A.2 Target Population

The Leman Academy of Excellence (LAE) will be located in Pima County within the greater metro area of Tucson, AZ in the northern suburbs of Oro Valley/Marana. LAE has laid the groundwork and secured funding for building a facility. Additionally, the Board of Directors has identified a location at the intersections of La Cañada and Tangerine Roads in Oro Valley. This location is the first choice for a site to build the facility. Details regarding additional location options are provided in section C.1 Facilities Acquisition.

For this purpose of this application, the Oro Valley location is the anchor from which the target population has been identified and assessed. In addition to providing population statistics on Oro Valley, the charts below also profile Marana. The purpose of these two community profiles is to demonstrate how similar the locations are. The demographics and community needs for Oro Valley and Marana are nearly identical. Should LAE not secure its first choice real estate opportunity in Oro Valley, the ASBCS can be assured that our alternate locations are located in a community with a similar target population and will not compromise LAE's approach to building a successful school.

Statistics regarding Marana have also been provided because it is likely that families will drive from surrounding areas to attend the Leman Academy of Excellence. Based on results of a roundtable discussion hosted by Dr. Leman in April 2014 (see page 3 below), it is clear that parents will chose a school based on the fit for their child over geographic location. Parents in this conversation all referenced drive times between twenty and thirty minutes to ensure their child attends the school that best meets their needs.

The Leman Academy of Excellence has an educational model, challenging curriculum and dynamic school culture that will thrive in any community. Dr. Leman's involvement with the program will be a draw no matter where the school ends up; his brand equity as a leader in family values will bring in parents who share this perspective and will provide support for families who struggle with finding the right way to support their child's educational journey. The Leman Academy of Excellence holds the promise of engaging parents and raising the level of parental involvement while providing a rigorous, effective and time-tested educational model.

The Marana and Oro Valley communities are profiled below demonstrating an understating of the population served. The information presented on the Target Population Page is consistent with the Oro Valley location at the intersections of La Cañada and Tangerine Roads.

Impact of Rapid Population Growth on Oro Valley / Marana
Oro Valley / Marana are two suburbs of Tucson that are among the fastest growing areas in the state. Since 2000, Oro Valley has had a population growth of 23.77%[i], and "projections indicate continued, healthy growth."[ii] More than just "healthy growth," there is serious potential for an additional 16,000 homes to be added to the community, potentially doubling the population in the foreseeable future. Similarly, Marana's population is expected to double by 2020, according the Marana 2010 General Plan. The growth of these areas alone demands that community resources keep pace. The Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce website highlights the economic development that is occurring in tandem with the population expansion. From community and shopping centers to physicians offices and manufacturin facilities, Oro Valley businesses are growing alongside residential sites and the corresponding population. The most notable resource missing from the Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce's update on economic development is that of schools.

In contrast to the long list of businesses opening in Oro Valley, the Chamber of Commerce website does provide some insight to the state of affairs for the local school district, Amphitheater School District. A recent article in the December 8, 2012 Oro Valley Chamber of Commerce Newsletter, "Pima School Super Laments Funding," offers an eye-opening perspective on the district's ability to handle the growth in the area. Linda Arzoumanian, Pima County School Superintendent, addressed the chamber of commerce members and stated, "we are number one in cuts to education." The article explains that with the defeat of Proposition 204 in November, school funding in the short term does not look good. Arzoumanian further stated, "They talk about the fiscal cliff in Washington. In Arizona, we're about to go over the fiscal cliff with the expiration of the 1% sales tax approved by voters three years ago. It ends this May." [iii]

Our target location – at La Cañada and Tangerine Roads – is located within the boundaries of the Amphitheater School District. While this school district has excellent schools, it lacks the financial resources to build the new facilities that will be required to support the continued growth in Oro Valley.

In 2006, the Governing Board of Amphitheater School District approved the initiation of a Blue Ribbon Budget Analysis and Facilities Needs Committee. In May of the following year, the committee produced a report with facility recommendations and budget analysis. The findings outlined in the report are organized in five needs / responsibilities of the district: [iv]

1) The Health, Safety and Security Needs of the District Must Be Improved.
2) Portable, Temporary Classrooms Throughout the District Are Deteriorating and Must Be Replaced.
3) Our District Community Needs New Classrooms and Increased Capacity to Serve Students.
4) Our District Must Improve Its Technology Infrastructure to Keep Pace in the 21st Century.
5) Our Community Needs an Improved Transportation Fleet and Facility.

