



THE BARNEY
Charter School

INITIATIVE



HILLSDALE COLLEGE



THE BARNEY *Charter School* INITIATIVE



The Barney Charter School Initiative is an outreach program of Hillsdale College devoted to the revitalization of public education through the launch and support of classical K-12 charter schools. Through this initiative, Hillsdale College promotes a model of education that is rooted in the liberal arts and sciences, offers a firm grounding in civic virtue, and cultivates moral character.

Our nation's founders knew, as Thomas Jefferson wrote, that "an educated citizenry is a vital requisite for our survival as a free people." Today's public schools are too often poor stewards of their trust, caught between moral and cultural relativism, conflicting views about education's purposes, and tangled layers of testing and oversight from multi-level bureaucracies. Hillsdale's Barney Charter School Initiative provides an effective alternative by collaborating with local citizens throughout the country to found classical charter schools built on the best curricular and instructional traditions.

Through this initiative, Hillsdale College serves as a perennial advisor in curriculum, instruction, and school governance. To receive these services, schools commit to embrace and uphold the following key characteristics:

1. The centrality of the Western tradition in the study of history, literature, philosophy, and fine arts
2. A rich and recurring examination of the American literary, moral, philosophical, political, and historical traditions

3. The use of explicit phonics instruction leading to reading fluency, and the use of explicit grammar instruction leading to English language mastery
4. The teaching of Latin
5. The acknowledgement of objective standards of correctness, logic, beauty, weightiness, and truth intrinsic to the liberal arts
6. A school culture demanding moral virtue, decorum, respect, discipline, and studiousness among the students and faculty
7. A curriculum that is content-rich, balanced, and strong across the four core disciplines of math, science, literature, and history
8. A faculty where well-educated and articulate teachers convey real knowledge using traditional teaching methods rather than "student-centered learning" methods
9. A school that uses technology effectively but without diminishing the faculty leadership that is crucial to academic achievement
10. A school with a plan to serve Grades K through 12, although the grades at school opening may be scaled back if reasonable

Since 1844, Hillsdale College has remained true to its mission to provide "sound learning" of the kind needed to preserve the "blessings of civil and religious liberty." The Barney Charter School Initiative is a vital extension of that mission.



ESTABLISHING A BCSI *Charter School*



*THE MISSION OF THE BARNEY
CHARTER SCHOOL INITIATIVE IS
TO PROMOTE THE FOUNDING OF
CLASSICAL CHARTER SCHOOLS
AND EXCELLENCE IN THEIR
TEACHING AND OPERATIONS, TO
THE END THAT PUBLIC-SCHOOL
STUDENTS MAY BE EDUCATED IN
THE LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES
AND RECEIVE INSTRUCTION IN
THE PRINCIPLES OF MORAL
CHARACTER AND CIVIC VIRTUE.*

The Barney Charter School Initiative (BCSI) collaborates with local charter school founders to achieve curricular and instructional excellence. Each school begins with a select group of citizens who are civic minded, passionate about education reform, and united in their promotion of classical education. They accept the responsibility to write a charter, apply for authorization to open a school, and govern the school's management and finances. BCSI consults throughout this process by providing resources, advice, and experience, and assists in drafting the school's founding documents.

From the founding of a school forward, BCSI supports each school and its local governing board by providing curricular design, resource recommendations, teacher training, and ongoing consultation. Both teachers and governing board members are regularly invited to Hillsdale to attend training seminars.

BCSI's collaboration ensures that its schools educate students in the best of the liberal arts tradition in literature, math, history, and science. In addition to these four core disciplines, required courses are Music, Art, Latin, Composition, Government, Economics, and Moral Philosophy. With their carefully chosen curriculum and faculty, BCSI schools cultivate well-spoken, well-read, and self-governing students. The schools are a great benefit to the families and communities they serve, and their efforts advance the principles and virtues of a free society.







SUPPORTING SCHOOL

Leaders and Teachers



The founding and continued success of BCSI schools requires recruiting, training, and supporting a talented faculty. While each school is ultimately responsible to hire and develop its teachers and administrators, Hillsdale College offers regular support and guidance at each step of the way, beginning with training principals prior to school launch and continuing through a comprehensive structure of consultation and training.

Principal Search. Once a charter is granted, school founders begin searching for highly qualified candidates for principal. Hillsdale College attracts many worthy prospects, especially through its Principal Candidate Boot Camp program, who can often be paired with a new school. Hillsdale participates in the job search, and representatives from BCSI interview candidates and make recommendations to the school founders.

