# Colorado STEM Academy

## Innovation Plan

## 2022

Westminster Public Schools

Where Education is Personal

# Table of Contents


**The Need for Innovation** ..... Page 6
**Mission and Vision** ..... Page 8
**Academic Achievement** ..... Page 9
**Student Learning Outcomes** ..... Page 12
**Curriculum and Instruction** ..... Page 14
**Assessment Design** ..... Page 21
**Target Population and Students Served** ..... Page 22
**School Accountability Structure** ..... Page 22
**Shared Leadership** ..... Page 24
**Special Populations** ..... Page 25
**School Calendar and Schedule** ..... Page 26
**Professional Development** ..... Page 26
**Compensation** ..... Page 27
**Culture and Climate** ..... Page 28
**Budget** ..... Page 28
**Proposed Waivers** ..... Page 30
**Appendix A** ..... Page 40
**Appendix B** ..... Page 45
**Appendix C** ..... Page 51
**Appendix D** ..... Page 52
**Appendix E** ..... Page 53
**Appendix F** ..... Page 55

Dear Dr. Swanson and the Westminster Public Schools Board of Education,

We are writing this letter to renew our innovation status for Colorado STEM Academy. The purpose of our innovation status is to continue our forward progress and ability to work with students in a unique capacity. We worked with all of our stakeholders in our CSA community through meetings, brainstorming sessions, and surveys to revise our plan for your review.

As you are aware, Colorado STEM Academy is in its ninth year of existence as an innovation school in Westminster Public Schools. Our school serves almost 400 students from all around the metro area in grades PK-8th. We have a focus on project-based learning within the STEM fields to help prepare our students for work-force readiness. Our current innovation status provides us the opportunity to hire and retain quality teachers with a passion for STEM instruction, schedule professional development opportunities around STEM education, design a calendar that allows for more individualized learning, and more.

In nine years, Colorado STEM Academy has a proven record of success. We have highlighted some of our accomplishments below.

- Colorado STEM Academy scored a 90.7 on our school performance framework from the state of Colorado on our most recent framework in 2018-2019.
- Colorado STEM Academy earned the Governors Distinguished Improvement Award for two consecutive years in 2017-2018 and 2018-2019.
- Throughout the pandemic, Colorado STEM Academy has established innovative practices to help maintain enrollment and STEM learning through a hybrid model in the 2020-2021 school year and an in-person model for the 2021-2022 school year.
- The school most recently obtained level one high reliability school status through Marzano Academies.
- The school offers annual hands-on trips for outdoor education and ski trips to explore STEM concepts in real-world settings.
- Classrooms have daily social-emotional lessons to help students develop the "soft skills" needed for their futures.
- The school partners with National Center for Atmospheric Research, Garver Engineering Consulting, Bird Conservatory, KidSpace, and Stanley Lake Stargazing.

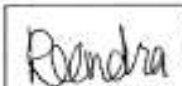
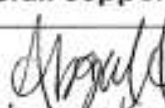
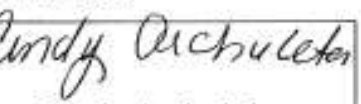
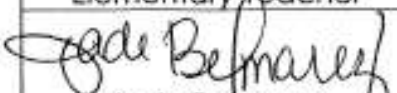
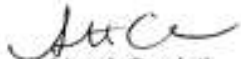
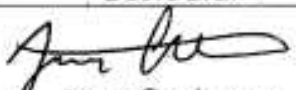
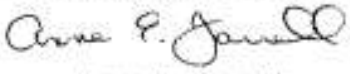
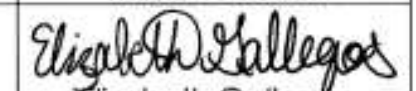
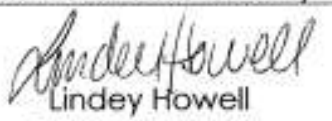
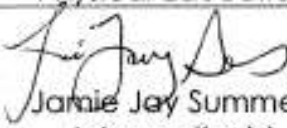
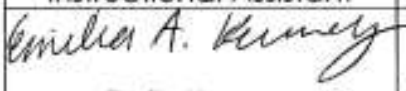
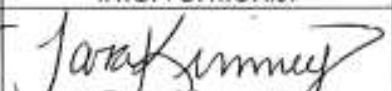
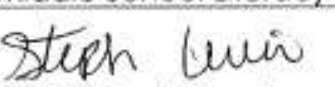
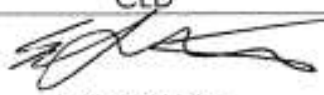
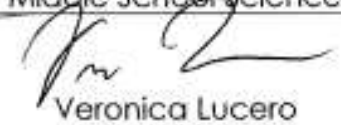
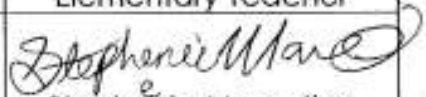
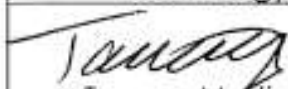
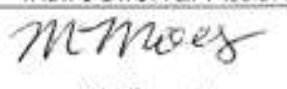
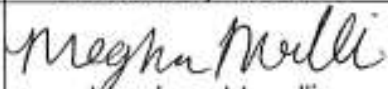
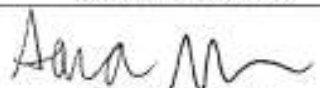
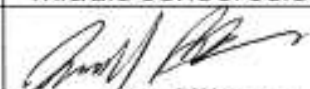
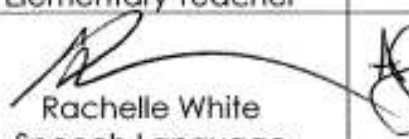
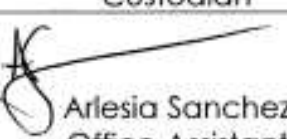
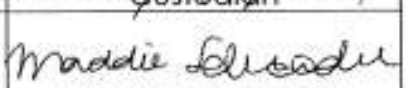
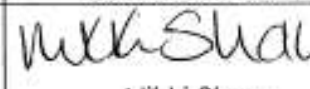
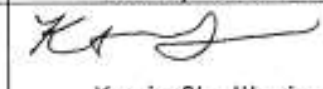
By renewing our current innovation status and the continued support of the Board of Education, we know we can continue to excel as Westminster Public School's STEM innovation school.

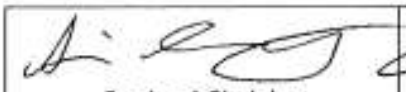
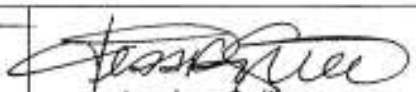
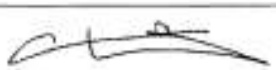
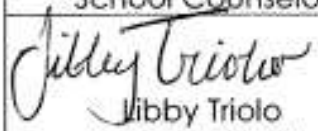
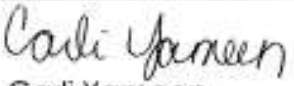
Thank you for your consideration,

Brenda Martin, Principal

Richard Diehl, Assistant Principal

**Staff Support for our Innovation Status**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
|  Reandra Alexander<br>Elementary Teacher |  Abby Anderson<br>Primary Teacher |  Cindy Archuleta<br>Custodial |
|  Jade Belmarez<br>Elementary Teacher |  Stevi Caridi<br>Preschool Teacher |  Joey Costanza<br>Music Teacher |
|  Anne E. Farrell<br>Art Teacher | Masa Fritz<br>Middle School Math |  Elizabeth Gallegos<br>Middle School Literacy |
| Brianna Giovengo<br>Middle School Math | Nick Hamar<br>Physical Education |  Lindey Howell<br>Primary Teacher |
| Jenna Anderson-Jay<br>Instructional Assistant |  Jamie Jay Summers<br>Interventionist | Katie Joliff<br>Middle School Literacy |
|  Emily Kenney<br>CLD |  Tara Kimmey<br>Middle School Science |  Stephenie Lewis<br>Elementary Teacher |
|  Edgar Lista<br>Technology |  Veronica Lucero<br>Instructional Assistant |  Stephanie Marantino<br>Elementary Teacher |
|  Tammy Martinez<br>Preschool Para |  Melissa Moos<br>Middle School Science |  Meghan Morelli<br>SPED |
|  Sara Munson<br>Elementary Teacher |  Joe Pittman<br>Custodian | Gary Reynolds<br>Custodian |
|  Rachelle White<br>Speech Language |  Arlesia Sanchez<br>Office Assistant |  Madeline Schroeder<br>Primary Teacher |
| Claudia Seefried<br>Instructional Assistant |  Nikki Shaw<br>Secretary |  Kevin Shultheiss<br>Office Assistant |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
|  Sydnei Slutsky<br>School Counselor |  Jessica Sullivan<br>Middle School Social Studies |  Chris Tidd<br>Elementary Teacher |
|  Libby Triolo<br>Mental Health |  Carli Yameen<br>Interventionist/ Technology | |

## The Need for Innovation

During the course of our nation's history, education has been seen as the guarantor of a bright future for all its children and for the country. This vision has been undermined by staggering dropout rates in schools across the nation, by graduation rates here in Colorado (81.9% graduation rate for the class of 2020) Colorado Department of Education) and by equally dismal achievement gaps between ethnic and socioeconomic subgroups across the state of Colorado. These alarming trends call into question the notion of education as a great provider of opportunity.

It is apparent that this change in public education and more specifically here in Westminster Public Schools (WPS) is of the essence. Maintaining our innovation status will provide the flexibility needed to create such change to be implemented in a careful and deliberate manner. Over the past several decades, educational reform has often been confined to what happens in the classroom and within school buildings. With a systemic, Competency Based System (CBS) reform effort, WPS has embarked on a journey to change this. Efforts such as these are essential and a first step in the right direction toward reform. With Innovation School status and CBS, Colorado STEM Academy has the ability to increase the level of rigor and instruction considerably.

Through problem-based instructional approaches, with engineering experiences integrated across the curriculum, and technology use infused in all core and elective courses, Colorado STEM Academy offers a reform approach that is grounded in research for 21st century learning. This reform requires autonomy to be able to implement a researched and project-based curriculum in which students participate in challenging, hands-on, problem-based learning opportunities that are initiated and fostered by the guided inquiry approach. Innovation status allows us to be able to use the building and community as a teaching and learning lab that enables students to build real solutions and apply their skills to solve relevant community issues.

The restrictions often placed on schools to comply with certain schedules and school year calendars inhibit the flexibility that Colorado STEM Academy needs in order to successfully implement our instructional model. Colorado STEM Academy utilizes a flexible schedule with an extended school day to allow additional time for problem-based learning and high levels of rigor to take place in the community and classrooms.

Typically, schools are neglecting to look at the "whole" child in terms of long-term success. Student goals are focused solely on academics when research tells us that we are missing the boat and losing many students as a result. We teach and expect students to live up to the Colorado STEM Academy's core values, which are further described throughout this document. Students engage in an intense, integrated curriculum and receive individualized support to ensure mastery of core content areas. Throughout the core curriculum, STEM standards are integrated using backward design.

Colorado STEM Academy has the flexibility to hire a professional staff willing and able to support the mission and vision of our school, including working within a flexible schedule and extended school day. Our current innovation status also affords us the ability to be able to

terminate those who are not in alignment with the mission and vision of the school through our at-will employment status.

Colorado STEM Academy is a program with a clear vision and mission driven by the needs of our students and community. Our school attracts families that have chosen to opt out of a traditional school setting by offering a relevant, high quality education for all students. Colorado STEM Academy respects diversity, expects engagement, and thrives on the very foundation of why public schools were created in this country, to participate in a democratic society and strengthen communities.