Additionally, sixteen schools were highlighted as over-utilizing space – for example closets repurposed as offices, multiple programs such as REACH and OT sharing space, music and orchestra meeting in unconventional location, and regular displacement of PE classes. The district's newest school, Painted Sky Elementary, which is within two miles of the property LAE is considering to build on, was described in the report:

> *At Painted Sky Elementary School where enrollment is expected to grow for the next few years, for example, construction of more classrooms is not possible. The school would lack sufficient playground space to absorb more students. The school's cafeteria and library spaces, as well, are at functional capacity. The school simply cannot serve more students than its current capacity permits already. This requires that capacity be developed elsewhere (page 10).*

In 2009, two propositions were on the ballot that would have provided Amphitheater School District with the funding required to upgrade, maintain and expand facilities as recommended by the Blue Ribbon Budget Analysis and Facilities Need Committee; however only Proposition 403 passed (Continuation of a Maintenance and Operations Budget Override). As referenced above during the Superintendent's address to the Chamber of Commerce, Proposition 404 failed (Capital Outlay Revenue Limit Override), thereby limiting the resources Amphitheater School District has for new construction.

Oro Valley Round Table Discussion

On April 25, 2014, Dr. Leman and other LAE board members hosted a roundtable conversation with a diverse group of both stay-at-home and working mothers who live in Oro Valley. The life-stages and experiences of the participating mothers ranged from those with infants/toddlers and current elementary aged children to mothers with high school and college graduates. The educational choices these women have made for their families included traditional public schools, home schooling, private / parochial, and charter schools in Oro Valley (Basis and Legacy).

The group discussed Classical Education, the educational needs in their community, qualities that make a school appealing and the prospect of the Leman Academy of Excellence opening in their neighborhood. The results of the focus group were quite powerful and provided LAE Board Members with unique insight and perspective on the target population. A number of recurring themes developed during the course of the conversation. A brief synopsis of the groups' insight to each theme, followed by participant statements, is provided below:

1) School Choice: Not every school is the right fit for every child. In Oro Valley, the two charter choices are very different from one another, but neither choice offers an emphasis on the arts and literature. The mothers who participated in the round table discussion really value school choice and understand that a parent knows when a school is the right fit. In recognizing that matching a child with the right school, it was also noted that public schools have what seems to be a Sisyphean task: to be everything to every child. Unfortunately, this often creates a diluted public school system.

- *The best situations always involve parental choice and matching the child with the curriculum. Arbitrarily assigning children to a school – based on a zip code, for example – is detrimental to parent choice.*

- *I'm really nervous [about the k-12 education choices I have]. My child needs more attention and I just don't think he will get that at my feeder school.*

2) School Administration: A solid leader – who knows the students and is ever-present – is pivotal to a successful school. Participants discussed various situations in their public school experiences in which a change in school administration dramatically shifted the school culture and desirability. The school leadership is also central to teachers. There was a sentiment that traditional public schools are mired in rules and regulations that ultimately hamper both student and teacher.

- *Teachers need more autonomy; I'm less interested in a teacher's certification than I am in knowing they are an expert in their field and have a real passion for teaching.*

- *Preparation is also really critical for teachers. They need support and training to be really effective.*

3) Technology in the Classroom: Striking a balance between the need for children to be competent and comfortable with technology, but also to retain certain pillars of education (such as handwriting and sensory experiences) is an essential ingredient in the classroom.

- *Technology in the classroom is really important to me, but we keep a balance in our house. We set time limits [for screen time] and our kids do a mix of real books and ebooks.*

- *There is really nothing like holding a real book in your hands. I've heard studies about all the sensory benefits – remembering where you were when you held a book, how it smelled, the sounds around you….like reading on a beach…all that goes away with a tablet.*

- *Amphitheater School District just adopted a new Pearson Language Arts Common Core Curriculum where all your literature and excerpts are online. I really don't like that – not only because something is lost in the process of highlighting and annotating, but as a parent I can't easily pick up on what my child is reading. I lose that access.*

4) Logistics / Convenience: The LAE board members who facilitated the roundtable discussion were surprised that the participants indicated no particular geographical boundaries when selecting a school for their child. While the general consensus was that the participants drove on average 20-30 minutes, it was clear that distance from home to school weighed little on a parent's choice.

- *If it's the right school for my child, I'll drive across town.*

5) Interest / Needs / Desires for a School: There was a genuine excitement and enthusiasm for Dr. Leman's body of work to become the cornerstone of a school in Oro Valley. Additionally, the participants expressed a deep understanding of a Classical Education, as many of them were taught with that method.

