Achievement Peaks Institute

A Utah Public Charter School focused on CTE

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Section 1: Executive Summary

Vision

Developing self-motivated, educated individuals in Iron County Utah who will spread the wealth of knowledge worldwide in a meaningful way.

Mission

Achievement Peaks Institute empowers students to take charge of their education by connecting their individual needs and interests to a rigorous learning plan, thus creating self-motivated responsible citizens, critical problem-solvers, and lifelong learners.

Achievement Peaks Institute (API) is dedicated to delivering a rigorous, standards-based education utilizing a unique, blended technology approach that is focused on career technical training and post-secondary education. Achievement Peaks Institute focus is also to improve education for students who are economically disadvantaged in rural and urban areas including the Native American reservation. By cultivating a community of learning and academic excellence, API will bolster the number of underrepresented students who successfully complete advanced level secondary coursework and attain college and technical degrees. API has formed a partnership with the Piute Tribe and is in the process of securing a partnership with the Navajo Tribe and it is the intent of API to serve the students of both these tribes in promoting technical career education and post-secondary education.

In steadfast support of our students and families, Achievement Peaks Institute is founded upon and firmly committed to three core beliefs. These core beliefs underpin our design and the daily execution of our mission.

1. Every child deserves access to a rigorous technical and college preparatory education delivered by highly effective teachers.
2. A culture of accountability and high expectations develops learners and leaders.
3. Excellent schools are deeply and broadly tied to the communities they serve.

API aims to engage students' natural curiosity and creative talent as they develop the ability to problem solve, reason, invent, innovate, and hypothesize. These critical thinking skills are not exclusive to chosen subjects; they are indeed transferable and desirable performance objectives in all content areas and will be a focus in our Career Technical Education (CTE) curriculum offering.

API will provide a CTE and college preparatory, *standards based* education with a *specialized focus* using a blended model of online and site instructional projects based approach. Our approach engages students in inquiry- and standards-based learning, balanced with direct instruction to ensure mastery of basic skills, particularly in literacy and mathematics. Our goal is to provide both remediation and highly effective instruction tailored to individual needs, while actively designing multiple entry points for students to engage their critical thinking skills.

In enacting a CTE and college preparatory, standards-based curriculum undergirded by a culture of personal responsibility and academic press, API aims to help eliminate the achievement gaps that continue to exist amongst Native American and at-risk students in many rural communities and prepare students for success in their post-secondary pursuits and in life. The trajectory from academic achievement to educational attainment and job earnings remains heavily governed by students' race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. In the targeted areas throughout the State, the percentage of the population living below the poverty line is about 20%. However, the percentage of adults holding college degrees ranges from 10-18%. While most of these areas have high school graduation rates in excess of 90%, students are not moving on to higher education. We seek to de-couple academic achievement from these student background characteristics by ensuring all Achievement Peaks Institute students (1) master basic skills in literacy and mathematics; (2) strengthen critical thinking skills by engaging in project and inquiry based learning; (3) rigorously prepare for, access, and complete advanced secondary coursework and technical school or college; and (4) engage and lead peers in responsible, self-directed living typified by honor, integrity, and generosity of spirit. Graduates of the Achievement Peaks Institute will become persistent and steadfast problem solvers, active leaders in the community, and highly engaged and empathetic citizens.

Core Values of the Achievement Peaks Institute Community

In order to accomplish the Achievement Peaks Institute mission, we are committed to and focused on living the Achievement Peaks Institute community's core values. These core values are the foundation upon which our academic program and community-centered school model are based. We call this the Core Value Commitment, and we live by the following ethos: "Aim High. Reach Out. Achieve SUCCESS. Go to Technical School or College" By *aiming high*, we teach students to pursue excellence and remain steadfast in their pursuit of ambitious goals. By *reaching out*, we teach students to develop meaningful relationships and work to improve their communities. We believe that if students are taught and supported to AIM High and REACH Out, they will *reach success* in college, career, and life. We aim to build and sustain a strong and safe learning environment grounded in the following core values:

Respect: Appreciating the value of a person or an object through your words, actions and attitude – treating people appropriately with common courtesy.

Excellence: Seeking to expand your mind through ideas and experiences, and going beyond to achieve great results in academics and behavior.

Absolute Determination: Putting your best effort into everything you do, and pursuing challenging goals that help you grow.

Community: Building and sustaining meaningful relationships, and keeping the best interest of the community at heart by setting positive examples and doing what is right.

Honor: Being truthful, fair, and trustworthy in your words and actions, and possessing confidence and resolve to take risks and make right decisions in the face of pressure and adverse or unfamiliar circumstances.

