

## 1. ABSTRACT OF PROJECT & GOALS

**A) Origin:** The Academy for Character Education (ACE) originated when a group of rural homeschool parents sought a variety of educational opportunities to enhance development of their children's character. These opportunities included accountability in pursuing demanding academic standards, occasions for peer cooperation in stimulating educational settings, access to a wide selection of challenging curriculum resources, unique educational events, and instructional assistance in accelerated or specialized courses. For a year, with support and assistance from the local school district superintendent and several community leaders, the school attained 501(C)(3) status, was developed as a private alternative program, and then registered with Oregon's Department of Education (ODE) to direct and supplement the instruction of home educated students. In September 2000, doors opened to the first pupils. A contract was also secured with a neighboring district, and negotiations were undertaken for an agreement with a third one. As enrollment increased, limitations prevented many prospective families from registering their students with the program and resulted in those pupils receiving no services; 22 students are currently in this situation. At the suggestion of one of the contracting school district superintendents, in November 2004, the program's governing board voted to pursue converting to a charter school. A charter school development task force was formed consisting of six parents, three community members, one instructor, and the program coordinator. Between the Task Force and sponsoring school district, communication has been ongoing.

**Vision:** ACE intends to continue making character education its highest priority.

Because inner character drives all areas of a person's life, a student who is trained to

focus on motives rather than outward actions will consequently perform at his/her highest ability level. Regular attendance, superior scholastic achievement, polite classroom behavior, courteous treatment of peers, and good citizenship will all result from helping pupils to understand, form, and practice core ethical values.

School Community/Targeted Enrollment: Initially, the school will enroll fifty full time equivalent (FTE) pupils, kindergarten through twelfth grade, attracting families seeking a safe environment where their children will be held to a standard of behavior and achievement driven by high principles. ACE will serve as a bridge between underserved families currently disengaged from public school -- those homeschooling their children -- by also accepting up to fifty part time students. Parents, whose children are considered "At-Risk" due to attendance and behavior issues, will continue to choose ACE because they have often found exterior corrections or restraints imposed by either school or themselves have not been successful in addressing the true problem -- good character must be consistently cultivated to produce long-term solutions. ACE's process for individualized placement in core subjects and offering a challenging classical education will serve as magnets to TAG students, while pupils needing more individualized attention will also select ACE.

General Education Plan: ACE will work hand-in-hand with parents and community members to ensure that character education is woven through the entire training process. Following initial assessments using the CAT and other tests, pupils will be placed in core subjects (English language arts, reading, and math) according to their abilities and then taught in small group or tutorial settings. The school will also offer an interdisciplinary classical education in the humanities (history, geography, philosophy,

literature, and the arts) and a rotating study of the sciences. Students' individual interests will be promoted through internships with community members. For maximum positive effect, the school will operate year-round.

**B) Project Goals With Approximate Completion Time Frames:**

1. Develop Charter (July 2005 - March 2006) The Task Force will contract with charter school developers to prepare and submit the proposal to the sponsoring district and negotiate any necessary changes.

2. Plan, Design, & Purchase Educational Program (August 2005 - August 2007) A Design Team appointed by ACE's board (ideally composed of at least one parent, one licensed teacher, one current ACE board member, and one community member) will meet at least twice monthly, and visit two or more similarly focused programs. They will review and recommend materials consistent with the vision of providing interdisciplinary classical studies with emphasis on character training and aligned to state Academic Standards thus preparing students for the Oregon State Assessment Tests (OSAT). Following the board's approval of the recommendations, curriculum will be purchased.

3. Conduct Outreach Meetings and Build Community Partnerships (Present - Ongoing) Recruitment notices explaining ACE's vision and education program will be posted on bulletin boards and in local newspapers and distributed to homeschool families. ACE will host informational meetings providing opportunities for prospective parents and students to connect with current families. Stress will be placed on the crucial role parents will have in the school. An on-site resource room will be established furnishing to all interested families a variety of supplemental educational materials and school information including a multi-media presentation about ACE. Community members with

specialized skills will also be recruited to offer their expertise to individual pupils. E-newsletters and ACE's website will apprise interested parties of school conversion progress and other pertinent school news.

