

School would take cues from the Greeks

The founder of the proposed \$2 million charter school says it wouldn't rely on textbooks.

BY BILL ROBERTS

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Nampa could become home to a charter school that will teach with classical education techniques that date back more than 2,000 years.

Backers of Nampa Classical Academy will come before the Nampa School Board Tuesday to ask for permission to start classes in fall 2009.

Supporters envision a school of 360 students in grades one through nine. Kindergarten and other high school grades would be added over the next several years.

Along with teacher instruction, classical education emphasizes memorization and chants in early years. In the middle and high school years students are encouraged to investigate and

debate subjects they learn.

Nampa Classical won't rely on textbooks, but plans on using original documents, autobiographies and other source material.

Classical education, which dates back to Greek times, has "produced some of the greatest minds in western civilization," said Isaac Moffett, a founder and vice chairman of the school's board of directors. Moffett is getting an education degree through Lewis and Clark State College and hopes to teach in the school he's creating. If he does, he would have to give up his seat on the board of directors.

Charter schools are public



Isaac Moffett
Founder and
vice chairman
of board

CHARTER SCHOOL HEARING

What: Nampa School District Board hearing on proposed Nampa Classical Academy

When: 7 p.m. Tuesday

Where: Nampa High School Little Theater, 203 Lake Lowell Ave.

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schools funded by taxpayer dollars. But the schools often are started by educators or parents who want to pursue strategies not typically found in mainstream public schools. Charter schools must hire state-certified teachers, and students must take the same statewide achievement exams as students in regular

public schools.

Nampa Classical proposes a nearly \$2 million budget, including \$15,000 to help train teachers in classical methods of instruction.

Supporters want both an academic headmaster and a business manager who would oversee the school's finances and ward off some of the financial problems Idaho charter schools have faced in recent years.

School backers also are looking at a number of options to provide a location for classes, including renting or building their own school.

If the Nampa School Board approves Nampa Classical's charter, then the district would become the schools authorizing agency.

If the school board rejects the school, it can still try for approval through the state.

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