

Applicant Assurances

Print this sheet, complete and sign the spaces at the bottom, scan, and attach to the electronic application.

The Board Chair must sign the following agreement prior to submitting the application package.

Should the agreement be signed by someone other than the current Board Chair, the application package will be deemed Administratively Incomplete.

School Name: Merit Preparatory Academy

The Applicant certifies all information contained in this application is complete and accurate, realizing that any misrepresentation could result in disqualification from the Amendment Request process or revocation after award.

The Applicant understands that applications must be uploaded into the UCAP system no later than the third Friday of the month preceding the month of the requested SCSB meeting and that incomplete applications will not be considered.

The Applicant acknowledges that all information presented in the application package, if approved, may become part of the charter to be used for accountability purposes throughout the term of the charter.

The Applicant acknowledges that the charter school governing board is subject to all Utah statutes regarding charter schools as well as all relevant federal, state and local laws, and requirements, and should comply such.

The Applicant acknowledges that the most current academic and compliance data will be provided to the SCSB for its consideration of the application.

The applicant acknowledges that prior to inclusion on the agenda, the SCSB recommends charter school governing boards schedule an appointment with SCSB staff to discuss the request and provide clarification to any staff questions.

Rachel Jay
Name of Board Chair

 11-12-25
Signature of Board Chair/Date

School Entity Information

Name of School: Merit Preparatory Academy

Name of School Administrator: Mike Condie

Contact Information for School: (801) 491-7600 / mike.condie@meritacademy.org

Below, list the names and positions of all current Board Members (officers, members, directors, partners), and their positions. Also list any other current charters in which they act as a corporate principal or charter representative. Add rows as necessary.

Name	Position	All Charter Affiliations
Rachel Jay	Board President	Merit Preparatory Academy
Jeri Mellor	Treasurer	Merit Preparatory Academy
David Jensen	Secretary	Merit Preparatory Academy
Ashley Watts	Member	Merit Preparatory Academy
Mary Howell	Member	Merit Preparatory Academy
Aaron Cook	Member	Merit Preparatory Academy
Heidi Bingham	Member	Merit Preparatory Academy

Contractual Charter Agreement Goals

Merit Preparatory Academy's contractual goals, as established in its Charter Agreement (Exhibit A), are as follows:

1. **Mission Alignment:**

Merit Preparatory Academy will prepare students to achieve their highest potential as citizens and leaders by developing the knowledge and skills required for higher education, community leadership, and social commitment.

2. **Academic and Performance Goals:**

Merit Preparatory Academy will perform at or above the median of the six closest comparable schools, as defined in the Charter Agreement. These schools include Springville Junior High, Springville High,

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American Leadership Academy, Dixon Middle, Provo High, and Freedom Preparatory Academy.

3. **Instructional Model:**

The school employs innovative learning strategies including Explicit Learning Techniques, Project-Based Learning, and other evidence-based instructional methods to foster deep understanding and real-world application.

4. **Mentoring and Character Development:**

Merit offers a unique, schoolwide mentoring program that supports students' academic growth, leadership, and life skills from grades 7–12, with yearly themes such as belonging, vision, determination, and service.

5. **Service and Citizenship:**

Merit emphasizes service as a core value, requiring students to complete biannual service logs and participate in an annual schoolwide legacy event to promote meaningful community engagement.

6. **Governance and Accountability:**

The governing board meets at least eight times annually and ensures the school meets all student engagement, financial, and governance standards defined by the Utah State Charter School Board Accountability Framework.

Status: Merit Preparatory Academy is currently achieving all contractual charter goals.

Alignment with Proposed Online Offerings: The addition of online course offerings will further support Merit's mission and goals by expanding access to high-quality, evidence-based instruction and providing greater flexibility for students. These offerings will enhance academic achievement, strengthen student engagement, and allow Merit to extend its personalized approach to learning while maintaining full alignment with the Charter Agreement.