Principal Candidate Boot Camp. Principals with a deep understanding of and commitment to classical education can be challenging to find. Individuals must be grounded in the rich heritage of the liberal arts tradition and have the right character, demeanor, and qualifications. In order to help vet and cultivate such leaders, Hillsdale College conducts annual “boot camps” for principal candidates. These intensive training programs focus on the philosophical and academic fundamentals of classical education.

New School/New Principal Workshop. Newly hired principals, especially those at new schools, must overcome a steep learning curve. To support them in the details of school policy, curriculum, and culture, BCSI offers an

in-depth workshop and continues to support them with regular visits and phone calls, especially during a school’s first years.

Teacher Training for New Schools. BCSI offers ten days of on-site teacher training before each new school opens to train teachers in instruction and curriculum. Training is provided by the BCSI staff, select Hillsdale College professors, and additional experts on classical education as needed. These sessions and workshops ensure that teachers understand the philosophy and culture of the classical school and affirm the elements of a good education. Specific training is given in teaching grammar, literature, science, history, math, and phonics.

Annual Teacher Training. Teachers from BCSI-affiliated schools travel to Hillsdale College each summer for professional development. BCSI offers focused sessions tailored to particular grade levels or subject areas in order to meet the needs of all teachers. These advanced sessions, taught by over 35 Hillsdale College faculty members and adjunct instructors, help teachers to improve their instruction and remain faithful to the methods and purposes of classical education. The visit to Hillsdale also offers teachers the opportunity to confer with peers from other schools and build camaraderie across the BCSI network.

Site Visits. During regular site visits throughout the school year, the BCSI team furthers relationships with teachers and principals, provides feedback from classroom observations, and offers tailored coaching and resources.



TRAINING HILLSDALE COLLEGE'S *Undergraduate Students*



*“PROMOTE, THEN, AS AN OBJECT
OF PRIMARY IMPORTANCE,
INSTITUTIONS FOR THE GENERAL
DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE. IN
PROPORTION AS THE STRUCTURE
OF A GOVERNMENT GIVES
FORCE TO PUBLIC OPINION, IT IS
ESSENTIAL THAT PUBLIC OPINION
SHOULD BE ENLIGHTENED.”*

– GEORGE WASHINGTON
First Inaugural, April 30, 1789



CLASSICAL EDUCATION MINOR

Hillsdale College offers a minor in classical education that is grounded in the rich heritage of the liberal arts curriculum and teaches its students the means and ends of classical education.

LIBERAL ARTS TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP

Hillsdale's Liberal Arts Teacher Apprenticeship answers the growing demand for teacher candidates with a strong academic preparation and an understanding of the classical school environment. With a solid liberal education from Hillsdale College, a course in philosophy of education, and a semester-long experience in a classical school classroom, the College is able to graduate teacher candidates who possess the kinds of qualifications needed in classical schools.

CLASSICAL SCHOOL JOB FAIR

Hillsdale College sponsors an annual Classical School Job Fair for classical school personnel from throughout the country. School representatives meet and interview Hillsdale students and alumni who are seeking teaching positions in classical charter and private schools. As a result, Hillsdale graduates continue to swell the ranks of classical K-12 schools throughout the nation.







ABOUT

Hillsdale College

Located in rural southern Michigan, Hillsdale College was founded in 1844 with the purpose of providing its students “sound learning” of the kind necessary to preserve the “blessings of civil and religious liberty.” In the words of its modern mission statement, it “considers itself a trustee of our Western philosophical and theological inheritance tracing to Athens and Jerusalem, a heritage finding its clearest expression in the American experiment of self-government under law.”

Outreach efforts of the College include not only the Barney Charter School Initiative, but also the Allan P. Kirby, Jr. Center for Constitutional Studies and Citizenship in Washington, D.C.; the Center for Constructive Alternatives, one of the largest college lecture series in America; the Ludwig von Mises Lectures in free market economics; the Hoogland Center for Teacher Excellence; National Leadership Seminars; and *Imprimis*, a monthly speech digest with a circulation over 3.5 million.

The College’s educational mission rests upon two principles: academic excellence and institutional independence. The College is nationally known for its large and rigorous core curriculum, including a one-semester course on the U.S. Constitution, and for its principled refusal to accept federal or state taxpayer subsidies for any of its operations. This includes its work with public charter schools through the Barney Charter School Initiative.

With a student body of approximately 1,450, Hillsdale’s campus includes comfortable residence halls, a state-of-the-art health education and sports complex, studio and performance facilities for arts and music, and well-equipped classrooms and laboratories. An ideal student-to-faculty ratio of 10-to-1, rigorous academics, intramural sports, national fraternity and sorority houses, and widespread community volunteerism nurture intellectual, physical, social, and personal growth.





HILLSDALE COLLEGE

PURSUING TRUTH · DEFENDING LIBERTY SINCE 1844

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