalized learning and strong relationships;
- Competitive salaries and benefits to attract and retain qualified educators;
- Professional development stipends to support ongoing training in UDL, SDI, and MTSS;
- Investment in assistive technology and adaptive materials to enhance accessibility;
- Funding for transition education and job coaching, allowing students to access real-world learning; and
- Targeted use of IDEA and state funds to ensure equitable support for students with disabilities.

These budget assumptions are both mission-driven and financially sound, ensuring that resources directly support instructional quality and student outcomes. As enrollment grows, additional positions (e.g., Behavior Specialist, Transition Coordinator, Job Coaches, General and Special Education Teachers) will be added in alignment with student needs, IEP caseloads, and enrollment thresholds.

Fiscal oversight will be conducted by the Governing Board in partnership with the Treasurer and School Director, ensuring transparency and accountability. All expenditures, including staffing levels, will be reviewed annually during the budgeting process to ensure financial sustainability and program fidelity.

During the startup phase, administrative salaries will remain modest to prioritize classroom staffing and direct instructional support. This ensures that the majority of available resources are directed toward teaching, learning, and student-centered services during the school's critical first years of operation.

The Board may also leverage the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation to pursue additional grants, community donations, and partnerships that enhance staffing capacity or fund specialized programs without increasing the school's operational burden.

Approximate Year 1 expense distribution is projected as follows:

- Personnel & Benefits: 70–75%
- Facilities & Operations: 10–12%
- Instructional Materials & Technology: 8–10%
- Professional Development & Training: 3–5%
- Administrative & Other Costs: 2–4%

By aligning budget assumptions with its educational and staffing priorities, The Dawn Institute ensures that every financial decision reflects its mission—investing in people, accessibility, and opportunity. The school's lean but intentional startup plan prioritizes quality over quantity, ensuring that staff, supports, and structures grow responsibly with student enrollment while sustaining long-term fiscal health.

ENROLLMENT AND GROWTH REFLECTION

The Dawn Institute's staffing plan is intentionally designed to scale in alignment with enrollment growth while maintaining the school's commitment to small class sizes, individualized instruction, and intensive student support. The school's projected enrollment begins with 50 students in Year 1 and grows to a maximum of approximately 110 students by Year 5, allowing for gradual expansion that ensures quality, compliance, and sustainability.

Year 1: Foundational Staffing

In its first year of operation, The Dawn Institute will focus on establishing a strong instructional and administrative foundation. The initial team is sufficient to meet the needs of a 50-student population while maintaining a low student-to-staff ratio (approximately 1:10). At this stage, many staff will hold cross-functional responsibilities—ensuring efficiency while allowing the school to remain financially responsible during the startup phase.

Years 2–3: Strategic Program Expansion

As enrollment increases to approximately 60–80 students, staffing will grow strategically to maintain service quality and program depth. New roles added during this period may include

the Transition Coordinator, Additional General Education and Special Education Teachers, and Paraeducators as IEP caseloads and instructional demands increase.

Administrative staffing will remain lean but capable, with most growth concentrated in instructional and student-support roles that have direct impact on learning and transition outcomes.

Years 4–5: Program Maturity and Sustainability

By full enrollment (approximately 110 students), The Dawn Institute will employ a comprehensive multidisciplinary team supporting both academic and transition-based learning. Staffing growth will reflect expanded elective offerings, greater access to community-based learning, and additional related service providers as needed or in place of some contracted services (e.g., job coaches, on-site related speech or occupational therapists).

At this stage, the school will also strengthen internal leadership capacity. Leadership expansion may include—if justified by need and supported by the budget—an Assistant School Director, an Administrative Assistant, Social Worker, and a Building and Facility Manager to oversee campus operations and safety.

All established leadership roles, including the School Director, Special Education Director, and other administrative staff, will receive annual pay increases to reflect professional growth, institutional commitment, and the Board's recognition of their continued contributions to the school's mission and long-term success.

Scalability and Fiscal Alignment

Staffing growth directly corresponds with student enrollment projections and available per-pupil revenue, ensuring that the school grows responsibly and maintains long-term fiscal health.

- Each new position will be added only when enrollment thresholds and funding levels justify expansion.
- Staffing decisions will be reviewed annually by the School Director and Governing Board during budget planning to ensure sustainability.
- Administrative roles will remain modest and efficient to prioritize resources for classroom instruction and direct student services.

This gradual, needs-based approach to staffing guarantees that The Dawn Institute can expand capacity without compromising its founding mission of accessibility, advocacy, and individualized learning.

EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP, COMPLIANCE, AND EVALUATIONS

Employer–Employee Relationship

The Dawn Institute is an equal-opportunity employer committed to creating an inclusive, respectful, and collaborative work environment. All employees—administrators, teachers, and support staff—are employees of The Dawn Institute Governing Board, which serves as the school's legal employer. As previously described in detail, day-to-day supervision, evaluation,

and management of employees will be delegated to the School Director, under the direction and policies established by the Governing Board.

While The Dawn Institute is structured to ensure accountability and smooth operations, the school's internal culture emphasizes collaboration over hierarchy. Every employee—whether administrative, instructional, or support—shares in the responsibility of advancing the school's mission. However, to ensure efficiency and clarity in communication, a defined chain of reporting is maintained. This structure serves not as a hierarchy of power, but as a flow of support: for example, teachers report behavioral incidents to the Behavior Specialist (and to the School Director if suspension or expulsion becomes necessary); questions about IEPs or accommodations go directly to the Special Education Director; and matters of student conflict or safety are escalated to the School Director.

This framework ensures that every staff member knows where to turn for guidance and that decisions are made collaboratively, promptly, and with the best interest of students in mind.

The Dawn Institute complies with all applicable federal and state labor laws, including the Utah Code Title 53G (Public Education System), Utah Administrative Code R277, and all relevant employment and civil rights laws. All employment decisions—including hiring, promotion, compensation, and termination—are based solely on qualifications, merit, and organizational need, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, gender, age, disability, national origin, or any other protected classification.

Employee Evaluation

Employee evaluations at The Dawn Institute are designed to ensure professional growth, instructional excellence, and accountability. Evaluations are both formative and summative, emphasizing mentorship, reflection, and continuous improvement rather than mere compliance.

Evaluation Structure

All staff participate in an annual evaluation process.

- Teachers and Instructional Staff are evaluated by the School Director (or designee) using a rubric adapted for inclusive and special education environments.
- Administrators are evaluated by the Governing Board or its designee.
- Non-certificated Personnel (e.g., paraeducators and support staff) are evaluated by their direct supervisors—such as the Special Education Director or Behavior Specialist—focusing on reliability, professionalism, and contribution to student growth.

Each evaluation incorporates formal observations, student outcome data, collaboration indicators, and evidence of professional development. Results inform individualized goals, ongoing support, and contract renewal decisions.

This growth-centered model reinforces The Dawn Institute's belief that continuous improvement—among both students and staff—is essential for achieving lasting success and sustaining a culture of excellence and belonging.

Sample Policy: Employee Evaluation Policy

The Dawn Institute shall implement a performance evaluation system consistent with Utah Code §§ 53G-5-407 through 53G-5-409. Evaluations will:

- Promote instructional improvement and professional growth;
- Identify strengths and areas for development;
- Provide targeted feedback and resources for improvement; and
- Inform decisions regarding renewal, advancement, and compensation.
- Each employee will receive at least one formal evaluation annually, supplemented by informal feedback cycles throughout the year.

Employment of Relatives

The Dawn Institute recognizes the importance of avoiding conflicts of interest in all employment matters. To maintain transparency and public trust, the school prohibits nepotistic hiring practices as defined by Utah Code.

Sample Policy: Employment of Relatives Policy

In accordance with Utah Code § 52-3-1, The Dawn Institute prohibits any individual from participating in the hiring, supervision, or evaluation of a relative.

1. "Relative" means a spouse, parent, child, sibling, grandparent, grandchild, uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, or in-law relationship.
2. No employee or Board member may use their position to influence the employment, compensation, promotion, or discipline of a relative.
3. Exceptions must be approved by the Governing Board and documented in public meeting minutes.
4. Any potential conflicts of interest will be disclosed in writing and addressed through recusal procedures.

Compliance with Criminal Background Check Requirements

To ensure student safety and compliance with Utah Code, all employees, contractors, and volunteers with unsupervised access to students will undergo state and national background checks prior to hire and periodically thereafter.

Sample Policy: Criminal Background Check Policy

Consistent with Utah Code § 53G-11-402 and § 53G-5-408:

1. All prospective employees, contractors, and volunteers with unsupervised student access must submit to a fingerprint-based background check prior to beginning work.
2. Background checks will be processed through the Utah Bureau of Criminal Identification (BCI) and the FBI.
3. The School Director will maintain confidential records of clearance status and will report results to the Governing Board for verification.
4. Employees with disqualifying offenses as defined by Utah law will not be eligible for employment.
5. Background checks will be renewed every five years, or sooner if required by law.

Licensing and Compliance Assurance

The School Director and Governing Board will maintain a compliance checklist for all licensed staff, ensuring that educator licenses and credentials are active and valid through USBE. The Board will review compliance quarterly to ensure adherence to state certification, fingerprinting, and reporting requirements.

Additionally, the Board shall, within 30 days of authorization, complete and verify criminal background checks for all Governing Board members, in compliance with Utah Code § 53G-5-408(4).

Through these policies, The Dawn Institute ensures that employment practices reflect the school's mission of integrity, accountability, and inclusion. The evaluation, background check, and nepotism policies together establish a foundation of ethical governance, safety, and professional excellence, ensuring that every staff member—certificated or non-certificated—contributes to a secure, equitable, and thriving educational environment.

Section 7: Business Plan

Budget

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW INITIAL SUMMARY

The Dawn Institute's financial plan is grounded in fiscal responsibility, sustainability, and mission alignment. The school will maintain a transparent, Board-approved budgeting process, with conservative, data-informed projections for both revenue and expenditures. All fiscal operations will comply with state and federal regulations and undergo annual independent audits to ensure accountability and transparency.

Financial priorities are intentionally aligned with the school's mission—directing resources toward high-quality personnel, professional development, inclusive practices, and accessibility infrastructure. The largest portion of the budget is devoted to instructional staffing, small class sizes, and student supports that uphold the school's commitment to individualized education.

Anticipated and initial funding is supported by the Charter School Start-Up and Implementation Grant and Utah State Charter School Board start-up funds, providing essential resources for facility setup, furnishings, and technology prior to opening. Once operational, the school will rely primarily on per-pupil revenue (approximately \$8,000 per student), IDEA allocations, and most notably, grants and donations. (See *Revenue and Expenditure Assumptions For The First Three Fiscal Years* section for a multi-pronged sustainability plan.)

Projected expenditures emphasize personnel and programming, with an estimated \$788,000 in salaries and benefits in Year 1 and a total budget of approximately \$1,000,125, including a 5% contingency reserve. Facility costs are expected to remain near \$72,000 annually, while instructional materials and technology expenditures will decline after Year 1 as initial curriculum and technology purchases stabilize.

