



BUILDING ON SUCCESS

IDAHO'S CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT

INTRODUCTORY WEBINAR

Idaho's Building on Success for Future Excellence

Federal Charter School Program Grant



BLUUM
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Contact Info: GrantsCSP@Bloom.org

csp.bloom.org



AGENDA

- Introduction & Federal Language
- CSP Overview
- Grant Logistics
- Eligibility & Definitions
- Timeline & Reminders



Idaho's Building on Success for Future Excellence

- This is a competitive public charter school grant program funded under the Congressional *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA, Public Law 114-95), which reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Act* of 1965 (ESEA).
- A public charter school is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution. Public charter schools are open to all students who apply and cannot charge tuition.
- A charter school receiving CSP funds must use a lottery if more students apply for admissions to the charter school than can be admitted. *Note: New for this CSP, awardees agree to not use a weighted lottery.*



CSP Federal Language

Authorized by Title V, part C, of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* of 1965, as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (20 U.S.C 7221-7221j), the federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) provides funding to State Entities (ALN 84.282A) with the purpose to expand opportunities for all students, particularly traditionally underserved students, to attend public charter schools and meet challenging State academic standards; provide financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of charter schools; increase the number of high-quality charter schools available to students across the United States; evaluate the impact of charter schools on student achievement, families, and communities; share best practices between charter schools and other public schools; encourage States to provide facilities support to charter schools; and support efforts to strengthen the charter school authorizing process.



CSP Federal Language (continued)

The CSP State Entities program provides financial assistance to State Entities to support charter schools that serve elementary and secondary school students in a given state. Under the program, recipient State Entities make subgrants to eligible applicants for the purpose of opening new public charter schools and replicating and expanding high-quality public charter schools. Grant funds may also be used to provide technical assistance to eligible applicants and authorized public chartering agencies in opening new charter schools and replicating and expanding high-quality charter schools, and to work with authorized public chartering agencies to improve authorizing quality, including developing capacity for, and conducting, fiscal oversight and auditing of charter schools. Public charter schools receiving subgrant funds under the CSP State Entities program also may serve students in early childhood education programs or postsecondary students.



CSP Overview

Idaho's consortium successfully secured the federal Charter Schools Program grant for 2023-2028 to **lead the expansion of high-quality public charter schools** across the state, in the amount of \$24,878,000, with a supplemental award of \$6,160,000 as of October 1, 2025, totaling **\$31,038,000**.

- **Bluum** – project lead and grant recipient
- **J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation (JKAF)** – critical nonprofit funding partner
- **Idaho State Board of Education/Idaho State Department of Education** – ultimate state quality control agents



CSP Overview

The Charter School Program (CSP) Grant to State Entities program funded under *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) enables sub-grants to:

- Open and prepare for the operation of new, high-quality **public charter schools**
- Replicate or expand high-quality **public charter schools**

Replicate means to open a new charter school, or a new campus of a high-quality charter school, based on the educational model of an existing high-quality charter school under an additional charter.

Expand means an increase in the student count of the existing school by more than 50 students or at least two grade levels over the course of the subgrant.



CSP Overview – Performance Measures

Idaho's Building on Success project has three objectives to carry out within Idaho:

- increase the number of quality Idaho charter school seats by no less than 5,900 students, especially for our most educationally disadvantaged and rural students through start- up, replication, or expansion;
- support quality authorizing in Idaho while disseminating and supporting best authorizer practices statewide; and
- evaluate and disseminate widely the successes and lessons of high-quality charter schools to impact the broader education system.





Grant Logistics

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Grant Logistics

Idaho's **\$31,038,000** Distribution:

- At least 90% of Idaho's federal CSP award will be utilized for competitive subgrants to eligible **public charter school** subgrantees.
- At least 7% will be utilized for state-level technical assistance activities and program evaluation/research, of which up to 3% is designated to supporting quality authorizing in Idaho.
- No more than 3% for administration.