- *As parents, we forget that our kids are going to get older. We focus on 18, but then what? What we need is a school that will prepare kids for real life…that's what a Classical Education does. When you read the classic books all through school then your education is not re-writing history, but rather you are following history, identifying the cycles of history and then comparing that to current events. The curriculum goes even deeper by adding literature on top of that and then classical art, classical music and then weaving in science and you are drawing this beautiful line through education from little tiny people all the way through graduation. [Classical Education] produces people who have a life perspective that goes beyond, "I have to get a job." It is the deep beautiful part of learning that intrigues people to see where that thread goes. It's about developing a love of learning and following the line/thread to the end. That's what classical education is to me.*

- *I understand that Basis is recognized as a great school, but the stress level there is very high and the focus sometime feel myopic. It is missing the well-rounded side of education.*

- *With a Classical curriculum, by and large, your kids are going to learn more, learn it faster, and function better. By offering a variety of disciplines children will want to get into the arts, science and they begin to internalize the interconnectedness of it all. You have that ability with a Classical Curriculum and it's challenging at all levels.*

- *Why do kids leave Basis? Because they want a life! The stress is so high and it's not very well rounded.*

- *I don't know anyone in Oro Valley who is not looking for a school. Like an ever present conversation that runs from the grocery store to the salon and back. Parents really ponder this.*

Oro Valley/ Marana Demographics
To assess the target population and determine how the Leman Academy of Excellence compliments the Marana / Oro Valley community, nine indicators from income and ethnicity to family dynamics and education levels have been researched. Data for each of the nine indicators is provided below and on the following pages:

- **Total Population –** Oro Valley has been steadily growing for the past forty years, and that growth is expected to dramatically increase. A *Tucson News Now* article, "Oro Valley One Step Closer to Arroyo Grande Plan," indicates that the State Land Department has proposed developing up to 16,000 homes, making room for 38,000 people to live in the area.[v] The Arroyo Grande plan will increase the number of households in Oro Valley by 50% (there are currently 34,082 households according to the U.S. Census). The chart below provides current population numbers, as determined by the U.S. Census.

2013 Population in Oro Valley & Marana	
Marana	**Oro Valley**
88,393	61,060

Of greater interest is the number of prospective school-aged children who will populate the Leman Academy of Excellence. The chart below provides a break down of the population under the age of 18:

Age Distribution of Target Population in Marana / Oro Valley		
Age	**Marana**	**Oro Valley**
Age 0-5	6,795	3,193
Age 6-11	7,216	4,140
Age 12-17	7,571	4,941

Source: High Mark Schools via the U.S. Census

- **Educational Achievement –** The vast majority of adults in Marana / Oro Valley have a high school degree, more than a quarter of the population has achieved post-secondary education and approximately 10% have graduate/professional degrees. It is typical for educated parents to desire high quality education for their children, which makes an attractive location for LAE due to the anticipated shortage of quality schools as the population continues to expand. A detailed chart is provided in the following page.

Educational Achievement Statistics Leman Academy Target Population in Marana / Oro Valley		
Level Achieved	**Marana**	**Oro Valley**
< 9th Grade	7.9%	0.8%
9th-12th	14.8%	3.3%
High School	32.4%	16.4%
Some College	27.7%	28.6%
2 Yr. Degree	5.6%	7.1%
4 Yd. Degree	8.2%	26.7%
Graduate / Professional	3.4%	17.1%
H.S. +	77.3%	95.9%
4 Yr. +	11.6%	43.8%

Source: www.zipskinny.com

- **Marital Status –** Looking at marriage as an indicator for family and income stability, the data for this area indicates that an average of 66% of the target population is married. The divorce rate among this population is approximately 10.2%, which compares to the state divorce rate of 10.98-12.63 per 1,000.[vi] This indicates strength in family values in this population, which is a pillar of Dr. Leman's professional recognition. The reputation and sensibility of Dr. Leman – which is among the core principals of the Leman Academy of Excellence – will be a huge draw for this community.

Marital Status Statistics Leman Academy Target Population in Marana / Oro Valley		
Marital Status	**Marana**	**Oro Valley**
Never married	21.6%	14.7%
Married	59.8%	72.2%
Separated	1.2%	0.4%
Widowed	4.6%	5.1%
Divorced	12.8%	7.6%

Source: www.zipskinny.com

- **Stability/Newcomer Appeal –** this indicator speaks to the stable economic conditions in the target area, which makes it desirable for people to move in and stay. 40.6% of families remain in their homes for five or more years, indicating a core population of residents who are invested in their community.

