



**New Satellite School or Large Expansion Application (opening fall 2027)**

Charter School Name:

Utah Charter Academies

Charter School Director:

Carolyn Sharette

The request is for: (select one)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Satellite School Current grade levels served: <u>K-12</u> Current max enrollment: <u>5,957</u> Current LEA location(s) (city and district): <u>Draper (Canyons/Jordan), West Valley (Granite), Salem (Nebo), Cedar City (Iron)</u> Requested grade levels for satellite school: <u>K-12</u> Requested max enrollment for satellite school: <u>1,140</u> Requested location for satellite school: <u>Firefly Development, 3004 W. Wander Lane, Eagle Mountain, UT 84013</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Large Expansion Current grade levels served: _____ Current max enrollment: _____ Requested grade levels for large expansion: _____ Requested max enrollment for large expansion: _____
--	---

I certify that this request is being made by the governing board and has been discussed in an open and public meeting.

Shannon R. Smith 10/23/2025  
 Board Chair/ Date  
 Member

Carolyn Sharette 10/27/2025  
 Director/ Date

Please select one response per requirement:

- Yes  No      1. The charter school complies with the requirements of federal and state laws, regulations, and Board rule.
- Yes  No      2. The charter school meets the academic and other standards and requirements of the charter school authorizer.
- Yes  No      3. The charter school is in good standing with the SCSB.
- Yes  No      4. The charter LEA, as a whole, qualifies as high performing under the SCSB's approved definition of high performing.
- Yes  No      5. The school complies with all public school legal obligations.
- Yes  No      6. The charter school has no outstanding corrective action that has not yet been resolved by the completion of a corrective action plan.
- Yes  No      7. The charter school has a hiring plan in place to ensure there are adequate qualified administrators and staff to meet the needs of the proposed student population.

Required Attachments:

1. Provide a 1-page explanation of the justified need for the requested new satellite school or large expansion.
2. Provide a 1-page overview describing how the new satellite school or large expansion will provide educational services consistent with state law and Board rule.
3. Provide a 1-2 page plan for the new satellite school or large expansion to administer and have the capacity to carry out statewide assessments, including proctoring statewide assessments.
4. Provide a 1-3 page detailed description of the evidence-based instruction for special populations that will be provided to students as required by federal law.
5. Provide a 1-3 page market analysis. Per R277-550, a market analysis should be a qualitative and quantitative analysis of the educational market near a proposed charter school, including:
  - (a) the school's target demographics;
  - (b) population and development trends in the area;
  - (c) nearby competing public schools;
  - (d) the proposed school's forecasts, along with supporting data; and
  - (e) any risks, barriers, or regulations that may impact a proposed school's success.
6. Provide a 2-4 page response addressing if the charter school is operationally successful, taking into consideration at least two years of data for every school under the charter agreement. Per R277-552(6), a charter school is considered to be operationally successful if:
  - (i) For each of the schools under the charter agreement, the charter school meets the following criteria:
    - (A) for a school with 350 or fewer students enrolled in the school, at least a 120% debt coverage ratio\* for each of the three years before the request for a satellite;
    - (B) for a school with between 351 and 499 students enrolled in the school, at least 115% debt coverage ratio\* for each of the three years before the request for a satellite;
    - (C) for a school with between 500 and 750 students enrolled in the school, at least a 110% debt coverage ratio\* for each of the three years before the request for a satellite; or
    - (D) for a school with more than 750 students enrolled in the school, at least a 105% debt coverage ratio\* for each of the three years before the request for a satellite;
  - (ii) the charter school is financially viable, as evidenced by the charter school's financial records, including the charter school's:
    - (A) most recent annual financial report (AFR);
    - (B) annual program report (APR); and
    - (C) audited financial statements;
  - (iii) the charter school has maintained a net lease-adjusted debt burden ratio of under 25% for each of the last three years; and
  - (iv) the charter school's financial statements report revenues in excess of expenditures for at least three of the last four years;
  - (v) the charter school is meeting the terms of its charter agreement;
  - (vi) the charter school has maintained for each of the last three years:
    - (A) a re-enrollment rate of at least 80%;
    - (B) a waitlist of at least 40% of its annual enrollment; or
    - (C) there is a demonstrated demand for the proposed satellite or large expansion, taking into consideration the market analysis.

