GARFIELD COUNTY SCHOOL OF INNOVATION

K-12



Opening Grades 6-9 in Fall 2027

September 30, 2026

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3. **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR THE SCHOOL** - Identify in more detail the unique goals and objectives for the school, particularly as they relate to the kind of educational program at the school. Discuss timelines and describe how progress toward the goals and objectives will be specifically monitored, measured, evaluated, and reported during the first three years of the school and thereafter.

4. **EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT** - Information that indicates an adequate number of parents, teachers, and students (any combination) support the proposed school. A list of parents and community members who support the school should be included. If practical, the application should include a statement of support signed by everyone on this list. In addition, if practical, a list of parents who intend to enroll their students at the school, including the school currently attended, should be included. No personal identification information regarding students will be disclosed without parental consent.

5. **PROJECTED ENROLLMENT** - The number of students, including evidence and background information substantiating the projected enrollment for District and non-resident pupils. If the non-resident pupil tuition policy differs from the District policy, such information must be provided. Identify the contingency plans for operation in the event enrollment falls short of projection.

6. **STATEMENT OF NEED** - An explanation of how the district charter school will provide an appropriate solution to a specific need in the district within an area or within the whole district. Discuss the population of students targeted and how the population is currently not served.

7. **TIME PERIOD FOR APPROVED DISTRICT CHARTER** - The number of years (up to five years) for which the application is made and the rational.

8. **ACHIEVEMENT OF STATE GOALS** - A statement of how the district charter school plans to achieve graduation rate, attendance rate, and student achievement goals provided in the district's policies and Accreditation Contract.

9. **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND STANDARDS** - A description of the educational program for all students, including but not limited to special education, English as a Second Language, and gifted, including pupil performance levels, the curriculum, and content standards. Standards must meet or exceed content standards adopted by the district. In

addition, specific plans must be included as to how the programs will be monitored for compliance with federal and state laws, as well as District policies not waived in the district charter, and how the programs will be evaluated to determine program effectiveness. Specific assessments to measure student growth must be included in the program description.

10. **PLAN FOR EVALUATING PUPIL PERFORMANCE** - A description of how pupil achievement will be evaluated, including types of assessment to be used to measure pupil progress toward achievement of pupil performance levels, timeline, and proposed plans for using achievement information and taking corrective action to improve the school so content standards and performance levels can be met. Explain, in addition to CSAP reporting, how student achievement will be reported to the general public and school district. Describe any objectives and means for increasing the educational opportunities for "at risk" students, meaning those students who, because of physical, emotional, socioeconomic, or cultural factors, are less likely to succeed in school.

11. **ACCOUNTING SYSTEM** - A description of the accounting system, information stating whether the district charter school will use District Accounting Services and what methods will be used for cash and interest earnings.

12. **PROPOSED BUDGET** - A budget that covers the term of the district charter, detailing all projected revenue and expenditures and a proposed cash flow schedule and identifies every assumption made to support the number of students and the projected number of students for any categorical program funding (special education, Title I, etc.). The budget must also provide details on:

    - Contracted services.
    - The amount of state and federal funds to which the district charter school will be entitled.
    - Services the district charter school expects to purchase from the school district identified by function.
    - Personnel costs are identified by function and activity.
    - The amount the district charter school will hold in reserve.
    - Student fees.

13. **AN ECONOMICALLY SOUND PLAN** - Evidence that the plan is economically sound for the district charter school and the district, including a discussion of the listed criteria for economic soundness prepared by the district.

14. **INITIAL COSTS** - Initial startup costs and the amount of money needed in advance with an explanation of where these funds will come from and any re-payment schedule. The school district shall be held harmless for repayment of initial startup costs.

15. **ADMINISTRATIVE AUDIT** - A description of plans for an annual audit of the school's financial and administrative operations, an outside review of operations. Administrative audit includes whether or not laws, rules, and policies affecting the school were followed. A financial audit serves to ensure the expenditures of public funds are properly made and

accounting procedures complete. Both audits must comply with the accreditation process of the State.

16. **DISPLACEMENT OF STUDENTS AND STAFF** - A description of the plan for relocating pupils and staff if the creation of the district charter school means pupils and staff will be displaced from their current school or a school in an adjacent district.

17. **SITE FOR THE SCHOOL** - A description of the proposed site and how the site will be obtained and maintained. If the use of a district facility is proposed, the maintenance and security of the facility should be described. In addition, evidence should be submitted as to whether the space is available.

18. **GOVERNANCE AND OPERATION** - A description of the proposed governance and operation, including the nature and extent of parent, educator, community, and student involvement. Describe how a governing body representative of the community served will be responsible for carrying out the district charter. Define the committee composition and selection, and specify how it will be selected and maintained. The organizational structure of the district charter school shall be summarized. All proposed organizational documents, including articles, bylaws, or similar organizational documents, shall be submitted with the application. Identify qualifications for membership on the governing body, terms of office, and how vacancies will be filled. Identify a plan for communicating with students, parents, and staff. Discuss the accountability process that will be followed and provide information about how the district charter school will be accountable to the public, as follows:

    - Outline specific plans for meeting state guidelines for building accountability membership.
    - Development of an annual school improvement plan with supporting profile information.
    - Representation on the district accountability committee.
    - Reporting procedures to the Board and school community.

19. **RELATIONSHIP WITH DISTRICT** – A description of the relationship between the district charter school and the district.

20. **EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP** - A description of the school's employment policies and the agreements between the district charter school and the teachers and other staff, including salary, benefits, working conditions and rights, plans for resolving employee relation problems, determination of seniority, determination of probationary status, evaluation procedures, and the coordination of the issues with the District. Any proposed written employment agreements or policies must be submitted with the application.

21. **LIABILITY AND INSURANCE** - Provisions for insurance coverage and any agreements limiting liability between the district charter school and the Board of Education. The district charter application should provide information relating to the responsible party and amount of different insurance coverage: workers' compensation; comprehensive general liability; automobile and bus liability; property, boiler and machinery insurance coverage; blanket crime public school employees' blanket bond; individual public official bonds; school

officials' errors and omissions; international travel liability; excess accident insurance for volunteers; field trip and high risk accident insurance; and a student accident policy.

22. **TRANSPORTATION PLAN** - A description of how students will get to school**,** including whether any services will be provided by a second party. If the school will provide transportation, a description should be provided of how transportation needs of low-income and low-achieving students will be met. If the target population is at-risk students, the plan should indicate how these students will have access to the school. If transportation will not be provided, the plan should indicate why lack of transportation will not be an impediment to achieving a diverse student population and making the district charter school equally available to all students, and how the impediments will be overcome. A description of how safety of buses will be monitored and provided should be included.

23. **FOOD SERVICE PLAN** - A description of the plan of how it will provide for students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. All students should be provided with an equivalent lunchtime experience.

24. **ADMISSIONS PROCESS** - A description of the student selection and admission process if the applications exceed enrollment capacity. Describe the admissions process to be followed to help ensure that the student body is representative of the diversity of the community served, and demonstrate how equal access is provided for all who apply. Describe the school's plan for inclusion of low-achieving students, exceptional students, and students with special needs.

25. **WAIVERS** - A listing of district policies and state statutes and/or State School Board rules from which waivers are requested. The specific citation, explanation of waiver sought, what will be done instead, and how the waiver will help achieve the school's goals. The justification should indicate how the requested waiver will help the school improve educational achievement or enhance educational opportunity. Any significant financial impact of the proposed waiver should be described.

26. **STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES** - Describe discipline procedures that will be implemented.

27. **ADOPTION OF STANDARD DISTRICT CHARTER SCHOOL AGREEMENT PROVISIONS** - From time to time, the district may develop new or revise existing provisions in its district charter school agreement form (the District Charter School Form Agreement) which it believes are in the best interest of the district charter school, the district, the pupils of both the district charter school and the district, and the community. The district charter school applicant shall agree to be bound by the District Charter School Form Agreement, except that the application may specifically request modifications to or alternatives to specific provisions of the Agreement. The application shall indicate why each modification or alternative will affect the district charter school, the district, the pupils of both the district charter school and the district, and the community. This documentation should be attached to the contract.

28. **WAIVERS** – A description of the district's policies for which waivers are requested. A reason for each request should be included.

29. **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION** - Any further data which may be helpful in supporting the application.

2027 GCSI Appendices

The GCSI Applications and all Appendices are available to the public at this link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lfo2A9W-GHAcGDZjUcxzrjyeBuRsRhNM?usp=drive_link

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INTRODUCTION

1. GENERAL INFORMATION - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

District charter school name:

Garfield County School of Innovation ("GCSI")

A representative or designee of the governing body (primary contact), address, telephone number:

Judy A. Brannberg, MSc
45 Wolf Liam Lane
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
303.522.2158 | judy.brannberg@gmail.com

Date district charter school plans to open:

Fall 2027 – Grades 6-9
Garfield County School of Innovation will open in Fall 2027 with grades 6 through 9 at the Rosie's School Campus, 151 West Main Street, New Castle. That first year includes a staffed Friday and after-school Youth Center program in robotics, rocketry, aviation, and other STEM-focused competitions, clubs, and activities so students on a four-day calendar stay busy and engaged in a robust learning environment and avoid high risk activities. In 2028–29 the school will serve grades 6-10 at the Rosie's School Campus. At year three, Kindergarten through grade 11 are added that year at the new aviation-focused campus, adjacent to the Rifle Garfield County Airport. High school will then add one grade a year until the school is a full K–12. Section 17 states how each site will be obtained. The aviation lab and the culinary pathway, including the student restaurant, are at the Aviation Campus. In year three, Rosie's School will continue to serve as an after-school and Friday Youth Center with a STEM-focused curriculum, activities, competitions, and clubs and Homeschool Enrichment Center. This plan may evolve based on the timeline to acquire property and construct the Aviation Campus, and based on parent and community needs. GCSI will remain flexible to adapt to the speed of the process.

The educational model combines a content-rich K-8 Core Knowledge foundation with project-based learning, a strong STE³M + Business (Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Education, Math) focus, and intentional character development (Respect, Integrity, Servant Leadership, Excellence, and Kindness — RISE-K). Beginning in Sixth Grade, every student will participate in engineering classes from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. See Exhibit 44.

United States history and civics will be taught using primary source documents, personal letters, and early texts from the founding era so that students develop an accurate and deep understanding of their history and United States Constitution. If we want young Americans to defend freedom, they must first understand it. If we want them to protect our Constitution, they must know why it matters. If we want them to take pride in America, we must teach them the extraordinary history that made America possible. Protecting that history — and passing it

faithfully to the next generation — is not merely an educational responsibility. It is our patriotic duty. GCSI will restore Western civilization, America's founding principles, and the full context of our nation's exceptional story to our classrooms. It is vital that future generations will understand the civilization and nation they are tasked with preserving for their posterity.

Students will engage in real-world learning through business and industry partnerships, research labs, mentorships, and higher-education collaborations. Through Career and Technical Education pathways and Concurrent Enrollment with Colorado Mountain College—on the same basis CMC already serves other public high schools in its tax district—GCSI students may earn industry-recognized credentials and transferable college credit while in high school. A cooperative agreement will be executed after the school is an established local education provider. Program details are in Section 9. A sample of CMC's current in-district Concurrent Enrollment financial addendum is attached as Appendix 23. That form is the instrument CMC uses with public high schools in its tax district. It is not an executed agreement. GCSI will present the completed cooperative agreement to the GCSI Board for approval after the charter is granted and the school is an established local education provider.

Business and Entrepreneurship
From the earliest grades, students will be introduced to the principles of business and entrepreneurship. Through age-appropriate projects, Junior Achievement-style curriculum and experiences, and later through more advanced incubators and real-world partnerships, students will learn how ideas become products, how value is created, and how to solve problems that make a difference in the marketplace. The goal is to graduate young people who not only understand science and technology, but who also know how to turn knowledge into useful, sustainable, and innovative business enterprises.

Engineering (starting in Sixth Grade) – Exhibit 44 Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
Every student at Garfield County School of Innovation, starting in the sixth grade, will participate in dedicated Engineering classes as a regular part of the school day—not as an occasional enrichment activity, but as a core component of the curriculum. Through age-appropriate design challenges, students will learn the engineering design process: defining problems, brainstorming solutions, prototyping, testing, and refining. Early grades will emphasize hands-on exploration with simple materials, spatial reasoning, and collaborative problem-solving; as students advance, engineering experiences will integrate more deeply with science, mathematics, technology, and real-world applications. See Exhibit 44 – ERAU Partnership with GCSI - Sample Curriculum.

By making engineering a continuous thread from Sixth Grade through high school, GCSI ensures that all students—not only those who self-select into elective pathways—build the habits of mind, creativity, and technical confidence that prepare them for advanced STE³M + Business coursework, career exploration, and lifelong innovation. Professional and technical services (architecture, engineering, surveying) and specialized manufacturing of renewable-energy components are named high-wage targets by the Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership; GCSI's required engineering sequence from middle school is the K–12 preparation for those occupations. See Appendix 22 - CRVEDP Economic Development Version 4
Education (the third E in STE³M).

Education/teaching is a regional workforce need. Beginning in high school, students who want to become educators may enter a Teacher Apprenticeship track: Concurrent Enrollment education coursework with Colorado Mountain College after GCSI is an established local education provider, plus supervised classroom hours inside GCSI. Details are in Section 9.

Aviation Pathway – Flight Ground School and Aviation Tech Lab
GCSI will operate an Aviation Tech Lab so Western Slope students can begin a public-school aviation pathway the region does not now offer. The lab is a secondary on-ramp: ground school, simulators, and college-aligned coursework. Flight instruction, if a student pursues a certificate, will be delivered only by an FAA-certificated provider, which GCSI will endeavor to hire in subsequent years. GCSI is studying public charter aviation programs in other states so the design is informed. One example is Albuquerque Aviation Academy (New Mexico), grades 6–12, whose aeronautics students may complete ground school and flight training toward a private-pilot certificate. A public description of that school's program is attached as **Appendix 38** as a sample of how another charter has sequenced aviation coursework starting in the 6th grade. A unique feature of that school is that every student graduates with a pilot's license and completes the required 75 hours of flight time while in school, because the school owns its own aircraft. (GCSI is not adopting Albuquerque's budget, aircraft, staffing, or hour targets, and is not promising a school-owned airplane or a set number of logged flight hours.) But this is our dream.

The Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership Strategy identifies a Wildfire Aviation Operations and Training Hub at Rifle Garfield County Airport and lists firefighting aviation among high-wage sectors. Dual-credit high school aviation programs are named as a way to keep young people in Western Garfield. No Re-2 school currently offers ground school or an aviation CTE sequence. GCSI's lab is the K–12 response to that gap. It is not a county airport contract. See Exhibit 22 – CRVEDP Economic Development Version 4.

Partnership with Colorado Northwestern Community College
CNCC is the intended college partner for aviation Concurrent Enrollment. After the charter is approved and GCSI is an established local education provider, GCSI will seek a cooperative agreement so eligible high-school students may enroll in CNCC **AVT 1001, Private Pilot Ground School**, and **AVT 1002, Private Pilot Flight**, on the same statutory basis other public high schools use for Concurrent Enrollment. No CNCC agreement will be signed before that point. See Appendix 39 - LOS - CNCC - Nathan Hardin

Partnership with Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU). The sequence is in this application because two prospective parents, both graduates of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, made it possible. The Engineering-Aviation curriculum from ERAU is fixed by grade. Grades 6 and 7 are robotics. Grade 8 is aviation. Grade 9 begins the higher-level

SMART@ER coursework in space, manufacturing, aeronautics, and uncrewed aircraft. The courses are in Section 9. See Exhibit 44 – ERAU Partnership with GCSI - Sample Curriculum.

Advancing Technology to Improve Emergency Response and Public Safety Innovation
The Center of Excellence for Advanced Technology Aerial Firefighting was formed in 2014 as the research and development arm of the Colorado Division of Fire Prevention and Control. Its team, with more than 260 years of combined public-safety experience, works to improve emergency response and to move new technology into public safety. Its work includes real-time location services, spatial technologies, robotics, and aviation technologies. The Center is headquartered at the Rifle Garfield County Airport. https://cofiretech.gov/ and has been referred to as the crown jewel of Garfield County. GCSI's Aviation Campus is planned on land adjacent to our airport. The Center is named here because the public-safety and aviation work the state already does at Rifle is the setting for the school's aviation, robotics, and emergency-response pathway. That work is the example. GCSI's aim is to prepare the next generation for it, including careers in drone piloting, which will create the pathway to keep bright young talent in the Valley.

Immersive Science Facilities. A distinctive long-term vision for the Middle and High School campus includes immersive science facilities. Specifically a planetarium[1] and a Science on a Sphere[2]—that will serve both Garfield County School of Innovation students and the wider Garfield County community as a field-trip destination and after-school resource. These tools, which historically inspired generations of students during the Space Race era, remain powerful ways to spark curiosity in science, astronomy, and related fields.



[1] In 1958, President Dwight D. Eisenhower signed the National Defense Education Act, which provided the states with over $1 billion in federal money to boost education in science, math and foreign languages. One of the options was to build a planetarium. By 1970, the U.S. had built 729 planetariums, over half in public K-12 schools, and the majority were constructed with NDEA funds.
[2] NOAA's Science On a Sphere® is a room-sized, global display system that projects visualizations of planetary data onto a six foot diameter sphere to help illustrate Earth System science to people and students of all ages. https://sos.noaa.gov/sos/getting-sos/

Positive Student Culture through Capturing Kids' Hearts
Capturing Kids' Hearts® (CKH) is a classroom-management and school-culture process developed by Flippen Group. All teachers and teacher assistants will complete CKH professional development and implement the process school-wide. Training focuses on repeatable skills that help staff develop safe, trusting, self-managing classrooms; build student motivation and responsibility; and reduce negative behaviors.

In a 2008–2009 randomized study of high schools implementing CKH, intervention schools showed a 40% increase in pro-social skills compared with control schools, and discipline referrals declined an average of 22% (Appendix 33). CKH's published summary reports increased pro-social skills and fewer discipline referrals in implementing schools (www.capturingkidshearts.org/ckh-impact). CDC identifies school connectedness as a protective factor associated with healthier student behavior (Appendix 34). GCSI will use CKH as part of its compliance with C.R.S. 22-30.5-116, C.R.S. 22-32-109.1(1)(b), and the School Safety Act.

Culinary Arts, Hospitality, Tourism, and Resort Management
GCSI will develop a Culinary Arts and Tourism Management career and technical education pathway aligned with the region's largest industry, tourism and hospitality across Garfield County and the Western Slope. Students will learn food preparation, kitchen operations, service, hospitality management, and the business skills used in restaurants, resorts, event venues, and related businesses.

The signature piece is a student-run, airport-themed restaurant, Garfield Master Chef, on the Aviation Campus, on land adjacent to the Rifle Garfield County Airport. It is not at Rosie's School. The dining room, the menu, and the service are built around the airport: pilots, crews, passengers, and airport workers, as well as families from Rifle, Silt, New Castle, and the rest of the county. Students plan menus, prepare and serve meals, manage the guest experience, and apply entrepreneurship and customer-service skills in that setting. The pathway connects the academic program to the local economy and gives students practical credentials and career readiness while strengthening the school's partnership with New Castle, Rifle, Silt, and the surrounding communities.

GCSI is designed to be a sustainable, high-quality school of choice that begins small, grows responsibly, and remains rooted in New Castle, Rifle, Silt, and the communities it serves. Tourism and hospitality are identified in the CRVEDP Strategy as both the region's largest industry cluster and an under-leveraged growth sector. SWOT findings list a lack of skilled hospitality and service labor as a threat, and they list expanded career and technical training in tourism as an opportunity. The culinary and tourism pathway, and the airport restaurant, are GCSI's direct response to that gap.

LightHouse Youth Center – Fridays and Afterschool at Rosie's
The first-year Friday and after-school program will be held at Rosie's. On Fridays, students will extend their STEM learning through Technology Student Association (TSA), BEST Robotics, FIRST Robotics, MathCounts, 4-H, and other STEM-focused competitions, clubs, and activities, when Garfield Re-2 is not open, providing a safe place for students to hang-out with their friends while engaging in a fun, innovative, and creative STEM-focused learning environment.

The aviation lab is at the Aviation Campus, on land adjacent to the Rifle Garfield County Airport. The culinary pathway is there too. Students will run an aviation themed restaurant at that campus, for the school and for the community. The restaurant is not at Rosie's, and it is not open in the first year. It opens with the Aviation Campus.

The goal is to create a genuinely cool, inspiring place for students to learn—one that connects rigorous academics with wonder, real-world relevance, and character. Across Colorado, public enrollment has not fully returned to pre-pandemic patterns, and interest in homeschooling and other alternative arrangements remains elevated. Locally, Garfield Re-2 and neighboring mountain and Western Slope communities face enrollment pressure from declining school-age populations, housing costs, and family demand for options. Garfield County School of Innovation is designed as a district public charter that expands choice within the public system—offering a content-rich STE³M + Business (Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Education, Math), model, engineering from sixth grade, entrepreneurship, and career pathways tied to the region's tourism and technical economy—so families who want rigor and real-world learning do not have to leave public education to find it. By opening with grades 6–9 and growing deliberately, GCSI aims to add public capacity and opportunity, not to displace students from existing neighborhood schools.

Mascot: The Flames **Colors:** Black, Red and Gold

Innovating Today For A Bright Next Generation

2. MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

A clear statement of purpose defining primary goals and primary means for achieving those goals and primary means for achieving those goals, consistent with the purposes of the Colorado charter school law.

Garfield County School of Innovation will provide an innovative, creative, content-rich, research-based, integrated, and non-discriminatory educational system of high standards to engage all students in an academically rigorous core curriculum, promoting a strong foundation in the sciences, technologies, engineering, entrepreneurship, education, mathematics, and business (STE³M + Business), built on Respect, Integrity, Servant Leadership, Excellence, and Kindness (RISE-K) to nurture student character and to create entrepreneurial endeavors, so that all students are ready for college, career, and civic participation.

GCSI Vision Statement:

Innovating Today For A Bright Next Generation!

Describe how the mission statement was developed.

The mission statement was developed through collaborative discussion among the founding team. Drawing on the design principles refined across prior STE³M + Business-focused charter work, the founders identified the essential commitments for students in Garfield County:

rigorous content knowledge, application through project-based, entrepreneurial, and business learning, strong character formation, and preparation for both higher education and productive work. These priorities will be recited at every board meeting and used as a clear standard for all school decisions. A well-rounded, balanced liberal arts education with a STE³M + Business-focus will be taught at the school.

3. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND PUPIL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Identify in more detail the unique goals and objectives for the school, particularly as they relate to the kind of educational program at the school. Discuss timelines and describe how progress toward the goals and objectives will be specifically monitored, measured, evaluated, and reported during the first three years of the school and thereafter.

Garfield County School of Innovation will open in Fall 2027 with Grades 6-9 and will expand in carefully planned phases. The goals below apply across the life of the school.

In order to fulfill its purpose that each student is equipped for success in college and life beyond, GCSI has strategically developed the following goals, objectives and student performance standards. These goals are measured each year of the charter contract, providing GCSI with objective data by which to measure increases in student achievement and provide continuous improvement.

The purpose of instruction at GCSI is to help students access, retain, and apply the ideas and skills of its curriculum. By so doing, GCSI students will be well-prepared to meet the required goals of both Garfield Re-2 and the State of Colorado. GCSI will fully participate in all assessments required by federal and state agencies. GCSI will use all academic data from state and other assessments to provide feedback to our educational leaders, parents, teachers, students, and curriculum designers.

1. **Standard #1:** GCSI will exceed the performance expectations of the charter and the State of Colorado. GCSI accepts full responsibility to ensure that students attending GCSI learn and grow academically. To ensure the fulfillment of this commitment, GCSI's student growth data will be regularly assessed, systematically monitored, and analyzed to identify and compare student performance. Student achievement data of GCSI students will be compared with other demographically comparable schools in the district and in the state.

2. **Standard #2:** Students at GCSI will exceed the proficiency levels of Garfield Re-2 School District **s**tudents and the State of Colorado. Individual students' academic achievement will be monitored through all tests required by the state of Colorado, including, the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS), and the READ Act.

3. **Standard #3:** The first year of achievement will be measured by documenting the baseline levels of each student on all state tests, tests required by Garfield Re-2 School District, and additional tests. These baseline measures will be used to identify academic proficiency and growth as defined by all oversight entities and state or national normed assessments. The assessment program currently includes all elementary students taking the Northwest

Evaluation Association ("NWEA") assessments two-three times per year in at least Reading, Math, and Language Usage.

Standard #4 addresses postsecondary and workforce readiness specific to Western Garfield; the measurable targets appear as Goal #9.

4. **Standard #4:** GCSI students will be prepared for college, credentialed work, and civic life in Western Garfield—not only for a four-year campus elsewhere. GCSI accepts responsibility to build a local postsecondary and workforce pipeline consistent with the CRVEDP Strategy's call for Western Garfield to become a regional training hub.

Progress on this standard will be assessed, monitored, and reported each year of the charter as follows:

- **Curriculum alignment.** Middle- and high-school programs will map to the sectors the Strategy names: construction trades, energy technology, business services, hospitality/tourism, professional/technical services (including engineering), and aviation-related ground instruction.
- **Concurrent Enrollment Access.** Eligible students will have access to Concurrent Enrollment with Colorado Mountain College on the same statutory basis CMC already serves other public high schools in its tax district (C.R.S. 22-35-104 and 22-35-105). Families will not be charged CE tuition.
- **Credentials and credit.** The school will report annually: industry-recognized credentials attempted and earned; Concurrent Enrollment credits attempted and earned; and, beginning with the first graduating class, the share of graduates who remain in-county for work, CMC, or another Colorado public institution.
- **Comparison.** Results will be reviewed against Garfield Re-2 and state postsecondary-and-workforce-readiness indicators on the School Performance Framework, and against the school's own Goal #9 targets.
- **Baseline.** Year 1 establishes the baseline (pathway maps, placement protocol, and enrollment in exploratory CTE/engineering). Year-over-year improvement is expected once high school is fully built out.

GCSI does not treat an Associate's Degree at grade 12 as a required outcome. Developmental coursework, if taken, will follow CMC placement rules.

GOAL #1: Academic Growth

It is GCSI's goal that each student demonstrates at least one year's growth every school year. This goal will be measured annually as follows:

- GCSI will achieve an average rate of growth on the NWEA tests in Reading, Math, and Language Usage of more than 120%. (100% is the national average.)
- If other assessments are implemented for older elementary, junior high, or high school, the goal is to achieve, on average, more than a year's growth in each school year.
- Growth as identified through state assessments should also meet or exceed state expectations.

GOAL #2: Academic Proficiency
It is GCSI's goal that students will exceed the scores of Garfield Re-2 School District and CMAS tests required by the state of Colorado during the initial contract with the district. This goal will be measured as follows:

- GCSI students will exceed the proficiency of students in Garfield Re-2 School District and the state of Colorado on all required state assessments.

GOAL #3: Growth Gaps
It is GCSI's goal that students who show growth gaps close those gaps over time. After obtaining baseline data about a cohort with growth gaps, interventions will be implemented systematically to pinpoint root causes for the lag and to increase growth over the next three years. The goal of growth toward grade level proficiency will be measured through state assessments as well as NWEA or SAT (depending on the grade level).

GOAL #4: Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness
It is GCSI's goal that students who graduate will be prepared for college, credentialed work, and civic life. This is a fundamental part of the school's vision and is the operational partner to Standard #4 and Goal #9.

This goal will be measured as follows:

- **College-entrance assessments.** GCSI will administer the assessments required by the State of Colorado and Garfield Re-2. For high school accountability that is the SAT (and the PSAT in the grades the state requires). GCSI students' SAT Evidence-Based Reading and Writing and SAT Mathematics mean scores will meet or exceed the Garfield Re-2 and statewide averages once a full graduating cohort is in place. Until that cohort exists, PSAT results and growth from PSAT to SAT will be the leading indicators.
- **School Performance Framework — Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness.** Goals 1–3 appear on the elementary and middle school frameworks. Goal #4 is the high school PWR indicator. GCSI intends to earn a *Performance Plan* rating at each level (elementary, when added; middle; high school) by meeting state expectations for SAT, graduation rate, dropout rate, and matriculation.
- **Local pipeline (does not replace SAT).** Credentials earned, Concurrent Enrollment credits earned, and in-county continuation after grade 12 will be reported under Goal #9. They supplement, and do not substitute for, the state's SAT and matriculation measures.

GCSI will not use ACT as a state-accountability measure unless the State Board of Education again designates it. Families who wish to take the ACT may do so independently. It is GCSI's goal that students who graduate from our K-14 school will be amply prepared to go to college and be successful in college. This is a fundamental part of our vision for GCSI..

