New Charter School Proposal Application

Technical Components:

Proposed Charter School Name: Juniper Grove Academy

Name of Applicant(s):

Taylor Niemela - Chair

Emory Wride - Vice Chair

Jessica Rhoton - Board Member

David McDaniel - Treasurer

Courtney Edge - Secretary

Authorized Agent, if applicable:

Main Point of Contact: Taylor Niemela

Point of Contact Phone Number: 801-755-5274

Point of Contact Email Address: utahcharterplanning@gmail.com

Proposed Charter School Location (city/area): Southern Utah County (Spanish Fork, Mapleton, Salem)

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

Proposed Charter School's Reported Grade Configuration and Maximum Authorized Enrollment: K-5

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	**40**	**40**	**40**	**40**	**40**	**25**								**225**
Year 2	**42**	**42**	**42**	**42**	**42**	**40**								**250**
Year 3	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**	**42**								**267**
Year 4	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**								**270**
Year 5 +	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**								**270**

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

Yes, Nebo School District elementary schools are currently on a K-5 model.

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

No; at this time, we do not plan to apply for waiver, special treatment or priority consideration allowable by statute or rule.

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

Name of Authorized Agent: Taylor Niemela
Signature of Authorized Agent:
Name of Charter School Board Chair (if different than Authorized Agent):
Signature of Charter School Board Chair (if different than Authorized Agent):

Juniper Grove Academy Proposal

1. Provide a 1-2 page overview of the "big ideas" of your proposed charter school

Juniper Grove Academy's mission is to provide students with a high-quality, flexible hybrid education that fosters academic excellence, strong literacy skills, STEM innovation, and individualized learning opportunities that prepare every student for lifelong success. Our vision is to become a leading hybrid charter school where students thrive through a balanced model of literacy learning and STEM collaboration, empowering students to become confident readers, creative problem-solvers, and engaged citizens.

By providing options for students' schedules, we will be significantly increasing students' choices of learning opportunities. The hybrid structure and curriculum will allow families the flexibility to create a learning schedule and plan that will be most effective for their individual children. We will maintain a strong focus on literacy (reading and writing) and STEM (math and science), with programs exploring each of these fields available to students during both their at-home and in-school learning times. This will create well-rounded citizens with a firm knowledge and understanding of principles in multiple core educational subjects. The proposed location of our school will also fulfill a significant need in Utah County, as Spanish Fork and the surrounding cities are growing in population, but the number of high-performing schools offering a hybrid model of education is low in this area. Public elementary schools are at high capacity, and more quality schooling options are necessary to ensure that all children can access the education and attention that will prepare them for a successful future.

Juniper Grove Academy's vision aligns with that of the Utah State Charter School Board because it provides families with a multitude of choices that they would not typically have in other schools. By allowing access to flexible schedules and learning environments, we will be catering to families who are seeking greater involvement in their children's education. Our model also supports students who thrive in blended learning environments or simply need flexibility in their educational plan. It also allows expanded access to personalized education opportunities within the community, which most students don't have the time or capacity to deeply investigate in a traditional school setting. Our plan blends independent learning with teacher-guided instruction, and incorporates hands-on learning experiences and parental involvement. We believe our model will support student success by allowing students to learn independence, problem-solving, and self-management, through engaging curriculum and consistent progress monitoring.

Our hybrid learning structure immediately sets us apart from existing local schools, especially those in southern Utah County, but what differentiates us even more is our commitment to minimal student technology use and our emphasis on parental involvement. Our proposed learning model will provide a daily checklist for students' at-home learning days to ensure that education is prioritized and stays on topic and on schedule. Though this will be an online checklist, it will be the responsibility of the parent or guardian to follow and update this list, thereby minimizing the students' time using technology. Teachers will be able to access the daily checklist and track progress in order to provide one-on-one support to students who may require additional guidance. We will provide guardians with daily ideas and prompts for more interactive learning opportunities on the day's topic–including ideas for community activities or programs that align with the curriculum. Our goal is to educate and include the entire family, not just the enrolled student. Our in-school learning days will include dedicated time for reviewing and filling any gaps found in the at-home learning days, with teachers or aides assisting in one-one-one instruction as necessary. Students will also spend significant time participating in physical projects and challenges while on campus, where they can practice working with others and solving real-world problems. We plan to utilize a rotation model, where students will alternate between specific days for at-home and in-school learning. Families can choose the schedule option that works for them, with at least two days of on-campus learning required for each child. This will allow class sizes to stay smaller and individual attention to be available for each child.

We anticipate that Juniper Grove Academy will produce clear, measurable academic outcomes that demonstrate the effectiveness of our approach. Students are expected to outperform state averages in both literacy proficiency and STEM subjects on standardized assessments. We will also target strong academic growth, aiming for students to achieve above-average growth percentiles, particularly in closing achievement gaps for historically underserved populations. Beyond standardized metrics, we expect to see success through higher student engagement and fulfillment, measured by strong attendance rates, low chronic absenteeism, and positive results from student and parent satisfaction surveys. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply literacy skills meaningfully to complex STEM projects, producing high-quality work that reflects critical thinking, creativity, and real-world problem-solving.

2. Submit a 2-3 page overview of the educational program, including the following elements:
a. An explanation of the overarching educational philosophy that is supported by cited research and/or evidence.

Our school's educational philosophy is based on the belief that literacy (reading and writing) is the foundation of learning. We believe students learn best when they receive clear instruction and have opportunities to apply what they learn through meaningful, hands-on activities. Through incorporating STEM learning experiences, students build critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving skills.