All individuals in the Achievement Peaks Institute community ---including the Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer, school leaders, faculty, staff, community partners, families, parents and students--- will engage in a series of activities to learn, reflect upon, and enact Achievement Peaks Institute's core values. All members of the school community will publicly sign the Achievement Peaks Institute Core Value Commitment and focus on living the community's core values each day both within and outside of the school building.

We are confident our educational model will serve our 9th-12th grade students very well. The key to our blended model is a mix of both online live instruction, online analytical software as well as critical time spent with in a classroom with a teacher. The blended model and calendar will enable our students to schedule at least two, three-hour blocks in the afternoon as well as Fridays for one-on-one mentoring and remediation, as well as small group instruction, projects and assessments. Blended instruction requires critical time spent in the classroom with a teacher.

The curriculum Achievement Peaks Institute uses is a mix of both online instruction and classes with a teacher, as well as heavy exposure to analytical software. The benefit of this mixed approach will enable small group instruction and time with the teacher as well as the benefits of the immediate feedback provided by analytical software.

Achievement Peaks Institute is dedicated to ensuring all students receive a rigorous, CTE and college preparatory education, and our commitment does not end at the Achievement Peaks Institute door. We view our work as one way to expand capacity for academic growth in general, and blended initiatives. We recognize the needs of small rural districts to scale up reform and sustain excellence, and Achievement Peaks Institute shares this important goal, remaining committed to all of our students. Moreover, Achievement Peaks Institute will further bolster its capacity to bring choice and innovation to all students through our high school CTE and college preparatory-focused curriculum.

Section 2: Key Elements

The Achievement Peaks Institute idea, concept, and board originated when like minds of both successful and passionate educators, community organizers and business leaders collaborated to improve and promote innovation in public education amongst students of ethnic, diverse, and at-risk backgrounds. The API Board in its majority is comprised of highly successful and accomplished first generation Americans, first generation high school graduates, college graduates, advanced degree graduates and white collared professionals. It is the intent of the Board in seeking, serving, and advancing students of these same dynamics at the Achievement Peaks Institute as they serve students and their families in Iron County and those of the Piute and Navajo Native American Tribes.

The API Board has determined the purposes met of the Achievement Peaks Institute as a whole include:

(1) Continuing to improve student learning, through our innovative and uniquely individualized educational plans that are tailored designed around the student's interests and goals, progression and

graduation requirements, and vocational and educational pursuits following high school. Our dual CTE & Common Core Curriculum will be the basis of education in our School.

(2) Encouraging the use of different and innovative teaching methods. This our educators will achieve through various proven methods researched, studied and published by Robert Marzano's in his book titled, "Classroom instruction that works". These methods adopted by our Board includes, identifying similarities and differences, summarizing and note taking, reinforcing effort and providing recognition, providing appropriate homework and practice, modeling and allowing for nonlinguistic representations, promoting cooperative learning, setting objectives and providing feedback, generating and testing hypotheses, career planning, early internships, and College & Career Workshops.

(3) Creating new professional opportunities for educators that will allow them to actively participate in designing and implementing the learning program at the school. As are our students, our educators will be encouraged and empowered to maximizing the learning opportunities, resources and Mission of the Achievement Peaks Institute.

(4) Increasing choice of learning opportunities for students. Choices, options, creativity will be hallmarks in our learning approach and delivery to our students.

(5) Providing opportunities for greater parental involvement in management decisions at the school level. We will create and foster an environment at our School that empowers parents to know they have a voice, that they can affect change in our school, in their child's educational experience, in the curriculum and programs of the School.

Section 3: Market Analysis

The due-diligence we conducted in determining that the Cedar City and Iron County community is where our educational offering would thrive and where we could best serve the public was based on the following factors:

The Piute and Navajo Native American Tribe: We have formed a great partnership with the Piute Tribe and will soon be forming the same partnership with the Navajo Tribe. The Tribe believes a CTE focused curriculum with welding, engineering, dental science, mechanics, and aerospace as pathways would pique the interest of their students greatly and thus increase post-secondary career training extensively. We believe we can assist and progress student achievement in this community greatly.

Free or Reduced Lunch: The percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch was considered, as this is the best indicator available for identifying students who are economically disadvantaged, at-risk, and who we believe we could best serve and inspire. This number is high amongst the native American student population.