GOAL #5: Re-Enrollment
It is GCSI's goal to grow the school into a full PK-14 experience. One measure of a successful school is re-enrollment of students. GCSI intends to show re-enrollment of at least 90% of students each year.

GOAL #6: Parent Satisfaction
Every year, a majority of GCSI parents will express satisfaction with the school based on a survey that will be administered each spring. A baseline measure of overall satisfaction will be established after the first year of operation. Satisfaction will increase from the baseline year until it reaches 80 percent or greater.

GOAL #7: Teacher Re-Hire Rate
GCSI understands that stability of the teaching staff is important in school quality and student performance. We aim, therefore, to maintain an 85% or greater teacher re-hire rate.

Goal #8: Literacy – Reduce the % of students on Read Plans
GCSI will work to reduce the number of students on Read Plans each year for each grade level cohort by 20% each year.

GCSI will comply with all requirements of the READ Act of 2012 that focuses attention on reading skills and fluency in K-3. Students in Grades K-3 will be progress-monitored for reading growth each spring and fall, with the goal of helping each student to make at least one year's growth. In compliance with the READ Act, teachers will notify parents at least 45 days before the end of each school year that the child is in K-3, if their child is considered to have a significant reading deficiency.

Teachers will collaborate with parents to write a READ plan for each student with a reading deficiency, that will: identify the deficiency, set student goals, identify future interventions, set evaluation and monitoring methods, give parents strategies to use at home, and set forward any other additional services or strategies the teacher deems necessary. READ plans will be evaluated and updated at least once per year. The Read Act of 2012 will provide for funding of Research Based Interventions and Intervention teachers to assist students with a deficiency in reading. GCSI will continuously monitor the reading progress and skills for each student in the school through teacher observations, anecdotal records, and NWEA assessments.

GOAL #9: Workforce and Postsecondary Pathways (CRVEDP alignment)
It is GCSI's goal that students leave with more than a diploma: industry credentials and, when eligible, transferable Concurrent Enrollment credit aligned with the sectors the CRVEDP Strategy names for a Western Garfield training hub—construction trades, energy technology, business services, hospitality/tourism, and aviation-related ground instruction.
This goal will be measured as follows:

- **Years 1–2 (2027–29, grades 6–10).** Pathway maps published for construction trades, energy technology, business services, hospitality/tourism, aviation-related ground instruction, and teacher preparation / education; middle-school engineering and exploratory CTE in place; Accuplacer/placement protocol written; CE coordinator contact established with CMC. No family is charged tuition for Concurrent Enrollment. A cooperative agreement will be executed only after GCSI is an established local education provider. The form cooperative agreement and 2026–2027 in-district financial addendum

provided by CMC are attached as Appendix 23 and will be executed after GCSI is an established LEP.

- **Year 3 (2029–30, first grade 11).** If the cooperative agreement is in effect, eligible students begin CE and/or stackable CTE credentials. Target: at least 25 percent of grade 11 students enrolled in one or more CE or CTE-credential courses.

- **Year 4 (2030–31, first graduating class).** Target: at least 40 percent of graduates earn one or more industry-recognized credentials and/or transferable CE credits; school reports the share of graduates who remain in-county for work, CMC, or another Colorado public institution the following fall.

- **Annually thereafter.** Credentials attempted, credentials earned, CE credits attempted, CE credits earned, and in-county continuation will be reported to the GCSI Board and to Garfield Re-2 with the school's other performance data.

Goals Not Met in Initial Years – Growth Gaps
For any goals that are not accomplished during any year of operation, corrective action will take place to address the data points that are not achieved. Development of the Unified Improvement Plan) will include the staff and board. Much of this work will be done through the School Accountability Committee as set forth in the section on Governance. The UIP produced in this process will be approved each year by the GCSI board of directors. These 8 goals will allow GCSI to fulfill the vision and mission of the school. Students that progress through our K-12 program will demonstrate high achievement, growth and readiness for college and the workforce, giving them the knowledge, skills and values to be successful in "college and life beyond."

4. EVIDENCE OF SUPPORT

Information that indicates an adequate number of parents, teachers, and students (any combination) support the proposed school. A list of parents and community members who support the school should be included. If practical, the application should include a statement of support signed by everyone on this list. In addition, if practical, a list of parents who intend to enroll their students at the school, including the school currently attended, should be included. No personal identification information regarding students will be disclosed without parental consent.

Garfield County School of Innovation is documenting two different kinds of "intent," and they are not the same instrument.

1. Intent to Apply to the District (Appendix 1).
On August 11, 2026, the founding applicant submitted a written Intent to Apply to Superintendent Kirk Banghart and the Garfield Re-2 Board of Education, as required by Policy LBD-R (at least 30 days before the application) and consistent with Policy LBD-E. Because no separate LBD*-E form was published on the District policy page at the time of mailing, the August 11 letter was submitted to satisfy that notice. The letter states the proposed school name, Fall 2027 opening with grades 6–9, phased K–12 growth, program summary, September 30, 2026 filing date, and a request that the Board accept a Fall 2027 start with planning on an

accelerated schedule. A copy is **Appendix 1**. That letter is notice to the authorizer. It is not a parent enrollment document.

2. Parent Letters of Intent to Enroll (website).
Families who may enroll may submit a Letter of Intent or Letter of Interest online at gcsik12.org (homepage button and header: "Click Here to Fill in a Letter of Intent to Enroll"). A parent LOI is an expression of interest only. It is not a binding application. Binding applications will follow the lottery and enrollment policy in Appendix 2 after the charter is approved. No student personally identifiable information is disclosed in this application without parental consent.

Outreach to the Spanish-speaking community. GCSI has added a Google "Español" translation button on www.gcsik12.org so Spanish-speaking families can read the site, the Letter of Intent, and the notices of the public meetings. The button is community outreach. It is not the School's English Learner program.

Currently, GCSI has 153 Letters of Intent to Enroll. The number has doubled and then tripled for the last 3 weeks. Therefore, after GCSI files this application on September 30, 2026, GCSI will continue to file weekly updates to the Garfield County School District Re-2 every Monday with the new weekly Letter of Intent to Enroll numbers on the following dates:

Monday, October 5, 2026
Monday, October 12, 2026
Monday, October 19, 2026
Monday, October 26, 2026
Monday, November 2, 2026
Monday, November 9, 2026
Monday, November 16, 2026
Monday, November 23, 2026
Monday, November 30, 2026
Monday, December 7, 2026
Monday, December 14, 2026
Monday, December 21, 2026

3. Letters of Support.
The website also provides online forms for business and industry partners, elected officials, and higher-education collaborators. Signed letters received before or shortly after filing will be added to the packet or to a supplement. CMC provided the sample in-district Concurrent Enrollment financial addendum attached as Appendix 23.

The following Letters of Support have been secured:

Appendix 39 - LOS - CNCC - Nathan Hardin
Appendix 40 – LOS - Stephanie Jarvis
Appendix 35 - LOS - County Commissioner Mike Samson
Appendix 48 - LOS - Robin Robinson
Appendix 49 - Sam Carver Email
Appendix 50 – Email from New Castle Town Administrator for Public Meeting on 2026.10.20
Appendix 51 – Budget
Appendix 52 - GCSI has requested additional Letters of Support from Community and Airport Leaders and will continue to file additional Letters of Support with the District as they are received to keep the District abreast of the progress.

4. Public Parent-Community Information meetings (September 2026).
GCSI is holding open meetings at Garfield County libraries. No RSVP is required.

Date	Time	Location
Saturday, September 12, 2026	10 a.m.	New Castle Library, 402 W Main St, New Castle, CO 81647
Monday, September 14, 2026	6:30 pm	Glenwood Springs Library, 815 Cooper Avenue, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601
Tuesday, September 15, 2026	6:30 pm	Silt Library, 680 Home Ave, Silt, CO 81652
Wednesday, September 16, 2026	6:30 pm	Rifle Library, 207 East Ave, Rifle, CO 81650
Thursday, September 17, 2026	6:30 pm	Parachute Library, 244 Grand Valley Way, Parachute, CO 81635
Saturday, September 19, 2026	2 pm	Carbondale Library, 320 Sopris Avenue, Carbondale, CO 81623
Saturday, September 26, 2026	2 pm	New Castle Library, 402 W Main St, New Castle, CO 81647

Questions: Judy A. Brannberg, 303.522.2158, judy.brannberg@gmail.com.

Over 100 interested parents attended the meetings.

5. Newsletters.
GCSI uses Constant Contact to notify subscribers of meetings, the parent LOI form, and filing milestones.

Section 5 states the enrollment projection. Section 4 documents that (a) statutory notice to the District is on file as Appendix 1, and (b) the public demand-collection process is live and county-wide.

6. Parental Rights — Parents Have the Power at GCSI

Governing principle

Parents are the primary educators of their children. Garfield County School of Innovation is a tuition-free public charter school. It works for the family — not around it. The school's duty is to teach a content-rich academic program, keep parents fully informed, and honor lawful parental direction on matters of belief, upbringing, and the child's welfare.

This policy implements *Mahmoud v. Taylor*, 606 U.S. 522 (2025); the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment, 20 U.S.C. § 1232h; FERPA, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; and C.R.S. § 22-1-128.

See Appendix 36 - Draft GCSI_Charter_Parental_Rights_Policy

Appendix 37 - Alliance Defending Freedom parents-in-control-guide-co-english-2026-08-1

5. PROJECTED ENROLLMENT

The number of students, including evidence and background information substantiating the projected enrollment for District and non-resident pupils. If the non-resident pupil tuition policy differs from the District policy, such information must be provided.

In Colorado, a charter school is not funded at the per-pupil revenue of the district where the student lives. The student is counted in the district where the student is enrolled, and the school is funded at that district's per-pupil revenue. For GCSI, that district is Garfield School District Re-2. C.R.S. § 22-30.5-112(1)(a)(II). Counts of parent LOIs received as of this filing on September 29, 2026 are stated below; this narrative is exact and does not invent a number.

Total Letters of Intent to Enroll Grades 6-9 – For the Opening in Fall 2027

Current School	Grade	Count
Elk Creek Elementary	6	
Elk Creek Elementary 5th grade	6	
St. Stephen Catholic School	6	
Homeschool	6	
Highland Elementary	6	
Sopris Elementary	6	
Bea Underwood Elementary	6	
Homeschool	6	
Cactus Valley Elementary	6	
Rifle Middle School	6	
Rifle Middle School	6	
Cactus valley elementary	6	
Graham mesa	6	
Homeschool	6	
Graham Mesa Elementary	6	
Homeschool	6	
CVE	6	
Colorado Preparatory Academy online	6	
Homeschool	6	
Riverside Middle School	6	
Riverside Middle School	6	
LCA	6	**22**
Homeschool	7	
Rifle Middle School	7	
Liberty Classical Academy	7	
Ridle Middle School	7	
De Beque School	7	

Elk Creek Elementary. Maria, Aurora, Juan	7	
Grand Valley Middle School	7	
6th Carbondale Middle School	7	
Riverside Middle School	7	
Riverside Middle School	7	
Cactus Valley and Riverside	7	
Riverside Middle School	7	
Riverside Middle School	7	
Riverside Middle School	7	
Riverside Middle School	7	
Homeschool	7	
Rifle Middle School	7	
Homeschool	7	
St. Stephen Catholic School	7	
Colorado preparatory academy	7	**20**
Connections Academy Online	8	
St. Stephen Catholic School	8	
St. Stephen Catholic School	8	
Rifle Middle School	8	
Riverside Middle school.	8	
Homeschool	8	
Homeschool	8	
Riverside	8	
Riverside Middle School	8	
Riverside Middle School	8	
Rifle middle School	8	
Homeschool	8	**12**
8th	9	
Ross Montessori	9	
Home School	9	
Glenwood Springs High School	9	
Riverside Middle School	9	
Riverside Middle School	9	
Riverside Middle School	9	
Riverside middle school	9	
Riverside middle school	9	
Riverside Middle School	9	
Homeschool	9	
Homeschool	9	
Homeschooling	9	

Glenwood Middle School	9	
Homeschool	9	
St. Stephen Catholic School	9	
LCA	9	**17**
Total Students for Grades 6-9 Opening in Fall 2027		**71**

Total Letters of Intent to Enroll Grades PK-5

First Name	School Now Attending	Grade in 2027	Total
Dax	Preschool	Pre K	
Reed	Preschool	Pre K	
Michael	Preschool Wamsley	Pre K	
Cove	Pre school	Pre K	
Rowen	Preschool	Pre K	
Rynlee	Preschool	Pre K	
Dax	Preschool	Pre K	
Cooper	Preschool	Pre K	**8**
Ronan	Preschool	Kindergarten	
Dax	Preschool	Kindergarten	
Cassidy	Preschool	Kindergarten	
Sage	Debeque	Kindergarten	
Dawson	Preschool	Kindergarten	
Ophelia	Preschool	Kindergarten	
Hattie	Preschool Elk Creek	Kindergarten	
Barrett	Highland Elementary	Kindergarten	
Kayd	Preschool Highland	Kindergarten	**9**
Tucker	Graham Mesa Elementary	1	
Arrow	CVE	1	
Phoenix	Wildwood	1	**3**
Griffin	Sopris Elementary	2	
Giovanni	Homeschool	2	
Sean	Highland elementary	2	
Harrison	Grand Valley Center Family Learn	2	
Aria	CVE	2	
Viena	Cactus Valley Elementary	2	
Garth	Preschool	2	
Maple	CVE	2	
Seth	Graham Mesa Elementary	2	
Evie	Cactus Valley Elementary	2	
Noella	Cactus Valley	2	
Zain	Elk creek elementary	2	
Coby	Highland Elementary	2	

Myles	Highland Elementary		2	
Cooper	Wamsley Elementary		2	
Ari	Homeschool		2	**16**
Jameson	Two Rivers Community School		3	
Juan	Elk Creek Elementary		3	
Cooper	St. Stephen Catholic School		3	
Nova	Cactus Valley Elementary		3	
Jonas	ECE		3	
Lonn	Cactus Valley		3	
Zarinah	Elk Creek Elementary		3	
Roman	Homeschool		3	
Jupie	Homeschool		3	
Charlie	Homeschool		3	
Peter	Graham Mesa Elementary		3	**12**
Saydee	Graham Mesa Elementary		4	
Jaaziah		3	4	
Morgan	KSE - 2nd grade		4	
Ava	Two Rivers Community School		4	
Theodore	CVE		4	
Lea	CVE		4	
Sophia	Cactus Valley Elementary		4	
Jude	Graham Mesa Elementary		4	
Jed	Cactus Valley Elementary		4	
Liam	Highland Elementary		4	
Jackson	Homeschool		4	
Nili	Homeschool		4	**12**
Killian	Crystal river elementary		5	
Grace	De Beque School		5	
Mason	KSE		5	
Kane	Homeschool		5	
Penelope	Bra Underwood Elementary		5	
Jeriah	Cactus Valley Elementary		5	
Creed	Cactus valley elementary		5	
Ezra	Highland Elementary		5	
Emery	ECE		5	
Clint	Elk Creek		5	
Laci	Graham Mesa Elementary		5	
Madden	Cactus Valley Elementary		5	
Palin	Cactus Valley		5	
Grayden	Highland Elementary		5	
Koltyn	Cactus Valley Elementary- 4th		5	**15**
	Total Pre K - 5 Letters of Intent			**75**

Identify the contingency plans for operation in the event enrollment falls short of projection.

In the event enrollment falls short of projection, GCSI may adjust class sizes to have a "balloon" class with above projected numbers in certain classes, thereby making up for the enrollment shortfall in the predetermined class size.

If enrollment falls short, private donations and grants will make up for the loss of income if needed.

6. STATEMENT OF NEED

An explanation of how the district charter school will provide an appropriate solution to a specific need in the district within an area or within the whole district. Discuss the population of students targeted and how the population is currently not served.

Regional Economic Need Documented By Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership ("CRVEDP")
Western Garfield's own economic development strategy documents the gap GCSI is designed to close. Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership, Economic Development Strategy (Alvarium Economics et al., Oct. 2025 / Version 4 updated Mar. 2026) ("CRVEDP Strategy"). See Appendix 22.

Educational attainment and income (CRVEDP Strategy, Table 2-5).
Western Garfield adults are not under-educated at the high-school and associate level. They are under-represented at the bachelor's and graduate level, and they earn less. That is the gap a dual-credit, CTE, and CMC-aligned high school is built to close.

Table 2-5. Western and Eastern Garfield Educational Attainment (population 25 and over)
Source: CRVEDP Strategy, citing U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates.

Category	Western Garfield	Western %	Eastern Garfield	Eastern %
Population 25 years and over	22,122	—	19,346	—
Less than high school graduate	2,473	11.2%	2,315	12.0%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	6,940	**31.4%**	3,225	**16.7%**
Some college or associate's degree	7,598	34.4%	5,064	26.2%
Bachelor's degree	3,599	**16.3%**	5,097	**26.4%**
Graduate or professional degree	1,512	**6.8%**	3,647	**18.9%**

Median income (ages 15+) is $43,089 in Western Garfield and $46,188 in Eastern Garfield (CRVEDP Strategy, Table 2-6). Local-government education—school districts and Colorado Mountain College—is already among Western Garfield's largest employers and GDP contributors. The Strategy's point is not that the west side lacks work ethic. It is that bachelor's-level attainment and local career pipelines lag the east side of the same county.

What this means for GCSI.
Nearly two-thirds of Western Garfield adults stop at a high school diploma, some college, or an associate's degree (31.4% + 34.4% = 65.8%). GCSI's job is to make that associate-and-credential path *intentional* for the next generation—Core Knowledge and engineering in the middle grades, then CTE and Concurrent Enrollment with CMC—so students can stay in Rifle, Silt, and New Castle instead of leaving the valley for a four-year campus they may not need, or leaving public school for a private option.

In Western Garfield, 31.4 percent of adults 25 and over hold a high school diploma as their highest credential, compared with 16.7 percent in Eastern Garfield. Only 16.3 percent hold a bachelor's degree and 6.8 percent a graduate or professional degree, versus 26.4 percent and 18.9 percent east of the county. Median income is $43,089 in Western Garfield versus $46,188 in Eastern Garfield. Education is already one of the region's largest employers and GDP contributors (local-government education, including school districts and Colorado Mountain College). The Strategy's conclusion is not that Western Garfield lacks work ethic; *it is that bachelor's-level attainment and local career pipelines lag the east side of the county.*

What residents and employers asked for.
Community and business surveys ranked workforce training and upskilling immediately behind workforce housing as a use of public funds. Firms asked CRVEDP to "expand workforce training (especially trades and entry-level tech) in partnership with CMC." Nearly one-third of community respondents said specialized training, certification, or apprenticeships offered *inside* Western Garfield would make them more likely to change or advance jobs. The Strategy's aligned finding is explicit:

> "There is clear support for developing talent from within. Community members want career pathways for young people to stay and thrive locally, while businesses need skilled workers who are already invested in the region. Expanding trade, tech, and health care training is a priority."

Youth retention is named as an opportunity and a threat.
SWOT opportunities include: "Youth want to stay, the region needs to create viable local career pathways"; "Expand CMC and trade training programs to support energy, health care, tourism, child care, construction"; and "Apprenticeships, remote work hubs, and education-business linkages." SWOT threats include "Aging population and youth out-migration reduces workforce capacity" and "Lack of skilled trades, hospitality, and service labor." GCSI's grades 6–9 opening, engineering from middle school, entrepreneurship, culinary/hospitality CTE, and aviation ground school are the K–12 feeder those findings describe.

The Strategy's own solution language matches the school.
Scenario C ("Grow High-Wage Industries in Context of Oil and Gas Decline") lists "Post-high school education, becoming a training hub, BOCES, CSU Extension, CMU" among the sectors the working group selected. Section 8.2.2.2 then states:

> "Western Garfield can strengthen its workforce pipeline and create high quality local jobs by becoming a regional training hub. Partnerships among the Colorado River BOCES,

> CMC, CSU Extension, and CMU can expand opportunities in both education and workforce development. … Programs should focus on health care, energy technology, construction trades, and business services. … Supporting applied learning through apprenticeships, internships, and short-term certification programs will connect residents to high-wage employers while reinforcing education as an industry that itself provides stable, year-round employment."

And, on dual credit specifically**:**

> "Expanding trade apprenticeships, dual-credit high school programs, and customized training in health care, firefighting aviation, and renewable energy technology would raise income potential and keep young people in Western Garfield."

GCSI does not replace CMC, BOCES, or Re-2 high schools. It is the public middle/high school designed so that dual-credit, CTE, and "training hub" language in the Strategy has a local 6–12 pipeline in Rifle / Silt / New Castle rather than requiring families to leave the valley or leave public education for over-priced private options.

CMC cannot execute a cooperative agreement until GCSI is an established local education provider. The Strategy is evidence of *need and alignment*, not a signed partnership.

Unique Differentiators at GCSI Currently Not Served

Garfield School District Re-2 currently offers families a range of educational options, including traditional district schools and several schools that follow classical models. While these options serve many students well, there remains a clear need for a high-quality public school choice that combines rigorous STE³M + Business (Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Education, Math), with content-rich academics, accurate history instruction, strong character development, and meaningful parent partnership.

Garfield County School of Innovation will deliver a STE³M + Business (Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Education, Math) program that does not currently exist as a comprehensive public option in Garfield Re-2. Content-rich academics (Core Knowledge in the elementary/middle years) will be paired with engineering as a required course of study—beginning in First Grade when elementary opens, and immediately for every student in the opening grades 6–9—not as an elective for a few. Students will use the engineering design process every year: define a problem, prototype, test, fail, refine, and ship a solution. That work will be joined to entrepreneurship and real-world technology: students will learn how an idea becomes a product, how value is created, and how to use modern tools—including artificial intelligence used as a supervised assistant for research, drafting, coding, data analysis, design iteration, and presentation—so they master 21st-century skills instead of being left behind by them. AI will not replace thinking; students will be taught to prompt, verify, cite, and challenge machine output the same way they challenge any source. Project- and problem-based learning, industry partnerships, junior incubators, and later CTE pathways (engineering, aviation tech, culinary/hospitality entrepreneurship) will make STE³M + Business (Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Education, Math, the daily work of the school, not a poster on

the wall. This combination—required engineering, entrepreneurship, technology fluency, and disciplined use of AI on a content-rich academic core—is the gap GCSI is built to fill.

Garfield County School of Innovation is designed to meet this need in the following ways:

1. **STE³M + Business (Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Education, Math) is the core, not an add-on.** Every GCSI student will take engineering as a regular class (from Sixth Grade in elementary; immediately in opening grades 6–9), learn entrepreneurship by turning ideas into products and services, and use technology—including AI as a supervised 21st-century assistant—to research, design, code, analyze data, and present work. Students will be taught to verify and challenge AI output, not copy it. Hands-on, project-based STE³M + Business learning on a content-rich Core Knowledge foundation, with real business and industry partnerships, is not currently available as a comprehensive public option in Garfield Re-2.

2. **The K-8 Elementary and Middle School will provide a content-rich academic program grounded in the Core Knowledge sequence**, combined with hands-on, project-based/problem-based, STE³M + Business learning, real-world business and entrepreneurial experiences, and intentional character formation through RISE-K framework (Respect, Integrity, Servant Leadership, Excellence, and Kindness). This combination is not currently available as a comprehensive public option within Garfield Re-2.

3. **U.S. History and Civics** will be taught using primary source documents, personal letters, and early texts from the founding era. Students will learn the origins of important American holidays and historical events (Thanksgiving, Fourth of July, etc.) from original sources rather than through revisionist narratives, so they develop an accurate and deep understanding of their history. Garfield County School of Innovation is committed to teaching United States history and civics with accuracy, depth, and intellectual honesty. Students will study the American founding and the nation's development through primary source documents, personal letters, speeches, and early texts from the colonial, revolutionary, and constitutional eras. The goal is for every student to develop a genuine understanding of the ideas, events, and individuals that shaped the United States, rather than a simplified or ideologically filtered version of the past.



Instruction will emphasize:

- Close reading of founding documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Federalist and Anti-Federalist papers
- Study of the lives and writings of key figures from the colonial and founding periods
- Examination of the principles of limited government, individual rights, consent of the governed, and the rule of law

- Honest treatment of both the achievements and the failures in American history, so that students can think critically and form their own informed judgments.

Whenever possible, learning will be brought to life through age-appropriate experiences such as living-history activities, reenactments, debates, and analysis of original documents. Younger students may engage with the stories and material culture of early America; older students will move into more sophisticated primary-source analysis, constitutional study, and civic reasoning. By grounding American history instruction in original sources and rigorous inquiry, GCSI aims to equip students with the knowledge and habits of mind necessary for informed citizenship and a lasting appreciation of their constitutional heritage.

4. **Beginning in Sixth Grade, every student will participate in Engineering Lab** classes as a regular part of the curriculum.

5. **The long-term vision includes distinctive learning spaces such as a planetarium, Science on a Sphere, Aviation Tech Lab with ground school and simulators, Aviation-Themed Culinary Garfield Master Chef, and other Career and Tech Research/Learning Labs** creating unique opportunities used by all students on the Western Slope.

The target population includes families in the New Castle, Silt, Rifle, and surrounding areas who are seeking a rigorous STE³M + Business education, accurate primary-source-based history instruction, strong character development, and a school that partners meaningfully with parents. By meeting these needs, Garfield County School of Innovation will expand public school choice for Garfield Re-2 families.

7. TIME PERIOD FOR APPROVED DISTRICT CHARTER

The number of years (up to five years) for which the application is made and the rationale.

Garfield County School of Innovation respectfully requests a five-year charter contract, the maximum term permitted under Garfield School District Re-2 policy.

A five-year term is appropriate for the following reasons:

1. **Phased Growth Plan** – The school will open in Fall 2027 with Grades 6–9 and in the second year expand the K-5. In the second year, GCSI will grow the high school one grade at a time. A five-year contract provides the stability needed to implement this phased growth responsibly.

2. **Program Development** – Establishing a high-quality STE³M + Business program, building strong instructional practices, developing community and industry partnerships, and creating the culture of parent engagement described in this application all require sustained time and consistency.

3. **Facility and Operational Stability** – Whether the school begins in an existing facility and later develops a dedicated middle/high school campus, a five-year term allows

adequate time for facilities planning, financing, and implementation without the disruption of an early renewal process.

4. **Accountability** – A five-year term does not reduce accountability. The school will be subject to ongoing performance monitoring, annual reporting, and the district's accreditation process. The Board retains full authority to address any significant performance concerns during the term of the contract.

For these reasons, a five-year charter term will best support the successful launch and steady development of Garfield County School of Innovation while maintaining strong accountability to Garfield Re-2 and the families it serves.

8. ACHIEVEMENT OF STATE GOALS

A statement of how the district charter school plans to achieve graduation rate, attendance rate, and student achievement goals provided in the district's policies and Accreditation Contract.

Garfield School District Re-2's Board of Education has stated that its primary responsibility is to provide leadership in the area of student achievement. GCSI fully supports this priority and is committed to meeting or exceeding the standards, goals, and requirements established in the district's Accreditation Contract and Policy AED.

https://www.garfieldre2.net/school-board/search-page/single-policy/~board/a-school-board-policies-admin/post/aed-accreditation

The school understands that the Board accredits all district schools, including charter schools, with particular emphasis on the four key performance indicators:

1. Student longitudinal academic growth
2. Student achievement on statewide assessments
3. Postsecondary and workforce readiness
4. Progress made on closing achievement and growth gaps

Student Achievement and Academic Growth - Because student achievement is the Board's primary focus, it is also the school's highest priority. The school will implement a rigorous, content-rich curriculum (Core Knowledge) supported by ongoing formative assessment (including NWEA MAP Growth), state assessments (CMAS), and a Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Progress will be reviewed regularly in Professional Learning Communities. The school's goal is for students to demonstrate strong longitudinal academic growth and for proficiency rates on statewide assessments to meet or exceed district and state averages, with continuous improvement each year.

Attendance - High attendance will be supported through a positive school culture, strong family engagement, clear attendance policies, and early intervention when absences become a concern. The school's target is to achieve an attendance rate that meets or exceeds the district average.

Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness / Graduation Rate - As high school grades are added, the school will support postsecondary and workforce readiness through academic monitoring, college and career advising, capstone projects, internships, industry partnerships, and personal learning plans. The school's goal is to achieve a four-year graduation rate that meets or exceeds the district and state averages and to prepare students for success in college, career, and civic life.

Closing Achievement and Growth Gaps - The school will monitor the performance of all student groups and implement targeted supports to promote equitable growth and achievement. Progress on closing gaps will be reviewed as part of the school's regular data analysis and reported to the Board.