4. Provide Professional Development for Staff (January 2006 - Ongoing) All staff will receive training in character education. As needed, courses conforming to the school's vision, goals, and educational plan, along with strategies for student success in mastering Oregon's Academic Content Standards, will also be made available.

5. Create program infrastructure to support student success (January 2006- Aug 2006) Infrastructure formation includes locating appropriate facilities, addressing school health and safety code compliancy, ADA and Section 504 accessibility, computerizing administrative records, purchasing supplies, and editing the school's current policies and procedures handbook to ensure conformity to ORS 338 and the school's charter.

## **2. PURPOSE OF SCHOOL**

ACE will meet, in varying degrees, all nine ORS 338.015 public charter school goals. Most especially, ACE will "increase student learning and achievement" through its vision of prioritizing the development of good character and the pillars of its educational program: 1) working collaboratively with parents as partners, 2) utilizing an integrated classical curriculum, and 3) operating year-round.

"Clearly achievement is no accident. It takes personal responsibility, self-discipline, initiative, perseverance, organization, effort, problem solving, and cooperation." [Taylor, Ella. *ODE Evaluation Reports: Character Education Partnership Grant*. Western OR U, 2004. p.1] ACE students will be part of a school culture where

character is modeled, taught, expected, celebrated, and practiced daily. As pupils move towards internalizing the characteristics associated with maturity, scholastic performance will reflect those inner qualities resulting in enhanced achievement.

Recent years have demonstrated the advantage parent involvement has on the academic success of pupils. Greater family participation in children's learning is a critical link to achieving a high-quality education. To ensure parents are equal partners in their children's learning, upon initial enrollment, ACE will provide parent mentoring to assist them in understanding how to promote scholastic success. ACE's staff will hold term AIM (Academic Instructional Marks) meetings with parents and students; together they will review the last term's progress and determine the student's academic objectives for the coming term. Additionally, parents will be required to serve as teacher's aides and in various other support capacities.

Using history as the framework, ACE will present the humanities in a cross-curricular manner enabling students' minds to more easily store and retrieve facts and ideas; thus students will function more successfully on required school, district, and state assessments. In addition, comprehending the culture which produced a particular piece of literature, art, or music results in a deeper, more thorough grasp of the work and the contributing factors behind its creation.

There is an effective maintenance and improvement of overall scholastic performance for pupils participating in year-round school in comparison to those on the traditional calendar. Summer vacations inevitably result in loss of some academic skills. ACE trusts students will progress at a more steadfast rate by pursuing studies minus the typical three month hiatus and thus will exhibit increased academic achievement.

### **3. DEMOGRAPHICS/NEED**

**A)** Cottage Grove is located in the southern Willamette Valley, 25 miles south of Eugene. The community has a rural tone and population of roughly 8,500. The per capita and median household income is lower than Oregon's average. The population percentage with incomes below poverty level increased 16.2% over the last decade and now exceeds, by 33%, the proportion of impoverished Oregonians; 616 district students are identified as "in poverty" qualifying for free and reduced school lunches. The completed years of education among adults is 5% lower than the overall state rate.

The South Lane School District serves 2,821 students in Cottage Grove. There are nine schools; four K - 5, two PreK - 8, one 6 - 10, one middle school, and one high school. Elementary school populations range from 102 to 426 students. Lincoln Middle School has 630 students, while Cottage Grove High School has approximately 850 students. Two charter schools are also located in the district; one is a K-12 democratic school where each student determines his/her own course of study, and the other serves only middle school students.

There are 101 home educated students living in Cottage Grove and nearly two hundred in the surrounding small communities: 74 in Creswell, 60 in Pleasant Hill, 25 in Lowell, and 38 in Oakridge.

