



**AWARDED APPLICATION PROJECT NARRATIVE**

**Compass Public Charter School**

## **Narrative (106 Points)**

### **A. Grant Project Goals**

The mission of Compass Public Charter School is to provide a safe and challenging learning community that prepares students for life long excellence through exceptional academics, character development, and the ability to define and defend a personal worldview.

Academics are a primary focus at Compass; however, it is only part of our overall objective.

Goals that align to our academic and culture beliefs:

#### **1. College and Career Readiness - Life Long Excellence**

- A. Compass students will show college readiness by participating in concurrent college credit opportunities. At least 80% of graduating seniors will have completed 17 or more concurrent college credits.
- B. Compass students will demonstrate lifelong excellence through enrollment in post-secondary opportunities. At least 85% of graduating seniors will enroll in a post-secondary program within one year of graduation.
- C. Students will meet the composite college ready benchmark on a college entrance exam.
  - a. 80% of students will meet the benchmark. Or,
  - b. A 10% increase in the number of students who met the college ready benchmark from the previous year.

#### **2. High School Preparedness - Exceptional Academics**

- A. All students will be prepared to transition from middle school to high school. One hundred percent (100%) of 8th grade students will develop a 4-year high school plan.

- B. 4th and 8th grade students will demonstrate proficiency on the mathematics and English Language Arts ISAT. At least 70% of 4th and 8th grade students will score proficient or advanced on the math and ELA ISAT.

### **3. Provide Access and Support to Underserved Student Populations**

Compass Public Charter School's English Learner, Gifted, Special Education, Foster, Economically Disadvantaged, Homeless, and At-Risk student populations, also known as Special Programs, will be provided equitable academic and behavioral services ensuring success in meeting state academic standards, as well as success within the Compass Model and culture.

Compass plans to meet all student needs and track their progress:

- A. Teachers will individualize or differentiate instruction within or outside core instruction, using evidence-based strategies, programs, products, and practices. At least 80% of students needing support will meet grade level proficiency on district assessments.
- B. Support and enrichment will be designed by collaborative teams to meet individual student needs in their specific skill and content area deficits. At least 70% of students needing support or enrichment will meet grade level proficiency on state assessments.
- C. Special Program populations will receive frequent progress monitoring. This provides fluid measures for parents and teachers to evaluate student academic and behavioral growth, in order to continue, change, or discontinue supports.
- D. Families of Special Program students will receive additional support and communication through our student services department, family and community events, parent workshops, and teacher communications. Parents will complete a student services survey to provide measurable annual feedback on program effectiveness.

#### **4. Culture**

6th-12th grade students will participate annually in the Compass School Climate Survey designed to measure the success of the Compass Model – our approach to educating the Whole Child. Questions relate to the learning environment, culture, discipline, and community.

- A. The Compass Model will provide a safe and positive school climate conducive for students to express their personal worldview. At least 80% of 4th through 12th grade students have an average score of 3.0 or higher on the Learning Environment questions in the Compass School Climate Survey
- B. The Compass Model will develop a sense of community and a culture of service learning. At least 80% of 4th through 12th grade students have an average score of 3.0 or higher on the Culture and Discipline questions in the Compass School Climate Survey

#### **B. Educational Philosophy, Instructional Practices, and Curriculum**

Compass has established a school philosophy, embraced by board members, teachers, administrators, and families which holds that every child is valued and every student will succeed at a high level both socially and academically. This philosophy is grounded in the belief that when there is low threat and content is highly challenging, accelerated learning takes place. Emphasis on building positive character and developing social emotional skills compliments our academic program. We refer to this focus area of the Compass Model as our “culture.”