Strong reading proficiency in the early grades is one of the most powerful predictors of extended academic success. Hernandez (2011) found that students who are not reading proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to fail to graduate from high school than proficient readers. Furthermore, Duncan et al. (2007) found that early math and reading skills at school entry are the strongest predictors of later academic achievement across subjects, even after controlling for socioeconomic background and other factors.

To address this need, the school will implement a structured literacy model based in the Science of Reading. The National Reading Panel (2000) found that systematic instruction in phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension significantly improves reading outcomes for early learners. Research reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse and the Institute of Education Sciences shows that students learn to read more effectively when skills are taught explicitly and systematically in a structured sequence. Therefore, instruction will be organized in a clear progression that helps students build solid foundational reading skills.

Another area we want to focus on is STEM. Research indicates that integrated STEM education improves student achievement, motivation, interest in STEM fields, and elevated thinking skills by connecting learning across disciplines and engaging students in authentic problem-solving experiences. Students will participate in hands-on projects that help give them experiences that encourage creativity and teamwork. They will use reading, writing, math, and science skills to explore questions, solve problems, and share their ideas. By combining strong literacy skills with engaging STEM experiences, students will build the knowledge, confidence, and critical thinking skills needed for future success.

The school will align to the Utah Core Standards in English Language Arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Instruction will be intentionally designed to ensure mastery of grade-level standards through clear learning objectives, strong instruction, and ongoing assessment. Literacy instruction will be central across all subject areas, with students regularly engaging in reading and writing. STEM instruction will be integrated across subjects through hands-on, problem-solving, and project-based learning experiences.

Student learning will be measured through a balanced assessment system that includes formative, interim, and summative assessments. Formative assessments such as student discussions, teacher observations, practice work, and short checks to evaluate understanding will be used regularly to guide instruction and provide feedback. We will conduct benchmark assessments that will track progress toward proficiency of the Utah Core Standards and help students who need additional support. State-required assessments will also be administered, and all data will be used to inform instructional decisions, improve teaching practices, and support continuous school improvement.

The intended educational program focuses on strong literacy instruction and integrated STEM learning in math and science, along with a structured blended learning model that combines in person instruction with digital learning. Research from the U.S. Department of Education on online and blended learning shows that well-designed blended models can be as effective as traditional instruction when they include clear learning goals, strong teacher interaction, and consistent feedback (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).This model provides flexibility while upholding high expectations for mastery of the Utah Core Standards. Hybrid students will engage in teacher-led instruction, standards-aligned digital learning, and regular in-person assessments and STEM-based collaborative experiences.

Literacy instruction will be grounded in the Science of Reading and a structured literacy approach.Research from the National Reading Panel shows that students learn to read most effectively when skills are taught explicitly and in a clear sequence (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, 2000). Students will receive daily reading instruction that includes phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, along with small-group support based on individual needs.

Math and science instruction will be delivered through hands-on, problem-based STEM learning that helps students apply academic concepts to real-world situations. Research on integrated STEM education and project-based learning shows that students develop stronger problem-solving skills, increased understanding, and greater engagement when learning is connected to authentic, real-life challenges (National Research Council, 2014).

Curriculum will be selected through a rigorous, evidence-based review process. Priority will be given to programs aligned to the Utah Core Standards and supported by research showing effectiveness at improving student achievement, as well as support for structured literacy, STEM integration, differentiation, and hybrid instruction.

Although the school serves grades K–5 and does not issue diplomas, it is designed to fully prepare students for success in secondary education and completion of Utah's graduation requirements. By the end of grade 5, students will have mastered elementary Utah Core Standards and developed solid foundational skills in literacy, mathematics, scientific reasoning, communication, and collaboration.

The school will offer several special programs that extend learning beyond the traditional classroom and support its literacy-focused, STEM-integrated model. A structured blended learning program will combine face-to-face instruction with digital learning at home. This model allows students to receive direct teacher instruction and hands-on STEM experiences in person.

The school will also provide STEM enrichment opportunities designed to give students hands-on exposure to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics through inquiry-based learning, design challenges, experimentation, and problem-solving activities.

In addition, community engagement and partnerships can help deepen a child's education and learning. We will develop partnerships with local organizations such as libraries, universities, museums, and STEM-related businesses. These partnerships will support student learning through field experiences, guest speakers, and hands-on learning opportunities that connect classroom instruction to the real world.

3. Provide a 2-3 page detailed description of the research-based or evidence-based cited instruction for special populations that will be provided to students as required by federal law (ie, students with disabilities, multilanguage learners, students who are economically disadvantaged, students who are migrant, etc.)

At Juniper Grove Academy we understand that special population students are entitled to the same rights and privileges as all other enrolled students (U.S. Department of Education, Rehabilitation Act, 1973). We are eager to create an environment that will allow for all students to receive a quality education and feel included in a supportive community. Utah Charter Schools are given very specific requirements in the assistance and protection of special population students. Under IDEA, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, ESSA, and Title III; we are given excellent guidance and instruction to help us care for and help these students succeed. Juniper Grove Academy's curriculum will offer a reading centered hybrid program, with strong, hands-on STEM opportunities and experiences. Because hybrid models create both opportunities and challenges for diverse learners, Juniper Grove Academy will implement evidence-based instructional systems designed to help all students exceed; including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, economically disadvantaged students, and other special populations.

Juniper Grove Academy will use a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) that includes academic, behavioral, and social supports to identify student needs early and provide additional support when and where necessary. Based on our market analysis we anticipate enrollment from several different special population students; including (but not limited to) special needs, learning disabilities, and multi-language learners. Special needs resources were a requirement for almost 25% of our market analysis report.

