


Presentation to the Idaho Senate Education Committee

“Idaho’s Communities of Excellence Project”

**Expanding Opportunities through
Quality Charter Schools Program (CSP)
February 13, 2019**



What’s Bluum?

- Bluum is a Boise-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization founded in 2014 to seek out, vet and support innovative leaders and high-performing school models.
- We believe that school choice helps families, children and educators achieve more and do better.
- We share research and lessons learned widely in Idaho and beyond.
- We currently receive support from the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation, the New Schools Venture Fund, the Charter School Growth Fund, the Louis Calder Foundation and anonymous Idaho-based donors.

Bluum Partners and Albertson's New School Investments since 2014

Name & Location	Albertson Grant*	Grant Year	School Type	# of Seats
North Idaho STEM (Rathdrum)	\$450,000	2014	Public Charter	372
Sage International 1 (Boise)	\$750,000	2014	Public Charter	530
Upper Carmen (Salmon)	\$123,015	2015	Public Charter	45
Compass 1 (Meridian)	\$1,093,220	2015	Public Charter	478
GEM Innovation (Nampa, Meridian & Pocatello)	\$4,601,500	2015	Public Charter	1,786
Idaho Arts (Nampa)	\$1,546,230	2015	Public Charter	582
Alturas International (Idaho Falls)	\$1,000,000	2016	Public Charter	538
Grace Lutheran (Pocatello)	\$250,000	2016	Private	300
Treasure Valley Leadership (Nampa)	\$1,000,000	2016	Innovation	200
Pathways in Education (Nampa)	\$775,000	2016	Public Charter	300
St. Ignatius (Meridian)	\$1,200,000	2017	Private	488
Future Public School (Garden City)	\$1,980,000	2017	Public Charter	576
Elevate Academy (Caldwell)	\$1,250,000	2018	Public Charter	487
Forge International (Middleton)	\$1,601,000	2018	Public Charter	653
Compass (Meridian)	\$555,000	2018	Public Charter	224
Treasure Valley Classical Academy (Fruitland)	\$1,620,000	2018	Public Charter	510
TOTAL ALBERTSON GRANT SUPPORT:	\$19,794,965		TOTAL NEW SEATS:	8069
Total Average Amount Per New Seat: \$2,453				

*Albertson Grant Amounts include new school grants, planning grants and Fellowship grants

OVERVIEW OF FEDERAL CSP GRANTS PROGRAM

The CSP Grants to State Entities program is funded under the *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)*.

It enables sub-grants to:

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



O V E R V I E W

Idaho's Consortium

- **Bluum** – project lead and grant recipient.
- **J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation** – critical nonprofit funding partner.
- **Idaho State Board of Education** – ultimate state quality control agent.
- **Idaho Public Charter School Commission** – lead authorizer for new and expanded public charter schools.
- **Building Hope** – nationally-recognized facilities finance experts.

The 2018 CSP Competition

- \$400 million in funds with Idaho competing against 15 states: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Delaware, Guam, Indiana, Michigan, New York, Puerto Rico, Colorado, District of Columbia, Iowa, New Hampshire and North Carolina.
- Eight states won: Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Idaho, Delaware, Michigan, New York, North Carolina.
- **Idaho received \$17,111,111 over 5-years; \$8,939,900 in the first two years.**



O V E R V I E W

Idaho's Grant Rationale

- *Supply of school seats is tight.* Idaho and Nevada were the nation's fastest-growing states between July 2017 and July 2018. Both states' populations increased by about 2.1 percent in the last year alone. – "Our schools are overcrowded."
- *Idaho's charter sector is well established, capable of adding students, and high performing.* For over 20 years the number of schools and enrollment have steadily grown, on average adding two to three new schools a year.
- *Public support and demand for charter schools in Idaho is robust* – 3 out of 4 Idahoans favor charter schools described as "public schools that have a lot more control over their own budget, staff and curriculum, and are free from many existing regulations."

Who Supports Idaho's CSP Effort

- | | |
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| • Governor Butch Otter | • US Senator Mike Crapo |
| • Senate President Pro Tempore Brent Hill | • Congressman Mike Simpson |
| • House Speaker Scott Bedke | • Congressman Raul Labrador |
| • Senate Education Chair Dean Mortimer | • J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation |
| • House Education Chair Julie VanOrden | Executive Director Roger Quarles |
| • Representative Wendy Horman | • Idaho Farm Bureau President Bryan Searle |
| • Idaho State Board of Education Executive Director Matt Freeman | • Building Hope President Joe Bruno |
| • Idaho Public Charter School Commission Chairman Alan Reed | • Public Charter School Leaders across Idaho |
| | • Business and Philanthropic Leader |

P E R F O R M A N C E M E A S U R E S

Idaho's 2018 CSP Grant Objectives:

- Increase the number of quality charter school seats by 8,200 students, especially for our most educationally disadvantaged and rural students, through start-up, replication and expansion;
- Support the PCSC in expanding its quality authorizing efforts while disseminating and supporting best practice for other authorizers statewide; and
- Evaluate and disseminate widely the successes and lessons of high-quality charter schools to impact the broader education system.