As educators, we cannot only focus on teaching core subjects, we must consider the needs of the whole child. This begins with building relationships and getting to know students as individuals with unique needs. The Love and Logic™ Philosophy helps teachers maintain positive relationships with students while continuing to hold them accountable for their choices. A Whole Child belief statement that relates to our philosophy, reads, “Each child, in each school, in each

of our communities deserves to be healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. That's what a whole child approach to learning, teaching, and community engagement really is.” (The Whole Child, 2015). We believe this Model allows students to grow and develop into contributing members of society, which is one way to build strong communities and strengthen our future. In order to meet the instructional needs of the whole child philosophy, Compass strives to provide students with traditional academic subjects augmented with a variety of elective/specials courses such as foreign language, band and choir, physical education, and STEM. In addition to course variety, our school counselor creates character lessons, which are presented weekly to students in grades 6th-12th. Character education, is a crucial piece of our overall instruction related to the whole child and our Compass Model. Compass’ focus on character education for the development of interpersonal skills and an instructional approach includes collaboration, communication, problem-solving and creativity while using technology, preparing our students for success in the real world.

Furthermore, Compass has employed schoolwide standard-referenced grading practices.

Compass considers the state standards to be the “floor” of our instruction with intent to teach to the “ceiling.” Standards-referenced learning is being implemented in an effort to reach our goal of providing consistent, accurate, and meaningful feedback that supports student learning.

### **Educational Program**

A primary goal of Compass’ educational program is the development, deepening of student understanding, and transferred learning of important ideas and processes within, and across, disciplines. Compass utilizes the instructional framework of Understanding by Design™ (UbD™), an inquiry-based curriculum framework grounded in the work of McTighe and Wiggins (2005). UbD™ provides a planning process and structure to guide curriculum,

assessment, and instruction for all levels of learners. Our goal is to prepare students for the world beyond school, where they are able to apply and transfer their learning to future situations.

To support these goals, teachers weave together three instructional approaches:

- **Direct Instruction.** The teacher's primary goal is to help learners acquire basic information and skills through explicit instruction and modeling. Direct instructional strategies include lecture, multimedia presentations, convergent questioning, demonstration, modeling, guided practice, and feedback.
- **Facilitation.** Teachers help learners make meaning and understand important ideas and processes. Teachers guide learners in actively processing information and exploring complex problems through such instructional strategies as analogies, graphic organizers, divergent questioning and probing, simulations, problem-based learning, Socratic seminars, reciprocal teaching, and student self-assessment.
- **Coaching.** Teachers provide opportunities for students to transfer learning in increasingly complex situations. Teachers establish clear performance goals, provide models and just-in-time teaching, and give feedback (as personalized as possible).

As these categories make clear, there is rarely one best teaching approach. Compass is a school committed to teaching for understanding; therefore, we use all three pedagogies in differing degrees based on child development, grade level learning goals, and individual student needs. These K-12 teaching pedagogies ensure that the needs of students at various educational and developmental levels are met.

Additionally, Compass has embraced an instructional learning environment designed for the Next Generation Learner that includes a technology-rich educational setting. Compass has four computer labs, iPad carts for each grade level K-4, classroom Chromebooks for grades 4-9, and

one-to-one Chromebooks for grades 10-12. Each teacher has a projector, document camera, and laptop to use for instructional purposes.

We believe that when technology is embedded in daily instruction, students become more engaged and begin to take control over their own learning. Compass' instructional staff supports effective technology integration that includes digital communication by both students and teachers and is utilized for instructional delivery and assessment. The goal of a technology-rich learning environment is to assist students in developing creativity, innovation, soft skills - collaboration and communication skills, problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, and media and information literacy skills.

Academic knowledge is not enough to prepare our future workforce. Our program goals are based on this understanding, which is supported by a quote in the America's Promise Alliance article,

Schools, communities and corporations can no longer afford to focus on academic outcomes alone. Applied skills are essential to personal economic success and to the success of corporate America. By extension, they are essential to the future well-being of all Americans. View Source America's Promise Alliance, Under-equipped and underpaid: America's emerging workforce and the soft skills gap (2007).

With the knowledge that soft and applied skills are necessary for future success, apprenticeships are one of the approaches incorporated into the educational program. Students are required to complete apprenticeships in their junior and senior years. Additionally, students are academically challenged through concurrent college credit courses. These courses are not reserved for only a few, but rather, every high school student participates in college level curricula starting in 9th grade (The Benefits of Dual Enrollment | Inside Higher Ed. Web. 12 Jan. 2014).