Special needs education and accommodations are an important part of public education. In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, students of this population will be given equal and specialized education opportunities. They will also be provided with accessibility needs and given equal opportunities in extracurricular activities and experiences. Juniper Grove Academy will comply with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The law states that "Disability is a natural part of the human experience and in no way diminishes the right of individuals to participate in or contribute to society. Improving educational results for children with disabilities is an essential element of our national policy of ensuring equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities"; Juniper Grove Academy agrees with this statement and strives to provide quality education and support for special needs students and their families. Using Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), students will be given a free appropriate public education (FAPE).

Students with disabilities will receive specially designed support based on their Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) within the school model and focus.

Inclusion in our literacy and STEM centered hybrid program will include (but is not limited to):

- Explicit literacy instruction during both home and school
- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to increase uniformity across hybrid instruction
- Teaching Aides, co – teaching and small-group intervention
- Offering STEM activities with multiple methods for participation and demonstration of learning

Because reading proficiency serves as the foundation for future academic and social success, literacy instruction will prioritize structured literacy practices that emphasize teaching of phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

Teachers and administrators will use IEPS to continually monitor progress, adjust needs and promote our schools focus on growth mindset, to set our students up for greater success in future schooling and life.

In January 2025, The U.S. Department of Education created "Building and Sustaining Inclusive Educational Practices" to assist in educating special needs students on an individual level while attending a public school. Its focus to include special needs students in general education classes to the maximum, appropriate extent, will coincide with Juniper Grove Academy core values of a growth mindset to encourage students to improve in a safe learning environment according to their individual capabilities. Our focus on reading curriculum and hybrid schedule will allow for students with disabilities to receive staff at school and at home according to their individual abilities and needs. With the support of staff, other students, the student's parents and additional aides (if necessary), we will strive for an environment of inclusion and progression.

Multi-language learners (MLLs) are another population that accounted for about one fifth of our market analysis research. MLLs will be able to participate fully in our school's literacy and STEM focuses through evidence-based language support. Including, but not limited to:

- Vocabulary instruction connected to reading content
- Language objectives emphasized within literacy and STEM lessons
- Visual supports, sentence frames, and guided academic discussions
- Opportunities for additional oral language development during group STEM experiences

Reading instruction for multilingual learners will include access to grade-level texts while supporting language learning through consistent exposure to academic vocabulary and guided discussion.
Families and caretakers will receive resources and guidance supporting literacy development at home regardless of language background.
The success of Juniper Grove Academy and our hybrid reading model depends on strong family-school relationships. To achieve this Juniper Grove Academy will:

- Conduct progress screening multiple times throughout the school year
- Use literacy progress monitoring and testing to evaluate growth
- Provide families with regular reading progress updates
- Offer training and resources to support home literacy routines
- Engage families as partners in academic and success planning

4. Provide a 2-3 page market analysis. A market analysis should be a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the educational market near a proposed charter school, including:

The proposed charter school seeks to serve students and families in southern Utah County through a differentiated educational model focused on literacy and reading achievement, academic excellence, flexible hybrid learning opportunities, and a school culture grounded in growth mindset principles and character development. This market analysis examines the educational landscape surrounding the proposed school, including community demographics, population trends, competing educational options, demonstrated community demand, enrollment forecasts, and potential risks. Based on available demographic, academic, and survey data, the evidence suggests that southern Utah County possesses both the need and demand necessary to support an additional high-quality public charter school.

Southern Utah County continues to experience significant population growth and remains one of the fastest-growing regions in the state. Spanish Fork's population has increased substantially over the past two decades and is projected to continue growing through 2050. Regional planning data projects that Spanish Fork's population will grow from approximately 42,700 residents in 2020 to more than 95,000 residents by 2050. In addition, city planning documents project the need for thousands of additional housing units over the coming decades to accommodate future growth. Neighboring communities, including Salem, Payson, Santaquin, Mapleton, and Springville, continue to experience residential development and population increases as well. These trends indicate that the region will continue producing significant numbers of school-aged children for the foreseeable future.

The demographic profile of southern Utah County further supports the need for additional elementary educational opportunities. More than one-third of Spanish Fork residents are under the age of eighteen, reflecting a strong family-oriented community with a substantial school-aged population. Nebo School District remains one of Utah's largest school districts and serves tens of thousands of students throughout the region. The continued growth of the student population suggests that demand for educational options will remain strong in the years ahead. The proposed K-6 charter model aligns directly with the area's demographic characteristics and addresses the educational needs of a large and growing population of elementary-aged students.

While population growth supports the long-term viability of the proposed school, the most compelling educational need identified through this analysis relates to literacy achievement. Reading proficiency remains inconsistent across many elementary schools serving southern Utah County. State assessment data indicates that several nearby elementary schools report English Language Arts proficiency rates below 50 percent, with some schools reporting proficiency rates between approximately 35 and 45 percent. While several schools in the region demonstrate strong literacy outcomes, the overall data reveals that a substantial number of students are not yet reading at proficient levels according to state standards.

This challenge is significant because literacy serves as the foundation for academic success in nearly every subject area. Students who struggle with reading often experience difficulty in science, social studies, mathematics, and written communication. Reading proficiency is strongly correlated with future academic achievement, graduation rates, and long-term educational success. The inconsistency in literacy outcomes among nearby schools suggests an opportunity for additional educational models specifically designed to prioritize reading achievement and reading comprehension.

