



BUILDING ON SUCCESS

IDAHO'S CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM GRANT



APPLICATION DETAILS

School Name: Idaho Agritech Academy	
Contact Person: Susan Lux	Contact Email: slux@idahoagritech.org
Application Type: Start-Up	Grant Budget:
Grades Served: 9 – 12	New Seats Created:
Total Averaged Score: 88.5	Priority Points Assigned: 6
Application Status: Funded	

RUBRIC

A. SMART Grant Project Goals <i>Identify</i> 2-4 SMART grant project goals and <i>justify</i> each goal in terms of its value in supporting the planning and implementation of your proposed school. <i>All grant spending, including future revisions to your budget, must fit clearly within one of your stated project goals.</i>		
TOTAL POINTS		10/10
Reviewer Comments – Grant Project Goals N/A		

B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum Fully <i>describe and justify</i> 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		16/20
Reviewer Comments - Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum - Curriculum justification is stronger in the budget narrative than in the main academic narrative. The narrative describes curriculum areas but does not consistently name the exact core materials. - The research base is broad and plausible but somewhat generic. It cites CTE, PBL, and work-based learning research, but does not show much evidence of prior implementation with a similar student demographic. - The application could better explain how the academic curriculum and CTE pathways are sequenced across grades 9–12. I only saw it in the budget narrative table. - There are risks when bundling core subject matter curriculum, entrepreneurship, CTE, and industry-focused partnership learning. I was surprised there was mention or benchmarking of any of these existing schools: Chicago High School for Agricultural Sciences, Norfolk County Agricultural High School, Ag Tech Academy, Metro Agriscience Futures Academy, Global Impact STEM Academy, and Florin High School Agriculture Technology Academy. - What technology and how it’ll be integrated is thin. - I’m a little surprised there’s no partnership secured with Battelle, Simplot, Lactalis, Chobani, etc. - I also had questions about how the students would thrive with the curriculum choices made. Illustrative Mathematics users frequently mention that the curriculum does not provide enough rote practice or spiraled review, meaning students may struggle to retain skills without supplementary homework. Steep Learning Curve parents state the discovery-based approach can be frustrating for students who lack foundational math skills or who are accustomed to traditional direct instruction. Is Studies Weekly appropriate for high school students? HMH Into Literature educators report that the reading selections fail to catch students' attention, and texts can be heavily dated. They also feel constrained by strict district pacing guides that force them to rush through dense, standards-heavy material. Units are organized by theme rather than specific skills, meaning students get introduced to many skills but struggle to master any single one.		



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**5/6****Reviewer Comments – Teaching and Learning**

- The section is conceptually strong but operationally general. It does not name the specific benchmark tools, assessment calendar, intervention menu, intervention minutes, or decision rules for movement among tiers.
- It does not fully explain how teachers will differentiate instruction in ELA/math versus CTE/agriculture labs.
- The narrative says data will be used regularly, but it does not provide a clear workflow from assessment to analysis to intervention assignment to progress monitoring to exit criteria.

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**

- It does not clearly define who owns each data review cycle beyond broad references to leadership, staff, PLCs, and the board.
- Academic performance goals are present, but the actual performance-management plan would benefit from a sample dashboard, calendar, or meeting protocol.
- Teacher performance monitoring is mentioned, but not deeply connected to coaching, evaluation cycles, or professional development triggers.

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**8.5/10****Reviewer Comments – Student Demand and Community/Local Support**

- There is strong community interest in IAA as evidenced by the interested list and number of followers on social media.
- Demand evidence is still relatively soft. Interest lists and social media followers are useful, but not as strong as applications, lottery data, signed intent forms, or waitlist numbers.
- The outreach strategy names many activities but does not specify timeline, target communities, languages, partner organizations, or expected conversion rates.
- The application claims it will serve a student population reflective of the region but does not provide a detailed demographic comparison to local districts.
- Parent engagement is described through advisory groups and feedback processes, but ongoing parent roles in school decision-making could be clearer.

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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**7/12****Reviewer Comments – Effectively Serving All Students**

- The needs of students who have accommodations as specified in 504 plans were not directly addressed.
- Supports for educationally disadvantaged students are mostly general; the narrative does not provide a detailed plan for low-income students, rural transportation barriers, internet access, or family engagement barriers.
- ELL services are thin. The application mentions language supports and accessible communication, but not staffing, screening, service delivery model, curriculum supports, or family-language access.
- SPED is compliant in concept, but the narrative would be stronger with staffing ratios, related-service providers, Child Find processes, IEP progress monitoring, and transition services.
- Transportation is strong conceptually, but contracted transportation and bus stop plans appear not yet finalized.

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**2.5/4****Reviewer Comments – Staffing and Professional Development Plan**

- The staffing structure itself is underdeveloped. Recruitment and selection strategies are broad; the plan does not explain how the school will recruit hard-to-fill CTE/agriculture/welding/STEM teachers. Retention is less developed than professional development. Because the model depends heavily on specialized agricultural/CTE instructors, staffing risk should be treated more explicitly.

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**5/7****Reviewer Comments – Financial Management and Monitoring Plan**

- IAA's Board Treasurer has a strong and proven record of public school finance in Idaho.
- Facility plan is a significant weakness. The school is still "actively pursuing" options, including modular facilities and a possible CWI site, rather than presenting a secured facility.
- The phrase "below 20 percent whenever feasible" is weaker than the rubric expectation that facility costs are feasible and below 20% of the annual budget.



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**

- IAA's Board of Directors are a diverse group of individuals with extensive backgrounds in education, agriculture, finance, real estate, business ownership and operations, and leadership positions in Idaho FAA.

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**9/10****Reviewer Comments – School Leadership and Management**

- IAA has identified several options for their facility plan as they continue to work with College of Western Idaho in developing a long-term land lease agreement.

Overall comments**Reviewer Comments**

- Idaho AgriTech Academy presents a compelling and timely school concept aligned to Idaho's agricultural workforce needs, with a clear emphasis on STEM, CTE, entrepreneurship, work-based learning, and college/career readiness. I've hoped to see this type of school take shape in Idaho for years now. Overall, the model has promise, but the application does not yet provide sufficient operational detail or risk mitigation to fully demonstrate readiness for successful implementation.



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>16</u>	20
C. Teaching and Learning	<u>5</u>	6
D. Student Academic Achievement Standards	<u>7.5</u>	9
E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support	<u>8.5</u>	10
F. Effectively Serving All Students	<u>7</u>	12
G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan	<u>2.5</u>	4
H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan	<u>5</u>	7
I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure	<u>12</u>	12
J. School Leadership and Management	<u>9</u>	10
STANDARD POINTS AWARDED	<u>82.5</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>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>0</u>	2
TOTAL POINTS AWARDED	<u>88.5</u>	110