## **Compass Model – Culture Program**

Compass offers opportunities for students to develop professional work skills through in-school and community-based service and apprenticeships. Setting high expectations early in life is an important step in order for youth to develop the skills to succeed in the future. Work-based learning is one way youth can identify interests, strengths, skills, and needs related to career development ("Information Brief." Publication of the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition. N.p., n.d. Web. 12 Jan. 2014).

Compass encourages all students to develop self-discipline and take responsibility for their own behavior through the implementation of Love and Logic's™ One School Rule. To support students in making good choices, we are intentional with regard to teaching character traits, problem solving, goal setting, decision making, and conflict resolution. "Schools with the highest levels of student achievement do not sidestep the issue of character education. They embrace it. These schools acknowledge that their success is due in large measure to their attention to guiding principles, through which they have been able to create the supportive learning environment that is essential for students to achieve high standards" ("Parent, Family, Community Involvement in Education." NEA Education Policy and Practice PB11 (2008): 1. Wwww.nea.org. Web. 12 Jan. 2014).

Compass also values parents as partners in their students' education. When schools, parents, families, and communities work together to support learning, students tend to earn higher grades, attend school more regularly, stay in school longer, and enroll in higher level programs.

## **C. Teaching and Learning**

Compass Public Charter School uses Understanding by Design® (UbD™) as a framework for improving student achievement. UbD™ is an ideal instructional framework for implementing a

Multi-tiered System of Support to meet student needs. Teachers utilize instructional standards to first identify what students need to know and be able to do. Performance based measures, that certify learning will be achieved, are created prior to instructional planning, as the summative assessment is the tool for measuring mastery learning. Curriculum is planned backward from long-term desired results, through a three-stage design process (Desired Results, Evidence, and Learning Plan). This process helps avoid common problems of treating the textbook as the curriculum rather than a resource and prevents activity-oriented teaching, in which no clear priorities and purposes are apparent.

The UbD™ framework offers a three-stage backward design process which includes: Stage 1: Identifying desired results (summative assessment), Stage 2: Determining assessment evidence (formative assessments). Formative assessments are implemented throughout the learning process as a tool, providing feedback to both the teacher and the student to drive and differentiate instruction. Stage 3: Planning learning experiences and instruction that will help students achieve learning for understanding. Furthermore, Compass employs a Multi-Tier System of Supports (MTSS) Director, skilled in the implementation of a data driven instructional approach. The MTSS Director supports teachers in evaluating student data and providing evidence-based practices. Compass utilizes the MTSS structure to develop K-12 systematic supports for students at academic and behavioral risk. The goal of MTSS is to continue supports until the student is determined to be academically proficient at their grade level and there is a reduction of behavior incidents. MTSS encompasses Response to Intervention (RtI) and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Embedded in our instructional practices of using the UbD™ framework and MTSS, Compass' cycle of innovation continues with ongoing professional development, based on teacher input

and needs, requirements from the state, school wide goals, and Compass' mission specific goals.

This professional development initiative is housed within the framework of Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and allows teachers to determine student needs and to differentiate instruction.

#### **D. Student Academic Achievement Standards**

Compass uses a variety of assessments to collect qualitative and quantitative information regarding student performance. This data is maintained in Unified classroom, our data management system which offers features to measure all student skill level outcomes. Compass' comprehensive assessment framework includes:

##### State Assessments

- Idaho Standards Achievement Test (or "ISAT") in grades 3-10,
- Istation's Indicators of Progress (Idaho Reading Indicator or "IRI") in grades K-3.
- Standards Achievement Test (or "SAT") in grades 11 & 12

##### District Assessments

- Measure of Progress Assessment (or "MAPs") in grades K-10
- Practice Standards Achievement Test (or "PSAT") in grades 9 & 10
- Portfolios of Student Work Samples in grades K-12
- End of Semester (or "EOSs") in grades 6-12

##### Classroom Assessments

- Weekly Formative in grades K-5
- Quarterly Interim in grades K-10
- End of Unit Summative in grades 6-12

## Progress Monitoring

- Monthly Istation in grades K-5
- Monthly Kahn in grades K-5
- MAP's in grades 6-10