The importance of early literacy has recently become a major focus of education leaders throughout Utah. In 2026, Utah lawmakers introduced Senate Bill 241, a comprehensive early literacy initiative designed to address concerns that approximately half of Utah's K-3 students are reading below minimum proficiency levels. The legislation establishes a statewide goal of having 80% of students reading on grade level by the end of third grade by 2030 and includes interventions such as individualized reading plans, expanded literacy coaching, teacher training in the science of reading, and additional support for struggling readers. State leaders have recognized that third grade represents a critical educational milestone because students transition from "learning to read" to "reading to learn," making early literacy one of the strongest predictors of future academic success. The proposed charter school is designed to directly support these statewide priorities. By placing literacy and reading comprehension at the center of its educational model, utilizing evidence-based instructional practices grounded in the science of reading, and providing early intervention for students who fall behind, the school seeks to help more students achieve reading proficiency before the end of third grade. Rather than simply responding to a local need, the proposed school aims to contribute to Utah's broader effort to improve literacy outcomes and ensure that more students are prepared for long-term academic success. (Deseret News)

The area is also served by several established charter schools, including Reagan Academy, American Leadership Academy, American Preparatory Academy Salem. These schools have demonstrated that families in southern Utah County value educational choice and are willing to seek alternatives to traditional district schools when those alternatives align with their educational priorities. Existing charter schools continue to maintain strong enrollment and utilize lottery-based enrollment systems when applications exceed available seats. The continued popularity of charter schools within the region suggests that demand for public-school choice remains strong.

Community survey results further support the need for the proposed school. A survey conducted among families in southern Utah County received 149 responses representing a variety of educational backgrounds, including public school families, charter school families, homeschool families, and families utilizing hybrid learning models. Survey responses revealed substantial interest in elementary education options, with K-6 grade levels receiving significantly more support than middle school or high school grade configurations.

The survey also provided valuable insight into the educational priorities of local families. Respondents identified growth mindset development, strong school culture, character development, and reduced dependence on technology as important educational values. Hybrid learning opportunities ranked among the most desired program features. Additionally, approximately eighty percent of respondents indicated a willingness to commute to attend a school that aligned with their educational priorities. These findings suggest that families throughout southern Utah County are actively seeking educational options that combine strong academics with flexible learning opportunities and positive school culture.

Importantly, the survey results align closely with the proposed mission and educational model of the charter school. The school's emphasis on literacy achievement, academic excellence, hybrid attendance options, and growth mindset development directly reflects priorities identified by surveyed families. This alignment provides evidence that the proposed school is responding to a demonstrated community interest rather than creating a solution in search of a problem.

Based on current demographic trends, survey data, and regional educational demand, enrollment projections for the proposed school appear reasonable and sustainable. Continued population growth, a large elementary-aged population, demonstrated parent interest, and the ongoing popularity of school choice options all support the likelihood of successful enrollment. While future enrollment projections will continue to be refined as additional community outreach and intent-to-enroll data become available, current evidence suggests that the proposed school will be positioned to attract sufficient enrollment to support long-term viability.

As with any new charter school, several risks and challenges must be acknowledged. Existing district and charter schools provide families with numerous educational options, creating a competitive educational environment. Additionally, enrollment projections must be carefully monitored to ensure sustainable growth. The proposed school plans to mitigate these challenges through clear differentiation, strong academic outcomes, community engagement, and a distinctive educational model centered on literacy, academic achievement, flexible learning opportunities, and growth mindset principles. Compliance with state charter requirements, accountability standards, and operational expectations will also remain critical to long-term success.

In conclusion, the evidence indicates that southern Utah County possesses both the demographic capacity and demonstrated community demand necessary to support an additional public charter school. The region's continued population growth, large elementary-aged population, strong interest in educational choice, and ongoing literacy challenges provide a compelling rationale for the proposed school. Through its focus on reading achievement, academic excellence, hybrid learning opportunities, and growth mindset development, the proposed charter school will provide families with a distinctive educational option while contributing to the broader goal of improving educational outcomes for students throughout southern Utah County.

Governing Board:

Members of Governing Body: (add additional rows if needed)

Name:	Position on Board:	Area of Expertise:	Any Previous or Current Charter Affiliation:
Taylor Niemela	**Chair**	**Teacher and Staff Support, Business Management**	
Emory Wride	**Vice Chair**	**Literary Development, Family/Home Learning Engagement, Bookkeeping**	
Jessica Rhoton	**Board Member**	**Community perspective, business management**	
David McDaniel	**Treasurer**	**Curriculum and Teaching Models**	**Taught at Maeser Preparatory Academy Teacher at Freedom Preparatory**
Courtney Edge	**Secretary**	**Community Engagement, Health and Wellness**	

Appendix A
Board Member Background Information

Name:

Taylor Niemela

Position on Board:

Chair

Area of Expertise:

Non-Profit Management, Curriculum Research and Development

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

I, Taylor Niemela, intend to serve as a founding member of the Board of Directors for Juniper Grove Academy. I am committed to supporting the school's mission of providing a quality, literacy-centered education that promotes academic achievement, strong reading skills, and STEM learning opportunities.

My experience working with nonprofit organizations has strengthened my ability to build relationships, collaborate with diverse stakeholders, and support organizational goals. I believe strong relationships among schools, families, and the community are essential to student success. I am also committed to supporting educators and staff, recognizing their critical role in creating a positive and effective learning environment.