## Mission and Vision

Throughout the planning process our school innovation planning team in partnership with our staff, students, and parents collaboratively engaged in a series of planning and visioning exercises. What did they want from the school? How did they define STEM programming? What are the skills that make one successful in school, in the community, and as a 21st century learner? As the work progressed, agreed upon themes became apparent. The team's core components of our STEM program are:

- All implementation designs will be based on Westminster Public Schools (WPS) Competency Based System (CBS) model to raise achievement of all students, so that they are prepared for future advancement in STEM education and careers.
- Inspire students in science, technology, engineering, and math by involving them in solving authentic problems, working with others, building real solutions (artifacts), and applying their skills to solve relevant community issues.
- Close the achievement and technical skill gaps between economically disadvantaged students, students of color, and their peers.
- Support students for a 21st century work and future environment through the development and practice of social emotional learning lessons and soft skills.
- Increase the number and diversity of students who aspire and succeed at the highest levels of academic and technical achievement in these subject areas and related career pathways.

Through the process of defining our STEM program and identifying goals, the team agreed upon a vision and mission for the school.

**Shared Mission**

*Prepare today's students for life*

**Shared Vision**

STEM Academy is dedicated to preparing students for continued education and workforce readiness through the integration of the STEM fields. Our students, staff, and community strive to create student leaders through the use of authentic and collaborative learning opportunities.

We believe that if we implement the school vision and mission and focus on our goals, we will not only raise our performance on the State Accountability Framework, but we will give our

students a springboard to high achievement in continuing education and preparation for a work force that it is continuously changing and developing.

## Academic Achievement

The critical success of any programming depends on clearly identifying the issue(s) to be addressed by the proposed model. Do we have a justifiable case for investing our human and fiscal resources into the renewal of a STEM school? In reviewing academic achievement and growth scores for WPS and the state of Colorado, it is evident our students need more in order to be prepared for the challenges and demands of the 21st century workplace. The data, which follows, indicates our students' level of performance in the 2018-2019 school year which is the most recent data from the state due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**School Performance Framework**

COLORADO Department of Education

Preliminary 2019 School Performance Framework

4334: COLORADO STEM ACADEMY | 0070: WESTMINSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS — Levels: EM - (1-Year)

| Plan Type | Official Rating based on 1-Year SPF Report |
|---|---|
| Performance Plan: Meets 95% Participation | 90.7/100 |

The official plan type is based on either the 1-year or multi-year framework as indicated in the right hand corner of the black title bar above. Schools are assigned a plan type based on the overall percent of points earned on the official framework. The overall percent of framework points represents the percentage of points earned across all performance indicators. The official percent of points earned is matched to the scoring guide to determine the plan type. Failing to meet the accountability participation rate of 95% on two or more assessments will reduce the overall plan type by one level. Refer to the scoring guide at the end of this report for additional information.

90.7%

Performance
Improvement
Priority Imp
Turnaround

School plan types are based on the total percentage of points earned:

*Performance Plan:* 53.0% - 100.0%

*Improvement Plan:* 42.0% - 52.9%

*Priority Improvement Plan:* 34.0% - 41.9%

*Accredited with Turnaround Plan:* 0.0% - 33.9%

*Insufficient Data:* No reportable achievement and growth data.

**Indicator Rating Totals**

| Performance Indicator | % Pts Earned | Weighted Pts Earned/Pts Eligible | Rating |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academic Achievement | 87.1% | 34.8/40 | Meets |
| Academic Growth | 93.2% | 55.9/60 | Exceeds |

**Assurances**

| | Rating |
|---|---|
| Accountability Participation Rate | Meets 95% |

**Test Participation Rates****

| Subject | Total Records | Valid Scores | Participation Rate | Parent Excuses | Accountability Participation Rate** | Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| English Language Arts | 271 | 264 | 97.4% | 7 | 100.0% | Meets 95% |
| Math | 271 | 264 | 97.4% | 7 | 100.0% | Meets 95% |
| Science | 101 | 98 | 97.0% | 3 | 100.0% | Meets 95% |

**Summary of Ratings by EMH Level**

| EMH Level | Performance Indicator | % Pts Earned | Weighted Pts Earned/Pts Eligible | Rating | % Pts by EMH | Rating |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Elementary | Academic Achievement | 75.0% | 30.0/40 | Meets | 82.5% | Performance |
| | Academic Growth | 87.5% | 52.5/60 | Exceeds | | |
| Middle | Academic Achievement | 99.2% | 39.7/40 | Exceeds | 99.0% | Performance |
| | Academic Growth | 98.9% | 59.3/60 | Exceeds | | |

(*) Not Applicable; (-) No Reportable Data | For additional information, refer to the scoring guide on the last page of this report.
(**) Participation ratings are based on the Accountability Participation Rate, which excludes Parent Excusals from the denominator and counts English Learners in their first year in the United States who were eligible to take the ELP assessment as participants regardless of whether they tested.
(^) Schools with an Insufficient State Data plan type will maintain performance watch status from the prior year.

**CMAS School Growth Report**

COLORADO Department of Education

# SCHOOL CMAS GROWTH REPORT

## 4334: COLORADO STEM ACADEMY | 0070: WESTMINSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

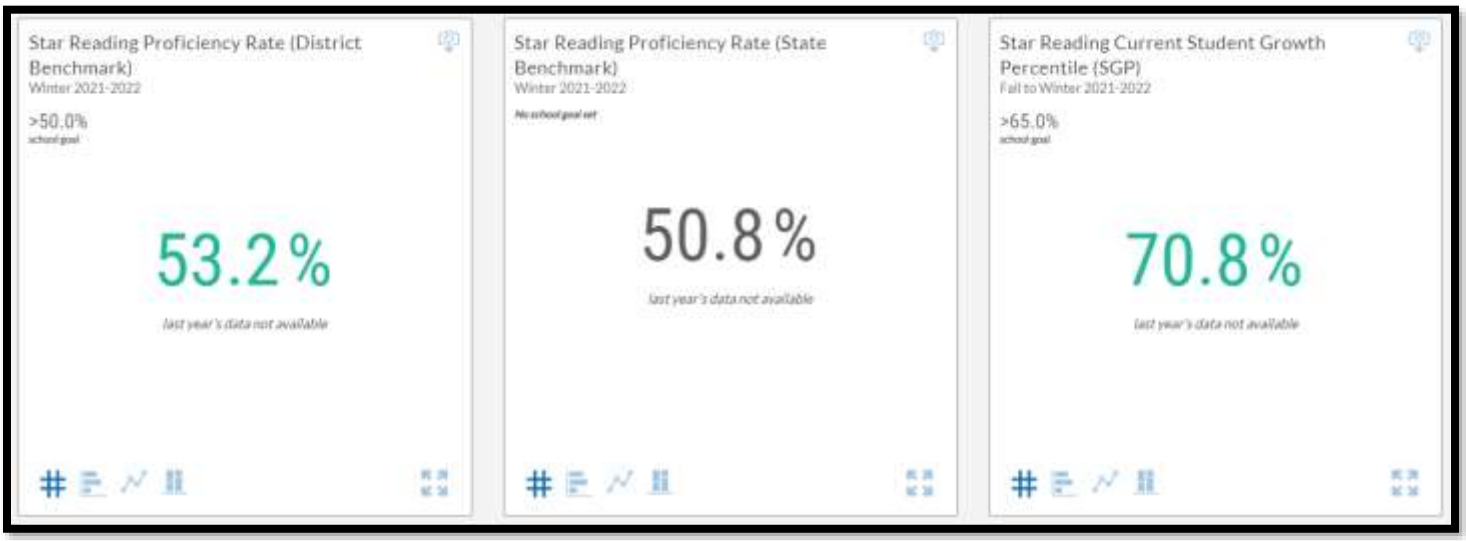
Growth metrics are intended to provide a more complete picture of academic performance by helping to contextualize more traditional achievement metrics. While achievement metrics represent performance at specific points in time when students are assessed, growth metrics show what happens in the time in between assessments. Under the Colorado Growth Model, growth percentiles are calculated by analyzing English Language Arts and Math scores over consecutive years of the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) assessments. A student's growth percentile (ranging from 1 to 99) indicates how his or her performance changed over time relative to students with similar score histories. Growth percentiles are independent of achievement levels, so all students have an equal chance of achieving high growth.

Median Growth Percentiles (MGPs) are used to represent growth outcomes for schools and districts. An MGP represents the mid-point of the distribution of all of the individual growth percentiles obtained by students within a particular group. This report shows MGPs for entire schools and districts, as well as for distinct grade levels and for different student groups. In general, higher MGPs indicate higher growth rates for the students in the designated group. State-level MGPs are presented along with school and district results as a point of reference. Typically, the state MGP for any group will be 50, though it may sometimes vary. Blank cells in the data table reflect cases where fewer than 20 student growth percentiles were available for the group; the MGPs are not shown in order to ensure privacy and to discourage inappropriate inferences about group performance. For additional resources, including PSAT/SAT growth reports, go to: www.cde.state.co.us/schoolview/coloradogrowthmodel