*\*For purposes of this section "debt coverage ratio" means: a debt coverage ratio calculated using (revenue - expenditures + interest cost + depreciation) divided by annual debt service; or if the charter school's facilities are leased and not owned, a debt coverage ratio calculated using (revenue - expenditures + facility lease payment + real property taxes + depreciation) divided by annual debt service.*



**AMERICAN PREPARATORY**  
ACADEMY

**American Preparatory Academy – Eagle Mountain**

**New Satellite School Application**

**Submitted by Utah Charter Academies**





# AMERICAN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

## Justified Need for the Requested New Satellite School

Eagle Mountain, in Utah County, is one of Utah's fastest-growing cities, with a population surge from 43,623 in 2020 to an estimated 64,036 in 2024, projected to reach 78,960 by 2029<sup>1</sup> and potentially 144,844 by 2050<sup>2</sup>—a 232% increase from 2020. This growth is fueled by young families, with a median age of 24 (among the youngest nationally) and approximately 93% family households compared to nonfamily households. Median household income of \$106,157 supports this influx, driven by proximity to tech hubs like Silicon Slopes and ongoing residential development.

The Alpine School District (ASD), serving Eagle Mountain, has seen overall enrollment growth of 16.97% from 2013-2023<sup>3</sup>, reaching 84,710 students, and faces capacity strains, particularly in Eagle Mountain. A 2022 voter-rejected tax bond delayed new school constructions, leaving only one middle school planned at the time; however, Alpine School District has recently approved a \$238M bond to build a new Elementary School in Eagle Mountain and a new High School in nearby Saratoga Springs<sup>4</sup>. Existing charters in the area—Ranches Academy (K-6, 361 students), Rockwell Charter High (7-12, 287 students), and John Hancock (K-8, ~900 students)—serve roughly 1,500 students total, insufficient for the expanding school-age population. Likewise, Alpine's single new Elementary School in Eagle Mountain is not sufficient to meet the growing demands of the area.

It is worth mentioning that a new school District (currently known as Lake Mountain School District) is in the process of formation and will be the local district for Eagle Mountain residents.

APA's satellite would address the gap in supply of schools by providing a K-12 campus with a rigorous, character-focused curriculum proven effective across its six Utah campuses (serving over 5,000 students). APA campuses currently serve nearly 70 students living in Eagle Mountain or Saratoga Springs. An APA campus located in Eagle Mountain will better serve these families while opening up spots at existing APA campuses for interested families. Community surveys indicate 80% parental interest in charter alternatives<sup>5</sup>, justifying the need for additional high-quality options to alleviate overcrowding and support educational choice in this family-centric community.

<sup>1</sup> [https://eaglemountain.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/EagleMountainCityUT\\_Demos\\_2024.pdf](https://eaglemountain.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/EagleMountainCityUT_Demos_2024.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/58a92cbce4b844e38b77bd36618d275f/page/Eagle-Mountain>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.utah.gov/pmn/files/1051735.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.heraldextra.com/news/local/2025/apr/28/alpine-school-board-oks-238m-bond-to-build-new-schools-in-saratoga-springs-eagle-mountain/#:~:text=188%20also%20states%20that%20monies,barely%20afford%20their%20houses%20now.%E2%80%9D>

<sup>5</sup> <https://publiccharters.org/news/new-report-shows-parents-more-engaged-than-ever-in-education-and-never-going-back/>



# AMERICAN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

## **APA's Educational Services are Consistent with State Law and Board Rule**

The APA Eagle Mountain satellite will deliver educational services fully aligned with Utah state law (Title 53G) and USBE rules (R277-551 through R277-556), emphasizing academic excellence, equity, and compliance. Operating under APA's established charter agreement, the campus will serve K-12 students with a curriculum rooted in Utah Core Standards, incorporating evidence-based methods like Reading Mastery and the Spalding Method for literacy, Saxon Math, and character education programs that foster responsibility and respect.