I strongly believe that literacy is the foundation of lifelong learning and academic achievement. As a board member, I am committed to providing support for the school's mission to ensure students have the opportunity to thrive academically and personally.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

Volunteered at BYU Philanthropies

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Full Time Parent with at home learning experience

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Minor Degree in Non Profit Management
Studies in Spanish Translation
Attended American Leadership Academy

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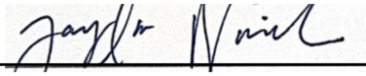
Applicant’s Signature:



Date:

22- June - 26

Name:

Emory Wride

Position on Board:

Vice Chair

Area of Expertise:

Literacy and Language Development, Family Engagement, and Regulatory Compliance/Finance Directing

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

As Vice Chair, I intend to support the Chair and fellow board members in fulfilling the board’s governance responsibilities. I am committed to helping ensure that the school operates in accordance with its mission, charter, policies, and applicable laws and regulations. I will work collaboratively with board members, school leadership, families, and community stakeholders to promote transparency, accountability, and effective decision-making.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

Full-time parent with direct experience supporting children’s at-home learning and financial management; translation intern (Russian to English translation)

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Manager at a Section 42 housing complex, assisting with regulatory compliance and budget/financial tracking; counselor at a children’s camp engaging in hands-on second-language learning; research assistant, transcribing

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

BA in Linguistics

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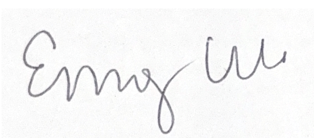
Applicant’s Signature:



Date:

22- June - 26

Name:

Jessica Rhoton

Position on Board:

Board Member

Area of Expertise:

I would describe my primary area of expertise as family and community perspective I believe I would contribute practical insight, accountability, and a parent-centered perspective to board governance.

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

As a parent of three children and a small business owner, I am passionate about helping create a high-quality educational environment where students can thrive academically, socially, and personally. My intent as a board member is to provide thoughtful oversight, contribute to strategic decision-making, and help ensure that the school remains focused on its mission and long-term success.

As a Board Member I believe families benefit from strong educational options, and I am committed to representing the interests of students, parents, and the community while supporting responsible governance, accountability, and continuous improvement. I look forward to contributing my professional experience, collaborative mindset, and dedication to helping establish a school that serves students with excellence.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

While I have not previously served on a nonprofit board, I have extensive experience volunteering my time and energy in support of children, families, and community centered initiatives through my roles as a parent, business owner, and community member.

As a mother of three children, I have developed a strong understanding of the importance of educational quality, family engagement, and creating environments where children can succeed. I am eager to apply this perspective to charter school governance and to continue learning best practices in nonprofit leadership and board service.

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

I am the owner and operator of a photography business, where I manage all aspects of business operations, including budgeting, marketing, customer relations, scheduling, strategic planning, and financial decision making. Operating a small business has strengthened my ability to solve problems, communicate effectively with diverse groups of people, manage resources responsibly, and maintain accountability for outcomes.

Prior to becoming a business owner, I worked as a phlebotomist in the healthcare field holding leadership positions. This role required professionalism, attention to detail, adherence to policies and procedures, and compassionate interaction with individuals from diverse backgrounds. My healthcare experience reinforced the importance of integrity, compliance, and service qualities that are equally valuable in board governance.

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Business owner, trained by professionals in leadership.

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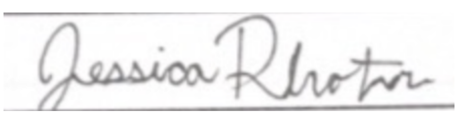

Date:

22- June- 26

Name:

Courtney Edge

Position on Board:

Founding Board Member and Secretary

Area of Expertise:

Community engagement & outreach, Health & Safety, Management, Organizational, Leadership

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

I want to serve on the founding board to help ensure our students are safe, supported, and set up to succeed. As a nurse, I am deeply committed to ensuring that our school focuses on the well-being of every student, and I bring practical experience in health, safety compliance, and patient education to the table. Through my extensive volunteer work directing local youth programs, I have a strong understanding of the diverse needs of children and families in our community. I am committed to supporting student well-being, helping build trusted connections between the school and families, and utilizing my organizational skills to ensure the board remains transparent, orderly, and compliant in my role as Secretary.

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

I have served in volunteer leadership roles in my local church, where I have worked with youth and families. In these roles, I have helped plan and organize activities and events, coordinate with others in the community, and assist with budgeting. I have also participated in community service, including food bank volunteering. These experiences have helped me develop leadership, organization, and teamwork skills, and have strengthened my ability to work with families and support the community.

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Registered Nurse and Customer Service Agent

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Bachelors of Nursing

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Applicant's Signature:

Courtney Edge

Date:

22-June-26

Name:

David McDaniel

Position on Board:

Treasurer

Area of Expertise:

Math Curriculum, Educational policy, Educational models

Statement of Intent Regarding Role on the Board:

I intend to bring transparency and prudence to my role as treasurer, by using our money effectively and finding innovative ways to reduce spending so we can reinvest savings into the schooling community and have a higher quality education. I believe that by using resources effectively and thoughtfully we can do more to provide high quality education for our students.

David McDaniel

Not-for-Profit History Relevant to Board Role:

Math Teacher

Employment History Relevant to Board Role:

Math Teacher

Education History Relevant to Board Role:

Educational Policy
Math Education

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Applicant's Signature:

Date:

06/21/2026

APPENDIX B

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION

OF

JUNIPER GROVE ACADEMY

We, the undersigned natural persons all being of the age of eighteen years or more, acting as incorporators under the Utah Non-Profit Corporation and Cooperative Association Act, adopt the following Articles of Incorporation for such Corporation:

ARTICLE I

The name of this corporation is Juniper Grove Academy (the "Corporation").