The Governing Board will implement monthly financial oversight, including cash flow monitoring, quarterly reviews, and external audits to ensure proactive fiscal management. Should the school experience a funding delay or enrollment variance, the Finance Committee is prepared to authorize temporary adjustments in non-essential spending or seek bridge funding through grants or short-term financing.

Through disciplined budgeting, diversified revenue development, and rigorous oversight, The Dawn Institute is positioned to sustain financial stability while advancing its mission of accessible, high-quality education for students with disabilities.

The remainder of this section provides a detailed explanation of projected revenues, expenditures, priorities, and contingency plans for the first three fiscal years of operation.

FINANCIAL PRIORITIES

The Dawn Institute's financial priorities are purposefully designed to advance its mission of providing an inclusive, college-preparatory education for students with disabilities and diverse learning needs. Each budgetary decision is guided by the school's four founding principles—advocacy education, individuality, differentiation, and social-emotional wellbeing—ensuring that fiscal planning directly supports instructional quality, accessibility, and long-term sustainability.

Investment in People

Personnel costs represent the largest portion of the school's budget because staff quality and small class sizes are central to the success of The Dawn Institute's mission.

- Low student-to-staff ratios ensure individualized attention and meaningful progress monitoring.
- Competitive salaries and professional development stipends attract and retain high-quality educators trained in SDI, UDL, and evidence-based behavioral supports.
- Funding for paraeducators, transition staff, and behavior specialists guarantees students receive the daily support needed for academic and social success.

Accessible and Safe Facilities

A significant portion of the budget is allocated to maintaining an ADA-compliant, single-story facility in downtown Provo that prioritizes student safety, sensory accessibility, and independence. The school's investment in environmental design—light colors, adaptive seating, and technology access—creates a physical space that reflects the school's inclusive philosophy and supports positive learning outcomes.

Instructional Resources and Technology

The budget includes dedicated funding for instructional materials, assistive technology, and adaptive devices, ensuring equitable access to the curriculum for all students. Technology expenditures focus on supporting students with communication, executive functioning, and self-advocacy tools.

Transition and Community Integration

Consistent with the school's emphasis on advocacy and real-world readiness, financial resources are reserved for job coaching, community-based learning, and partnerships with local organizations and universities. The school's Friday Community Days are financially supported through transportation and coordination funds built into the operational budget.

Professional Development and Growth

Each year, the budget designates funds for ongoing staff training in inclusive practices, ABA, trauma-informed teaching, and transition planning. The Governing Board recognizes that empowering staff to grow professionally strengthens the entire school community and ensures consistency with best practices in special education.

Fiscal Responsibility and Sustainability

Finally, The Dawn Institute maintains a 5% contingency reserve to manage unforeseen expenses and ensure operational stability. The Governing Board conducts quarterly financial reviews and adjusts spending as necessary to maintain alignment with the school's mission and student needs. The school also seeks annual grants and partnerships to increase access.

The Dawn Institute's financial priorities are a direct reflection of its values—investing first and foremost in people, accessibility, and real-world learning. Every dollar spent advances the mission of empowering students with disabilities to achieve academic success, self-determination, and independence, ensuring the school remains both fiscally responsible and educationally transformative.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE ASSUMPTIONS FOR THE FIRST THREE FISCAL YEARS

The Dawn Institute recognizes that the first three years of operation are the most financially vulnerable for new charter schools, particularly those emphasizing specialized programming for students with disabilities. To ensure stability and fiscal responsibility, the Governing Board and leadership team have developed a multi-tiered financial strategy built on conservative budgeting, diversified revenue development, proactive monitoring, and transparent oversight.

1. Conservative Budgeting and Phased Growth

The school's financial model ties all staffing, facility use, and program expansion directly to verified enrollment numbers. For example, the first-year staffing plan supports up to 50 students, with additional hires and program enhancements occurring only after enrollment targets are met and sustained.

Essential expenditures—such as personnel, student services, and compliance—are prioritized in every budget cycle, while non-critical purchases may be deferred until sufficient reserves are confirmed.

The Governing Board maintains a rolling three-year budget projection to anticipate financial needs and adjust early to revenue or cost changes. This structure ensures flexibility and foresight as the school transitions from start-up to stable operations.

2. Projected Revenues and Expenditures

Revenue projections incorporate multiple funding sources, with a focus on sustainability and program quality:

- **State Funding:** The Weighted Pupil Unit (WPU) provides the primary revenue stream. Calculations are based on state-published per-pupil funding rates and projected enrollment growth.
- **Federal Funding (IDEA Part B):** Given the school's population of students with disabilities, The Dawn Institute anticipates receiving above-average IDEA allocations, which will directly support specialized instruction and related services.
- **Charter School Start-Up and Implementation Grant:** The school is seeking to receive \$357,500 over two years, which will provide critical support for curriculum development, technology, and start-up operations.

- Grants and Donations: Beyond start-up funds, the school will pursue at least three major grant opportunities annually and conduct an annual community fundraiser coordinated by the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation to support ongoing program and facility needs.

Each year's budget includes a 4% annual salary increase to remain competitive and a 5% contingency reserve to mitigate unexpected expenses or delays in funding. Enrollment is projected to increase by approximately 22% per year, reaching full capacity of 110 students by Year 5. This gradual increase allows the school to expand staff and services responsibly.

<i>Fiscal Year</i>	<i>Projected Enrollment</i>	<i>WPU</i>	<i>Total Personnel & Benefits</i>	<i>Total Budget (with 5% Contingency)</i>
Year 1	50 Students	+\$400,000	\$788,000	\$1,000,125
Year 2	61 Students	+488,000	\$850,720	\$1,062,805
Year 3	74 Students	+592,000	\$965,037	\$1,187,380

Year 2 personnel costs increase to include a fourth paraeducator and cost-of-living adjustments for all returning staff. Year 3 projections add a part-time Transition Coordinator, one part-time general education teacher, and an additional paraeducator to support growing enrollment and program expansion. Personnel projections are directly tied to verified student enrollment growth each year. In all years, total personnel and benefits increases remain within the annual WPU funding increase, ensuring sustainability and fiscal responsibility.

3. Cash Flow Management and Financial Oversight

The Finance Committee, which may be led by the Board Treasurer, reviews monthly cash flow statements, revenue reports, and expenditure trends to identify and address variances early. Financial reports are reviewed during every regular Board meeting to maintain transparency and accountability.

The school will implement accrual-based accounting and maintain a minimum two-month operational reserve to ensure coverage of payroll and essential expenses. The Governing Board will also contract with a state-approved external accountant for monthly reconciliation and quarterly financial reviews.

An independent annual audit will be conducted in accordance with GAAP and SCSB standards.

4. Grant Funding and Supplemental Revenue

Recognizing that operational costs exceed per-pupil funding, The Dawn Institute will actively pursue state, federal, and private grant opportunities. Examples include:

- IDEA Flow-Through and Discretionary Grants for special education programming;
- Utah STEM Action Center Grants for inclusive STEM curriculum development; and

- Utah Workforce Innovation Grants to support transition and job coaching programs.

The Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation will lead fundraising and grant initiatives, pursuing at least three grants annually and hosting at least one annual fundraising event and generating community and corporate partnerships. Fundraising is projected to generate \$25,000 in Year 1, increasing annually as community awareness grows.

5. Expense Flexibility and Contingency Planning

The school maintains a contingency reserve equal to 5% of total personnel and operating costs, earmarked for unexpected expenses or delays in revenue.

Vendor and service contracts will include flexible terms allowing for adjustments or postponements in the event of a budget shortfall.

If funding challenges arise, the Governing Board may approve short-term, low-interest financing or a line of credit beginning in Year 3. Any debt would be capped at no more than 10% of annual revenue and repaid within 3–10 years, using predictable state and federal revenue streams.

This cautious approach ensures that borrowing remains temporary, manageable, and mission-aligned, safeguarding the school's long-term sustainability.

6. Break-Even Enrollment, Fiscal Sustainability, and Long-Term Outlook

According to the Charter School Budget Template formula (see Appendix I), The Dawn Institute's break-even enrollment is projected at 50 students in the first year of operation. This estimate is based on projected revenues from state and federal funding sources, including the Charter School Start-Up and Implementation Grant distributed over two years. If we receive the Grant and if personnel and facility costs remain within projected ranges, the school will be able to sustain balanced operations in Year 1 at this enrollment level.

The break-even analysis accounts for:

- Charter School Start-Up and Implementation Grant;
- State and local per-pupil revenue based on Utah's WPU;
- Federal IDEA Part B funding, which will be higher than average due to the school's special education population;
- Strategic grant and donation support to supplement operational funding; and
- Conservative staffing and facility costs aligned with the school's small-scale model.

However, The Dawn Institute fully recognizes that once the Utah State Charter School Board start-up funds and/or Charter School Start-Up and Implementation Grant concludes, the combination of WPU and IDEA funds alone will not fully sustain operations at the school's intentionally low enrollment level.

To ensure long-term financial stability, the Governing Board and the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation have established a multi-pronged sustainability plan that includes:

- Applying for additional state, federal, and private grants at least three times annually, including those focused on inclusion, transition, and special education;
- Hosting an annual fundraiser organized by the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation to support facility improvements, student scholarships, and program innovation;
- Maintaining ongoing community partnership development to diversify funding sources and reduce reliance on per-pupil revenue alone; and
- Implementing continuous, year-round marketing and outreach to sustain enrollment and raise awareness of the school's mission and impact.

While the school acknowledges that its financial model differs from larger charter schools, this approach is intentional. Through disciplined budgeting, community engagement, and a proactive approach to fundraising, The Dawn Institute is positioned to remain financially stable while advancing its mission to serve students with disabilities and their families.

DEBT, FINANCIAL CONTINGENCY, AND RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Dawn Institute has developed a proactive and multi-layered financial contingency plan to ensure stability during the startup phase and beyond. As a mission-driven school serving a specialized population, we recognize that fiscal responsibility, foresight, and disciplined growth are essential to sustaining operations and protecting the quality of student services.

Budget Reserves and Conservative Planning

The school's initial budget includes a 5% contingency reserve (\$47,625 in Year 1) to serve as a safeguard against unanticipated costs or short-term revenue delays. In addition, all financial projections have been developed using conservative enrollment and funding estimates to prevent overreliance on optimistic revenue assumptions.

Tiered Spending and Expenditure Prioritization

The Governing Board, in collaboration with the School Director, maintains a tiered spending plan that prioritizes essential functions such as instructional staffing, special education services, and critical facility operations. Non-essential expenses—such as elective program expansion, discretionary technology, or additional non-required professional development—can be deferred or scaled back as needed without compromising educational quality.

Continuous Oversight and Rapid Response

The school will implement monthly cash flow tracking and quarterly financial reviews conducted jointly by the Board Treasurer and an external financial consultant. This structure ensures that potential shortfalls are identified early, allowing for timely intervention through spending freezes, temporary staffing adjustments, or reallocation of funds.