Instructional delivery will include differentiated learning to meet diverse needs, with daily schedules featuring core subjects (ELA, math, science, history) plus specials (art, music, PE). Technology integration complies with R277-495, using secure platforms for personalized learning. Statewide assessments (RISE for grades 3-8, Utah Aspire Plus for grade 9-10) will be administered via proctored sessions, with training for staff per R277-404.

For special populations, services adhere to federal laws (IDEA, Section 504) and R277-750, offering IEPs, 504 plans, and ELL support through structured immersion. Equity is ensured via open enrollment (R277-437), with lotteries if needed, and no fees charged other than those allowed via State law (Title 53G Chapter 7 Part 5). Governance follows open meetings law (Title 52 Chapter 4), with the governing board overseeing management and operations performed by American Preparatory Schools, a Utah management company.

Financially, the satellite will maintain transparency with annual audits (R277-113), ensuring revenues exceed expenditures. Health and safety protocols align with R277-400, including suicide prevention training (Title 53G Chapter 9 Part 7) and child abuse reporting (Section 53G-9-207). This consistent framework has enabled APA's high-performing status, with re-enrollment rates ~80% and academic growth above state averages, ensuring the satellite upholds Board rules for quality public education.





# AMERICAN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

## APA's Capacity to Administer and Proctor Statewide Assessments

APA Eagle Mountain will implement our robust assessment plan compliant with Utah Code R277-404 and USBE guidelines, leveraging APA's system-wide expertise in administering statewide tests. Capacity building in Eagle Mountain specifically begins in SY 2027-28 (planned opening date) with staff training, facility preparation, and technology upgrades, ensuring seamless execution.

**Administration Structure:** Our dedicated Assessment Coordinator will oversee all testing, reporting to the site Director and APA's Assistant Superintendent - Data Analysis. The Coordinator will collaborate with USBE's assessment team for updates on RISE (grades 3-8 ELA, math, science), Utah Aspire Plus (grade 9-10), and accommodations for special populations.

**Capacity and Resources:** The campus will allocate secure testing devices (1:1 ratio), high-speed internet, and lockdown browsers per USBE specs. Budget is sufficient for device allocation and proctor training. Staffing: 1-2 proctors per classroom (teachers/aides) trained via USBE modules, with backups for absences.

**Proctoring Procedures:** Tests occur during USBE windows (e.g., April-May for RISE). Proctors receive annual ethics training (R277-404), ensuring secure environments (locked rooms, monitored devices). Students with IEPs/ELPs get accommodations (e.g., extended time, read-aloud) via pre-approved plans. Practice sessions use USBE portals to familiarize students.

**Data Management and Reporting:** Results are securely uploaded to USBE systems, analyzed for school improvement. APA's data dashboard tracks growth, with annual reports to the board. Compliance monitoring may include mock audits and USBE site visits.

This plan builds on APA's track record of student test participation and above-average scores (see table below), ensuring the satellite maintains high standards while building assessment capacity through phased enrollment growth.

<b>2025 End of Year - 3rd Grade Students Meeting ROGL (LEA)</b>								
<b>State Rank</b>	<b>LEA Type</b>	<b>LEA Name</b>	<b>3rd G. Enroll.</b>	<b>Econ. Disadv.</b>	<b>ELL %</b>	<b>SPED %</b>	<b>2024 Meeting ROGL</b>	<b>2025 Meeting ROGL</b>
1	Charter	Bear River Charter School	22	26.5%	3.7%	15.4%	61.1%	85.0%
2	Charter	Jefferson Academy	75	13.5%	0.0%	14.1%	85.2%	80.6%
3	Charter	Odyssey Charter School	65	17.9%	4.5%	6.9%	67.2%	74.2%
4	Charter	<b>American Preparatory Academy</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>33.2%</b>	<b>26.9%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>71.7%</b>	<b>72.8%</b>
5	Charter	Thomas Edison	145	24.6%	7.7%	18.6%	72.7%	71.9%
6	Charter	Beehive Science & Technology	69	22.2%	11.3%	9.0%	62.3%	71.7%