Progress on these goals will be monitored through the school's internal data dashboard, reported to the Board of Directors multiple times per year, and included in the annual report provided to Garfield Re-2 in accordance with the district's accreditation process and Policy AED.

9. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND STANDARDS

A description of the educational program for all students, including but not limited to special education, English as a Second Language, and gifted, including pupil performance levels, the curriculum, and content standards. Standards must meet or exceed content standards adopted by the district. In addition, specific plans must be included as to how the programs will be monitored for compliance with federal and state laws, as well as District policies not waived in the district charter, and how the programs will be evaluated to determine program effectiveness. Specific assessments to measure student growth must be included in the program description.

Educational Philosophy and Overview

Garfield County School of Innovation will offer a content-rich, academically rigorous educational program that combines the Core Knowledge Sequence with project-based learning, a strong STE³M + Business focus, and intentional character development through the RISE-K framework (Respect, Integrity, Servant Leadership, Excellence, and Kindness).

The school's educational philosophy rests on a balanced approach: students must first acquire solid foundational knowledge before they can effectively apply, analyze, evaluate, and create. Project-based and real-world learning are most powerful when built on a strong base of content knowledge. This balanced pedagogy will guide instruction from Kindergarten through Grade 12.

K–8 Educational Program

1. Core Knowledge Sequence - The primary curriculum framework for Kindergarten through Grade 8 will be the Core Knowledge Sequence. Core Knowledge provides a coherent, cumulative, and content-specific curriculum that ensures all students build the background knowledge necessary for reading comprehension, critical thinking, and later academic success. The Sequence systematically builds knowledge in language arts, history and geography, visual arts, music, mathematics, and science.

Core Knowledge curriculum is aligned to the Colorado state model content standards through the development of a Scope and Sequence document that outlines the specific content and skills that students should learn at each grade level. This will allow students to meet or exceed state standards, and demonstrate both proficiency and growth. You can find the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence documents on the Core Knowledge Foundation's website at https://www.coreknowledge.org/resources/.

On the site, you can browse the different subjects and grade levels to access the specific Scope and Sequence documents you are interested in. These documents provide a detailed outline of the knowledge and skills that students should learn at each grade level, based on the Core Knowledge curriculum and aligned with state standards. This document is based on the Colorado state standards and is designed to ensure that students receive a comprehensive education that covers the necessary knowledge and skills.

For example, the Core Knowledge Foundation's Scope and Sequence document for Language Arts in grades K-8 outlines the specific literary and language skills that students should master at each grade level, such as phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary development, comprehension strategies, and writing skills. The same type of alignment can be found in other subject areas, such as history, science, and mathematics, where the Scope and Sequence documents outline the specific content and skills that students should learn in each grade level. Overall, the alignment of the Core Knowledge curriculum to the Colorado state model content standards ensures that students receive a well-rounded education that prepares them for success in high school, college, and beyond.

Curriculum – What Students Need To Know
Knowledge is essential to student achievement, and the Core Knowledge Curriculum (K-8 offering
Literature, History, and Science, all building what E.D. Hirsch calls cultural literacy) has a history of demonstrating high achievement in Colorado and other states. This will allow students to meet or exceed all state standards, and demonstrate both proficiency and growth.

The K–8 Core Knowledge sequence is the academic spine of GCSI and is a research- and evidence-based curriculum. Please see the following detailed research on the Core Knowledge curriculum:

Appendix 24 - CK Research How-Do-We-Know-This-Works
Appendix 25 - CK Research FiveYearEffects_Maryland_2000
Appendix 26 - CK Research Walberg_phase2
Appendix 27 - CK Research Walberg_phase3
Appendix 28 - CK Research CK_Creativity_2004
Appendix 29 - CK Research CK_National_Study_2004
Appendix 30 - CK Research CK_Oklahoma_2000
Appendix 31 - Core Knowledge Curriculum Mapping Scope and Sequence

These studies are also collected by the Core Knowledge Foundation at https://www.coreknowledge.org/research. GCSI cites them to show that a content-rich, grade-by-

grade sequence is supported by published research and can raise achievement without suppressing creativity. They are not a claim that GCSI has already produced those results. Results will be measured under Section 10 and the School Performance Framework after the school opens.

Appendix 31 – Core Knowledge Curriculum Mapping Scope and Sequence (Participant Workbook)

Appendix 31 is the Core Knowledge Foundation's curriculum-mapping workbook. It is the practical tool teachers use to lay the K–8 Sequence against the Colorado Academic Standards, unit by unit, so that every grade has a written map of what will be taught, when, and how it meets state standards. GCSI will use this mapping process before opening and will keep the maps as living instructional documents. Garfield Re-2 did not require this exhibit; it is included so the District can see how the Sequence becomes a teachable, standards-aligned plan rather than a book list.

2. Alignment with Colorado Academic Standards - The Core Knowledge Sequence, when properly implemented and supplemented, meets or exceeds the Colorado Academic Standards. The school will map Core Knowledge content to the Colorado Academic Standards and will use additional high-quality resources where needed to ensure full coverage of state expectations.

3. Literacy - Early literacy will be a top priority. The school will implement a research-based approach aligned with the Colorado READ Act, including systematic phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Students will be assessed regularly, and those reading below benchmark will receive timely, targeted intervention.

4. Mathematics - Mathematics instruction will emphasize both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency. The school will select a high-quality mathematics program that aligns with the Colorado Academic Standards and supports the problem-solving demands of later STE³M + Business coursework.

5. Science, History, Geography - Science, history, and geography will be taught as serious content disciplines within the Core Knowledge framework. History and civics instruction will emphasize primary source documents, personal letters, and early texts from the founding era so that students develop an accurate understanding of American history from the earliest grades.

6. Engineering - Beginning in Sixth Grade, every student will participate in engineering classes as a regular part of the curriculum. Engineering will be taught through age-appropriate design challenges that integrate science, mathematics, and problem-solving.

7. Character Education (RISE-K) - Character development is not treated as an add-on. The five RISE-K traits—Respect, Integrity, Servant Leadership, Excellence, and Kindness—will be explicitly taught, modeled, and reinforced throughout the K–8 experience.

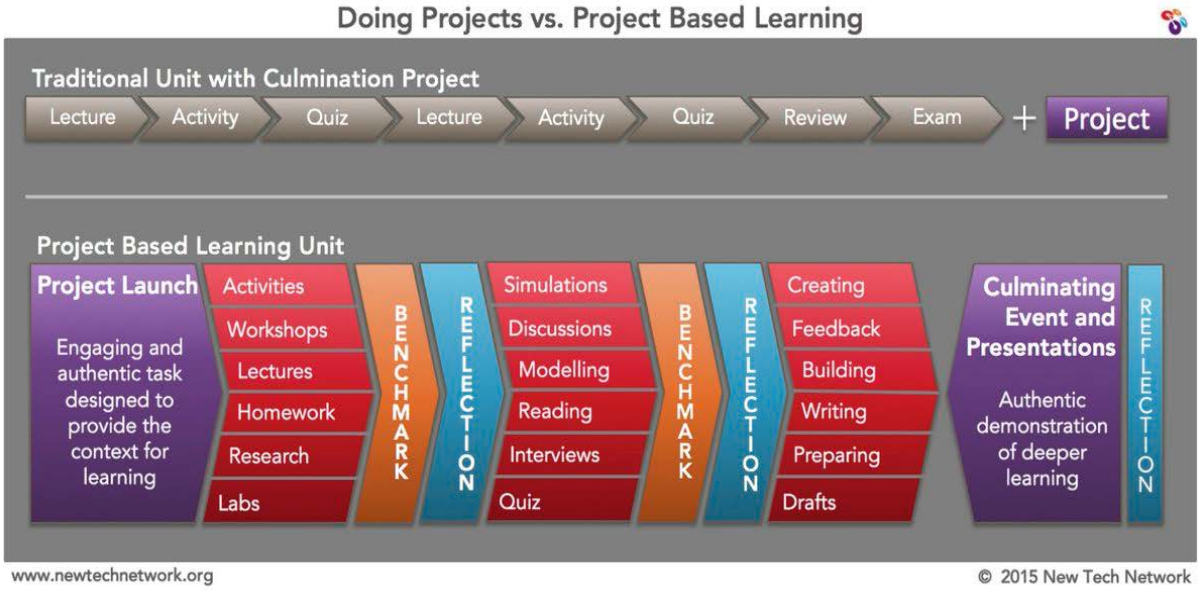
8. Assessment in K–8 - Student growth and achievement will be monitored through:

- NWEA MAP Growth (Reading and Mathematics)
- Colorado READ Act assessments
- CMAS (as required)
- Curriculum-based measures and teacher-created assessments
- Character growth rubrics related to RISE-K

9. Student Centered Instructional Design – Project-Based/Problem-Based Learning (PBL)
PBL is at the heart of instructional approach used by GCSI. It provides a context and structure for integrating academic, technical, and career skills and dispositions into holistic learning opportunities. The focus of the instructional program is to provide students with a strong developmental student centered academic program built within a PBL-modeled concept.

Through peer leadership, students will learn discipline, self-confidence, and the rewards of self-directed goal attainment. Peer leadership will be evident in every classroom and school activity. High school students will serve as visible, active role models for middle school and elementary school students. Students in leadership positions will rotate duties on the school campus.[3]

As illustrated in the comparison of a Traditional Unit with Culmination Project versus a Project-Based Learning Unit (New Tech Network, 2015), there is a clear difference between "doing projects" and true project-based learning. In traditional instruction, content is taught first and a project is added at the end. In PBL, an authentic project launches the unit and drives the learning. Students engage in workshops, research, simulations, discussions, creation, feedback, and reflection throughout the process, culminating in an authentic demonstration of deeper learning.



The GCSI faculty will be trained to use PBL at the school. It provides a context and structure for integrating academic, technical, and career skills and dispositions into holistic learning opportunities. Students will collaborate on meaningful projects that require critical thinking, creativity, and communication in order to answer challenging questions or solve complex problems. By making learning relevant, the model helps students to see the value in mastering state- required skills and content concepts. Students will be assessed on their understanding of academic content and on their ability to successfully apply that content using 21st century skills. Through this process, PBL will give students the opportunity to develop the real life skills required for success in today's world, and will lead to greater student engagement, which research shows is associated with higher student achievement.

[3] Table design is from New Tech Network. There are 131 School Districts in the New Tech Network.



Research conducted through the Opportunity Structures for Preparation and Inspiration (OSPrI) project—a National Science Foundation–funded collaboration involving researchers at George Washington University and SRI International—identified key design components of successful inclusive STEM-focused K-12 schools.[4] GCSI draws on these components to guide its instructional design. The components are:

1. **Student-Centered STEM-Focused Curriculum.** Intentionally strong courses in all four STEM areas, or engineering and technology, are explicitly integrated into STEM subjects and non-STEM subjects (Subotnik, Tai, Rickoff, & Almarode, 2010; Means et al., 2008; Rosenstock, 2008; Scott, 2009).

2. **Reform Instructional Strategies and Project-Based Learning.** STEM classes emphasize instructional practices informed by research found in *Adding It Up* (National Research Council, 2001), *Taking Science to School* (National Research Council, 2007), *Learning Science in Informal Environments* (National Research Council, 2009), and related work on active teaching and learning (Borgman et al., 2008). Opportunities for project-based learning and student production are encouraged during and beyond the school day. Students are productive and active in STEM content, processes, habits of mind, and skills, as measured by performance-based assessment practices that have an authentic fit with STEM disciplines (Means et al., 2008; New Tech Network, 2015; National Research Council, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2010; Subotnik et al., 2010; Scott, 2009).

3. **Integrated, Innovative Technology Use.** Student-centered technology connects students with information systems, models, databases, and STEM research; teachers; mentors; and social networking resources for STEM ideas during and outside the school day (Means et al., 2008; National Research Council, 1999, 2009; New Tech Network, 2015;

[4] The OSPrI project (Opportunity Structures for Preparation and Inspiration), led by Sharon Lynch at George Washington University in collaboration with SRI International and funded by the National Science Foundation, examined design features of inclusive STEM K-12 schools.

Rosenstock, 2008). The school's structure and use of technology has the potential to change relationships between students, teachers, and knowledge (Borgman et al., 2008; Coburn, 2003; Elmore, 1996) and to flatten hierarchies (Means et al., 2008; New Tech Network, 2015; Scott, 2009).

4. **Blended Formal/Informal Learning beyond the Typical School Day, Week, or Year.** Learning opportunities are not bounded but ubiquitous. Learning spills into areas regarded as "informal STEM education" and includes apprenticeships, mentoring, social networking, and doing STEM in locations off the school site—in the community, museums, STEM centers, and business and industry (National Research Council, 2009; President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, 2010; Rosenstock, 2008). As a result, the relationship between students, teachers, and knowledge changes (Coburn, 2003; Elmore, 1996), and hierarchies flatten "to substantially alter the traditional roles of learners, teachers, and instructional resources in the learning environment" (National Science Foundation, 2010, p. 7).

5. **Real-World STEM Partnerships.** Students connect to business/industry/world of work via mentorships, internships, or projects that occur within or outside the normal school day (Means et al., 2008; Subotnik et al., 2010; Rosenstock, 2008). This is consistent with the vision in the NSF Discovery Research K-12 solicitation that "the responsibilities for meeting the goals of formal education will undoubtedly shift to include a broader community of stakeholders, such as informal institutions, STEM professionals, parents and caregivers" (National Science Foundation, 2010, p. 7).

6. **Early College-Level Coursework.** The school schedule is flexible and designed to provide opportunities for students to take classes at institutions of higher education or online (Means et al., 2008; Rosenstock, 2008; Subotnik et al., 2010).

7. **Well-Prepared STEM Teaching Staff.** Teachers are qualified and have advanced STEM content knowledge and/or practical experience in STEM careers (Means et al., 2008; Subotnik et al., 2010).

8. **Inclusive STEM Mission.** The school's stated goals are to prepare students for STEM, with an emphasis on recruiting students from underrepresented groups (Means et al., 2008; President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, 2010).

9. **Administrative Structure.** The administrative structure for inclusive STEM education varies (school-within-a-school, charter school, magnet school, etc.) and is likely affected by the school's age (less than a full set of grade cohorts) and the school's provenance—that is, whether the school was converted from another model or was created "from scratch" as a STEM school (Means et al., 2008; Scott, 2009).

10. **Supports for Underrepresented Students.** Supports such as bridge programs, tutoring programs, extended school day, extended school year, or looping exist to strengthen student transitions to STEM majors. Such supports result in altered, improved opportunity structures—that is, students are positioned for STEM college majors, careers,

and jobs—and student social structures and identities change to accommodate new opportunity structures (Carnegie Corporation of New York, 2009; Means et al., 2008).

High School Educational Program (Grades 9–12)

As students move into high school, the program will deepen the content-rich foundation established in K–8 while expanding opportunities for specialization, real-world application, and postsecondary preparation.

Key features of the high school program will include:

- Continued emphasis on rigorous academic content
- STE³M + Business pathways
- Expanded engineering coursework
- Aviation Tech Lab (ground school and flight simulators)
- Entrepreneurship education, business projects, and incubators
- Capstone projects and/or structured internships for upperclassmen
- Opportunities for concurrent enrollment and Career and Technical Education Labs (CTE).
- Students will have the option of finishing high school with a high school diploma, plus a 2-year Associate's Degree from Colorado Mountain College.

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University Partnership

This sequence is in the application because two Garfield County School of Innovation prospective parents, both graduates of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, made it possible. They brought the university's syllabi to the founding board. The syllabi are in Appendix 44. On a call on September 24, 2026, Embry-Riddle described the curriculum as a fixed sequence: Grades 6 and 7 are robotics, Grade 8 is aviation, and Grade 9 begins the higher-level SMART@ER work in space, manufacturing, aeronautics, and drones. SMART@ER is Embry-Riddle's name for Space, Manufacturing, Aviation, Robotics, and Technology.

GCSI will teach to that sequence and to the published syllabi. It will not tell a student, a parent, or this Board that a course carries Embry-Riddle credit unless Embry-Riddle has executed an agreement covering that course and has credentialed the teacher. No such agreement is in place at filing. The parents' degrees are not that agreement. The September 24 call was a description of the sequence. It was not a contract.

This is separate from Colorado concurrent enrollment under C.R.S. § 22-35-101 and following. Concurrent enrollment with a Colorado public college, including Colorado Northwestern Community College for flight-related coursework and Colorado Mountain College for other pathways, waits until GCSI is an approved local education provider and a cooperative agreement is signed. An Embry-Riddle course, even if later offered for Embry-Riddle credit, does not replace AVT 1001 or AVT 1002 and is not that Colorado program.

Grades 6 and 7 — Robotics. Both grades use Building and Programming Machines, Embry-Riddle's middle-school robotics course, inside the required engineering sequence. Grade 6 takes the first half: what a robot is and how robotics has been used; design, coding, troubleshooting, and joining software to hardware; and the subsystems and first build. Grade 7 takes the second half: design principles and the ethical and safe use of the technology; a team build that has to move and respond; and a final project aimed at a real problem. Assessment is quizzes, written reflections, lab work, team presentations, and unit exams. Students follow the lab safety rules. A group may build one machine. Each student is graded on what that student can explain. Aviation is not the Grade 6 or Grade 7 course. The robotics years are what make the Grade 8 aircraft work something a student can build, not only watch.

Grade 8 — Aviation. Every eighth-grade student takes Exploring Flight and Beyond. Students learn lab safety and tools; technology and society, with aviation as the case; the engineering design process; the four forces of flight; early flight, buoyancy, Bernoulli's principle, and aerodynamics; military, general-aviation, commercial, and special-purpose aircraft and their systems; rocketry and propulsion, including thrust, stability, center of gravity, and center of pressure; communication, navigation, structures, and avionics; aeronautical charts and route planning; and later developments, including electric aircraft, uncrewed aircraft, and satellites. Work is labs, builds, tests, design challenges, and written explanations.

Grade 9 — SMART@ER. Grade 9 is the higher level Embry-Riddle described: space, manufacturing, aeronautics, and drones, above the middle-school courses. A ninth-grader does not take four college courses at once. GCSI has two of those college syllabi in hand, and those are the Grade 9 courses it will teach to.

The aeronautics course is ASCI 120, Principles of Aeronautical Science, three credit hours. It covers the history of the airplane and the airline industry; the theory of flight; airport operations; aircraft systems, powerplants, instruments, and performance; air navigation and aeronautical charts; weather theory and weather hazards; air traffic; flight physiology; and aviation regulations and safety. The required text is the FAA Pilot's Handbook of Aeronautical Knowledge, FAA-H-8083-25C. Grades on the Embry-Riddle syllabus are assignments 40 percent, quizzes 20 percent, exams 30 percent, and class participation 10 percent. GCSI will use that balance. This is the school's Private Pilot Ground School standard. It is not, by itself, CNCC's AVT 1001.

The drones course is AS 220, Introduction to Uncrewed Aircraft Systems, three credit hours. It is a survey of uncrewed aircraft: military and commercial history, growth, and uses, and the basics of acquiring and operating a system. Students explain the technology and the platforms, explain how uncrewed aviation developed, connect that history to the larger aviation system, choose a system for a stated mission, and judge where the industry is likely to go. The course includes the Unmanned Safety Institute small-UAS safety ground school: foundations, the aircraft, the environment, federal aviation regulations, operating in the National Airspace System, human factors and crew resource management, aeronautical decision-making, and the professional remote pilot, followed by foundations, robotic aircraft, datalinks, control, and payloads. Three exams are 20 percent each. A group proposal, presented as a briefing to a fictional operator, is 20 percent. Assignments, attendance, and fly days are 20 percent. A fly day is a supervised training

flight under the course rules. It is not a promise that GCSI will own aircraft, and it is not an FAA certificate. The Unmanned Safety Institute assessment and the FAA Remote Pilot Certificate under 14 C.F.R. Part 107 are different credentials. GCSI will not tell a student that passing the course is the FAA certificate.

Space and manufacturing were named on the September 24 call as part of the same Grade 9 level. GCSI does not yet have those two syllabi. It will not invent them. If Embry-Riddle later provides a space course or a manufacturing course from the SMART@ER list, GCSI may add it in Grade 9 or Grade 10 under the same rule: no Embry-Riddle credit, and no claim that the course is the Daytona Beach course, until the university credentials the teacher and signs the agreement.

Embry-Riddle states that a high-school section of one of its college courses is the same course taught on the Daytona Beach campus, taught by an instructor the university has credentialed. GCSI will not open ASCI 120 or AS 220 as an Embry-Riddle section until that condition is met. Until then, the school may teach the same material under its own course titles and will say so.

Online courses for students who need more rigor. Garfield County School of Innovation will not follow the Albuquerque Aviation Academy model. That school uses an online course program for a large part of the school day, with study hall, homeroom, and a support lab built around it. Appendix 46. GCSI's first-year program is the in-person learning program described above. The online courses are a tool, not the school day. Imagine Edgenuity's Colorado course list for 2026–2027 is aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards. Appendix 45. A student who is advanced, and whose teacher and parent agree that the grade-level course is not enough, may take a course from that list for extra rigor but this is not part of the curriculum list for GCSI. It is only included to reference the Albuquerque aviation model. It is not a substitute for the Core Knowledge sequence.

Together with Khan Academy these on-line classes which were used by Albuquerque Aviation Academy may be used as a tool to accelerate advanced and to all learners in the future if needed:

Appendix 45 - EDG-Course-List-Colorado
Appendix 46 - Edgenuity Course Descriptions

Concurrent Enrollment
Colorado Mountain College works with all public high schools in its tax district. GCSI will participate in Concurrent Enrollment and Career and Technical Education with CMC on the same basis as other Re-2 high schools, under a cooperative agreement executed after the school is an established local education provider (C.R.S. 22-35-104). Tuition for approved Concurrent Enrollment courses is paid by the local education provider, not by families. Students in grade 9 and above who meet CMC placement standards (Next-Generation Accuplacer, SAT, or ACT scores not more than five years old) may enroll in CMC courses taught at GCSI, at the Rifle campus, or online. GCSI will seek to employ or host instructors who meet Higher Learning Commission credentials (a master's degree in the discipline or 18 graduate semester hours in the field) so that college credit can be awarded on site. Full program-level agreements (culinary certificates, Multi-Occupational Trades, and any aviation pathway with a partner institution) will

be sequenced after charter approval and will be designed to complement, not duplicate, existing CMC Rifle capacity.

American History Without Revisionism
Garfield County School of Innovation is committed to teaching United States history and civics with accuracy, depth, and intellectual honesty. Students will study the American founding and the nation's development through primary source documents, personal letters, speeches, and early texts from the colonial, revolutionary, and constitutional eras. The goal is for every student to develop a genuine understanding of the ideas, events, and individuals that shaped the United States, rather than a simplified or ideologically filtered version of the past.

Instruction will emphasize:

- Close reading of founding documents, including the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Federalist and Anti-Federalist papers
- Study of the lives and writings of key figures from the colonial and founding periods
- Examination of the principles of limited government, individual rights, consent of the governed, and the rule of law
- Honest treatment of both the achievements and the failures in American history, so that students can think critically and form their own informed judgments

Whenever possible, learning will be brought to life through age-appropriate experiences such as living-history activities, reenactments, debates, and analysis of original documents. Younger students may engage with the stories and material culture of early America; older students will move into more sophisticated primary-source analysis, constitutional study, and civic reasoning.

Study of Totalitarian Regimes
In addition, GCSI will include age-appropriate instruction on the history of communism and other totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century. This instruction is designed to mirror the comprehensive K-12 standards adopted in Florida under legislation (SB 1264) signed by Governor Ron DeSantis, which require students to study the history, practices, and human consequences of communist regimes.

Consistent with that model, GCSI's curriculum will address:

- The history of major communist regimes, including the Soviet Union, the Chinese Communist Revolution, and the regimes in Cuba, North Korea, and Venezuela
- How socialist systems have transitioned into full communist control
- Documented patterns of systemic poverty, starvation, suppressed freedoms, political repression, and the large-scale loss of life associated with these regimes in the twentieth century
- The history of communist movements and tactics within the United States, placed in proper historical context
- The contrast between totalitarian systems and free societies grounded in constitutional limits on power, individual rights, and the rule of law

By grounding both American history and the study of totalitarian regimes in primary sources and documented historical evidence, GCSI aims to equip students with the knowledge and habits of mind necessary for informed citizenship and a lasting appreciation of their constitutional heritage.

Graduation Requirements (Which are aligned to the Garfield Re-2 Policies)
In pursuit of its mission to ensure that all students reach their learning potential and are prepared for postsecondary and career opportunities, our development team has established the following graduation requirements for students entering the ninth grade in the 2027-2028 school year and each ninth-grade class thereafter.

To receive a high school diploma from the district, students must meet or exceed the district's academic standards and measures required by this policy. Students with disabilities and students involved in the criminal justice system must be provided access to all graduation pathways provided by this policy and must have the opportunity to earn a high school diploma from the district.

College and Career Readiness
The Colorado State Board of Education has adopted state graduation guidelines that identify college and career readiness measures in English and Math. The Board has selected its own measures from these state graduation guidelines, which conform to the Garfield County Re-2 graduation requirements.
Students must complete at least one English measure and one Math measure and meet or exceed the measure's corresponding cut score or criteria to demonstrate college and career readiness in English and Math. The Board's approved measures and cut scores are outlined in this policy's accompanying exhibit.

Exceptions to the Board's Required Measures and Cut Scores/Criteria
If the student has demonstrated college and career readiness by completing an assessment or other measure that is not included in this policy's accompanying exhibit but is included in the state graduation guidelines, the principal or principal's designee may determine that such assessment or other measure is acceptable and meets the district's graduation requirements.

Graduation Pathways
Garfield County School of Innovation will offer two distinct high school graduation pathways so that families can choose the level of academic rigor that best fits each student’s goals. The first pathway aligns fully with the existing graduation requirements of Garfield School District Re-2, ensuring that students who complete this track meet all district credit, course, and college-and-career readiness expectations and remain fully portable within the district and the State of Colorado.

The second pathway—the **Garfield County School of Innovation Scholar’s Diploma**—is a more rigorous option with elevated requirements and a deliberate emphasis on mathematics, science, and advanced STE³M + Business coursework. Students pursuing the Scholar’s Diploma will complete additional and/or more advanced credits in math and science, engage in deeper research or capstone work, and demonstrate readiness for competitive college programs and

technical careers. Both pathways lead to a high school diploma from Garfield County School of Innovation; the Scholar's Diploma simply signals a higher bar of academic challenge and preparation. Families will receive clear guidance at the start of high school so students can select the pathway that matches their postsecondary plans, with the flexibility to move between pathways when appropriate and with counselor support.

Courses Required for Graduation

4.0 English
3.0 Math
3.0 Science
2.5 Social Studies
0.5 Civics
1.0 Physical Education
0.5 Health
0.5 Technology
1.0 World Language
10.0 Electives
26.0 Total

*World language and physical education requirements may be waived through a formal application process.

Of the 10.0 elective credits, 1.0 must be high-school Engineering. The other 9.0 may include Aviation Tech Lab, business, culinary, trades, Teacher Apprenticeship, additional math and science, and CMC or CNCC dual credit.

Garfield County School of Innovation Scholar Designation - Courses Required for Graduation

4.0 English
4.0 Math
4.0 Science
2.5 Social Studies
0.5 Civics
1.0 Physical Education
0.5 Health
0.5 Technology
2.0 World Language
10.0 Electives
29.0 Total

Of the 10.0 elective credits, 1.0 must be high-school Engineering. The other 9.0 may include Aviation Tech Lab, business, culinary, trades, Teacher Apprenticeship, additional math and science, and CMC or CNCC dual credit.

Units of Credit ~~R~~required for ~~G~~raduation

A total of 26 credits earned during grades 9 through 12 are required for graduation. A credit is defined as the amount of credit given for the successful completion of a course which meets for

at least 36 weeks or the equivalent. Successful completion means that the student obtained a passing grade for the course.

The following criteria shall entitle a student to a high school diploma:

- Achievement in the district's academic standards as demonstrated by mastery of the curriculum which may include, but is not limited to, daily classroom assignments, state and district assessments, classroom assessments, and student participation in, and completion of, assigned projects.
- Completion of 26 credits in grades 9 through 12 in the prescribed categories listed below.

Graduation Pathways

Garfield County School of Innovation will offer two high school diplomas so families can choose the level of rigor that fits each student.

The **Standard Diploma** aligns with Garfield Re-2 credit categories and Colorado graduation guidelines. It is fully portable in the district and in the State of Colorado.

The **Scholar's Diploma** is the same core plus one additional year of mathematics, one additional year of laboratory science, and one additional year of world language. It is the default recommendation for students targeting four-year STEM, engineering, aviation, or competitive-college pathways. Both diplomas are GCSI high school diplomas. Families will choose a pathway at the start of high school and may move between pathways with counselor support.