Enrollment Stability and Revenue Protection

Because state funding is tied to enrollment, The Dawn Institute will engage in ongoing enrollment monitoring and proactive community outreach to sustain steady student numbers. The School Director and Governing Board will lead mid-year recruitment and

retention initiatives to fill vacancies and maintain optimal enrollment levels throughout the academic year.

Supplemental Revenue and Emergency Funding

In the event of a revenue shortfall, the Governing Board will pursue multiple avenues for supplemental support, including:

- Applying for emergency stabilization grants through the Utah State Charter School Board and other education agencies.
- Conducting fundraising campaigns and community events in partnership with the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation.
- Negotiating deferred rent options or bridge funding through community partners if necessary to preserve liquidity.

Controlled Growth and Staffing Flexibility

Staffing levels will remain directly tied to confirmed enrollment. New positions—such as part-time or specialized instructional roles—will only be added once verified funding thresholds are met. This ensures the school grows sustainably without compromising financial integrity or student support.

As reflected in the projected budget and proposal, many initial positions in the first three years are intentionally structured as part-time roles. This approach allows the school to control salary and benefits costs while still maintaining the necessary level of instructional and administrative support during the startup phase. As enrollment increases and fiscal capacity strengthens, these positions may transition to full-time as appropriate, ensuring growth remains both responsible and responsive to student needs.

As previously mentioned, The Dawn Institute will collaborate with local universities to host student teachers, practicum students, and interns in education, psychology, and related service fields. These partnerships will provide valuable field experience for future educators while offering the school additional instructional and programmatic support at minimal cost.

Debt Management and Fiscal Preparedness

The Dawn Institute does not anticipate incurring debt during its first two operational years, as facilities will be secured through a cost-effective lease agreement and start-up operations supported by SCSB, and projected grants and donations. However, recognizing the financial realities faced by our small enrollment, the Governing Board has developed a prudent contingency plan should donations or grant funding fall short.

If necessary, the school may pursue short-term, low-interest financing or a line of credit beginning in Year 3 to stabilize cash flow during unexpected funding delays or emergencies. Any such debt would:

- Be approved by the Governing Board;
- Maintain a debt service ratio below 10% of annual revenue; and
- Be structured for repayment over 3–10 years, using predictable state and federal funding streams.

The Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation will play a key role in reducing the need for borrowing by expanding grant capacity and fundraising initiatives. This cautious, transparent approach ensures that any borrowing remains manageable, temporary, and mission-aligned, supporting the long-term goal of maintaining a debt-free, sustainable operation.

Summary

Through disciplined budgeting, diversified revenue planning, and vigilant oversight, The Dawn Institute is fully prepared to manage financial challenges common to new charter schools. The Governing Board's combination of educational, financial, and nonprofit expertise ensures that the school remains financially sound, compliant, and focused on its mission—even under unexpected circumstances.

FACILITY ACQUISITION

The Dawn Institute's facility plan is grounded in both financial prudence and accessibility, consistent with the school's mission to create a safe, inclusive, and sensory-friendly environment for all students. The Governing Board has begun researching multiple options for facility acquisition and financing in Downtown Provo, Utah, an area chosen for its proximity to public transportation and community partnerships.

Facility Location and Criteria

The school plans to locate within the Downtown Provo corridor, ideally near University Avenue and Center Street, where public transit routes (UTA FrontRunner and bus lines) are readily available. This location ensures:

- Safe, walkable access to community resources, businesses, and partner organizations.
- Centrality for students from across Utah County and surrounding districts.
- Proximity to universities (BYU, UVU) for transition partnerships and job-coach programs.

The initial facility will be a leased, single-story ADA-compliant building with open-concept classrooms, sensory-friendly lighting, and adaptive furniture. Potential properties include:

- Existing commercial or office buildings suitable for educational use;
- Former educational spaces that require minimal modification; or
- Smaller facilities with lease-to-own potential for long-term stability.

Facilities Acquisition and Financing Options

Phase 1: Initial Lease (Years 1–3)

In its first three years of operation, The Dawn Institute will lease an existing move-in-ready facility, minimizing startup costs and avoiding large-scale renovation. Annual lease payments are projected at approximately \$60,000, excluding utilities and maintenance, which are reflected in the operational budget. This approach ensures that the majority of startup and implementation grant funds are directed toward instruction, staffing, and program development rather than facility build-out.

Phase 2: Facility Ownership or Lease-to-Own (Year 4 and Beyond)

Beginning in Year 4, as enrollment approaches 90 students and reserves strengthen, the Governing Board will evaluate long-term options, including:

- Lease-to-own agreement with a property owner or developer, allowing equity growth while maintaining manageable monthly payments;
- Purchase of an existing building supported by grants, donations, and low-interest educational loans; or
- Partnership with a charter facility developer to finance and manage acquisition through phased repayment.

To prepare for this transition, fundraising and facility planning will begin in Year 1, led jointly by the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation, the Governing Board, and the School Director. Their focus will include establishing a Facility Fund, pursuing state and federal grants (such as Utah's Charter School Revolving Loan Program), and cultivating philanthropic and community contributions specifically designated for long-term facility acquisition.

Financing Pathways May Include:

- Charter School Revolving Loan Program: The school intends to apply for low-interest support through Utah's program for facility improvements or acquisition.
- Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs): As stability grows, the Governing Board may explore CDFI or local bank financing tailored to mission-driven schools.
- Foundation and Donor Support: The Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation will seek grants and community donations to minimize reliance on commercial debt.

By prioritizing a centrally located, ADA-compliant, and transit-accessible facility in downtown Provo, The Dawn Institute ensures that its physical environment directly supports its educational mission. Through a balanced combination of strategic leasing, proactive fundraising, and responsible long-term financing, the school will secure a safe, affordable, and sustainable facility that fosters inclusion and community engagement for years to come.

COMMITMENT TO MAINTAINING FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Dawn Institute is firmly committed to maintaining long-term financial viability through disciplined planning, transparent oversight, and mission-driven decision-making. The Governing Board will continue to monitor fiscal performance through monthly reporting, annual audits, and ongoing consultation with external financial experts. By maintaining a balanced budget, adhering to state accountability standards, and aligning every financial decision with student-centered outcomes, the school ensures both operational stability and educational excellence. This unwavering commitment to sound financial management positions The Dawn Institute for sustained success, growth, and service to its students and community.

Beyond financial responsibility, the Governing Board recognizes that the vision behind The Dawn Institute represents a long-awaited shift—one that families, students, and educators

have needed for far too long. Our community deserves a place where accessibility, belonging, and opportunity are not privileges, but expectations; where every student's education reflects dignity, independence, and genuine inclusion. The Board understands that what we build is not only a school, but a model of what equitable, human-centered education can and should be—here in Utah, and beyond. To achieve this vision, we understand that financial security and sustainability are where our focus and commitment must remain.

Finance

FINANCIAL SYSTEMS AND OVERSIGHT

The Dawn Institute will implement a transparent and accountable financial management system that ensures all funds are managed in compliance with state and federal regulations, GAAP, and the SCSB financial standards. Financial operations will be overseen by the School Director, the Finance Committee, and the Board Treasurer. Together, they will provide fiscal oversight, establish financial controls, and ensure that all expenditures align with the school's mission and approved budget.

Financial Management Roles

- *School Director* – Serves as the primary fiscal agent and is responsible for implementing Board-approved budgets, overseeing daily financial operations, approving purchase orders, managing contracts, and ensuring timely submission of financial reports to the Governing Board and SCSB.
- *Board Treasurer* – May lead the Finance Committee, review monthly and quarterly financial statements, and provide independent oversight of revenues, expenditures, and cash flow. The Treasurer ensures that financial reports are accurate, transparent, and aligned with Board policy.
- *Finance Committee* – Oversees budgets, audits, and fiscal compliance. Works collaboratively with the School Director, recommends corrective actions when necessary, and ensures full adherence to state financial guidelines.
- *Office Manager / Registrar* – Supports the School Director by processing purchase orders, maintaining financial documentation, managing payroll coordination, and ensuring accurate tracking of student enrollment data used for state funding.
- *External Financial Services Provider* – The Governing Board may contract with a state-approved external accountant or charter management support organization to perform monthly reconciliations, maintain financial records, and prepare required state and federal reports. An independent annual audit will also be conducted by a certified public accounting firm.

Financial Systems and Procedures

The school will use accrual-based accounting and maintain a cloud-based financial management system to ensure accuracy and real-time monitoring. Procedures will include:

- Dual approval for all expenditures and reimbursements to maintain internal control.

- Segregation of duties among staff handling purchasing, deposits, and reconciliation.
- Monthly bank reconciliations reviewed by the external accountant and Board Treasurer.
- Regular financial reporting at each Board meeting, including budget-to-actual comparisons and cash flow statements.
- Maintenance of an operational reserve equivalent to at least two months of core expenses.

The Finance Committee will meet monthly to review reports, address any variances, and recommend budget adjustments to the full Board. Annual financial training will be provided to all Board members to ensure continued compliance and fiduciary competence.

Through these clearly defined systems, transparent reporting practices, and strong internal controls, The Dawn Institute ensures that public funds are managed responsibly, efficiently, and in alignment with the school's mission of inclusion, equity, and educational excellence.

PROTECTION OF STUDENT AND FINANCIAL RECORDS & FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT OBLIGATIONS

The Dawn Institute is fully prepared to meet all financial management, audit, and insurance obligations required of a Utah charter school. The Governing Board has established clear oversight structures, internal controls, and professional partnerships to ensure fiscal integrity, data protection, and transparency from the school's first operational year.

Protection of Student and Financial Records

All financial and student records will be secured in compliance with FERPA, Utah's Government Records Access and Management Act, and applicable cybersecurity standards. Records will be stored in encrypted digital formats and backed up regularly using secure, cloud-based systems accessible only to authorized personnel.

The School Director, in coordination with the Office Manager and an external IT provider, will oversee compliance, data integrity, and security protocols. These safeguards ensure the confidentiality and integrity of both student and financial information, protecting against unauthorized access or data loss.

Accounting Systems and Fiscal Oversight

The Dawn Institute's accounting system will adhere to GAAP and utilize an SCSB-approved financial management platform to track revenues, expenditures, payroll, and grants. Internal controls include:

- Dual signature requirements for all disbursements;
- Segregation of duties between authorization, reconciliation, and recordkeeping; and
- Monthly financial reconciliations by both the Treasurer and external accountant.

Financial statements and budget-to-actual comparisons will be reviewed monthly by the Finance Committee and quarterly by the full Governing Board to ensure transparency and accountability. A Financial Procedures Manual will govern procurement, payroll,

reimbursements, and conflict-of-interest policies, reviewed annually to reflect current laws and best practices.

Annual Audit and Financial Reporting

An independent Certified Public Accountant (CPA) will conduct the school's annual financial audit in accordance with Utah Code §53G-5-404, USBE, and SCSB standards. The audit will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and Board Treasurer, and presented to the Governing Board for approval. The completed audit will be submitted to state agencies by statutory deadlines, and any findings will be promptly addressed with corrective action plans.