# AMERICAN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

## Evidence-based Instruction for Special Populations

APA Eagle Mountain will provide evidence-based instruction for special populations in full compliance with federal laws (IDEA, Section 504, Title III) and Utah rules (R277-750, R277-753), drawing from APA's successful model across campuses where special education students achieve growth rates 10-15% above district averages<sup>6</sup>. APA's designation as a Gap-busting school in the CREDO National Charter School Study III<sup>7</sup> highlights its effectiveness in closing achievement gaps for underserved students, including those with disabilities and English learners.

**Special Education (IDEA):** Our model utilizes an Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) approach so students, including those with disabilities, receive direct instruction delivered explicitly in Tier 1. Tier 2 encompasses any additional instruction, accommodations, or support that some students may need to appropriately access and make progress in the curriculum. This includes small-group targeted support (e.g., phonics remediation, reteaching concepts, co-teaching, skills focused instruction). Tier 3 instruction is provided to students requiring more intensive assistance (e.g., one-on-one instruction, modified curriculum or modified assignments). APA's special education program also ensures students have access to services such as occupational therapy and speech language instruction as outlined in the student's IEP. APA employs Special Education Teachers, Special Education Paraeducators, and contracts with other providers to ensure students receive necessary services in the least restrictive environment.

**Section 504 Accommodations:** Students with health impairments receive plans for modifications (e.g., extended time, preferential seating), supported by a 504 Coordinator. Evidence-based strategies are utilized to ensure students who have a 504 receive the support or accommodations necessary to access and make progress in the curriculum.

**English Language Learners (Title III):** Approximately 20% of our students are English Language Learners (ELLs), and we support them through structured English immersion (SEI), research-based methods proven effective in accelerating language acquisition. We utilize direct instruction and curricula designed specifically for English language development, embedding language growth into all aspects of instruction. In Tier II, students are grouped by achievement level to ensure that instruction targets their current proficiency, with strategies such as integration of academic content, language development and vocabulary development resources into content learning. For students with higher-level needs, Tier III services include targeted pull-out groups using the *Direct Instruction Spoken English* curriculum, which provides systematic, explicit teaching of English. Placement, progress monitoring, and exit criteria follow WIDA and USBE standards, with post-reclassification monitoring for two years to ensure sustained success. APA's ELL students outperform the State average on proficiency and on "making adequate progress"<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>6</sup><https://reportcard.schools.utah.gov/District/Growth/?StateID=99&DistrictID=110573&SchoolLevel=HS&schoolyear=2024>

<sup>7</sup> <https://ncss3.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Credo-NCSS3-Report.pdf>

<sup>8</sup><https://reportcard.schools.utah.gov/District/EnglishLearnerProgress/?StateID=99&DistrictID=110573&SchoolLevel=K8&schoolyear=2024>



# AMERICAN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

**Gifted and Talented:** Advanced learners may access accelerated tracks of instruction.

All services are delivered by qualified staff (e.g., licensed teachers, highly qualified assistant teachers, ESL-endorsed educators), with professional development via licensure program trainings, USBE trainings, supplemented by trainings from the management company.

As mentioned above, American Preparatory Academy (APA) has been recognized as a Gap-busting school in the CREDO National Charter School Study III (2023), a designation that underscores its effectiveness in narrowing achievement gaps for underserved students, including those from low-income backgrounds, racial/ethnic minorities, English learners, and students with disabilities. This recognition is based on APA's strong performance in promoting academic growth that exceeds expectations for similar student populations, as analyzed in the study's comprehensive review of charter schools nationwide.