Graduation requirements

Both diplomas meet or exceed Garfield Re-2 and Colorado graduation guidelines (one English measure and one Math measure from the State Board menu).

Subject	Standard Diploma	Scholar's Diploma	Required courses (successful completion)
English	4.0	4.0	Four years of literature and composition
Mathematics	3.0	4.0	Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II. Scholar adds Precalculus / Trigonometry. Calculus is a fifth-year or Concurrent Enrollment or AP
Laboratory science	3.0	4.0	Biology, Chemistry, Physics. Scholar adds a fourth lab (Anatomy & Physiology, Environmental / Earth systems, or a second Physics)
Social studies	2.5	2.5	World History, United States History (primary sources, without revisionism), Geography or Economics
Civics / government	0.5	0.5	American Government

Subject	Standard Diploma	Scholar's Diploma	Required courses (successful completion)
Physical education	1.0	1.0	May be waived by formal application
Health	0.5	0.5	
Technology / computer science	0.5	0.5	
World language	1.0	2.0	May be waived by formal application on the Standard track
Electives / CTE / Concurrent Enrollment	10.0	10.0	Of these 10.0 credits, 1.0 must be high-school Engineering (continuation of the required grades 6–8 sequence). The other 8.0 may include Aviation Tech Lab, business / entrepreneurship, culinary, trades, Teacher Apprenticeship, additional math and science, and CMC or CNCC dual credit
Total	**26.0**	**29.0**	One credit = one year (two semesters) or the equivalent

College- and career-readiness measures (English and Math cut scores) will match the Re-2 exhibit in force the year the student enters ninth grade. A principal may accept any other measure that appears on the current State Board graduation-guidelines list.

Recommended 9–12 sequence

Grade	Mathematics	Laboratory science	Engineering / pathway	Notes
9	Algebra I *or* Geometry (if Algebra I was completed in grade 8)	Biology	Engineering I; Aviation intro / simulator module available	English 9, World History
10	Geometry *or* Algebra II	Chemistry	Engineering II; Private Pilot Ground School may begin	English 10, United States History
11	Algebra II *or* Precalculus / Trigonometry	Physics	Engineering III *or* CTE concentration (Aviation, business, culinary, trades, Teacher Apprenticeship)	English 11, Government / Civics; CMC Concurrent Enrollment if the student meets placement
12	Calculus (CMC or AP)	Fourth lab (Scholar) *or* CTE science application	Capstone, internship, CNCC AVT 1001 / 1002 if the student is eligible and a	English 12; remaining electives complete the 26- or 29-credit total

Grade	Mathematics	Laboratory science	Engineering / pathway	Notes
			cooperative agreement is in force	

Students who complete Algebra I in eighth grade shift the math column up one year and reach Calculus in grade 12 on the Scholar's track. Students who need Algebra I in grade 9 still complete Geometry and Algebra II for the Standard Diploma and may reach Precalculus through summer school, credit recovery, or Concurrent Enrollment.

What is required of every graduate vs. what is a pathway

- **Required of every student:** the Standard Diploma table, including 1.0 high-school Engineering inside the elective credits; United States history from primary sources.
- **Scholar's Diploma:** fourth year of math and of lab science, and a second year of world language.
- **Aviation Tech Lab:** elective / CTE concentration inside the remaining electives. Ground school and simulators are not a graduation requirement. A private-pilot certificate is not a graduation requirement. Flight hours, if any, are with an FAA-certificated provider after parental consent and insurance.
- **Associate's degree option:** a student may finish with a GCSI diploma **and** a CMC associate's degree only if Concurrent Enrollment credits actually accumulate to that award. It is an option, not a promise that every graduate leaves with an A.A.

Units of credit

A credit is successful completion of a course that meets at least 36 weeks or the equivalent. Transfer, home-based, and Concurrent Enrollment credit follows the rules already in this section. Weighted GPA applies to Concurrent Enrollment and other Board-approved advanced courses. Early graduation requires that all diploma credits and readiness measures are met.

Credit from Other ~~I~~nstitutions and ~~H~~ome-Based Programs
Students entering from outside the district must meet the district's course requirements. The principal or principal's designee must determine whether credit toward course requirements will be granted for courses taken outside the district.

In accordance with applicable state law, college courses completed pursuant to the student's participation in a "dropout recovery program" must count as credit toward completion of the district's credit requirements.

Early Graduation
The Board of Education believes that most students benefit from four years of high school experience and are encouraged not to graduate early. However, in some cases, students are ready for postsecondary education or other opportunities prior to completing four years of high school. Therefore, the superintendent or designee may grant permission to students wishing to

graduate early, provided the student has met all district graduation requirements in accordance with this policy and its accompanying exhibit.

Class Rankings and Grade Point Averages
Graduating seniors must be ranked within the graduating class for each high school upon the basis of grade-point averages for the four-year program. Grades for regular classes will be given the following values: A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1.

Weighted grades with the following values, A=5.0, B=4.0, C=3.0, D=2.0, will be earned in these classes:

- International Baccalaureate.
- Advan
- Concurrent enrollment classes mutually agreed upon between Garfield Re-2 and Colorado Mountain College.

After a course has been passed, no future grade earned in the same course may be used to determine class rank or grade point average.

The student with the highest-class rank will be valedictorian. When more than one student holds the numerical one rank, all students holding the rank will be declared co-valedictorians.

The student with the highest grade point average as computed at the end of eight semesters of high school work, the student who chose to take the most rigorous schedule offered at the school, who took the highest number of possible classes, and who is a recipient of a four-year academic letter in academics will be declared valedictorian. In the case where two or more students meet all three above criteria, then all students will be declared co-valedictorian.

When transcripts of transfer students show grades, such as pass or satisfactory, such grades may not be counted in determining class rank or grade point average. Students entering from home-based education programs must submit student work or other proof of academic performance for each course for which credit toward class ranking or grade point average is sought.

Independent Study
Independent study, work experience and experienced-based programs approved in advance by the principal may be taken for high school credit. Students must submit a request for approval that includes a summary of the educational objectives to be achieved and monitored by a faculty member.

Student Course Load
The course load for freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors must be a minimum of 6/7 credits per school year. Students who wish to take less credits in any given school year must obtain advance permission from the principal.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

Career and Technical Education at Garfield County School of Innovation is designed to connect rigorous classroom learning with real careers through industry-aligned coursework, professional certifications, and hands-on experience in Garfield County's fastest-growing economic sectors. GCSI will continuously adjust and refine its career and technical pathway programming based on the needs of our students, the partnership opportunities and workforce demands of the local business and industry community, and emerging regional economic trends. Our CTE programs go beyond traditional vocational training. They are high-quality, college- and career-ready pathways that prepare students for high-wage, high-demand occupations while simultaneously building the academic foundation needed for postsecondary education and lifelong learning.

Students earn industry-recognized credentials alongside their high school diploma, graduate with a competitive advantage in the regional job market, and leave with clear pathways into registered apprenticeships, community college certificate and degree programs, and four-year universities.

Partnership with Colorado Mountain College Colorado Mountain College partners with all public high schools within its tax district to provide concurrent enrollment and career and technical education opportunities. Upon approval of the charter, GCSI intends to formalize a partnership with Colorado Mountain College to offer concurrent enrollment courses and aligned CTE pathways that allow students to earn both high school and college credit.

Concurrent Enrollment Classes For Garfield County School Of Innovation High School Students

Appendix 23 — Sample CMC Cooperative Agreement (financial addendum)

CMC provided GCSI a copy of its standard **Addendum A: Cooperative Agreement Concurrent Enrollment Programs with Colorado Mountain College — Financial Provisions (In-District), 2026–2027**. That sample is attached as Appendix 23. It is the form CMC uses with local education providers in its tax district. It will be completed and signed after (1) Garfield Re-2 approves the charter and (2) GCSI is an established local education provider. The GCSI Board will approve the executed agreement.

Under the sample in-district terms now in use for 2026–2027:

- The LEP pays **100% of tuition** at CMC's in-district rate. For 2026–2027 that rate is **$110 per credit hour** for developmental courses and for 1000-, 2000-, 3000-, and 4000-level courses (AAS Dental Hygiene, AAS Radiologic Technology, and the BSN carry higher published rates and are excluded from the $110 rate).
- Colorado law requires the LEP to pay that tuition for enrolled students **even if the student withdraws from or does not pass the college course**, and even if the student later withdraws from the LEP.
- When a **qualified high school instructor**, employed by the LEP and credentialed as a CMC adjunct, teaches the CMC course in the LEP's facilities during the LEP's customary school day, CMC **returns 100% of the tuition collected** for that course to the

LEP that employs the instructor (subject to deductions if CMC pays costs that are the LEP's responsibility). The LEP—not CMC—pays the instructor's salary, benefits, workers' compensation, retirement, and related employment costs. CMC's role in those cases is limited to annual orientation, evaluation, and college-instructor standards.

- The LEP is responsible for the **quality, availability, and safety** of facilities used to deliver CMC courses on the LEP campus. If an LEP-employed adjunct does not complete a course, CMC is not obligated to finish the course with a CMC faculty member who is not employed by the LEP; the parties attempt to resolve that situation cooperatively.
- CMC may charge the student or parent **mandatory general fees** (for example student-government or incidental fees). Those fees are not billed to the LEP.
- **Course-specific instructional fees** (consumable materials, laboratory supplies, safety equipment, national or state testing fees) are charged unless otherwise agreed. The LEP may elect to pay them or leave them with the family. The sample form requires that election to be checked.
- **Textbooks and course materials** must be CMC-approved. The LEP decides whether the school or the family purchases them. CMC offers an optional Learning Materials Program (leased materials) at **$30 per credit hour** for 2026–2027. CMC does not furnish books on behalf of students. Colorado law does not require the LEP to pay for books.
- CMC invoices the LEP within **60 days after census**; the LEP pays within **30 days** of the invoice.

These figures are CMC's published 2026–2027 in-district rates. They will be updated in the executed agreement to the rates then in effect. GCSI's operating budget will treat CE tuition as an LEP obligation, will model the 100% tuition-return when a GCSI instructor is CMC-credentialed and teaching on site, and will state separately whether the Board elects to cover course fees and/or the Learning Materials Program. Families will not be charged CE **tuition**. Course fees and books will follow the Board's checked elections on the executed addendum.

Appendix 23 is evidence of **how** the partnership works once GCSI is an LEP. It is not a promise that CMC has already contracted with an unapproved school.Earn college credits with free tuition from CMC before you graduate from high school. Please review the CMC landing page for requirements: https://coloradomtn.edu/classes/concurrent-enrollment-high-school/

Start college now while still in high school and jumpstart your career! Complete commonly required college classes in English, math, speech, foreign language, computer science, and psychology before graduating high school. CMC also offers technical courses such as welding, nurse aide, construction, and automotive.

Earning concurrent college and high school credits helps you:

- Save money on tuition (tuition is free!)
- Graduate from college early
- Complete prerequisite courses that can transfer to another college
- Explore your academic interests

Concurrent enrollment courses are taught in a variety of ways, from in-person at your high school, to distance education, to your local CMC campus. Although many of these classes are

taught in the high schools, the content, quality, and faculty skills are equal to what you'll find on a college campus.

Start Your Application Now
Submit your application online. It's simple and free! Check the eligibility requirements if you're not sure.

Once you've submitted your application, we'll walk you through the following steps...

- Meet with your high school or CMC counselor to discuss your plans
- Take placement tests, if required. It's free
- Sign up for your classes

What about AP Classes?
Unlike AP courses, you don't have to take a test to determine whether you receive college credit. Concurrent Enrollment allows you to take a real college course and receive college credit based on your grade in the course.

See where CMC students have transferred (including some Ivy League schools):

Arizona State University
Auburn University
Baylor University
Bennington College
Boston College
Boston University
Bowdoin College
Brown University
Bryn Mawr College
Colorado College
Colorado Mesa University
Colorado School of Mines
Colorado State University
Columbia University
Cornell University
Embry Riddle University
Emory University
Florida State University
Fort Lewis College
Georgetown University
George Washington University
Gonzaga University
Harvard University
James Madison University
Juilliard School
Kansas State University
Lewis & Clark Law School
Loyola Marymount University
Metro State College of Denver
Michigan State University
Middlebury College
Montana State
New York University
Ohio University
Ohio State
Pennsylvania State University
Pepperdine University
Regis University
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rhode Island School of Design
Rutgers University
San Francisco State University
Seattle Pacific University
St. Olaf University
Stanford University
SUNY in Albany
Syracuse University
Tufts University
Tulane University
Western Colorado University
Wheaton College
Whitman College
Whittier College
Willamette University
University of Chicago
University of Colorado
University of Connecticut
University of Denver

University of London
University of Michigan
University of Missouri
University of Oregon
University of Puget Sound
University of San Diego
University of Texas
University of Washington
University of Wisconsin
Vanderbilt University
Yale Universit

What is concurrent enrollment?
Concurrent enrollment, also known as "dual enrollment," is a program that allows high school students to earn college or vocational credit toward a postsecondary credential with a certificate or degree. The concurrent enrollment courses also count as credit toward a high school diploma.

Concurrent enrollment courses are college courses. Students should understand that the amount of work necessary to succeed in college courses may be much greater than in high school courses.

In addition, concurrent enrollment courses become a part of a student's permanent college transcript. It is important to do well in these courses to realize all the benefits of concurrent enrollment.

The concurrent enrollment program is an opportunity to take college courses and accelerate education opportunities. Students who successfully complete concurrent enrollment (dual enrollment) courses will save time and money toward their college degree and/or certificate.

When is concurrent enrollment right for students?

Students should obtain approval from their high school guidance counselor or school district office prior to enrolling in concurrent enrollment (dual enrollment) courses.

Students and parents must attend the orientation/pre-registration or meet with a CMC student services counselor about the concurrent enrollment (dual enrollment) classes offered.

Who pays the college tuition for concurrent enrollment courses? How much are they?

The Garfield County Re-2 Local School District will be responsible for paying the tuition to CMC for students who are approved to participate in the concurrent enrollment program.

Students interested in concurrent enrollment must be approved by Garfield County School of Innovation, our local high school.

Qualified students must meet all prerequisites for the college classes they intend to take. Qualified students must be under the age of 21 and enrolled in the 9th grade or higher. GCSI will comply with all CMC eligibility requirements. These courses may be taken before, during or after school or during the summer. They may be offered at the GCSI High School, at the college, or online. Students interested in concurrent enrollment should contact the GCSI High School Counselor for more information.

What about the cost of textbooks?
GCSI students are expected to purchase the appropriate textbook (unless furnished by the high school). Textbooks are available through CMC's Learning Materials Program.

Are all college courses available through concurrent enrollment?
Many state-guaranteed transfer college courses are available for concurrent enrollment. However, there are some restrictions on choice of courses.

When and where may concurrent enrollment courses be taken?
These courses may be taken before, during or after school or during the summer. They may be offered at the high school, at the college, or online.
Not all college courses are available at all high school or college locations; remedial, physical education skills, and some recreation courses are not available for concurrent enrollment (dual enrollment).

Will concurrent enrollment courses transfer to other colleges and universities?
Concurrent enrollment (dual enrollment) college credit will transfer to any public college or university offering that course with the same prefix and number and must be treated as though taken at the receiving institution. However, upon high school graduation, if students do not attend the same college or university where they earned the concurrent enrollment credit, the application of transfer credit to general education, prerequisite, and degree programs may vary at the receiving institution.

For any questions related to concurrent enrollment, please contact:
ConcurrentEnrollment@coloradomtn.edu.

Guaranteed Admission Agreement with the University of Colorado Boulder
The Guaranteed Admission Agreement with CU-Boulder offers CMC students guaranteed admission to the engineering path of their choice after completing four college-level courses. Students with less than 24 total college credits will be required to submit high school transcripts.

Pre-Engineering at CMC
Save time and money by starting your engineering degree at CMC and transferring to a top Colorado university. The coursework outlined below is designed to strengthen your preparation for transfer, helping you reduce time to degree and overall cost at leading engineering schools such as the University of Colorado Boulder and the Colorado School of Mines.

From the space shuttle to the Golden Gate Bridge, engineering drives innovation that shapes our world. If you're interested in becoming an engineer, CMC's Pre-Engineering pathway offers a clear starting point. Our program:

- Prepares you to transfer to a four-year engineering program
- Aligns coursework with both the University of Colorado Boulder and the Colorado School of Mines
- Offers guaranteed admission pathways to CU Boulder and the Colorado School of Mines for students who meet established requirements

Other CMC courses not listed in the curriculum below may also transfer. Students are encouraged to work with a CMC advisor and consult with their intended transfer institution to confirm course selection.

Locations for GCSI where the pre-engineering is offered:

- **Breckenridge:** In-person & Virtual
- **Dillon:** In-person & Virtual
- **Leadville:** In-person & Virtual
- **Rifle:** In-person & Virtual
- **Spring Valley at Glenwood Springs:** In-person & Virtual
- **Steamboat Springs:** In-person
- **Vail Valley at Edwards:** In-person & Virtual

Curriculum

The Pre-Engineering program at CMC prepares students to transfer to the University of Colorado Boulder or the Colorado School of Mines for the completion of a bachelor's degree in an engineering program of their choice. Students may use the recommendations below to help gain acceptance to and transfer credits to other engineering programs around the country, but students are encouraged to contact a transfer advisor before completing a significant number of courses.

The Pre-Engineering program is not a degree, it is a recommendation of courses based on Guaranteed Admission Agreements, Articulation Agreements, and what has commonly been accepted by receiving institutions. Nearly all CMC campuses can accommodate students wanting to complete these courses. Not every course is offered on every campus, nor are they offered every semester. Some courses may require technology enhanced modalities to complete.

Recommended Courses for All Students

For students planning to attend the University of Colorado Boulder, there is a four-course minimum requirement for guaranteed admission to the program of your choice. These courses are MAT 2410, MAT 2420, PHY 2111 or CHE 1111, and one course from PHY 2111, PHY 2112, CHE 1111, CHE 1112, CSC 1060, or MAT 2430. For students applying without 24 or more college credits, students will be required to submit a high school transcript. Please refer to the CU Guaranteed Admission Agreement. For students planning to attend the Colorado School of Mines, they prefer students to complete the Calculus sequence rather than transfer in one or two courses. Also, historically, Mines accepts a small number of transfer students, so students are encouraged to apply before accumulating 24 or more college credits. Please refer to the Mines Admission Agreement.

- ◆ MAT 2410 - Calculus I (GT-MA1)
- ◆ MAT 2420 - Calculus II (GT-MA1)
- ✻ MAT 2562 - Differential Equations With Linear Algebra
- ◆ MAT 2430 - Calculus III (GT-MA1)
- ◆ PHY 2111 - Physics: Calculus-Based I With Lab (GT-SC1)
- ◆ CHE 1111 - General College Chemistry I (GT-SC1)
- ✻ CSC 1060 - Computer Science I: (Language)

University of Colorado Boulder

The following are additional course recommendations for students planning to attend the University of Colorado. The following are additional course recommendations for students planning to attend the University of Colorado.

- ◆ CHE 1112 - General College Chemistry II w/ Lab (GT-SC1)
- ◆ PHY 2112 - Physics: Calculus-Based II with Lab (GT-SC1)

Choose 3 courses (9 credits) from the following areas:

  - ◆ GT-CO1: Introductory Writing
  - ◆ GT-CO2: Intermediate Writing
  - ◆ GT-AH1: Arts
  - ◆ GT-AH2: Literature & Humanities
  - ◆ GT-AH3: Ways of Thinking
  - ◆ GT-HI1: History
  - ◆ GT-SS1: Economic and Political Systems
  - ◆ GT-SS2: Geography
  - ◆ GT-SS3: Human Behavior, Culture, and Social Frameworks

The following are additional courses that will be accepted, but only into specific Engineering programs at the University of Colorado. For example, Physics III is recommended for many programs, but is not a required course in all degree programs. Where one program might take Biology I, others might require both BIO 1111 and BIO 1112 for use in the program. Students are encouraged to review the CU Guaranteed Admission Agreement and to check with CU Boulder Engineering before taking these courses to ensure degree applicability.

- ✻ PHY 2113 - Physics III: Calculus Based Modern Physics
- ◆ BIO 1111 - General College Biology with Lab: Cellular Principles (GT-SC1)
- ◆ BIO 1112 - General College Biology with Lab: Biodiversity & Ecosystems (GT-SC1)
- ✻ EGG 1040 - First Year Engineering Projects
- ✻ CAD 2455 - SolidWorks/Mechanical

Colorado School of Mines

The following are additional course recommendations for students planning to attend Mines. To meet a Mines requirement, student must complete both ENG 1022 and PHI 2018. Refer to the articulation agreement for information regarding OUT, PED, DAN, and HWE as well as the GT-Pathways courses.

- ◆ ENG 1022 - English Composition II (GT-CO2)

- ◆ PHI 2018 - Environmental Ethics (GT-AH3)
- Most OUT, PED, DAN, and HWE courses **1.0 Credit**

Select 1 course (3 credits) from the following courses:

- ◆ HIS 2015 - 20th Century World History (GT-HI1)
- ◆ SOC 2007 - Environmental Sociology (GT-SS3)
- ◆ PSC 2025 - Comparative Government (GT-SS1)
- ◆ LIT 2002 - World Literature After 1600 (GT-AH2)

Select 2 courses (6 credits) from the following courses:

- ◆ ECO 2001 - Principles of Macroeconomics (GT-SS1)
- ◆ ECO 2002 - Principles of Microeconomics (GT-SS1)
- ◆ Other GT-Pathways courses

The following are additional courses that will be accepted, but only into specific Engineering programs at the Colorado School of Mines. Students are encouraged to speak with an adviser at Mines before completing these courses.

- ◆ PHY 2112 - Physics: Calculus-Based II with Lab (GT-SC1)
- ◆ BIO 1111 - General College Biology with Lab: Cellular Principles (GT-SC1)
- ◆ CHE 1112 - General College Chemistry II w/ Lab (GT-SC1)
- ◆ MAT 1260 - Introduction to Statistics (GT-MA1)
- ◆ GEY 1111 - Physical Geology w/ Lab (GT-SC1)
- ◆ GEY 1112 - Historical Geology (GT-SC1)

Guaranteed Admission Agreement With Colorado School Of Mines

The Guaranteed Admission Agreement with Colorado School of Mines offers CMC students a clear pathway to one of the nation's leading engineering universities. Students who complete required coursework, earn a 3.25 GPA and achieve grades of B or better in key classes are guaranteed admission. https://coloradomtn.edu/news/programs/guaranteed-admission-school-of-mines/

Guaranteed Admission Agreement With The University Of Colorado Boulder

The Guaranteed Admission Agreement with CU-Boulder offers CMC students guaranteed admission to the engineering path of their choice after completing four college-level courses. Students with less than 24 total college credits will be required to submit high school transcripts. https://coloradomtn.edu/programs/pre-engineering/

Career and Technical Education Pathways

GCSI will offer the following industry-partnered pathways that combine hands-on learning, industry credentials, and clear connections to postsecondary options:

1. Advanced Robotics Pathway Students engage in experiential learning focused on robotics and automation, including automated control systems, manufacturing processes, electrical principles, and robotic programming. The multidisciplinary curriculum develops the skills needed to install, calibrate, modify, troubleshoot, repair, program, and maintain automated systems and industrial robots. Students may continue into an Associate of Applied Science degree in Robotics and Automation through the community college partner. *Industry Credentials:* PMMI, ISA, Snap-on, NC3

2. Culinary Arts, Hospitality, Tourism, and Resort Management This hands-on pathway prepares students for careers across the culinary, hospitality, tourism, and resort management industries—one of the largest and fastest-growing employment sectors in Colorado. Students train in a commercial kitchen and hospitality lab, mastering professional cooking techniques, baking and pastry arts, food safety, front-of-house operations, guest services, event planning, and resort management fundamentals. Graduates may enter the workforce immediately or continue toward an Associate of Applied Science degree in Culinary Arts or Hospitality Management. *Industry Credentials:* ServSafe Manager, ProStart Certificate, ACF Student Membership, Colorado Tourism Credential

3. Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing Students develop CAD/CAM design, CNC machining, welding, and fabrication skills aligned with regional manufacturing and energy-sector employers. The pathway provides hands-on experience with industry-standard tools and software, from 3D modeling and precision machining to structural welding and quality control. It prepares students for apprenticeships, technical certificates, and four-year engineering programs. *Industry Credentials:* NCCER Core, AWS Welding, Autodesk Certified User

4. Aviation Pathway In partnership with Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver), high school students explore aviation careers while earning dual-enrollment college credit. Students take authentic college-level courses including Aviation Fundamentals, Aviation Weather, Introduction to Flight Simulation I, and Advanced Flight Simulation, aligned with MSU Denver's Professional Flight Officer concentration. This pathway provides a direct route into commercial aviation careers. *Industry Credentials / Outcomes:* MSU Denver Dual Enrollment Credit, FAA Ground School Preparation, Flight Simulation Certificate

5. Business and Entrepreneurship Students build marketing, finance, project management, and startup skills through project-based learning that includes market research, financial planning, pitch competitions, and business plan development. The pathway connects to concurrent enrollment business courses and regional entrepreneurship networks, preparing students to lead organizations, launch ventures, or manage operations across industries. *Industry Credentials:* DECA Certification, QuickBooks Certified User, Google Digital Marketing

6. Natural Resources and Energy This pathway focuses on environmental science, energy systems, and natural resource management, reflecting the industries that define Garfield County's economy and the stewardship values of the community. Students explore renewable and traditional energy systems, land and water resource management, environmental monitoring, and sustainability practices. Graduates are prepared for careers with energy companies,

conservation organizations, and government agencies across the Western Slope. *Industry Credentials:* OSHA 10 Safety, EPA 608 Prep, Colorado Water Operator Prep

These CTE pathways are intentionally designed to integrate with GCSI's concurrent enrollment opportunities, Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship programs, and entrepreneurship and engineering experiences, ensuring that every student has access to multiple, high-quality routes to postsecondary success and meaningful careers.

Teacher Apprenticeship and the Education Pathway (the third E in STE³AM)

The cubed E in STE³M includes Education. GCSI will treat teaching as a high-wage, high-need, highly respectable/admirable regional profession, not only as the work of the adults in the building. GCSI will elevate and highly esteem the teachers from Garfield County, our State and Nation.

Western Garfield and the broader Western Slope face a documented teacher shortage. Colorado Mountain College reports that elementary teachers account for a large share of new hires across districts in its service area, and Colorado teaching openings have grown faster than the national average over the last decade. Regional districts that regularly recruit include Garfield Re-2, Garfield Re-16, Roaring Fork, Aspen, Eagle County, Summit, Lake County, Steamboat Springs, South Routt, Buena Vista, and West Grand. GCSI's response is a secondary-level Teacher Apprenticeship track that feeds CMC's teacher-preparation pathway, so students who want to stay on the Western Slope can begin that work in high school.

How the Education Track Will Work
Eligible juniors and seniors who meet CMC placement standards may take Concurrent Enrollment education coursework on the same statutory basis CMC already serves other public high schools in its tax district (C.R.S. 22-35-104 and 22-35-105). Families will not be charged CE tuition. Course fees and books will follow the elections on the executed cooperative agreement (Appendix 23). Classroom placements will be inside GCSI, under a GCSI mentor teacher, during the regular school day. That is an introduction to the profession. It is not a substitute for CMC's bachelor's program, state licensure, or a registered apprenticeship agreement.

CMC's published Education (EDU) courses that may be offered through Concurrent Enrollment, subject to instructor credentials, enrollment, and the executed agreement, include:

Course	Title
EDU 1331	Adult Basic Education / Adult Secondary Education
EDU 2211	Introduction to Education
EDU 2341	Multicultural Education
EDU 2351	Multilingual Learners
EDU 2611	Teaching, Learning & Technology

GCSI will seek instructors who meet Higher Learning Commission credentials so college credit can be awarded on site when possible. If an on-site adjunct is not available, students may take the course at the Rifle campus or online.

What This Track Is and Is Not.
GCSI will introduce students to teaching, give them supervised classroom hours, and stack transferable CE credit toward a teacher-preparation path. CMC—not GCSI—awards the college credit, operates its Bachelor of Arts in Education, and administers any registered teacher-apprenticeship, alternative-licensure, or endorsement pathway (CLD, bilingual, early childhood, special education, mentor teacher). Braided funding, rural-educator stipends, and scholarships described on CMC's site are CMC and state programs. GCSI will help eligible students apply. It does not control those awards and does not guarantee a debt-free bachelor's degree.

