

**ENSIGN**

**LEADERSHIP ACADEMY**

*K-12 TUITION-FREE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL  
WITH A QUALITY PRE-K PROGRAM*

---

**CSP GRANT APPLICATION  
PROJECT NARRATIVE**

---

**MARCH 3, 2026  
ENSIGN LEADERSHIP ACADEMY K-12**

<b>1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b> .....	3
<b>2. EDUCATIONAL MODEL</b> .....	4
PROJECT DESIGN .....	4
Math Growth Strategy .....	4
English Language Arts Growth Strategy.....	4
Growth Plan and Enrollment Strategy.....	5
Professional Development.....	6
Feasibility and Sustainability.....	7
PROJECT GOALS.....	8
SMART Goals .....	8
Mission-Aligned Goals and Student Outcomes.....	8
Goal Tracking.....	9
PLAN FOR SERVING STUDENT NEEDS .....	10
Monitoring and Improving Academic Outcome Strategies.....	10
Identifying Underserved and Educationally Disadvantaged Students .....	11
Equitable and Inclusive Practices .....	12
FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT.....	13
Family Engagement and Broader Community Support .....	13
Meaningful Participation in Decision-Making.....	13
Pre-Planning Engagement with Families and Community Stakeholders.....	14
Diversity in Recruitment, Admissions, Enrollment, and Retention Processes.....	14
COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND DEMAND.....	15
Projected Enrollment, Needs Analysis, & Methodology .....	15
TRANSPORTATION PLAN.....	17
<b>3. LOTTERY PROCESS</b> .....	18
Non-Discrimination .....	18
Eligibility .....	18
Enrollment Process .....	19
Lottery Procedures.....	19
<b>4. GOVERNANCE, AUTONOMY, AND PROJECT ADMINISTRATION</b> .....	21
Board Member Information.....	21

Project Manager and Support Team .....	22
Education Management Organization (EMO) Partnership .....	22
Alignment with ESEA § 4310(2) .....	23
Quality Control and Accountability .....	23
<b>5. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>6. COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES .....</b>	<b>24</b>
Innovative Charter Model.....	24
High-Quality High School Programs .....	25
Educator and Community-Centered Schools .....	25

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ensign Leadership Academy (ELA) is a K-12, all-inclusive public charter school, opening Fall 2027, in the Saratoga Springs-Westlake/Eagle Mountain-Cedar Valley area within the Alpine School District. 1,535 students are anticipated to enroll in year 1 and up to a maximum of 2,500 students by year 5. ELA's mission, "In support of the family, provide the best educational experience to as many students as possible in a moral and wholesome environment," and vision to "Learn, Lead, Change the World!" will be realized through a rigorous classical education and RAISE Leadership development model, with robust elective and extra-curricular offerings, aimed to develop the whole child. Featured in this model is the Core Knowledge Sequence for grades K-5 in ELA, Social Studies, and Science; Eureka Math<sup>2</sup>; and for grades 6-12, SAVVAS curriculum with mandatory courses in financial literacy and entrepreneurship. Elective and extracurricular offerings will include theatre, art, music, dance, technology, foreign language, physical education, and a full athletics program. This model is essential to successfully achieving the following goals:

1. By the end of Year 3, 75% of students in grades 3-8 will score at or above proficiency in English Language Arts and Math on Utah's RISE assessments, or with performance at least 5% higher than the Alpine District growth average.
2. By the end of Year 2, 90% of students will demonstrate growth in leadership skills by earning a 'proficient' or higher rating on the RAISE Leadership rubric.
3. By the time of graduation, 100% of high school students will complete a financial literacy and entrepreneurship course with at least 80% achieving proficiency.
4. By the end of Year 1, at least 70% of families will participate in one or more school-sponsored events, with participation increasing to 85% by Year 3.
5. Maintain at least a 90% student retention rate year over year.

Consistent with ESEA § 4310(2), ELA will operate as a public school that is exempt from select state and local rules that inhibit flexibility, while fully accountable for academic results and fiscal management. This affords ELA the autonomy to make independent decisions regarding curriculum and instruction design, staffing, scheduling, parent engagement, and professional development, as well as proactively respond to staff and student needs as they may arise.

ELA's nonprofit governing board has vast experience in education policy, curriculum design, charter school innovation, and performance accountability. Held accountable to the Utah State Charter School Board (SCSB), the Board oversees strategic planning, academic programming, and all legal and fiduciary compliance matters. Though contracted with Charter One, an experienced Education Management Organization (EMO), the Board retains absolute authority over all aspects of governance. Subsequently, the Board will conduct regular self-evaluations, audits, and KPI data reviews to ensure ongoing alignment to ELA's mission and vision, and progress toward meeting goals.

## **EDUCATIONAL MODEL**

### **PROJECT DESIGN**

Ensign Leadership Academy (ELA) will provide a rigorous, classical education for students in grades K-12. ELA's model features the Core Knowledge Sequence for grades K-5 in English Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science; Eureka Math<sup>2</sup> (Singapore Math strategies); and SAVVAS curriculum for grades 6-12, all of which are aligned with the Utah Core Standards. In addition to the core curriculum, completion of courses in financial literacy and entrepreneurship are required for all students at the high school level. The RAISE leadership curriculum (Respect, Accountability, Integrity, Service, Excellence) is another fundamental aspect of the ELA model and is integrated daily across all subjects and grade levels to foster leadership and character development. Altogether, ELA expects this model to be instrumental in leading students to exceeding state averages in core-subject growth and proficiency.

#### **Math Growth Strategy**

With the goal of exceeding state growth and proficiency averages, ELA's annual median growth in Math will be improved through the implementation of Singapore Math strategies, specifically the Eureka Math<sup>2</sup> curriculum, and a robust assessment strategy to include universal screeners, formative and summative assessments, and state-mandated tests such as RISE and ACT. Data from these assessments will be analyzed by PLCs and used to adjust curriculum and instruction as needed, ensuring continuous improvement.