Requested Amendment(s) to Charter

1. Complete as many sections as apply.
2. Provide requested details and supporting documentation as outlined for each amendment requested.

☐ ***Change to curricular or instructional emphasis, including educational program or methods of instruction.***

Changes to Charter (Exhibit A) Language

Current Language (6.e): “Does not offer distance or online education, as it is defined by the Utah State Board of Education.”

Proposed Language (6.e): “May provide educational services through in-person, blended, or online learning formats in accordance with all applicable Utah laws and Utah State Board of Education policy.”

Rationale and Educational Justification

Merit Preparatory Academy seeks approval to amend its charter to allow for online and blended educational delivery models that align with the school’s mission: *to provide an outstanding educational experience designed to instill excellence, build a love of learning and service, and create principled leaders who engage in real-world challenges and opportunities.*

This amendment does not represent a change in mission or educational philosophy. Rather, it is a natural extension of Merit's existing program, enabling the school to serve students more effectively and sustainably. The ability to provide high-quality online learning options will strengthen academic offerings, address physical space constraints, and extend the reach of Merit's mission to students throughout the state.

Ensuring Quality and Compliance

Merit is fully committed to meeting and exceeding all Utah State Board of Education standards for online learning. The school has consulted with the Statewide Online Education Program (SOEP) and will continue to collaborate closely to ensure compliance with state expectations and best practices.

All online courses will:

- Align fully with Utah Core Standards.
- Be delivered through Canvas, Merit's official Learning Management System (LMS).
- Provide active and frequent teacher contact, exceeding state minimum requirements to ensure strong virtual support and engagement.

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- Maintain measurable standards of active participation for every student.
- Utilize licensed, highly qualified Utah educators who have completed ethics training and background checks.
- Maintain a minimum 80% course completion rate to ensure program success and integrity.

Merit will also continue to serve all student populations—including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and those needing accommodations—consistent with IDEA, Section 504, and Title III requirements.

Instructional Model and Pedagogy

Students enrolled in Merit's online courses will continue to experience the distinctive features of a Merit education. Instruction will remain grounded in Project-Based Learning, peer-to-peer dialogue, experiential learning, and service learning—all central components of our current in-person program. These methods will be thoughtfully adapted for virtual delivery to ensure that students remain active participants in their learning and connected to our community.

Additionally, Merit's Quest Time mentoring program, a core element of our charter, emphasizes leadership, personal development, and 21st-century skills. Through this program, students are already being taught critical competencies in digital literacy, self-management, and effective online collaboration. Expanding into online and blended courses will build upon these existing efforts, helping students further develop the skills needed for success in higher education, the workforce, and civic life.

Experience and Capacity

Merit has a committed team with secondary, university, and state-level experience that has specifically worked in online course design, research, teaching, and program management. Our team brings a deep understanding of instructional quality, data integrity, and student engagement in virtual environments. Together, they will ensure that all online courses meet the same standards of rigor, personal attention, and joy of learning that define "The Merit Way."

Anticipated Benefits

The addition of online learning will enhance both educational access and quality. Students and families seeking greater flexibility—due to health needs, scheduling challenges, or personal learning preferences—will now have the option to remain within the Merit community rather than turning to outside providers. Furthermore, the introduction of online learning will foster teacher innovation, support in-person instruction through shared resources, and enable Merit to share its mission-centered education statewide.

In summary, our goals with this amendment are:

- To expand access to Merit's mission-driven education through flexible learning formats.

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- To preserve small class sizes and the personalized learning environment for in-person students.
- To strengthen the development of 21st-century skills through intentional online learning experiences.
- To provide flexible, equitable learning pathways for students statewide.
- To position Merit as a model of high-quality, mission-centered online education in Utah.

Merit Preparatory Academy respectfully requests approval of this amendment to allow the school to deliver educational services through in-person, blended, and online learning formats in compliance with all applicable laws and standards, thereby enhancing its ability to serve students and fulfill its founding mission.