Grant Logistics – Types of Subgrants

The funding for subgrants will be divided into three categories, based on applicant eligibility, to carry out one of the following eligible subgrant activities (*per ESEA § 4303(b)(1) requirements*) :

- a. open and prepare for the operation of **new charter schools**;
- b. open and prepare for the operation of **replicated high-quality charter schools**;
or
- c. **expand high-quality charter schools.**





Grant Logistics – Size and Duration

Idaho's Building on Success Charter Schools Program subgrants are designed to be for a period of **up to 18 months of planning** and not more than **24 consecutive months of implementation** activities following the opening of a new school, replication school, or expansion project (which is compliant with ESEA § 4303(d)(1)(B)).



Grant Logistics – Size and Duration

- CSP subgrants are awarded on a competitive basis through a rigorous third-party review process.
- There is no guarantee that submitting a proposal will result in funding, or funding at the requested level.
- Proposals that do not reach a minimum score overall will not be funded.
- CSP subgrants are subject to an annual renewal process. Satisfactory progress toward meeting the goals and objectives stipulated within the grant will be required in order to renew the grant for a second year.



Grant Logistics – Use Of Funds

Under the allowable activities described in the ESEA § 4303 (h), grant funds must be used for the following:

- 1) **Preparing teachers, school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel**, including through paying costs associated with –
 - a) **Providing research-based professional development** for teachers and other staff that includes national staff development standards; and
 - b) **Hiring and compensating, during the eligible applicant’s planning period** specified in the application for funds, one or more of the following: (i) Teachers. (ii) School Leaders. (iii) Specialized instructional support personnel.
 - c) **Travel costs** for school leaders, staff, and school board to attend conferences and training, or visiting other charter schools.
- 2) **Acquiring supplies, training, equipment (including technology), and educational materials** (including developing and acquiring instructional materials or aligning curriculum).



Grant Logistics – Use Of Funds *(continued)*

- 3) **Carrying out necessary renovations** to ensure that a new school building complies with applicable statutes and regulations, and minor facilities repairs (excluding construction).
- 4) Under ESEA § 4303(h)(4), providing **one-time startup costs** associated with **providing transportation** to students to and from the charter school.
- 5) Carrying out **community engagement activities**, which may include paying the cost of student and staff recruitment, and informing the community about the school, and coordinating outreach and research efforts to ensure there is a robust parent and community engagement plan.
- 6) Providing for other appropriate, **non-sustained costs** related to opening, replicating, or expanding high-quality charter schools when such costs cannot be met from other sources.



Grant Logistics – Restrictions

Unallowable Costs

- Facility construction, renovation or other capital improvement costs.
- Apparel.
- Lobbying.
- Student activities.
- Utilities and other facility operating expenses on or after the first day of school.
- Salaries or related fringe benefits after the school opens for essential staff.
- Funding cannot be redirected for other uses (e.g. traditional public schools that are not charters).

This list is not inclusive but is presented to show typical items that cannot be covered with grant funds.





Eligibility & Definitions

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Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be approved by an Idaho state sanctioned charter school authorizer as:

- **New Charter School** – approved and in their 1st year of operations (new LEA).
- **Replication of a High-Quality Charter School** – open a new charter school or campus based upon the educational model of an existing high-quality charter school, under an existing LEA.
- **Expansion of a High-Quality Charter School** – significantly increase enrollment or add one or more grades to a high-quality charter school.

*Eligible applicants **must** provide Bluum with an **approved charter school petition** from an approved Idaho authorizer that provides a description of the quality controls agreed to between the eligible applicant and the authorized public chartering agency.*



Eligible Applicants

Applicants must:

- Meet the federal definition of a “charter school.”
- Have applied for and received authorization to operate as a charter school.
- Seek to serve a representative student population.
- If **replication or expansion**, provide academic data showing at least three years of scores higher than the state averages for ELA and Math for growth and proficiency, as defined by ESSA.
- Virtual charter schools **are not** eligible to apply.
- Schools choosing to engage a for-profit or nonprofit educational service provider (ESP) or educational management organization (EMO) or charter management organization (CMO) must demonstrate that they and their governing boards are independent of the provider, and that all fees and agreements are fair and reasonable. The **ESP, EMO, or CMO does not qualify as an eligible applicant**, nor may it hold or manage a subgrant awarded to a school.