Compass establishes a culture of data-driven instruction through our implementation of professional learning communities (PLCs). Students are released one hour early and teachers stay an additional hour in order to provide a two-hour weekly PLC time every Monday. There are four specific goals for professional learning communities to focus on throughout the year:

1. Collaborative Teams analyze student results after each assessment (formative, interim, and summative). Teams use this data to make instructional adjustments during the current instruction as well as lesson planning. This requires differentiated instruction, providing additional instruction to students not learning as well as enrichment for students who have reached proficiency.
2. Practice a variety of instructional strategies and implement various forms of assessment in order to engage students. Effective teachers every day, everywhere!
3. Use student voice to assess classroom/school climate (issues such as safety, connectivity, stress, and kindness and respect).
4. Focus on reflective practices (see Chapter 6, Transforming Schools with Laurel Hecker and Janelle Wills).

As the data suggests, this practice has served Compass well over the past five years. According to [EdTrends 2017-2018](#), Compass ranks among the top 5 Idaho schools for its academic performance. Listed below are some of the results.

CATEGORY	RANKING	SCORE
Idaho's Best Third Grade Reading Scores	2nd	92.3%
ELA ISAT (State Standardized Test)	3rd	77.9%
Math ISAT (State Standardized Test)	4th	75.9%
National College Entrance Exam: SAT- Math	3rd	595
National College Entrance Exam: SAT- Reading/Writing	5th	595

Academic achievement (based on ISAT) as compiled by the Idaho Public Charter School Commission and presented in the school's 2018 Annual Report:

- Academic Measure 1a- Compass exceeds the standard of math proficiency as compared to the state.
- Academic Measure 1b – Compass exceeds the standard of ELA proficiency as compared to the state.
- Academic Measure 2a- Compass exceeds the standard of math proficiency as compared to the district.
- Academic Measure 2b – Compass exceeds the standard of ELA proficiency as compared to the district.
- Academic Measure 3a – Compass meets the standard of criterion-referenced growth in math.
- Academic Measure 3b – Compass meets the standard of criterion-referenced growth in ELA.

IDAHO READING INDICATOR Percent of Students Who Met the Benchmark	2016-2017	2017-2018
Kindergarten	86%	96%
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	97%	91%

2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	95%	94%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	97%	97%

Compass students that successfully completed the Spring 2018 SAT scored 55% higher in meeting both ERW and Math benchmarks.

<b>PERCENT OF STUDENTS MEETING 2018 SAT BENCHMARK ACHIEVEMENT</b>			
	Met Both Benchmarks	Met Reading/Writing	Met Math
Idaho	31%	57%	33%
Compass	86%	93%	86%

Offering a concurrent college credit high school program, an additional measure of our progress, includes the number of college credits students are taking while enrolled at Compass.

Additionally, we use the National Clearinghouse data along with personal phone calls to track our alumni’s ongoing participation in college courses. The results for the past two years supports research, which indicates, students who participate in concurrent college credit programs in high school are more likely to enroll in postsecondary education following graduation (The Benefits of Dual Enrollment | Inside Higher Ed. Web. 12 Jan. 2014).. Additionally, Compass’ “go on” rate far exceeds the State of Idaho’s “go on” rate.

<b>Graduating Class</b>	<b>% That Completed 20 or More College Credits</b>	<b>Total Credits Earned by the Graduating Class</b>	<b>% That Enrolled in Post-secondary Education Following Graduation</b>
2018	90.5%	893	90%
2017	92.5%	845	85.7%

A thorough evaluation of the above named academic achievement is reviewed by stakeholders and administrators to determine schoolwide goals, program effectiveness, performance, and can be used to inform future policies and practices. See teacher performance assessment under section G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan.

### **E. Student Demand and Community/Local Support**

Compass Public Charter School is the only Kindergarten through high school public charter school in Ada County offering a true college preparatory education. We have quadrupled our enrollment since our inception in 2005 and developed a successful concurrent college credit (dual enrollment) focused high school program, offering over 50 concurrent college credits on our campus. In 2005, Compass enrolled 247 students and approximately 12 staff. Today our enrollment is 1,097 with 91 employed staff. Recently our performance certificate renewal was approved to raise our student cap from 1300 to 1600 students. With a large influx of students over the past five years, Compass has experienced significant growth in at-risk populations. As a result, we have qualified to operate a schoolwide Title I program to serve these students.