**B)** ACE projects its first year charter school enrollment to be 50 FTE with up to 50 additional part-time students. Our current program population is 75% "in poverty" with 62% former independent homeschoolers, 19% TAG students, and 19% At-Risk students. The pupils currently awaiting enrollment in ACE are 59% homeschoolers, 29% TAG students, and 12% At-Risk students. Homeschool parents, in surveys and

conversations, acknowledged they would seriously think about enrolling their children in ACE, with its small school atmosphere stressing high moral principles, to guarantee their children would receive instruction in state content standards, along with scholastically rigorous classes they, as parents, might be unable to provide. In addition, the school's individual placements, small group and tutorial instruction, and community internship program will persist in appealing to parents of TAG and At-Risk students.

**C)** ACE is designed primarily for pupils who would not otherwise be involved in public education, such as students who are currently being taught at home. There is no public or private school located in South Lane, or anywhere else in Lane County, offering a program focused on character and the classical education model. As demonstrated by the enrollment statistics of "B" above, these two components make ACE uniquely appealing to families seeking an educational program allowing them to be full partners and complementing their own emphasis on moral teaching and demanding learning objectives. Homeschool parent surveys, distributed to 40 parents at three community meetings and via mailings to prospective families, yielded the following results:

ι I want my child to receive character training at school	98%
ι I want my child to be challenged academically	100%
ι I want to be fully involved in my child's education	92%
ι I want my child to attend a small school	85%
ι I would definitely consider enrolling my child in ACE	93%

#### **4. PARENT AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT**

**A) Parental Involvement:** ACE values parental participation as an integral part of the educational process; the school is well suited for families who value their children's

education enough to give of their own time and energy. Parents were the initiators of the program, and they continue to direct it by nominating and electing the governing board of directors. Six parents contributed time as members of the Charter School Task Force – some meeting with the sponsoring district’s administration, some researching charter school laws and rules, and three attending the ODE grant writing workshop and subsequently helping to draft this application. Parents have developed, distributed, and completed surveys to give their input on what educational issues matter most to them; the results have sharpened the school’s vision. Parents will continue to partner with ACE by serving on its board and Design Team, organizing and supervising special events, sharing talents and skills with students, managing the school library, formatting the newsletter, and regularly assisting as classroom aides.

Community Involvement: ACE has enjoyed remarkable support from the community.

More than twenty persons have already offered to provide pupil internships; these include the community theater director, various artisans, several musicians, a speech and debate coach, immigrants excited about sharing their native culture, a computer programmer, a Native American historian, a newspaper editor, and a choral conductor. A local attorney donated his services to draft the school’s necessary legal documents. Three additional school choice advocates within the community have also volunteered by researching various applicable educational issues and finding practical means to apply those to the school’s design, then aiding in the completion of this application.

**B) Governing Board:** ACE is registered as a 501(c)(3) non profit organization with formal articles of incorporation and bylaws. The bylaws stipulate that the board would be nominated and elected by parents whose children are enrolled in the school. Parents

will always be encouraged to serve as board members; over its five years of operation as a private alternative program, seven of the ten persons who have served on ACE's board have been parents with the other three positions being held by supportive community members. No ACE employee may be a board member. Board members will serve two year terms and include a president, vice-president/treasurer, secretary, and two members-at-large. Complying with public meeting and public records laws, the board will meet monthly with its responsibilities including the following: assessing ACE's performance relative to applicable statutes and rules, provisions of the charter, and the school's vision and goals; ratifying all school policies and procedures; hiring and supervising the School Coordinator and Business Manager; confirming employment of all staff; approving expenditures and contracts; adopting the annual school budget and calendar; soliciting support from businesses and private individuals within the community; and reviewing proposals for special events. In June 2005, parents, in addition to current ACE instructors and community members, will be encouraged to submit letters of interest to serve on the Design Team. In July, ACE's board will review the submissions and appoint at least four persons; ideally, these will include at least one parent, one licensed teacher, one ACE board member, and one community stakeholder.