Stability / Newcomer Appeal Leman Academy Target Population in Marana / Oro Valley		
Metric	**Marana**	**Oro Valley**
In Same Home for 5+ Years	42.2%	39%

Source: www.zipskinny.com

- **Income –** The average median household income for the Marana / Oro Valley area in LAE's study is $64,115. This is 24% higher than the 2012 national median income of $51,371 and 34% higher than Arizona's median income of $47,826.[vii]

Household Income Leman Academy Target Population in Marana / Oro Valley		
Income Range	**Marana**	**Oro Valley**
<$10,000:	8.4%	3.0%
$10,000-$14,999:	6.2%	2.4%
$15,000-$24,999:	14.0%	7.7%
$25,000-$34,999:	15.7%	8.6%
$35,000-$49,999:	19.3%	15.9%
$50,000-$74,999:	20.1%	25.7%
$75,000-$99,999:	10.6%	16.0%
$100,000-$149,999:	3.4%	13.5%
$150,000-$199,999:	1.2%	3.4%
$200,000+:	1.2%	3.8%
Median:	$66,841*	$61,390

Source: www.zipskinny.com
* Marana 2010 General Plan

- **Employment –** The data provided in the chart below shows Marana has a very balanced distribution of employment. However Marana has one outlier data point: 16.9% of the population works in construction, which again supports the projections of a sizable population expansion in the area between now and 2020. Both Marana and Oro Valley show very low levels of unemployment and poverty when compared to the national unemployment rate of 6.7%[viii] and the national poverty rate of 15%.[ix]

Employment Statistics for Leman Academy of Excellence Target Population in Marana / Oro Valley		
Occupation	**Marana**	**Oro Valley**
Mgt./Prof.:	20.1%	51.4%
Service:	23.4%	12.1%
Sales/Office:	24.6%	26.3%
Fish./Farm./Forest.:	1.9%	0.1%
Constr./Extr./Maint.:	16.9%	4.2%
Prod./Trans.:	13.1%	6.0%
Unemployed	1.9%	1.8%
Below Poverty Line	11.8%	3.4%

Source: www.zipskinny.com

- **Ethnicity –** The community in Marana and Oro Valley is predominantly white with the next largest population being Hispanic/Latino.

Racial Statistics for Leman Academy of Excellence Target Population in Marana / Oro Valley		
Race	**Marana**	**Oro Valley**
Hispanic/Latino	22.2%	7.5%
White	71.7%	88.0%
Black	1.9%	1.0%
Native American	2.0%	
Asian	0.5%	1.9%
Pacific Island	0.1%	0.1%
Other	0.1%	0.1%
Multi-racial	1.4%	1.0%

Source: www.zipskinny.com

- **Age/Gender –** The median age in the target population is approximately forty years old, which is when parents have school-aged children.

Gender and Age Statistics for Leman Academy of Excellence Target Population in Marana / Oro Valley		
Gender / Median Age	**Marana**	**Oro Valley**
Males	51.5%	48.6%
Females	48.5%	51.4
Median Age	35.4	54.1

Source: www.zipskinny.com

- **Violent Crime Index –** The data below indicates that Marana and Oro Valley are considered safe: total crime index is below both national and state averages and the violent crime index for the areas in particular is very low. This is an important draw for families and staff that may be attracted to the school, but do not necessarily live in the immediate area.

Comparative Crime Statistics for the Marana / Oro Valley Areas			
Statistic	**Target Area Per 100,000***	**Nationally Per 100,000**	**Arizona Per 100,000**
Violent Crime	96 (estimate)	387	429
Property Crime	2,830 (estimate)	2,859	3,539
Total Crime Index	2,926 (estimate)	3,246	3,968

Source: www.areavibes.com/tucson-az
* figures are estimated averages from data provided for each location

Performance of Area Schools
The majority of schools in the Marana / Oro Valley area are performing at a B level or higher. The chart on the following page represents five schools in the immediate vicinity of LAE's first choice location: the real estate opportunity at the intersections of LA Cañada and Tangerine Roads. As indicated in the chart, student performance is not among the high priority needs of Oro Valley; the primary need of the community is additional high performing charter schools to keep pace with the exploding population in those areas and to provide a more comprehensive set of educational choices for families.

2013 Performance Indicators of Sample Elementary and Middle Schools Surrounding Oro Valley Location (Tangerine & La Cañada)					
School	**AIMS Rating (A-F)**	**Great Schools Rating (1-10)**	**AIMS Passing in Math**	**AIMS Passing in Reading**	**AIMS Passing in Writing**
Painted Sky Elementary School (K-5)	A	9	83%	94%	71%
Copper Creek Elementary School (K-5)	A	9	79%	94%	84%
Richard B. Wilson Jr. School (k-8)	A	9	78%	90%	75%
Ironwood Elementary School (k-6)	B	8	71%	87%	62%
Coronado School (k-8)	B	7	66%	84%	71%

Source: Arizona Department of Education website & GreatSchools.com

ELL & Special Education in the Target Population

Data on ELL and SPED Students in Target Population		
School	**Percentage of SPED Students**	**Percentage of ELL Students**
Painted Sky Elementary School (K-5)	16%	3%
Copper Creek Elementary School (K-5)	16%	3%
Richard B. Wilson Jr. School (k-8)	16%	2%
Ironwood Elementary School (k-6)	11%	3%
Coronado School (k-8)	16%	4%
Average	**15%**	**3%**

Source for SPED data: Executive Summary Reports for Amphi School District (2012-13 school year) and Marana School District (2009-10 school year).
Source for ELL data: Arizona Department of Education website & GreatSchools.com

Target Population - Summary
The Oro Valley community is an attractive place for LAE to locate. The community is stable, safe and appealing for newcomers. Data also indicates that this neighborhood's population is comprised well-educated residents whose median age is approximately 40, which falls in line with the age of parents with school-aged children.