Federal Definition of a Charter School



All applicants must demonstrate they meet the federal definition of a “charter school” and “developer” in the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* of 1965, as amended by the *Every Student Succeeds Act*, sections 4310 (2) and 4310 (5), to be eligible for federal CSP funds.

Federal Definition of a Charter School



ESEA § 4310 (2) CHARTER SCHOOL—The term “charter school” means a public school that—

- A. in accordance with a specific State statute authorizing the granting of charters to schools, is exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and management of public schools, but not from any rules relating to the other requirements of this paragraph;
- B. is created by a developer as a public school, or is adapted by a developer from an existing public school, and is operated under public supervision and direction;
- C. operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives determined by the school’s developer and agreed to by the authorized public chartering agency;
- D. provides a program of elementary or secondary education, or both;
- E. is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations, and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;
- F. does not charge tuition;

Federal Definition of a Charter School (continued)



- G. complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.), section 444 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) (commonly referred to as the “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974”), and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- H. is a school to which parents choose to send their children, and that—
 - i. admits students on the basis of a lottery, consistent with section 4303(c)(3)(A), if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated; or
 - ii. in the case of a school that has an affiliated charter school (such as a school that is part of the same network of schools), automatically enrolls students who are enrolled in the immediate prior grade level of the affiliated charter school and, for any additional student openings or student openings created through regular attrition in student enrollment in the affiliated charter school and the enrolling school, admits students on the basis of a lottery as described in clause (i);



Federal Definition of a Charter School (continued)

- I. agrees to comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other elementary schools and secondary schools in the State, unless such State audit requirements are waived by the State;
- J. meets all applicable Federal, State, and local health and safety requirements;
- K. operates in accordance with State law;
- L. has a written performance contract with the authorized public chartering agency in the State that includes a description of how student performance will be measured in charter schools pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school; and
- M. may serve students in early childhood education programs or postsecondary students.

Defining High-Quality for Start Up Schools

- Evidence of a committed board of trustees that own the charter school process and have the demonstrated capacity to deliver for children and families.
- Identified quality instructional leader who is either experienced or proven in running a high-performing school and/or has received first-class charter specific training.
- Demonstrated ability to attract, recruit, retain and develop top teaching talent.
- Sustainable business plan.
- Well-conceived facility plan.
- Evidence of market-demand for the school.
- Innovative and effective learning model that meet the needs of disadvantaged and/or rural students.
- Defined and clear transportation plan for students.
- Evidence of community and parent support for the school.



Replication or Expansion of an Existing High-Quality Charter School

- Evidence of strong academic results, including at least three years of above state average growth and proficiency on ISAT.
- No significant issues identified by authorizer in areas of student safety, school finance, operational management, or statutory/regulatory compliance.
- Success in significantly increasing student achievement, including graduation rates, for all students and for each subgroup defined by ESSA (e.g. economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, Hispanic or Latino, and ELL).
- Good standing with authorizer and lenders.
- Evidence of a student waitlist.
- Evidence of strong and stable leadership and governance.
- Evidence of community and parent support for the school.





BUILDING ON SUCCESS

IDAHO'S CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Final Version Approved by USDOE

2025 Federal CSP Subgrant

APPLICATIONS DUE: [November 21st, 2025 5:00 PM MST]



PROGRAM QUESTIONS CONTACT:

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FISCAL/BUDGET QUESTIONS CONTACT:

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GRANT SIGNATORY CONTACT:

Terry Ryan, CEO | tryan@bluum.org

Interested in Applying?

Please download the
Request for Applications for Federal CSP Grant Support

csp.bluum.org/building-on-success-rfa



Details on the program,
online application instructions,
and the rubric used by peer
reviewers.



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