Rural Location: Rural locations outside of Cedar City and throughout Iron County where school choice is limited to a traditional district school we believe inhibits innovation, diversity and options for the

students for whom they serve. Our blended learning programs, CTE Pathways, concurrent enrollment and other curricular and extracurricular programs are the inspiration behind Achievement Peaks Institute and what sets us apart from the current educational offering available in the community. Achievement Peaks Institute is confident in our abilities to serving the community and we are requesting 400 seats for our first year in operation.

Community Interest: Achievement Peaks Institute has conducted public interest surveys in the community in learning of interest of the school and its offering and the reception has been overall positive and greatly received. Presently, there is an active group of parents who are recruiting students and are engaged in building relationships with local leaders. The limited availability of innovation, blended learning opportunities, certain CTE pathways including Utah Aerospace Program that will be offered at API, within the community and certain rural areas of the County makes Achievement Peaks Institute particularly appealing to high school students in Cedar City and more importantly those students of the Piute and Navajo Tribe.

Collaboration: Willingness on the part of local organizations that work with at-risk student populations to work collaboratively with Achievement Peaks Institute to help recruit students was a determining factor for site location. In the community, Achievement Peaks Institute has been working to develop a collaborative relationship with the Piute and Navajo Tribe Education Office. The school will continue to work on building collaborative relationships with other community groups and the Iron County School District.

Market Context and Trends: While there is not significant growth in any of the target areas within the County, the fact that public school choice is limited to students of the Native American reservations, in rural areas in the County, Achievement Peaks Institute is confident it can achieve maximum enrollment. As the need for technical career training and college education increases, so does the preparation required to be ready for success following high school. Achievement Peaks Institute believes it will provide students with the skills and knowledge they will need for post-secondary educational training and to get a head start in their lives.

Outreach: Achievement Peaks Institute intends to employ an aggressive recruitment/marketing campaign to ensure that we believe will attract a sufficient pool of applicants to meet our enrollment projections. The Achievement Peaks Institute will actively recruit students through outreach services in the community with a focus on social media and electronic messaging. These may include:

- Public open houses and community meetings on the Reservation and at a variety of locations and times throughout Cedar City and various locations in Iron County.
- Outreach through social media such as Facebook.
- Distribution of promotional materials in public libraries, community centers, grocery stores, farmers markets, and community gathering events.
- Public Service announcements on local radio and TV
- Press releases

- Advertising in local publications
- Canvassing neighborhoods with flyers

Section 4: Program of Instruction

The purpose of the Achievement Peaks Institute is to provide a rigorous four-year High School program that is CTE and college prep focused and is designed to prepare its students to be Career Ready and College prepared. Our curriculum offering and programs will include the following in broadening and enhancing the educational experience of our charter school students:

I. CTE Pathways
   - Aerospace
   - Engineering
   - Diesel Mechanics
   - Dental Science
   - Welding
II. Concurrent Enrollment via Southern Utah University
III. College Preparatory curriculum offering
IV. Military Counseling & Advising
V. Blended learning with classroom and online instruction offered via APEX
VI. Interscholastic Athletic Participation (UHSAA 1A Competition)
   - Boys Basketball
   - Girls Basketball
   - Girls Volleyball
   - Wrestling
   - Speech/Debate
VII. Advanced elective courses will be offered at API in capitalism, free markets, Reaganomics, Milton Friedman economic principals, minimal government, U.S. Constitution, U.S. History, etc.

Our students through their certification in Engineering, Aerospace, Diesel Mechanics, Dental Science and Welding, will be prepared for gainful employment in the manufacturing industry that surrounds our community and available throughout the State and at the same time have the educational knowledge to continue their formal education in an institution of higher learning. API will partner extensively with Southwest ATC in support of our CTE program offering. It is also anticipated that prior to our USCB authorization, Achievement Peaks Institute will be an approved provider of the Utah Aerospace Pathway program. API has entered into discussions with the Governor's Office of Economic Development and will be considered as the first charter school provider in the State of the Aerospace Pathway.

Our curriculum will include foundational and blended courses that teaches students to understand and apply the design process, create sketches, use computer software to design models, understand mass property calculations and parametric modeling, understand cost analysis, quality control, staffing needs, packing and product marketing, explore career opportunities in design engineering and understand

what skills and education these jobs require, and develop portfolios to display their designs and present them properly to peers, instructors and professionals. The use of blended curriculum is growing, as is the evidence that it works[1]. Benefits to blended learning include the following: students arrive to class better prepared to learn, they write more effectively, earn higher scores on exams, create higher quality projects, engage in deeper and more meaningful discussions of course content, demonstrate a better understanding and deeper exploration of concepts, and succeed at an equal or higher level than their peers in traditional classroom settings. While there are a few blended learning programs happening along the Wasatch Front, there are not any in the rural parts of Utah, where parents have fewer educational options to start with. Achievement Peaks Institute is going to change this with the inclusion of our program offering in the 2019-20 academic year.

