

**Idaho STEM Academy
2012**

Abstract: Young people in Idaho’s rural Blackfoot, Snake River, and Firth School Districts are facing a critical challenge. State standards are becoming increasingly stringent, and overcrowding in public classrooms has led to a student population that struggles to meet them. Over 400 students grades K-8 have opted to enroll in charter schools, accessing high-quality alternatives to traditional public schools and reaping the benefits of smaller class sizes, longer school days, and an extended school calendar. However, there are currently no charter high schools in these communities – forcing Grade 8 charter school graduates to re-enter their traditional, under-staffed, overcrowded public schools in Grade 9.

To meet this need, Idaho STEM Academy (**ISA**) will serve 400 students, Grades 9-12, and will be financially self-sustaining. The school will address the purpose of the CSP program, providing results that are replicable and significant to the knowledge regarding the impact of charter schools on student populations. Idaho STEM Academy believes that a challenging but supportive atmosphere along with a safe environment create the setting where learning best occurs. A three-pronged instructional methodology will include:

- Classrooms similar to traditional high school classes, taught by highly qualified teachers;
- Dual enrollment classrooms where the teacher is both a highly qualified secondary teacher and an adjunct university faculty; credit is awarded for both high school and college simultaneously; and
- Computer labs with full-time facilitators where students schedule individual online college courses based on their interests and ability

This three-year project respectfully requests \$199,680 in Year One to provide new and critically needed educational opportunities to 400 high-need students in rural Idaho.

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