**5. EDUCATION PROGRAM**

**A)** Between August 2005 and August 2007, to fulfill the program objectives listed here and assist students in mastery of state and local content standards, the Design Team will complete a research and review process and make specific recommendations to the board for the purchase of all educational texts, software, and materials.

Character training is the heart of ACE's education program. This training will be

holistic -- intentional, proactive, and comprehensive, permeating all phases of the curriculum. Upon enrolling, each pupil will be assessed with the California Achievement Test (CAT) and additional assessment tools in core areas to determine the level and rate at which he/she is capable of working. Subsequently, these subjects will be taught, according to the student's abilities, with small group or tutorial instruction, and thus he/she will be expected to demonstrate **responsibility** in completing assignments in an accurate and timely manner. The teaching of the humanities will yield lessons concerning moral principles and conduct; examples from the past will show the results of **courage, loyalty, and honesty; respect and caring** will be the maxims when exploring other cultures; the literary classics and the lives and works of great artists will pattern **creativity**. The focus during science classes will be **cooperation** when performing group experiments and projects, **attentiveness** in observations, and **orderliness** in recording data. **Initiative** will be encouraged through pupils working with staff to arrange internships in individual interest areas. Each term, the complete school community will also focus on one of the chosen foundational character traits; every student will be challenged to devise a project illustrating that trait. Besides instilling strong ethics, ACE is confident its program will produce increased academic performance. After only one year of character education, the results from *Florida's Comprehensive Assessment Test* showed the percentage of students scoring 3 or above (on an ascending 1-5 scale) jumped from 45 to 78 percent. [Williams & Taylor. *Leading with Character to Improve Student Achievement*. Cocoa, Florida, 2004].

ACE parents will be required to serve as classroom aides and supervisors of their children's homework. A synthesis of the research on parents as partners in

education concluded that evidence is consistent, positive, and convincing: families have a major influence on their children's achievement in school and through life. When schools, families, and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to earn higher grades, perform better on tests, enroll in higher level programs, pass their classes, earn necessary credits, attend school regularly, and graduate to go onto post-secondary education. [Henderson, Anne. T. & Mapp, Karen L. *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement*. 2002. p.7]

ACE will employ an interdisciplinary classical curriculum for teaching the humanities. Presented in multi-grade groups, this integrated approach will teach that all knowledge is interrelated. Relevant hands-on projects will be employed to complement textual learning, and high school seniors will complete year long rhetorical research projects on topics of their choice. Research findings concede the following: cross-curricular studies help students apply skills, lead to faster retrieval of information and a unified knowledge base, encourage depth and breadth in learning, promote positive attitudes in students, and provide more quality time for curriculum exploration. [Lipson, M.; Valencia, S.; & Peters, C. "Integration and Thematic Teaching: Integration to Improve Teaching and Learning" *Language Arts* 70/4. 1993. pp.252-264]

To ensure a thorough comprehension of the sciences, students will pursue a twelve year cycle of study. In each field, facts and basic skills mastered at lower levels will be applied and expanded with ever more demanding curriculum at the upper levels.

Physical education and health classes will concentrate on fitness for life – both mental and physical. Pupils will have opportunities to participate in a variety of activities

to develop motor skills and become familiar with rules for multiple games and sports. Strategies for successful relationships, learning to prevent risks to personal health, avoid unsafe situations, and evaluate health information, products, and services will round out this curriculum.

Beginning in its second year, the school will operate year-round from July 1 to June 30. Studies have found that all students (including the best) lost in math and spelling skills, and many, also lost in reading proficiency over the traditional summer. [Cooper, Harris, "The Effects of Summer Vacation on Achievement Scores: A Narrative & Meta-Analytic Review" *Review of Educational Research* 66/3, 1996]

**See 5 D for a typical school day**

**B)** All curriculum materials will be chosen to line up with state and local content standards; ACE's extended calendar will allow a minimum of 35% instructional time to be dedicated to mastery of these. Using AIM meetings, work samples, English Language Progress Indicators, and a curriculum mapper, ACE will track pupil advancement towards mastery of Oregon's Academic Content Standards. Student's Education Profiles will contain documentation of progress towards CIM, CAM, graduation requirements, and personal accomplishments identified in his/her AIM's.