The most compelling need for the Leman Academy of Excellence to locate in Oro Valley is to keep pace with the population expansion across the next five years. The Amphitheater Unified School District – by its own assessment – is not financially capable to build new schools to accommodate this influx of families.

Oro Valley is also a community of well-educated people who demand high quality schools for their children. This is an area of Tucson that is already supported by many high performing schools and this level of quality will be expected to continue. The Leman Academy of Excellence is an option that will provide parents with a rigorous, proven model of education that correlates with their values.

The Leman Academy of Excellence represents a uniquely different school choice for parents in Oro Valley. The mothers who participated in the round table discussion with Dr. Leman clearly recognize that the highest performing charter schools in Oro Valley – Basis and Legacy – are not right for every child. These two amazing schools are well known for intense expectations that are largely focused on science and math. The message was clear: Basis and Legacy only fit a certain type of learner and many students are being left behind. There is a need for a well-rounded curriculum that cherishes the arts and literature as well as math and science. The Leman Academy of Excellence will bring the first public, Classical Education Charter School to Oro Valley. Furthermore, the integration of Dr. Leman's nationally recognized approach to child development and psychology is unmet in our target population. Oro Valley parents are excited about The Leman Academy of Excellence.

Meeting the Needs of the Target Population

Program of Instruction
A Classical education program with a Charlotte Mason influence is not offered anywhere in the state of Arizona as a charter option for families. Further, Dr. Leman's role as the school's founder brings another unique and unparalleled quality to the Leman Academy of Excellence. LAE is both unique and time-tested. As delineated in section A.1 under section C, "Rationale for Target Population," a Classical education model has a solid track record of success. From communities that were once struggling with pupil achievement to neighborhoods with existing schools that were highly successful, Classical Educational schools thrive where they open.

In addition to the strength of the Classical educational model as a vehicle for pupil improvement, the daily class schedules for each grade level at LAE are specifically designed to meet the needs of the scholars in our target population by providing ample time to teach core academic content as well as provide differentiated instruction for

scholars based on identified academic needs. The most pressing educational need of our target population (as indicated by the data in the chart on page 11) is for improving scholar achievement in writing, followed by math and reading. The programs of study at LAE that specifically address these content areas are: Shurley English, Latin and Saxon Math.

Impact of Shurley English
Research has shown one of the essential features of Shurley English, the ongoing use of feedback through formative assessments. Providing scholars with information about how well they are doing on a regular basis was found to be incredibly powerful, so much so that researcher John Hattie analyzed nearly 8,000 studies and concluded, "The most powerful single modification that enhances achievement is feedback. The simplest prescription for improving education must be 'dollops of feedback.'" Research found that the effects of feedback could increase achievement from 7 to 37 percent.[x] The continuous use of feedback with Shurley English should provide significant scholar improvement in the writing skills of our target population.

Impact of Latin
LAE's introduction of Latin will increase pupil achievement. A course of study that includes Latin can make significant pupil improvement by developing their reading skills, study skills, math problem solving abilities, as well as attain higher test scores.[xi] The specific attributes of a Latin curriculum for pupil achievement in Oro Valley is linked to data that demonstrates higher achievement on SAT scores and improved study skills for students who learn Latin (see section A.1).

As noted in earlier sections, the example of 6th-grade students in Indianapolis who studied Latin for 30 minutes each day for five months advanced nine months in their math problem solving abilities. In addition, the students exhibited the following advances in other areas:

- Eight months in world knowledge
- One year in reading
- Thirteen months in language
- Four months in spelling
- Five months in science
- Seven months in social studies

Impact of Saxon Math
Saxon Math is the math program chosen by Leman Academy of Excellence and has been implemented starting in Kindergarten and will continue throughout each grade level. Independent research, longitudinal studies, and field-testing provide clear evidence that the Saxon Math program shows immediate, dramatic, and sustained improvement for all scholars.[xii] The Saxon Math program is based on an incremental pedagogical approach that emphasizes practice, review and frequent cumulative assessment. Over the past thirty years, research has suggested that there is value in a teaching method that uses small, easily understood pieces of information that are distributed across an extended period of time.[xiii] It is the Saxon philosophy that mathematics learning should build on prior

learning. Saxon Math's approach to math instruction aims to ensure that scholars both gain and retain essential math skills.