ARTICLE II

The period of duration of this corporation is perpetual.

ARTICLE III

The Corporation is organized and shall be operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes. The corporation's purpose is to provide K-5 students with a high-quality, literacy-centered educational program that promotes academic excellence, character development, and meaningful STEM learning opportunities

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers, or other persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered to the corporation and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth herein;

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 except as authorized under the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended;

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 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law).

ARTICLE IV

The corporation shall not have any class of members or stock.

ARTICLE V

The number of directors of this Corporation shall be five (5), or more than five, as fixed from time to time by the By-Laws of the Corporation. The number of directors constituting the founding Board of Directors of the Corporation is five, and the names and addresses of the persons who are to serve as directors until their successors are elected and shall qualify are:

Taylor Niemela
3471 E 1180 S
Spanish Fork, Utah 84660

Emory Wride
1207 S 3500 E
Spanish Fork, Utah 84660

Jessica Rhoton
3587 E 1360 S
Spanish Fork, Utah 84660

Courtney Edge
1403 S Windy Ridge Dr
Spanish Fork, Utah 84660

David McDaniel
3828 S Sage Wood Ave
Mapleton, Utah 84664

ARTICLE VI

The names and addresses of the incorporators are:

ARTICLE VII

The address of the corporation's initial registered office shall be:

3471 E 1180 S

Spanish Fork, Utah 84660

Such office may be changed at any time by the Board of Trustees without amendment of these Articles of Incorporation.

The corporation's initial registered agent at such address shall be:

Taylor Niemela

I hereby acknowledge and accept appointment as corporate registered agent.

ARTICLE VIII

No part of the net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to its trustees, 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 III 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 or in opposition to any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of these Articles of Incorporation, 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, as amended or supplemented, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, as amended or supplemented.

ARTICLE IX

Upon the 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, as amended or supplemented, or shall be distributed to the federal government or to a state or local government for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the District Court of 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 are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

ARTICLE X

In Witness Whereof, We, Courtney Edge, Taylor Niemela, Jessica Rhoton, Emory Wride and David McDaniel have executed these Articles of Incorporation in duplicate this 18 day of June, 20 26, and say:

That they are all incorporators herein; that they have read the above and foregoing Articles of Incorporation; know the contents thereof and that the same is true to the best of their knowledge and belief, excepting as to matters herein alleged upon information and belief and as to those matters they believe to be true.

Courtney Edge

Courtney Edge

Taylor Niemela

Jessica Rhoton

Jessica Rhoton

Emory Wride

David McDaniel

Appendix C

Governing Board Bylaws

Bylaws for Juniper Grove Academy

Article I - Organization

1.1 Name. Juniper Grove Academy

1.2 School Direction. The Corporation will be directed by a Board of Trustees acting as the Governing Board or "The Board."

1.3 Corporation Office. The Corporation shall maintain such offices, within the State of Utah, as the Board may from time to time designate.

Article II- Purposes

2.1 The Corporation has been formed and established to operate a Utah Charter School (the "School") and to provide public education following Utah Charter School laws.

2.2 The corporation is organized exclusively for charitable and educational purposes.

2.3 The corporation is organized under the Utah Nonprofit Corporation Act for public purposes and is not formed for profit or the personal financial gain of any person. The organization's assets and income will not be distributable to or benefit the Trustees, officers, or other individuals. Both the assets and income shall be used for the sole purpose of promoting the corporation's purposes as described in the bylaws. Nothing contained within the bylaws shall

prohibit payments of compensation to employees and independent contractors for services provided that benefit the organization.

Article III - The Governing Board, also referred to as "The Board"

3.1 General Powers. The business and affairs of Juniper Grove Academy shall be managed by the Governing Board, except as otherwise provided in the Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act or as set forth in the Juniper Grove Academy- Articles of Incorporation. The Governing Board's purpose is to ensure that the school's administration is executing the school's mission and vision, and to provide oversight of the school's finances, budget, and performance.

3.2 Roles. The Governing Board officer positions include Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Secretary. The number of Governing Board Members shall be five. The Board may change the number of members to five, six, or seven, provided a majority vote is obtained at any regularly scheduled meeting. The Board may appoint or elect any additional officers or assistant officers as necessary to carry out its functions.

Officer responsibilities will be defined by board rule and may be amended at the annual meeting. The Treasurer reports on all financial aspects of the School and Corporation. The Treasurer is a voting member of the Board. The Chair calls and runs the meeting. The Chair works with the secretary to arrange the agenda. The Chair may delegate this responsibility to another officer. The Vice-Chair works closely with the Treasurer and is made aware of all financial obligations and updates. The Board Secretary is a voting member of the board. The Board appoints the Secretary.

3.3 Responsibilities. Board members are required to attend at least seven regularly scheduled board meetings per year. At least four board meetings, including the Annual Meeting, must be attended in person; other board meetings may be attended online. Board members shall uphold the mission and vision of the school, fulfill responsibilities as indicated by the Governing Board Code of Conduct, and complete all state requirements for board members

3.4 Executive Director. The Executive Director will act as an advisor to the Board and attend board meetings.

3.5 Founding Board Members. To establish and maintain the intended vision and purpose of Juniper Academy Grove, the Founding Board Members will serve an initial term of five years, unless they request to leave the Board or pass away. If a Founding Member leaves or dies within the first year of the school, they will be replaced by a newly elected Board Member who will serve the remainder of their term. In the event of a Founding Board Member's death, the secretary will compile a list of candidates and present it to the Founding Board members, who will then elect each position by the Board's rules. Interested potential new board members will submit an application to the Board for review. New Board Members, replacing a Founding Board member, shall be elected by a majority vote of the current Governing Board members at each annual business meeting or during a special election during the first year. Founding Board Members may fill any open Board seat if they elect to return to the board after an absence. Founding Board members may not be removed for differences in opinion on how to execute the mission and vision.