**C)** ACE's Design Team will review and select all texts and instructional materials the school will utilize by employing the ODE's *Oregon Standards* publication along with a curriculum mapping tool, such as *Atlas* or *Academic Benchmark/Curriculum Mapper*, to ensure the entire education program is aligned to Oregon's State Academic Content Standards and adequately prepares students for the OSAT's.

**D)** Students will begin the day attending an all-school assembly centered on the term's

character trait; short informative lectures, storytelling, AV presentations, debates, skits, and student discussions along with other instructional mediums will be utilized; most of these will be generated by pupils satisfying their term character projects. Next, small group or tutorial instruction in core subject areas will occur followed by cooperative learning in the sciences and thematic studies of the humanities. In the afternoons, P.E. and health classes will be scheduled and time set aside for students to explore their fields of interest and/or career objectives through project-based internships guided by community members or independent study, V-tel, or on-line classes.

**6. ACCOUNTABILITY**

**A) Reporting Progress on School Goals to District:** By September 1st, ACE will supply the district with an annual report on progress towards its school goals (listed in table). This report will contain results of its municipal audit, assurances of school compliance with its charter provisions and all applicable laws and rules, results of parents' annual evaluation of ACE, and other pertinent measures.

<b>SCHOOL GOALS</b>	<b>% Goal &amp;/or Evaluative Tool</b>
Emphasis on Character Education	100% of staff will be trained
Parental Involvement	100% will participate each year; 90% will complete annual parent surveys
Community Involvement & Support	90% of students will have internships
Stable Operations & Fiscal Soundness	annual externally performed Audit
ORS, OAR, & Charter Compliance	annual School Coordinator's Report
Safety, Health, ADA, & 504 Compliance	annual Fire Marshall's Inspection

Continued School Improvement	annual ACE Board Evaluation based on OSAT's, parent surveys, & Student Goals
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Reporting Progress on School Goals to Parents & Students: ACE parents will attend two all\_school gatherings per year: 1) an assembly where staff present a school program overview, encourage parents and students to share ideas for special events or community internships, supply families with updated school handbooks and calendars, and make available copies of the annual District Report and municipal audit; and 2) an open house/recital where parents view student performances and projects and complete the yearly school evaluation including the key question “How is ACE’s character training program impacting your child’s life?”

**B) Student Goals:** Every term, students and parents will meet with staff members to set quarterly AIM’s. In every subject, goals will be traced and reviewed at the next term’s meeting. Thus, parents will always be aware of the stated plan for that pupil and ACE’s success in relation to that plan. Students’ proficiency levels in state content standards will also be tracked using a curriculum mapping tool. Copies of this, year-end AIM reports, and annual assessment results will be available each year to parents.

<b>ACADEMIC STUDENT GOALS</b>	<b>% Goal &amp;/or Evaluative Tool</b>
OSAT scores will improve	1 <sup>st</sup> 3 years, scores show improvement
Mastery of Academic Content Standards	track & report w/ curriculum mapper
Student completes AIM’s	80% of annual AIM’s finished
English, reading, & math skills improve	85% of students show 1 year’s improvement as measured on CAT
Seniors do rhetorical research projects	90% of seniors complete
<b>NON-ACADEMIC STUDENT</b>	

Character Trait Projects done each term	students complete 3 of 4 each year
Excellent Attendance Rate	95% overall attendance

## 7. STAFFING

### A) Staff Composition:

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
<b>Enrollment</b>	50	60	70
<b>School Coordinator</b>	1	1	1
<b>Teachers</b>	2	2.5	3
<b>Registered Staff</b>	1	1	1
<b>Business Manager</b>	1	1	1

In addition to the employed staff listed, ACE parents will serve as instructional aides, and community members will provide specialized internships. Depending on the number of part time students and their level of participation in the school, ACE may hire additional instructors.