Class Size & Student Teacher Ratios

The average class size at the Leman Academy of Excellence will be 26 students. Educational assistance will be incorporated into the school-staffing plan. On average, the student teacher ratio will be 19:1, which accounts for a mix of assistant teachers who move around the school. While 19:1 is the school average, the distribution of assistant teachers is greater in the younger classrooms. The specific break down for year one is listed below:

- **Kindergarten:** two assistants will support the four, half-day classes, which accounts for a 17:1 student teacher ratio.
- **1st & 2nd Grades:** two assistant teachers will support the six, full-day classrooms that comprise first and second grade for a student teacher ratio of 20:1.
- **3rd-6th Grades:** One assistant teacher will support the six, full-day classrooms that comprise third through sixth grades for a student teacher ratio of 22:1.

Smaller class sizes provide a more individualized approach to education, which is proven to help student achievement. One of the most influential studies on the benefits of low student teacher ratios was conducted in the late 1980's – the Student Teacher Achievement Ratio or STAR – found that a reduced class size increased student achievement by an amount equivalent to three additional months of schooling four years later. Additionally, the National Education Association web site notes that students in smaller classes continue to reap academic benefits though middle and high schools, especially minority and low-income students.[xiv]

At LAE, small class sizes will allow our teachers and the students to build meaningful relationships, where students see the classroom as a safe place to succeed and fail, as they know they have the support of the teacher to come alongside them and bring them along academically and emotionally. LAE scholars will feel a sense of belonging to the school because the teachers and scholars are collaborators and life-long learners together.

Supporting Special Education Students

As indicated in the chart provided on page 11, approximately 15% of the target population may qualify for Special Education services. In order to address this need, Leman Academy will partner with contracted special education professionals in the first three years of operation. In year four, LAE will hire a full time, highly-qualified and certified special education teacher. Additionally, Leman Academy of Excellence will educate and train all teachers in special education compliance and best practices regarding the education of special needs scholars.

Improving Pupil Achievement in Special Needs Students

The learning community of Leman Academy of Excellence will consist of scholars with a wide range of learning abilities and special needs. Scholars with special needs in our target population will receive the services as outlined in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Our teachers will work closely with administration, contracted service provider, parents and any IEP team member(s) to ensure that the implementation of an IEP is effective and meets the requirements as stated in the document. Specific training through experts in the field of Special Education will be made available to the faculty and staff of Leman Academy in order to both meet the needs of the special needs scholar and to meet all state and federal laws regarding Special Education.

All scholars in our target population receiving a rigorous, Classical education are surrounded with daily opportunities to learn, and scholars with special needs are no different. The administration, faculty and staff of Leman Academy will make the proper accommodations for individual scholars with special needs who may require a specific accommodation through an IEP or a 504 plan. Accommodations may offer alternative ways for scholars to either acquire information or share what they have learned in the classroom, but accommodations made by our teachers will not lower the difficulty level nor the expectations for scholarly achievement, although changes could be made in teaching materials used, testing materials, or even in the instructional environment. Examples of accommodations including, but not limited to:[xv] textbooks for at-home use, answers to be dictated, use of tape recorder for lectures, use of computers or calculators, preferential seating, provision of notes or outlines, study sheets, etc…

Accordingly, if modifications are included in a scholar's IEP, our teachers will then modify a scholar's instruction to accommodate the young person's unique learning needs without interfering with our Classical educational approach. Modifications may include changes to the quantity of material to be learned, how the material/content is presented or the form of testing. Although modifications make fundamental changes in what a scholar in our target population is expected to learn, any modifications made by our teachers should not take away opportunities for learning in the classroom, which will allow a scholar with special needs to continually be engaged in the learning process with the other scholars in class. Examples of modifications including, but not limited to:[xvi] reduction of homework, reduction of class work, shortening an assignment to allow the scholar to focus on mastery of key concepts, provide a vocabulary list with definitions, allow for an open-book test, etc…

For the special needs scholars from our target population who will be integrated into our rigorous, Classical educational program, here are some examples of specific strategies that may be implemented for improving learning, attention, organization and behavior:[xvii]