Median Growth Percentile
1.0 — 50.0 — 99.0

| | | ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS | | | | | | | | | MATH | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | School | | | District | | | State | | | School | | | District | | | State | | |
| | | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 |
| ALL STUDENTS | All Students | 56.5 | 64.0 | 71.0 | 53.0 | 55.0 | 56.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 61.5 | 70.5 | 65.5 | 44.0 | 49.0 | 47.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| GRADE LEVEL | 04 | 67.5 | 69.0 | 73.5 | 42.0 | 48.0 | 51.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 58.0 | 76.0 | 77.5 | 40.0 | 52.0 | 51.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 05 | 61.0 | 71.0 | 59.5 | 52.5 | 60.0 | 51.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 56.0 | 84.0 | 45.5 | 49.0 | 57.0 | 43.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 06 | 47.0 | 60.5 | 63.0 | 48.0 | 51.0 | 56.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 63.0 | 68.0 | 64.5 | 47.0 | 47.0 | 45.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 07 | 58.0 | 63.5 | 79.0 | 61.0 | 62.5 | 58.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 55.0 | 63.5 | 78.5 | 43.0 | 44.0 | 42.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | 08 | 52.5 | 51.0 | 75.0 | 59.0 | 56.0 | 62.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 68.0 | 65.5 | 69.0 | 43.0 | 47.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| ENGLISH LEARNERS | English Learners | 51.0 | 67.0 | 79.5 | 52.0 | 57.0 | 56.0 | 51.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 64.0 | 73.0 | 63.0 | 43.0 | 50.0 | 45.0 | 49.0 | 48.0 | 50.0 |
| | Non-English Learners | 58.0 | 63.5 | 68.0 | 53.0 | 54.0 | 55.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 59.0 | 69.5 | 66.5 | 46.0 | 49.0 | 48.0 | 51.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH (FRL) | FRL Eligible | 57.5 | 66.0 | 72.0 | 52.0 | 54.0 | 55.0 | 48.0 | 47.0 | 47.0 | 56.0 | 73.0 | 60.5 | 42.5 | 49.0 | 46.0 | 46.0 | 46.0 | 47.0 |
| | Non-FRL | 55.5 | 64.0 | 70.5 | 56.0 | 58.0 | 57.0 | 52.0 | 52.0 | 52.0 | 63.0 | 66.0 | 73.0 | 54.0 | 52.0 | 49.5 | 53.0 | 53.0 | 52.0 |
| GENDER | Female | 55.5 | 67.5 | 76.0 | 57.0 | 57.0 | 58.0 | 55.0 | 54.0 | 53.0 | 56.0 | 73.0 | 65.0 | 44.0 | 51.0 | 46.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 51.0 |
| | Male | 58.0 | 63.0 | 68.0 | 48.0 | 53.0 | 54.0 | 45.0 | 46.0 | 47.0 | 64.5 | 68.0 | 68.0 | 44.5 | 48.0 | 47.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 49.0 |
| GIFTED | Gifted and Talented | 40.5 | 60.0 | 69.5 | 55.0 | 66.5 | 69.0 | 58.0 | 59.0 | 58.0 | 64.0 | 68.0 | 63.5 | 60.0 | 55.5 | 55.0 | 58.0 | 59.0 | 58.0 |
| | Non-Gifted and Talented | 59.0 | 64.0 | 71.0 | 52.0 | 55.0 | 55.0 | 49.0 | 49.0 | 49.0 | 58.5 | 71.0 | 66.5 | 44.0 | 49.0 | 46.0 | 49.0 | 49.0 | 49.0 |
| INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP) | On IEP | | | | 41.0 | 46.0 | 47.0 | 40.0 | 42.0 | 43.0 | | | | 39.0 | 42.5 | 39.5 | 43.0 | 43.0 | 44.0 |
| | Non-IEP | 57.0 | 65.0 | 71.0 | 54.0 | 56.0 | 57.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 59.5 | 70.0 | 65.5 | 45.0 | 50.0 | 47.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 |
| MIGRANT | Migrant | | | | 52.5 | 54.0 | | 49.0 | 47.0 | 45.0 | | | | 47.0 | 50.0 | | 47.0 | 43.0 | 46.0 |
| | Non-Migrant | 56.5 | 64.0 | 71.0 | 53.0 | 55.0 | 56.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 61.5 | 70.5 | 65.5 | 44.0 | 49.0 | 47.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| MINORITY | Minority | 58.0 | 66.0 | 69.0 | 52.0 | 55.0 | 55.0 | 49.0 | 48.0 | 48.0 | 57.5 | 71.5 | 64.5 | 42.0 | 49.0 | 46.0 | 48.0 | 48.0 | 48.0 |
| | Non-Minority | 53.5 | 58.0 | 73.5 | 53.0 | 54.0 | 56.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 52.0 | 68.0 | 69.0 | 68.5 | 55.0 | 52.0 | 48.0 | 53.0 | 52.0 | 52.0 |
| PERFORMANCE LEVEL | At or Above Benchmark | 53.0 | 64.0 | 64.5 | 50.0 | 52.0 | 58.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 57.5 | 67.0 | 65.0 | 46.0 | 50.0 | 47.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| | Below Benchmark | 59.5 | 64.0 | 79.0 | 53.0 | 56.0 | 55.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 64.0 | 73.0 | 67.5 | 44.0 | 49.0 | 46.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 | 50.0 |
| RACE/ETHNICITY | American Indian or Alaska Native | | | | | | | 46.0 | 46.0 | 48.0 | | | | | | | 44.0 | 48.0 | 48.0 |
| | Asian | | | | 68.0 | 65.0 | 61.0 | 58.0 | 58.0 | 59.0 | | | | 58.0 | 56.5 | 57.0 | 59.0 | 59.0 | 60.0 |
| | Black | | | | 56.0 | 58.0 | 61.0 | 48.0 | 46.0 | 46.0 | | | | 46.0 | 48.5 | 41.0 | 45.0 | 46.0 | 47.0 |
| | Hispanic | 59.0 | 67.0 | 70.5 | 52.0 | 54.0 | 56.0 | 48.0 | 48.0 | 47.0 | 56.0 | 70.0 | 64.5 | 41.0 | 48.0 | 46.0 | 47.0 | 47.0 | 47.0 |
| | White | 53.5 | 58.0 | 73.5 | 53.0 | 54.0 | 56.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 52.0 | 68.0 | 69.0 | 68.5 | 55.0 | 52.0 | 48.0 | 53.0 | 52.0 | 52.0 |
| | Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | | | | | | | 54.0 | 50.0 | 47.0 | | | | | | | 50.0 | 51.0 | 45.0 |
| | Two or More Races | | | | 58.0 | 55.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 50.0 | 51.0 | | | | 58.0 | 53.0 | 41.5 | 51.0 | 51.0 | 51.0 |

# 2021 Renaissance STAR Data



## 2021 DIBELS Proficiency Levels by Grade and Season

## Student Learning Outcomes

In Westminster Public Schools (WPS), we have implemented a Competency Based System (CBS) where students are placed at their performance levels and must demonstrate mastery of the content before they advance to more complex work. The district has eliminated

traditional grade levels and the time-bound, social promotion found in most educational systems nationwide. Ending one school year does not automatically mean moving to the next grade level in the fall.

Colorado STEM Academy has seen immense success with the implementation of CBS with a current School Performance Rating of 90.7 in the 2018-2019 school year. Beyond our rating, though, is the importance of preparing our students for life. A recent report by *The Information Technology and Innovation Foundation* concluded, "The United States has made the least progress of the 40 nations studied in improvement in international competitiveness and innovation capacity over the last decade."

To remain a global leader in innovation the nation must continue to harness the creativity and dynamism of a new generation. In his opening remarks to the *Change the Equation Initiative*, a CEO-led effort to improve education, former President Barack Obama stated, "Leadership tomorrow depends on how we educate our students today — especially in science, technology, engineering and math."

WPS recognizes that in order to prepare our students with the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in leading tomorrow's innovations; we must reorganize our instructional programs today. The Board of Education has, through their leadership, made the commitment to our students' future by investing in the development of a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) program. The proposal contained herein outlines the vision, program focus, and rationale for the instructional approach presented.

Colorado STEM Academy is committed to being a high performing K-8 school. Over the next 3 years, our goal is to maintain our Performance rating. Our aim is to have the overall school rating of "Exceeds Expectations" and an Academic Growth rating over the 60$^{th}$ percentile.

As this formula has served us well, we intend to keep it in place, which explains the strategic use of building funds in the budget section of this document. The table below will show more specific goals to be achieved over the next three years.

| WPS School Performance Framework Indicators | Innovation School Annual Achievement Goals and Measures |
|---|---|
| Student growth over time towards State standards, including the following measures:<br>• CMAS and other assessments chosen, including assessments in compliance with the READ Act | CSA has a commitment to academic success. We expect the school to maintain an overall rating of "Performance" over the course of the next three years (2022-2025)<br><br>Therefore, we will meet the following requirements:<br>• The school's median growth percentile will be 60 or higher in literacy and math<br>• The median growth percentile will be above the state and |

| | |
|---|---|
| | district average in all demographic areas<br>• The school's percentage of students staying at the "meets" or "exceeds" CMAS performance levels will be equal to or above the District's and State's percentage |
| Student Achievement Level/Status, including the following measures:<br>• CMAS and other assessments chosen, including assessment in compliance with the READ Act<br>• Achievement gaps (i.e. FRL, CLD, Special Education and ethnic subgroups) | Our overall goal is to have a mean score of 750 in both literacy and math as measured by CMAS. Additionally, our goal is to be above the 60th percentile on the overall Growth Framework as dictated by the State of Colorado for all subgroups. |
| Local Assessments:<br>• As measured by Renaissance, 75% of our students will be "on pace" and either High or Above Average in reading and literacy by 2024-2025.<br>• DIBELS reading assessment for K-5 students will be at 75% "benchmark" by the end of each school year by 2024-2025.<br>• To ensure successful continuation into middle school and further matriculation into high school, students will be at or above grade level, in all subjects upon entering the 6th grade and 9th grade as measured by Empower Data. | The local assessments on the left are specific to our Competency Based System. In good years, grade levels might hit 50% or 60% proficiency on either Renaissance or DIBELS. However, with a rigorous model and extended day, we do believe we can move students to this level of academic performance.<br><br>The data goal mentioned in the Empower bullet is how we measure progress in a Competency Based System. Students are measured not by their age level but by their performance level. |

## Curriculum and Instruction

**Curriculum Design**

STEM teachers center student learning on strong literacy skills while building students' understanding of rigorous content in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Student centered instruction is balanced with opportunities for whole class instruction, small group instruction and one-on-one learning using an inquiry-based approach.

Students learn to think and solve problems as scientists, technologists, engineers and mathematicians.

Each level will develop units of study around proficiency scales and use a scope and sequence to maintain adequate pacing and focus of instruction. Learning outcomes are linked to the Colorado Academic Standards. Teachers integrate literacy, math, science, social studies, engineering and technology into project-based units of inquiry. Progress in these units of study are measured through the use of performance-based formative assessments and summative, content specific assessments.

**STEM Primary Exploratory Program**

Students in this program will learn through a balance of guided instruction, play, and exploration. Building the foundation of numeracy and literacy skills as well as introducing problem-based learning will be a focus of this programming. Our K-2 students will have the opportunity to develop and deepen their curiosity about the world around them through inquiry-based learning, hands-on exploration and taking intellectual risks. Teachers will also introduce foundational presentation and technology skills in addition to incorporating a social and emotional component during the day to lay a foundation for effective communication and citizenship. This program includes:

- Dedicated math and science, taught daily using a Competency Based System Curriculum.
- Introduction to technology across all content areas.
- Regular opportunities for social-emotional growth through a dedicated curriculum.
- The development of engineering skills through a primary engineering curriculum (Project Lead the Way).
- Using a maker's space model, students will have the opportunity for regular hands-on exploration.
- Exposure and practice using the engineering design process.
- Specials classes in technology, art, music, and physical education.
- Age appropriate technology will be available for daily use in all classrooms.
- Introduction and practice with the scientific process in preparation for the science fair.

**STEM Intermediate Program**

Students in the upper elementary grades will experience a deeper connection between the content areas through our project-based approach. Our 3-5 students will have the opportunity to develop and deepen their curiosity about the world around them through inquiry-based learning, hands-on exploration and taking intellectual risks. Students will also expand presentation and technology skills in addition to incorporating a more mature social and emotional component during the day to lay a foundation for good communication and citizenship. This program includes:

- Math and science, taught daily using Competency Based System curriculum.

- Technology that is integrated with math, science and engineering activities. In addition to technology as part of learning in the core areas, technology literacy goals are taught and assessed through problem-based learning opportunities.
- Literacy curriculum that emphasizes the use of non-fiction reading in the content areas as part of the Common Core.
- STEM classes that are interdisciplinary and inquiry-based and will provide extensive opportunities for problem-based learning.
- All students participate in the school science/ STEM exploratory fair.
- Technology is used for intervention and enrichment opportunities.

**STEM 6th – 8th Grade**

Students in this program will expand on their knowledge of the four major content areas (Math, Literacy, Science, and Social Studies) through our project-based approach. Students will have the opportunity to self-select electives in this program to help support a passion for learning and deepen cross-content connections. Students will master presentation and a variety of technology skills in addition to learning more about metacognition, critical thinking, current events, and social emotional leadership to help prepare them for high school and beyond.

- Students solve problems using higher-level algebra and geometry.
- Competency Based curricula is used in all areas of instruction.
- By 8th grade, students are prepared for Project Lead the Way and STEM at the high school level.
- Students have extensive laboratory experiences using the most contemporary technologies for scientific inquiry, mathematical calculation, engineering design and problem-solving techniques.
- Extensive use of technology is used in all classes as well as electronic presentations.
- Curricula integrates analytical reading and technical writing skills development.
- Intensive communication assignments are designed to refine verbal and visual communication abilities.

**Pedagogical Approach & Classroom Design**

Effective teaching starts with classroom strategies grounded in solid pedagogy. Effective STEM teaching challenges students to innovate and invent while integrating math, science and technology concepts with other subject areas. Teachers learn how to use problem-based learning instructional methods and STEM teaching strategies to engage students and encourage a student-centered learning environment.

**Support for Teachers with School-Based Professional Development**

- Develop interdisciplinary curriculum that focuses on driving questions and learning outcomes based on Colorado Academic Standards.
- Identify and plan specific cross-content hands-on activities at each level.
- Organize and facilitate problem-based learning as part of instruction.
- Design and guide community-based projects at each grade level. These projects will

support the STEM school vision by linking learning in school to the greater Westminster Community.
- Use a variety of strategies and settings that identify and accommodate individual learning styles; and engage students in experiential learning.

**Core Literacy Program (Wonders and Study Sync)**
The core literacy program is a balanced literacy approach along with all current District programs. In preparation for STEM and in conjunction with our project-based learning approach to instruction, students will be challenged with authentic text materials. This includes both fiction and non-fiction with an emphasis on non-fiction text in STEM content areas. In alignment with the District, CSA also uses the Wonders Literacy Program and Study Sync as primary resources. Small group literacy instruction is provided to students as well as reading intervention support as needed.