Additionally, ELA will implement an MTSS process to address the needs of students who are educationally disadvantaged or require additional support. The three-tiered MTSS process includes universal interventions (Tier 1), targeted small-group support (Tier 2), and intensive individualized interventions (Tier 3). Teachers will use assessment data to identify students who may need this additional support and then develop targeted, tier-specific interventions, which may include the use of digital intervention tools such as IXL.

#### **English Language Arts Growth Strategy**

The strategy for annual median growth improvement to exceed the state average in English Language Arts begins with implementation of the core English curriculum. In grades K-5, Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) provides structured literacy instruction in phonics, vocabulary, and comprehension. In grades 6-12, SAVVAS's advanced tasks include exposure to diverse texts, argumentative writing, and Socratic inquiry. Weekly RAISE Leadership lessons also embed literacy skills. As with math, data from universal screeners, formative and summative assessments, and state-mandated tests will be analyzed by teachers during regular PLC meetings.

Assessment data will be used to inform curriculum and instructional adjustments as needed. The MTSS process will also be used to identify specific supports for struggling and educationally disadvantaged students which may include, but will not be limited to, tier-specific interventions, differentiated instruction, and providing supplemental resources and additional language supports through intervention curriculum such as Heggerty, 95% Group, and IXL. These supports ensure students have continuous access to the core curriculum, thus influencing academic growth.

**Growth Plan and Enrollment Strategy**

ELA expects to open in Fall 2027 with a total of 1,535 students (140 students per grade level in K-8, 120 students in grade 9, 80 students in grade 10, 50 students in grade 11, and 25 students in grade 12). As the table below demonstrates, students-per-grade-level will grow over the next four years resulting in a total enrollment of 2,500 by year 5.

Year	K	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup>	6 <sup>th</sup>	7 <sup>th</sup>	8 <sup>th</sup>	9 <sup>th</sup>	10 <sup>th</sup>	11 <sup>th</sup>	12 <sup>th</sup>
1	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	120	80	50	25
2	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	90	60
3	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	150	90
4	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	160	160
5	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	180	180	180	160

The ELA board understands how vital marketing is to the survival of a school and has partnered with Charter One and their in-house marketing team. To meet an enrollment goal of 1,535 students in year 1 ELA’s marketing strategy includes a combination of social media and traditional marketing efforts. This includes targeted advertising on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram, as well as Google Ads. Traditional media placements will be featured through community publications, billboards, and other media outlets. In addition, ELA plans to advance community ties and engagement by hosting open houses, campus tours, information sessions, and a variety of local events designed to foster meaningful relationships with community members. ELA has and will continue to implement a full-scale marketing plan that will reach a wide variety of demographics in the target area and surrounding communities. This marketing plan includes the following strategies:

**Digital Marketing:** Google Search and display advertising, paid social media, Over the Top (OTT) streaming media services, and website search engine optimization. Digital marketing enables ELA to geo-target particular areas and demographics.

**Traditional Marketing:** Direct mailers, flyer drop distribution, trifolds, word of mouth, and family and friends of the Board and local employees.

**Community Event Marketing:** Attend planned community events (i.e. city festivals, kid/family events, information sessions, and welcome events) to engage with the community and promote that the school plans to provide an exceptional learning environment for families and to assist students in their educational goals.

ELA will use a variety of communication strategies to inform potential families and community members about the school and keep them engaged. Individuals who sign up for ELA's interest list will receive consistent communication via email, social media, and website postings regarding progress updates for campus construction and enrollment information. Once a family enrolls in the school, they will begin receiving monthly newsletters from campus administration and teachers that pertain directly to the opening/start of school.

**Phase 1: Pre-Approval Marketing:** ELA will market interest through in person information sessions in Provo and nearby areas, via door-to-door canvassing, interest list communication, and social media platforms. Materials will be available in bilingual formats.

**Phase 2: Post-Approval Marketing:** ELA will continue marketing and outreach efforts to families on our interest list as well as continued information sessions for new families. We will also promote ELA via local media and events and other community family-oriented events.

**Phase 3: Ongoing Monitoring and Adjustment:** ELA will track progress monthly, adjusting with targeted ads on Facebook/Google and referrals. If our anticipated enrollment is below 90% by June 2027, we will intensify efforts in high-growth areas to ensure we reach our anticipated enrollment projections.

### **Professional Development**

ELA will provide a robust professional development agenda during both the planning and implementation phases. During the planning phase, administrators and teachers will receive intensive training on, but not limited to, the Core Knowledge Sequence, Eureka Math<sup>2</sup>, CKLA, SAVVAS, direct instruction strategies, MTSS implementation, Policies and Procedures, HIPAA, FERPA, Child Find, IEP/504 Implementation, English Language Learner Support, School Environment and Culture, and the RAISE Leadership curriculum. This intensive training ensures a shared understanding of instructional and operational expectations as well as school culture expectations.

During the implementation phase, professional development will be ongoing, on-the-job, and data driven. Teachers will participate in regular coaching opportunities, classroom observations, and feedback sessions led by school administration and Charter One leadership. Dedicated time will be scheduled for PLC participation in which teachers and administration will analyze student data, refine instructional practices, and ensure fidelity to ELA's instructional model.

Additional training throughout the year will further address serving special populations including students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and gifted students.

### **Feasibility and Sustainability**

Successfully opening a school on ELA's scale is a responsibility the board takes with great seriousness. Although ambitious in size, this project is both feasible and sustainable. ELA's enrollment model is one of scalable growth supported by responsible fiscal management and strategic use of resources to ensure consistent educational quality while maintaining financial health as enrollment increases.

State and federal per-pupil funding will serve as ELA's primary, long-term revenue source. In addition to possible CSP funds, ELA will seek Title I and Title III funding to support additional academic and English Language Learner support resources. Grant funds (if awarded) and start-up resources will be allocated to one-time investments such as curriculum acquisition, instructional technology, and professional development. Grant funds will not be allocated to ongoing operational costs.