Following the audit, the School Director and Treasurer will compile and publish the Annual Financial Report (AFR), summarizing the school's fiscal performance, including revenues, expenditures, and fund balances. The AFR will be made publicly available on the school's website and presented at an annual community meeting to uphold transparency and stakeholder engagement.

Insurance and Risk Management

The Dawn Institute will secure comprehensive liability and property insurance coverage consistent with Utah Risk Management Division standards. Policies will include:

- General Liability and Property Insurance;
- Educator Professional Liability;
- Directors and Officers (D&O) Insurance;
- Cyber Liability;
- Workers' Compensation; and
- Automobile and Student Accident Coverage (as applicable).

These policies will indemnify the school, its Board members, employees, and volunteers against tort claims and unforeseen incidents, ensuring continuity of operations and protection of public assets.

Capacity and Preparedness

The Governing Board's Finance Committee, which may be led by the Board Treasurer, provides ongoing fiscal oversight and ensures compliance with all state and federal reporting obligations. Day-to-day operations are managed by the School Director, supported by the Treasurer, external accountant, and contracted back-office service providers as needed. Through this comprehensive system—combining strong internal controls, independent auditing, robust insurance coverage, and data protection measures—The Dawn Institute demonstrates full readiness and capacity to manage public funds responsibly and protect the interests of its students, staff, and community.

TRACKING ENROLLMENT, ATTENDANCE, AND STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The Dawn Institute will utilize a USBE-approved Student Information System (SIS)—such as Aspire or PowerSchool—to accurately manage student enrollment, attendance, demographic information, and state reporting. The Registrar, under the supervision of the School Director,

will be responsible for daily data entry, verification, and timely submission of required reports to the USBE and the SCSB.

SIS will include integrated modules for tracking attendance patterns, absences, and membership days, allowing for early intervention when attendance issues arise. The system will also generate state-compliant reports, ensuring full alignment with Utah's CACTUS and Utrex data requirements.

Special Populations and Federal Reporting

The Dawn Institute will establish clear policies and internal procedures for the identification, documentation, and tracking of students with disabilities (SWD), English Learners (EL), and students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch (FRL):

- The Special Education Director will oversee all SWD data collection, IEP documentation, and compliance reporting in accordance with IDEA and Utah Special Education Rules.
- The School Counselor will serve as both the 504 Coordinator and EL Coordinator, responsible for home language surveys, WIDA assessments, and progress monitoring to ensure EL students receive appropriate support services and accommodations.
- The Registrar will manage FRL eligibility verification and documentation following USBE and USDA guidelines, maintaining confidentiality and compliance with federal nutrition program standards.

All data will be maintained in SIS, integrated with state databases to ensure real-time accuracy and eliminate duplication or reporting errors.

Oversight, Training, and Data Integrity

To ensure accuracy and accountability, The Dawn Institute will implement quarterly internal audits of enrollment and demographic data, comparing SIS entries with supporting documentation. The School Director and Registrar will receive ongoing training from USBE and SIS providers on data management, FERPA compliance, and secure reporting practices.

Through this combination of robust technology, trained personnel, and formalized procedures, The Dawn Institute demonstrates full capacity to develop and maintain reliable, compliant, and transparent systems for tracking student enrollment, attendance, and special populations.

GRANT AND FEDERAL PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

The Dawn Institute will ensure that all grants and federal program funds are administered in strict accordance with federal, state, and local guidelines, including the Uniform Grant Guidance (2 CFR Part 200), USBE, and SCSB requirements.

The School Director, in partnership with the Board Treasurer and external accountant, will be responsible for financial oversight of all federal and state grants. The Finance Committee will review all grant budgets and expenditures to confirm that funds are used exclusively for their intended purposes and that documentation meets audit and compliance standards.

All grant-related financial transactions will be recorded in the school's accounting system under separate cost codes to ensure proper fund segregation, traceability, and reporting. The school will maintain detailed records of expenditures, time-and-effort documentation for staff partially funded through federal programs, and all supporting invoices or receipts in accordance with retention and audit requirements.

The School Director will submit required financial and programmatic reports to the Utah State Board of Education and other relevant agencies on schedule. These reports will be reviewed internally by the Finance Committee prior to submission to ensure accuracy and alignment with approved budgets.

All staff responsible for grant administration will receive annual training on federal compliance requirements, allowable costs, procurement rules, and documentation standards. The school will also undergo annual external audits that include review of all grant expenditures to confirm adherence to federal and state regulations.

Through these systems—combining oversight, training, and strict financial controls—The Dawn Institute ensures full compliance with all grant and federal program guidelines, protecting both fiscal integrity and the school's reputation as a responsible steward of public funds.

Facilities

LOCATION AND COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Provo is known for its strong sense of community, transportation, and local small businesses—and The Dawn Institute intends to be an active part of that network. For both connection and budgeting purposes, the school will establish its initial facility in Downtown Provo, within the Provo City School District boundaries. While downtown is one of the more expensive areas of the city, its proximity to public transportation, community resources, and higher-education partners makes it the most strategic and mission-aligned choice for our students and families.

FACILITY NEEDS AND EARLY-STAGE PLANNING

Because of the school's intentionally small enrollment in the first three years, The Dawn Institute can effectively operate in a modest, flexible space that meets all safety and accessibility standards without requiring an extensive build-out. Suitable early facilities may include renovated office suites in professional buildings near Center Street or historic single-story homes that have been converted for office or educational use. This approach allows the school to prioritize funding for students and programming, rather than unnecessary large-scale construction.

Essential renovations for accessibility and sensory needs—including lighting adjustments, calming spaces, and ADA-compliant restrooms—will remain a top priority, and lease decisions will be guided by properties that already possess many of these features.

Initial Facility Components (Years 1–3)

- 2–3 classrooms designed for small-group or co-taught instruction;
- A cafeteria/kitchen area adaptable as a multipurpose transition lab;
- Therapy and counseling rooms and a sensory regulation space;
- Collaborative work areas for staff meetings and IEP coordination;
- Access to nearby outdoor space or a local park for recreation and community-based instruction.

All facilities will meet ADA requirements and align with Universal Design principles, ensuring full accessibility for all students, families, and staff.

LEASE AND FACILITY ACQUISITION PLAN

The Governing Board anticipates entering a three-to-five-year lease agreement for the school's initial facility, with annual payments estimated at \$60,000, excluding utilities and maintenance. This approach provides both stability and flexibility during the school's early growth phase. Leasing an existing, ADA-compliant facility ensures the school can direct the majority of start-up and operational funds toward instruction, staffing, and student services, rather than high-cost construction or property acquisition.

During Years 1–3, The Dawn Institute will exclusively pursue leased facilities, strategically selecting a location that meets its accessibility and instructional needs while maintaining financial efficiency. These initial years will allow the school to solidify enrollment, establish strong community partnerships, and build a stable financial foundation before committing to long-term facility ownership.

Beginning in Year 4, as enrollment reaches approximately 90 students and financial reserves strengthen, the Governing Board may evaluate options for transitioning to a permanent facility. These options may include:

- Purchasing an existing educational or commercial property outright, supported through a combination of grant funding, philanthropic donations, or low-interest educational loans; or
- Entering a lease-to-own agreement that allows the school to build equity gradually while maintaining budget flexibility.

To prepare for this transition, fundraising and facility planning will begin in Year 1, led by the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation, the Governing Board, and the School Director. This effort will include:

- Establishing a Facility Fund dedicated to future acquisition;
- Applying for state and federal facility grants and private foundation support;
- Launching annual fundraising events focused on long-term infrastructure and accessibility; and

- Conducting a feasibility and location study by the end of Year 2 to guide future planning.

This phased approach allows The Dawn Institute to remain financially conservative during its start-up years, while proactively preparing for sustainable facility ownership in the future. It reflects a deep commitment to fiscal responsibility, community partnership, and the long-term goal of creating a permanent home that fully embodies the school's mission of accessibility, belonging, and inclusive education.

Long-Term Facility Vision (Year 4 and Beyond)

By Year 4–5, The Dawn Institute intends to transition into a permanent facility—preferably an existing educational or commercial property to minimize construction costs. The ideal long-term space will include:

- 3–5 classrooms designed for small-group and inclusive instruction;
- A Multipurpose Cafeteria/Transition Lab equipped for hands-on life-skills training;
- Therapy and counseling rooms, soundproofed for privacy and accessibility;
- Sensory regulation spaces designed for student self-regulation and readiness to learn;
- Administrative offices, conference areas, and professional collaboration spaces;
- A community gathering space, library, and study rooms to foster belonging and enrichment; and
- An outdoor garden or recreation area for physical education and community engagement.

Renovation and Cost Planning

Renovation costs are projected at \$40,000–\$70,000, primarily for ADA upgrades, sensory accommodations, and safety improvements in a future, long-term facility. These costs are not anticipated during the initial lease period (Years 1–3), as the school will occupy move-in-ready spaces requiring minimal modification beyond basic furnishings. Funding for the eventual renovation and facility transition will come from a combination of grants, donations, and potential low-interest educational loans.

Utility and maintenance costs for the leased facility are expected to average \$1,000–\$1,800 per month, consistent with comparable educational leases in the Provo area, and are fully reflected in the operating budget.

ACCESSIBILITY AND COMPLIANCE

Every leased or owned facility will meet or exceed state and federal ADA requirements and receive e-occupancy certification prior to use. Buildings will be reviewed by the Utah State Fire Marshal and local building officials to ensure compliance with health, safety, and occupancy standards. Accessibility features will include step-free access, adjustable workstations, sensory-friendly lighting, and clearly marked evacuation routes.

The Dawn Institute will intentionally collaborate with an interior designer and individuals with disabilities to ensure that materials, colors, and patterns throughout the school are sensory-friendly and inclusive by design (see Appendix J for preliminary renovations). All

future renovations will continue to be guided by Universal Design principles, ensuring that physical spaces reflect and reinforce the school's inclusive instructional philosophy.

TIMELINE FOR ACQUISITION AND OCCUPANCY

- Pre-Operational Year: Secure lease agreement, finalize design and compliance review, and begin renovations.
- Spring–Summer (Pre-Opening): Install technology infrastructure, safety systems, and furnishings.
- Year 1 Start: Obtain final certificate of e-occupancy and open to students.
- Year 3: Begin strategic planning for long-term facility ownership or lease-to-own transition.
- Year 4–5: Implement ownership or long-term facility solution based on feasibility and financial readiness.

If the identified site becomes unavailable, the Governing Board will immediately pursue alternate properties within the Downtown Provo corridor, prioritizing accessibility, safety, and cost efficiency.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

The Dawn Institute's facilities plan reflects fiscal responsibility and mission alignment. The initial lease and renovation costs are well within budgeted parameters, supported by startup funding and conservative projections. The school's long-term vision for ownership—supported by dedicated fundraising, foundation support, and potential grant partnerships—ensures sustainability and stability beyond the initial lease period.

