

# **LAKE MOUNTAIN SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## **APPLICATION TO SERVE AS A CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER**

Submitted to the Utah State Board of Education

### **INTRODUCTION**

Lake Mountain School District respectfully submits this application to the Utah State Board of Education seeking approval to serve as a charter school authorizer pursuant to Utah Code Title 53G, Chapter 5, including §53G-5-205(authorization by local school boards) and §53G-5-305 (charter authorization procedures).

Lake Mountain School District (Lake Mountain) is comprised of the communities of Saratoga Springs, Eagle Mountain, Cedar Fort, and Fairfield. These cities represent one of the fastest-growing regions in the State of Utah. They are communities built by families who expect strong public schools, transparent governance, fiscal responsibility, and local accountability.

Lake Mountain was created through voter approval pursuant to Utah Code Title 53G, Chapter 3, Part 3 (Creation of Local School Districts). From its inception, Lake Mountain School District has been structured around disciplined governance, measurable student outcomes, and responsible stewardship of public resources.

The Board of Education operates under a Results-based governance framework. Student outcomes are defined clearly. Operational guardrails are established in writing. Performance is monitored consistently. Difficult decisions are addressed directly when necessary to protect students and public trust.

As a newly formed district serving rapidly expanding communities, Lake Mountain recognizes that families within district boundaries expect meaningful public school options. Charter schools, when authorized responsibly and overseen rigorously, can provide innovative instructional models and specialized academic pathways within the current public system.

Lake Mountain seeks authorizing authority not to expand institutional influence, but to ensure that public school choice within district boundaries is exercised with clarity, accountability, and measurable academic growth.

### **MISSION, PURPOSE, AND GOVERNING PHILOSOPHY**

Lake Mountain affirms the purposes of charter schools set forth in Utah Code §53G-5-104, including improving student learning, expanding opportunity, encouraging innovation, and establishing accountability focused on measurable outcomes. Lake Mountain's authorizing mission is grounded first and foremost in accountability.

The purpose of authorizing at Lake Mountain is to ensure that every charter school authorized by Lake Mountain delivers measurable academic growth for students,

operates with fiscal integrity, complies with law, and remains accountable under a clear and enforceable performance contract.

Lake Mountain recognizes that charter schools are granted operational flexibility pursuant to §53G-5-303. That flexibility exists within the framework of a binding charter agreement. The charter agreement is not symbolic. It is a performance contract defining:

- Academic expectations
- Financial sustainability requirements
- Governance standards
- Compliance obligations
- Renewal and intervention benchmarks

Lake Mountain's accountability framework will include:

1. Clear Performance Standards Before Approval  
Academic, financial, and organizational expectations will be explicitly defined in writing prior to authorization.
2. Annual Performance Monitoring  
Schools will be reviewed annually against defined Academic and Financial Performance Frameworks aligned with state accountability measures.
3. Defined Intervention Thresholds  
Performance falling below established benchmarks will trigger structured corrective action pursuant to §53G-5-501.
4. Enforceable Revocation Authority  
Persistent failure to meet performance standards may result in revocation proceedings pursuant to §53G-5-502 through §53G-5-504.

Lake Mountain will not delay difficult decisions when student outcomes or fiscal integrity are at risk. The role of the authorizer is not to preserve institutions. It is to protect students and public trust.

Charter schools that demonstrate strong academic growth, responsible financial management, and compliance with law will be supported. Charter schools that fail to meet agreed standards will be required to improve, and if necessary, will be closed in accordance with statute.

Accountability is not reactive at Lake Mountain. It is built into the structure of authorization from the beginning.

## **STATUTORY AUTHORITY AND GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE**

Lake Mountain seeks approval under §53G-5-205 to serve as a charter school authorizer within the legally defined geographic boundaries of the Lake Mountain School District.

Charter schools authorized by Lake Mountain must be physically located within district boundaries established pursuant to Title 53G, Chapter 3, Part 3, unless otherwise permitted by law.

Lake Mountain acknowledges that charter schools are local education agencies (LEAs) pursuant to §53G-5-304, and must comply with all applicable state and federal laws unless formally waived under §53G-5-303(3).

Portfolio growth will be capacity-driven. Before approving any new charter, the district will evaluate staffing ratios, monitoring systems, and compliance infrastructure to ensure the district can fulfill its oversight obligations under §53G-5-205(2).

Growth will not outpace oversight.

### **GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND AUTHORIZER CAPACITY**

The Lake Mountain Board of Education will serve as the charter school authorizer and will exercise all statutory authority in public session consistent with:

- Utah Code Title 53G, Chapter 5
- Utah Code Title 52, Chapter 4 (Open and Public Meetings Act)

The Board retains ultimate responsibility for:

- Approval or denial of charter applications pursuant to §53G-5-305
- Execution of performance-based charter agreements pursuant to §53G-5-303
- Annual performance review
- Renewal determinations
- Probation and revocation proceedings pursuant to §53G-5-501 through §53G-5-504

### **ADMINISTRATIVE ASSIGNMENT AND BOARD OVERSIGHT**

The Superintendent will designate specific executive-level administrators to carry out the day-to-day monitoring and review responsibilities associated with charter oversight. All monitoring findings, performance analyses, compliance reviews, and recommendations will be formally reported to the Board of Education.

The Board retains ultimate oversight authority and responsibility for all authorizing decisions, including approval, renewal, probation, amendment, and revocation pursuant to §53G-5-303 and §53G-5-501 through §53G-5-504.

Administrative review supports the Board's oversight function; it does not replace it.

### **Academic Oversight**

- Annual review of academic performance data aligned with statewide accountability indicators
- Analysis of student growth, subgroup performance, and achievement trends
- Monitoring of compliance with assessment administration requirements under R277-404

### **Financial Oversight**

- Review of Annual Financial Reports (AFR) and Annual Program Reports (APR)
- Analysis of liquidity ratios, debt service coverage, and sustainability indicators
- Oversight of compliance with R277-113 (LEA Fiscal Policies) and audit requirements

### **Organizational and Legal Compliance**

- Monitoring of compliance with state and federal law, including IDEA and R277-750
- Verification of governing board compliance with statutory requirements
- Oversight of procurement and financial controls pursuant to Title 63G, Chapter 6a (Utah Procurement Code)

Each designated administrator will provide written findings and recommendations to the Superintendent, who will in turn provide formal recommendations to the Board.

### **Separation of Roles**

Charter schools authorized by Lake Mountain will remain independent public schools and separate LEAs pursuant to **§53G-5-304**.

### **Capacity and Scaling**

Before approving any new charter school, the Superintendent will certify to the Board that sufficient administrative capacity exists to provide effective oversight consistent with **§53G-5-205(2)**.

As the portfolio expands, oversight assignments may be adjusted, and additional personnel may be designated to ensure monitoring responsibilities are fulfilled without compromising quality.

Lake Mountain will not authorize beyond its demonstrated capacity to monitor rigorously and consistently.

Accountability requires clarity of responsibility. This structure provides it.

## **NEW CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION PROCESS**

Lake Mountain will implement a multi-phase application process consistent with **§53G-5-305**.

## **Orientation**

All applicants will participate in a mandatory orientation reviewing statutory requirements, governance obligations, academic performance expectations, and financial safeguards.

## **Proposal Phase**

The proposal phase will evaluate mission alignment, community need, instructional design, and governance competence.

## **FULL APPLICATION**

Invited applicants will submit detailed documentation including:

- Academic program design aligned to Utah Core Standards
- Growth targets consistent with statewide accountability indicators
- Five-year budgets and cash flow projections
- Facilities plans
- Special education and English learner compliance plans
- Governance bylaws consistent with Title 16, Chapter 6a (Utah Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act)

Applications will be evaluated using objective scoring criteria aligned with statutory purposes.

## **Capacity Interview**

Applicants advancing beyond written review will participate in a structured capacity interview assessing governance literacy, financial oversight competency, compliance awareness, and operational readiness.

Approval decisions will occur in public session pursuant to §53G-5-305(3).  
Charter Agreement

Approved schools will enter into a performance-based charter agreement pursuant to §53G-5-303, defining academic, financial, and compliance expectations.

## **TRANSFERS, EXPANSIONS, AND SATELLITE CAMPUSES**

Lake Mountain will implement procedures consistent with R277-552 governing transfers, expansions, and charter amendments.

Formal application documents will be developed and published separately; however, review standards are established herein.

## **Transfers (R277-552-8)**

Transfer applicants must submit:

- Multi-year academic performance data
- AFR, APR, and audited financial statements

- Compliance certifications
- Current authorizer position statement

Transfers will only be approved when sustained academic performance, financial stability, and compliance are demonstrated.

### **Large Expansions (R277-552-7)**

Expansion requests must demonstrate:

- Academic performance meeting or exceeding accountability expectations
- Evidence of closing achievement gaps
- Clean audits and sustainable debt ratios
- Facility and staffing readiness

Growth will not be approved if it risks destabilizing quality.

### **Satellite Campuses**

Replication requests must demonstrate sustained academic success and governance stability sufficient to maintain fidelity across multiple sites.

All approvals will require amendment or execution of a performance-based charter agreement.

## **PERFORMANCE MONITORING, RENEWAL, AND INTERVENTION**

Lake Mountain will conduct annual performance reviews aligned with established Academic and Financial Performance Frameworks.

### **Academic Monitoring**

Academic review will include:

- Statewide assessment proficiency pursuant to R277-404
- Student Growth Percentiles
- Growth of the lowest 25 percent
- English Learner Progress
- Postsecondary Readiness indicators

Disaggregated subgroup performance will be reviewed annually.

### **Financial Monitoring**

Financial oversight will include:

- Liquidity ratios
- Debt service coverage
- Net lease-adjusted debt burden
- Audit findings
- AFR and APR compliance

### **Corrective Action**

If performance deficiencies are identified, the district may impose corrective action plans pursuant to §53G-5-501.

## **Revocation Authority**

Persistent or material noncompliance may result in revocation proceedings pursuant to §53G-5-502 through §53G-5-504.

## **AUTHORIZE SELF-EVALUATION AND TRANSPARENCY**

Lake Mountain will conduct periodic internal reviews of authorizing practices to ensure compliance with statute and alignment with best practices.

Portfolio-level summaries will be made publicly available consistent with transparency expectations under Utah law.

Continuous improvement applies to authorizers as well as schools.

## **CONCLUSION**

Lake Mountain School District seeks authorizing authority with clarity, discipline, and conviction.

Families within our district boundaries expect meaningful public school options. Charter schools, when authorized responsibly and monitored rigorously, can expand opportunity while preserving accountability.

The quality of charter schools depends directly on the quality of authorizing.

Lake Mountain is prepared to:

- Authorize carefully.
- Monitor consistently.
- Intervene when required.
- Protect students above all else.

Pursuant to Utah Code Title 53G, Chapter 5, Lake Mountain respectfully requests approval from the Utah State Board of Education to serve as a charter school authorizer consistent with statute and the highest standards of public governance.