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TWO IDAHO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS EARN \$1.6 MILLION IN FEDERAL GRANTS *Alturas Preparatory Academy and Gem Prep: Meridian South Each Earn \$800,000 for startup*

Boise – (December 18, 2020) Idaho's *Communities of Excellence* consortium announced the award of \$1.6 million in grant funding from the Federal Charter Schools Program.

A panel of third-party reviewers evaluated applications and awarded grants of \$800,000 each to Alturas Preparatory Academy, and Gem Prep: Meridian South. These schools are free, public, and open to all students. Since 2018, Bluum has awarded \$13.58 million in subgrantee awards to 15 charter schools to create 7,008 new public school seats across the state of Idaho.

Idaho's *Communities of Excellence* CSP grant is a competitive public charter school grant program funded under the Congressional *Every Students Succeeds Act*, which reauthorized the *Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965* (ESEA). The *Communities of Excellence* consortium consists of Bluum, the Idaho Public Charter School Commission, the Idaho State Board of Education, the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation, and Building Hope.

The grant awards are aimed at increasing the number of high-quality public charter school options for families throughout Idaho. Idaho's charter schools have consistently delivered [strong academic outcomes for students](#); they regularly rank in Idaho's top ten for reading growth, and college readiness as measured by the SAT.

Alturas Preparatory Academy, which will open in Idaho Falls, will build upon the foundation laid by [Alturas International Academy](#), a K-8 public charter school.

The CSP funding will allow Alturas to expand the only International Baccalaureate (IB) program in eastern Idaho to serve grades 9-12. The expansion will add 602 new seats to the school, which will help Alturas bring their unique learning model to more families and students.



[Gem Prep: Meridian South](#) is a new public charter school set to open in August of 2022, making it the sixth school to join the Gem Prep family. In its first year, the school will serve students in grades K-5, expanding to serve grades K-12 by 2026.

Through personalization, and by leveraging best practices in technology, blended learning and online learning, Gem Prep: Meridian South (GPMS) will engage K-12 students in 21st-century work. Students develop competencies necessary for productive lives as citizens in a dynamic, increasingly competitive global world. Gem Prep students who graduate from the school often do so with at least 18 college credits, and some with an associate degree.

Summary of Idaho's *Communities of Excellence* Public Charter School Program Investments through December 2020

Award Date	School	Community	Amount	New Seats
May 2019	Gem Prep Meridian	Meridian	\$1,250,000	574
May 2019	Forge International	Middleton	\$1,250,000	653
May 2019	White Pine STEM	Ammon	\$800,000	354
May 2019	Future Public School	Garden City	\$1,250,000	576
May 2019	Compass Public Charter	Meridian	\$800,000	319
November 2019	Elevate Academy	Caldwell	\$1,250,000	487
November 2019	Fern Waters	Salmon	\$133,224	57
November 2019	Gem Prep Meridian North	Meridian	\$800,000	574
November 2019	Hayden Canyon	Hayden	\$800,000	434
November 2019	MOSAICS	Caldwell	\$800,000	540
November 2019	Treasure Valley C.A.	Fruitland	\$1,250,000	702
April 2020	Anser Public Charter School	Garden City	\$800,000	302
April 2020	Idaho Arts	Nampa	\$800,000	260
December 2020	Alturas Preparatory Academy	Idaho Falls	\$800,000	602
December 2020	Gem Prep Meridian South	Meridian	\$800,000	574
		Totals:	\$13,583,224	7008
		Per Seat Investment: \$1,938		

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About Charter Schools

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 admission to the charter school



than can be admitted. Idaho has 60 public charter schools and collectively they serve over 25,000 public school students.

About Bluum

Bluum is a nonprofit organization committed to ensuring Idaho's children reach their fullest potential by cultivating great leaders and innovative schools. For more information visit www.bluum.org.

About the Federal CSP Grant

Idaho received \$22 million in funding over five years. At least 90 percent of these dollars will flow to public charter school subgrantees for school start-up, school replication and school expansion. At least seven percent must be utilized for state-level technical assistance activities and program evaluation/research. No more than three percent for Bluum administration.