ELA's enrollment projections are conservatively aligned to facility capacity and staffing ratios to prevent overstaffing. As student enrollment grows, staffing will continue to conservatively follow while being mindful of maintaining a reasonable student-to-teacher ratio. Teachers and administrators will participate in a robust professional development program which is expected to strengthen teachers' professional capacity and thus limit turnover.

Resources will be allocated in a manner that is guided by student outcomes and operational effectiveness. Instructional materials, technology, and support services will be selected based on proof of effectiveness, durability, and cost-effectiveness. By partnering with Charter One, an Educational Management Organization (EMO), key operational services are centralized: academic and curriculum support, human resources, finance, facilities management, marketing, IT, etc., passing on significant cost savings through economies of scale. With this structure in place, ELA will be able to allocate a greater proportion of resources directly to our day-to-day instructional program and student and teacher support.

Additionally, the ELA board includes a diverse group of professionals with various backgrounds and experience in education policy, curriculum design, charter school innovation, and performance accountability. Our vice chair, State Senator Howard Stephenson for example, has long been recognized as a national policy expert in public education. As such, he has traveled much of the nation, speaking on dual language immersion, school choice, and the power of computer assisted educational software to empower personalized learning. With Senator Stephenson's extensive professional and personal relationships, the ELA board was formed with individuals whose skill sets cover the key areas of a newly formed charter school. These include operations, facilities, academics & instruction, accounting, education policy and education

technology. The ELA board has been referred to as similar to "The Avengers" due to its high levels of experience and gravitas. The board is very committed to ensuring that ELA meets all its obligations and grows into one of the finest public schools in Utah.

## **PROJECT GOALS**

### **SMART Goals**

The following goals align with Ensign Leadership Academy's (ELA) mission to support families by providing the best educational experience to as many students as possible in a moral and wholesome environment, and its vision to Learn. Lead. Change the World! These goals reflect the unique elements of ELA's design.

#### **1. Academic Achievement-Core Knowledge and Classical Education**

By the end of Year 3, 75% of students in grades 3-8 will score at or above proficiency in English Language Arts and Math on Utah's RISE assessments with performance at least 5% higher than the Alpine District average focused on growth data.

#### **2. Leadership and Character Development-RAISE Principles**

By the end of Year 2, 90% of students will demonstrate growth in leadership skills by earning a 'proficient' or higher rating on the RAISE Leadership Rubric (Respect, Accountability, Integrity, Service, Excellence), administered each semester.

#### **3. College and Career Readiness-Financial Literacy and Entrepreneurship**

By the time of graduation, 100% of high school students will complete a financial literacy course and an entrepreneurship course, with at least 80% achieving proficiency as measured by course assessments and project-based business plan presentations.

#### **4. Family and Community Engagement-Whole Child Focus**

By the end of Year 1, at least 70% of families will participate in one or more school sponsored community events (e.g., open houses, service projects, parent workshops), with participation increasing to 85% by Year 3.

#### **5. Student Well-Being and Retention**

Maintain at least a 90% student retention rate year-to-year by fostering a safe, wholesome environment through RAISE values, small-group interventions, and extracurricular programs.

### **Mission-Aligned Goals and Student Outcomes**

The goals above connect directly to the unique elements of ELA and ensure long-term positive student outcomes. Those elements include implementation of the Core Knowledge curriculum, leadership development through RAISE, entrepreneurship and financial literacy, family

partnership, and a moral and wholesome school culture. ELA's mission-aligned goals are both rigorous and realistic, reflecting the Board's commitment to high expectations while maintaining an understanding of what is realistically achievable for students and families.

ELA's academic goal of achieving 75% proficiency in English Language Arts and Math by Year 3, with performance at least 5% higher than the local district, is ambitious yet grounded in proven instructional models and benchmarking against comparable districts with a focus on academic growth. It is an important goal as it considers the growth of all students from all subgroups including those who may be educationally or economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners, or Gifted & Talented.

Leadership and character development goals through the RAISE framework are designed to be measurable and achievable, promoting personal growth that extends beyond academics.

College and career readiness goals, including 100% completion of financial literacy and entrepreneurship coursework, prepare students with essential life skills that are both practical and rigorous.

Family and community engagement targets emphasize strong partnerships that are vital to student success, while retention goals demonstrate a focus on creating a safe, supportive environment that fosters long-term stability.

These goals illustrate the Board's dedication to ensuring that students not only meet high academic standards but also develop the leadership, character, and practical skills necessary to thrive in a changing world. They are intentionally designed to push students and staff toward excellence while remaining realistic and attainable within the first three years of the school's operation and beyond.

### **Goal Tracking**

ELA is committed to closely monitoring academic performance, operational effectiveness, and student outcomes of all students in all subgroups (e.g. Students with disabilities, economically and educationally disadvantaged, English Language Learners, etc.). This will be supported using a central data management platform that tracks enrollment, attendance, assessment results, special education status, English Language Learner identification, and free and reduced lunch eligibility.

ELA will collect multiple forms of student performance data throughout the year using assessments such as RISE, ASPIRE, ACT, and benchmark assessments. Classroom-level formative and summative assessments and instructional software will provide the most up-to-date performance data, enabling teachers to adjust instruction and develop interventions quickly and as often as needed.

Academic proficiency and growth data will be disaggregated by student subgroups (e.g., students with disabilities, English Language Learners, economically disadvantaged students, etc.) and analyzed during bi-weekly Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings. During PLC meetings, teachers and administrators will review classroom and grade-level data, assess instructional effectiveness, and plan responsive strategies. The disaggregated data will inform the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process as well as determine whether specific adjustments need to be made to the curriculum, instruction, staffing, or professional development, to better meet students' needs.

Additionally on a monthly basis, campus directors will provide a report to the Board which will include important data such as academic growth, enrollment and attendance trends, curriculum implementation effectiveness, etc. On a quarterly and annual basis, the Board will review Key Performance Indicator (KPI) progress in the areas of student achievement, financial health, compliance, and Charter One performance, and may include site visits and third-party audits. If KPI targets are not met, the Board will pursue corrective action plans and monitor progress through follow-up reviews, ensuring accountability and continuous improvement.