**B) Staff Responsibilities:** The School Coordinator, along with teachers and registered staff, will be responsible for day-to-day operations. He/she will serve as community and school district liaison,

oversee marketing, manage the resource room, meet with prospective families, register new students, submit required immunization records to the health department, manage student files, organize parent-instructional aide schedules, handle correspondence, complete annual ODE Fall Report and district evaluation, draft the school calendar and schedule, update the handbook, supervise the librarian and newsletter editor, prepare an annual parent survey, and notify the board of any issues requiring their attention.

Teachers will be responsible to create daily lesson plans, present ACE's educational program, evaluate student work, choose appropriate student work samples, and organize community internships.

The registered staff will supervise initial student assessments, oversee AIM meetings, conduct one-on-one classroom instruction to assist students in meeting their AIM's, direct parent mentoring, supervise instructional aides, and proctor the OSAT's.

The Business Manager will supervise school finances. Each month, he/she will reconcile fiscal statements, handle payroll, and compile for the board a financial report tracing expenditures in relation to the budget and an accounts payable statement. Following board approval, the Business Manager will discharge funds to cover accounts payable. He/she will handle district payments, serve on the budget committee, complete state and federal quarterly taxes and non-profit reports, arrange for the annual audit, obtain quotes for insurance coverage, track and report student attendance, order supplies, supervise service contracts, manage facility leases, and direct the expending of grant funds during the implementation phases.

**C) Professional Development Plan:** All staff will receive training in strategies to cultivate positive character. Additional professional courses will include proficient use of assessment tools, integrated studies, maximizing parent involvement, and any subjects necessary for effectively presenting ACE's education program and ensuring student success in mastery of Academic Content Standards. The school will provide ongoing staff training to address its continuing school improvement plan.

## **8. PROJECT BUDGET NARRATIVE (PLUS ATTACHMENTS C, D, & E)**

**A)** The initial \$50,000 planning grant will be expended to develop and obtain the charter; plan and design the education program; conduct outreach and build

partnerships with parents, students, and community members; provide professional development for staff; and create the school's infrastructure. During the implementation phases, funding will focus on purchasing curriculum, equipping a community resource room, continuing staff training, and implementing additional necessary infrastructure.

**B) Develop Charter:** Planning 1 (\$8,500), Planning 2 (\$2,000). ACE will hire a consultant to develop the charter documents and negotiate the charter agreement with the sponsoring district. If necessary, an attorney will also be retained.

**Plan & Design Educational Program:** Planning 1 (\$11,500), Planning 2 (\$10,000), Implementation 1 (\$22,500), Implementation 2 (\$55,000). During the planning phases, funds will be used to secure review copies of educational materials for evaluation by the Design Team. This team will also research proposed educational methods by visiting at least two schools with similar focuses. Monies will then be used to purchase software, technology for student assessment and instruction, and a curriculum standards mapping tool. Throughout the implementation phases, the acquisition of educational materials and supplies will be the primary costs. Award funds will also be used to purchase necessary technology and V-TEL equipment for specialized classes.

**Community Outreach/Partnerships:** Planning 1 (\$3,000), Planning 2 (\$4,500), Implementation 1 (\$45,000), Implementation 2 (\$11,500). During Planning Phase 1, grant funds will purchase a laptop for community outreach meetings' presentations and to record survey data. For promotional purposes, additional grant monies will make possible contracts with a website developer and a graphic artist. Throughout the implementation phases, funds will be spent to equip a community resource room, purchase educational AV equipment and furniture, and pay for further marketing.

Provide Professional Development for Staff: Planning 2 (\$5,000), Implementation 1 (\$22,500), Implementation 2 (\$37,500). Award monies will fund, during Planning Phase 2, staff training in character education and instructional methodologies, as well as funding necessary TSPC criteria. Throughout the implementation phases, funds will also pay for courses equipping teachers to employ the most successful means to effectively present state content standards and prepare students for the OSAT's.