3.6 Spokesperson. One board member shall be designated as the Board spokesperson and is the only authorized individual who may speak on behalf of the Board for official business. No other board members will speak to the media, public organizations, or private organizations regarding school business or represent the school to public or private organizations without permission from the Board.

3.7 Elections. Board members shall be elected or re-elected by the Governing Board at the Annual Meeting each January.

Each Board Member shall hold office until their term has expired and a successor has been elected and qualified, or until death, resignation, or removal from office.

Board member elections for officer positions will be held annually, at the request of a board member, during the Annual Meeting in January. If no request is made for elections, no election will be held, and the current officer position will remain unchanged. Interested parties will submit an application to the Governing Board for review and consideration. Notice of request must be made to the Board Secretary at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting. The Secretary will compile a list of candidates for each office and present it to Board members, who will then elect the candidates for each position in accordance with Board rules. Board members may invite potential board members to apply or post open positions on the school's website

3.8 Terms of Service for Board Members (other than Founding Board Members). All new board members (other than Founding Board Members) are elected to a six-month probationary term. Board member terms (except for Founding Board members) will be 2 years in length and commence on June 1st, following the January election. After six months, the new member may immediately apply to the Board for the remaining 2-year term. A majority of the Board must approve the remaining term of service after the 6-month probationary term. Founding Board members are exempt from the probationary term. If the board membership drops below 5, vacancies will be filled within 60 days of the vacancy, and the new term will commence immediately. In this case, the Board member will serve from the date of election and two additional years after their election, and their term will end May 31st. If a Founding member leaves the Board and later rejoins the Board, they remain exempt from the probationary term. Officers will serve in their elected position for a two-year term. Board Members must serve on the board for at least 12 months to be eligible to run for an officer position. Terms of service for all Board positions shall end on May 31st at the end of the term.

3.9 Board Member Qualifications. Board members must meet the following qualifications and requirements to serve on the Board. They must have the ability to pass a formal background check, be at least 21 years of age, and be a resident of the state of Utah. Board members may not be current full-time employees of the school. Board members are required to sign and adhere to the Board Member Code of Conduct. Close relatives may not hold officer positions concurrently. Board members (except Founding members) are limited to a maximum of four years of service. After the second year of the school, at least four Board Members shall be parents or grandparents of one or more children currently attending the school.

3.10 Voting. A majority vote requires a majority of those present and voting. In the event of a tie, the Board Chair's vote will break the tie.

3.11 Quorum. A quorum is defined as half of the board plus one. A majority of board members shall constitute a quorum. The Board may meet, vote, and carry out business if a quorum is present.

3.12 Removal from Board. Board members (other than Founding Members) may be removed at any time, with or without cause, by a majority vote of Board members, not including the board member who is to be removed.

Founding board members may be removed, with or without cause, by a unanimous vote of the remaining Board members.

3.13 Compensation. Board members shall not receive compensation for their services. Board members shall not be disqualified from receiving reasonable compensation for services rendered to or for the benefit of the Corporation in any other capacity with Board approval.

3.14 Meetings. The Board shall meet monthly, ten times a year, with the Annual Meeting taking place in January each year. Board members are required to attend a minimum of seven meetings per year. Meetings will be announced, and the day and time will be publicly posted on the School website. Meetings will be held on the fourth

Tuesday of each month at 4:00 p.m., unless a holiday or school break is planned, in which case the meeting will be rescheduled for the third Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. The agenda will be available two weeks prior to the meeting, and the public is invited to the public sessions. Meetings will take place at the School or another location designated by the Board. If a Board member needs to join virtually, they may do so.

3.15 Utah Open and Public Meetings Act. The Board will fulfill its obligation to act in accordance with the Utah Open and Public Meetings Act.

Article IV- Business and Meetings

4.1 Annual Meeting. An annual business meeting shall be held once each calendar year to elect members to the board and to transact such other business as may come before the meeting. The annual meeting shall be held during the regularly scheduled board meeting time in January or as designated by the directors.

4.2 Governing Board Code of Conduct. The Governing Board shall re-adopt the Code of Conduct at each annual meeting by majority vote.

4.3 Regular Meetings. Regular meetings of the Governing Board will be held monthly, at least ten times a year, at a time and place designated by the Board.

4.4 Notice. All meetings will be open to the public and will be held and noticed under UCA 52-4-202 and any other applicable code.

4.5 Special Meetings. Special meetings may be requested by the Chair or a majority vote of the Board members.

4.5 Robert's Rules of Order (RRO). A simplified version of Robert's Rules of Order will be used to conduct Board Meetings.

4.6 Conflicts. If a conflict of interest occurs between a Board Member and the Corporation, the Board shall follow the conflict of interest policy adopted by the Board. The board member who has the conflict shall recuse themselves from voting on any issue when a conflict of interest exists and may not be present for any discussion of the issue.

4.7 Authority to Bind Corporation. Only The Board may authorize the execution of instruments as described in its policies, no director, school employee, officer, committee, employee, or other agent shall have the authority to bind the Corporation by any contract or instrument or pledge its credit or render it liable monetarily for any purpose or in any amount.