This plan demonstrates a sound understanding of educational facility requirements, the financial realities of charter school operations, and the school's unwavering commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and community integration.

Pre-Opening Plan

The Dawn Institute recognizes that a successful launch depends on careful, organized preparation between charter approval and the first day of school. The Governing Board will oversee all pre-opening milestones through monthly Board meetings and quarterly progress reports to the SCSB.

The following pre-opening plan outlines all essential tasks from charter approval to the first day of school, ensuring full readiness in governance, facilities, staffing, compliance, and operations. Each phase includes key tasks, responsible roles, and anticipated resource needs.

Phase 1: Post-Approval and Governance Finalization

Key Tasks:

- File and receive state and federal nonprofit documentation for The Dawn Institute (as distinct from the Foundation).
- Finalize adoption of school bylaws, policies, and procedures.
- Complete background checks for all Board members (Utah Code §53G-5-408).
- Establish official bank accounts and accounting systems.
- Recruit and confirm additional Governing Board members (parent representative, educator, disability representative).

Responsible Parties: Governing Board Chair (Suzy Ahlman), Treasurer (Christina Ellsworth), Board Secretary, Legal Counsel.

Resources Needed: Legal consultation, Board insurance, and startup funding from Utah State Charter School Board.

Phase 2: Facility Acquisition and Build-Out

Key Tasks:

- Secure and finalize lease agreement for a facility in Downtown Provo.
- Begin ADA and e-occupancy compliance inspections and required renovations.
- Partner with interior designer and local disability representatives to ensure sensory-friendly design.
- Purchase and install technology infrastructure (Wi-Fi, network security, classroom tech).
- Acquire furniture and materials for classrooms and administrative offices.

Responsible Parties: Governing Board (oversight)

Resources Needed: Charter startup funds (Phase I & II), local contractors, ADA consultants.

Phase 3: Staffing and Human Resources

Key Tasks:

- Recruit and hire School Director (if not already hired), Special Education Director, School Counselor, and key instructional staff.
- Conduct background checks and credential verification for all employees.
- Develop job descriptions and evaluation systems aligned with Utah Code §53G-5-409.
- Set up payroll systems and HR policies (including Employment of Relatives and Anti-Discrimination policies).
- Establish professional development schedule for pre-service training.

Responsible Parties: School Director, Special Education Director, Office Manager, Governing Board (hiring committee oversight).

Resources Needed: Utah HR templates, USBE onBoarding support, startup operational funds.

Phase 4: Curriculum, Instructional Systems, and Compliance

Key Tasks:

- Finalize curriculum selection and alignment with Utah Core Standards.
- Set up student data and reporting systems (SIS) compliant with USBE and SCSB requirements.

- Develop policies for attendance, grading, student discipline, and special education compliance.
- Establish systems for IEP management, MTSS progress monitoring, and accommodations tracking.
- Adopt school-wide assessment plan (statewide testing + formative measures).
- Create internal monitoring calendar to ensure compliance with IDEA, ADA, FERPA, and Section 504.

Responsible Parties: School Director, Special Education Director, Academic Oversight Committee.

Resources Needed: SIS vendor (e.g., Aspire, PowerSchool), legal review of policy compliance, curriculum funds.

Note: By the completion of Phase 4, all core operational systems—including financial management, student data reporting, and required state policies—will be fully implemented and tested to ensure compliance with USBE and SCSB standards prior to opening.

Phase 5: Enrollment, Marketing, and Community Outreach

Key Tasks:

- Develop enrollment forms and lottery procedures consistent with Utah law.
- Host community information sessions, especially targeting underserved families and transition-aged students with disabilities.
- Build partnerships with local universities, community centers, and potential employers for future internship placements.
- Launch school website and social media presence to communicate mission, enrollment process, and accessibility features.

Responsible Parties: School Director, Governing Board, Community Partnerships Committee.

Resources Needed: Marketing materials, translation services, technology support, community partnerships.

Phase 6: Final Preparations and School Opening

Key Tasks:

- Complete facility inspection, occupancy approval, and final safety checks.
- Receive delivery of curriculum materials and technology.
- Conduct two-week staff training and orientation (UDL, MTSS, behavior supports, and emergency procedures).
- Host family orientation and student welcome events.
- Submit all pre-opening documentation to SCSB and receive authorization to open.

Responsible Parties: School Director, Office Manager, Governing Board Chair.

Resources Needed: Startup grant funding, staff stipends, operational supplies.

Ongoing Oversight and Accountability

The Governing Board will maintain a detailed Pre-Opening Checklist, monitored monthly. Each phase milestone will be reviewed during regular Board meetings and reported quarterly to the SCSB to ensure transparency, fiscal responsibility, and operational readiness.

To ensure comprehensive coverage across all functional areas, the Pre-Opening Plan integrates readiness benchmarks for:

- Governance and Finance: Policies, audits, accounting systems, and financial reporting;
- Operations and Facilities: Lease, insurance, ADA compliance, and technology setup; and
- Academics and Enrollment: Curriculum, SIS, IEP systems, and staff training.

Closure Plan

In the event that The Dawn Institute's charter is revoked, non-renewed, or voluntarily surrendered, the Governing Board has established a clear, organized, and compassionate closure plan to ensure the orderly transition of students, staff, and assets while maintaining full compliance with Utah Code §53G-5-403 and 34 CFR §80.32.

This plan prioritizes four guiding principles:

- Protection of students and families;
- Compliance with all legal and fiscal requirements;
- Transparency with all stakeholders; and
- Preservation of public trust and resources.

The Dawn Institute's closure plan reflects the same intentionality and care that defines its daily operations. Through proactive oversight, transparent communication, and unwavering commitment to students and families, the school ensures that—should closure ever occur—it will be handled with dignity, fiscal responsibility, and full compliance with state and federal regulations.

CLOSURE PROCEDURES AND OVERSIGHT

If a closure decision occurs, the Governing Board will immediately convene a Closure Committee, chaired by the Board Chair and composed of the School Director, Treasurer, and a Legal/Financial Consultant.

Key tasks include:

- Notifying the SCSB and USBE in writing within 48 hours of the decision;
- Developing a detailed Closure Timeline identifying all required actions, deadlines, and responsible parties;
- Freezing non-essential spending and securing assets;
- Coordinating communication with staff, families, and community partners to ensure an orderly transition.

Responsible Party: Governing Board Chair

Timeline: Within 1 week of charter termination or surrender

SELF-EVALUATION AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

To prevent the need for closure and to ensure accountability, The Dawn Institute will conduct semiannual self-evaluations against minimum state standards and Board-determined performance targets.

Evaluation Process:

- Led by the School Director and Academic Oversight Committee, with Board review each semester;
- Uses data from student outcomes, compliance reports, and financial audits;
- Findings are summarized in a Performance Review Report shared with SCSB and stakeholders.

If any target appears at risk, the School Director must immediately notify the Governing Board and SCSB to develop an Action Plan for Remediation within 30 days.

- Responsible Parties: School Director, Academic Oversight Committee
- Frequency: Twice annually (mid-year and end-of-year)
- Stakeholder Dissemination: Via school website, family newsletter, and annual report.

STUDENT AND FAMILY TRANSITION SUPPORT

In the event of closure, student transition will be the top priority. The School Director, School Counselor, and Office Manager will collaborate with USBE and local districts to support families.

Support Actions:

- Notify parents and guardians immediately in writing and through meetings;
- Provide individualized transition counseling for students with disabilities to ensure continued services under IDEA;
- Provide detailed student portfolios and official transcripts for transfer;
- Coordinate directly with receiving schools to ensure smooth placement;
- Follow up with families the following school year to confirm student re-enrollment.

Responsible Parties: Governing Board Chair or Co-Chair, School Counselor, Special Education Director, School Director

Timeline: Initiated immediately upon closure announcement

STAFF TRANSITION AND EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT

The Governing Board will notify all staff in writing and comply with all state and federal employment laws.

Support Measures:

- Provide letters of recommendation and documentation of service;

- Offer references for future employment;
- Ensure payment of all wages, benefits, and retirement contributions through final closure date;
- Provide access to Utah unemployment and benefits information.

Responsible Parties: Governing Board Chair, School Director, Treasurer

RECORDS AND ARCHIVING

All student, financial, and operational records will be preserved in compliance with Utah Code §53G-5-403 and 34 CFR §80.32.

Records Management Plan:

- Student academic, attendance, and special education files transferred to USBE or designated LEA within 30 days;
- Employment, payroll, and vendor records archived for a minimum of 7 years;
- Electronic records securely stored on a password-protected, backed-up drive managed by the appointed Records Officer.
 - Records Officer: School Director (or designee)

FISCAL AND LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

All financial obligations will be settled according to state law.

Actions Include:

- Final audit conducted by an independent CPA;
- Submission of final AFR to SCSB;
- Liquidation of assets with proceeds returned to the state or used to satisfy legitimate debts;
- Final submission of all required reports (audit, grant, state, and federal).

Responsible Parties: Treasurer, Governing Board Chair, External Auditor

CLOSURE RESERVE

The Dawn Institute will maintain a Closure Reserve Fund equal to 5% of annual operational expenses, as reflected in the budget. These funds will cover:

Record management and archiving;

- Final payroll and benefit payouts;
- Legal and accounting services for closure;
- Communication and transition costs for students and families.

Responsible Party: Treasurer, Governing Board Chair

COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPARENCY

Throughout the process, The Dawn Institute will maintain open and proactive communication with SCSB, families, employees, and the broader community. All closure actions will be documented and shared publicly to ensure transparency, accountability, and trust.

Section 8: Contracts

EDUCATION SERVICE PROVIDER (ESP) DECLARATION

The Dawn Institute has not entered into any contracts with an Education Service Provider (ESP), Education Management Organization (EMO), or Charter Management Organization (CMO), nor does it intend to do so during the planning or operational phases.

The Governing Board has elected to retain full operational autonomy and management responsibility for the school to ensure that all decisions directly reflect the school's mission, vision, and community values. This approach aligns with the school's philosophy of individualized education, collaboration, and accountability to families and students.

Rationale

The Dawn Institute's mission and structure are uniquely centered on inclusion, accessibility, and transition-focused education for students with disabilities and diverse learning needs. Given this specialized focus, the school's leadership believes that management should remain close to the community it serves, guided by educators, families, and professionals with firsthand knowledge of the population.

Due to the Governing Board and administrative team's collective expertise, partnering with an ESP or EMO would introduce unnecessary layers of oversight, additional cost, and potential dilution of the school's mission and decision-making authority. Instead, The Dawn Institute will engage independent vendors and professional service providers for specific operational, financial, and student support functions that complement—but do not replace—school management.

INDEPENDENT SERVICE CONTRACTS

To ensure high-quality operations and compliance, the school will or may enter into contracts with specialized professionals and vendors for targeted services, including:

- *Accounting and Auditing:* Engagement of an external accountant and an independent CPA to conduct the annual audit and ensure adherence to GAAP and SCSB financial standards.
- *Legal Services:* Retained legal counsel specializing in education and nonprofit law.
- *Information Technology (IT):* Contracted IT provider for network setup, cybersecurity, data protection, and maintenance of student information systems.
- *Related Service Providers:* Engagement of licensed service providers, which may include a BCBA, speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, or other related service professionals as determined by student needs and legal practices.
- *Facility and Grounds Management:* Contracts for custodial services, building maintenance, landscaping, and safety inspections.