**Core Math Program (Envisions Math)**
The core math program will, like the literacy program described above, will be in line with WPS proficiency scales as described in the overall CBS instructional system developed by WPS. Like literacy, math will be taught through project-based learning unit plans developed by teachers. The core curricular supports for delivering this curriculum will be *Envisions.*

Math instruction will mirror literacy instruction in some ways. A balanced approach to math will include modeled math in whole and small group settings, shared math in whole and small group settings, guided math in small groups and independent work. Instruction will build from concrete to pictorial in order to build students' abstract understandings of math concepts across the varying strands.

Additional curricular resources include *IXL, Successmaker,* and potentially other high interest, high engagement practice methods for students to use both at school and to extend learning at home.

**Core Science Program (Mystery Science)**
Using a combination of online resources and Mystery Science, students will have a balanced approach to high-level science skills using technology and hands-on experiences. The objective of the program is to deliver a comprehensive hands-on science education that will lead to measurable impact on:

- Science knowledge and skills among students and their teachers.
- Higher teacher confidence levels in science instruction.
- Inquiry-rich content.
- Cross-curricular connections that link reading and science skills.
- Leveled readers for differentiated instruction to meet students where they are developmentally.
- Lessons where student scientists investigate the natural world and generate scientific knowledge using the scientific method.

**Core Social Studies and Humanities Studies**

Using a combination of online resources and teacher developed units of study, students will have a balanced approach to high-level thinking skills using technology and hands-on experiences. The objective of the program is to deliver a comprehensive hands-on education that will lead to measurable impact on:

- Understanding the impact of personal decisions and society decisions for personal financial literacy and economic growth and development
- The interconnectedness of the world through geography studies in relation to STEM
- Studies relating the history of science, technology, engineering, math, and other topics to deepen an understanding of the world
- Higher teacher confidence levels in social studies instruction.
- Inquiry-rich content.
- Cross-curricular connections that link reading and social science skills.

**Core Engineering Program (Project Lead-the-Way)**

Colorado STEM Academy has adopted Project Lead-the-Way designed specifically to offer:

- Structures where technologies are the products and processes created by engineers who apply mathematics and science knowledge. Almost everything made by humans to meet a need is a technology, e.g., a telephone, a drainage system, and/or a bridge.
- Students gain the skills they need to find solutions for societal problems. Engineers create the designs and instruments used daily, based on what scientists have found.
- Engineering units of study that incorporate design and problem solving under constraints, such as project goals, budget, deadlines, and the limits of knowledge itself.
- Support for students interested in engineering to make the transition into high school and college engineering programs.
- Detailed units of study aligned with the Next Generation Science Standards that incorporate inquiry-based methods with high-level engineering content.

**Arts Program**

According to the *National Science Foundation (NSF)*, "The great scientific and technological breakthroughs are expected at the intersection of disciplines, with the arts playing a key role." Art curriculum includes technology and design engineering mediums. As a matter of fact, STEM and the arts are two sides of the same coin, with STEM representing the knowledge, tools and processes to invent the future; and the arts providing us with our humanity. The two are inseparable.

At Colorado STEM Academy, we have a strong understanding of how STEM and the arts complement and balance each other. Students use various programs to investigate the art of engineering design. Traditional art instruction is blended into the curriculum to ensure a solid understanding of essential art concepts. Units of study could include scientific illustration,

modeling, sketching and building, modern and classic elements of design, videography and photography. Career paths and training related to technology and engineering are also included in teaching.

**Music**
Music curriculum includes technology-based music instruction. In addition to choir and instrumental instruction, students work on computers to write, compose, develop and produce a wide variety of music. Student produced music is shared through electronic and traditional means.

**Physical Education**
The STEM school provides a high quality physical education program that provides various exercise, health and wellness programs. Health education, including anatomy and physiology, is included within exercise science curriculum.

**Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learner Support**
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners are supported through the implementation of the Sheltered Instruction Approach. Students are guided to construct meaning by scaffolding the instruction starting at the instructional level of each student. The students have the opportunity to demonstrate understanding of concepts and skills through different assessments such as:

- Hands on activities
- Group tasks or projects
- Performance-based assessments
- Instruction by a highly-qualified language teacher

**Instructional Technology**
Technology has a dual function at Colorado STEM Academy. Our school is outfitted with one-to-one Chromebooks to enhance learning while in the classroom. Technology supports learning in STEM classrooms as a tool for teaching and learning. Technology also functions as a separate subject with specific technology goals established for problem-based learning. This dual approach supports the understanding that technology offers students access to current and developing information, tools for visualizing and modeling, data collection, data analysis and emerging communication of ideas.

Teachers and students use:

- Interactive white boards for classroom instruction and presentations.
- Mobile computer devices for research, communication and learning activities.
- STEM online resources for content area reinforcement.
- Digital books to support literacy.
- Digital data collection equipment such as thermometers, probes and microscopes for scientific investigations and inquiry.
- Video conferencing and virtual fieldtrips to maximize students' exposure to STEM-related

points of interest.
- Virtual learning including learning blogs, MIT courseware, Wiki, educational forums and digital learning communities.
- Online scientific tools to manipulate labs through the Gizmos resource
- Access to an international weather station to collect and analyze local weather in partnership with the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR).

**Homework Expectations**

Colorado STEM Academy has an extended day and therefore, only assigns limited homework to students as needed. In addition to nightly reading, homework experiences support and extend classroom learning. Students engage in activities and independent practice. Technology enhances the flow of information between families and the STEM learning community.

**Personalized Learning and WIN (What I Need)**

The Westminster Public Schools Competency Based System allows students to learn at a customized pace. The model presents knowledge and skills as a series of blocks that build upon each other. Students show that they have mastered one block—called a learning target—before moving onto the next. Within each content area there is a collection of learning targets that make up a performance level. Students must complete all of the learning targets within one performance level before moving to the next. Learning is individual to the student and happens at a customized pace. To support the student, progress is monitored through a Learning Management System that tracks individual competencies on a scale of 0-4.0, with 3.0 being the required level of proficiency to progress. The model allows for:

- Learners to progress purposefully at their own pace with teacher guidance based on demonstrating proficiency or better on the Learning Targets.
- Learning to be personalized through goal setting, choice and voice with appropriate instruction.
- Multiple opportunities over time are provided to demonstrate and verify competency of Learning Targets (standards).
- Support and scaffolding for any struggling learner is provided through the Blended Services Model to meet the area of need. There is no retention.

**Interventionist Support**

CSA will have support as needed in CLD, SPED, and other academic needs as determined by student data. The interventionist model will follow the WPS Blended Services Instructional Model, which groups students by their needs (as opposed to simply their label). In this model the CLD teacher, Special Education teacher and mental health staff work collaboratively in order to service all students. This approach is an integrated response to what could be called siloed instruction that has typically isolated interventionists as well as the students they serve.

**Assessment Design**

Learning is measured through the systematic use of school wide Problem Based Learning (PBL) rubrics and a detailed Competency Based reporting tool.

Student assessment will reflect three criteria based on course and level specific learning:

- **Product Criteria**: What students need to know and be able to do at each level (i.e. standards and STEM based content knowledge).
- **Process Criteria**: How students are doing related to their efforts and behavior (i.e. how students are developing their 21st century skills and as citizens).
- **Progress Criteria**: How far students have come from where they were at the beginning of the learning experience or unit of study (i.e., how quickly are students progressing towards goals and what growth can we measure).

Rubrics reflect STEM problem-based learning and performance assessments at all levels. School wide rubrics are continually developed using resources from PBL Works for problem-based learning experiences. Rubrics reflect clear expectations for both students and parents.

Students are required to use rubrics to measure their own progress toward meeting assignment goals. Benchmarks for adequate achievement are established and communicated regularly to Colorado STEM Academy families. School improvement goals are directly linked to measurable data from school wide rubrics and assessment results.

Student progress is measured by:

- Student achievement on state assessments
- Performance assessments in all STEM areas
- Curriculum embedded performance tasks
- Team collaboration/leadership/social emotional skills
- Participation in extra-curricular activities/competitions
- Renaissance assessments
- DIBELS progress monitoring and benchmark assessments
- Community engagement
- Student presentation

Students are expected to work in partnerships, teams and independently on a variety of STEM projects that demonstrate their mastery of STEM subjects at each level.

## Target Population and Students Served

In approaching the design for a STEM school, staff evaluated many things that would position the program to best meet the needs of our students and community. In 2015, the Board of Education voted to expand Colorado STEM Academy to grades PreK-8.

Our current design requires an application process upon entrance to help with our competency-based placement upon entrance. We believe the STEM school should be an innovation magnet school, drawing students from within and outside of the District. Additionally, to capitalize on the choice option available to Colorado families, we propose reserving up to 50% of the enrollment for students living in-District boundaries who are currently choosing to go elsewhere for educational opportunities and/or for out-of-District families.

**Table 1**
**Proposed Performance Level Roll-Out**

| School Year | Grade Levels | Number of Sections/Grade Level | Total Enrollment | In-District Enrollment | Enrolled Outside of District* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022-2023 | PK-8 | 1-2 | 420 | 210 | 210 |
| 2023-2024 | PK-8 | 1-2 | 440 | 220 | 220 |
| 2024-2025 | PK-8 | 1-2 | 460 | 230 | 230 |

*(*Represents both in-District students not currently enrolled in the District and students residing outside the District.)*

There is the expectation that families, students, and the school will work in equal partnerships to help each student reach their potential. Parents must commit to supporting students with projects and occasional volunteer opportunities. This may be through service on school committees or organizations, in the classrooms, or through participation in project-based learning units of study as community or industry experts. Parents are also expected to monitor homework assignments and regularly communicate with the school regarding assignments on which their child is struggling.

**To View the application, please see Appendix B**

## School Accountability Structure

**School Accountability Structure**
The Building Leadership Team works closely to analyze school and classroom data. Building

Leadership Team members lead content and leveled teams in regular data-cycles to ensure student success. The leadership team includes a school administrator and level leaders to represent all students PK-8. The decision-making model supports shared leadership for the school and collective accountability. The leadership team, led by the principal of the school, will ensure that the staff meets the demands of the STEM model and innovation plan. This will include building on the strengths and talents of the staff and training staff to develop STEM expertise.

**Colorado STEM Academy Leadership Team**
The school leadership team will consist of the following stakeholders:

*Principal*
The principal will have extensive knowledge and training of curriculum, assessment, and instruction in a problem-based learning environment.

*Assistant Principal*
The assistant principal will have extensive knowledge and training of curriculum, assessment, and instruction in a problem-based learning environment.

*STEM Level Leaders PK-8 grade*
A minimum of one teacher will represent two levels from each competency level for development of problem-based projects and collaborative decision-making.

**Building Accountability Advisory Committee (BAAC)**
Colorado STEM Academy's BAAC was established to help guide instruction and hold all stakeholders accountable. Membership on this committee includes STEM parents as well as the principal and educators with expertise in curriculum development, teaching, administration, and finance. The committee's primary role will be to provide guidance in the accomplishment of the school's stated vision, monitoring of the School Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) and annual approval of the school budget.

**Community Outreach Team**
A community outreach team for Colorado STEM Academy is established to help form partnerships with universities and local businesses to support and enhance problem-based learning. Membership on this committee will include teacher leaders, higher education partners, industry leaders, as well as one of the administrators. Parent and student representation is essential for the committee. The committee's primary role is to arrange support in collaborating with outside agencies and provide marketing opportunities for CSA.

**Parent Leadership Development**
As partners in education, parents are active participants and valued partners in STEM

education. They are encouraged to attend and participate in PTA meetings or activities, and serve as PTA leaders and/or members. In addition, all parents will have opportunities to participate in the school science fair, family wellness nights, fundraising opportunities, celebration of learning exhibits, and various extended day options.