Altogether, these progress monitoring methods and accountability reviews ensure that the school and all students are making adequate progress toward the school's goals and grade-level standards.

## **PLAN FOR SERVING STUDENT NEEDS**

### ***Monitoring and Improving Academic Outcome Strategies***

ELA will monitor and improve academic outcomes by collecting student performance data through state assessments (e.g., RISE, ASPIRE, ACT), curricular formative and summative assessments, and technology-supported benchmark tools (STAR). These student performance measurement tools are aligned to Utah's Core Standards and graduation requirements and are part of ELA's accountability framework.

In the classroom, ELA's direct instruction model is supplemented by instructional software and resources from the Utah Educational Network (UEN). The tools within UEN enable teachers to collect and disaggregate data that will then inform targeted intervention and differentiated instruction decisions for students. It will also inform the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) process as well as determine whether other adjustments need to be made to the curriculum, staffing, or professional development to better meet students' needs. The monitoring of student progress and instructional effectiveness will be an ongoing process.

As previously stated, ELA will implement an MTSS process to address the needs of students in disadvantaged subgroups (e.g., Students with disabilities, educationally and economically disadvantaged, English Language Learners (ELLs), etc.) or other students who may require

additional support. The three-tiered MTSS process includes universal interventions (Tier 1), targeted small-group support (Tier 2), and intensive individualized interventions (Tier 3). Supported by the MTSS framework, teachers will use data from formative and summative assessments to tailor instruction and develop intervention and enrichment support for all students, which may include the use of intervention resources such as Heggerty, 95% Group, or IXL.

Teachers and administrators will participate in bi-weekly Professional Learning Community meetings (PLCs) to review instructional data, evaluate teaching practices, and ensure fidelity to the curriculum and RAISE Leadership values. At the campus leadership level, Directors will report to the Board on specific training, instruction, and academic performance metrics during monthly Board meetings. These reports will give the Board detailed insight into student growth and achievement, campus leadership, and overall performance ensuring progress toward the school's goals are being made and academic expectations are being met. If the Board determines that adequate progress is not being made, it will pursue corrective action as needed.

### **Identifying Underserved and Educationally Disadvantaged Students**

ELA will identify underserved, educationally disadvantaged, and economically disadvantaged students through systematic data collection. Student enrollment, attendance, assessment results, and demographic information will be tracked using the school's Data Management Interface (DMI). This system, which includes the enrollment application portal, will be used to identify and monitor students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELLs), Gifted & Talented students, disadvantaged subgroups, and students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

Students with disabilities will be identified and served in full compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). ELA has adopted the Utah State Board of Education special education rules verbatim and will implement all required procedures from evaluation and eligibility to service delivery procedures. Special education services will be supported by qualified school personnel and contracted specialists as needed.

ELLs will be identified using the state-approved WIDA Screener followed by regular progress monitoring. Students' English proficiency will continue to be assessed annually until the student is deemed proficient and qualified to be exited from receiving ELL services. ELA's data management system will allow the school to track language proficiency and academic performance to ensure students are receiving appropriate instructional support and are making progress.

Economically disadvantaged students will be identified through eligibility data tied to federal programs such as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and monitored to ensure consistent access to resources and services. At the beginning of each school year, families will be encouraged to complete an NSLP application to receive an eligibility determination for free or

reduced lunch. Also, through compliance with the McKinney-Vento Act and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), during the enrollment process the school will screen families for homelessness and foster care status. Should a student be homeless or in foster care, the school will remove barriers that might otherwise impede the student's ability to enroll immediately such as providing a birth certificate.

The MTSS process is also an important aspect of identifying students who are underserved or educationally disadvantaged. MTSS is a three-tiered approach that includes universal interventions (Tier 1), targeted small-group support (Tier 2), and intensive individualized interventions (Tier 3). Teachers will use a variety of assessment data to tailor instruction and inform instructional and intervention decisions.

Students who demonstrate advanced academic skills or aptitude based on their learner profile may be referred for further consideration to the Gifted and Talented (GT) program. The learner profile for any students referred to the GT program for consideration will be reviewed by the Director, the student's teacher(s), and the GT teacher. If a student meets the criteria for testing, parent permission for further evaluation will be obtained. Students who demonstrate intellectual aptitude at the 97% percentile or higher will be considered Intellectually Gifted and will receive targeted enrichment services (grades K-6) or enrollment in Honors (grades 7-12), Advanced Placement (grades 9-12), or Concurrent Enrollment courses (grades 9-12).

### **Equitable and Inclusive Practices**

Equitable and inclusive academic practices will be ensured through the implementation of the MTSS framework. This framework is specifically designed to provide targeted academic and behavioral interventions for students based on demonstrated need. The MTSS framework supports the early identification of struggling students and provides increasing levels of support (Tier 1: Universal interventions, Tier 2: Targeted small-group support, Tier 3: Intensive individualized interventions) while maintaining alignment with the curriculum and Utah state standards.

Ongoing professional development will also play a role in understanding and implementing equitable and inclusive practices. Teachers and staff will receive regular professional development to ensure fidelity of the direct instruction model, effective use of instructional technology, alignment with RAISE Leadership values, and MTSS tiered instruction. PLCs will also be used to discuss and strengthen instructional practices, support differentiated instruction implementation, and ensure that all students have access to rigorous academic content regardless of subgroup, status, or need.

Students with disabilities and English Language Learners (ELLs) will be supported within the general education classroom to the greatest extent appropriate and beyond direct instruction, using accommodations documented within their IEP, 504, or Individualized Learning Plans

(ILPs), implementation of specialized/differentiated instruction, and other related services (e.g. Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, etc.). Charter One will provide support in managing areas such as Special Education, ELLs, teacher observations, curriculum implementation, and data-informed instruction, ensuring consistency and compliance.

For those students who may be economically disadvantaged, ELA will extend an opportunity each school year for families to submit an eligibility application for free or reduced lunch. All families may apply regardless of any previous eligibility designations, and the school will then determine eligibility according to federal income eligibility guidelines.