Additionally, we have employed an MTSS Director (as described in Section C of this grant application) who also serves as our Federal Programs Director. In spite of our growth and a more diverse student population, we continue to perform as one of the top 10 schools in Idaho.

We have consistently received 500+ new applicants for our annual lottery, despite enrollment increases, since 2012. For this reason, we haven't specifically marketed our program. We do provide informational meetings and tours to those interested in our school.

Application Data						
	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013
<b>K</b>	225	153	197	156	173	183
<b>1</b>	61	45	81	75	95	95
<b>2</b>	64	33	65	66	68	83
<b>3</b>	43	30	59	71	63	67
<b>4</b>	46	32	75	61	74	61
<b>5</b>	48	41	49	59	56	55
<b>6</b>	80	53	69	71	77	72
<b>7</b>	46	34	46	45	45	54
<b>8</b>	36	21	26	37	35	28
<b>9</b>	53	37	66	41	41	38
<b>10</b>	18	15	16	12	19	11
<b>11</b>	9	5	8	10	6	3
<b>12</b>	2	1	3	1	6	3
	731	500	760	705	758	753

### Capacity of other area schools

BY CHRISTINA LORDS AND MICHAEL KATZ

March 13, 2018

“Voters in the West Ada School District approved a \$95 million bond and approved a renewal of a \$14 million levy on Election Day.

Eric Exline, spokesman for the district, said exploding student enrollment growth with no signs of slowing down requires the district to run a bond measure nearly every two to three years. Four of the district’s five high school are at or over capacity, especially Rocky Mountain and Eagle high schools.”

This article which ran in The Idaho Statesman last March would indicate that the West Ada School District, the same district boundaries of Compass Public Charter School, is struggling to meet the needs of Meridian’s fast paced growth.

**Community Need** Each year, Compass purges the waitlist and requires a new lottery application for the upcoming school year. We have consistently received 600+ applicants for the past five years with a dip occurring only in one year (see table in Section A). Measurable growth in the Meridian area indicates a strong community need for additional schools. A specific

need/desire for the Compass Model is evidenced by our application and waitlist numbers:

<b>WAITLIST DATA</b>		
<b>Grade</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
K	61	118
1	43	56
2	16	0
3	16	0
4	33	0
5	55	0

6	17	76
7	39	53
8	6	45
9	29	63
10	0	27
11	0	0
12	0	0
Total	315	438

Parents recognize the importance of a challenging academic program throughout their child's education, not just in high school. Compass has a saying, “We teach Seniors in Kindergarten.”

This saying specifies the importance of a rigorous and academically aligned K-12 school.

Parent engagement is crucial to the success of our students and our program. In order to provide excellent academics and a culture conducive to learning, Compass has adopted a Parent-Student-School Compact, referred to as the Three-Legged Stool Philosophy. This philosophy has proven most effective due to the commitment to actively participate in frequent, two-way, and meaningful communication with students and families. The compact lists the responsibilities of the school, teachers, students, and parents, who work together as a team to achieve academic excellence.

Our dedication to working with families prompted the creation of our parent group, The Compass Parent Connections Committee. The committee partners with the school to help improve communication, teacher morale, and parent involvement. As a voice for our families, the committee provides feedback on school events, suggests agenda items, attends conferences, and assists in state monitoring. They have participated in policy development, required annual meetings, and information sharing.

## **F. Effectively Serving All Students**

On The Idaho State Department of Education’s school finder webpage, <https://idahoschools.org/>, Compass continues to receive school recognition as a “Top Performer” and “Goal Maker”. As Compass expands for families drawn to a top performing school, the lottery process for selecting students at random allows for students of all ability levels. Due to increased enrollment, there has been an increase in the need for specific student population focused programs.

Through Federal Program requirements and MTSS, Compass is able to identify students of all ability levels and provide data driven instruction and a system of support or enrichment to all students. MTSS allows for frequent data review, identification of strengths and deficits, allowing teachers to provide differentiation, enrichment, and/or support.