**Student Leadership**
Students will have the opportunity to participate in the STEM student council governance team. Each advisory class will have two representatives who will make recommendations to the governance team on behalf of the student body. These students will make recommendations on behalf of the student body for curriculum-related activities, projects, field trips and events that support their learning in STEM areas. Students will also have the opportunity to serve as school mentors and participate in various school clubs in a leadership capacity.

**University Partners** *(University partners will provide opportunities for the following)*

- Ongoing STEM professional development for teachers and staff.
- Mentorships between University students and STEM students.
- Practicum work for University students working towards a teaching certification.
- Assisting teachers in the development and implementation of STEM units of inquiry.

## Shared Leadership

Colorado Stem Academy will operate under a shared leadership model. Decisions are divided into three major areas, command, consultative and collaborative decisions, each decided by the appropriate person(s) or committees.

*Command Decisions:* The principal makes these decisions, which involve student safety, staffing, personnel, evaluation, hiring, dismissing and budgetary decisions.

*Consultative Decisions:* Student discipline is a consultative decision made by the assistant principal and other staff members on a case-by-case basis. The assistant principal will have authority to make disciplinary decisions if the principal is unavailable. Instructional action plans, such as those found in the Unified Improvement Plan, are decided upon through a consultative process involving the Leadership Team.

*Collaborative decisions*: Decisions that impact culture and climate in the building such as revamping the code of conduct, hosting an after school event, making a club, or instituting a new positive behavioral support system are decisions made collaboratively by all stakeholders affected by the initiative. In these settings the principal, BLT member, teacher, student, etc. are all *equal* stakeholders in the process and decisions are made collaboratively.

*Monitoring and Implementing the Innovation Plan:* The innovation plan and Unified Improvement Plan are implemented and monitored by our building leadership team.

**School Leadership Accountability Supervision**
As the execution of the mission and vision is the most essential function of building leadership, a supervisory and support structure for the school principal must be in place.

CSA's principal will receive support through monthly visits and walkthroughs by his or her direct district level supervisor. The district level supervisor will assist with issues as they arise and also ensure that the principal is keeping up with district level expectations, deadlines and mandates.

The principal's supervisor will evaluate the principal using the state evaluation and rating system.

## Special Populations

**Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners**

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners are supported through the implementation of the Sheltered Instruction Approach. Students are guided to construct meaning by scaffolding the instruction starting at the instructional level of each student. The students will have the opportunity to demonstrate understanding of concepts and skills through different assessments such as:

- Hands on activities
- Group tasks or projects
- Performance-based assessments
- Instruction by a highly-qualified language teacher
- ACCESS Testing and Renaissance Assessments

**Special Education**

- Special Education teachers use a co-teaching and push-in blended service model. Lessons are differentiated to ensure the success of all students in the class. Data is disaggregated and monitored to ensure that all students are successful. Special education teachers participate in personalized job-embedded professional learning to support the development of reading skills in the content areas.

**Support Services Model**

- There is a school-wide system of support for students' social-emotional and behavioral development. The use of the Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) and the District's classroom management code of conduct will provide materials and curriculum to sustain this school-wide design.

- Students who continue to experience academic difficulty or missing assignments will be required to meet with parents, teachers and administration to develop a plan for academic success using our student contract.

## School Calendar and Schedule

### Length of Calendar Year

- Students will have a similar length of calendar as all WPS schools. Limited changes will be made to breaks or holidays.

The teacher year may go longer than the WPS teacher year and staff will be compensated accordingly.

### Length of School Day

- The school day will include a gentle start at 8:00AM for all students PK-8 and will end at 3:30 with a gentle release.
- Extended day opportunities and clubs will run from 3:45PM to 5:00PM based on availability, student interest and possible collaborations with outside groups.
- Early dismissal will be included in the calendar to allow for teacher training.

## Professional Development

In order to ensure a successful program, teachers must participate in the following professional development:

- Staff training in August in order to analyze data and participate in master planning for the school year including the drafting of the school's Unified Improvement Plan.
- Ongoing professional development in CLD, CBS and STEM topics and instructional delivery.
- New Teacher Institute for new teachers as designed by the WPS Learning Services team and implemented before the school year.
- Ongoing trainings necessary for the completion of New Teacher Institute during the school year.

### Encouraged Professional Development

Although not always mandatory, teachers are encouraged to engage in staff development in the following areas:

- Classroom management
- Differentiated instruction
- STEM courses
- Kagan Cooperative Learning
- Technology
- Gifted and Talented Support
- Specific contents (PE, Art, Music, et al)

**Teacher Professional Learning Plan**
As part of Senate Bill SB-191, all teachers set goals on a yearly basis in order to score proficient on their yearly evaluation. Colorado STEM Academy teachers will follow state guidelines and set yearly professional and data goals.

In addition, teachers will also have demonstrated their efficacy by demonstrating positive growth on assessment data as dictated by the District IAC team. These results will be reported in their Standard 5 portion of their evaluation.

*Data Driven Dialogue and Ongoing Data Camps:* Staff will begin their professional learning plan by participating in a data driven dialogue, prior to the beginning of the school year and then again for revision once fall assessments are completed. From there, action steps will be developed that will drive the UIP and classroom goals. These action steps will be measured, along with student work, during data meetings throughout the year.

*New Teacher Institute:* The district and school will provide teachers new to the district specific, intensive and comprehensive training on how to use the myriad of systems and curricular supports in WPS, including, but not limited to, *Empower*, Proficiency Scales and Progressions, Unit Planning, *Wonders, Study Sync, The WPS Instructional Model, The WPS Blended Services Model, and CLD Instruction.*

## Compensation

In consultation and collaboration with our district HR department, the school will follow and adhere to the District's Compensation procedures outlined in the annual salary matrix. The plan, as presented, does request a waiver of the Negotiated Agreement's subsections that deal with pay above and beyond the annual salary (e.g. professional development, extra-curricular, days beyond the negotiated maximum, other).

## Culture and Climate

Culture and climate are directly aligned to our shared mission and vision. In order to continue to foster this important sense of community, Colorado STEM Academy staff and students will continue with the following positive culture and climate practices.

- Colorado STEM Academy has a culture of academic excellence and a belief that all students can learn at a high level.
- Colorado STEM Academy celebrates student accomplishments in a variety of ways including positive phone calls home, trimester award assembles, and student of the month.
- All students, staff and parents will be treated with dignity and respect. We will have a safe learning environment.
- The school will commit to partner with parents in order to help meet the academic, developmental, mental, social and emotional needs of the child.
- Each leveled team will commit to partner with external agencies each year to help promote STEM careers and prepare students for life beyond the four walls of a school building.

**School Contract**
Colorado STEM Academy will have a student parent contract that will ask for commitments around behavior, attendance, parent involvement and academic excellence. This contract is provided at the end of this document (appendix B) and should be referenced for further detail on parent, student and school commitments.

**School Uniforms**
CSA will enforce a uniform policy. Uniforms can be purchased at our onsite school store or online.

**Application Process**
CSA will utilize a comprehensive application to help woth student placement upon acceptance. For the full process, application rubric and rationale, please see the appendix B.

## Budget

Our school leadership team agreed on budget allocations based on the number of students enrolled on October 1st. The Colorado STEM Academy leadership will be able to purchase administrative services based on our model for the following: transportation, food services, facility management, maintenance, student services and substitute teachers, from WPS, based on a pricelist that will be provided by WPS to the principal or designee, or from other providers.

The budget included in our appendix illustrates the current year's innovation needs. Additional money has been moved to technology expenses and staff professional development in anticipation of the approval of the Innovations related to curriculum and technology. The budget process for Colorado STEM Academy is a collaborative effort between administration, staff, and the Building Accountability Advisory Committee to determine true budget amounts for the upcoming school year. All of the innovation factors will be taken into account to ensure the programs are implemented with fidelity and that we are meeting the instructional needs of our students. This budget is subject to change as new figures come in from the state and District level, along with changes in costs related to various purchases for technology and curriculum for the upcoming year.

**For innovation costs, please see Appendix E**

## Proposed Waivers

**WAIVERS REQUESTED**
***See Appendix A for a detailed description of Replacement Policies/Practices***

**STATE POLICIES – COLORADO REVISED STATUTES**

**TIME AND TEACHING/WORKING CONDITIONS**

***C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(n)(I) – Local Board Duties Concerning School Calendar***
Waiver from this statute allows the CSA to use its own method for determining a school calendar.
***C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(n)(II)(A) – Determine Teacher-Pupil Contact Hours***
Waiver from this statute allows CSA to use its own method for setting teacher-pupil contact hours.
***C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(n)(II)(B) – Adopt District Calendar***
Waiver from this statute allows CSA to use its own method for determining a school calendar.
***C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(t) – Educational Program and Selection of Textbooks***
Waiver from this statute allows CSA to determine its own educational programs and have direct oversight and decision-making on textbook selection.
***C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(k) – In Service Training***
Waiver from this statute allows CSA to determine its own needs for in-service training and professional growth.
***C.R.S. 22-32-118 – Summer Schools, Continuation, Evening and Community Education Programs***
Waiver from this statute allows CSA to use its own method for determining a summer school schedule/school calendar.

**COMPENSATION**

***C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(f) – Local Board Duties Concerning Selection of Personnel and Pay***
Waiver from this statute allows CSA to use its own method for selecting and paying teachers.
***C.R.S. 22-63-401 – Teachers Subject to Adopted Salary Schedule***
Waiver from this statute allows CSA to develop its own compensation system.
***C.R.S. 22-63-402 – License and Letter of Authorization Required in Order to Pay Teachers***
Waiver from this statute allows CSA to adopt its own policy for fair compensation of instructional staff.
***C.R.S. 22-63-403 – Payment of Salaries***
Waiver from this statute allows CSA to adopt its own policy for fair compensation of instructional staff upon dismissal.

**EMPLOYMENT AND EVALUATION**

***C.R.S. 22-63-201 – Employment – License Required – Exception.***

Waiver from this statute allows CSA to verify to the District the qualifications of teachers for the purpose of complying with federal law.

***C.R.S. 22-63-202 Contracts in Writing, Duration, and Damage Provision***

Waiver from this statute allows CSA to issue its own employment offer letters.

***C.R.S. 22-63-203 Renewal and Nonrenewal of Employment Contract***

Waiver from this statute allows CSA to use its own method for determining the conditions for continued employment or termination of licensed staff.

***C.R.S. 22-63-206 – Transfer of Teachers***

Waiver from this statute allows CSA not to have the District transfer teachers into the school.

***C.R.S. 22-63-301 – Grounds for Dismissal***

Waiver from this statute allows CSA to set its own policy for dismissal.

***C.R.S. 22-63-302 – Procedure for Dismissal***

Waiver from this statute allows CSA to develop its own procedure for dismissal.

***C.R.S. 22-9-106 – Local Board Duties Concerning Performance Evaluations for Licensed Personnel***

Waiver from this statute allows CSA to use its own method for evaluating licensed personnel.

***C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(h) – Local Board Powers Concerning Employment Termination of School Personnel***

Waiver from this statute allows CSA to use its own method for terminating school personnel.

***C.R.S. 22-63-202: Contracts in Writing, Duration, Damage, Provision, Human Resource Management***

Waiver from this statute allows CSA to use its own contracts, hiring procedures, termination procedures, and withdraw from mutual consent procedures. All contracts will be in writing and with the school not the district. Academy teachers hired following the adoption of the school's innovation plan shall be on annual contracts which expire at the end of each contract year. All Academy employees, including teachers, will be at-will employees. The Academy has the right to refuse transfers of teachers from the district.

**WESTMINSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD POLICIES**

**TIME AND TEACHING/WORKING CONDITIONS**

***Policy GCHC – Professional Staff Induction***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to opt out of District-mandated induction procedures. The Academy will not opt out of Culturally Linguistically Diverse (CLD) mandated training.

