



New Nampa charter school wins approval

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NAMPA — Nampa Classical Academy, a classical liberal arts public school, won approval Thursday by the Idaho Charter Commission.

"We're pretty pleased," Isaac Moffett, board chairman, said. "The next step is to secure land, build a new building and look for a head of school."

The charter school's backers initially presented their proposal to the Nampa School District.

The Nampa School Board voted 4-1 to deny the petition on June 7, with Chairman Dan Nogales casting the dissenting vote. The opposing board members felt the district isn't prepared to take on the responsibilities and liabilities of an additional charter, Nogales said.

Now, those responsibilities will lie with the state.

Moffett, who attended a traditional public school as a child, said he wasn't satisfied with his education in his first year of college in 2003.

"I started investigating what kind of education our founding fathers received," he said. "Our founding fathers' education equipped them to rise to the occasion and fulfill their destinies."

Moffett's research led him to a private school in Michigan and a charter school in Colorado that incorporated classical curriculum in their lessons.

"It was incredible," he said. "Students there were thriving; and their enthusiasm ... they loved it."

Moffett said there is another classical education-based charter school in Idaho. Xavier Charter School operates in Twin Falls.

Moffett said all students need to feel they have a purpose in life, and finding that purpose needs to always be a focus at home and at school with adults and mentors to guide them.

"Education is not to get a high-paying job, make a lot of money and be rich and famous, as so many people think. Education is only useful if you know what your destiny is ... if you have a personal vision," Moffett said.

Moffett explained that every subject will be coordinated with the others in the school's curriculum. For example, when students learn about World War I in history class, they may learn about the architecture during that time in art class, read a book on the subject in a literature class and learn about blood transfusions and penicillin in science.

"It's all interrelated," he said.

Moffett said children with a purpose will do the things necessary to reach their goals. Too many kids don't have a clue what they want to do and then they get into trouble, he said.

Such quick approval by the charter commission came as a pleasant surprise to Moffett. "The state has been wonderful to work with," he said.

Nampa Classical Academy plans to open in fall of 2009 for grades one through nine, adding a grade each year until the school reaches 12 grades. Kindergarten will be added when there is enough demand.

"Now the work really begins," Moffett said. "We expect we will have land and a contract any day now and will be rockin' and rollin' very soon."