



BUILDING ON SUCCESS

IDAHO'S CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT



APPLICATION DETAILS

School Name: Alturas Academy North	
Contact Person: Brian Bingham	Contact Email: brian.bingham@alturasacademy.org
Application Type: Start Up	Grant Budget: \$2,000,000
Grades Served: K–8	New Seats Created: 648
Total Averaged Score: 96.5	Priority Points Assigned: 2
Application Status: Funded	

RUBRIC

<p>A. SMART Grant Project Goals <i>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.</i></p>	
TOTAL POINTS	10/10
<p>Reviewer Comments – Grant Project Goals Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project goals align with the mission / vision of the school and are reasonable and attainable. • The goal for obtaining IB authorization is rigorous and will require a steadfast commitment in preparation. • The grant application contained five goals. • Each goal was justified in supporting the overall health and well being of the school in providing equal access to a highly effective educational program. • Each goal provided alignment to the school's vision and mission. • Two of the goals centered on the academic obligations of the grant and how these were to be measured while one focused on increasing the number of "high quality, rigorous Idaho Charter School seats." • Student demographics, transportation and food services rounded out the remainder of school goals allowing equitable access to the education program for all students. 	

<p>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.</p>	
TOTAL POINTS	20/20
<p>Reviewer Comments - Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has the distinct advantage of using curriculum, technology resources and instructional practices already proven to be successful at Alturas International. • There is data to show the performance of students using the same materials and approaches. • Their flexibility, teacher contract, and individualized approach have a high likelihood of having similar success to Alturas International. • This is the third school to utilize programs and practices that have proven successful in two other schools with similar populations. • Chosen curriculum is evidenced based and has shown a proven track record of success. • The school utilizes curriculum that is both structured and multidisciplinary, project based and are tightly aligned to the Idaho Core Standards. • Students are grouped at their instructional levels utilizing small group multiage settings. • Peer mentoring and collaborative learning is emphasized and teachers become trainers and facilitators to encourage independent learning. • Technology is utilized to support the curriculum utilizing 1:1 Chromebooks and digital platforms. 	



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:

- Multi-age classrooms, small group instruction, MTSS supports, and differentiation strategies will support all learners.
- Both formative and summative assessments inform instruction and remediation.
- Strong teacher-student relationships will foster a positive learning environment.
- Alturas Academy North's educational philosophy is differently structured and has found success in like schools' philosophy of "tailoring instruction to the academic level of each student rather than their grade level"; thus utilizing multiage classrooms.
- Formative assessments are used on a consistent basis in the classroom to monitor and adjust instruction in real time.
- A data driven environment also includes summative assessments throughout the year for benchmarking and to inform groupings and differentiated tasks when needed.
- Students who require additional accommodations are given more support through push-in programs utilizing paraprofessionals and other professionals and those who need challenged are provided opportunities to explore advanced topics.
- A strength of the program is the strong relationships formed between student and teachers.
- Multiage classroom structure allows a deeper understanding of student needs as the teacher is often with the same students for two to three years.
- Children are supported at every stage of their development as they build confidence and mastery and become leaders of their own learning and social development with the support of their peers and caring teachers.



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	9/9
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Reviewer Comments – Student Academic Achievement Standards

Strengths:

- Weekly data analysis and PD is a strong and ongoing part of the performance management plan.
- Various assessment tools are outlined.
- Staff are expected to pivot to meet the needs, based on data, of all students.
- Students will set SMART goals and complete projects throughout the school year.
- Interim benchmark summative assessments in reading and math are given every 6 weeks. These are reviewed on a consistent basis in order to monitor and adjust instruction.
- Formative classroom assessments are also analyzed on a consistent basis to ensure progress in small group instruction, individualized support and scaffolding strategies.
- The strength of Alturas Academy North is that a robust assessment plan is well established to meet the needs of students, inform policy and management decisions..., professional development activities and make adjustments to the school's curriculum.

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	9.5/10
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Reviewer Comments – Student Demand and Community/Local Support

Strengths:

- The Alturas Internationalschool (of which this new school is modeled after) has an extensive waitlist, thus showing community support for a new school using the same model.
- The community is growing.
- The community is interested in the IB education.
- Outreach efforts have already begun.
- Having a waitlist for a "like" school is 240 students, thus highlighting the demand of a school with the same instructional model.
- Surveys were conducted in order to rate interest and 77% of participants rated their interest as High (4 or 5).
- Outreach efforts by a Recruitment Committee are underway to gage and increase interest in the new school.
- A budget has been established for marketing and outreach to support enrollment goals.
- Partnerships have been formed within the community and with BYU-Idaho's Teacher Education Program.
- Parent and family outreach has begun in order to educate families and to participate in a Booster Club.

Weaknesses:

- No specifics are given on how they will reach under-served students and no mention of providing translation or other supports for those families who might need that.
- There are a lot of opportunities for the community and families to become involved in more traditional ways for a school start-up. One area that may be explored is how these entities can be part of decision making opportunities.