All contracts will remain vendor-based, governed by Utah's public procurement rules, and subject to approval by the Governing Board prior to execution. These contracts will be

monitored regularly to ensure quality, cost-effectiveness, and alignment with the school's mission.

COMMITMENT TO OVERSIGHT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Governing Board understands and accepts its ultimate fiduciary and operational responsibilities and will ensure that:

- All financial, legal, and administrative decisions remain under the direct authority of the Board and School Director.
- Any contracted services are procured transparently and monitored for performance, compliance, and value.
- The school remains fully compliant with Utah Code Title 53G, Chapter 5, and all state charter regulations regarding independence, accountability, and conflict of interest.

This governance model ensures that The Dawn Institute remains mission-driven, community-led, and fully transparent, while leveraging professional expertise through carefully selected partnerships that strengthen operations and support student success.

Appendix A: Background Information Sheets

Appendix A: Background Information Sheet

Complete this form for each governing board member. Do not include a resume. This page may be copied as many times as necessary.

Name:

Suzy Ahlman

Position on Board:

President/Chair

Area of Expertise:

Special Education and Disability Law

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

Advocate for young adults with disabilities by creating a curriculum and framework in a school system that builds student success and community engagement.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

PTA Treasurer, Provo Peaks Elementary, 2019-2020
Legal Intern, University of San Diego School of Law, 2022-2023
Junior Co-Chair, Autism Resources of Utah County Council, December 2024-Present

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Legal Intern, University of San Diego School of Law - providing pro-bono support and representation of families in special education legal proceedings and conservatorships.
K-12 Special Education Director - head of special education department; working on legal issues related to special education policies, procedures, and services, including IEP legality; writing reports for the state; supervising special education staff.
Program Manager & Instructor, Wolverines Elevated & UVU - Instructor teaching 3 courses a semester; Program manager for TPSID program for adults with intellectual disabilities, assisting and supporting the development and implementation of the Program needs and courses.

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

In 2020, while attending Utah Valley University, earning a bachelor's in special education and autism studies, I had the opportunity to work as a peer mentor for Wolverines Elevated. While my passion to work with those who have disabilities came earlier, it was here I learned the importance for all individuals with disabilities to learn about self-advocacy and determination. Following this experience, I continued my education, attending the University of San Diego School of Law, earning a master's in Legal Studies, with an emphasis in education and disability advocacy. I have a Utah Professional Educator License in K-12 Special Education and have been published in the Salt Lake Tribune. I now serve as the Program Manager for Wolverines Elevated and teach three college courses each semester focused on self-determination, disability advocacy, and leadership.

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:

6/21/2025

Appendix A: Background Information Sheet

Complete this form for each governing board member. Do not include a resume. This page may be copied as many times as necessary.

Name:

Wendy Ahlman

Position on Board:

Co-Chair

Area of Expertise:

Education Leadership

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

To give support to the other board members as we work to build, create and bring The Dawn Institute to fruition.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

I volunteered to develop after school programs for schools in Utah County. I've been the PTA President, and I served on the Provo Peaks Community Council board, where we made decisions on uses for the school's budget. I sponsor a free yearly event for parents at my business, focusing on literacy. I also started the non-profit we are using for our school.

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

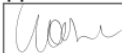
In 2004, I started Chrysalis Preschool and Kindergarten in Provo. I developed the curriculum, and format we use everyday. This includes writing and illustrating over 50 books that the children read to help them continue learning to read, as well as several nonfiction and fiction books for various subjects during the school year. I hire the teachers, do the training, the advertising for the school, and communication with parents. I complete the yearly licensing requirements for the city and state to run a school and business. I'm responsible for the yearly taxes, and all applicable financial requirements.

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from UVU
Master of Education Leadership from BYU

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Applicant's Signature:



Date:

6/21/2025

Appendix A: Background Information Sheet

Complete this form for each governing board member. Do not include a resume. This page may be copied as many times as necessary.

Name:

Joseph Johnson

Position on Board:

Board Member

Area of Expertise:

Pediatrics

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

My understanding is I will be a medical consultant for the needs that may come up with students at the school and how to best meet these. Also, I can help with suggestions on utilizing community medical resources.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

I am on the board for Brade's place, a non profit organization based in Orem, Utah, providing pediatrics care for children with special health care needs.

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

I am self-employed as a pediatrician in Provo, UT since 2006. I worked as an employee 1 year prior to that.

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Undergrad - BS at BYU
Medical School - Emory University (MD)
Residency - University of Colorado in Denver

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Applicant's Signature:

Joseph Johnson

Date:

6/21/25

Appendix A: Background Information Sheet

Complete this form for each governing board member. Do not include a resume. This page may be copied as many times as necessary.

Name:

Sarah Hampton

Position on Board:

Board Member

Area of Expertise:

Teacher, mother to child with autism

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

As a special education teacher, and mother to three children with disabilities, I'd like to provide input, knowledge, and support to The Dawn Institute mission.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

NA

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Special Education paraeducator, Special Education teacher/case manager, 3-4 Teacher

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

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:

Sarah Hampton

Date:

6/24/25

Appendix A: Background Information Sheet

Complete this form for each governing board member. Do not include a resume. This page may be copied as many times as necessary.

Name:

Christina Ellsworth

Position on Board:

Treasurer

Area of Expertise:

Accounting

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

To keep finances organized and up to date. To assist us in fundraising etc., and helping the school to acquire all the funds needed and available to our school.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

Board Chair, Board of Directors for Rim Family Services a nonprofit drug and alcohol counseling agency located in Skyforest, CA, November 2012 - August 2016
Board Member, Board of Directors for Rim Family Services a nonprofit drug and alcohol counseling agency located in Skyforest, CA, May 2012 - November 2012

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Senior Associate, Croft CPA & Associates, tax preparation, tax advisory, accounting, located in Upland, CA February 2023 - Present
Accountant and HR Specialist, Myers Law Group, accounting, bookkeeping, forecasting, located in Rancho Cucamonga, CA August 2020 - February 2023
Bookkeeper, Kadtec an engineering firm located in Twin Peaks, CA March 2019 - September 2020
Assistant General Manager, Arrowhead Lake Association, preparation and administration of annual operating and capital budgets, HR director, managed over 50 full-time and seasonal staff members, located in Lake Arrowhead, CA May 2013 - October 2017

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Master of Accountancy (MAcc), Southern Utah University, Cedar City, UT
Bachelor of Science in Business Management, Brigham Young University-Idaho, Rexburg, ID

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:

Christina Ellsworth

Date:

6/24/25

Appendix B: Articles of Incorporation

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
MARY ANN ELIZABETH WHATMOUGH EDUCATION FOUNDATION
A NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

The undersigned natural person, of the age of 18 years or more, acting as incorporator of a nonprofit corporation under the Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act of UTAH CODE ANN. §16-6a-1001 et seq., does hereby adopt the following Articles of Incorporation for such Corporation.

ARTICLE I

Name of Corporation

The name of the Corporation is:

Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation

ARTICLE II

Existence

The period of duration of this Corporation is perpetual, provided, however, that the Corporation may be dissolved at any time according to law.

ARTICLE III

Purposes

The purposes for which the Corporation is organized are as follows:

- A. To provide education to persons with disabilities.
- B. The organization is organized exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

C. To do everything necessary, proper, incidental, conducive, advisable, or convenient for the accomplishment of the foregoing purposes.

ARTICLE IV

Powers

The Corporation shall, consistent with its qualification as a nonprofit corporation under UTAH CODE ANN. §16-6a-101, et seq., and subject to any limitations imposed by these Articles of Incorporation or the Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act, shall have and exercise the same powers as an individual to do all things necessary or convenient to carry out its permitted purposes, activities, and affairs, including but not limited to the powers set forth in UTAH CODE ANN. §16-6a-302.

ARTICLE V

Membership

The Corporation shall have no members or shareholders.

ARTICLE VI

Regulation of the Internal Affairs of the Corporation

Provisions for the regulation of the internal affairs of the Corporation shall be set forth in the by-laws of the Corporation, provided, however, that such by-laws are not inconsistent with these Articles or with the qualification of the Corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

ARTICLE VII

Limitation of Liability and Loans

No officer or director of the Corporation shall be individually liable for the debts or

obligations of the Corporation. No loans shall be made by the Corporation to any of its directors or officers.

ARTICLE VIII

Earnings Not to Benefit Directors

No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of or be distributable to its directors or officers or other private persons, except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article Three hereof. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provisions of these Articles, the Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law), or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law).

ARTICLE IX

Provisions Relative to Private Foundation

If the Corporation is determined to be a Private Foundation then:

- A. The Corporation shall distribute its income for each taxable year at such

time and in such manner as not to become subject to the tax on undistributed income imposed by section 4942 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal tax laws.

B. The Corporation shall not engage in any act of self-dealing as defined in section 4941(d) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal tax laws.

C. The Corporation shall not retain any excess business holdings defined in section 4943(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal tax laws.

D. The Corporation shall not make any investments in such manner as to subject it to tax under section 4944 of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal tax laws.

E. The Corporation shall not make any taxable expenditures as defined in section 4945(d) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding provisions of any subsequent Federal tax laws.

ARTICLE X

Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the Corporation the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Corporation, and after properly disposing of assets held by the Corporation upon condition requiring return, transfer or conveyance upon such event of dissolution as required by Utah law, transfer, convey or otherwise dispose of all of the remaining assets and benefits of the Corporation exclusively for

the purposes of the Corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under §501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any remaining assets and benefits of the Corporation shall be disposed of by the District Court of the State of Utah for the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which most nearly approximate the purposes for which this Corporation was organized.

ARTICLE XI

Registered Office, Registered Agent and Place of Business

The name of the initial registered agent of the Corporation is Wendy Ahlman, whose address is 409 North University Ave, Provo, Utah 84601.

The undersigned hereby consents to her appointment as registered agent for Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation.

The address of the initial principal office of the Corporation is 291 East 400 North, Provo, Utah 84606.

ARTICLE XII

Board of Directors

The number of Directors constituting the initial Board of Directors of this Corporation is two (2), and the name and address of the persons to serve as initial Directors are:

Wendy Ahlman

409 North University Ave
Provo, Utah 84601

Susanne Ahlman

291 East 400 North
Provo, Utah 84606

ARTICLE XIII

Incorporator

The names and addresses of the incorporator is:

Wendy Ahlman
409 North University Ave
Provo, Utah 84601

DATED and signed this ____ day of May, 2024.

INCORPORATOR:



Wendy Ahlman

Appendix C: Governing Board Bylaws

Bylaws of The Dawn Institute Governing Board

(Adopted under authority of the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation)

Article I – Name, Authority, and Purpose

Section 1. Name.