A program-level teacher-preparation or registered-apprenticeship agreement with CMC will be sequenced after charter approval and after GCSI is an established LEP, and will be designed to complement—not duplicate—CMC Rifle capacity. Until that agreement is executed, the track is an exploratory CTE / Concurrent Enrollment pathway under Goal #9 (business services and the regional training-hub sectors), not a licensed teacher-prep program.

Measurement.
Beginning with the first junior class, GCSI will report: number of students in the Education pathway; EDU credits attempted and earned; and, after the first graduating class, the share of those students who continue at CMC or another Colorado public institution in education. That reporting sits with Goal #9. GCSI does not treat a teaching license at grade 12 as a required outcome.

TREP Program

Interested in becoming a teacher? TREP covers two years of tuition at CMC

The **Teacher Recruitment Education and Preparation** (TREP) program can pay for your first two years of classes at Colorado Mountain College. Qualified students in an educator career pathway stay enrolled in their school district, and concurrently enroll in college courses for up to two years after the 12th grade year.

A student is eligible for TREP if the student:

- Is following the teaching career pathway and is on schedule to complete one course in the teacher education pathway their 12th grade year.
- Is enrolling in the postsecondary courses identified in the teaching career pathway for the fifth and sixth years.
- Is college ready, and not in need of developmental education coursework in accordance with the education career pathway in which they enroll.
- Applies to, and is accepted into, Colorado Mountain College.
- Enters the TREP program in the year immediately following the student's 4th year of high school.

- Has been selected for participation by their high school principal or equivalent school administrator based on the above criteria.
- Upon entry to the TREP program, has not been designated a TREP program participant in any prior year (can only participate in TREP for 2 academic years).
- Is in good academic standing (minimum Grade Point Average of 2.0 in postsecondary coursework) and remains enrolled in an applicable educator pathway in order to participate in year 2 of the TREP program.

Questions?

Please contact your high school counselor for more information or contact CMC at joinus@coloradomtn.edu.

Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Garfield County School of Innovation's Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship program prepares students for high-demand careers in construction, skilled trades, and the built environment through hands-on training and industry-recognized credentials. The program gives students a direct pathway into one of the fastest-growing sectors in the region by developing real-world skills in carpentry, woodworking, electrical, plumbing, HVAC, and construction management while earning credits toward graduation and industry certifications.

GCSI partners with local contractors, trade unions, and workforce development organizations to connect students with mentors, job-site experiences, and registered apprenticeship programs before they leave high school. The program is designed so that students can "earn while they learn," gaining both academic credit and marketable credentials that position them for immediate employment or continued advancement.

What Students Learn

Students progress through a sequence of hands-on, project-based experiences that include:

- **Construction Fundamentals** — Blueprint reading, site safety, tool use, and basic construction principles tied to real community builds.
- **Carpentry and Framing** — Rough framing, finish carpentry, cabinetry, and structural systems applicable to both residential and commercial construction.
- **Electrical and Plumbing Basics** — Residential wiring, conduit installation, plumbing systems, and code compliance that prepare students for entry-level positions and apprenticeship entrance exams.
- **HVAC and Mechanical Systems** — Heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and related mechanical systems, a high-demand trade with strong local employment opportunities in Garfield County.
- **OSHA Safety Certification** — All students complete OSHA 10 training and earn their safety card, a baseline credential required by most employers and apprenticeship programs.

- **Woodworking and Fine Craftsmanship** — Precision woodworking skills including joinery, cabinetry, furniture making, and finishing techniques, developed through hands-on projects in partnership with a local Glenwood Springs woodworking shop.
- **Registered Apprenticeship Pathways** — Direct connections to registered apprenticeship programs through union and contractor partnerships, giving students a head start on a lifelong career in the skilled trades.

Program Progression
The Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship pathway is designed as a coherent sequence across grade levels:

- **Grades 6–8 (Introduction)** — Basic tool safety, construction math, and introductory project builds that spark interest in the skilled trades.
- **Grades 9–10 (Foundations)** — Core trade coursework, OSHA 10 certification, and first job-site visits with local contractor partners.
- **Grades 11–12 (Pre-Apprenticeship)** — Advanced trade electives, paid work-based learning experiences, and preparation for registered apprenticeship entrance exams.
- **Grades 13–14 (Apprenticeship Bridge)** — Concurrent enrollment opportunities and direct placement into registered apprenticeship programs through higher education and union partnerships.

Industry and Workforce Partners
GCSI works alongside local contractors, trade unions, and workforce development agencies and actively recruits skilled community volunteers to mentor students and bring real-world trade experience into the classroom. These partnerships ensure that the program remains aligned with current industry standards and local employment needs.

The Building Trades Pre-Apprenticeship program is fully integrated with GCSI's broader Career and Technical Education pathways, concurrent enrollment options, and entrepreneurship experiences, providing students multiple high-quality routes into meaningful, well-compensated careers in the skilled trades.

Homeschool Hybrid Enrichment
Garfield County School of Innovation will offer a part-time Homeschool Hybrid enrichment option for families who educate at home and want one day of supervised, project-based STE³M + Business work each week. The option is an enrichment program.

What families can expect.
For the first year, participating students attend **one designated day per week**, on Fridays when GCSI is not in session secured for this purpose. Sessions will emphasize hands-on enrichment that is difficult to provide at home: engineering and design challenges, entrepreneurship projects, and making, and age-appropriate career exploration. Hybrid students do not join the full-time GCSI student body for the regular instructional day and are not guaranteed access to campus labs, the Aviation Tech Lab, the culinary kitchen, or other specialized spaces that exist only if and when the school campus is open and has capacity.

Enrollment and funding.
Hybrid students will be enrolled **part-time** under Colorado part-time pupil-count rules. The school may claim the **portion of Per Pupil Revenue** the State and CDE allow for that part-time status. Families will not be charged tuition. Course fees, materials, or off-site costs, if any, will be stated in the Board-approved fee schedule and will comply with Colorado public-school fee law.

Conditions before launch.
The program will open only after:

1. the charter is approved and GCSI is an established local education provider;
2. a separate site is under a written use agreement that meets health, safety, and occupancy requirements;
3. CDE and Garfield Re-2 confirm part-time count, funding, and reporting for the model; and
4. the GCSI Board adopts an enrollment addendum for hybrid students (capacity, day of week, age/grade bands, attendance, and withdrawal).

If a separate facility is not available, or if CDE/Re-2 confirmation is not obtained, the hybrid option will be delayed. It will not be operated inside the GCSI school as overflow seating.

What this option is and is not.
It is a publicly funded, one-day enrichment track for homeschool families. Homeschool instruction for the other days remains the family's responsibility under Colorado homeschool statute.

Measurement.
Once the option is open, GCSI will report hybrid headcount, part-time FTE claimed, attendance on the enrichment day, and whether the separate-site agreement remains in force. Those figures will be included with the Section 5 enrollment "count day" report. They will not be used to inflate the full-time grades 6–9 projection.

Graduation Pathways and Diplomas

Garfield County School of Innovation offers multiple rigorous pathways to graduation so that every student can earn a meaningful credential aligned with their goals. All pathways meet or exceed Colorado and Garfield Re-2 graduation requirements.

1. Standard High School Diploma Students who successfully complete the required coursework, credit hours, and assessments earn a standard high school diploma from Garfield County School of Innovation. This diploma prepares students for entry into the workforce, registered apprenticeships, certificate programs, or postsecondary education.

2. Scholar's Diploma The Scholar's Diploma recognizes students who pursue a more rigorous academic program. In addition to meeting all standard graduation requirements, Scholar's Diploma candidates complete advanced coursework (including honors, Advanced Placement, or

dual-enrollment college courses), maintain a higher grade-point average, and demonstrate excellence in writing, research, or capstone project work. The Scholar's Diploma signals to colleges and employers that the student has completed a demanding college-preparatory program.

3. Dual Diploma / Associate Degree Pathways GCSI places strong emphasis on concurrent enrollment so that motivated students can graduate with both a high school diploma **and** substantial college credit—or, in many cases, a full Associate Degree.

Through formal partnerships with Colorado Mountain College (and other higher-education partners as they are developed), students may enroll in college-level courses while still in high school. These courses count toward both high school graduation requirements and college credit. Students who carefully plan their schedules and take advantage of summer and concurrent-enrollment opportunities can complete the requirements for an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of Applied Science degree by the time they finish high school or shortly thereafter (the "13–14" bridge years).

Two primary Dual Diploma pathways are available:

- **Academic Dual Diploma Pathway** — Focused on transferable college credit leading to an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree and preparation for a four-year university.

- **Career & Technical Dual Diploma Pathway** — Focused on industry-aligned concurrent enrollment and certificate coursework that leads to an Associate of Applied Science degree or industry credentials in fields such as robotics/automation, culinary arts and hospitality, engineering/advanced manufacturing, aviation, business, natural resources/energy, or the building trades.

Students on either Dual Diploma pathway work with counselors and college advisors to map a coherent sequence of high school and concurrent-enrollment courses. Successful completion allows students to leave GCSI with a high school diploma **plus** an associate degree or a significant block of college credit, giving them a substantial head start on further education or entry into high-skill careers.

These multiple diploma options—Standard Diploma, Scholar's Diploma, and Dual Diploma / Associate Degree pathways—ensure that GCSI students have clear, flexible routes to college readiness, career readiness, and long-term success.

Serving All Students Overview

1. **Special Education** - The school will provide a full continuum of services for students with disabilities in accordance with IDEA and Colorado law which will comprise approximately 8% of the student body, which is the district average. Students with IEPs will receive the supports and services required by their plans in the least restrictive environment appropriate.

2. **English Learners** - English Learners will receive appropriate language development support so they can access the full curriculum while developing English proficiency.
3. **Gifted and Talented** - Gifted students will be identified and served through advanced content, acceleration options, and enrichment opportunities consistent with Colorado guidelines.
4. **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)** - The school will implement a Multi-Tiered System of Supports to provide academic and behavioral interventions at increasing levels of intensity based on student need.

1. Special Education

GCSI is committed to serving all students who want to enroll including those with disabilities, gifted and talented, English language learners (ELL), and students with 504 plans and other needs.

This section discusses how GCSI will address exceptional and educationally disadvantaged student needs. Specific research-based instructional programs, practices and strategies will be employed to produce a continuum of services, which are supported by good assessments, to help ensure academic success for all students.



Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Program Administration

This subsection summarizes the approach, oversight, and design of programs to serve exceptional and educationally disadvantaged students.

Additional Supports or Programs Provided to Exceptional Students

How the Assessment System will enable GCSI to Identify
Students who fail to meet grade-level or age appropriate standards when provided appropriate instruction will be referred to the problem-solving team (teachers and specialists who work with student) to determine what further interventions may be necessary for student achievement. If classroom interventions are not successful, the problem-solving team will meet to discuss the student and determine the next steps based on the classroom data presented. If the problem-solving team agrees that formal evaluation is necessary, parental consent will be obtained and formal evaluation will be completed within 60 days. During the evaluation, the family will be interviewed to gather information about language proficiency, family history, school history, health/medical history, social/emotional concerns, and cultural considerations. The assigned teacher will gather curriculum-based measures such as work samples, formal and informal

assessments, teacher interviews, and observations. Based on the child's needs, the ELL teacher, the special education teacher, the psychologist, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist or other itinerants may also evaluate the child.

Implementation of Services During School Day
Students will be included in classroom instruction with their same-age, non-disabled peers to the fullest extent possible. Special service providers will work with the general education teachers to provide services and supports necessary for student success as specified in their Individualized Educational Plans,504s, or other learning plans. If it is necessary to pull a student out of class for services, it will not occur during core instruction time.

A day in the life of a student who has a disability will look different for each student as special education is not a one-size-fits-all program. Each student's day will be different as determined by his or her individual educational program (IEP). In addition, all teachers will be required to utilize the IEP as a tool to ensure the student's receives a Free And Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). It is the responsibility of all parties to abide by the IEP as a legal contract entered into by all parties including parents, student and GCSI education staff and administration.

Best Practices for Implementation of Special Education Strategies
Students who have a disability must receive appropriate services that ensure that they receive equal educational opportunities to their nondisabled peers. GCSI will ensure that all staff members follow research-based best practices to ensure that students who have disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE).

GCSI will provide all special education students with customized learning plans that support standards based IEPs. We recognize the importance of ensuring that standards-based IEP goals with measurable objectives that are aligned to the Common Core. IEPs will address evidence-based practices and interventions for students who have disabilities. Extended evidence outcomes (EEOs) will ensure that students who have a modified curriculum are meeting the same standards on their instructional level. The IEP will guide teachers so that each student receives appropriate accommodations, and modifications when necessary.

GCSI will provide differentiated instruction that engages students through a variety of learning modalities that engage a variety of learning styles with pedagogically sound approach focusing on mastery of content and skill.

GCSI will use assessments that are flexible and diagnostic to provide an accurate picture of each student's strengths and needs. Regular progress monitoring will be used to track students' progress and provide teachers with valuable information on where students need further instruction.

Instructor Responsibilities and Communication Plan
All teachers will receive copies of the IEPs, 504s, or ALPs for students in their classes. Special education teachers will collaborate with and consult with general education teachers during weekly planning periods to ensure that the accommodations and modifications specified for each student are implemented with fidelity. General education teachers will be responsible for making

the necessary adaptations for all students in their classes. The special education teacher will collaborate with the general education teacher to make any necessary modification to the content to ensure that it is accessible for all students in the classes. Teachers will communicate with parents on a regular basis. Progress on IEP goals and grades will be communicated to parents through quarterly progress reports, report cards, and during parent-teacher conferences.

Special Education Overview

GCSI anticipates a special education population around 14%, because of our unique STE^{3}AM-focused, technology driven, curriculum which will attract a high percentage of students with ALP's. GCSI plans to hire non-instructional service providers such as a school nurse, school psychologist, and a speech language therapist, and an occupational therapist. GCSI and will comply with all district regulations for accommodating students' needs, including hiring licensed and certified special education teachers. Specific resources allocated to special needs students will be determined as needed and on an individual basis. The primary goal will be to allow students to participate in general education classes with their same-age nondisabled peers to the greatest extent possible. For students who require more intensive supports or specialized classroom aids, the school will take whatever actions are deemed necessary by the district, Principal and IEP Team.

Number, Type of Instructional Staff, and Qualifications

GCSI will hire highly qualified teachers as required by ESSA. We will prepare job descriptions for each staff position prior to beginning recruitment. Teachers and staff will meet the training requirements of the Child Protection Act.

All SPED staff, including service providers such as OT, PT, SLP, Psychologist, and Nurse, will be certified and licensed through the State of Colorado.

Garfield County School of Innovation will co-operate with its charter authorizer to ensure that students with special needs receive an appropriate level of service. Special education staff hired by Garfield County School of Innovation will have or obtain proper licensure and endorsements as stated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Colorado Exceptional Children's Educational Act (ECEA).

GCSI will hire one highly qualified special education generalist, one part-time contracted occupational therapist, one part-time contracted speech language pathologist, one part-time contracted school psychologist, and a part-time contracted bachelor's prepared registered school nurse with both a DORA and CDE license to meet the needs of our special education students.

The school nurse will also provide training to our front office and health room staff in all the proper procedures necessary under CDE regulations.

A certified and endorsed ELD specialist will be hired per OCR directives.

GCSI will apply to the Colorado State Board of Education for a waiver from licensing requirements for our general education teachers. If waived from licensing, our general education teachers will not need to meet the licensing requirement for HQ requirements. However, our

teachers must still hold a Bachelor's degree (or higher) and demonstrate subject matter competency for their assignment(s).

The Executive Director will oversee recruitment, hiring, and retention of highly qualified teachers and service providers.

Alignment with School Mission
GCSI's mission is to provide an innovative, creative, content-rich, research based, integrated, and non-discriminatory educational system of high standards to engage all students in an academically rigorous core curriculum, promoting a strong foundation in the sciences, technologies, engineering, entrepreneurship, education, and math (STE^3AM), built on respect, integrity, servant leadership, excellence, and kindness, to nurture student character and to create entrepreneurial endeavors, so that all students are ready for college, career, and civic participation.

Alignment with Curriculum and Instructional Approach and Garfield Re-2, State, and Federal Guidelines, Laws and Policies
The Core Knowledge curriculum will benefit our students by providing the necessary rigor for student growth. Our curriculum is enriched with inquiry-based STE^3AMfocused projects and activities that will provide the student-centered, hands-on learning opportunities that will enable all students to access the curriculum regardless of their dominant learning style. Our plan for meeting the needs of exceptional students is further in alignment with all Garfield Re-2, Colorado, and Federal Guidelines, Laws and Policies.

Professional Development – Serving Students with Special Needs
Much of the professional development received by GCSI's general education teachers will focus on data-driven decision-making, research-based instructional strategies, and professional development in content. The special education teacher will participate in these trainings to ensure alignment of practice with special education student needs. In addition, the special education teacher will receive ongoing special education training through the district and the Colorado Department of Education. The special education teacher will provide ongoing training and support to the general education teachers to ensure that they are providing rich, engaging, and differentiated learning experiences that enable all students to achieve their learning objectives. All teachers receive training that will enable them to implement the MTSS/RTI process.

Our primary goal is provide the supports necessary for special education students to participate in general education classes to the fullest extent possible. Decisions regarding the best practices for inclusion in the least restrictive environment are the responsibility of the Individualized Education Program Team. Garfield County School of Innovation will fully comply with any Individual Education Plans established for students with special needs.

Staffing and Budget
Financial considerations for these key aforementioned areas, along with staffing and needed materials are addressed in the budget. Please refer to section Budget and Finance. We have examined the demographics from neighboring schools, especially those of GCSI, which has a larger than average population of students who have been identified as Gifted and Talented. The

percentage of exceptional students in neighboring schools averages about 8%. Our budget reflects a projected exceptional student population of 8%.



Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Students with Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)

This subsection focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

Individual Educational Program (IEP)
As required by federal and state statutes and regulations, each special education student eligible under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) will be provided a free, appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. To meet each student's needs, Garfield County School of Innovation will focus on providing necessary educational enhancement services such as assistive technology, interventions, small group, individual instruction, and note-taking services within the regular education environment.

The school will assume responsibility for classroom instruction for students with special needs and will comply with all district regulations for accommodating such students, including hiring SPED teachers with the required certifications. Specific resources allocated to special needs students will be determined as needed and on an individual basis. The primary goal will be to allow students to participate in mainstream classes to the greatest extent possible. For students who require more individualized instruction or specialized classroom aids, the school will take whatever actions the IEP team agrees are necessary for student success.

Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in a Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)
GCSI is committed to providing all students with a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) in compliance with special education laws. Our goal is to provide as much in-class support as necessary to meet students' needs. We understand the requirements of important federal laws including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). We also understand the requirements of Colorado's Exceptional Children's Education Act (CECEA).

Confidentiality and Special Education Records
Pursuant to the IDEA, the ECEA, and the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Colorado Public Records Act, Garfield County School of Innovation will establish policies and procedures to maintain the confidentiality of personally identifiable information in special education records during all stages of their collection, storage, disclosure and destruction.

Student Evaluation Process
GCSI will provide time (prior to school starting) to review all enrolled students' IEPs and 504 plans to ensure that teachers are aware of all accommodations and modifications needed by students in their classes. IEPs for all students will be reviewed annually for student progress and to ensure that the IEP is appropriate to meet the student needs. Students who have IEP's will be reevaluated every three years.

Students who fail to meet grade-level or age appropriate standards when provided appropriate instruction will be referred to the problem-solving team (teachers and specialists who work with student) to determine what further interventions may be necessary for student achievement. If classroom interventions are not successful, the problem-solving team will meet to discuss the student and determine the next steps based on the classroom data presented. If the problem-solving team agrees that more formal evaluation is necessary, parental consent will be obtained and formal evaluation will be completed within 60 days to determine what services and supports the student will need to receive a free appropriate public education. The assessments will cover all areas of suspected disability which may include cognitive, social/emotional, communication, physical, hearing, and vision. During the evaluation, the family will be interviewed to gather information about language proficiency, family history, school history, health/medical history, social/emotional concerns, and cultural considerations. The assigned teacher will gather curriculum-based measures such as work samples, formal and informal assessments, teacher interviews, and observations. Once the evaluation is complete, the IEP team, including the parents, will meet to review the evaluation results, and based on the results, will determine under which disability, if any, the student qualifies for special education services. If the student qualifies for services, the IEP team will develop an individual education plan (IEP) based on the child's specific needs. The IEP will describe the student's strengths, concerns of the parents/guardians, results of the evaluation, accommodations, modifications, and related services that the child will need to receive an appropriate education. It will also list the goals and objectives, which will be used to measure a student's progress and determine whether the program and placement are appropriate.

Student to Teacher Ratios in Years 1-5
We predict a teacher to student radios of 1:20 for years 1-5. GCSI has allocated necessary resources to SPED in order to meet CDE requirements.

Continuum of Services - Instructional Programs and Practices
In full compliance with the Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), GCSI is committed to providing a continuum of services in the least restrictive environment that is appropriate to each individual student's needs. This means that students will receive instruction in the general education classroom as much as possible. The special education coordinator will work with regular classroom teachers so they know how to provide accommodations and modifications for students. For example, depending on the disability, a student's IEP might

include strategies such as oral testing, extended time, alternative formats, using computers rather than writing, scribes, and assistive technology for students with graphic-motor challenges. The special education teacher might work with general education teachers for inclusion support, co-teaching, support in designing instruction, and more.

Some students may require minimal pull-out support, and in these situations the student works with the special education teacher, or other service provider, individually or in a small group. The instructors use a variety of tools to support students' learning needs depending on the disability and identified strategies. Minimal pull-out support might also come from other itinerant service providers such as occupational, physical, and speech therapy.

Components of an IEP include the following:

- The student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, describing how the student is currently doing in school and how the student's disability affects his or her involvement and progress in the general curriculum
- Annual goals for the student, meaning what parents and the school team think he or she can reasonably accomplish in a year
- The special education and related services to be provided to the student, including health, behavioral, transportation, etc.
- Supplementary aids and services (such as a communication device) and changes to the program or supports for school personnel
- How much of the school day the student will be educated separately from nondisabled students or not participate in extracurricular or other nonacademic activities such as lunch or clubs (called extent of nonparticipation)
- How (and if) the student is to participate in state and district-wide assessments, including what modifications to tests the student needs
- Service delivery details, such as when services and modifications will begin, how often they will be provided, where they will be provided, and how long they will last
- Accommodations or modifications necessary for student success
- Transition goals and services
- How school personnel will measure the student's progress toward the annual goals.
- Once the IEP has been fully developed, the school will share the IEP with all of the student's teachers.
- IEPs are reviewed annually and are thoroughly re-evaluated triennially.

Transition Services

In order to improve outcomes for youth with disabilities, GCSI will comply with transition services requirements, which were included in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA P.L. 101-476). The basic purpose of including transition components in the legislation is to better prepare students with disabilities to gain access to the supports and services necessary to reach their desired outcomes and become as independent as possible. The transition planning process should promote successful movement from school to post-secondary education and training, employment, independent living, and community participation based on students' preferences, interests, abilities and needs.

The transition services requirements of IDEA provide opportunities to:

- Help students and families think about the future and consider what they want to do after high school;
- Plan how to make the high school experience most relevant to the student's desired outcomes; and
- Help students and families make connections to supports and services they may need after high school.

The process of planning and providing transition services based on individual student needs may be challenging in our complicated systems of education with limited resources. GCSI will utilize community resources to help provide adequate transition services for students in compliance with Indicator 13.

How will the progress of students with special needs be monitored?
Students with special needs will be assessed for growth with accommodations or modifications as outlined in their IEPs. Teachers will assess student progress by establishing a baseline at the beginning of the year and tracking progress towards academic goals throughout the year (fall, winter, spring). Teachers will monitor students who have special needs on a regular basis by giving weekly probes. This will enable teachers to identify areas of concern before they become problematic. We will use Aimsweb Plus or Enrich to progress monitor our Tier II and III students reading, writing, and math goals. Progress will also be monitored with teacher-designed tools in order to assess academic performance, quantify rate of improvement, and evaluate the effectiveness of instruction.

What percentage of SPED students do you anticipate having?
GCSI anticipates a minimum of 8%, which is the District average. However, our prior experience with STEM School Highlands Ranch shows that our percentage will be much greater, at least double or more, because of the project-based/problem-based learning style.

Evaluating and Monitoring the Progress of Special Education Students
In addition to the IEP and the Enrich software system, which is used to track student progress made towards goals, documentation will also be taken from the three types of monitoring aligned with the three RTI levels:

1. Tier 1: Benchmarking – Assess all students three times per year for universal screening (early identification) and general education progress monitoring.

2. Tier 2: Strategic Monitoring – Monitor at-risk students monthly and evaluate the electiveness of instructional changes.
3. Tier 3: Intensive Progress Monitoring – Write individualized annual goals and monitor more frequently for those who need intensive instructional services.

IEP Progress Reporting Toward Annual Goals
All students with IEPs will have an annual meeting with the parents, special education teacher, the general education teacher, and a school administrator. At the annual meeting, the student's IEP will be reviewed to ensure that the student is meeting the IEP goals or making appropriate progress. Strategies may be refined or modified based on the student's progress. A parent can submit a special request to have a student's IEP reviewed or modified before the annual

evaluation is scheduled. In addition, any time a change is made to an IEP, the special education team will call a formal meeting that involves the student's parents/guardians, general education teacher, and an administrator. If student assessment data, classroom data and observations indicate student is performing at grade, proficiency level, then the student exits special education program.

What will be the specific focus of the Tier I, II, & III Interventions at this school? How will students with Mental Health concerns be served in a tiered approach according to our MTSS model? (Psychologist, social worker, counselor)

The specific focus of the MTSS model at GCSI will be to meet the needs of our student population. A multi-disciplinary team (parents, teachers, admin, counselors, external partners, etc.) will use data-based problem solving to close the achievement gap for underserved students and to ensure high expectations and academic success for our entire student population. We will offer a continuum of interventions and classes to meet the needs of the students with the ultimate goal of closing the achievement gap. We will meet the socio-emotional needs of the students and provide services for students who have mental health issues by hiring a social worker, psychologist and/or counselor.

John Dewey Institute Partnership – Every Student. Every Ability. A Real High School Diploma. https://gcsik12.org/education/jdi

GCSI will serve students on the autism spectrum under IDEA from day one; a later JDI application, if pursued, is a separate filing and is not part of this charter.

A Growing and Underserved Population
According to the most recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network (surveillance year 2022, published 2025), approximately 1 in 31 (3.2%) eight-year-old children in the United States has been identified with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Prevalence has risen steadily over two decades, and rates vary significantly by community — reaching as high as 1 in 19 in some sites. Despite this high and growing population, students on the spectrum remain grossly underserved by traditional public-school models that lack the specialized staffing, individualized curriculum, and experiential learning environments these learners need to thrive.

Administrative Unit, ECEA categorical funding, and FAPE

GCSI is a district charter of Garfield School District Re-2. It is not an Administrative Unit.

Under the Exceptional Children's Educational Act, C.R.S. § 22-20-101 et seq., and 1 CCR 301-8, state special-education categorical dollars are distributed to the Administrative Unit, not as a separate check to an individual school. Colorado River BOCES is the Administrative Unit for Garfield Re-2. The AU remains legally responsible for Child Find, evaluation, IEP development, and the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to eligible students who enroll at GCSI. Federal IDEA funds flow on a separate track through the same AU.

ECEA uses two tiers (FY 2025–26 CDE preliminary amounts, which inflate annually beginning FY 2024–25 under S.B. 22-127):

- **Tier A** — every student identified with a disability: **$1,882.59**.
- **Tier B** — an additional amount for specified disabilities that generally require more intensive services, including visual impairment including blindness, hearing impairment including deafness, deaf-blindness, autism spectrum disorder, serious emotional disability, traumatic brain injury, multiple disabilities, and intellectual disability: **$5,797.67** (statutory maximum $6,000). A student in a Tier B category is counted in both tiers.

Those amounts are in addition to ordinary per-pupil Total Program funding. A smaller statewide pool reimburses high-cost students. GCSI will not treat current-year published rates as Year-1 revenue. Budget assumptions in Section 12 will be updated to the CDE ECEA and IDEA allocations in force for FY 2027–28.

A district charter does not remove Re-2's membership in the AU and does not make GCSI the AU. It creates another public-school setting in which IEP services can be delivered. The charter contract will specify which special-education and related services GCSI provides with its own staff, which services are purchased from Re-2 or Colorado River BOCES, and how ECEA/IDEA dollars attributable to GCSI-enrolled students are accounted for. GCSI will participate in Child Find, IEP meetings, and service delivery as the school of attendance, under the AU's direction and in compliance with IDEA and ECEA.