- **The teacher can encourage the scholar to record lectures and discussions,** so that the scholar can listen again for review and pause when needed.
- **The teacher can provide the scholar a pre-printed outline for note taking and studying.** The teacher creates a fill-in-the-blank outline of the entire book or class. Throughout the course or lesson, the scholar fills in the outline with his own notes to help him understand an ordered overview at the same time.
- **Give the scholar a pocket device for recording schedules and assignments**. An electronic device may be considered, especially for boys, or a small spiral notebook. The teacher will help the scholar check the device daily, or assign an organized and compassionate buddy for this task.
- **Consider a running to-do list.** Every Friday afternoon, the teacher along with the parents can help the scholar assess his overall to-do list, scratch off accomplished tasks, and make a plan for his next work week.
- **Teach him to use a planner or electronic organizer for long-term projects.** The school and home can help the scholar "task analyze" his longer-term assignments by week, so he can enter the components in order and accomplish them on time.
- **Schedule time to organize.** At the end of each day and then more thoroughly once per week, the teacher may organize the scholar's desk, books, folders, or index cards side-by-side with him, so he can participate in the process of organizing his materials.
- **Move often.** The teacher may have the scholars stand for recitations, sit at a desk for writing and literature, move to a special area for calendar or stories or history discussion, then return to the table for math work.
- **Be clear and direct.** We understand that multiple, wordy, unclear directions thwart attention. Our teachers will be concise, using short, clear sentences.
- **Give one direction at a time.** The teacher will supervise task completion, and then give the next direction. For example, with young children: "Put on your jacket." "*Good!"* "Zip up your jacket." "*Great."* "Take my hand. Let's walk to the park."
- **Create a laminated checklist for self-monitoring when the scholar finishes his work.** Examples:

I Check My Work! / MATH

__Every problem has an answer.

__Every answer includes units.

__My answers make mathematical sense.

I Check My Work! / WRITING

__Every "i" has a dot.

__Every sentence begins with a capital letter.

__Every sentence has an end mark.

- **Finally, the very tenets of Classical education are able to assist us:**[xviii]

a) **Teach by Asking Questions – the Socratic Method.** Teachers are able to ask clear, step-by-step questions to assess, lead and strengthen the child's understanding. The oral Socratic Method with good discussions can effectively replace some written answers.
b) **Teach "Slowly & Steadily" – the Tortoise & the Hare.** Teachers may delve deeply and seek mastery. The high quality of the best resources will assist the child's mind and character, even when taught at a more relaxed pace.
c) **Enjoy the Original "Multi-Sensory" Methods – Recitation, Dictation and Narration.** Scholars can enjoy songs, chants and narration. Teachers may add visual cues or movements to accompany auditory learning.
d) **Read-Aloud Great Literature**. Even without extensive literary analysis, rich and beautiful language soothes, lifts and teaches.
e) **Repetition.** Teachers reading a story or poem several times can build fluency, expression, understanding and appreciation.

Above all, we plan to create a positive, thoughtful, encouraging learning environment for each of our scholars in order that they may be successful. Our teachers will help to break any patterns of failure. We can shift the assignments, reduce the level of instruction, or change the style of work to something better suited to our scholar's abilities, if needed. If the scholar reads well, our teacher will assign him oral reading in class. If the scholar discusses well but writes poorly, our teacher will encourage oral responses to some questions and mark them "completed orally" in the workbook. If memory work should prove to be difficult, our teacher can have others recite before the scholar's turn. In other words, we plan to emphasize true strengths of each of the scholars who may have a special need.

Supporting English Language Learners
In accordance with the Arizona Department of Education, scholars in our target population who have been identified as second language learners on the Home Language Survey (HLS) will take the Arizona English Language Learner Assessment (AZELLA) placement test, which measures scholars' English language proficiency. AZELLA, a standards-based assessment, meets both state and federal requirements to measure scholars' English language proficiency. Scholars' proficiency scores determine appropriate placement for instruction. Scholars who have been placed into an English Language Learner (ELL) education program will also take the AZELLA reassessment once per year until they achieve proficiency. Scholars struggling in our Classical learning

classroom based on a lack of English language proficiency (classroom performance and assessment results shows scholar having difficulties) along with a teacher referral may take an AZELLA Placement Test. If the scholar receives an Overall Proficiency Level below "Proficient" on the AZELLA Placement Test, the scholar shall be transferred into ELL services at the first appropriate opportunity.

Improving Pupil Achievement in the Target Population with ELL Scholars

ELL Program Model: **Integrated "Group" Classrooms**
Due to the low number of ELL scholars anticipated at Leman Academy based on the small percentages in our target population (please see chart on page 11) we believe the best approach to meet all of our scholars academic needs will be to integrate the ELL scholars of our target population into the general classroom at the appropriate grade level.[xix] Best classroom practices and teaching strategies will be used with our ELL scholars at developmentally appropriate levels and considering the scholars' language proficiencies and cognitive levels.[xx] All instruction in the classroom will be in English and the materials will be aligned to the State's English Language Proficiency Standards. The key principles are that English is fundamental to content mastery and that time on task increases academic progression.