The name of this body shall be *The Dawn Institute Governing Board* (hereinafter "the Governing Board").

Section 2. Authority.

The Governing Board operates under the legal authority of the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation, a Utah nonprofit corporation and charter holder approved by the Utah State Charter School Board (SCSB).

Section 3. Purpose.

The purpose of the Governing Board is to oversee the academic, financial, and operational performance of The Dawn Institute, ensuring that the school fulfills its mission of fostering advocacy, independence, and inclusive postsecondary preparation for students with disabilities and diverse learning needs.

Section 4. Mission Alignment.

The Board shall uphold the mission and vision of The Dawn Institute and ensure all policies and decisions align with the principles of accessibility, equity, and self-determination.

Article II – Composition and Membership

Section 1. Number and Qualifications.

The Governing Board shall consist of not fewer than five (5) and not more than nine (9) voting members. Members shall collectively represent expertise in education, special education, law, finance, and community engagement.

Section 2. Terms of Office.

Board members shall serve two (2) year terms and may be reappointed by majority vote of the Board. Terms shall be staggered to promote continuity.

Section 3. Appointment and Removal.

Board members shall be appointed by majority vote of the Governing Board and approved by the Foundation. Members may be removed for cause, including misconduct, neglect of duty, or violation of policy, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the remaining members.

Section 4. Vacancies.

Vacancies shall be filled by nomination and majority vote of the remaining Board members, subject to confirmation by the Foundation.

Section 5. Restrictions.

No member of the Governing Board shall be an employee of The Dawn Institute. Should a member accept employment with the school, their board seat shall be deemed vacated immediately upon hiring.

Section 6. Representation.

The Governing Board shall, where possible, include members with lived experience of disability and those representing English Learners, economically disadvantaged families, or community partners.

Article III – Officers

Section 1. Officers.

The officers of the Board shall be the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary.

Section 2. Election and Term.

Officers shall be elected by the Board from among its members for three (3) year terms and may be re-elected.

Section 3. Duties.

- **Chair:** Presides at all meetings, ensures compliance with bylaws and charter, and serves as liaison to the Foundation.
- **Vice Chair:** Assists the Chair and assumes duties in their absence.
- **Treasurer:** Oversees budgeting, financial reports, and compliance with fiscal policy; collaborates with the Foundation's Finance Committee.
- **Secretary:** Maintains records, meeting minutes, and compliance with the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act (OPMA).

Article IV – Duties and Responsibilities

Section 1. Governance.

The Governing Board shall set policy, approve budgets, monitor performance, and ensure the school's mission is implemented effectively.

Section 2. Oversight of the School Director.

The Board shall recruit, hire, evaluate, and, if necessary, terminate the School Director. The Director shall manage daily operations and report regularly to the Board.

Section 3. Accountability.

The Board shall ensure that the school meets or exceeds academic, financial, and organizational goals as outlined in its charter agreement.

Section 4. Ethics and Integrity.

Board members shall maintain the highest ethical standards and adhere to the following:

- Avoid conflicts of interest;
- Refrain from discrimination, harassment, or abuse;
- Disclose potential conflicts annually;
- Act in the best interest of the school community.
- Members found to have engaged in misconduct may be subject to investigation and removal by two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Section 5. Mission Alignment and Removal.

All members of the Governing Board, officers, and committee members are expected to uphold and act in alignment with the mission, vision, and core values of The Dawn Institute. If a member's actions, statements, or conduct are found to be inconsistent with the school's mission or to undermine its integrity or operations, the Governing Board may, by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the remaining members, remove the individual from their position following reasonable notice and an opportunity to respond.

Article V – Committees

Section 1. Standing Committees.

The following standing committees shall be maintained:

- Finance Committee – Oversees budgets, audits, and fiscal compliance.
- Academic Oversight Committee – Monitors curriculum, student outcomes, and compliance with the Utah Core Standards.
- Community Partnerships Committee – Develops and sustains relationships with local universities, employers, and community agencies for internships and service learning.
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility (DEIA) Committee – Ensures that school practices promote access, representation, and equitable opportunity.
- Student Advisory Council – A student-led body providing input to the Board through a non-voting representative.

Section 2. Committee Membership.

Committees may include members of the Governing Board, school employees, students, parents or guardians, and community partners, as appropriate to the committee's purpose. Committees may be chaired by a Governing Board member or another individual with relevant expertise in the committee's focus area. The Committee Chair shall be responsible for coordinating committee activities and providing regular updates or recommendations to the full Governing Board.

Section 3. Committee Authority.

Committees shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Board. They may not take independent action or make binding decisions on behalf of the Board without express authorization.

THE DAWN INSTITUTE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY INSTITUTION. WE DO NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF RACE, ETHNICITY, GENDER, OR RELIGION.

Article VI – Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings.

The Board shall meet no fewer than four (4) times annually. One meeting each year shall serve as the Annual Meeting for the purpose of electing officers and reviewing the school's performance.

Section 2. Public Access.

All meetings shall comply with the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act (OPMA), ensuring public notice, access, and minutes.

Section 3. Quorum and Voting.

A majority of voting members shall constitute a quorum. Unless otherwise stated, actions shall be approved by majority vote.

Section 4. Special Meetings.

Special meetings may be called by the Chair or a majority of Board members with at least 48 hours' notice.

Article VII – Relationship to the Foundation

Section 1. Delegation of Authority.

The Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation is the charter holder for The Dawn Institute. The Foundation delegates governance authority to the Governing Board to oversee operations, policy, and compliance, while retaining ultimate fiduciary and legal responsibility.

Section 2. Coordination.

The Governing Board shall provide regular reports to the Foundation and collaborate on major decisions involving budgets, charter amendments, facility acquisition, and legal compliance.

Section VIII – Compensation and Reimbursement.

Members of the Governing Board shall serve without compensation. Board members may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred while performing official duties, as approved by the Board and in accordance with school policy.

A Board member may be separately engaged for professional services only if the engagement complies with applicable conflict-of-interest policies, is approved by a disinterested majority of the Board, and is consistent with Utah law and federal nonprofit regulations.

Article IX – Indemnification

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Governing Board shall indemnify any member or officer acting in good faith and within the scope of their duties.

Article X – Amendments

These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Board at any regular meeting, with at least ten (10) days' written notice of the proposed changes and final approval from the Foundation.

Approved by the Governing Board on: November 5, 2025

Appendix D: Minutes from Board Meeting

5 November 2025

5:00 - 5:50pm

Location – Zoom

Board Agenda

Mission Statement: The Dawn Institute is a center dedicated to cultivating a culture of belonging—where individuals with developmental disabilities and future advocates come together. A place where academics, behavioral interventions, and advocacy education finally meet. Young adults are often provided with academics in school, but not appropriate social-emotional and independent living skills interventions. Our mission is to create a community of advocacy and independence. An education that focuses on differentiation, individuality, and gaining the knowledge of federal civil rights laws. To provide the opportunity for those with developmental disabilities to pursue post-secondary education, to become self-determined, and create a life of independence, belonging, and inclusion.

Focus: Bylaws Adoption

Tasks Completed:

1. Call to Order

Suzy Ahlman called the meeting to order at 5:05pm.

2. Attendance

Board Members Present:

Suzy Ahlman (Chair)
Wendy Ahlman (Co-Chair)
Christina Ellsworth (Treasurer)
Sarah Hampton (Board Member)
Joseph Johnson (Board Member)

3. Review and Discussion: Draft Bylaws

The Board reviewed the proposed Bylaws of The Dawn Institute, previously distributed to all members for review.

Discussion included:

- Clarification of board officer roles and terms.
- Voting procedures and quorum requirements.
- Conflict of interest provisions and compliance.
- Review of Committees.
- Frequency of regular board meetings.

Edit Noted:

During discussion, the board agreed to amend the proposed bylaws to change the required number of regular board meetings from six (6) times per year to quarterly (4 times per year) to align with organizational needs and ensure effective governance.

Motion to approve this amendment was made by Suzy Ahlman, seconded by Christina Ellsworth.

Vote: Unanimous

Amendment adopted.

4. Motion to Adopt Bylaws (as Amended)

Motion: Christina Ellsworth moved to adopt the Bylaws of The Dawn Institute as amended.

Second: Wendy Ahlman

Vote: Unanimous

Outcome: The motion carried. The Bylaws of The Dawn Institute were formally adopted as amended, effective immediately.

5. Discussed next steps for New Charter School Full application submission to SCSB

6. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 5:50pm.

Appendix G: Start-Up Grant Application



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.

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

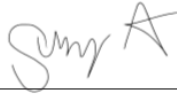
Grant Assurances

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:
 - Costs associated with creating and implementing office functions;
 - Costs associated with the installation of computers, data systems, networks, and telephones;
 - Personnel expenses incurred either before or after the school's opening (not to exceed a total of \$5,000 per month); and
 - 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.



Board Chair Signature

11/12/2025

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)	\$100,000	\$655,000	\$712,400	\$1,467,400
<i>Additional info and Comments</i>	School Director (\$70,000) Special Education Director (part-time in start-up year) (\$30,000)	- School Director - Special Education Director - School Counselor - Behavior Specialist (BCBA-qualified) - General Education Teachers - Special Education Teacher - Paraeducators - Office Manager - Registrar - Related service providers (SLP/OT/PT)	4% annual salary increase - Paraeducators (+1)	
Employee Benefits (200)	\$45,500	\$133,000	\$138,320	\$316,820
<i>Additional info and Comments</i>	No benefits for Sped Director	10% State Retirement 10% Social Security 15% Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life Only applicable to FT employees	10% State Retirement 10% Social Security 15% Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life Only applicable to FT employees	
P & T Services (300)	\$	\$	\$	\$
<i>Additional info and Comments</i>				
Property Services (400)	\$12,000	\$12,000	\$12,600	\$36,600
<i>Additional info and Comments</i>	\$12,000 utilities	\$12,000 utilities	\$12,600 utilities	

Other Services (500)	\$	\$23,000	\$24,150	\$47,150
<i>Additional info and Comments</i>		- Property Insurance - Liability Insurance - Advertising - Printing and Binding		
Travel (580)	\$	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$20,500
<i>Additional info and Comments</i>		Student Transportation Services		
Supplies and Materials (600)	\$	\$32,500	\$22,875	\$55,375
<i>Additional info and Comments</i>		- Instruction - Technology Related	Instructional materials and technology expenditures will decline after Year 1 as initial curriculum and technology purchases stabilize.	