The substantive FAPE standard is *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District RE-1*, 580 U.S. 386 (2017): an IEP must be reasonably calculated to enable the child to make progress appropriate in light of the child's circumstances — not a program that is merely more than de minimis. GCSI will implement each IEP to that standard in the least restrictive environment appropriate to the child.

Appendix 41 - 2024 School Finance in Colorado
Appendix 42 - CDE Administrative Units - Funding for Autism
Appendix 43 - Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District

The John Dewey Institute at GCSI

In Year 2 or 3 of operation, GCSI will support the creation of a separate, embedded charter school — the John Dewey Institute — located directly inside the GCSI campus on a dedicated wing or floor. JDI combines project-based and problem-based STE²AM + Business learning with Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) supports, social-skills instruction, athletics, hands-on science, Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways, Building Trades pre-apprenticeships, concurrent-enrollment college courses, and transitional programs for ages 18–21. GCSI and JDI are committed to providing a Free Appropriate Public Education for all students in the Least Restrictive Environment.

The mission of the John Dewey Institute (JDI) is to create a five-star K–14 school with an innovative STE³M + Business curriculum designed for students on the Autism Spectrum, supported by teachers specially trained in presenting that curriculum — so that all students will graduate with a **high school diploma** and become self-actualized individuals. While students on the Autism Spectrum will benefit most from attending, JDI is inclusive and welcomes all students.

T.A.C.T. – Teaching the Autism Community Trades
GCSI will also partner with a very successful program on the front range called T.A.C.T. – Teaching the Autism Community Trades. The mission of T.A.C.T. is to empower individuals on the Autism spectrum through skilled trades because 90% of people in the Autism community are unemployed. T.A.C.T.'s mission is to change that. T.A.C.T. recently opened a campus in Carbondale, Colorado. https://www.buildwithtact.org/carbondale

A Diploma That Means Something
The diploma is not a consolation prize — it is the goal. JDI's entire curriculum is engineered around one outcome: every student walks across that stage. STE²AM + Business coursework is delivered by teachers specially trained to present rigorous academic content in ways that reach students on the Autism Spectrum, ensuring no learner is tracked into a lesser credential.

Graduates leave JDI with a standard high school diploma, college credits through concurrent enrollment, career-ready CTE certifications, and the self-advocacy skills to pursue higher education, skilled trades, or meaningful employment — on their own terms.

Financially and Programmatically Possible
GCSI's commitment makes this model financially and programmatically possible. GCSI will provide JDI with free rent and grant JDI students full, no-cost access to GCSI's specialized facilities — science and engineering labs, digital media spaces, physical-education areas, culinary and aviation CTE labs, planetarium/Science on a Sphere resources, and other shared infrastructure. By eliminating facility and rent costs, JDI can direct its resources toward the high-salaried, highly trained professionals essential for success with this population. Together, GCSI and JDI will actively pursue private foundation grants to fund the specialized staffing this program demands — ensuring that every neurodiverse learner is supported by the right professionals from day one.

- Specialized Staff for Specialized Learners
- Special Education Teachers certified and extensively trained in autism-spectrum pedagogy and STE³M + Business delivery
- Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and Registered Behavior Technicians delivering evidence-based ABA therapy
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech-Language Pathologists
- School Psychologists
- Mentors, transition specialists, and trained paraprofessionals
- A Model That Works for Every Learner

This partnership structure allows JDI to recruit and retain the specialized staff required to deliver an individualized, high-quality education that traditional district settings rarely afford. The result is a model in which students on the spectrum — and their neurotypical peers — earn a real high school diploma, gain career readiness through CTE and concurrent enrollment, develop moral core values, and build the capacity to become self-actualized contributors to society.

Our goal is to help *all* students gain an appreciation and respect for diversity, individual strengths, and an increased sense of compassion for others regardless of ability or circumstance.

JDI's educational philosophy follows Dewey's belief that learning is active, rooted in real-life tasks and guided experiences within a living community. By embedding this specialized program inside GCSI's innovative STE²AM + Business campus, Garfield County will offer families a rare and urgently needed option: a free public-charter pathway that meets the scale of the autism population while leveraging shared world-class facilities and freeing resources for the expert educators these students deserve.

The John Dewey Institute was co-founded by Dr. John Evans — a former member of the Colorado State Board of Education, former Assistant Majority Leader of the Colorado Senate, and an attorney — and Judy Brannberg, to create a school for students on the autism spectrum so they can earn a high school diploma. Denials of those charter applications are the subject of appeals, including current review by the Supreme Court of the United States.

2. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: English Language Learners (ELLs)

This subsection focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of ELL students. (C.R.S. 22-24-101 et. seq.

Identification of Exceptional and ELL Students
The GCSI Team will ensure early identification of students who are having difficulty learning, accompanied by individualized interventions to ensure that each student is on target to close the learning gap within a reasonable amount of time. Teachers will collaboratively plan for students in need of attention during regular team meetings. Teachers will ensure that students in need of assistance beyond regular classroom instruction are provided with intensive classroom interventions before any additional steps are taken in accordance with the revised Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA).

Teachers will regularly monitor the progress of all students. Progress monitoring will enable the teachers to quickly identify students who are not responding to classroom intervention. Students who are not responding to classroom interventions will be referred to the SPED Coordinator for further evaluation while interventions at the classroom level continue. Students who respond to the classroom interventions will continue to be monitored to ensure their continued success. Examples of classroom interventions a teacher might include on an individual student with an intervention plan are tutoring, modification or adaptation of materials or curriculum, small group instruction, organizational aids, chunked instruction, and additional time to complete assignments.

Plan for English Language Learners (ELL)

Garfield County School of Innovation will meet all requirements of federal and state law relative to equal access to the curriculum for English language learners (ELL). The goal is to develop high quality instructional programs and services for English language learners that allow them, within a reasonable amount of time, to achieve the same challenging grade level and graduation standards as native-English speaking students.

Outreach to the Spanish Speaking Community
GCSI has added a Google "Espanol" Translation button on our website, www.GCSIK12.org in order to specifically reach more prospective families from the Spanish-speaking community for our school. GCSI expects our numbers to rise significantly in the coming weeks because of the outreach directly to the Spanish-speaking population.

GCSI Curriculum Will Meet Needs of ELL Students
Garfield County School of Innovation's STE³M + Business- focused approach is particularly effective with English language learners for a number of reasons. First, the small group instruction that accompanies projects allows for teachers to differentiate supports for students based on individual needs. Second, ELL students participate in group problem-solving with native English speaking students and learn from those interactions. Third, Garfield County School of Innovation's focus on applying knowledge to real-world projects encourages comprehension and learning for all students. The budget includes an English Language Development (ELD) teacher who will be LDE-certified (Linguistically Diverse Educator Certificate).

Identification of English Language Learners
At Garfield County School of Innovation elementary, middle and high, content knowledge is not inert or solely textbook-driven; rather, it is applied, and transformed in ways that deepen the learning for all students. As required by law, Garfield County School of Innovation will administer the Colorado English Language Assessment to all new students with a home language other than English and to all English language learners annually to determine each student's individual proficiency level and to reclassify students to Fluent English Proficient (FEP) where appropriate. Once an English language learner is identified, a conference will be scheduled with the parent to outline the instructional program, the teacher's role in implementation, and the teacher's, parents' and school's role in providing support. At least twice each semester, the instructional program will be reviewed and discussed. The ELL student will be assessed annually (using WIDA's ACCESS for ELLs) to assess growth and to ensure that he or she is still receiving appropriate level of services for their language needs. The ELD teacher identifies the appropriate ACCESS for ELLs assessment based on the student's language skills (Tier A for beginning; Tier B for intermediate; and Tier C for advanced.)

Instructional Programs & Practices for English Language Learners
In all ELD instruction, includes the following:

- Instruction incorporates appropriate school-adopted texts and materials as well as specific supplemental resources.

- Explicit language objectives are provided during instruction that incorporate listening, speaking, reading and writing skills that are appropriate for each student's language proficiency level.
- Instruction and strategies are interactive and provide an open environment that allows ELLs to feel safe to experiment with English.
- Instruction provides ample practice and reinforcement activities that are appropriate for each student's proficiency level.
- Student instructional needs are determined by ongoing formative assessments; common formative assessments; and analysis of student writing, reading, and speaking samples.
- Differentiated instruction is evidenced by teaching strategies as well as questioning strategies that are based upon students' proficiency levels.
- Differentiated instruction is evidenced by intentional grouping of students according to proficiency levels, as appropriate for the activity (homogeneous/heterogeneous grouping).
- Classroom assignments are differentiated based upon students' language proficiency levels.

Assessing and Monitoring the Progress of ELL Students
GCSI creates an ELD Plan for each English language learner at the school. This plan includes annual goals and benchmarks for the student, as well as strategies and instructional techniques that will be used in the regular classroom. These plans are developed in collaboration with the parents or guardians and regular classroom teachers.

ELL Student Evaluation and Screening
The home family will be interviewed to gather information about language proficiency, family history, school history, health and medical concerns, social and emotional concerns, and any cultural concerns. In addition the ELL classroom teachers will gather curriculum based measures, such as work samples, formal and informal assessments, and observations in the classroom environment.

Once an ELD Plan is in place, the ELD teacher also develops and maintains a portfolio of each English language learner's work. The portfolio includes examples of student work that offer evidence of learning; the portfolio becomes a great tool for communicating with parents on the student's progress. The portfolio also includes the student's assessment results from other testing occurring in the regular classroom, including the NWEA MAPs scores, Grades and other assessments.

These assessment results, along with possibly WIDA's ACCESS for ELLs® and other examples of student work, provide a comprehensive picture of the student's progress in developing English language skills. If an ELL is struggling to meet benchmarks, the ELD teacher and the regular classroom teacher(s) will collaboratively discuss additional interventions that can be used to support the student's learning. This process would be similar to the Response to Intervention process that is used for all students. When a student reaches proficiency (level 6) on WIDA's ACCESS for ELLs® and all other assessment data indicating strong English language skills, then the student exits the school's ELD program. For more information, visit www.wida.us

Professional Development for Serving English Language Learners
At the beginning of each school year, all teachers receive the ELD Plan for each English Language Learner enrolled in the school. This provides the teacher with context on the student's goals, strategies towards meetings those goals, and samples of their past work. The ELD teacher helps the regular classroom teacher become more aware of what background knowledge must be built for them to hook new information to in order for content to be delivered and skills to be developed effectively. English language learners are capable of higher-level thinking, but often struggle to communicate their thoughts and ideas in spoken or written language. As a result teachers have to strategically go beyond language barriers in order for ELL to be intellectually challenged similar to their peers who are native English speakers.

How the GCSI educational program be modified to meet the educational requirements of students with special needs (SPED, GT, 504, ELL, Literacy, etc.)
How we modify the program will depend upon the individual students that attend our school. In order to serve students well, their plans and programs will determine our program instead of us pre-determining our program without knowing student needs. In other words we will be student driven and adapt to our students' needs.

As an example, if a student has a need for extra time in test taking, that will be written into the teacher's lesson plans. In addition, if a student has been identified as Gifted or Talented, then they will be eligible for clubs, extensions, and additional opportunities created by our Gifted and Talented Director.

Professional Development for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education
GCSI is passionate about equality for all students, parents, staff, and community mentors, and will implement measures to ensure that all students are treated fairly and are not overrepresented in disciplinary measures. Judy Brannberg, the Proposed Executive Director of GCSI, will lead a top-down approach to ensure that all members of the community receive diversity training during the Summer Learning Institute and on-going training will be implemented as needed.

The GCSI Board of Directors and Proposed School Leader/Executive Director understand the importance of fair and equitable treatment for all community members and will ensure that culturally sensitive practices are utilized in all trainings and interactions. Planning for all trainings will include consideration of and preparation to meet the needs of each member of our diverse community in order to be in compliance with non-discrimination laws. The ELD teacher will act as a liaison for parent engagement by offering opportunities for parents to participate in educational programs, field trips, and family activity nights. The ELL Teacher will act as the ELD Coordinator and will be responsible to ensure high quality training for staff, program implementation, appropriate assessment, and resource allocation of budgeted funds for ELL.

3. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Gifted and Talented Students (G/T)

This subsection focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of G/T students. Garfield County School of Innovation anticipates a large population of students that have been identified as G/T

because of our content-rich STE^{3}AM-focused curriculum, Core Knowledge K-8 curriculum, and inquiry-based education, combined with the following strategies and programs:

1. Flexible Ability Grouping
2. Cluster Grouping
3. Honors Classes
4. Concurrent Enrollment
5. Advanced Placement
6. Expanded Learning Opportunities (After-school and weekends)
7. Early College Entrance
8. Mentorships with STE^{3}M + Business/Community Professionals
9. Post-Secondary Options
10. Advanced Math
11. Differentiated Instruction

Gifted and Talented Endorsements

GCSI will hire a highly qualified teacher with a Gifted and Talented Endorsement per the CDE Office of Gifted Education from the following CDE Guidelines[5]: In Colorado, "qualified personnel" in gifted education means a licensed educator who has a teaching certificate along with one of the three gifted education endorsements. The three types of endorsements include: 1.) Core Gifted Endorsement; 2.) Gifted Specialist, and 3.) Gifted Director. Every administrative unit (AU) shall have an educator who is responsible for the management of the AU's program plan and gifted education professional development. Although it is preferred that this person be qualified in gifted education, it is not an ECEA mandate. An AU has the autonomy to determine the licensing and endorsement levels of those educators supporting gifted students. However, paraprofessionals may serve in supportive roles, but may not be the sole instructional provider for gifted programming. House Bill 14-1102 permits AUs to apply for grant funds to offset costs incurred by employing a qualified person to administer the gifted program plan. AUs may submit an application for the Qualified Personnel Grant to offset up to a .5 FTE.

Gifted and Talented

GCSI uses the definition for "gifted" as determined by the Colorado Exceptional Children's Education Act:

12.01 (9) "Gifted & Talented Children" means those persons between the ages of four and twenty-one whose abilities, talents, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs. Gifted and talented children are hereafter referred to as gifted students. Children under five who are gifted may also be provided with early childhood special educational services. Gifted students include gifted students with disabilities (i.e. twice exceptional) and students with exceptional abilities or potential from all socio-economic and ethnic, cultural populations. Gifted students are capable of high performance, exceptional production, or exceptional learning behavior by virtue of any or a combination of these areas of giftedness:

[5] https://www.cde.state.co.us/gt/endorsements

12.01 (9) (a) General or Specific Intellectual Ability
12.01 (9) (b) Specific Academic Aptitude
12.01 (9) (c) Creative or Productive Thinking
12.01 (9) (d) Leadership Abilities
12.01 (9) (e) Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Musical or Psychomotor Abilities

Research Based Instructional Programs and Strategies
GCSI places high value on educational opportunities that enable each student to demonstrate continuous improvement of academic achievement and to develop fully according to his or her potential. The Gifted and Talented Program (G/T) at GCSI serves as a vehicle for this instructional service.

How GCSI Will Differentiate Instruction
GCSI will differentiate for gifted and talented students in the area of content, processes, and products to match students' readiness, interests, and learning profiles. A continuum of Best Practice Services will be provided to meet the specific needs of many different types and levels of giftedness. The development of our gifted learners will be a shared responsibility of GCSI faculty, parents, and the community partners. Decisions regarding programming and differentiation will be made based on the individual assessment data of each individual gifted and talented student.

GCSI will deploy the following structure, which will start in our elementary grades and progress in middle and high school. GCSI will use the following eleven strategies and programs for Gifted and Talented learners:

1. Flexible Ability Grouping
2. Cluster Grouping
3. Honors Classes
4. Concurrent Enrollment and C/T Classes
5. Advanced Placement
6. Expanded Learning Opportunities (After-school and weekends)
7. Early College Entrance
8. Mentorships with STE³M + Business/Community Professionals
9. Post-Secondary Options
10. Advanced Math
11. Differentiated Instruction

Flexible Ability Grouping
Differentiated instruction at GCSI occurs during math and language arts, especially in the elementary and middle school. Students who understand and master the material quickly are allowed to move faster. This also ensures that learners who excel at math are always appropriately challenged. Learners will be grouped by ability, so they can support and collaborate with each other under the direction of a mentor. In addition, our school will implement flexible ability grouping arrangements so students will be able to easily move from one academic learning group to another based upon their prerequisite skills and knowledge as well as their learning needs. Ability Groups will be used in K-12 mathematics and language arts. When appropriate, students will be encouraged to go further faster and will not be impeded.

Cluster Groups
If Gifted and Talented students are scheduled in heterogeneous classrooms, one strategy that may be used is Cluster Grouping, in which the gifted and talented teacher provides differentiated curriculum to students who have been identified as G/T.

Honors Classes
E = Enriched/Honors, is a course that augments the content and/or rigor of a general course. These courses typically include additional content not found in general courses. (Note: These courses are NOT designated as Advanced Placement. Those courses have a unique State Course Code because they have specific curriculums designated by their organization.)

Concurrent Enrollment and C/T Classes
When appropriate, 9-12 students will be allowed to take Concurrent Enrollment classes from the local community college or other colleges or universities offering Concurrent Enrollment. Eligible high school students may take college, career or technical courses to earn both high school credit and college credit when taking concurrent enrollment classes. Students may take designated classes at their high school through Colorado Mountain College. Students begin building a college transcript while they complete their high school graduation requirements. GCSI will also offer a variety of C/T classes in the STEM disciplines. It is our goal that our students will graduate with both their high school and associates degree

Advanced Placement Classes[6]
GCSI will offer a variety of Advanced Placement, when the teacher is certified to teach AP. AP classes provide significant rigor, especially for the G/T population. Students then will be given the opportunity in May of each year to take the AP Exam, which is the final step after a year of hard work in an AP class. These standardized exams are designed to measure how well GCSI students have mastered the content and skills of the course. A successful score will earn GCSI students college credit and advanced placement in college. The following AP Classes are offered by the AP organization and will be options for GCSI when a AP certified teacher is available. In some cases, if teachers recommend and students request, they will be allowed to take the AP Exam, even if the class was not designated AP. This protocol was implemented at the Denver School of Science and Technology.

AP Capstone
AP Research
AP Seminar

Arts
AP Art History
AP Music Theory
AP Studio Art: 2-D Design
AP Studio Art: 3-D Design
AP Studio Art: Drawing

[6] https://ap.collegeboard.org/

English
AP English Language and Composition
AP English Literature and Composition

History & Social Science
AP Comparative Government and Politics
AP European History
AP Human Geography
AP Macroeconomics
AP Microeconomics
AP Psychology
AP United States Government and Politics
AP United States History
AP World History

Math & Computer Science
AP Calculus AB
AP Calculus BC
AP Computer Science A
AP Computer Science Principles
AP Statistics

Sciences
AP Biology
AP Chemistry
AP Environmental Science
AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism
AP Physics C: Mechanics
AP Physics 1: Algebra-Based
AP Physics 2: Algebra-Based

World Languages & Cultures
AP Chinese Language and Culture
AP French Language and Culture
AP German Language and Culture
AP Italian Language and Culture
AP Japanese Language and Culture
AP Latin
AP Spanish Language and Culture
AP Spanish Literature and Culture

Early College Entrance
Where appropriate, if the student has met all graduation requirements, they will be allowed to graduate early from GCSI and obtain an early college entrance. Students will not be impeded and held back. They will be allowed to go further faster, when they can.

Expanded Learning Opportunities

In addition to differentiated instruction for high ability learners, the G/T program also supports Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) activities such as Chess, Destination ImagiNation, TSA, Brain Bowl, Math Olympiad, and the School Spelling Bee. Our after-school Youth Center programming will offer a robust STE^{3}M-focused Activity-, Project-, and Problem-based (APB) instructional learning environment suitable for challenging the most highly gifted students at our school. During the inaugural year at STEM School Highlands Ranch, STEM Academy Executive Director and STEM School Highlands Ranch Founder Judy Brannberg created nearly 100 after-school classes with highly qualified, mentors. Some of the most memorable classes, clubs, activities, games were:

- 4-H / CSU Partnership
- Aviation101 and Aviation 201
- BEST Robotics
- Brain Bowl (Optimist Club)
- Code Club,
- Cyber-security Competition
- Crash-Blaster Rocketry Class,
- Crime Scene Investigation (CSI)
- Cyber Patriots
- FIRST Robotics
- Hydro-Electric Power Class
- Internal Combustion Engines
- Intro to Computer Programming
- Introduction to Veterinary Medicine
- Khan Academy
- LABView Computer Class
- Mars Landing Event
- Master Blaster Rocket Class
- Medical Club
- Minecraft Club
- Mobile Apps Course
- Multiplication Fact Club
- NAR Regional Competition
- NASA – Adventures in Rocket Science
- UCCS, Noxious Weeds
- NREL Junior Solar Sprint / Hydrogen Fuel Cell Competition
- Orbital Mechanics and Space Systems – Astrophysics for Beginners
- Raytheon Math Counts
- Remote Control Plane Club
- Robotics 101
- Team America Rocket Competition (TARC)
- Rocketry Club
- Shark Tank! Public Speaking
- SparkFun
- Technology Student Association (TSA) High School
- Technology Student Association (TSA) Middle School

- UCCS STEM Classes
- ULA Payload Rocket Competition

Mentorships with STEM/Community Professionals
GCSI is developing a data-base of STEM Professionals who have willingly volunteered to mentor students. GCSI will match GCSI student interest areas with mentors in their prospective career choice.

Advanced Math Classes
GCSI students will be encouraged to move at their own pace and will be allowed to take advanced math courses in elementary and middle school when appropriate. Students will be allowed to take Concurrent Enrollment classes in upper elementary and middle school.

Differentiated Instruction
Differentiated instruction for gifted learners means providing changes in content, process, products, and assessments to meet their unique academic and affective learning profiles. Many instructional methods and strategies are used in differentiated instruction. To differentiate content for gifted learners:

- Provide rigorous curriculum that aligns to state content standards but is advanced often by two or more grade levels.
- Engage learners in abstract concepts.
- Use interdisciplinary content that focuses on concepts and themes.
- Develop greater independence in learners through the mastering of more advanced research skills used by learners to answer their own questions.
- Eliminate areas of content already mastered

To differentiate process for gifted learners:

- Use tiered lessons to provide challenge.
- Increase the instructional pacing of basic skills.
- Allow more time for learners to devote to study or discussion of issues that are complex.
- Provide more open-ended tasks.
- Develop tasks that require the use of critical and creative thinking.
- Incorporate the process of metacognition into instructional activities.

To differentiate product for gifted learners:

- Engage learners in solving real-world problems.
- Have learners create innovate ideas and inventions.
- Teach learners to use unique ways to demonstrate their learning.
- Provide authentic feedback about products from experts.

The Trigonometry Lesson Plan below represents two G/T strategies:

1. Advanced Math
2. Differentiated Instruction

Stage 1: Identify Desired Results

Established Goals

Trigonometry Unit

Enduring Understandings

Students will be able to…

- *Discover the relationship between degrees and radians*
- *Understand trig functions of acute angles and solve right triangles*
- *Apply trig functions to the unit circle and find sin/cos/tan without a calculator*
- *Be able to identify trig function graphs*
- *Apply trigonometry to real life problems*

Essential Questions

- *How do degrees and radians relate to our everyday life?*
- *How can you solve right and non-right triangles using trigonometric ratios, law of sines, and law of cosines?*
- *What is the unit circle and how can I fill it in completely without a calculator?*
- *What do the graphs of each trig function look like?*
- *How can I use triangles and trig functions to solve everyday problems?*

Stage 2: Determine Evidence for Assessing Learning

Performance Tasks:

- *Mastery of solving right triangles using trig functions as well as non-right triangles using the laws of sine and cosine, all through the use of a calculator*
- *Be able to completely fill out a blank unit circle (quiz)*
- *Mastery of solving special right triangles and unit circle problems without a calculator*

Other Evidence:

- *Can they perform various trig functions without a calculator (unit circle and special right triangles problems)?*
- *Are they engaged with their peers and the task assigned in the group activities?*
- *Thursday's game review – can they solve the problems on their own without getting help*
- *Are they engaged and following along during instructional periods?*

Stage 3: Build Learning Plan

Learning Activities:

Day	***Introductory Questions***	***Activities/Procedures***
Monday	• *3 people tell their favorite vacation spot/ map reading story* • *History lesson: What if there wasn't an option to "ask for directions"? How did people get places before there were maps?*	• *Lecture on degree/radian conversion* • *Teach conversion to DMS* • *Draw compass with 16 bearings (360° ÷ 16?)* • *Split into 2 groups- one at a time they race for geocache* • *Give them worksheet with decimal degree location and compass- they must translate location to DMS, label its direction on the compass, and translate it*

	• *What's another name for a map maker?* • *They had to use longitude/ latitude to measure degrees* • *Math can tell you where you're going in life!*	*into radians.* • *Then they enter it into GPS and find geocache- once found they leave the completed ws in it.* • *Other group stays inside and learns length of intercepted arc (s=rΘ)* • *Group who finds it in the fastest time wins quiz passes for Thursday (automatic hundreds)*
Tuesday	• *Teach SOH CAH TOA* • *Intro Chief MakeTrigEasy* • *His clothes have Pythagorean theorem, special right triangle, sin=o/h, tan= sin/cos, sec=1/cos, etc.*	• *Teach: standard position* • *Evaluate trig functions with a calculator* • *Common calculator errors* • *Solve right triangles* • *Work on homework assignment*
Wednesday	• *Split into 4 groups (hand out pizza toppings), give them cartoon- have them explain the joke and why it's funny (use a picture to explain what Jason did)*	• *Lecture: initial side, terminal side, positive and negative angles, standard position, coterminal angles* • *Do examples* • *Explain the definition of a trig function of any angle and relate it to the x/y coordinate plane* • *Explain unit circle- do example* • *Assign pizza poster project to each group* • *(Split 16 angles between 4 groups. They must draw a picture to find each value using a unit circle. NO Calculators! No radicals in the denominator. Place degree values on olives, radian values on Mushrooms, and the exact fraction values for sinΘ, cosΘ, and tanΘ on separate pepperonis.)*
Thursday	• *Bellwork: "Snake" identification (math snake with it's equation by entering the equation into graphing calculator)*	• *Reciprocal teaching: go through the descriptions of sin, cos, tan, csc, sec, cot one-by-one. Student reads a description and uses the picture to explain why this is so. They have 3 options: ask the audience (ask if anyone in the class wants to answer (they raise their hand)), 50-50 (I give them hints), phone a friend (ask me to explain it).* • *Go through graphs of each trig function (with and without coefficients/composite trig functions)*
Friday	• *Is there a tangible application to all of this??* • *How tall is our flagpole?* • *Split into 4 groups* • *Brainstorm a way using right triangles and trig functions to figure out the height of a flagpole*	• *Hand out flagpole activity* • *Each group makes their own transit (protractor device) and does their own experiment*

GCSI will incorporate the following ten strategies for Developing a Growth Mindset in Gifted Students from Differentiation for Gifted Learners: Going Beyond the Basics by Diane Heacox, Ed.D.

Differentiated Strategies

Ten Strategies for Developing a Growth Mindset in Gifted Students

How exactly do you help students switch mindsets? Here are some strategies that have proven effective for helping them make this transition..

1. Help students recognize their strengths and their weaknesses. Show them how to use their strengths to develop their weak areas or find learning partners who are strong in areas where they may be weak.
2. Provide descriptive, accurate, and constructive feedback that focuses on how students can develop themselves in specific tasks or skill areas.
3. Focus praise on the effort students put forth toward a goal.
4. Offer authentic challenges on issues they or others care about that will take time, effort, and persistence to solve.
5. Teach specific skills of studying, organization, metacognition, time management, goal setting, and monitoring.
6. Use preassessments to help students recognize what they already know/understand and are able to do, and what they don't know/understand and are not yet able to do. Be mindful that students may perceive preassessments as shameful (especially if they are in the fixed mindset). Reassure students that preassessments are meant to focus teaching and learning.
7. When teaching discrete strategies, show students how using the strategy will help them develop certain skills. Some gifted students are whole to part learners and may avoid practicing discrete strategies (part) if they don't understand how it leads to greater skill development (whole).
8. Structure time throughout the day when students can reflect on their learning process, talk with others about tasks that were easy or difficult, or take note of their personal feelings on the topic.
9. Create learning activities where students will need to rely on others to complete the tasks. In these "unlike" groups, students learn to appreciate other people's skills and realize they have skills unique to themselves.
10. Continually support students by showing them how their efforts lead to success.

All K-12 students will take engineering classes during the regular school day, which promote higher-level thinking, designed for all students but especially for the Gifted and Talented. Students will use the Project Lead The Way textbooks, following the model that we implemented at STEM School Highlands Ranch. According to PLTW these, "Activity-, Project-, and Problem-based (APB) instructional design centers on hands-on, real-world activities, projects, and problems that help students understand how the knowledge and skills they develop in the classroom may be applied in everyday life. The APB approach scaffolds student learning through

structured activities and projects that empower students to become independent in the classroom and help them build skill sets to apply to an open-ended design problem. This approach provides students with unique opportunities to work collaboratively, identify problems, apply what they know, persevere through challenges, find unique solutions, and lead their own learning."