***Policy GCI – Professional Staff Development Opportunities***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to opt out of District-mandated professional development.

***Policy IC/ICA – School Year/School Calendar/School Day***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to opt out of the District calendar and District recommendations for length of school day.

***Policy GDJ – ESP Payment Schedule, Work Week, and Work Day***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to set payment schedule, workweek, and workday for Educational Support Professionals.

***Policy IHA-R – Educational Program***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to incorporate individual and career academic plans into our problem-based learning model.

***Policy IHBB – Gifted and Talented Education***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to follow state procedures to determine placement of gifted students, advanced learning plans, and professional development.

***Policy IJJ-A and IIJ-B – Textbook selection/ Adoption Form and*** *Procedure*

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to select appropriate educational materials to enhance our focus on STEM curriculum, instructional resources, and personal project learning model.

**EMPLOYMENT AND EVALUATION**

***Policies GCE/GCF – Professional Staff Recruiting/Hiring***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to develop its own procedures for recruiting, hiring, and appointing candidates to open positions.

***Policy GCF - Professional Staff Assignments and Transfers***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to opt out of voluntary and involuntary transfers.

***Policy GCJ – Staffing New Schools***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to select teaching staff directly.

***Policy GDE/GDF – ESP Recruiting, Posting, and Hiring***

Waiver from this policy allows CSA to select non-teaching staff directly and meet or exceed the requirements for the selection process utilized by the District.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

***Policy DFG – Income from Vocational/ Technical School Shop Sales and Services***

Waiver from this policy allows the Academy to raise finances through an entrepreneurial program with students.

***Policy JQ – Student Fees, Fines, and Charges***

Waiver from this policy allows the Academy to adopt our own procedures for student fees, fines, and charges.

***Policy GCJ – Staffing New Schools***

Waiver from this policy allows the Academy the flexibility in creating and implementing a hiring process that meetings building specific needs.

**WESTMINSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT**

**LICENSED AGREEMENT WAIVERS**

| Article | Summary of Article(s) | Replacement Policy or Practice |
|---|---|---|
| **Recognition and Representation** | | |
| L3 – Recognition<br>L4 – General Provisions<br>L5 – Conducting Negotiations<br>L6 – Grievance Procedure<br>L9 – Right to Representation | Westminster Education Association (WEA) is exclusive representative of and negotiating agent for licensed staff, to include:<br>Master Agreement and Salary Negotiations, | The Westminster Public Schools Human Resources Department will assume the role and duties currently provided by WEA. |

| Article | Summary of Article(s) | Replacement Policy or Practice |
|---|---|---|
| L32 – Association Rights<br>L33 – Dues Deduction<br>L36 – Instructional Advisory Committee<br>L37 – Term of Agreement/ Interim Negotiations | Grievances, Representation. | |
| **Teaching Conditions** | | |
| L7 – Transfers<br>L8 – Teaching Conditions<br>L10 – Teacher Exchange<br>L11 – Job Sharing<br>L12 – Teacher Evaluation<br>L13 – Reduction in Force<br>L14 – Teaching Assignments<br>L25 – Professional Relationships<br>L26 – Professional Responsibilities<br>L31 – Academic Freedom | These articles outline the length of school year, planning and professional development days, planning periods, transfer rights, evaluation, seniority, job assignment, participation on building committees, teacher input in planning in-service, and protection from censorship. | The principal and the school leadership team will mutually agree upon the length of school year/day, the amount of planning time allocated to staff, the design and content of professional development. The District will not make direct placement of teachers to CSA, or direct placement within our school. The principal will have flexibility in placing employees in teaching positions, including the consideration of a teacher's endorsement area when making decisions. |
| **Administrative Vacancies** | | |
| L15 – Administrative Vacancies | This article requires all administrative and supervisory vacancies be posted in all district buildings. All interested teachers may submit an application for said positions. | Given the significant investments in time and talent at CSA administrative vacancies might first be opened to qualified internal candidates. If the position cannot be filled by internal candidates, the position will then be opened to a wider audience. |
| **Personnel Files** | | |

| Article | Summary of Article(s) | Replacement Policy or Practice |
|---|---|---|
| L16 – Personnel Files | This article outlines what will and will not be placed in a teachers personnel file. | Teachers will continue to have access to their file for review, be provided an opportunity to contest any document placed in the file, and provide written replies to such material as they challenge. This process will be handled by the Department of Human Resources. |
| **Teacher Facilities** | | |
| L17 – Teacher Facilities | Recognizes the importance of the facility and the building's environment to the teaching and learning process. | Staff will have input into building use and environment. |
| **Class Size** | | |
| L20 – Class Size | Teachers have the right to contest class size to principal and/or his/her supervisor. | Teachers will be able to bring class size concerns to the principal. |
| **Curriculum & Instruction** | | |
| L18 – Curriculum<br>L19 – Instructional Materials | These articles speak to teacher participation in planning, reviewing, and adopting curricular and instructional materials. | The principal and building leadership team will continually monitor the viability of the curriculum and make needed adjustments as determined at the building level. |
| **Medical Examination** | | |
| L21 – Medical Examination | Requires new teachers to obtain pre-employment health checks. District retains right, at its expense, to require additional health checks during employment. | Teachers will still be required to obtain pre-employment health checks. Additionally, if CSA deems additional health checks necessary, it can require the teacher obtain the examination at the |

| Article | Summary of Article(s) | Replacement Policy or Practice |
|---|---|---|
| | | school/District's expense. |
| **Leave** | | |
| L22 – Cumulative Leave<br>L23 – Sick Bank Leave<br>L24 – Other Leaves<br>L29 – Personal Injury Leave | These articles outline the type, and amount of, leave provided to employees. | The District will continue to offer these benefits to the staff at CSA to at least commensurate with other district employees. CSA will determine its own lottery structure for high absence days and can consider an alternative package for cumulative leave pay. |
| **Insurance** | | |
| L27 – Liability Insurance Coverage<br>L28 – Personal Property<br>L35 – Insurance | These articles outline the liability, health and medical benefits, and supplemental insurance available to employees. | The District will continue to offer these benefits to the staff at CSA to at least commensurate with other district employees. |
| **Protection From Assaults** | | |
| L30 – Protection From Assaults | This article outlines steps taken in the event a teacher is accused of an assault, is a victim of an assault, or has property damaged during an assault. | Teachers accused of an assault will still be required to immediately report the circumstances thereof to the principal and follow the District's procedures in these cases. Teachers who are victims of assault will file a complaint with the principal for investigation—teachers maintain the expectation of a violence free workplace. |
| **Compensation** | | |
| L34 – Compensation | This article, in concert with Appendices A, B-1, B-2, and C to the Agreement, outlines the | Teachers will be compensated, at a minimum, in accordance with the |

| Article | Summary of Article(s) | Replacement Policy or Practice |
|---|---|---|
| | compensation and compensation formulas. | salary schedule annually adopted by the District and as modified by CSA or the District to account for performance of the school. |

**ESP AGREEMENT WAIVERS**

| Article | Summary of Article(s) | Replacement Policy or Practice |
|---|---|---|
| **Recognition and Representation** | | |
| E2 - Retained Rights<br>E3 – Recognition<br>E4 – General Provisions<br>E5 – Conducting Negotiations<br>E6 – Conflict Resolution<br>E15 – Association Rights<br>E16 – Dues Deduction<br>E20 – Classified Advisory Committee<br>E21 – Term of Agreement/ Interim Negotiations | Westminster Education Association (WEA) is exclusive representative of and negotiating agent for ESP staff, to include:<br>Master Agreement and Salary Negotiations, Grievances, Representation | The Westminster Public Schools Human Resources Department will assume the role and duties currently provided by WEA. |
| **Working Conditions** | | |
| E7 – Transfers<br>E8 – Disciplinary Actions<br>E9 – Reduction in Force<br>E19 – Working Conditions | These articles outline the workday/work week, assignment, supervision, transfer rights, evaluation, seniority, job assignment, reduction in force, participation on building committees, ESP input in planning in-service, and discipline. | The principal and the school leadership team will mutually agree upon the length of school day/week, the design and content of professional development, job assignments. CSA, in consultation with the Westminster Public Schools Human Resources Department ,will define rules for transfers, discipline, and reduction in force. CSA will reserve the right to opt out of transfer of ESP between schools, on a case-by-case basis. |
| **Personnel Files** | | |
| E10 – Personnel Files | This article outlines what will and will not be placed in an ESP's personnel file. | ESP staff will continue to have access to their file for review, be provided an opportunity to contest any document placed in the file, and |

| Article | Summary of Article(s) | Replacement Policy or Practice |
|---|---|---|
| | | provide written replies to such material as they challenge. This process will be handled by the Department of Human Resources. |
| **Leave** | | |
| E12 – Personal Injury Leave<br>E13 – Bereavement Leave | These articles outline the type, and amount of, leave provided to employees. | The District will continue to offer these benefits to the staff at CSA to at least commensurate with other district employees. |
| **Insurance** | | |
| E11 – Liability Insurance Coverage<br>E14 – Personal Property<br>E18 – Insurance | These articles outline the liability, health and medical benefits, and supplemental insurance available to employees. | The District will continue to offer these benefits to the staff at the Academy to at least commensurate with other district employees. |
| **Compensation** | | |
| E17 – Compensation | This article, in concert with Appendices A and B to the Agreement, outlines the compensation and compensation formulas. | ESP staff will be compensated, at a minimum, in accordance with the salary schedule annually adopted by the District and as modified by the Academy or the District to account for performance of the Academy. |

**SUMMARY OF RATIONALE FOR WAIVERS REQUESTED—STATE, LOCAL, & NEGOTIATED**

| Rationale for Innovation | |
|---|---|
| **Employment and Evaluation** | To strategically exit low performing staff and retain effective staff with qualities and credentials in alignment with the innovation plan, the Academy requires the authority to establish its own termination and dismissal policies and procedures. |
| **Compensation** | To strategically recruit, hire, and retain staff with qualities and credentials in alignment with the innovation plan, the Academy requires the authority to select staff and set rates of pay. In order to do this, the Academy requires the authority and flexibility to determine compensation schedules and set rates of pay at or above existing schedules. |
| **Time and Teaching** | To effectively implement the innovation plan the Academy requires increased flexibility around scheduling, the use of time, including but not limited to student learning time and teacher planning time thus the school requires waivers to determine its own school year and school day calendar.<br>To implement the program as outlined in the innovation plan, one that is sufficiently rigorous and engaging to meet the needs of students, the Academy requires the authority and flexibility to determine its own educational program and curricular materials. |

# Appendix A

## STATE POLICIES – COLORADO REVISED STATUTES

To enhance the ability of Colorado STEM Academy (the Academy) to innovate, the school is requesting the following Colorado Revised Statutes be waived.

| Description | Action | Statute to be Waived | Replacement Policy or Practice |
|---|---|---|---|
| Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act of 1990 Employment required-exception. | The Academy will make hiring decisions for non-core content teachers based on its own criteria. | C.R.S. 22-63-201 | The school will verify to the District the qualifications of teachers for the purpose of complying with federal and state law. In order to comply with ESSA requirements, all core content instructional staff employed at CSA will have a valid teaching license and meet subject matter competency requirements for the teaching subject. The school may employ non-licensed teachers for supplemental and enrichment instruction, but will require these teachers to hold a college degree and demonstrate subject-matter competency by |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | either holding an internationally-recognized certification to teach in the subject area in which they are hired to teach or having received a passing score on a State Board of Education approved content exam in the subject area in which they are hired to teach. |
| Local Boards of Education—Duties<br>Local Board duties concerning selection of personnel and pay.<br><br>Schedule and Calendar<br><br>Actual hours of teacher-pupil instruction and contact<br><br>School Calendar | Delegate authority to the Academy to select staff and set rates of pay.<br><br>Delegate authority to the Academy to establish its own calendar. | C.R.S. 22-32-209(1)(f)<br><br>C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(n)(I)<br><br>C.R.S. 22-32-109(n)(II)(A)<br><br>C.R.S. 22-32-109(n)(II)(B) | CSA will select teaching staff directly and set rates of pay based on school policy for any additional hours.<br><br>The school will exceed statutory minimums for calendar, hours of teacher pupil contact and schedule, subject to District oversight. The school will have authority to establish its own calendar, including professional development days, or days off |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | that may differ from the district. |