4.8 Audits. The Board will comply with all statutory audit requirements.

4.9 Maintenance of Records. The Board will maintain at its principal place of business: 1) copies of all public records required by federal, state, and local laws. 2) Books and records for all financial accounts. 3) A list of names and addresses of its current board. 4) copies of all agendas and minutes, and 5) any other records required by law.

4.10 Inspection Rights. Each Board Member shall have the right during regular business hours to inspect, copy, and make extracts of all documents of the organization.

4.11 Liability of Directors. No Board Member shall be held personally liable, individually or collectively, for the debts, liabilities, or other obligations of the corporation, except, and only to the extent to which, such liability is proven to be the direct result of specific criminal misconduct by said Board Member. We are aware that the bylaws of a Limited Liability Corporation typically do not cover the elements required of a public school.

4.12 Indemnification by Corporation of Directors, Officers, Employees, and Other Agents. To the extent that a person who is, or was, a Board Member, Director, Officer, employee or other agent of this organization has been

successful on the merits in defense of any civil, criminal, administrative or investigative proceeding brought to procure a judgment against such person by reason of the fact that he or she is, or was, an agent of the organization, or has been successful in defense of any claim, issue or matter therein, such person shall be indemnified against expenses actually and reasonably incurred by the person in connection with such proceeding.

If such a person either settles the claim or sustains a judgment against him or her. In that case, indemnification against expenses, judgments, fines, settlements, and other amounts reasonably incurred in connection with such proceedings shall be provided by these Bylaws, but only to the extent allowed by, and under the requirements of, applicable state and federal income tax codes.

4.13 Insurance for Corporate Agents. The Board will provide liability insurance for the Director and the other Agents of the School as deemed necessary.

4.14 Loans. The organization will not loan any money to a member of the Board, an employee, or any other individual or organization.

4.15 Deposits. All funds shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the organization in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as agreed to by the Board.

4.16 Gifts. Board Members may accept on behalf of the corporation any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the charitable or public purposes of the organization.

Article V - Conducting Board Business

5.1 Meetings. The Board will vote on the schedule for the following year's general meeting during each Annual Meeting.

5.2 Agenda. The agenda will be prepared in accordance with Utah's Open Meeting law by the Board Secretary in consultation with the Board Chair. All items requiring a board vote must be included on the agenda. Agenda items requested by three or more board members will be placed on the agenda. The agenda will be made available to the public at least 24 hours in advance, as required by statute.

5.3 Closed Sessions. The Board may initiate closed sessions to discuss sensitive information. Closed session information will not be included in the minutes.

5.4 Altering the Charter or Charter Agreement. Requests from Board Members to open an item for discussion that would change the Charter or Charter Agreement must be approved by a majority. If the item is approved, it will be placed on the next board agenda. Additional permission may also be required from the Charter authorizer.

Article VI: School Administration

6.1 Executive Director. The Governing Board hires the school's Executive Director and reports to the Board. The Executive Director is responsible for day-to-day school operations and manages and collaborates with each of the Assistant Directors to carry out the school's vision and mission. The Executive Director will attend all Board meetings, report on school progress, and carry out additional duties described in the job description and additional responsibilities assigned by the Board. The Executive Director is responsible for hiring additional director positions. The Board must approve proposed individuals with a majority rule. All other employees are hired by the Executive Director, or an Assistant Director with permission of the Executive Director and board majority vote.

Article VII: Committees

7.1 The board will organize and form any committees required by state regulations. Those committees may include an audit committee, land-trust committee, and curriculum committee. The board will fill committee seats and hold committee meetings during or directly before or after regular board meetings.

7.2 Additional committees may be formed by the Governing Board as needed.

Article VIII: Amendments

8.1 The bylaws set forth in this document may be altered, amended, repealed, or added to by an affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of the Governing Board. In all cases, the bylaws shall comply with Utah and Federal statutes and rules governing Charter Schools.

RESOLUTION:

These Bylaws of the Juniper Grove Academy were adopted on June 18th, 2026, by a majority vote of the Governing Board.

Signed,

Taylor Niemela, Board Chair

2026-06-18

Courtney Edge, Board Secretary

2026-06-18

APPENDIX D

Approval of Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation
Juniper Grove Academy

Meeting Notice
3471 E 1180 S Spanish Fork, UT 84660
June 18 2026, 12:00 pm

Meeting starts: 1:02 pm
Attendance: Taylor Niemela, Emory Wride, David McDaniel, Courtney Edge, Jessica Rhoton
Welcome: Taylor
Timekeeper: Courtney
Facilitator: Taylor
New Business:
Approve Articles of Incorporation:
Move that we accept the Articles of Incorporation as they are presented.
Discussion: N/A
Motion: Taylor 2nd: David : 5-0
Approve Board ByLaws
Move that we accept the Board Bylaws *as they are presented*
Discussion: N/A
Motion: Taylor 2nd: Emory Carries: 5-0
Board Member Appointments and Position:
Let us appoint Taylor as Board Chair.
Discussion: N/A
Motion: Taylor 2nd: Emory Carries: 5-0
Move that we appoint Emory Wride as Vice-Chair.
Discussion: N/A
Motion: Taylor 2nd: David Carries: 5-0
Move that we appoint David as Treasurer.
Discussion: N/A
Motion: Taylor 2nd: Jessica Carries: 5-0
Move to appoint Courtney as Secretary.
Discussion: N/A
Motion: Taylor 2nd: Emory Carries: 5-0

Other Business
Hybrid model presented by David
General discussion of proposal process and completing background information.
Future meeting

Move to adjourn the meeting.
Motion: Taylor 2nd: Emory Carries: 5-0
Meeting end: 1:26 pm
Next Meeting: June 22nd at 8pm