Key Features for an Integrated "Group" Classroom Approach[xxi]

1. All instruction is done in English
2. When possible, the child's primary language is used to clarify instruction
3. English is taught through reading, language arts, math, science and history
4. There is a strong English language development (ELD) component in every lesson
5. The acquisition of English takes place in a structured, non-threatening environment in which scholars feel comfortable to take risks
6. Lessons include controlled vocabulary while scholars gradually acquire the necessary language skills to succeed academically and become lifelong learners

Best Practices for Teaching the ELL Scholar in our Target Population
The following are effective instructional practices to be used with ELL scholars of our target population that can be incorporated into our rigorous, Classical educational program to enhance learning for the scholar in the classroom.[xxii]

1) **Scaffolding**: The teacher provides meaningful support and guidance needed for the ELL's learning growth toward each learning objective. Also, the teacher uses questioning techniques to elicit experiences that relate to his native culture. The teacher rephrases with words the scholar understands and uses pictures to further adapt the questioning techniques.
2) **Shelter**: The teacher introduces new content by using visual aids, music, etc. The ELL scholar will be observed to note which topics come easily and which ones will require more support.

3) **Total Physical Response (TPR):** As much as possible, the teacher links language learning to enable the ELL scholar to make a physical response. This technique ties in to various learning styles and is fun for the scholar.
4) **Reciprocal Teaching**: To help the ELL scholar complete a task, the teacher presents an interactive lesson, assesses the scholar's response for comprehension, and then restructures the lesson to correct the scholar's response. This strategy is beneficial since it demonstrates how to learn. The ELL scholar's self-esteem is enhanced by control over the learning situation.
5) **Critical Thinking Questions**: The teacher encourages the ELL scholar to ask and answer questions that start with the words "why" and "how."
6) **Hands-on Experiences**: The ELL scholar is given opportunities to complete activities that he can demonstrate and describe orally.
7) **Teaching Techniques**: The teacher needs to simplify instructions, connect the instruction to the ELL's native culture, and use graphic organizers to allow access of information. Some examples are controlled language, labeling, vocabulary word banks, flash cards, and discussions.

Finally, faculty and staff at Leman Academy of Excellence will ensure that parent relationships are fostered and maintained despite language barriers and that learning expectations for all scholars are high, including academic expectations for scholars who are English Language Learners.

Conclusion
The Leman Academy of Excellence can seamlessly address the specific needs of this community while simultaneously addressing a universal need that will benefit any community: Dr. Leman's world-renowned approach on the parent-child relationship brings new intellectual capital to the family/school connection, which is a proven approach to increasing educational outcomes. [xxiii]

The Leman Academy of Excellence provides a rigorous, time-tested educational model with a challenging curriculum. These attributes, combined with a dynamic school culture that raises the level of parental involvement, will thrive in any community. For the Marana / Oro Valley area, LAE will not only address raise pupil achievement with the addition of Shurley English, Latin and Saxon Math, but will support the needs of a rapidly expanding population in which its local school district is not financially equipped to bring new school facilities to the community.

A.2 End Notes:

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[i] http://www.bestplaces.net/city/az/oro_valley
[ii] http://www.orovalleyaz.gov/about-oro-valley
[iii] http://www.orovalleychamber.com/category/newsletter/
[iv] http://cms.amphi.com/media/CMSImport/ECA986E50DE84F1A901E5D7E598128CB
[v] http://www.tucsonnewsnow.com/story/9383553/oro-valley-one-step-closer-to-arroyo-grande-plan
[vi] http://www.abc15.com/dpp/news/state/divorce-rates-high-in-arizona-according-to-study
[vii] http://www.deptofnumbers.com/income/arizona/
[viii] http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/national-employment-monthly-update.aspx
[ix] http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/about/overview/index.html
[x] Why It Works: Shurley English. Retrieved from https://www.shurley.com/pdf/Why_It_WorksLRes.pdf
[xi] The Latin Advantage. (2014). Retrieved from http://www.arteslatinae.com/al/latadv.htm
[xii] Research – Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Retrieved from http://www.hmhco.com/shop/education…/math/saxon-math/…saxon-math/research
[xiii] Saxon Math Report Card 2010 HR - Scribd. Retrieved from https//www.scribd.com/doc/37810952/Saxon-Math-Report-Card-2010-HR
[xiv] http://www.nea.org/home/13120.htm
[xv] Swope, C. (2013). *Simply Classical*: A Beautiful Education for Any Child. Memoria Press.
[xvi] Ibid
[xvii] Swope, C. (2013). Specific Strategies for Special Needs. Retrieved from cherylswope.com/recommended-resources/specific strategies/
[xviii] Ibid
[xix] ELL Programs – Program Models. Retrieved from ellp.ccsd.net/programs
[xx] Ibid
[xxi] ELL Programs – Program Models. Retrieved from ellp.ccsd.net/programs
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[xxiii] Henderson, A. and Mapp, K. "A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family and Community Connections on Student Achievement," National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools. 2002: Austin.