## **FAMILY AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**

### ***Family Engagement and Broader Community Support***

Ensign Leadership Academy (ELA) has been intentionally designed to be a family-focused environment that is manifest in our policies, culture and classrooms and enshrined and implemented through our RAISE values framework. ELA's mission, "In support of the family, provide the best educational experience to as many students as possible in a moral and wholesome environment," and vision, "Learn. Lead. Change the World!" guides all our decisions and stakeholder engagement efforts.

ELA will actively engage families and the broader community by positioning itself as a community hub. This will be accomplished by hosting open houses, campus tours, information sessions, service projects, parent workshops, hosting athletics and fine arts events, and other local events designed to foster meaningful relationships with community residents. These opportunities will be communicated to families and the community through email, social media, website postings, and monthly newsletters from the school Directors and teachers. This will ensure that families and the community remain informed and connected to ELA's mission and vision.

### ***Meaningful Participation in Decision-Making***

Providing opportunities for families and the community to meaningfully participate in decision-making processes is an important aspect of ELA's governance as it fosters trust in the school and provides valuable insight. The Board will establish a Community Advisory Council made up of a diverse group of parents, educators, and local stakeholders, including local chambers. The Community Advisory Council will participate in bi-annual town halls and surveys to solicit feedback which will then be used to drive school improvement. Families, educators, and local stakeholders are welcome to participate in the Community Advisory Council regardless of background and socio-economic status. Another meaningful opportunity for families to participate in ELA's governance will be through the school's Parent Teacher Organization

(PTO). PTO nominations will also influence board recruitment, with a goal of 20-30% parent representation.

For many families, including those who may be underserved or economically disadvantaged, finding time to participate in the Community Advisory Council or PTO could be unrealistic. With this in mind, ELA is committed to removing as many barriers as reasonably possible and providing an opportunity for all families to meaningfully participate in some way. This will occur through regular and transparent communication from the school to parents (e.g., newsletters, virtual access to board meetings), an open line of communication for families from their home to the school (e.g., phone, email, in-person or virtual meetings), online access to school improvement feedback surveys, and invitations to participate in and volunteer at school events.

### ***Pre-Planning Engagement with Families and Community Stakeholders***

ELA has demonstrated significant pre-planning engagement with families and community stakeholders. Prior to approval, ELA conducted in-person information sessions, attended local community events, and built an interest list of nearly 1,000 families at the time of this submission.

The Board has developed and continues to maintain deep local ties and ongoing outreach with families, stakeholders, community leaders, legislators, and local officials. As a result, ELA has received multiple formal letters of support from elected officials and community members, demonstrating evidence of strong community support and buy-in of the school's mission, vision, and model.

### ***Diversity in Recruitment, Admissions, Enrollment, and Retention Processes***

ELA's recruitment, admissions, enrollment, and retention processes are open, transparent, equitable, and in compliance with state and federal law. Recruitment efforts are focused on the entire community of families with school-aged children in the area surrounding the school's proposed location, and within a 15 to 20-minute drive. ELA is a school for *all* students, from all cultural, ethnic, socioeconomic, and academic backgrounds, and recruitment and marketing efforts demonstrate this. Diversity in recruitment, admissions, enrollment, and retention will be evidenced in many ways including, but not limited to, providing a safe, moral and wholesome environment, providing school communications in English and Spanish (or other languages as needed), providing interpreters as needed, implementing a highly effective MTSS process, providing academic support services for English Language Learners and Gifted & Talented students, providing Special Education (IEP/504) services (which may also include Speech Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy as needed), offering Concurrent Enrollment classes, and exposing all students to character and leadership principles through the RAISE Leadership curriculum.

Just as important as having all the above opportunities and services available to all students who may need them, is the belief of the ELA Board that all students are capable of meeting high academic standards through a rigorous curriculum and high expectations. And all are *also* capable of developing the leadership, character, and practical skills necessary to thrive in a changing world. ELA’s model is intentionally designed to push all students and staff toward excellence.

**COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND DEMAND**

**Projected Enrollment, Needs Analysis, & Methodology**

Ensign Leadership Academy’s (ELA) total projected enrollment for Year 1 is 1,535 students. In its first year, ELA expects to enroll 140 students per grade level in grades K-8, 120 students in grade 9, 80 students in grade 10, 50 students in grade 11, and 25 students in grade 12 for a total of 1,535 students. Students per grade will grow over the next four years resulting in a total enrollment of 2,500 in Year 5.

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Max.
Y1	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	120	80	50	25	1535
Y2	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	90	60	1800
Y3	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	165	150	90	2055
Y4	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	160	160	2300
Y5	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	180	180	180	160	2500

ELA’s projected enrollment is reasonable and feasible. The Saratoga Springs and Eagle Mountain areas are two of the fastest growing cities in Utah. Between 2023 and 2024, Saratoga Springs ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> statewide in numeric population growth with an increase of 4,474 people, and 3<sup>rd</sup> in percentage growth (8.5%). Eagle Mountain ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in numeric growth with an increase of 3,189 people, and 6<sup>th</sup> in percentage growth (5.6%). According to U.S. census data these communities have some of the highest concentrations of children in the state. House Districts 50 and 51, contiguous with LMSD boundaries, have the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> highest percent of school-age population and 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> highest percent of population ages 0-4 which is double the state average. Household size in Saratoga Springs and Eagle Mountain exceed four persons per household with over 80% year-over-year household retention. This is indicative of stable, large-family demographics which will support demand for a K-12 campus.

Currently, public school infrastructure is experiencing strain. Within ELA’s target population, there are 27 district and charter schools serving 30,127 students. Drawing from a total population

of 127,720 residents, this represents approximately 23.6% being school-aged children. The U.S. Census shows that Saratoga Springs and Eagle Mountain have the youngest average age of any communities in the state of Utah. Population growth data from the MountainLand Association of Governments predicts that by 2032, the area will grow by an additional 48,072 residents, increasing the student population by as much as 11,000 students. It is estimated that the two area high schools are already over-enrolled by a combined 1,000 students and seven area elementary schools are over-enrolled by 200+/- students each, for a total of 2,500+/- over-enrolled students. The MountainLand Association of Governments also projects that by 2040 these communities and the surrounding area west of I-15 will exceed 300,000 residents, doubling the population over the next 15 years.

