



# UTAH STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Members, Utah State Board of Education

**FROM:** Martell Menlove, Ph.D.  
Chief Executive Officer

**DATE:** May 9, 2014

**ACTION:** Amendment request from The Ranches Academy

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### **Background:**

The Ranches Academy opened as a charter school in Eagle Mountain in fall 2004 and serves 364 students in grades K – 6. The school requests to open a satellite campus in Alpine School District in fall 2015 serving 364 students in K – 6. The State Charter School Board has reviewed and approved the school's revised request and forwards it to the State Board of Education for consideration.

### **Key Points:**

The Ranches Academy requests to modify its charter to open a satellite campus in Alpine School District in fall 2015 serving 364 students in K – 6, 728 total enrolments between both campuses. The executive summary report is included and additional information submitted by the school can be found at <http://schools.utah.gov/charterschools/State-Charter-School-Board/2014-Board-Meetings/April-2014.aspx>

### **Anticipated Action:**

The Law and Licensing Committee will consider approving The Ranches Academy governing board's request to open a satellite campus, City Center, as outlined in the amendment request. If approved by the Committee, the Board will consider approving the applications.

**Contact:** Brenda Hales, Deputy Superintendent, 801-538-7515  
Marlies Burns, Director of Charter Schools, 801-538-7871



Grades K-6 – 364 students total

c) The parent school's current configuration is: Grades K-6

d) Does the satellite school's grade configuration align with the local school district configuration? Yes

e) Percentage of minority students at parent school. How does the minority percentage compare with the local school district minority percentage? (Data from SY2014 Fall Enrollment Report)

The Ranches Academy – 14.8%

Alpine School District – 16.7%

f) Percentage of special education students at parent school. How does the special education percentage compare with the local school district special education percentage? (Data from SY2014 SCRAM Report)

The Ranches Academy – 14.0%

Alpine School District – 10.4%

g) additional information:

10. What makes this satellite school needed?

The Ranches Academy satellite school is both unique and needed in the Eagle Mountain vicinity. There are many aspects that separate The Ranches Academy from the surrounding schools such as: the number of students per classroom, having a highly qualified TA in each classroom for the majority of the day, differentiated instruction (ability grouping), and individualized attention. The small school setting allows teachers to be involved in every student's social, emotional, and academic growth. Students that graduate from The Ranches Academy are more than prepared for middle school.

The school is needed in this area as evidenced by our lottery priority list. Every year, the number of students applying to The Ranches Academy is well over 600. Typically there are only 8-20 seats available for the upcoming school year. Lakeview Academy, a neighboring K-9 charter school, also has a priority list close to 500.

Our unique education environment and academic focus allows our students to reach high standards across all curricular areas. The Ranches Academy's CRT proficiency scores consistently surpass the surrounding schools. It is our goal to offer this same level of education to the students at the satellite school.

The Ranches Academy is financially sound, academically strong, and has proven to be a successful charter school.

11. Is the schools' curriculum fully aligned with the Utah State Core Curriculum? If not, in what areas does the school deviate from the Core?

Yes

12. How will the school address the needs of students with disabilities who will need Special Education services?

The satellite school will address the needs of students with disabilities in the same manner as The Ranches Academy.

The Ranches Academy addresses the needs of students with disabilities who need Special Education services by following the State Board of Education *Special Education Rules* requirements. The Rules are in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) 2004 Regulations.

The Ranches Academy has in place policies and procedures to ensure that all students with disabilities enrolled in the LEA, regardless of the severity of their disability, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. The LEA has a practical method for determining which students are currently receiving needed special education and related services.

The Ranches Academy has policies and procedures in place for student referrals. Either a parent or the LEA may initiate a request for an initial evaluation to determine if a student is a student with a disability under Part B of the IDEA and the State Rules. The LEA will conduct a full and individual initial evaluation to determine if a student is a "student with a disability" under Part B of the IDEA and State Rules, and to determine the educational needs of the student.

The Ranches Academy ensures that all students identified as being a "student with a disability", from kindergarten through 6th grade who are enrolled in the school, have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services, as specified on an Individualized Education Program (IEP), designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.

In addition, the Ranches Academy serves all students in the least restrictive environment (LRE). To the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities are educated with students who are not disabled. Special classes, separate schooling, or other removal of students with disabilities from the regular educational environment occurs only if the nature or severity of the disability is such that education in regular classes with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily.

Students with disabilities receive specially designed instruction, which is adapted, as appropriate to the needs of an eligible student, the content, methodology, or delivery of instruction in order to:

1. Address the unique needs of the student that result from the student's disability.
2. Ensure access of the student to the general curriculum, so that he or she can meet the educational standards within the jurisdiction of the LEA that apply to all students.

The Ranches Academy employs highly qualified special education teachers who meet the highly qualified standards as described in the Utah State Board of Education NCLB (ESEA)-approved plan.

13. What is the financial position of the parent school?

In FY13, The Ranches Academy met both minimum financial standards and all but two recommended standards.

14. Who performs the financial accounting for the school (by name) and what are his/her credentials for accounting?

Matthew Lovell, charter school business manager experience since March 2010.

15. UCAS state academic information.

Total Points = 493/600  
Growth Points = 219/300  
Achievement = 274/300

16. What is the position of the local district regarding the amendment request? Who was the contact at the local district? When was the district provided a copy of the amendment request? (Attachment of letters, if necessary)

The school submitted this entire amendment request to Superintendent Vern Henshaw, Alpine School District in March 2014. No concerns from the district have been received to date.

17. What specific conditions or concerns did the SCSB place on the school in order to recommend full approval of this amendment?

None

18. Please provide a brief summary of other points the SCSB would like the Utah State Board of Education to consider in making the decision to approve the amendment.

The Ranches Academy is a high performing school. The State Charter School Board is confident it can implement its program with fidelity at a second location.

19. Votes of the SCSB in approving the charter school application:

(Listing of charter board members' vote)

Tim Beagley, Howard Headlee,  
Dean Brockbank, Bruce Davis,  
Kristin Elinkowski, Robert Enger

Recommended full approval

\_\_\_\_\_

Did not recommend approval

\_\_\_\_\_

Recommended alternate approval\*

\*Provide detailed explanation of alternate approval

The Utah State Charter School Board assures the accuracy of this report, supports this application, and submits it to the Utah State Board of Education for final approval.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, SCSB Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

The Utah State Board of Education considered this application on

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This application is: (  ) Approved (  ) Not Approved, for the following reasons:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, USBE Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date