As previously mentioned, The MTSS Director offers a variety of supports to teachers and is the voice for students of special programs and their families. The director is also responsible for ensuring overall student growth, equity of services, family assistance; including support for financial hardships relating to academics and extracurricular activities. The director oversees paraprofessional support and study hall assistance to students who have or may be struggling due to disability, home life, or other disadvantages that may cause them to struggle with achieving the high expectations Compass has in place.

The MTSS Director provides training for staff, so they are equipped with the skills necessary to identify students who are in need of additional support in various special programs. Training also consists of understanding different student populations, best practices for supporting or enriching those populations, and documenting student progress. Each month, teachers are responsible for bringing student progress to PLCs for team review. Students that are determined to be at-risk or have disabilities are not segregated from the general student population, Compass believes in an

inclusive classroom, therefore these students receive the same quality education provided to all Compass students.

In addition to academic and behavior support, Compass participates in the USDA national school lunch program, thus providing breakfast and lunch availability to all students. Compass includes information about free and reduced lunch at registration, as well as collects data identifying even more students for special programs. Compass also provides contracted busing transportation within our school transportation boundaries. We are efficient in the use of our buses by creating a split schedule between elementary and secondary, thus reducing the number of buses necessary yet providing transportation for as many students as possible.

### **G. Staffing and Professional Development Plan**

The Compass program requires excellent educators to deliver effective implementation of the school's model. Currently, the ratio of students to certified teacher is 19.6:1. Overall staff numbers include: Administrators (4), Administrative Support (4), Pupil Personnel (3), Elementary Certified Teachers K-5 (28), Secondary Certified Teachers 6-12 (28), Classified Staff K-12 (23).

Since opening as a new school in 2005, Compass has developed and implemented steps to ensure recruitment and selection of outstanding staff and will continue to do so during its expansion as proposed in this project. Specifically, Compass uses:

- A *Candidate Profile* document posted on the school's website clarifying the characteristics, competencies and mindset necessary to succeed as a teacher at Compass.
- An interview process that includes observation time in the classroom and discussion about the applicant's personal educational philosophy, making sure that the Compass mission, vision, and philosophy is aligned with the applicant's professional goals. The

interview also includes discussion around the Candidate Profile document and offers applicants an opportunity to ask questions about the uniqueness of the Compass model.

- *A Mentoring and Teacher Induction Program* using master Compass teachers to serve as year-long mentors for teachers new to Compass. This program provides support and further understanding of instructional practices, expectations of specific grade level or subject area assignments, as well as cultural pieces, keeping the program aligned vertically and horizontally. This promotes a feeling of cohesiveness, opportunity for innovation, and continuous improvement within the classroom. This program will assist new teachers and teachers new to our district, further understanding of teaching techniques, procedures, requirements, and expectations of their specific grade level or subject area assignment.
- Compass provides support to all staff to ensure the educational model is implemented with fidelity across all grade levels by using a professional development plan that includes (1) regular ongoing Professional Learning Communities, (2) instructional coaching from colleagues, administrators, mentors, and student services staff, (3) support for Individual Personal Learning Plans (IPLPs), and (4) support and resources for MTSS programs. Additionally, Compass embraces an evaluation process that promotes excellence, innovation and continuous improvement within the classroom while encouraging personal growth. As stated in the school’s evaluation procedure manual, “Compass Public Charter School has a firm commitment to performance evaluation of school personnel, whatever their category and level, through the medium of a formalized system. The primary purpose of such evaluation is to assist personnel in professional development and in achieving the school’s goals... in a way that aligns with the Charlotte

Danielson Framework for teaching, Second Edition.” The school’s evaluation process follows and even exceeds all state and applicable national standards by giving frequent feedback to teachers, providing observation, requiring self-reflection, conferencing, acquiring performance evidence (artifacts), gathering parent and student input, reviewing student achievement data, and providing ongoing conferencing with administration.

## **H. Financial Management and Monitoring Plan**

### **Budgeting**

Compass staff works diligently to budget wisely. Budgets are created using historical data, state and federal guidelines, and project goals. Careful attention is also given to meeting the requirements of the property bonds. These requirements monitor general fund balances, cash on hand, and debt service coverage ratios.