Property (700)	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$180,000
<i>Additional info and Comments</i>	\$60,000 annual rent	\$60,000 annual rent	\$63,000 annual rent	
Total	\$	\$	\$	\$

Appendix I: First Operational Year Projected Budget

THE DAWN INSTITUTE			
First Operational Year		100% Enrollment	
Number of Students:		50	
Grade Configuration:		9-12	
Revenue			
Food Services Sales to Students		50	\$20,880
Student Activities		\$0	
Contributions and Donations from Private Sources:			
Private Donations acquired through the Mary Ann Elizabeth Whatmough Education Foundation		\$25,000	
Miscellaneous		\$0	
Total Revenue From Local Sources (1000)		\$45,880	
Estimated Total All State Funding		\$	770,190.25
Charter School Revolving Loan			
Charter School Startup and Implementation Grant		\$178,750	
Total Revenue from State Sources (3000)		\$948,940	
Federal Child Nutrition Program		50	\$20,880
Restricted Federal Grants-in-Aid Received via USBE (IDEA)		\$5,600	
Federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA)		\$7,496	
Total Revenue from Federal Sources (4000)		\$33,976	
Loan Proceeds (other than revolving loan)		\$0	
Commercial		\$0	
Other (specify)		\$0	
Budget from Surplus (For Budgeting Purposes Only)		\$0	
Total Revenue from Other Sources & Changes (5000 & 6000)		\$0	
Total Revenue		\$1,028,796	
Expenditures		FTE/Number	Salary/Cost
--- SALARIES ---			Total
10.131	Salaries - Teachers Regular Ed	4.00	\$50,000
10.131	Salaries - Teachers Special Ed	1.00	\$50,000
10.132	Salaries - Substitute Teachers	0.00	\$0
10.161	Salaries - Teacher Aides and Paraprofessionals	3.00	\$30,000
10.198	Salaries - Other Classified Personnel	0.00	\$0
Total 10 (1000)-INSTRUCTION Salaries (100)			\$340,000
21.140	Salaries - Related Service Providers	1.00	\$60,000
21.141	Salaries - Attendance and Social Work Personnel	0.00	\$0
21.142	Salaries - Guidance Personnel	0.00	\$0
21.143	Salaries - School Counselor	1.00	\$50,000
21.144	Salaries - Psychological Personnel	0.00	\$0
21.152	Salaries - Office Manager	1.00	\$20,000
21.198	Salaries - Behavior Specialist	1.00	\$35,000
Total - STUDENT SUPPORT Salaries (100)			\$165,000
22.145	Salaries - Licensed Media Personnel	0.00	\$0
22.162	Salaries - Non-licensed Media Personnel	0.00	\$0
22.198	Salaries - Other Classified Personnel	0.00	\$0
Total - INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF SUPPORT Salaries (100)			\$0
24.114	Salaries - Business Administrator	0.00	\$0
24.121	Salaries - Principals and Assistant Principals	1.00	\$70,000
24.152	Salaries - Registrar	1.00	\$20,000
24.198	Salaries - Special Education Director	1.00	\$60,000
Total - SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION Salaries (100)			\$150,000
26.181	Salaries - Operation & Maintenance Supervisors	0.00	\$0
26.182	Salaries - Custodial & Maintenance Personnel	0.00	\$0
26.184	Salaries - Technology Personnel	0.00	\$0
Total - OPERATION & MAINT OF FACILITIES Salaries (100)			\$0
31.191	Salaries - Food Services Personnel	0.00	\$0
Total - FOOD SERVICES Salaries (100)			\$0
TOTAL - SALARIES (100)			\$655,000
--- EMPLOYEE BENEFITS ---			
10.210	State Retirement - Instruction	10%	\$200,000
21.210	State Retirement - Student Support	10%	\$50,000
22.210	State Retirement - Instructional Staff Support	0%	\$0
24.210	State Retirement - School Administration	10%	\$130,000
26.210	State Retirement - Operation & Main of Facilities	0%	\$0
31.210	State Retirement - Food Services	0%	\$0
Total - State Retirement			\$38,000
10.220	Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	\$200,000

21.220	Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	\$50,000	\$5,000
22.220	Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	\$0	\$0
24.220	Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	\$130,000	\$13,000
26.220	Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	\$0	\$0
31.220	Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment	10%	\$0	\$0
Total - Social Security Contributions/Workers' Compensation/Unemployment Insurance				\$38,000
10.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Instruction	15%	\$200,000	\$30,000
21.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Student Support	15%	\$50,000	\$7,500
22.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Instructional Staff Support	0%	\$0	\$0
24.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - School Administration	15%	\$130,000	\$19,500
26.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities	0%	\$0	\$0
31.240	Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life - Food Services	0%	\$0	\$0
Total- Medical Insurance/Dental Insurance/Group Life				\$57,000
10.290	Other Employee Benefits (<i>specify</i>) - Instruction	0%	\$340,000	\$0
21.290	Other Employee Benefits (<i>specify</i>) - Student Support	0%	\$165,000	\$0
22.290	Other Employee Benefits (<i>specify</i>) - Instructional Staff Support	0%	\$0	\$0
24.290	Other Employee Benefits (<i>specify</i>) - School Administration	0%	\$150,000	\$0
26.290	Other Employee Benefits (<i>specify</i>) - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities	0%	\$0	\$0
31.290	Other Employee Benefits (<i>specify</i>) - Food Services	0%	\$0	\$0
Total - Other Employee Benefits				\$0
TOTAL EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (200)				\$133,000
--- PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL SERVICES ---				
10.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Instruction			\$0
21.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Student Support			\$0
22.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Instructional Staff Support			\$0
22.330	Employee Training and Development			\$15,000
24.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - School Administration			\$0
24.345	Audit, Accounting, & Other Business-type Services			\$0
24.349	Purchased Legal Services			\$12,000
24.350	Other Technical Services - Website Development			\$0
26.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities			\$0
31.300	Purchased Prof & Tech Services - Food Services			\$0
TOTAL - PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL SERVICES (300)				\$27,000

--- PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES ---				
24.442	Rental of Equipment & Vehicles - Administration			\$0
24.443	Rental of Computers & Related Equipment			\$0
26.400	Purchased Property Services			\$0
26.410	Utility Services			\$12,000
26.441	Rental of Land & Buildings			\$60,000
26.442	Rental of Equipment & Vehicles - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities			\$0
26.450	Construction Services			\$0
26.490	Other Purchased Property Services - Property Tax			\$0
TOTAL - PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES (400)				\$72,000
--- OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES ---				
27.510	Student Transportation Services			\$10,000
24.520	Insurance (other than employee benefits - e.g. D&O)			\$0
45.521	Property Insurance			\$5,000
45.522	Liability Insurance			\$5,000
10.530	Communication (telephone and other) - Instructional			\$0
21.530	Communication (telephone and other) - Student Support			\$0
24.530	Communication (telephone and other) - School Administration			\$0
26.530	Communication (telephone and other) - Operation and Maintenance of Facilities			\$0
24.540	Advertising			\$5,000
10.550	Printing and Binding - Instruction			\$3,000
21.550	Printing and Binding - Student Support			\$1,000
24.550	Printing and Binding - School Administration			\$2,000
26.550	Printing and Binding - Operation and Maintenance of Facilities			\$2,000
10.560	Tuition			\$0
21.570	Food Service Management			\$0
21.580	Staff Travel/Per Diem - Student Support			\$0
24.580	Staff Travel/Per Diem - School Administration			\$0
26.580	Staff Travel/Per Diem - Operation and Maintenance of Facilities			\$0
10.590	Inter-educational, Interagency Purchased Services			\$0
TOTAL - OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES (500)				\$33,000
--- SUPPLIES & MATERIALS---				

10.600	Supplies & Materials - Instruction	1	\$25,000	\$25,000
10.641	Textbooks	0	\$0	\$0
21.600	Supplies & Materials - Student Support	0	\$0	\$0
22.640	Books and Periodicals	0	\$0	\$0
22.644	Library Books	0	\$0	\$0
22.650	Supplies - Technology Related - Audio/Visual	1	\$7,500	\$7,500
24.600	Supplies & Materials - School Administration	0	\$0	\$0
26.600	Supplies & Materials - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities	0	\$0	\$0
26.620	Energy	0	\$0	\$0
26.650	Supplies - Tech Related - Personnel & Wage Records and Data Mgmt			\$0
31.600	Supplies & Materials - Food Service	0	\$0	\$0
31.630	Food - Food Service			\$0
TOTAL - SUPPLIES & MATERIALS (600)				\$32,500
--- PROPERTY ---				
10.700	Property - Instruction			\$0
21.700	Property - Student Support			\$0
24.700	Property - School Administration			\$0
26.700	Property - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities			\$0
31.700	Property - Food Services			\$0
31.790	Depreciation and Amortization (Kitchen Equipment)	\$ -	7	\$0
49.710	Land and Site Improvements			\$0
49.720	Buildings			\$0
27.732	School Buses			\$0
10.733	Furniture and Fixtures - Instruction			\$0
21.733	Furniture and Fixtures - Student Support			\$0
24.733	Furniture and Fixtures - School Administration			\$0
10.734	Technology Related Hardware - Instruction			\$0
21.734	Technology Related Hardware - Student Support			\$0
24.734	Technology Related Hardware - School Administration			\$0
10.736	Technology Software - Instruction			\$0
21.736	Technology Software - Student Support			\$0
24.736	Technology Software - School Administration			\$0
27.735	Non-Bus Vehicles			\$0

10.739	Other Equipment - Instruction			\$0
21.739	Other Equipment - Student Support			\$0
24.739	Other Equipment - School Administration			\$0
TOTAL - PROPERTY (700)				\$0
--- DEBT SERVICE & MISCELLANEOUS ---				
10.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures - Instruction			\$0
21.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures- Student Support			\$0
24.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures- School Administration - Closure Reserve Fund			\$0
26.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities			\$0
31.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures - Food Services			\$0
45.890	Miscellaneous Expenditures - Facilities, Acquisition, & Constructuon Services			\$0
10.810	Dues & Fees - Instruction			\$0
21.810	Dues & Fees - Student Support			\$0
24.810	Dues & Fees -School Administration			\$0
26.810	Dues & Fees - Operation & Maintenance of Facilities			\$0
	Total - Miscellaneous			\$0
45.830	Interest on Debt			\$0
45.840	Redemption of Principal			\$0
	Total Debt Service			\$0
TOTAL - DEBT SERVICE & MISCELLANEOUS (800)				\$0
Total Expenditures			\$952,500	

1000	Local		\$45,880
3000	State		\$948,940
4000	Federal		\$33,976
TOTAL REVENUES			\$1,028,796
100	Salaries		\$655,000
200	Employee Benefits		\$133,000
300	Purchased Professional & Technical Services		\$27,000
400	Purchased Property Services		\$72,000
500	Other Purchased Services		\$33,000
600	Supplies & Materials		\$32,500

700	Property		\$0
800	Debt Service & Miscellaneous		\$0
TOTAL EXPENDITURES			\$952,500
Excess or Deficiency of Revenues over Expenditures			\$76,296
Other Sources of Funding (5000 & 6000)			\$0
Net Asset Balance (Fund Balance)			\$76,296
Reserves as Percentage of Total Revenue (Net Assets / Total Revenue)			7%
Percentage of Funding Contributed to Reserve Balance (Ttl Rev - Ttl Exp / Ttl Rev = >5%)			7%

Appendix J: Facility Renovations



Classrooms:



Hands-on Learning and Community Building Spaces:

