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## MEMORANDUM

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

**FROM:** Brad C. Smith  
Chief Executive Officer

**DATE:** April 9-10, 2015

**ACTION:** Amendment Request from Freedom Preparatory Academy

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### **Background:**

Freedom Preparatory Academy opened in fall 2003 serving a few hundred students in grades K–6. The school’s charter agreement was amended to expand to serving 1,220 students in grades K–12. Freedom Preparatory Academy requests to add a satellite campus in Alpine School District in 2016-2017 serving 720 students in grades K–5. The State Charter School Board has reviewed and approved the amendment to the school’s charter agreement and forwards it to the State Board of Education for consideration.

### **Key Points:**

Freedom Preparatory Academy is a high performing school and has been for several years. The governing board created a strategic plan and studied its enrollment patterns to determine which location would be the best for a satellite campus. The executive summary report is included and additional information submitted by the school can be found at <http://schools.utah.gov/charterschools/State-Charter-School-Board/2015-Board-Meetings/March-2015.aspx>

### **Anticipated Action:**

The Law and Licensing Committee will consider approving Freedom Preparatory Academy Governing Board’s request as outlined in the amendment documentation. If approved by the Committee, the Board will consider approving the request

**Contact:** Dr. Marlies Burns, Executive Director, State Charter School Board, 801-538-7817

**AMENDMENT  
(Satellite Request)**

**Utah State Board of Education  
Charter School Board Executive Summary Report**

The Utah State Charter School Board (SCSB) is charged with authorizing, monitoring, evaluating, and dismissing charters of public schools in Utah. Its work is under the direct supervision of the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) per Utah Code 53A-1a-501.5.

This summary report shall be completed by the SCSB and submitted to Brad Smith, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Utah State Office of Education, two weeks ahead of the regularly scheduled USBE meetings for approval and inclusion in the board's agenda materials. Only that which is in writing, and included in the agenda materials, as ratified for recommendation by the SCSB, shall be considered by the USBE in its final approval process. Attachments, by way of clarification, or elaboration, may be included.

1. Charter School Freedom Preparatory Academy

2. Street Address 1190 West 900 North, Provo Phone 801-437-3100

3. Chief School Officer Daniela Alvarez Phone 801-687-7904

4. The parent charter school is located in which school district? Provo City

The satellite charter school is located in which school district? Alpine

5. List or attach all duly elected, current board directors of the school:

Daniela Alvarez	Robert Merrill
Paul Baltés	Heather Day
Steven Lord	Duane Miller
Dan Stovall	

6. Requested amendment to charter:

Add satellite campus (Freedom Preparatory Academy #3) in Alpine School District in 2016-2017.

7. a) Summary description of satellite charter school:

Freedom Preparatory Academy will be entering our 13<sup>th</sup> year of operation in the fall of 2015. Our school has seen much success since our charter was approved in the spring of 2003.

The first three years of operation were met with the challenges of growth, space, and school culture development. However, our student population continued to grow. During those first three years of operation we had a population of 350-400 students in grades K-6. During the 2005 school year it was apparent by our wait lists that we needed to expand and utilize the full number of allocated student seats (675). It was at this point that our current location, which was a rented warehouse, became too small.

In the winter of 2005 we purchased an eight acre park which was dilapidated, overgrown, and frequently used by drug dealers and the drifter population. This once beautiful park, which was owned by the Geneva Steel Retirement Association, was now a place that neighbors feared and criminals used for their activities. Freedom Preparatory Academy hired a builder, obtained our own bonding, and in the fall of 2006 we opened the doors of a beautiful 65,000 square foot modern building which added much to the surrounding neighborhood. This same year we also completed our school model by expanding from a K-6 to a K-8.