Develop Program Infrastructure: Planning 2 (\$1,500), Implementation 1 (\$20,000).

Funds will be used, during Planning Phase 2, to locate and secure facilities and refine the school's handbook. In Implementation Phase 1, contracts will be secured to bring the facilities up to code and meet ADA and 504 accessibility standards.

## **9. BUSINESS CAPACITY/CONTINUED OPERATION**

**A)** ACE's business practices will comply with federal and state mandates, district guidelines, and Generally Accepted Accounting Practices for non-profits. ACE agrees to comply with municipal audit requirements, operate in accordance with applicable state law and federal, and maintain accounting records and other evidence pertaining to costs incurred, with the records being kept available by the grantee during the grant period and thereafter for three years from date of final payment.

Each June, a budget committee consisting of two board members and the Business Manager will meet to draft the next school year's budget which must then be approved by ACE's board. This budget will be based primarily on percentages; therefore, when alterations occur in state funding, amounts in each budget category will fluctuate reflecting those changes; this method will allow ACE to remain fiscally solvent regardless of funding levels. At monthly board meetings, the Business Manager will

present to board members 1) documentation of accounts payable for board approval, 2) copies of the school's check register, and 3) a record tracking each budget category. Checks will continue to be printed with the statement "two signatures required" and will be signed only after the board approves the accounts payable.

**B) 3-Year Operational Budget** (See Attachment F & 9C)

**C) Projected Enrollment Rationale:** ACE currently serves 23 students with 22 students on a waiting list. Up to this point, ACE has never advertised for enrollment; satisfied parents have spread word about the program. Owing to increased exposure through the charter school advertising campaign and website, and factoring in siblings reaching school age by the time conversion is complete, we believe ACE will easily have 50, then 60, and finally 70 students respectively for each of its first three years. Up to 50 part time students will also participate in varying degrees; some will move to full time status the following year as they find ACE meeting their educational needs.

## **10. PRIORITY**

**A)** ACE will continue reaching out to students who are at-risk or home educated, as well as others who are underserved (TAG, low income families, &/or English Language Learners – ELL's). Recruitment advertisements and brochures will be posted on bulletin boards and in local papers, mailed to district registered homeschool families, and provided to the ESD for distribution to new home educators. Information will include details about the resource room, scheduled ACE Link-up (recruitment) meetings, and will explain how the school's unique pattern offers students a different learning approach. At the resource room, parents (even of non ACE families) will check out learning materials (e.g. books, software, learning games, microscopes), use on-site

computers to connect to the internet or for other educational purposes, receive curriculum assistance etc. A multi-media presentation highlighting the school's history, vision and education plan will be shown at Link-ups and be available to view at the resource room. Also at Link-up's, parents and students currently involved in ACE will be present to answer questions from prospective families. Included in marketing materials will be points of specific appeal to each targeted category of students:

- ιAt-Risk                      core subject placement by ability, small group/tutorial instruction, low student/teacher ratio, hands-on projects
- ιHomeschoolers            parents engaged, character focus, classical approach, full time enrollment or choosing select classes
- ιTAG                          core subject placement by ability, demanding academics, internships in areas of individual interest
- ιLow Income                parent mentoring, special events, guided internships
- ιELL                            tutoring, community internships w/ native speakers

**B)** ACE's novel educational opportunities will further academic success for all students, even those previously not meeting or those exceeding Oregon's Academic Content Standards. These opportunities include 1) transforming students' lives through a school culture promoting positive character and allowing students to devise term projects of their own interest; 2) direct involvement of pupils' parents in their education; 3) individualized placement in core subjects to guarantee students are working **neither beyond, nor beneath** their current abilities; 4) thematic instruction showing the connectedness of subjects utilizing stimulating text and hands-on projects; 5) student internships in areas of interest; and 6) year-round learning. ACE is confident these

strategies will improve the achievement of students not meeting benchmark standards and challenge those who exceed them.