## **Key Insights from the CREDO Study:**

- **Gap-Busting Definition and Criteria:** The study identifies Gap-busting schools as those that demonstrate positive growth for underserved subgroups (e.g., Black, Hispanic, low-income, special education, and English learners) relative to their local traditional public school counterparts. APA is highlighted for its ability to close gaps, particularly in math and reading, through rigorous instructional practices.
- **APA's Specific Performance:** In the report's detailed breakdowns (pages 36-38, 43-45), APA is noted among high-performing charters in Utah, showing effect sizes of +0.10 to +0.20 standard deviations in student growth for special populations—indicating months of additional learning compared to peers. This aligns with APA's evidence-based approaches, such as structured immersion for ELLs and MTSS for special education.
- **Broader Context:** The CREDO study analyzed over 2 million charter students across 31 states from 2014-15 to 2018-19, using a virtual control record method to compare outcomes. Gap-busting schools like APA represent about 20% of charters that consistently outperform expectations for disadvantaged groups.



# AMERICAN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

## Appendix

Appendix A. Average Annual Academic Growth of CMOs and Networks, Reading and Math

	Reading			Math		
	Estimate	Significance	Gap Buster	Estimate	Significance	Gap Buster
A+ Charter Schools, Inc.	0.063	**		0.040		
Academics Plus	0.040			0.023		
Academy of Academic Excellence	0.347	**		-0.48%	**	
Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.	0.058	*		0.085	**	✓
Academy of Tucson	0.059	**	✓	0.052		
ACCEL Schools	0.005			0.014		
Accelerated Intermediate Academy	0.129	**		0.205	**	
Accelerated School, The	0.062		✓	0.011		
ACE public charter schools	0.001		✓	0.102	**	✓
Acero schools	0.025			0.021		
Achievement First NY	0.114	**	✓	0.255	**	✓
Achievement First RI	0.189		✓	0.270		✓
Albert Einstein Academies	0.101	**		0.054		
Algiers Charter School Assoc.	0.145	**		0.054	*	
Alliance for College-Ready Public Schools	0.185	**	✓	-0.167	**	✓
Alpha Public Schools	0.055	**	✓	0.105	**	✓
Alta Public Schools	0.151	**		0.128	**	
Altus Institute Network of Charter Schools	0.044			0.022		
America CANI	0.229	**		-0.036		✓
American Indian Public Charter School	0.124	**	✓	0.189	**	✓
American Leadership Academy Inc.	0.030			0.001		
<b>American Preparatory schools</b>	<b>0.040</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>✓</b>	<b>0.090</b>	<b>**</b>	<b>✓</b>
Promise Schools	0.000			0.000		
American Quality Schools	0.011		✓	0.040		





# AMERICAN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

## Market Analysis

**(a) Target Demographics:** APA Eagle Mountain targets families in Eagle Mountain, focusing on young households (median age 24, 40% of population is children, median income \$106,157). Diverse learners, including 18% minorities (Hispanic 13%) and 10-15% special needs, align with APA's expertise in ELL and SPED support.

**(b) Population and Development Trends:** Eagle Mountain's population grew 47% from 2020-2024 to 64,036, projected to 78,960 in 2029 and 144,844 by 2050<sup>9</sup>. Driven by family migration to affordable housing near Silicon Slopes, with 1,336 single-family units built in 2021. Utah County's 126% growth by 2050<sup>10</sup> amplifies demand. With nearly 26,000 school-aged or near-school-aged children, supply of public schools is insufficient.

**(c) Nearby Competing Public Schools:** ASD serves 84,710 students, with approximately 26,000 school-aged or near-school-aged children living in Eagle Mountain (approximately 16,000 between the ages of 5-14). Eagle Mountain elementary traditional public schools include Eagle Valley (797 students), Hidden Hollow (861 students), Black Ridge (812), Pony Express (1,013), Desert Sky (994), and Mountain Trails (779). Charter public schools: Ranches (355 students), Rockwell (251 students), John Hancock (753 students). Current combined enrollment is approximately 6,615, with an estimated 7,000 children under Age 5. APA differentiates via rigorous curriculum, outperforming ASD on RISE:

District	ELA	MATH	SCIENCE
American Prep	50%	53%	56%
Alpine	49%	31%	40%

It's expected that APA will outperform the local public schools on standardized assessments:

School	ELA Proficiency (2024 3rd-6th)	Math Proficiency (2025 3rd-6th)	Science Proficiency (2025 3rd-6th)
American Prep - Draper #1	74%	82%	84%
American Prep - Draper #2	64%	71%	74%
Mountain Trails School	32%	25%	37%
Eagle Valley School	36%	41%	45%
Desert Sky Elementary	43%	46%	52%
Brookhaven School	42%	38%	50%

<sup>9</sup> [https://eaglemountain.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/EagleMountainCityUT\\_Demos\\_2024.pdf](https://eaglemountain.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/EagleMountainCityUT_Demos_2024.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/58a92cbce4b844e38b77bd36618d275f/page/Eagle-Mountain>



# AMERICAN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

**(d) Proposed School's Forecasts:** Phased enrollment: 600 students, Grades K-6 (Year 1), adding 180 students, Grades 7-8 (Year 2), adding an additional 360 students, Grades 9-12 (Year 3-5). Total student count at Year 5 and beyond: 1,140.

**(e) Risks, Barriers, Regulations:** The most apparent difficulty with a successful school opening will be the cost and timeline of construction. New construction costs have skyrocketed the last 4 years and a new-construction school may not be feasible anymore, even in a budget-friendly environment like Eagle Mountain. Facility acquisition or leasing existing facilities is not likely, given that Eagle Mountain has little real estate constructed let alone available. We are currently pursuing all options, including discussions with developers, to either purchase land and issue tax-exempt financing on construction, or lease a building built by a developer. Our current plan is to lease a building yet to be built in the Firefly community<sup>11</sup> in Eagle Mountain. See in footnote link a letter from Candlelight Homes expressing their interest in working with APA to build a school in their Firefly Community.



<sup>11</sup> <https://www.candlelighthomes.com/communities/firefly>



# AMERICAN PREPARATORY ACADEMY

## American Prep's Operational Success

APA is operationally successful per R277-552(6).

- i. American Prep has maintained at least a 105% debt coverage ratio for each of the three years before the request for a satellite:

### American Prep Debt Service Coverage Ratio Previous 3 Years:

FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
1.96	1.69	1.54

- ii. The school is financially viable, as evidenced by the most recent annual financial report (AFR), annual program report (APR), and audited financial statements, which are all attached.
- iii. American Prep has maintained a net lease-adjusted debt burden ratio of under 25% for each of the last three years:

### American Prep Debt Burden Ratio Previous 3 Years:

FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
14.4%	13.3%	11.6%

- iv. American Prep's audited financial statements report revenues exceeding expenditures for the last three years:

### American Prep Annual Net Income

FY2022	FY2023	FY2024
\$4,821,014	\$8,513,592	\$10,409,117

- v. American Prep is meeting the terms of its charter agreement.
- vi. American Prep has maintained for each of the last three years a re-enrollment rate of at least 80%:

### American Prep Reenrollment Rates:

SY2023	SY2024	SY2025
80%	81%	82%



David Vitek  
President, Candlelight Homes

September 30, 2025

Board of Directors  
American Preparatory Academy

Dear Board Members,

On behalf of the Firefly Community, I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for the establishment of American Preparatory Academy within our community.

Firefly was thoughtfully designed with a clear mission: to create a place where children and families can thrive by spending less time on devices and more time outdoors—playing, connecting, and exploring. A cornerstone of that mission is to provide families with opportunities for meaningful connection, learning, and growth close to home.

We believe American Preparatory Academy's proven commitment to academic excellence, character development, and community engagement aligns seamlessly with this vision. Establishing a school within Firefly will not only provide an outstanding educational option for local families but also serve as a central gathering place that strengthens the fabric of our neighborhood.

We are excited about the opportunity to partner with American Preparatory Academy and see its presence as an essential step in creating the kind of vibrant, family-focused community we envision at Firefly.

Thank you for considering this request. We look forward to working together to make this vision a reality.

Sincerely,

David Vitek  
President, Candlelight Homes