ELA's enrollment projection is further supported by documented demand from families in the community. As of the submission of this application, nearly 1,000 families have joined the school's interest list, equating to over 2,000 students interested in attending. Families in the Saratoga Springs/Eagle Mountain areas have expressed demand for an all-inclusive K-12 campus. This is a model that is not currently available within the local school districts. Situated within the Alpine School District area, ELA will be the first charter school of its kind to prioritize the family unit by establishing a campus that serves all of the K-12 children in a family.

ELA's enrollment projection methodology is based on the above population growth rates and projections, the concentration of school-age children in the area, documented over-enrollment at local district and charter schools, and a strong and growing interest list. These factors show strong evidence of demand and support the feasibility of enrolling 1,535 students in Year 1 and then growing to 2,500 students by Year 5.

### **Supporting the Needs of Local Students and Families**

ELA is designed to support the needs and priorities of students and families in the Saratoga Springs and Eagle Mountain communities. With its focus on supporting the family to provide the best educational experience to as many students as possible in a moral and wholesome environment, welcoming students in grades K-12, the installation of high-quality athletic facilities, and a diverse offering of extra-curricular activities including offerings in dance, theatre, music, and art, ELA will without a doubt become a popular community hub.

### **Utilizing Community Assets**

ELA will support the needs of local students through strategic community partnerships and use of community assets. As a K-12 campus offering a full high school experience and the associated facilities (e.g., gymnasium, athletic fields, performing arts facility, etc.), the school in and of itself will be a community asset available to students and their families.

Additionally, being a school that celebrates and honors patriotism, ELA understands the significance of cultivating relationships with local law enforcement, first responders, and veterans. These patriots will be integrated into the school's annual Patriot Day and Veterans Day celebrations to honor their service and give students an opportunity to learn from their experiences. ELA will also partner with the local Chamber of Commerce to support community service and possible mentorship opportunities and extracurricular activities.

### **School Access**

The ELA campus will be established near residential neighborhoods and community corridors to maximize equitable access to the school for its targeted student population. This will allow many families access to the school by walking or through existing public transportation routes. Neighborhood demographics within walking distance of the school include a diverse mix of families aligned with ELA's intended enrollment population.

ELA will ensure that transportation is available as a related service for students with disabilities and special needs when required by a student's Individualize Education Plan (IEP). ELA will purchase buses and/or vans that have wheelchair ramps and tie downs as appropriate to meet this need. If a child has transportation needs that require more specialized transportation than readily available, the school Director or his/her designee will contract with a local vendor to provide this specific service. The school has funding in the budget allotted for Exceptional Children (EC) transportation. These measures support safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation while protecting the rights of students with disabilities.

[Letter of Support-Senator Heidi Balderree, Utah Senate District 22](#)

[Letter of Support-Rodney W. Mann, Utah County Auditor](#)

[Letter of Support-R. Neil Walter Utah House of Representatives House District 74, Chair of House Education Standing Committee](#)

[Letter of Support-Petter and Jamie Olsen](#)

[Letter of Support-Amelia Powers Gardner Utah County Commissioner](#)

### **TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

ELA's transportation plan provides equitable access for all students and will comply with Utah law. Transportation may be provided directly, contracted, or not offered, and will not be a condition of enrollment for all students.

ELA prioritizes equitable access, particularly for students with disabilities and special needs, and will ensure that transportation is available as a related service when required by a student's Individualize Education Plan (IEP). ELA will purchase buses and/or vans that have wheelchair ramps and tie downs as appropriate to meet this need. If a child has transportation needs that require more specialized transportation than readily available, the school Director or his/her designee will contract with a local vendor to provide this specific service. The school has

funding in the budget allotted for Exceptional Children (EC) transportation. These measures support safe, efficient, and cost-effective transportation while protecting the rights of students with disabilities.

ELA's anticipated location will be situated near established residential neighborhoods and community corridors in the Saratoga Springs/Eagle Mountain area to maximize equitable access to the school for its targeted student population. Ideally, the school site will be located within a walkable distance of existing and future residential subdivisions, and far enough east to be easily accessible by families commuting along I-15. However, if the cost and availability of a school site require the school to be constructed further west, ELA will provide busing at strategic pick-up locations for students residing east of the school.

The approximate demographics within walking distance of the school are as follows:

<b>Race</b>	<b>Saratoga Springs</b>	<b>Eagle Mountain</b>
White	79.2%	80.5%
Hispanic/Latino	14.2%	12.9%
Asian	1.5%	.3%
Black	.2%	.5%
Native American	.1%	.8%
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	.3%	.4%

### **LOTTERY PROCESS**

Ensign Leadership Academy (ELA) is committed to providing equal access to all students in accordance with federal and state law. ELA's Enrollment and Lottery Policy ensures compliance with the federal and state requirements for open enrollment, non-discrimination, and random selection when applications exceed available seats.

#### **Non-Discrimination**

ELA will not discriminate in enrollment or admission on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, academic achievement, English language proficiency, immigration status, homelessness, foster care status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

#### **Eligibility**

Enrollment is open to all students eligible to attend public schools in the state of Utah.

## **Enrollment Process**

### **Application**

- The School will establish an annual enrollment period with clearly published opening and closing dates. The annual enrollment period will typically open in November and close in January.
- Applications will be available at no cost and accessible online and in the front office.
- Assistance will be provided to families who require language, disability, or technology accommodations.

### **Public Notice**

The School will widely publicize enrollment opportunities through multiple methods, which may include:

- The School's website
- Community outreach and public postings
- Social media
- Information sessions

Outreach efforts will be designed to reach educationally disadvantaged students and underserved populations.