Once a budget is adopted, the Board of Directors receives a progress report at their monthly meeting. The budgeted amount, the month-to-date amount, the year-to-date amount, the balance of the budgeted amount, the monthly budgeted percentage, and the year-to-date budgeted percentage all appear on the monthly report to the school board.

In March of each year, the business manager and school administrator review the entire budget, including federal programs, special state distributions, and grants. Once they complete the review, a modified budget is sent to the school board for approval. The school board receives the budget in May of each year then reviews it until the annual budget hearing in June. The finalized budget is sent to the Idaho State Department of Education in July. Other budget reviews are performed as needed to monitor progress and a working budget is kept within the budgeting software.

## Accounting

The accounting system is based on the IFARMS chart of accounts provided by the Idaho State Department of Education. Grants and special state distributions are assigned unique fund numbers and tracked in those funds. Revenue and expenditure entries are made within the double entry accounting system from 2M. The board approves all expenses at least monthly, usually weekly.

## Segregation of Duties

Because the business manager takes on so many responsibilities in a small school environment, Compass has adopted a plan for segregating financial responsibilities. Board members, administrators, and office staff all contribute to the financial strength of the school.

## Cash Management

At the beginning of each month, the business manager will request reimbursement for actual expenditures incurred during the previous month. Reimbursement requests will include the date range during which purchases were made, the amount of the reimbursement, a brief description of the purpose of the expenditures, and any other documentation required for a specific program. Care will be taken to obligate all funds on or between the beginning and ending dates of the grant project.

## Reporting

Annual audits are performed by an independent auditor. The audit report is approved by the board and submitted to the Idaho State Department of Education, the Idaho Public Charter School Commission, the J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Family Foundation, and the trustee of the property bonds. It is also published on the school website. An annual IFARMS report is submitted to the State Department of Education following the audit.

Quarterly financial reports are sent to the Idaho Public Charter School Commission and the trustee of the property bonds, as requested.

#### Records Management

As recommended by the State Department of Education, Compass maintains five years plus one audit year for their record retention schedule for all federal fiscal and programmatic records. A complete schedule of records retention is outlined in board policy 8100, as well as a description of records destruction.

Compass will provide the awarding agency, Inspectors General, the Comptroller General of the United States, and the pass-through entity, or any of their authorized representatives the right of access to any documents, papers, or other records of the LEA which are pertinent to the Federal award, in order to make audits, examinations, excerpts, and transcripts.

Student, family, and staff privacy will be protected by safeguarding any information that makes them personally identifiable.

#### Purchasing/Procurement

The requisition system is the preferred method of purchasing since it requires an approval signature. However, small reimbursements and credit card purchases may be made, with the approval of a building administrator or the charter administrator. Another advantage of the requisition system is that any purchase made with federal funding requires a signature showing allowability of the purchase has been reviewed.

The requisition process and the cost allowability guidelines are published in the school's Federal Programs Procedural Manual which is available from the business manager and is on file with the Idaho State Department of Education. This manual also covers the guidelines for receiving quotes and handling contracts. To safeguard the bidding/contracting process, Compass has a

conflict of interest policy in place. As purchases of equipment are made, they must be entered into the inventory record.

Compass Public Charter School has chosen to apply only direct costs to federal program grants, so there is no indirect cost rate in place.

#### Facilities Plan

Compass has purchased its K-5 facility through private bonds and is currently constructing a new facility for its 6-12 program using private funds. Additional information is provided in required uploaded documentation.

### **I. Board Capacity and Governance Structure**

Under its bylaws, Compass is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of not less than five nor more than seven directors. Three directors are appointed to a two year term of office; one director is appointed to an initial term of three years, and subsequent terms of two years; and three directors are elected to a two year term by majority vote of the stakeholders. New board members are recruited from either the stakeholder group or the community to provide expertise in areas of need. An application process and interview with the election committee assures that new candidates will support the schools long range goals, mission, and vision. Directors serve until their successors are appointed by the Board of Directors at the annual meeting of the school. At each annual meeting, the newly appointed and elected Board of Directors shall determine which Director shall serve in the following capacities: Chairman of the Board (herein referred to as the "Chairperson"), Vice Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. Any number of offices may be held by the same person, except that neither the Secretary nor the Treasurer may serve concurrently as the Chairman of the Board. Vacancies are filled by a majority vote of the

remaining directors, and a director so elected shall hold office until the expiration of the director's term of office. Board members serve without compensation.