Gifted Identification
An educator, coach, parent or student may submit a referral. A referral made for possible gifted identification does not necessarily lead to the administration of specific cognitive or achievement assessments. The GCSI identification team will carefully consider the referral, examine current assessment data the student may have and then determine appropriate next steps. This may or may not include administering additional tests to the student.

Once a referral is made, how soon will a decision be made about identification?
Colorado law specifies an identification team has a timeline of no more than 30 school days after a referral is received to determine whether a student will be formally identified or if more time is needed to continue with identification assessment. The team's decision should be communicated to the parent, student and other educators.

Body of Evidence (BOE) and What Tests Will Be Used for Identification?
The following instruments are used in a body of evidence for identification: tests of cognitive ability; standardized achievement tests; norm-referenced behavior rating scales; performance observation data; and anecdotal data collected from teachers and the student. ECEA Rules define the criteria used for identification. This includes demonstration in the body of evidence of an advanced level on performance assessments and/or ninety-fifth percentile and above on standardized, norm-referenced assessments. Not meeting criteria on a single assessment tool shall not prevent further data collection or consideration for gifted identification, if other indicators suggest exceptional potential as observed in a body of evidence.

Is the parent part of the identification process?
Colorado Rules state parents should have the opportunity to provide input in the identification process. There is an expectation that parents will provide insight into the needs and interests of their child, and their input can add value to the identification process. If a parent is requested to complete a norm-referenced observation scale, a district may choose to use this as qualifying evidence for identification.

In what areas might a child be identified?
ECEA Rules define the areas for identification to include:

1. General and Specific Intellectual Ability
2. Specific Academic Aptitude to include: reading, writing, math, science, social studies and world languages
3. Specific Talent Aptitude to include: visual arts, performing arts, music, dance, psychomotor, creative/productive thinking, and leadership
4. A student may be defined in one or more of these areas.

What will happen after a child is identified?
After identification, the parents, school staff and the student will work together to develop an individualized Advanced Learning Plan (ALP). The ALP will include achievement and affective

annual goals for the student and describe the type of programming services that will be provided to meet the unique educational needs of the newly identified student.

How ALP Developed
GCSI will follow CDE guidelines for developing ALPs for our gifted and talented students. The gifted and talented teacher will notify all stakeholders that the ALP process is beginning and will seek input from all stakeholders. The gifted and talented teacher will gather a body of evidence and will analyze and synthesize the data to determine present levels of academic performance, achievement, and growth. After stakeholders have explored the needs of the student and the resources available at the school, the team will develop annual SMART learning goals and will develop a plan of instructional practices that the teachers will need to implement to ensure that the students will successfully attain their goals. Once the ALP is written, the teacher and student will monitor the student's progress throughout the year. The progress monitoring data will enable the teacher to determine if the learning goals are met. If goals are not attained, the teacher will look at the data and determine what needs to be done to meet the student's goal. The gifted and talented teacher will regularly meet with parents and the student to review progress.

General Intellectual Ability Pathway
GCSI students may qualify in the area of general intellectual ability with a score of 95th percentile or above on one or more batteries of a cognitive test. The determination team must collect and review additional data for the body of evidence to develop the student's learning profile. A gifted determination based solely on a cognitive assessment score, without any other qualifying data, is the exception. A review team should use their professional judgment to determine if identification is appropriate by examining supplemental or non-traditional information collected through interviews, observations or performances beyond the academic content areas. Students from underrepresented populations may not demonstrate gifted abilities through the use of traditional achievement data. When only cognitive ability assessment data meet criteria in a body of evidence (95th percentile or above), the review team may determine that the student is identified with general or specific intellectual ability. This meets portability requirements.

Academic Aptitude Pathways
Content areas for specific academic aptitude include: reading, writing, math, science, social studies and world language.

Two pathways may lead to identification in the area of specific academic aptitude.

ONE:
A student may score 95th percentile or above on one or more batteries of a cognitive test and demonstrate aptitude on two (2) specific academic measures.

	Criterion- or Norm-referenced Achievement Test	Norm-referenced Observation Scale	Performance Evaluation
Specific Academic Aptitude	• Exceeds Expectations on state assessment* • 95th Percentile or above on norm-referenced achievement test • 95th percentile or above on CDE Resource Bank or district bank of approved assessments for non-state tested standards	• 95th percentile or above on a norm-referenced observation scale for specific content area	• State or national academic contest - top ranking • Expert juried performance (Advanced or Distinguished) • Teacher/expert assessed portfolio review (Advanced/Distinguished/Above Grade Level

*A performance level of Exceeds Expectations on the ELA state assessment is qualifying evidence for identification in both reading and writing. If a student has a qualifying ELA state assessment score and a cognitive score of a 95th percentile or above on one or more batteries of a cognitive assessment, one additional reading measure would be needed to make a determination for Specific Academic Aptitude in the content area of reading. Likewise, one additional writing measure would be needed for a writing determination.

TWO:
A student may not score 95th percentile or above on a cognitive test. However, a review team may determine a comprehensive body of evidence demonstrates gifted academic ability. Content-specific measurement tools to meet criteria for identification should include at least three (3) or more measures from two (2) of the three areas below. Each measure used as qualifying data must be different. For example, if two teachers complete a norm-referenced observation scale, that can only be considered as one (1) measure.

When cognitive data do not meet gifted criteria, identification in a specific academic aptitude requires an examination of multiple data points and trends over time. Using this pathway in the primary years requires caution and sufficient data from multiple data points. At any time when the team needs more time to make a determination, ongoing opportunities in the specific domain are needed to ensure the child's continued growth and engagement in the content area. Additionally, continued examination of multiple data points and trend data over time, three years or less, may be necessary.

Plan for Students Identified as Gifted Prior to Attending GCSI
Garfield County School of Innovation will work closely with students identified as gifted through their prior school. Transitional meetings will be held for students on Advanced Learning Plans with students, teachers and parents. Garfield County School of Innovation will also arrange similar transitional meetings at parent request for students who attend private schools who may not have been officially identified as gifted, following the authorizer's process for the identification of students.

The curriculum at Garfield County School of Innovation allows teachers to personalize offerings according to individual students' abilities in each subject area. For two students in the same physics class, one might be building a hovercraft while another is building a sailboat. Garfield County School of Innovation teachers work to challenge and support each student to aim for their personal best. Students wishing to pursue enrichment opportunities may consider the Postsecondary Options program, online courses, or Independent Study options. In addition, the RTI model will be used toward improving the educational outcome for the gifted and talented students.

Underrepresented Populations in Programs for Gifted Students

GCSI will maintain high expectations, while providing experiences and educational support to students in reaching their potential. Sheltered instructional strategies are used as a way to differentiate for gifted ELL students. As the Former Executive Director at STEM Academy, our previous experience dictates that GCSI will serve the underrepresented populations from first generation Americans attending our school.

The field of gifted education has long advocated use of multiple criteria and multiple assessments for determining need for special programming. Nevertheless, standardized tests are often the gate to further assessment. Such measures can miss highly able students whose nonmainstream cultural values and behaviors, life circumstances, lack of parental support, depression, lack of language proficiency, skepticism about school, disabilities, behavior, or even illness preclude optimal standardized-test or classroom performance. Missing then are opportunities to affirm and nurture ability and provide social access to intellectual peers.

Other circumstances have social and emotional implications as well. Unfortunately, even when identified, children often need to fit a program, instead of the program accommodating and addressing developmental needs of diverse students. Gifted academic underachievers and gifted children from low-income, recent-immigrant, and/or minority-culture families, for example, may feel uncomfortable and frustrated in a one-mode-fits-all program.

Gifted and Talented Resources

GCSI has allocated materials, time, and the utilization of highly motivated and qualified ESSA staff to serve our Gifted and Talented students. In addition, GCSI will supplement the educational experience of our students with highly qualified teachers and mentors from the business and industry community. Furthermore, GCSI will provide unprecedented learning opportunities through our Research Labs with state-of-the-art equipment, Concurrent Enrollment, Ability Groups, Honors Classes, Advanced Placement and Cluster Groupings.

Twice Exceptional Students Will Be Identified and Served

Twice-exceptional students refer to gifted students with disabilities. GCSI uses the state definition which means twice exceptional students qualify for both GT and SPED (Special Education) or Section 504 (disabilities) services.[7]

[7] http://www.csi.state.co.us/school_resources/student_services/gifted_and_talented/twice_exceptional_students

GCSI anticipates having a much larger than average percentage of students identified in the spectrum of twice exceptional at our school because of our innovative curriculum with a STEM focus. GCSI will follow all State and District mandated protocol and will put special emphasis in hiring appropriately trained SPED staff with expertise in identifying twice-exceptional students, who can in turn train all GCSI staff to recognize and meet the needs of twice-exceptional students.

Twice-exceptional students are often difficult to identify because they possess the characteristics of gifted students and the characteristics of students with disabilities. Either the strengths, the disabilities, or both may not be identified as gifted characteristics may mask disabilities or disabilities may mask gifted potential. Twice-exceptional students are a highly diverse group of learners and some of those characteristics are identified in this resource highlight characteristics which are typical of many children who are gifted and who also have a disability. Another great resource highlights how gifted characteristics are manifested different in different populations.

CDE has released a comprehensive guide which provides a framework to identify twice-exceptional students and select appropriate strategies so gifted students with disabilities can achieve their full potential.

CDE is also providing online professional development to increase the learning and achievement of twice exceptional students. GCSI SPED staff will be required to attend these on-line twice-gifted training sessions when appropriately needed. CDE has also released a supplemental guidance document to be used to help to writing ALPs for students who are twice exceptional as well as for writing standards-aligned ALPs, which will be required for all SPED staff.

Garfield County School of Innovation will provide the following services and accommodations for twice-exceptional children as outlined by Dr. Daniel B. Peters, Ph.D [8]:

1. More time to complete tests and writing assignments;
2. Assistive technology such as audio books and the ability to keyboard;
   GCSI is a 1:1 laptop school, so this will be helpful and attractive to 2e students and parents;
3. Assistance in organizing and managing their workload;
4. Help transitioning throughout their day and navigating the increasingly complex social world;

Just as kids with these challenges need IEPs (Individual Education Plans) and 504 Plans (classroom accommodations), 2e kids need the above accommodations to work and perform to their potential. Furthermore, many 2e kids need these accommodations just to advance through grades and graduate (even though they are very smart)."[9]

GCSI will provide comprehensive assessment whenever a disability or second exceptionality is suspected in a gifted child and will utilize comprehensive assessment for diagnosis, eligibility determinations, to guide interventions and accommodations. Secondly, GCSI educators will inform parents who report performance concerns in a bright child of the student's right to

[8] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/daniel-b-peters-phd/gifted-learning-disabled-_b_5052115.html
[9] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/daniel-b-peters-phd/gifted-learning-disabled-_b_5052115.html

comprehensive assessment, the protocol required to request it, and the right to due process if the request is denied.[10]

GCSI will train the GCSI SPED Team as well as *all* GCSI staff to identify "2e kids" and then provide an academically stimulating, STE^{3}AM-focused curriculum with use of technology to help them thrive, reach their highest potential and become STEM champions such as Albert Einstein, Thomas Edison, Steve Jobs, and Helen Keller, who all were twice exceptional.

Read Act Assurances for Gifted Education Program
The READ ACT requires administrative units to consciously support advanced readers with tiered instruction and curriculum for rigor and high performance. GCSI will comply with this and give assurance that references the AU's commitment to accelerate the reading skills of advanced readers. This assurance is a reminder that awareness and support of the literacy needs of gifted and talented students is important programming. This will be documented on the GCSI student's Advanced Learning Plan. (ALP).



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4. Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)/Response to Intervention (RtI)

This subsection summarizes GCSI's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) / Response to Intervention (RTI) program and clearly identifies Garfield County School of Innovation has the following: program components, systems and structures to support the components that align with the curricular day, professional development considerations, clear timelines for student

[10] http://www.huffingtonpost.com/daniel-b-peters-phd/gifted-learning-disabled-_b_5052115.html

identification that supports district timelines and descriptive feedback that supports the understanding of this program.

MTSS/Response to Intervention (RTI)
GCSI views Response to Intervention (RTI) as a whole-school K - 12 intervention model that improves educational outcomes for all students (including English Language Learners, at-risk students, underperforming students, and gifted and talented students). The program includes a multi-tiered model for instruction and intervention that is consistent with our school's flexible ability groupings. The RTI model utilizes problem-solving teams that may include parents, teacher, principals, psychologists and administrators. The RTI problem-solving process includes: defining the problem, directly measuring the behavior or skill and analyzing the problem.

Two-Four Year Implementation Plan and Administrative Lead
GCSI will utilize shared leadership to ensure successful implementation of our MTSS Plan. The MTSS Implementation Team will include the school principal as administrative lead contact and lead teacher selected from each grade level. Lead teachers will oversee the MTSS/RtI process with their grade level teams. Lead teachers will be trained to coach their teams in order to provide on-going professional development. MTSS Teams will participate in data digs to evaluate student data to participate in data-based problem solving and intervention planning.

With RTI, there is a continuum into which students fall based on the number and level of interventions they need to be successful both academically and behaviorally:

Tier 1: Universal Level - Approximately 80% of students fall into this level and their needs are typically met in the mainstream classroom through GCSI's continuous cycle of standards-based instruction, assessment, analysis, re-teaching using different strategies when needed, re-assessment, etc. We expect teachers to differentiate instruction, model concepts, and develop activities to address a range of learning styles and educational needs.

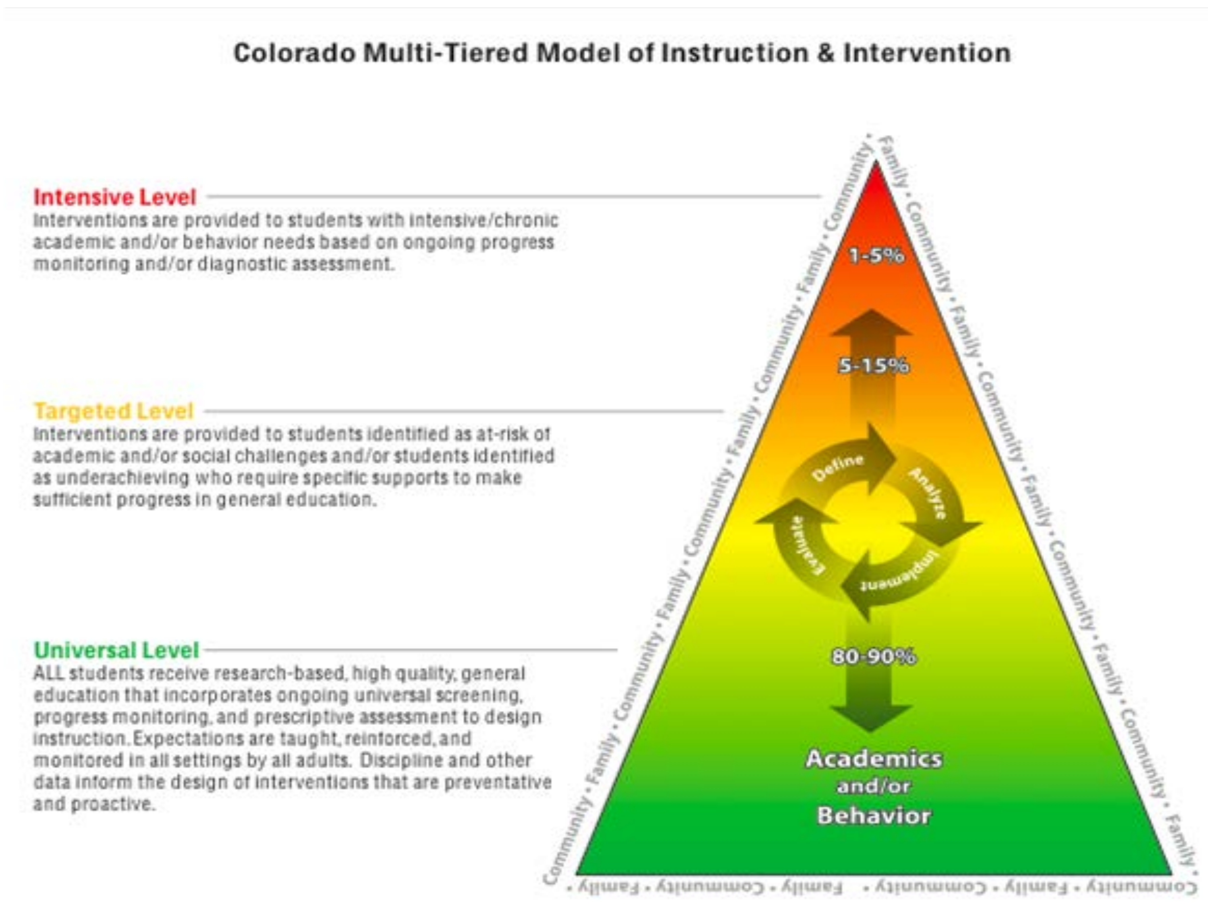
Tier 2: Targeted Level - Approximately 5-15% of students fall into this level and they need more targeted, specific interventions to find academic and behavioral success. Students needing intervention at this level are placed in small working groups within the classroom to focus three or four times a week on more targeted intervention by the teacher, which might include one-on-one tutoring, small group support, appropriate modifications to assignments, and other supports. If a student continues to not make sufficient academic progress, a more intensive intervention plan will be put in place with the assistance of the school's Intervention team.

Tier 3: Intensive Level – Approximately 5% of students fall into this level and they require the most intense level of interventions because their actual performance is significantly below their expected benchmarks. These interventions usually involve one-to one support, in classroom support, small group support and pull out support. When learning objectives are met through intensive interventions, the student may be moved back into tier 2 supports. Students who remain unresponsive to tier 3 interventions will be referred to the special education team for clinical evaluation to determine the presence of any learning disabilities.

This model is designed to be fluid. With all three tiers, teachers are continually re-assessing students to determine whether interventions are successful or whether new strategies should be used. This is reflected in the wheel at the center of the diagram with cyclical tasks of analyze, implement, evaluate and define. This aligns with the GCSI's six-week data analysis process.

Six Essential Elements

In order for RTI to be successful, there are six components to the model that need to be in place: leadership, problem-solving, curriculum and instruction, assessment and monitor, positive school climate, and family/community. Each of these components will be in place at GCSI's, creating a school environment which embraces this model, ensuring that all students are learning.



GCSI's special education team will use the Colorado Department of Education's Fidelity of Implementation Classroom-Level Rubric to do an annual internal self-evaluation of how well RTI is being implemented across the school. (http://2022.cde.state.co.us/RTI/downloads/PDF/Rubrics Classroom.pdf).

With RTI, there is a continuum into which students fall based on the number and level of interventions they need to be successful both academically and behaviorally.

The Response to Intervention model (RTI) coupled with a student specific education program, (applicable to each student's situation), such as Advanced Learning Plan (ALP), English Language Learner Plan/Instruction (ELL/ELD), Individualized Education Plan (IEP), 504 plan, Read Act plan, Drop out prevention plan are designed to address each student's needs and support each student's path toward educational success. Other key factors in building a student's educational success are progress monitoring quarterly, monitoring yearly academic growth, providing academic rigor while building cognitive stamina, quarterly informal and formal assessments, standardized state testing and data driven instruction and decision making. All of these elements implemented with fidelity are foundational in promoting student success.

How Students Are Referred for RtI and When Meetings are Held
Students will be referred based on academic testing, teacher observation or in some cases parent concern. Meetings will be held when all involved parties can attend.

GCSI's RTI Strategies and Interventions
Tier I Interventions
Students will be tracked through routine assessments and measures. Teachers will implement the following instructional strategies in order assist students in academic achievement:

- Differentiate Instruction
- Reduce classroom distraction
- Structured classroom routine
- Parent contact
- Attendance letters
- Use of timeout or supervised isolation
- Schedule change
- Modify seating chart
- Use study carrel or screen
- Sign planner
- Shorten or simplify instruction
- Partner reading
- Extra time

Tier II Interventions
If Tier I intervention prove unsuccessful, the following Tier II strategies will be used to further students in academic achievement.

- Additional Instruction time at Garfield County School of Innovation
- Special Grouping
- Parent Contact
- Consultation with Literacy specialist or GT Facilitator
- ALP
- After-school Homework Club
- Modified materia
- Modified work
- Peer Tutor
- Oral testing
- Attendance/behavior contract

Tier III Interventions
If student achievement is lacking with Tier I and Tier II intervention strategies, then Tier III intervention will be tracked individually using:

- Special Education
- Modified Standards
- Intensive Intervention

The RTI protocol will follow the cyclical six-step protocol including:

1. Gathering data:

- CMAS – Students that did not meet expectations or partially meet expectations
- MAPS – Students in the lower quartile

2. Convene an intervention team

- RTI Committee Members will facilitate
- Any teacher can bring students to intervention meetings
- An Intervention Team consists of all teaching staff within a department, counselor, special educator and dean
- Others may be invited to offer additional ideas and support, including intervention specialists.

3. Study data

- The Intervention Facilitator for the committee will introduce individual cases and discuss current status of academic achievement.
- The Intervention Team will discuss what Tier I interventions have been implemented and the results of interventions.

4. Develop practical ways of improving the student's performance.

- Intervention Team will ask questions about how and when student will receive extra teacher time?
- Intervention Team will develop a plan for communicating with parents.

5. Progress Monitoring

- Intervention Team will track individual student progress a minimum of every two weeks using the RtI Pyramid of Intervention and documenting all strategies used.
- Data will be stored in a confidential location where teachers may access the needed information.

6. Reflect on the Progress

- Necessary adjustments will be made based on the success of intervention strategies.

RTI PROACTIVE STRATEGIES
Teach the rules and expectations:

- Introduce the rule/expectation
- Model the rule/expectation
- Guide the practice, use a "T-chart" if necessary (OK/NOT OK)

- Allow independent practice
- Provide feedback
- Reinforce approximations

Evaluating and Monitoring the Progress of Special Education Students
In addition to the IEP and the Enrich software system, which is used to track student progress made towards goals, (and the effectiveness of various accommodations and modifications), documentation will also be taken from the three types of monitoring aligned with the three RTI levels:

1. Tier 1: Benchmarking – Assess all students three times per year for universal screening (early identification) and general education progress monitoring.

2. Tier 2: Strategic Monitoring – Monitor at-risk students monthly and evaluate the electiveness of instructional changes.

3. Tier 3: Intensive Progress Monitoring – Write individualized annual goals and monitor more frequently for those who need intensive instructional services.

All students with IEPs have an annual meeting (which includes the parents, special education teacher, the general ed teacher, and school leader). At the annual meeting, the student's IEP is reviewed to ensure that the student is meeting the IEP goals or making appropriate progress. Strategies may be refined or modified based on the student's progress. A parent can submit a special request to have a student's IEP reviewed or modified before the annual evaluation is scheduled. In addition, any time a change is made to an IEP, the special education team must call a formal meeting that involves the student's parents/guardians, general education teacher, and an administrator. If student assessment data, classroom data and observations indicate student is performing at grade, proficiency level, then the student exits special education program.

Procedures Are In Place to Avoid Misidentification
Students who fail to meet grade-level or age appropriate standards when provided appropriate instruction will be referred to the problem-solving team (teachers and specialists who work with student) to determine what further interventions may be necessary for student achievement. If classroom interventions are not successful, the problem-solving team will meet to discuss the student and determine the next steps based on the body of evidence presented by the grade-level RtI Team. The RtI Team must ensure that all Tiers have been completed and all intervention programs have been implemented for the entire period of instruction before referring a student for Special Education evaluation. If the problem-solving team agrees that more formal evaluation is necessary, the student will be referred for Special Education assessment to determine if the student is eligible for Special Education services.

The assessments will cover all areas of suspected disability, which may include cognitive, social/emotional, communication, physical, hearing, and vision. During the evaluation, the family will be interviewed to gather information about language proficiency, family history, school history, health/medical history, social/emotional concerns, and cultural considerations. The assigned teacher will gather curriculum-based measures such as work samples, formal and

informal assessments, teacher interviews, and observations. Once the evaluation is complete, the IEP team, including the parents, will meet to review the evaluation results, and based on the results, will determine under which disability, if any, the student qualifies for special education services. If the student qualifies for services, the IEP team will develop an individual education plan (IEP) based on the child's specific needs. The IEP will describe the student's strengths, concerns of the parents/guardians, results of the evaluation, accommodations, modifications, and related services that the child will need to receive an appropriate education. It will also list the goals and objectives, which will be used to measure a student's progress and determine whether the program and placement are appropriate.



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Serving Exceptional and Educationally Disadvantaged Students: Educationally Disadvantaged Students

This subsection focuses on the plan for meeting the needs of Educationally Disadvantaged students (sometimes referred to as at-risk referenced in http://eric.ed.gov/?ti=At+Risk+Students & C.R.S. 22-30.5-106(q)).

504 Services
Garfield County School of Innovation will also be responsible for delivering Section 504 services. Devised by the student, advisor, parents, school staff, and special education specialists, these plans will specifically address needs, timelines and special adaptations necessary for successful completion of the Garfield County School of Innovation educational program. As needed, teachers will be able to accommodate and/or modify assignments, tests, and evaluations according to an individual student's needs.

Students with 504 Plans
GCSI will comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973, which requires school districts to ensure that their programs and activities (including non-academic and extracurricular

programs and activities) are accessible to all individuals regardless of disabilities under the guidelines of FAPA and the Garfield Re-2 504 Guide for Students with Disabilities. Since Section 504 applies to all students with disabilities, it is important to note that the same child may or may not also qualify for services under IDEA. This section addresses the process of identifying, evaluating, and serving the "Section 504-Only Student." Students may qualify for a 504 Plan if he/she (1) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; (2) has a “record of” such an impairment; or (3) is “regarded as” having such an impairment. A substantial limitation means that the student is unable to perform a major life activity that the average person in the general population can perform or is substantially limited in the condition, manner, or duration under which the student can perform the major life activity at issue.

During GCSI’s first year of operation, Garfield Re-2 will be contracted to provide access to their district-level Section 504 coordinator who will be available to assist in the Section 504 process, which will be administered, implemented and monitored by the 504 Team, who will collaborate with the classroom teacher, the IEP team, parents, and the students, thus making up the 504 team along with the contracted district-level Section 504 coordinator. Informal assessments of a student's progress towards goals, proficiency levels in comparison to state standards, and any unaddressed needs, will be conducted quarterly with a comprehensive review of the 504 Plan to be administered annually. Students with a 504 Plan will undergo triennial formal comprehensive testing to determine ongoing eligibility for the program, the same as IEP plans. A parent may request a review of their student's 504 Plan, at any time. The 504 team members will have 30 days to complete such a requested review. All 504 team members will have annual professional development specific to students with disabilities. For subsequent years of operation, GCSI reserves the right to review its contract with Garfield Re-2 for Section 504 services and can either renew or replace with an in-house program. In addition, the GCSI Team will be responsible for evaluating the performance of the Section 504 program on an annual basis.

The MTSS/RtI Committee will be responsible for identifying and referring students who may qualify or a 504 Plan who do not enter GCSI with an existing 504 Plan, in place. At the initial 504 team meeting, members will examine all data collected by the MTSS/RtI Committee and complete any assessments deemed appropriate to determine eligibility based Garfield Re-2 criteria for Section 504 eligibility. Once the 504 team determines that the student qualifies for services, they will develop a personal, individualized 504 Plan for the student. The plan will include individualized classroom accommodations and curriculum modifications to provide the student with a disability equal opportunity to benefit from GCSI’s education programs.

Classroom accommodations and curriculum modifications will be determined based upon individual student needs and will take into account both the functional capabilities of the individual and the alternative methods of performing tasks or activities. Garfield Re-2 504 Guide for Students with Disabilities outlines several examples of common Section 504 accommodations including shortened assignments, preferred seating for noise avoidance or to decrease visual strain, peer tutor, and use of a keyboard for written work. The individualized 504 Plans at GCSI will be best determined based on their unique disability needs by physical and occupational therapists serving on the 504 team.

Students with Physical Disabilities
Garfield County School of Innovation will ensure its school facility is designed and constructed to be accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities. We acknowledge that compliance with ADA guidelines is required for any new (or remodeled) school facility and will work closely with the architect and contractor to make appropriate design decisions that comply with the American with Disabilities Act. Garfield County School of Innovation classrooms and buildings will be fully equipped to address the needs of students with physical disabilities, such as, but not limited to, visual impairment, auditory impairment, and/or mobility problems. Regarding IDEA 613(e)(1)(B), Garfield County School of Innovation will be a public school within Garfield Re-2, which has already established eligibility for federal assistance under IDEA. Thus, Garfield County School of Innovation will work in tandem with the Garfield Re-2 IDEA plan.