The following is an example of our Engineering pathway for students.
Our Engineering and Technology Curriculum incorporates the Project Lead the Way Curriculum along with an introduction to Engineering and Technology education to the highest standards and levels of student achievement.

Our curriculum and rigorous instruction will include the UTAH CTE Pathways and a thorough teaching and inclusion of the Utah State Core Standards in a nurturing a highly motivated learning environment where our students can attain high levels of academic achievement.

CHARTER SCHOOL COURSE OFFERINGS AND 4 YEAR SCHEDULE OF CLASSES CTE PATHWAYS - 2019-2020 (Subject to Adjustmenrts)			
Grade 9	**Grade 10**	**Grade 11**	**Grade 12**
Core/Req Classes	Core/Req Classes	Core/Req Classes	Core/Req Classes
ENG ACC	ENG ACC	ENGLISH	ENGLISH
GEOMETRY	ALGEBRA 2	PRE-CALCULAS	CALCULUS
BIOLOGY ACC	PHYSICS/AP PHYSICS	CHEMESTRY (HNR)	PHYSICS
WORLD HISTORY		US HISTORY (AP)	US GOV'T
PHYS. EDUCATION	PHYS. EDUCATION		
WORLD LANGUAGE	WORLD LANGUAGE		
INTRO TO EGR DESIGN	PRINCIPLES OF ENGINEERING		
COMPUTER SFTWR ENGINEER			
ELECTIVE OPTIONS FOR GRADES 9 THOROGH 12			
Grade 9	**Grade 10**	**Grade 11**	**Grade 12**
ECONOMICS	ECONOMICS	ECONOMICS	ECONOMICS
AP COMPUTER	AP COMPUTER	AP COMPUTER	AP COMPUTER
CTE PATHWAY	CTE PATHWAY	CTE PATHWAY	CTE PATHWAY
CTE PATHWAY	CTE PATHWAY	CTE PATHWAY	CTE PATHWAY
CREA/TECH WRTNG	CREA/TECH WRTNG	CREA/TECH WRTNG	CREA/TECH WRTNG
DGTL ELECTRONICS	DGTL ELECTRONICS	DGTL ELECTRONICS	DGTL ELECTRONICS
RBTCS MECH DGN	RBTCS MECH DGN	RBTCS MECH DGN	RBTCS MECH DGN
WORLD LANGUAGE	WORLD LANGUAGE	WORLD LANGUAGE	WORLD LANGUAGE
CHORUS	CHORUS	CHORUS	CHORUS
THEATER	THEATER	THEATER	THEATER
DANCE	DANCE	DANCE	DANCE
U.S CONSTITUTION	U.S CONSTITUTION	U.S CONSTITUTION	U.S CONSTITUTION

The Utah Core Standards will be taught via integration and embedding the standards within the Lesson Plans our students will be taught and assessed on as they complete Introductory, Beginning, Intermediate, and advanced student Engineering Projects that permit students to demonstrate their learning. Teaching, although having a traditional knowledge base as it underpinnings, will consist of but not limited to traditional direct instructional techniques, online courses, hands on student developed Project Based learning, Problem

[1] Aycock, A., Garnham, C., &Kaleta, R. (March 20, 2002). Lessons learned from the hybrid course project. Teaching with Technology Today, 8(6), 1-6.

Based learning where students are given a set of issues to solve or overcome with no formal classroom instruction, and the latest techniques and innovation as it comes to the education arena.

Achievement Peaks Institute in an effort to providing an additional challenge to its student will offer Concurrent Enrollment (CE). The purpose of CE is to provide an additional educational challenge to ambitious and high achieving students. API students in their last two years of high school will be eligible to participate in the CE program. Academic counselors at API will be available to meet, counsel and assist students with registration into the CE program and courses. Parents of students enrolled in CE courses will be responsible for fees associated with the program. Financial aid and waivers will be available to students who demonstrate a need.

Continuous Checks for understanding, weekly, monthly and quarterly, formative assessment will be used to inform instruction to monitor student learning, standards, and content mastery. A major motivating aspect of our Engineering, Aerospace, Diesel Mechanics, Dental Science and Welding is to issue certificates of Completion and Certification as students complete the Strands involved in their Advanced and Senior Classes.

Appendix A: Articles of Incorporation

Appendix B: Bylaws

Appendix C: Minutes from governing board meeting