## **Lottery Procedures**

### **When a Lottery Is Required**

If the number of eligible applications exceeds the number of available seats in any grade or program, ELA will conduct a statistically random, impartial lottery using specialized lottery software.

When ELA is operating under an active Charter Schools Program (CSP) grant, the lottery preferences and requirements outlined in this policy will apply and will supersede any other local lottery priorities to the extent required by federal law.

When ELA is not operating under an active CSP grant, student admissions priorities will be defined and governed by the school's board members and coordinated with the Education Management Organization (EMO) for admissions and lottery process, in accordance with applicable state and local law.

### **Lottery Administration**

- The lottery will be conducted after the application deadline, typically between late January to mid-February.
- The process will be documented and records retained in accordance with state and federal requirements.

## **Permissible Lottery Preferences (CSP Grant Only)**

When ELA is operating under an active CSP grant, the school may provide enrollment preference only to the following categories of students, as permitted by federal law and applicable state law:

### **1. Siblings of Currently Enrolled Students**

Applicants who have a sibling currently enrolled in the school at the time of the lottery may be granted preference.

### **2. Children of Founders or Full-Time Employees**

Applicants who are children of the school's founders or full-time employees may be granted preference, provided such preference is permitted under state law and does not exceed applicable limits (Not to exceed 5% of the school's total student population).

### **3. Students Previously Enrolled**

Applicants who were previously enrolled in the school and wish to return may be granted preference, consistent with state law.

## **Waitlist**

Students not selected for admission through the lottery will be placed on a waitlist in the order determined by the lottery results.

- The waitlist will remain active for the applicable school year.
- Offers of admission will be made in waitlist order as seats become available.
- Families will be notified of waitlist status and procedures.

## **Acceptance and Registration**

Lottery results will be communicated to families within 5 business days of the lottery. Parents will have 48 hours to accept or decline enrollment at the school and 5 days to return the enrollment paperwork.

If the school does not receive enrollment confirmation and the paperwork back in the specified time period, the School Director may decline enrollment to the student and offer the spot to the next student on the wait list. If enrollment is declined and then a parent later decides they would like to send their student after all, they will be asked to submit a new application, and they will be placed on the wait list in the next available spot.

As spots at the school become available, the parent/guardian of the student will be contacted via email. A phone call will also be made to the parent notifying them of the student's acceptance and applicable deadlines for return of enrollment paperwork. Every effort will be made to communicate promptly with all accepted families.

Families offered admission will be given a reasonable timeframe to accept the offer and complete registration. ELA may require standard enrollment documentation consistent with state law but will not delay or deny enrollment due to lack of records, particularly for students experiencing homelessness or foster care placement (Utah Code §53G-6-302).

**GOVERNANCE, AUTONOMY, AND PROJECT ADMINISTRATION**

**Board Member Information**

Name	Role	Email	Community Representation & Expertise
Curt Bramble	Chair	curt@cbramble.com	Public policy consultant. 20+ years in legislature, sponsoring charter laws, education committees; governance and accounting Expertise.
Howard Stephenson	Vice Chair	howardstephenson@me.com	Education policy consultant. 26 years in Senate sponsoring charter legislation; 4 years on Utah charter board; led UPSTART and Dual Language programs; 44 years at the Utah Taxpayers Association, the leading tax watchdog organization, nationally Recognized.
David Erickson	Treasurer	david@erickson.email	Part-time Controller at the Utah Valley Chamber of Commerce. CPA background, financial statements for charters (e.g., American Leadership Academy, Arizona); accounting systems design.

Stephanie Hill	Secretary	shillvegas@gmail.com	Retired educator. Curriculum development, school administration, charter governance focusing on student achievement.
Richard Moss	Member	Richard@c1dev.com	School development. Facility planning, community engagement, supporting educational initiatives.

**Project Manager and Support Team**

Name	Role	Organization	Responsibilities
Richard Moss, Board Member	Project Manager	CPA	Oversee all aspects of CSP grant application submission and project objectives and accountability
Cristina Schubert, Grants Development Director	Collaborator	Charter One	Assist with writing CSP grant.
Tina Letchworth, Federal Programs & Compliance Director	Collaborator	Charter One	Monitor CSP grant process and project compliance.
Brett Doughty, Regional VP	Collaborator	Charter One	Oversee school operations and support project timeline operations and accountability

The project manager, in partnership with Charter One collaborators, will ensure objectives are completed on time and within budget. An implementation timeline with milestones, deliverables, and responsible parties will guide all work. Progress will be reviewed during scheduled planning meetings in addition to monthly board oversight check-in meetings. The project manager and collaborators will monitor task completion, budget expenditures, and compliance requirements using tracking tools and financial reporting systems provided by Charter One.

**Education Management Organization (EMO) Partnership**

The ELA Board will contract with Charter One, an Education Management Organization (EMO), to provide support in areas such as compliance, finance, marketing, and academics. This

partnership allows the governing board to focus on strategic oversight, policy-setting, and accountability while Charter One uses their areas of expertise to focus on day-to-day school management. This model leverages proven systems for curriculum delivery, compliance, and financial management, thus reducing startup risks. However, ELA maintains ultimate authority regarding policy and oversight. The school Director will serve as the primary liaison to the EMO. The EMO will handle daily operations, reporting regularly to the Director and Board on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The EMO will report to the Board, with no authority to override board policies.

Charter One's services include, but are not limited to, academic support (curriculum alignment and professional development), financial management (budgeting, accounting, and payroll), human resources (recruitment, training, and compliance), information technology (systems setup and maintenance), marketing and enrollment support, facilities management, and regulatory compliance with state and federal education laws. Charter One will provide data-driven recommendations to the Board on academic and financial matters, ensuring adherence to ELA's charter agreement, and supporting the implementation of the school's mission and vision.

#### **Alignment with ESEA § 4310(2)**

Consistent with ESEA § 4310(2), ELA will operate as a public school that is exempt from select state and local rules that inhibit flexibility, while remaining fully accountable for academic results and fiscal management. This affords ELA the autonomy to make independent decisions regarding curriculum and instruction design, staffing, scheduling, parent engagement, and professional development, as well as proactively respond to staff and student needs as they may arise.