In 2009 our parents began making requests to the administration and our board to further expand the already successful education model through a high school. In 2010 we were approved to expand from a K-8 to a K-12. At our request we asked the State Charter School Board to allow us to expand our high school program over a four-year period by only adding grade 9 in the 2012-2013 year, grade 10 in the 2013-2014, and so forth until we had a complete K-12 program by the 2015-16 school year. Because of the success of Freedom Preparatory Academy, the charter board approved our proposed increase in student population all in the first year instead of the four-year period and encouraged us to expand more quickly.

Freedom Preparatory Academy has taken our expansion approach methodically and carefully. From the early days we have never rushed into any expanding efforts. We first thoroughly seek out options, study them in detail, execute the decision, and make necessary adjustments along the way.

In the fall of 2013 our secondary program (7<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grades) moved to a newly constructed, 60,000 square foot facility a ½ mile from our elementary school. Since our expansion into grades 9-12 we have seen continual and steady growth in student population.

Freedom Preparatory Academy now seeks to expand our successful charter school model within Utah County. With the rapid growth Utah County has experienced over the past several years and the projected explosive growth over the next decade, we want to provide the students an opportunity to attend a Freedom Preparatory Academy campus closer to their home.

It is our belief that through our proven track record of continued high test scores on state and school tests, our focus on success for every child (we are in our third year of being a high performing – high progress Title I school), our strong partnership with parents and the many programs devoted to well rounded, high achieving college ready students, a Freedom Preparatory Academy education will be in high demand in the coming years in Utah Valley.

b) How many students will the satellite school serve and what grades?

2016-2017	355 students	Grades K – 5
2017-2018	405 students	Grades K – 5
2018-2019	540 students	Grades K – 5
2019-2020	610 students	Grades K – 5
2020-2021	655 students	Grades K – 5
2021-2022	700 students	Grades K – 5
2022-2023	720 students	Grades K – 5
Ultimate enrollment	720 students	Grades K – 5

c) The parent school's current configuration is: K – 12

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

e) and f) Percentage of minority and students with disabilities at parent school. How does percentage compare with the local school district? (Data from SY2015 Fall Enrollment Report)

LEA	District	Enrollment	Minorities	SWD
Freedom Preparatory Academy	Provo	1,144	38%	9%
Alpine School District		73,570	15.8%	11%
Freedom Preparatory Academy #3	Alpine	720	15%	11%

8. What makes this satellite school needed?

The Freedom Preparatory Academy K-12 model has been successful in all areas of state testing, student achievement, student services and parent satisfaction. With a 96% re-enrollment rate this year and wait-lists every year, we find that parents throughout Utah Valley are seeking this model. We have families traveling from Lehi to Payson every single day in order to attend our school when there are plenty of schools, both district and charter, nearer to them. School capacity in surrounding districts reflects numerous schools that are exceeding capacity by 200 students at the present time. They are not ready to receive the projected growth rate of students slated to enter Utah K-12 schools in the next 25 years.

Too often we have parents tell us their friends and family would love to attend our schools for two reasons: 1.) The commute is unmanageable for their family and 2.) They have been on our wait lists for up to four years and believe they will never have a chance of getting in, so they have settled for their neighborhood school and are not happy. Many of these people even attend our big school events and hope that something will change in order for them to have the opportunity of experiencing Freedom Preparatory Academy's outstanding programs.

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

Yes

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

Freedom Preparatory Academy has an outstanding special education department that meets the needs of all students requiring these services. This team will continue the special education program and services as needed per case load at each location.

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

The school is in a good financial position and review of the governing board's long-term financials indicates the addition of a satellite school is viable.

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

Christopher S. Helvey, M.Ed., Business Manager of Freedom Preparatory Academy.

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

Superintendent Vernon Henshaw's office received a complete copy of this amendment request on February 20, 2015. No response has been received to date.

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

None

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

Freedom Preparatory Academy is a high performing charter school. The school's governing board has a long term strategic plan and plans to implement it appropriately over time. The consistency in board membership and administration adds to the school's success.

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

Recommended full approval Tim Beagley, Howard Headlee, Dean Brockbank, Bruce Davis, Kristin Elinkowski, DeLaina Tonks

Not present for vote Robert Enger