**DISTRICT POLICIES – BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICIES**

To enhance the ability of Colorado STEM Academy (the Academy) to innovate, the school requests the following WPS Board of Education Policies be waived.

| Description | Action | Board of Education Policy to be Waived | Replacement Policy or Practice |
|---|---|---|---|
| Professional Staff Assignments and Transfers Administrative staff recommends licensed personnel for transfer to Superintendent. | Exempts the Academy from involuntary or voluntary transfer of licensed personnel. | GCF | CSA will not participate in transfer of licensed personnel, but reserves the right to hire licensed personnel that, in the principal's discretion, fits the needs of the students and vision of the school. |
| Professional and ESP Staff Recruiting/Hiring The District handles hiring, recruiting, background checks and appointment of position to be filled at schools and other District facilities. | Delegates to the Academy the ability to recruit for, hire and appoint candidates for positions; the Academy will be responsible for complying with statutory due process expectations when applicable. | GCE/GCF | CSA has authority to pursue recruiting, hiring, and appointment of suitable candidates on its own; will seek the support of Human Resources when handling recruiting, hiring, and appointment of candidates. |
| Professional Staff Induction Induction program is | Waives the provision that teachers new to the District and | GCHC | CSA will largely utilize District induction procedures, |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| conducted jointly by the central administration and individual schools. | employed at the Academy will have to participate in District mandated induction activities. | | which comply with state law, but adopt additional standards so they are aligned with instructional programs at CSA, as well as the teacher profile. |
| Professional Staff Development Opportunities<br>The District shall mandate and provide for professional growth opportunities. | Delegates to the Academy the ability to supplement or replace District required professional development activities. | GCI | CSA will utilize District professional development opportunities where it aligns with the adopted standards and the instructional programs at CSA, as well as the teacher profile. Additional professional development will be offered in conjunction with the school goals. |
| ESP Recruiting, Posting, and Hiring<br>The District is responsible for recruiting, posting, and hiring of ESP. | Waives the provision that the District recruits, posts positions, and hires ESP. | GDE/GDF | CSA will select non-teaching staff directly and meet or exceed the requirements for the selection process utilized by the District. |
| School Year/School Calendar/School Day<br>The Superintendent supervises the | Waives the provision to follow the District calendar and District recommendations | IC/ICA | CSA will develop its own annual calendar and set length of school day, and thus meet or exceed the minimum |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| development and implementation of the District calendar. | for staff development. | | standards of the District and state. |

# Application Process at Colorado STEM Academy

### *Make an Informed Decision*

Thank you for your interest in Colorado STEM Academy. To ensure that students succeed in this program, we feel it is necessary for both parents/guardians and students to understand the commitments required to be successful.

### *Submit an Application*

The following material will be needed from parents/guardians in order to process the application.

- ☐ Colorado STEM Academy Application
- ☐ Assessment Records
- ☐ Attendance/Behavioral Records
- ☐ Student Writing Sample
- ☐ Teacher Recommendation
- ☐ Parent/Student Contract

Once the application is completed you will be contacted if further testing or other material is needed, as well as with instructions as to how to register your student through our online system.

# Colorado STEM ACADEMY APPLICATION

Please print in ink and fill out completely or complete online.
Only ONE application per student will be accepted.
No academic requirements.

Student's Last Name: _____

Student's First Name: _____ MI: _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female Date of Birth: _____ _____ _____
Month Day Year

Parent/Guardian Email Address: _____

Student's Address: _____ Bldg./Apt. #: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Race/Ethnic Category: *(Check all that apply)*
☐ *American Indian or Alaska Native* ☐ *Asian* ☐ *Black or African American* ☐ *Multi-racial*
☐ *Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander* ☐ *White* *Is the student Hispanic or Latino?* ☐ *Yes* ☐ *No*

Special Services: *(Check all that apply)*
☐ *IEP* ☐ *504* ☐ *Gifted and Talented*

Has your child moved to a new school boundary due to foster care placement or economic hardship? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Has your child moved to a new school boundary due to a court-ordered change in custody due to separation, divorce, serious illness or death? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Is your child currently enrolled in Westminster Public Schools? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, which school? _____

Is your child currently enrolled in another school district? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, which district? _____

Grade Applying to: ☐ K ☐ 1st ☐ 2nd ☐ 3rd ☐ 4th ☐ 5th ☐ 6th ☐ 7th ☐ 8th

Do you have a sibling currently attending Colorado STEM Academy? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Sibling's Last Name: _____

Sibling's First Name: _____ MI: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Last Name: _____

Parent/Guardian First Name: _____ Phone: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

COLORADO STEM ACADEMY
Preparing Today's Students for Life

## WRITING SAMPLE

What is a problem facing your community, and what are two possible solutions you can do to help solve the problem?

Date:

Student Signature: _____

# Colorado STEM ACADEMY
# TEACHER RECOMMENDATION FORM

## Please complete this survey regarding the applicant.

**Scale:** 1.0: significantly below peers
2.0: slightly below peers
3.0: same as peers
4.0: significantly above peers

**Critical Thinking Skills:** creativity, problem solving, analysis.

1.0 2.0 3.0 4.0

**Work Habits:** focus, motivation, independence, task completion, persistence, organization.

1.0 2.0 3.0 4.0

**Behavior in Class:** does the student remain on task without undue prompting, following the code of conduct, is respectful when redirected, etc.

1.0 2.0 3.0 4.0

**Any additional comments about this student?**

# Colorado STEM ACADEMY

## PARENT/GUARDIAN CONTRACT

By choosing to enroll your child in Colorado STEM Academy, parents and guardians have accepted the responsibility to provide proper interest, encouragement, guidance, and a home environment to foster the best possible learning situation. As part of the application process to the Academy, we would like to make sure you have a full understanding of the supports we are able to provide you and your student as well as the support we will require from you.

### Our commitment to you and your student:

1. Your student will receive a high quality education and upon matriculating to the 9th grade will be prepared for high school.
2. The school will make every effort to ensure your student is safe at all times in the building, on the grounds, and at school sponsored activities.
3. You and your student will be treated with dignity.
4. The school will maintain clear, consistent, and timely communications with you regarding your student and his/her progress.

### Your commitment to the school:

1. I understand that as a parent I must be supportive of my child and his/her school. I will commit to supporting the school, including but not limited to: attending PTA and/or BAAC meetings, volunteering in the building, supervising field trips, participating in after-school and/or evening events, and/or other activities sponsored by the school. I understand that my child is expected to attend school every day, to arrive promptly, and to remain throughout the scheduled hours. I commit that my child will not miss more than 10 days during the school year, and have no more than 10 tardies or 10 early removals from the school. Excessive tardies and/or absences will result in my child being placed on attendance probation.
2. I understand that my child is to adhere to the student code of conduct and discipline policies. Failure to follow school rules and requirements may result in my child receiving behavioral counseling, being placed on a behavior contract, and/or may result in dismissal from the Academy.
3. I commit to ensuring that my student has a quiet place and allotted time every day to complete homework as needed. I understand it is my responsibility to review, sign and return all homework and communications when requested.
4. I will read the school and teacher newsletters and be responsible for knowing the information contained in them.

COLORADO STEM ACADEMY
Preparing Today's Students for Life

5. I will be available for conferences with teachers/administrators as necessary. If I have circumstances that prevent me from meeting in person, I will work with the school to identify alternative (for example, phone, video/web conferencing) forms of communication.
6. I understand that my student is to adhere to the uniform policy.

## STUDENT CONTRACT

In order to be successful at Colorado STEM Academy, our students need to follow certain guidelines and expectations around behavior, attendance, and academics. I have read and discussed the following student expectations with my child.

As a student at Colorado STEM Academy:

1. I understand that I am to follow the student code of conduct. Violations of the code may result in being placed on a behavior contract and/or dismissal from the school.
2. I understand that I am to follow the directions of adults at the school.
3. I understand I am to keep up on homework and classwork and use the time before and after school to stay on top of my studies.
4. I understand I must attend school every day and be on time and ready to learn.
5. I understand I must wear the approved school uniform.

By signing below, my student and I indicate we have read and understand The Academy's expectations and our intent to comply with them.

_____
Parent Name

_____ _____
Parent Signature Date

_____
Student Name

_____ _____
Student Signature Date

COLORADO STEM ACADEMY
Preparing Today's Students for Life

## Appendix C

Master Schedule (modified for readability)

**8:00-8:30 Gentle Start**

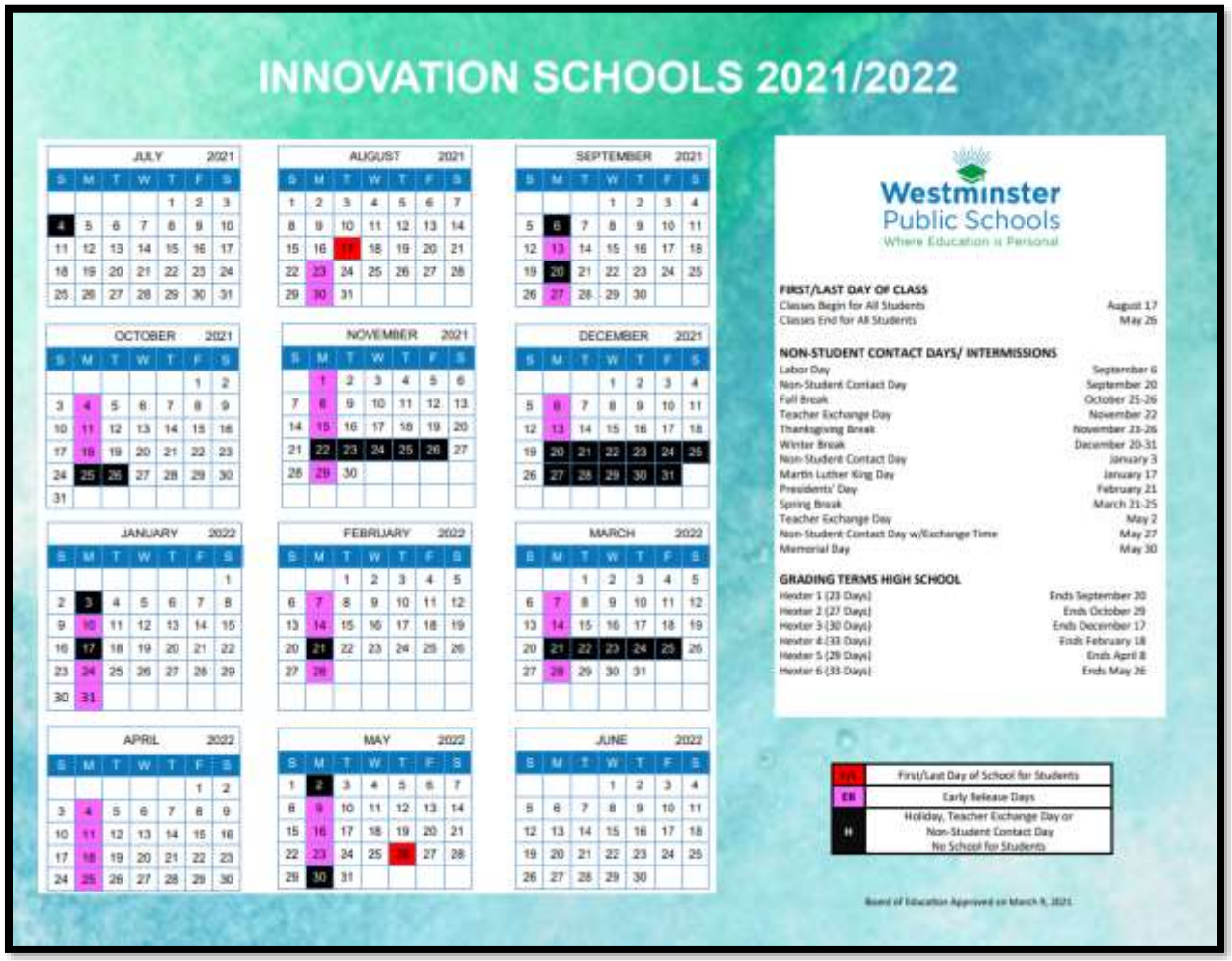
**8:30-3:30**

- Breakfast
- Math
- Literacy
- Science
- Social Studies
- Project-based learning
- Electives including art, music, PE, and technology
- Lunch and recess