ELA is governed by a nonprofit board with vast experience in education policy, curriculum design, charter school innovation, and performance accountability. Held accountable to the Utah State Charter School Board (SCSB), the Board oversees strategic planning, academic programming, and all legal and fiduciary compliance matters. Though the Board has contracted with Charter One, an experienced Education Management Organization (EMO), it retains absolute authority over governance, strategic direction, and performance expectations. Subsequently, the Board will conduct regular self-evaluations, audits, and KPI data reviews to ensure ongoing alignment to ELA's mission and vision, and progress toward meeting goals.

#### **Quality Control and Accountability**

The ELA Board will evaluate Charter One's performance annually through a formal review process, including analysis of key performance indicators (KPIs) such as student proficiency and growth on RISE and ACT assessments, financial audits, enrollment data, compliance reports, and feedback from staff, parents, and students. The evaluation will involve third-party audits if

needed, with contract renewal or termination based on results, as outlined in the agreement. The Board retains authority to direct changes if outcomes fall short of expected targets.

ELA expects Charter One to support and meet the school's student achievement target (e.g., By the end of Year 3, 75% of students in grades 3-8 will score at or above proficiency in English Language Arts and Math on Utah's RISE assessments or with performance at least 5% higher than the Alpine District average focused on growth data.), maintain full compliance with state and federal laws, ensure financial stability with no audit findings, support enrollment of up to 2,500 students, and foster a positive school culture.

Charter One will provide services related to curricular and instructional management, including alignment with Utah Core Standards using approaches like the Core Knowledge Sequence and student assessments. Oversight and monitoring will include the board reviewing reports on instructional effectiveness, student growth data, and alignment with ELA's mission.

Charter One will provide financial management services, such as budgeting and accounting. Internal controls will include purchasing protocols, monthly financial reports to the board, independent annual audits, board approval for major expenditures, and compliance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and Utah charter school financial rules to prevent conflicts and ensure transparency.

Charter renewal or revocation decisions will be guided by the school's demonstrated results against the above benchmarks. Annual accountability reviews will serve as evidence for renewal evaluations and inform improvement planning when necessary. ELA and Charter One understand that continued operation of the school depends on sustaining academic growth, financial integrity, and operational compliance. Failure to meet established standards may result in mandated improvement plans, contract modification, or charter revocation in accordance with Utah State Charter School Board (SCSB) policy.

## **FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

**Note:** Please see the *School Project Budget Narrative* section in the UAPCS application portal for a comprehensive budget narrative and plan for accountability of funds and post-grant sustainability.

## **COMPETITIVE PREFERENCE PRIORITIES**

### ***Innovative Charter Model***

Ensign Leadership Academy (ELA) offers a diverse and innovative charter school model by establishing a single, comprehensive campus for grades K-12 in the Saratoga Springs-

Westlake/Eagle Mountain-Cedar Valley areas within the Lake Mountain School District. ELA's model addresses unmet needs in the target community where schools are overcrowded, and the population is projected to continue to grow. ELA differentiates itself from other schools in the area with its classical education and direct instruction approach using the Core Knowledge Sequence, and integration of the RAISE values (Respect, Accountability, Integrity, Service, Excellence) as a foundation for leadership development and a moral and wholesome environment. Additionally, ELA will offer a competitive athletics program, fine arts programming (dance, theatre, band, art), foreign language, speech and debate, and financial literacy and entrepreneurship courses.

### **High-Quality High School Programs**

ELA's high school will offer a high-quality classical education program that uses the Core Knowledge Sequence and curriculum aligned to the Utah Core Standards (SAVVAS Science and History, Eureka Math<sup>2</sup>, Core Knowledge Sequence-aligned novel studies and English Language Arts curriculum. ELA's academic program emphasizes critical thinking via Socratic inquiry and requires mandatory courses in financial literacy and entrepreneurship. For students seeking additional academic challenge and rigor, Honors, AP, and Concurrent Enrollment courses will be available. Additionally, ELA will offer a wide range of electives courses and extracurricular programs to support students' personal interests and development including a competitive athletics program, fine arts programming (dance, theatre, band, art), foreign language, speech and debate, yearbook, and more. Furthermore, leadership development is integrated into students' experience with weekly RAISE leadership lessons that focus on the school's core values (Respect, Accountability, Integrity, Service, Excellence) and encourages strong moral character, goal setting, and academic progress monitoring. Alongside the general academic program, students who may need additional support will benefit from tiered interventions through the school's Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) process, ensuring personalized attention for students with diverse needs.

### **Educator and Community-Centered Schools**

ELA intends to promote a high-quality and community-centered model in support of underserved students including those who may be economically and educationally disadvantaged, ELL, special needs, and gifted and talented. This begins by ensuring enrollment is open to all families in the community, establishing a transparent lottery policy, having a Board of Directors with a deep knowledge and relationship with the local community and vast experience in education, finance, and policy, as well as a partnership with Charter One. Charter One is an experienced Education Management Organization (EMO) with a proven record of success in managing large, diverse K-12 charters (including A-rated schools in Arizona).

A rigorous classical education will be provided to all students in alignment with the Core Knowledge Sequence and Utah Core Standards. Teachers will collaborate during bi-weekly

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to review student data and adjust lessons as needed to better meet students' learning needs. Teachers will be prepared to meet the needs of all students through completion of comprehensive professional development in effective teaching practices, differentiated instruction, student engagement, classroom management, RAISE Leadership, Multi-Tiered, Systems of Support (MTSS), and more. Additionally, personalized support will be available for underserved populations through the school's MTSS process, which is a framework that provides students with tiered interventions.

Family partnership and engagement in the school community is also essential to ELA's success as a high-quality, community-centered model. The school will establish a Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO), a Community Advisory Council, and has also adopted the goal that by the end of Year 1, at least 70% of families will participate in one or more school sponsored community events (e.g., open houses, service projects, parent workshops), with participation increasing to 85% by Year 3.