Compass retains a Board Attorney to attend all open public meetings and assist the Board of Directors with following the Open Meeting Law.

Information on current board members, their bios, and their resumes have been uploaded, as requested.

### **J. School Leadership and Management**

Since its inception in 2005, Compass founders, Board of Directors, and administrative leaders have been intentional about the establishment and implementation of a strong leadership and staffing plan. As demonstrated by significant recent growth (the addition of approximately 200 students and 21 staff in 2014 and 150 more students and 5 more staff in 2018), the school demonstrates sufficient leadership and governance capability to implement and sustain the expansion project outlined in this application. In order to prepare for both past and future growth, Compass leadership provides ongoing opportunities for others to train and learn essential skills that ensure high-quality implementation and sustainability of the school. Substantial amounts of this training comes from imbedding future leaders into an immersion training experience on site for an extended period of time.

Current leadership and administrative roles at the school are well-defined, and comprehensively cover the broad set of responsibilities required by charter schools. Input for strengthening the Compass leadership system is gathered from both staff and stakeholders on an annual basis to meet the needs of a growing school program. To clearly define roles and help manage responsibilities, Compass has developed a comprehensive school leadership and management system which includes defined roles and responsibilities for these positions:

### Board of Directors, Administrators, Department Directors--

A RAPID Decision Making Model outlines administrative responsibilities for decisions around policy, culture, curriculum, practices, discipline, events, and day-to-day operations. Additionally, this model includes an organizational flow chart defining the appropriate relationship between the Board of Directors, Administration, Team Leaders, Department Chairs, and other non-administrative leadership roles.

### Department Chairs, Team Leads, Committee Heads--

Roles and responsibilities are outlined and defined in a Leadership Initiative For Teachers (LIFT) document. Some of these positions are appointed and some require an application so that many staff can have access to these opportunities.

### Counselors, Advisors, Administrative Support Staff

Roles and management responsibilities for positions including student services personnel and administrative support staff which are defined in the school's digital collection of staff materials. These roles align with all other leadership roles and responsibilities as outlined in the comprehensive school's leadership plan.

The Compass Board of Directors has adopted and follows a comprehensive process to evaluate the performance of school leadership, including identification of appropriate protocol for addressing performance concerns on an annual basis. Specifically this comprehensive process is outlined in Policy #5285 and Policy #5285P. Additionally, the Board has adopted and maintains a Code of Ethics Policy #5281 that defines and evaluates professional standards as identified by the state of Idaho. All Compass policies are available on the school's website.

The school has sufficiently identified any material operational challenges and has developed an adequate response for each. Specifically, we have a plan for the segregation of financial duties and have recently added the calculation of days cash on hand to help monitor financial progress. As demonstrated by letters/emails from staff to the Board of Directors and from annual surveys distributed to both staff and families, the school's leadership team demonstrates the ability to operate soundly, strategically and in ways that staff and stakeholders can understand and follow. The Board considers this data during its annual evaluation process of school leadership.

Current key leaders and founders include Kelly Trudeau, Charter Administrator, Susan Luke, Elementary Principal, and Cindy Stover, Business Manager and Clerk of the Board. These three individuals have successfully guided Compass in its growth from 240 students in 2005 to almost 1100 students in 2019. They have demonstrated their ability to successfully implement and sustain the expansion project as outlined in this application. This key leadership team can ensure sufficient expertise to manage charter school specific compliance, operations, finance, and legal matters. Together with other school leaders, this team has identified key risk factors which include (1) maintaining a safe culture, (2) maintaining a rigorous academic program K-12, and (3) working within a state budget that is fluid from year to year as approved by the state of Idaho.

However, as demonstrated over the past fourteen years of financial solvency and successful growth while maintaining a high performing school, Compass has skilled leadership and soundly-developed strategies to navigate and mitigate said risk factors.