**3:30 Dismissal Begins**

## Appendix D

2021-2022 Calendar



## Appendix E

Innovation Budget Planning

| Item/Personnel | Approximate Cost | Rationale | Year Implementation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Addition of STEM Teachers 1.5 FTE | $140,000-$170,000 pay and benefits | The addition of a STEM teacher is essential for the success of the building. The additional FTE not only adds a valuable service for students, it makes the school extremely marketable, as there are very few public schools with specified STEM programs. | **2022-2023**<br>**2023-2024**<br>**2024-2025** |
| Addition of full-time Assistant Principal | $120,000-$130,000 pay and benefits | With the expansion of the middle school and the additional programs occurring at two different buildings, administration will need additional administrative support to help manage the day to day functioning of the building and also to help ensure that middle school students are able to receive proper credits. | **2022-2023**<br>**2023-2024**<br>**2024-2025** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Addition of 1.0 Office Assistant | $60,000-$70,000 pay and benefits | With two separate buildings, we will require an additional office assistant to provide the best possible customer service to our students and families. | **2022-2023**<br>**2023-2024**<br>**2024-2025** |
| Extended day stipend and professional development support | Approximately $50,000 | With the need for STEM professional development and a longer student day, these funds are needed to stipend teachers for additional committee work beyond contract hours and provide additional time for STEM professional development. | **2022-2023**<br>**2023-2024**<br>**2024-2025** |
| STEM Programming Costs | Approximately $25,000 | With the constant changes in technology and engineering, STEM will require additional funds to compete with local STEM schools by offering new technologies and engineering curriculum. | **2022-2023**<br>**2023-2024**<br>**2024-2025** |

## Appendix G

### Glossary of Terms

**Assessment**: In education, this term refers to the measurement, usually by test or task, of a student's ability in a particular content or learning target.

**Assessment, Diagnostic**: A diagnostic assessment usually given at the beginning of a unit of study or school year, designed to ascertain what a student can already know and do as pertaining to a unit of study.

**Assessment, Formative**: Formative assessments are measurements of students' mastery of learning targets, usually administered midway in a unit of study or a school year.

**Assessment, Summative**: A summative assessment is an assessment taken at the end of a unit of study or school year to measure student achievement and/or growth.

**Achievement**: A student's ability level in a given subject as compared with his or her peers across the state and/or nation.

**BAAC**: Building Accountability Advisory Committee: A group consisting of parents and staff members of a school, tasked with holding the school accountable for its financial management and student performance.

**Balanced Literacy:** An instructional model that breaks up literacy instruction into whole group, small group and individual tasks and assignments.

**Balanced Math:** An instructional model that breaks up math instruction into whole group, small group and individual tasks and assignments.

**Blended Services**: Unique to Westminster Public Schools, "Blended Services" is an approach to instructing SPED, CLD and Title I students in a collaborative fashion based on their skill set in academic subjects.

**CBS**: Competency Based System: As defined by Westminster Public Schools, a Competency Based System is a systemic and systematic approach to education that emphasizes grouping students by ability levels; expecting that students show competency in any particular area prior to them moving to the next level;

encouraging student ownership over their work, and ending the practices of social promotion.

**CDE**: Colorado Department of Education.

**CLD**: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse is a label given to students whose first language is one other than English.

**CMAS**: The Colorado Measures of Academic Success are the tests given by the PARCC consortium as part of the statewide accreditation process.

**CSA:** The Colorado STEM Academy can be referred to as the Academy or CSA throughout this document.

**Curriculum**: Curriculum is a resource that helps teachers guide students to mastery of academic standards.

**Curricular Resource**: Usually a purchased program that helps a teacher deliver curriculum and gives instructional methods or best practices in doing so.

**Data Driven Dialogue/Analysis**: A collaborative effort that examines data for major trends and helps inform future actions by an organization or team. In education, this generally refers to looking at multiple points of student assessment data (sometimes referred to as triangulating) in order to help shape goals and action steps for educators.

**DIBELS**: DIBELS, or Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, is an assessment given by both in Colorado and nationally to measure reading fluency in students' grades k-5 in the beginning, middle and end of year.

**Differentiated Instruction**: An instructional term that refers to designing instruction and curriculum to meet the needs of students across varying ability levels, learning styles, and student preferences of learning.

**Electives**: In middle and secondary education, this term refers to specialized contents that may or may not be mandatory for matriculation or graduation. Examples might be visual arts, band, gym or secondary language.

**EngageNY**: A curricular resource in mathematics.

**Extracurricular**: Usually referring to activities or events that occur outside the normal teaching hours or calendar year.

**FRL**: Free and Reduced Lunch refers to culinary services given to students impacted by poverty. By citing "Free and Reduced Lunch" numbers, a school can give a depiction of how its community is impacted by poverty.

.

**FTE**: Full Time Employee. This refers to a position being added to a school and represents a financial consideration to the district and taxpayers.

**Growth**: A student's progress from year to year in a given subject as compared with his or her peers across a state and/or nation.

**Guided Instruction:** As opposed to whole group instruction, guided instruction is instruction in a small group setting where the teacher guides students to master a very narrow skill.

**Highly Qualified**: A term used for teaching credentials that indicate that a teacher has had what the state deems as adequate study in the content area they plan to teach in.

**Improvemen**t: An accreditation rating by the Colorado Department of Education. A rating of Improvement means that a school is making adequate progress in their achievement and growth data.

**Instruction**: Instruction is the method in which teachers guide students, using curriculum, to achieve academic standards.

**Integrated**: This term refers to interventions in education. As opposed to "siloed," "integrated" suggests that different departments are working collaboratively in order to educate students.

**Intervention**: In an educational setting this refers to specialized instruction for students that may not be achieving at the appropriate level. Intervention is usually described as having three tiers: Tier I generally refers to regular classroom instruction all students receive. Tier II generally refers to more small group instruction either in or outside of the classroom. Tier III usually refers to very small group or one on one instruction outside of the classroom.

**Learning target**: A specific skill and/or knowledge in a specific level and content area.

**Literacy**: This term refers to a content area that encapsulates reading and writing. At earlier ages, student learn to read, form letters and eventually sentences. At later levels student read to learn ideas in texts and writing in paragraph form.

**Master Schedule**: In education, this refers to a total building schedule of all classes and activities for a given school year.

**Magnet School**: A term usually used to describe public schools with specialized programs designed to attract students from outside its traditional boundaries.

**Modules**: In an educational context, this term usually refers to units of study for teachers participating in Professional Development.

**No Child Left Behind**: A national piece of educational legislation signed under President George W Bush in 2002 that greatly increased school accountability and close the achievement gap between poor and minority students and their more advantaged peers.

**Numeracy**: This term refers to early mathematics such as counting and simple addition.

**PARCC**: PARCC, or The Partnership for Assessments of Readiness for College and Careers, are the makers of standardized tests that the State of Colorado administer on a yearly basis to measure students' abilities in math, literacy, science and social studies. Although there are multiple tests, they are colloquially called 'PARCC' by educators.

**Performance**: An accreditation rating by the Colorado Department of Education. A rating of "Performance" means that schools possess strong academic achievement and growth.

**Performance, Performance Framework**: Like School Performance Frameworks, this term refers to a mathematical calculation the Colorado Department of Education administers to decide the accreditation rating of a district.

**Performance Framework, School**: Like District Performance Frameworks, this term refers to a mathematical calculation the Colorado Department of Education administers to decide the accreditation rating of a school.

**PMI**: Progressive Math Initiative is a math curricular resource utilized by Westminster Public Schools.

**PPOR**: Per Pupil Operating Revenue: the amount of money that a school receives for each student to run their program. The pupil count is conducted in October.

**Priority Improvement**: An accreditation rating by the Colorado Department of Education. A rating of "Priority Improvement" means that school have not made

adequate progress on standardized assessments and have five years to make significant gains on their performance data on the PARCC assessment or they may face sanctions.
**Professional Development**: Ongoing training for teachers, usually occurring outside normal teaching hours or calendar year.

**Proficiency Scales**: A series of learning targets, or skills and knowledge, that build on each other to create mastery.

**Progressions**: In education, this refers to the logical sequence in which a compilation of learning targets, called scales, are taught to students.

**PSI**: Progressive Science Initiative is a science curricular resource utilized by Westminster Public Schools.

**Push-in**: This refers to a Tier II intervention technique. It means that a specialist teacher will teach in a classroom alongside a regular education teacher with a small group.

**Pull-out**: This refers to a Tier II or III intervention technique. It means that a specialist teacher will remove a small group or single student from a classroom to give them specialized instruction.

**Rubric**: A document used to outline criteria necessary for the completion of a task.

**SB-191**: Colorado legislation that seeks to rate teachers' efficacy and places new rules over teacher tenure (see Standard 6 below). This Colorado legislation is in compliance with Race to the Top grant requirements.

**Scantron**: A multiple choice test in math and literacy that Westminster Public Schools use as a way to assess k-10 student's abilities at the beginning, middle and end of year.

**Standards**: Academic Standards are a set of specific knowledge and skills that students must have in each grade level. Standards are how curriculum is developed and delivered.

**Siloed**: Referring to interventions in education, the term "siloed" usually has a negative connotation, suggesting that departments are working in isolation of one another and either duplicating instruction or in some cases, working in opposition to one another.

**Standard 5**: Referring to SB-191, teacher efficacy is measured by five standards. The first five standards refer to observable and artifact driven observations by the teacher evaluator. Standard 6 refers to school and individual data.

**Study Sync**: A curricular resource in literacy for middle school students.

**Systematic**: This term refers to a step-by-step procedure and is usually a gradually unfolding process.

**Systemic**: Refers to processes engrained across an entire system.

**Specials**: In elementary education, this term generally refers to specialized content outside the core contents of math, science, social studies and literacy. These contents are usually physical education, gym and music, but may include such subjects as secondary language, health, or other subject areas.

**Teaching Gold**: A preschool and primary level curriculum in literacy and numeracy.

**Thinking Maps**: A curricular resource that helps students with critical thinking.

**Turnaround**: An accreditation rating from the Colorado Department of Education. A rating of "Turnaround" means that the school is far below expectations in growth and achievement. A school with this rating has five years to improve their rating or face sanctions.

**Walkthroughs**: In education, a Walkthrough generally refers to an administrator(s) or teacher(s) tasked with touring multiple classrooms in order to observe specific behaviors, evidences, and/or criterion. This data is then tabulated to look for trends. 'Walkthrough' and 'Learning walk' are often used synonymously.

**WEA**: Westminster Education Association. The teacher's union in Westminster Public Schools.

**WONDERS**: A Literacy Curricular resource utilized by Westminster Public Schools for elementary students.

**WPS**: Westminster Public Schools. Once called Adams County School District 50, WPS is the largest district in the state of Colorado to implement a competency based design of instruction. WPS is located just north of Denver, in the city of Westminster.

**UIP**: Unified Improvement Plan: The Unified Improvement Plan is a document that all public schools complete in as part of their accreditation process with the

Colorado Department of Education. Within this plan are specific instructional and student achievement goals and action plans.