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

11/12

Reviewer Comments – Effectively Serving All Students

Strengths:

- Teacher training in deescalation and behavior modifications will be implemented to increase success for students who experience challenges in these areas.
- Supports are outlined for students who are English learners, and targeted academic supports will be provided.
- The structure of the educational program allows all students to have the opportunity to succeed by emphasizing "high engagement, clear expectations, and consistent routines."
- The school is poised to serve all students, no matter their needs.
- Training staff to implement strategies for success for each subgroup of students is established by hiring highly qualified teachers in the appropriate area such as special education and ELL.
- The school will provide a school lunch program, transportation with the purchase of three buses that also includes after school curricular opportunities.

Weaknesses:

- The behavioral system wasn't overly detailed, although all expectations are rooted in the IB Learner Profile.

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:

- Four day instructional weeks allow staff to engage in PD and collaboration time, which is a positive draw for potential employees.
- Recruitment strategies are discussed and seem appropriate.
- PD plans are outlined and show supportive intentions for providing quality and varied PD to staff.
- There is a plethora of recruitment activities from job fairs to hosting open visiting days for teachers interested in teaching at the school.
- One day a week is dedicated to professional development opportunities and teachers are paired with a mentor teacher to help assist in orientating new staff to school expectations, instructional strategies and how to structure lessons.
- Online videos from Alturas staff is available to new staff members as well as support from the Executive Director, Administrator and IB Coordinator.

Weaknesses:

- There was no mention of actively seeking and recruiting for diversity in the staff.
- Although this is not a weakness but something to consider – having those who are being considered to be hired teach a differentiated lesson as well as a question / answer session as part of the visiting day with staff, parents and students.



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	6.5/7
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Reviewer Comments – Financial Management and Monitoring Plan

Strengths:

- The facilities agreement was provided and gives details on the project.
- Philanthropic supports will provide funding prior to the start of school.
- The budget Narrative Table is clear, concise and aligned to goals.
- The included timeline facilitates accountability.
- Mitigation strategies are addressed in regard to enrollment fluctuations.

Weaknesses:

- Funding for at-risk student support strategies was not fully detailed.

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	10.5/12
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Reviewer Comments – Board Capacity and Governance Structure

Strengths:

- The current Alturas Board will also oversee this one.
- There are policies in place, a commitment to ongoing PD and assessments, and a proven track record of success.
- Assessment of areas of experience, expertise and needs are conducted on a regular basis.
- A comprehensive orientation program for new board members has been established along with a training handbook.
- Board expectations are clearly stated.
- There is a commitment that all board members participate in professional development opportunities that coincide with board responsibilities.
- There are clear expectations established between board expectations and those by the leadership team.

Weaknesses:

- Although it is mentioned that expertise in law is part of the make-up of the board, reading through board members bios, I am not aware the law is represented in any of the five board members of the school. It is not clear if law is represented in the overall board of all schools or not.
- Four out of five board members are parents. Is there opportunity for another outside community member to be involved?



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:

- Experienced leaders, both within the Alturas network and schools in general, give confidence in the abilities of selected administrators.
- The schools in the Alturas network have a track record of success.
- The Executive Director has overseen one start up school and one replication school with great success.
- The leadership team has a collaborative relationship that will prove successful with Alturas Academy North.

Weaknesses:

- There is a lack of detail provided on roles / responsibilities of administrative roles or evaluation processes.
- Not sure in regard to the IB Contract and what the annual cost is – in the budget it is under professional development yet I know as an Education Provider there is usually an annual fee. This was not clear to me.

Overall comments

Reviewer Comments

- This reviewer holds confidence in the Alturas school network to effectively launch another school.
- Some details were lacking in the application but overall a strong application.
- The two successful schools in the Alturas Network leave no doubt that Alturas Academy North will also be successful.
- The grant application was well written, thorough in nature and comprehensively aligned to rubric expectations.
- The collaborative nature of the board, the leadership team, staff, students and families is to be commended.
- Attached documents were clear and concise.



APPLICATION TOTAL POINTS		
Rubric Section	Points Awarded	Points Possible
A. Grant Project Goals	<u>10</u>	10
B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum	<u>20</u>	20
C. Teaching and Learning	<u>6</u>	6
D. Student Academic Achievement Standards	<u>9</u>	9
E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support	<u>9.5</u>	10
F. Effectively Serving All Students	<u>11</u>	12
G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan	<u>4</u>	4
H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan	<u>6.5</u>	7
I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure	<u>10.5</u>	12
J. School Leadership and Management	<u>8</u>	10
STANDARD POINTS AWARDED	<u>94.5</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>2</u>	2
Priority Points: 2 Additional Points may be awarded for schools that provide a high-quality high school program.	<u>0</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>0</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>0</u>	2
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED	<u>96.5</u>	110