P U T T I N G N E W G R O W T H I N T O H I S T O R I C A L C O N T E X T

Idaho's Growing Charter School Sector 1998-2018

Year	# of Schools	Enrollment	Year	# of Schools	Enrollment
1998	1	168	2009	31	11,959
1999	2	184	2010	36	14,611
2000	8	915	2011	40	16,048
2001	9	1,083	2012	43	17,808
2002	10	1,478	2013	44	18,782
2003	13	3,058	2014	47	19,367
2004	16	4,767	2015	48	19,700
2005	18	5,975	2016	48	20,340
2006	24	8,003	2017	50	21,351
2007	28	9,543	2018	52	22,000+
2008	30	10,768			



DEFINITIONS

Must be approved by a state-sanctioned charter school authorizer as:

- **New Charter School** – approved and in planning year or 1st-year of operations.
- **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.
- **Expansion of a High-Quality Charter School** – significantly increase enrollment or add one or more grades to a high-quality charter school.



DEFINITIONS FOR REPLICATION/EXPANSION

High-quality for schools currently in operation (emphasized by Communities of Excellence application)

- Evidence of strong academic results, including 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 subgroups 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.

DEFINITIONS FOR NEW SCHOOLS

High-quality for start-up schools (emphasized by Communities of Excellence application)

- 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.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

- Competitive Grant Process.
- Must have an approved charter petition from a state-sanctioned public charter school authorizer.
- Bluum will fund only high-quality plans.
- Applicants that submit proposals that are high-quality and meet the definitions for new, replication or expansion will be considered after a rigorous peer review process.



GRANT LOGISTICS

Idaho's \$17,111,111 Application Distribution

- At least 90 percent must be provided in competitive subgrants to eligible applicants.
- At least 7 percent must be utilized for state-level technical assistance activities and program evaluation/research. Three percent of this to the Idaho Public Charter School Commission for technical assistance and new school supports.
- No more than 3 percent for administration.



GRANT LOGISTICS (TENTATIVE)

Four Competitive subgrant competitions

- In March 2019 there will be up to 6 available subgrants for up to \$800,000 each (3 start-up, 2 replication & 1 expansion).
- In October 2019 there will be up to 6 available subgrants for up to \$800,000 each (2 start-up, 2 replication & 2 expansion).
- In October 2020 there will be up to 5 available subgrants for up to \$825,000 (3 start-up, 1 replication & 1 expansion).
- In October 2021 there will be up to 2 available subgrants for up to \$837,500 (1 start-up & 1 expansion).

Total subgrant period is up to 42 months, of which up to 18 months may be designated for planning and up to 24 months for implementation.



GRANT LOGISTICS

Subgrant allowable activities

- (a) Preparing teachers, school leaders, and specialized instructional support personnel, including through paying costs associated with –
- (i) Providing professional development; and (ii) Hiring and compensating, during the eligible applicant’s planning period specified in the application for funds, one or more of the following: (A) Teachers. (B) School Leaders. (C) Specialized instructional support personnel.
- (b) Acquiring supplies, training, equipment (including technology), and educational materials (including developing and acquiring instructional materials).
- (c) Carrying out necessary renovations to ensure that a new school building complies with applicable statutes and regulations, and minor facilities repairs (excluding construction).
- (d) Providing one-time startup costs associated with providing transportation to students to and from the charter school.
- (e) Carrying out community engagement activities, which may include paying the cost of student and staff recruitment.
- (f) 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

- No construction; funding cannot be used to build buildings.
- Our application is a “contract” with the USDOE. Bluum will be held accountable for what is written in the grant.
- Funding cannot be redirected for other uses (e.g. traditional public schools that are not charters).
- Virtual charter schools are not eligible to apply.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Seven percent of total funding must be utilized for state level activities.

Bluum's plan includes:

- Capacity building for new schools, educators and community members.
- Support for Idaho Public Charter School Commission and other authorizers.
- Develop innovative practices and instructional models to share across schools settings (e.g. International Baccalaureate, STEM, Career Technical).
- Focus groups with stakeholders and town hall style meetings for sharing findings.
- Research study to evaluate impact of charter schools on student achievement.
- Technical assistance workshops with state and national experts.

DATE	EVENTS & IMPORTANT DATES (Tentative)
March 4, 2019	Communication Blitz – share information per CSP opportunity statewide
March 14, 2019	Charter School Technical Assistance Training (statewide - online)
March 15, 2019	Open RFA 1st Competition (pending approval of US DoE)
March 15, 2019	Charter School Technical Assistance Training (Boise - in person)
March 18, 2019	Charter School Technical Assistance Training (Idaho Falls - in person)
March 18, 2019	Charter School Technical Assistance Training (Twin Falls - in person)
March 20, 2019	Charter School Technical Assistance Training (Coeur d'Alene - in person)
March 22, 2019	Charter School Technical Assistance Training (statewide - online)
April 12, 2019	RFA Close
April 26, 2019	Reviews finalized
May 3, 2019	Management Review Completed
May 10, 2019	Notice of Awards
May 13, 2019	Schedule Individual Completeness Check with Budget Training (2 hours, online, dates TBD)
May 20, 2019	Post Award Webinar/Email Guide to New Sub Recipients
May 31, 2019	\$ Begins to be Disbursed to Sub Recipients
September 30, 2019	Y1 Funds Commitment Date
Ongoing	Technical assistance as needed in real time and in ongoing fashion
October 1, 2019	Similar Cycle for 2nd Competition begins



Questions, comments or concerns

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