



BUILDING ON SUCCESS

IDAHO'S CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT



APPLICATION DETAILS

School Name: Pathways In Education – West Ada	
Contact Person: Susan Lux	Contact Email: susanlux@pathwaysedu.org
Application Type: Start Up	Grant Budget: \$ 529,000
Grades Served: 9-12	New Seats Created: 300
Total Averaged Score: 94	Priority Points Assigned: 6
Application Status: Funded	

RUBRIC**A. SMART Grant Project Goals**

Identify 2-4 SMART grant project goals and *justify* each goal in terms of its value in supporting the planning and implementation of your proposed school. *All grant spending, including future revisions to your budget, must fit clearly within one of your stated project goals.*

TOTAL POINTS	6.5/10
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Reviewer Comments – Grant Project Goals**Strengths:**

- Each project goal is clearly defined and measurable. The goals are strongly linked to the mission and vision of the school, for example that every student will receive a learning plan that creates a path for graduation.
- Pathways' three project goals each support the proposed school's mission and vision. Each goal is defined in detail, with measurable outcomes. Goal #1 satisfies the requirement to serve a student population that is within 5% of the demographics of West Ada's other alternative academics.
- The development of Individualized Learning Plans for each student geared specifically towards graduation will assist with tracking student's progress on a regular basis.

Weaknesses:

- While clearly defined, the goals in the application do not satisfy the requirements of this rubric. There is no discrete English and math achievement goal, advanced opportunities and other high school programs are mentioned but no goal is ascribed to them, and the goals explicitly state that some students will be targeted to graduate in 6 years, not 5, with no indication as to whether 85% of students will graduate within 5 years.

B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum

Fully *describe and justify* the design of the academic program in terms of the educational philosophy, instructional practices, and curriculum that will be utilized to meet the school's performance objectives. Be sure to include key design elements, references supporting its validity and alignment to state and federal requirements, and rationale for why this education model was chosen and how it will produce strong outcomes for the unique community and student population the school will be located within.

TOTAL POINTS	17/20
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Reviewer Comments - Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum**Strengths:**

- The application includes ample detail surrounding the key instructional strategies of the school, including small group instruction, transitioning between online coursework and in-person learning, and establishing a culture of high expectations. The technology plan is clear and reasonable.
- Pathways' educational philosophy, instructional practices and curriculum have been selected based upon the ability to provide a personalized and equitable learning experience for at-risk students. The curriculum is based on Idaho Content Standards and focuses on remediation and core knowledge.
- Pathways' flexible schedule fits the demands of their student population.

Weaknesses:

- The narrative does not include each of the curricula expected to be implemented at the school; therefore, does not include sufficient justification of these choices (though the application describes general justifications regarding the needs of the student population).



C. Teaching and Learning

Fully *describe and justify* the design of the instructional strategy in terms of the educational philosophy, instructional practices, and curriculum that will be utilized to meet the school's performance objectives. Be sure to include key design elements, references supporting its validity and alignment to state and federal requirements, and rationale for why this strategy was chosen and how it will produce strong outcomes for the unique community and student population the school will serve.

TOTAL POINTS**6/6****Reviewer Comments – Teaching and Learning****Strengths:**

- Assessment practices are clearly described, in addition to the information that educators in the school will use to determine course placement and advancement. The school's MTSS framework is also described in good detail.
- The use of both Formative and Summative Assessments will provide teachers with the data needed to determine students successes, as well as their deficiencies. This allows for targeted improvements to be added to Individualized Learning Plans, ensuring students get the interventions necessary for continually progress. Additionally, Pathways will use Multi-Tiered Systems of Support to identify students who are at risk of academic failure.

D. Student Academic Achievement Standards

As an independently governed public school, charter schools need to ensure plans, systems, and tools for strong oversight and monitoring in the areas of academic performance. In this section, persuade the reader that your school will have rigorous goals and adequate oversight to ensure quality implementation, operation, and accountability.

TOTAL POINTS**7.5/9****Reviewer Comments – Student Academic Achievement Standards****Strengths:**

- The application describes a logical process of assessing whether seniors are on track to graduate (12th grade graduation cohort) and attaining credits at a sufficient pace (credit attainment and academic recovery). These measures seem reasonable as part of a wholistic approach to assessing student learning.
- Pathways' intensive monthly monitoring of student credit attainment and skills growth monitoring three times a year provides for timely identification of weaknesses in student success and allows for timely implementation of targeted inventions.

Weaknesses:

- This section does not describe how teacher performance will be assessed, nor does it directly address student mastery of academic content as distinct from credit attainment. It was difficult to create a full picture of how data would be used in the school from reading the narrative.

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E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support

Schools funded under the CSP subgrant must ensure they are in tune with their communities' needs and priorities. In this section schools will document their vitality and long-term sustainability through demonstrating their dedication to developing and maintaining community partnerships and connections.

TOTAL POINTS**10/10****Reviewer Comments – Student Demand and Community/Local Support****Strengths:**

- The application states, rightly, that alternative high school programs are in high demand within and around the West Ada School District. It is reasonable to expect that, with the planning, marketing, and recruitment efforts described here, the school would be able to reach adequate enrollment.
- Pathways has established a strong community partnership with their Authorizer, the West Ada School District. The two have worked closely together over the past year to address the growing population needs of the community and the effects on the capacity at existing schools. Even with these schools currently being near or at capacity, Pathways began recruitment efforts this spring.

Weaknesses:

- None aside from details around amount of funds expected to be used for marketing.

F. Effectively Serving All Students

Charter schools are obligated to take specific actions to ensure an open, fair, non-selective method of attracting and enrolling students, and all charter schools need to be ready to serve the group of students that choose to attend. In this section, describe your plan to offer a continuum of services for all types of students, including those that are educationally disadvantaged (such as low-income, special education, English learners, homeless, migrant and other at-risk students) and gifted and talented.

TOTAL POINTS**11.5/12****Reviewer Comments – Effectively Serving All Students****Strengths:**

- The application sufficiently justifies its approaches to special education, English learners, nutrition, and transportation given the unique student demographic being served. In particular, the special education and English learner sections contain good detail pertaining to what these students will experience in the school.
- Pathways' plans to accommodate their Special Populations of students, including Special Education, and English Learners are well defined and aligned to state and federal requirements.

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G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan

Describe the approach to staffing, inclusive of ratios, positions, etc. required for effective implementation of the chosen education model. Further, describe the process in which all staff will be supported in their ongoing professional development.

TOTAL POINTS**4/4****Reviewer Comments – Staffing and Professional Development Plan****Strengths:**

- The application describes a reasonable startup staffing plan and includes ample detail pertaining to professional development. Given the student demographic being served, it was good to read about teacher mentorship for new teachers especially.
- New teachers are provided with targeted learning in addition to the professional development all teachers participate in. New teachers are also assigned to Mentors. Pathways plans to use the High-Quality Teaching Initiative framework for instructional coaching, which is aligned to the Danielson framework.

Weaknesses:

- None aside from no clear description of what recruitment efforts will be used to reach 16 total staff.

H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan

As independently governed public schools, charters are fully responsible for ensuring quality financial management practices and ongoing financial stability. In this section, explain your school's plan to be compliant, strategic, and responsible with finances and business services.

TOTAL POINTS**5.5/7****Reviewer Comments – Financial Management and Monitoring Plan****Strengths:**

- It is clear that the startup costs of the school and ensuing financial projections bring in evidence and past experience from PIE-Nampa. The budget narrative seems reasonable and in line with the mission and vision of the school.
- Pathways Management group will work directly with the Principal to provide the following services: Facilities Management, Educational Program and Curriculum, Student Achievement Reporting, Personnel and Training, Management of the Charter, Human Resources, Accounting Services, Annual Audits, IT Services and Insurance.
- Salaries and Benefits are less than 65% of the school's annual budget. Facility costs are less of 20% of the school's annual budget.

Weaknesses:

- The CSP budget spreadsheet is either incomplete or sparsely filled out, and the information describing how the facility will be outfitted to serve the designated students is also incomplete.
- 501(c)(3) exempt status has not yet been received from the IRS. The request is currently under review.



I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure

A competent, trained governing board is essential to the success of a public charter school. In this section the school will demonstrate how it has developed a strong governing board with a diverse set of skills. Board members should understand their roles and responsibilities and have in place a transition plan and ongoing professional development to maintain board strength going forward.

TOTAL POINTS**12/12****Reviewer Comments – Board Capacity and Governance Structure****Strengths:**

- The application contains ample detail in this section surrounding appropriate board roles, responsibilities, and training.

Weaknesses:

- While the application does state that all founding board members have experience as PIE board members, there is no description of areas of expertise they bring to the board.

J. School Leadership and Management

This section should describe the intended leadership structure of your school and demonstrate a strong leadership and staffing plan that ensures high-quality implementation and sustainability of the school.

TOTAL POINTS**8/10****Reviewer Comments – School Leadership and Management****Strengths:**

- The application describes a reasonable and comprehensive set of expectations and responsibilities for school leadership. The selected leader is experienced and seems well-positioned for the role.
- A proven successful, Pathways leader will serve as the new school's Principal.
- Additionally, Pathways Management group will work directly with the Principal to provide the following services: Facilities Management, Educational Program and Curriculum, Student Achievement Reporting, Personnel and Training, Management of the Charter, Human Resources, Accounting Services, Annual Audits, IT Services and Insurance.

Weaknesses:

- There is no discussion of risk factors, operational challenges, or mitigation strategies in the narrative.

Overall comments**Reviewer Comments**

- The strengths in this application are in the understanding of the unique needs of the students being served and the underlying instructional tools and academic approaches that the school will bring to bear and benefit these students. Pathways is filling a difficult and much-needed role in Meridian and the surrounding community.
- The application lacked key details that the rubric required, such as reading and math goals, more information regarding curriculum, and discussion of challenges and risks.
- Based upon the success of the Pathways in Education - Nampa location, the experienced school leader, who has previously executed this model, and the support system provided by Pathways Management group, this new school appears to be readied for success.



APPLICATION TOTAL POINTS		
Rubric Section	Points Awarded	Points Possible
A. Grant Project Goals	<u>6.5</u>	10
B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum	<u>17</u>	20
C. Teaching and Learning	<u>6</u>	6
D. Student Academic Achievement Standards	<u>7.5</u>	9
E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support	<u>10</u>	10
F. Effectively Serving All Students	<u>11.5</u>	12
G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan	<u>4</u>	4
H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan	<u>5.5</u>	7
I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure	<u>12</u>	12
J. School Leadership and Management	<u>8</u>	10
STANDARD POINTS AWARDED	<u>88</u>	100
Priority Points: 2 Additional Points may be awarded for schools that articulate a plan to serve and intentionally meet the unique needs of students in rural geographic areas.	<u>0</u>	2
Priority Points: 2 Additional Points may be awarded for schools that provide a high-quality high school program.	<u>2</u>	2
Priority Points: 2 Additional Points may be awarded for schools that articulate a plan to serve and intentionally meet the unique needs of a student population of more than 50% economically disadvantaged students.	<u>2</u>	2
Priority Points: 2 Additional Points may be awarded for schools that serve a 100% at-risk student population.	<u>0</u>	2
Priority Points: 2 Additional Points for schools authorized by a public school district .	<u>2</u>	2
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED	<u>94</u>	110