Positive Accommodations
Garfield County School of Innovation students with special education needs and disabilities will the opportunity to participate in fieldwork and adventure education trips. This may be accomplished through the employment of a number of individual modifications and accommodations selected to best meet each student's unique needs. Some possible accommodations for the Garfield County School of Innovation student with various functional disabilities may include, but will not limited to, the following:

Vision Impairments:
- Use of a peer partner for guidance to move safely around the classroom or outdoor environment
- Tactile cue from peer or teacher to indicate a turn or movement during team building
- Auditory cues for team building
- Alternative print formats such as raised lettering
- Consistent placement of art supplies in student's workplace
- Use of art mediums workable by touch alone
- Preferential seating in all classes

Mobility Impairments:
- Use of adaptive and durable medical equipment (DME) such as a wheelchair
- Accessible desk and supplies from wheelchair
- Preferential seating in all classes

Hearing Impairments:
- Visual cues
- Tactile cues
- Peer partner for team building activities
- Assisted listening devices for music
- Use of technology as a visual aid
- Preferential seating in all classes

Non-Verbal Student:
- Visual cues

- Tactile cues
- iPad or other technological devices

Emotional/Behavioral Impairments:

- Reduce sensory over-stimulation by participating in a small group versus large class
- Allow for student to move around within a defined, acceptable area in all classes
- Provide increased structure to sustain attention in the distracted student in all classes
- Use of a weighted-vest to "ground" the sensory-seeking student
- Use of ear plugs/noise cancelling headphones to decrease sensory over-stimulation
- Use of a sit-disc in class to provide stimulation for the sensory-seeking student while keeping them in their desk

It is important to note that the above accommodation list is a very limited list of possible methods for inclusion of the special needs student at the Garfield County School of Innovation. The selection of possible special needs accommodations will be highly individualized dependent on the student's disability impairments and the requirements of the class. An accommodation that works well in one class may not work in another for the same student, so a student may require multiple accommodations to be employed differently in each class. Garfield County School of Innovation recognizes that all accommodations for the student will be identified and selected by qualified professionals from the student's IEP Team, such as occupational therapists, physical therapists, or school psychologists, in collaboration with the student's special education teacher. This will be an on-going process dependent on the success or failure of selected accommodations in the varying classes and will be assessed on a monthly basis by the IEP Team.

Economically Disadvantaged and Homeless Students – Students with IEPs or 504s

GCSI is committed to meet the transportation needs of students with IEPs or 504s, or homeless students that require transportation services, which will be negotiated in the Garfield Re-2 Authorizer Contract with GCSI. GCSI will comply with the McKinney-Vento Act, [11] which requires that all homeless children and youth have access to a free and appropriate public education and receive comparable services to other children in your district. The budget accurately reflects the cost of providing student transportation and insurance, and addresses safety needs using private, public, or school vehicles.

Economically Disadvantaged and Homeless Students

This at-risk group will be primarily determined by whether students qualify for the free and reduced lunch program and can also refer to the "neglected or delinquent students" as defined by the federal program. Possible accommodations for this group will consider both the physical and academics needs of the students. Assistance for physical needs may include free or reduced food programs, waiving student fees, and possible transportation by Garfield Re-2, which is approved on a case-by-case basis. Students in this at-risk category will be carefully evaluated through the employment of the MTSS/RtI model with appropriate tier placement as needed.

[11] http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/documents/cdenutritran/download/pdf/transportation/transhb02-1181.pdf

Low Performing Students
The MTSS/RtI program being utilized by GCSI was designed to provide early identification for under or low-achieving students. Once these students are identified, they will follow the above MTSS/RtI protocols for tier level designations, rapid targeted interventions, and referral to the more specialized special education teams, as needed and deemed appropriate.

Implementation of the Core Knowledge Sequence will expand opportunities for at-risk students. E.D. Hirsch, Jr., makes a strong case for the importance of a core curriculum – a shared base of knowledge – to equality of educational opportunity. He writes in the introduction to What Your First Grader Should Know:

When all the children who enter a grade can be assumed to share some of the same building blocks of knowledge, and when the teacher knows exactly what those building blocks are, then all the students are empowered to learn. In our current system, children from disadvantaged backgrounds too often suffer from unmerited low expectations that translate into watered-down curricula. But if we specify the core of knowledge that all children should share, then we can guarantee equal access to that knowledge and compensate for the academic advantages some students are offered at home. In a Core Knowledge school, all children enjoy the benefits of important, challenging knowledge that will provide the foundation for successful later learning.

GCSI will provide an inclusive learning environment where all students are welcome, regardless of ability. GCSI welcomes all students, including those who have been traditionally underserved or unsuccessful in other schools. Our goal is to help all students gain an appreciation and respect for diversity, individual strengths, and increased sense of compassion for others regardless of ability or circumstance.

GCSI will foster the academic achievement of all students through the utilization of highly qualified and motivated teachers. GCSI recognizes that at-risk students may not be able to access the curriculum because of various limitations; therefore, our school will provide these students with appropriate adaptations and modifications. In addition to implementing the Core Knowledge Sequence, we will have a team that meets regularly to identify and assist students who are at risk of failing. Depending upon the student and his/her needs, the team may be composed of regular classroom teachers, the Principal, the special education teacher, and any other relevant learning specialists. Strategies our school will use to assist students at risk of not meeting school standards include one-on-one tutoring, individualized learning plans, and supplemental programs. In addition, our school will implement flexible ability grouping arrangements so students will be able to easily move from one academic learning group to another based upon their prerequisite skills and knowledge as well as their learning needs.

GCSI will have a designated 504 Coordinator for our school. The “504”in“504 plans” refers to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which specifies that no one with a disability can be excluded from participating in federally funded programs or activities, including elementary, secondary or postsecondary schooling. “Disability” in this context refers to a “physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities.” This can include physical impairments; illnesses or injuries; communicable diseases; chronic conditions like asthma, allergies and diabetes; and learning problems. A 504

plan spells out the modifications and accommodations that will be needed for these students to have an opportunity perform at the same level as their peers, and might include such things as wheelchair ramps, blood sugar monitoring, an extra set of textbooks, a peanut-free lunch environment, home instruction, or a tape recorder or keyboard for taking notes.

The 504 Coordinator will go through any necessary training through the district to ensure compliance with all district policies regarding 504 plans. The 504 Coordinator will be responsible for overseeing all 504's in our school which includes meeting with parents and teachers for annual review of the documents, creation of new 504 plans as appropriate, and providing support to the teachers as needed, as well as ensuring that all teachers and support teachers have a copy of the 504 plan and are meeting the accommodations for these students and providing support to teachers as needed.

We will annually distribute forms to identify students who are eligible for free and reduced lunches based on the Free Lunch Program guidelines developed by the federal government. Our school will accommodate the needs of students identified by the guidelines.

Other At-Risk Factors
GCSI will have a program in place to increase the educational opportunities of at-risk children, who are less likely to succeed in school because of the following criteria.

- Physical Factors
- Emotional Factors
- Socioeconomic Factors
- Cultural Factor
- Academically Low-Achieving

Garfield County School of Innovation is marketing to students from the South Metro Denver area that otherwise would not have this opportunity to attend a world-class science and technology school will have this opportunity. Special attention will be given to market to minority students and to females, who are the least represented population groups in the high tech engineering industry.

Garfield County School of Innovation will set grade-level and above standards for all students in all classes. Part of the school's mission is to ensure that all students have the opportunity for scholastic achievement, without discrimination, and as a result Garfield County School of Innovation will implement a program for quick and productive corrective action when students are at-risk of academic failure. The system of having each student linked to a Student Services Advisor who will track their progress throughout their entire school experience supports this philosophy.

GCSI will use a variety of intervention strategies for struggling students outside of the RtI process for those students with an IEP including the following, which are recommended by CDE.

Dropout Prevention, three-tiered model:

- **The primary stage** of the prevention model involves school-wide GCSI reforms aimed at providing high-quality instruction that promotes engaged learning and successful high

school completion for every student. This stage includes a whole-school approach to encouraging regular attendance and other positive behaviors. These primary prevention strategies alone often succeed with a large majority (two-thirds to three-quarters) of students.

- **The secondary stage** targets interventions on small groups of students who need additional supports beyond the school-wide reforms to address attendance, behavior, or academic struggles.
- **The tertiary stage** provides intensive intervention (often delivered one-on-one to students by instructional specialists) for the five to 10 percent of students who need more support.

Research-Based Interventions

After outlining core instruction, the next step is to identify students for whom the core instruction is insufficient, determine why and then delineate Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions for those students. Additional resources will likely be required to address areas of need. When outlining Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions for students struggling in Tier 1, principals and teachers may consider their methods for providing the interventions, what programs are available, and other factors. In addition to features of the core instruction, Tier 2 and Tier 3 interventions might include the following:

- Academic support through remedial courses, additional instructional time, tutoring, extended learning programs, study skills, or small-group instruction
- Graduation support through course and credit recovery programs or preparation classes for state assessments
- Behavioral support programs through student support teams and behavior plans

Because of the structure and unique characteristics of high schools, interventions should focus on helping students stay in school and experience postsecondary success (Barton, 2008). Instructional decisions about the appropriate interventions for each student must be based on the student's performance data from multiple sources. "The goal is to offer a variety of services in varying degrees of intensity to address learning needs" (Ehren, Ehren, & Proly, 2009, p. 40).

Progress Monitoring

Progress monitoring consists of administering brief assessments to measure student progress on a regular basis (weekly or monthly) to determine whether students are responding successfully to instruction/intervention. Progress monitoring is an essential feature of RtI. The structure and process for monitoring progress includes identifying the content area(s) and skills to be assessed (e.g., reading fluency, vocabulary, and writing for a literacy intervention), the progress-monitoring measure to be used, how often to administer assessments, who administers and scores the tests, what to do with the data, and how to respond to meet students' needs.

Using Data to Make Instructional Decisions

Analyzing progress-monitoring data and universal screening that measure academic skills and/or behavior provides evidence of the effectiveness of the core curriculum in meeting the academic needs of all learners and the effectiveness of teachers' instructional practices. On the basis of student data, teachers choose ways to adjust and further differentiate instruction for learners who are struggling. Teachers gather, display, and analyze data to determine whether what they are

doing is working and, if not, why (Bernhardt, 2006). Also, data analysis helps teachers identify students who may require targeted and intensive interventions in core content and/or behavioral areas. High school principals and teachers implementing RtI may find the following types of data useful:

- Grades in core academic subjects, especially grades for first-quarter freshmen and end-of-year courses
- Benchmark and high-stakes assessment results
- Attendance records, especially for ninth-grade students who miss 10 days or more of school in the first 30 days
- Promotion status, especially for ninth-grade students who will not be promoted to 10th grade because they failed too many core subjects
- Disciplinary records (The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2008)

If the available data are insufficient for pinpointing the problem, then additional in-depth diagnostic assessments in the specific content areas of difficulty are recommended. For students with persistent behavioral problems that affect their achievement, additional psychological and behavioral assessments could be recommended. Ultimately, the data will become part of a comprehensive evaluation for making eligibility decisions for students referred for special education testing.

How Students At-Risk of not Meeting Academic Expectations Will Be Served.
All students will be assessed using a variety of assessments. All student learning will be tracked longitudinally to gauge progress over time. Any student that does not demonstrate growth over time might receive special services or help, none of which is based on FRL or minority status. Please read the Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance.

Timeline
On a continuing and immediate timeline, the Head of School/Executive Director, principals, advisors, and teachers will address the student's educational needs by developing formative assessments to monitor student achievement on a daily and weekly basis. Student progress will be reviewed for the academic achievement of all students in order to determine successful outcomes. Further, the Student Support Team will monitor individual student academic achievement, and students who are not progressing according to state standards will be addressed immediately. An intervention plan will be developed in order to prevent the student from falling behind. The educator and the child will collaborate to implement a system of re-teaching and assessment to ensure proficiency in standards. A student who receives an overall GPA below 2.0 will be put on "Academic Watch."
A student on Academic Watch will automatically be disqualified from after-school sports or other extracurricular activities. A student who goes on Academic Watch will meet with their Advisor and the two will devise a plan to help the student improve his or her grades. As a part of this plan, the student will be required to attend after-school tutoring (frequency will be determined by the principal.) In addition, teachers will fill out a grade report for the student every two weeks. This report will go to the Advisor and the student's parents. Administration and/or staff may use other exercises to improve academic achievement, such as regular meetings with teachers, peer tutoring, parent tutoring, homework plans, etc.

If no academic improvement is noted during a period of one month, a mandatory meeting will be conducted by the student's Advisor and will include the principal, guidance counselor, parents, the student's teachers, and the student. The student's learning plan will be evaluated and revised as needed to help the student achieve academic success. The Student Support Team will be kept apprised of progress and discussions with the student. If intervention should become necessary, the Student Support Team will enter into the situation.

The curriculum of Garfield County School of Innovation will be designed to accommodate a wide range of learning styles. In general, instruction will be child-specific and will be accelerated, not decelerated, for students with all types of special needs. As a small school, our teachers can remain quite flexible in how they challenge individual students. This personalized approach is critical to any student's eventual success.

STEAM curricula also have the advantage of requiring a variety of skills from students, not just the narrow competencies that have traditionally defined children as gifted or slow. Our goal is that all students will be challenged to move beyond self-imposed limits. Because we believe that all students have intellectual ability, we see it as our responsibility to provide a variety of routes to let them exercise it.

How Students at-risk of Not Meeting Academic Expectations Will be Served
All students will be assessed using a variety of assessments. All student learning will be tracked longitudinally to gauge progress over time. Any student that does not demonstrate growth over time might receive special services or help, none of which is based on FRL or minority status. Please read the Plan for Evaluating Pupil Performance.

E. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Compliance

The educational program will be monitored for compliance with federal and state laws and with all Garfield Re-2 policies not waived in the charter contract. Program effectiveness will be evaluated through:

- Student growth and achievement data (NWEA, CMAS, READ Act assessments)
- Annual review of curriculum implementation
- Teacher professional development effectiveness
- Parent and student feedback
- Board review of the academic dashboard multiple times per year

Specific assessments used to measure student growth include NWEA MAP Growth, Colorado READ Act assessments, CMAS, and curriculum-based measures. Results will be used to adjust instruction, allocate intervention resources, and inform continuous improvement of the educational program.

F. Supplemental and Expanded Learning Opportunities

Homeschool Enrichment Program Garfield County School of Innovation will offer a Homeschool Enrichment Program designed to serve families who educate their children at home and wish to supplement that education with high-quality, campus-based or expeditionary learning classes. The program will provide part-time enrollment opportunities in selected courses, particularly in STE³M + Business, engineering, and other enrichment areas.

Because GCSI will follow the Garfield County Re-2 calendar which operates on a Monday-Thursday schedule, the Homeschool Enrichment program will operate at Rosie's School classrooms on Fridays. The large gym/Engineering Lab will be open on Fridays for supervised STEM + Business competitions and activities including TSA, Best Robotics, First Robotics, etc.

This program will allow the school to serve a broader segment of the Garfield County community. Homeschool students participating in the enrichment program will be welcomed as part of the school community while maintaining their primary homeschool status.

Garfield County School of Innovation recognizes that some families prefer a flexible combination of home-based instruction and access to school resources. GCSI will explore a Homeschool Hybrid option that allows participating families to maintain primary instruction at home while connecting to selected GCSI opportunities—such as certain Career and Technical Education experiences, concurrent enrollment advising, project-based learning events, or periodic campus activities—as space, staffing, and program capacity permit.

Because GCSI will open with limited facility space and will prioritize full-time enrolled students, the Homeschool Hybrid option will be structured carefully. It is not intended as a daily, classroom-based program housed at the school. Instead, it will be designed as a partnership model in which families provide the majority of instruction off-site, and GCSI offers limited, scheduled access to specific resources or activities when capacity allows. The exact structure, eligibility, and level of campus access will be determined by the Governing Board and school leadership after facility plans and enrollment are finalized, and will be clearly communicated to interested families.

This approach allows GCSI to support homeschooling families in the community without over-committing scarce classroom space or creating expectations that cannot be met in the school's early years.

GCSI's Homeschool Hybrid Program is structured as a part-time enrollment option. Participating students are enrolled part-time with GCSI, and the school receives a portion of the Per Pupil Revenue (PPR) allocated by the state of Colorado for part-time students. There is no tuition cost to families — the program is publicly funded.

Specific PPR rates and part-time enrollment requirements are governed by Colorado Revised Statutes and CDE guidelines. GCSI will confirm all regulatory details with the Colorado Department of Education and our authorizing district prior to program launch. Families will receive complete enrollment documentation before the program begins.

G. Optional Offsite Released Bible Instruction Program During the School Day

Garfield County School of Innovation will offer an optional, opt-in released-time Bible instruction program for students whose parents request it a local church. This program will be made available once per week during the school day.

In accordance with the 1952 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Zorach v. Clauson* and longstanding constitutional principles, the program will operate under the following conditions:

1. **Off School Property** – All instruction will take place off the school campus.

2. **Privately Funded** – No public or school district funds will be used to support the program.

3. **Parental Permission Required** – Students may participate only with written parental permission. Participation is entirely voluntary.

The school will cooperate with parents and the private provider(s) to facilitate a smooth released-time process while ensuring that the program remains fully optional and separate from the school's required academic curriculum. Students who do not participate will remain at school and continue with regular instructional or enrichment activities.

This optional program is offered in recognition of the important role that families play in the moral and spiritual formation of their children and in response to community interest in such an opportunity.

10. PLAN FOR EVALUATING PUPIL PERFORMANCE

A description of how pupil achievement will be evaluated, including types of assessment to be used to measure pupil progress toward achievement of pupil performance levels, timeline, and proposed plans for using achievement information and taking corrective action to improve the school so content standards and performance levels can be met. Explain, in addition to CSAP reporting, how student achievement will be reported to the general public and school district. Describe any objectives and means for increasing the educational opportunities for "at risk" students, meaning those students who, because of physical, emotional, socioeconomic, or cultural factors, are less likely to succeed in school.

Garfield County School of Innovation will use a thorough, multi-layered assessment system to monitor student learning, evaluate the effectiveness of the educational program, and guide continuous improvement.

1. Use of Assessment Data to Monitor Student Progress
The school will measure student achievement through a balanced combination of baseline, formative, interim, and summative assessments.

Baseline Assessments At the beginning of each school year and upon enrollment of new students, the school will administer baseline assessments (including NWEA MAP Growth in

Reading and Mathematics and Colorado READ Act-aligned literacy screeners for early elementary students) to establish starting points for instruction and intervention.

Formative Assessments Teachers will use ongoing formative assessments—daily checks for understanding, curriculum-based measures, quizzes, running records, and classroom observation—to adjust instruction in real time.

Interim / Growth Assessments NWEA MAP Growth will be administered three times per year (fall, winter, and spring) to measure individual student growth in Reading and Mathematics. These results will be used to set growth goals, evaluate instructional effectiveness, and identify students needing additional support.

State and Federally Required Assessments The school will administer all required Colorado assessments, including:

- CMAS (English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science)
- Colorado READ Act assessments
- ACCESS for English Learners
- PSAT and SAT (as high school grades are added)

Additional Measures Curriculum-embedded unit assessments, performance tasks, and character growth measures aligned with the RISE-K framework will provide further evidence of student learning.

2. Data Management and Use
Assessment data will be managed through a student information system and a school-level data dashboard that allows teachers and administrators to compile, sort, and analyze results. Teachers will review data in Professional Learning Communities. School leadership will review school-wide and subgroup data regularly and report progress to the Board of Directors multiple times each year.

Data will be used to:

- Adjust daily and unit-level instruction
- Form intervention groups
- Evaluate curriculum effectiveness
- Guide professional development
- Inform decisions about grade-level advancement and course completion

3. Corrective Action
If the school falls short of student academic achievement or growth goals, it will take a systematic approach that includes:

- Careful analysis of the specific skills and knowledge areas where students are struggling
- Development of targeted interventions and individualized supports
- Additional small-group instruction or tutoring as needed
- Review of instructional practices and curriculum materials
- Engagement of teachers in collaborative problem-solving during professional learning time

- Clear communication with families about student progress and ways they can support learning

Students identified as needing additional support will receive Tier 1 interventions within the classroom. Students who do not respond adequately will be brought to the MTSS team for consideration of more intensive Tier 2 supports. Students with a Significant Reading Deficiency will be placed on a READ plan and provided the required additional reading instruction and family engagement.

4. Communication of Student Progress

- Families will receive regular individual progress reports and have access to student information through the school's student information system.
- The Board of Directors will receive a data dashboard multiple times per year.
- An annual School Performance Report summarizing achievement and growth results will be published on the school website and provided to Garfield Re-2 as part of the district's accreditation process.

5. Supporting At-Risk Students

The school will use assessment data for early identification of students who, because of physical, emotional, socioeconomic, or cultural factors, are less likely to succeed. These students will receive timely, tiered supports through the MTSS process, strong family communication, and a positive school culture grounded in the RISE-K character framework.

Through this comprehensive assessment and data-use system, Garfield County School of Innovation will monitor the progress of all students, respond quickly when learning gaps appear, and continuously improve the educational program.

Standardized Assessment Calendar *All dates are approximate and subject to change based on the official Colorado Department of Education and Garfield Re-2 testing windows.*

Month	Assessment	Grades
August – September	TS Gold	Kindergarten
August – September	NWEA MAP Growth (Reading & Math) or equivalent diagnostic	K–8 (expanding as grades are added)
October	PSAT 8/9	8th & 9th
October	PSAT/NMSQT	10th & 11th
October	SAT (optional)	10th–12th
November – February	CogAT (as needed for gifted identification)	2nd–6th
December	NWEA MAP Growth (mid-year)	K–8
January – February	ACCESS for ELLs	K–12
February	NAEP (if selected)	4th (and others if applicable)

Month	Assessment	Grades
April	CMAS English Language Arts & Math	3rd–8th
April	CMAS Science	5th, 8th, & 11th
April	PSAT 9	9th
Spring (as scheduled)	Colorado READ Act assessments	K–3

Additional curriculum-based and formative assessments will be administered throughout the year according to the instructional calendar. High school assessment offerings will expand as grades 9–12 are added.

11. ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

A description of the accounting system, information stating whether the district charter school will use District Accounting Services and what methods will be used for cash and interest earnings.

Garfield County School of Innovation will maintain a complete, accurate, and transparent financial and accounting system that follows generally accepted accounting principles for governmental entities and meets all requirements of Colorado law, the Colorado Department of Education, and the school's charter contract with Garfield School District Re-2.

Use of District Accounting Services
The school does not intend to use Garfield Re-2 District Accounting Services. It will operate its own accounting system under the oversight of the Board of Directors and with support from qualified financial professionals.

Financial Planning, Budgeting, and Oversight
The Board of Directors holds ultimate responsibility for the financial health of the school. The Board will approve the annual operating budget, review regular financial reports, and ensure that the school remains fiscally solvent and in legal compliance.

A Finance Committee of the Board will provide ongoing oversight of financial activities and assist the full Board in its fiduciary role. The Finance Committee will include at least one Board member.

The Head of School (or Executive Director) will be responsible for day-to-day financial management, preparation of the annual budget for Board approval, timely financial reporting, and coordination of the annual independent audit. The Head of School will ensure that financial operations remain within the Board-approved budget.

The school will operate on a July 1 – June 30 fiscal year and will use a modified accrual basis of accounting. Budgets will conform to the requirements of the Colorado Financial Policies and Procedures Handbook and the Chart of Accounts.

Internal Controls and Segregation of Duties
The school will implement strong internal controls that include:

- Clear segregation of duties for authorizing, recording, and reconciling transactions

- Required dual signatures on checks above a Board-established threshold (recommended $5,000)
- Proper written authorization before any obligation of school funds is made
- Regular reconciliation of bank accounts
- Physical safeguards for cash, checks, and financial records

No obligation of school funds may be initiated without proper authorization. Purchases made without prior approval may not be reimbursed, except in rare emergency situations approved by the Head of School.

Procurement
The school will follow sound procurement practices to ensure efficiency, legal compliance, ethical behavior, and fairness in dealing with vendors.

- Purchases and contracts under a Board-established threshold will follow sound business practices.
- Higher-value contracts will require competitive quotes (generally three written quotes) or formal bidding as appropriate.
- The Head of School or designee will have authority to approve purchases within budget parameters; purchases outside budget parameters will require Board approval.

Cash Management and Interest Earnings
All cash, checks, and other receipts will be properly recorded, receipted, and safeguarded. Deposits will be made regularly (at least weekly). The school will maintain appropriate bank accounts and will invest available funds in accordance with Colorado law governing public funds, with the primary goals of safety, liquidity, and reasonable yield. Interest earnings will be recorded and reported as part of the school's regular financial statements.

Financial Reporting
Monthly financial statements (including budget-versus-actual comparisons) will be prepared and made available to the Board and Finance Committee. Quarterly financial reports will be provided to Garfield Re-2 as required. The school will comply with Colorado Financial Transparency requirements by posting required financial documents on its website in a timely manner.

Annual Independent Audit
The school will engage a highly qualified independent Certified Public Accountant or accounting firm with experience in Colorado charter schools and governmental accounting to conduct an annual financial audit. The completed audit will be presented to the Board of Directors and submitted to Garfield Re-2 and the Colorado Department of Education as required.

Record Retention
Financial records will be maintained in accordance with applicable state retention schedules (generally two years in paper form and seven years electronically).

Through these systems, policies, and controls, Garfield County School of Innovation will protect public funds, maintain accurate financial records, and provide transparent reporting to the Board, Garfield Re-2, and the public.

12. PROPOSED BUDGET

A budget that covers the term of the district charter, detailing all projected revenue and expenditures and a proposed cash flow schedule and identifies every assumption made to support the number of students and the projected number of students for any categorical program funding (special education, Title I, etc.). The budget must also provide details on:

- Contracted services.
- The amount of state and federal funds to which the district charter school will be entitled.
- Services the district charter school expects to purchase from the school district identified by function.
- Personnel costs are identified by function and activity.
- The amount the district charter school will hold in reserve.
- Student fees.

GCSI Budget Narrative and Financial Controls

Garfield County School of Innovation will maintain rigorous financial controls and transparent budgeting practices. Detailed financial policies governing budgeting, accounting, cash management, purchasing, payroll, and internal controls are set forth in:

- Appendix 3 – Financial and Accounting Controls
- Appendix 4 – Procurement Policy

These policies establish Board oversight, segregation of duties, purchasing authority, signature requirements, credit-card controls, petty-cash procedures, payroll processes, and record-retention standards. They also require monthly and quarterly financial reporting to the Board and Finance Committee, annual independent audits, and compliance with Colorado Financial Transparency requirements and the CDE Chart of Accounts.

The multi-year operating budget, cash-flow projections, and all supporting assumptions (enrollment, per-pupil revenue, categorical funding, staffing, contracted services, facilities, reserves, and start-up costs) are provided in the accompanying budget workbook and narrative. GCSI will hold reserves consistent with TABOR requirements and Board policy, and will maintain insurance coverages as required by the charter contract and Appendix 3.

Budget Overview

Garfield County School of Innovation will prepare a complete five-year operating budget and cash-flow projection that aligns with the school's phased enrollment plan (beginning with K–4 in Year 1 and expanding thereafter). The budget will be developed using conservative assumptions and will be balanced each year.

The detailed budget spreadsheets (including revenue, expenditures, staffing, and cash flow) will be submitted as attachments to this application. The narrative below summarizes the key assumptions and required elements.

See Appendix 51 – GCSI Budget

GCSI Budget Assumptions

GCSI Budget YR 1

GCSI Budget YR 2

GCSI Budget YR 3

GCSI Budget YR 2027-31

GCSI Digital Budget YR 2027-31

Key Assumptions

- **Enrollment**: Phased growth beginning with grades 6-9 the first year, adding grades over subsequent years according to the enrollment plan in Section 5.
- **Per-Pupil Revenue**: Based on the projected Garfield Re-2 and state per-pupil funding rates for the applicable years, adjusted for any mill levy or other local revenues that may be available to charter students.
- **Categorical Funding**: Special education, Title I (if eligible), English Learner, and other categorical revenues will be projected based on anticipated student demographics and state/federal formulas.
- **Facility Costs**: To be determined based on the final facility solution (lease, purchase, or other arrangement). A conservative facility cost assumption will be used until a specific site is secured.
- **Staffing**: Personnel costs will be built from a detailed staffing plan that grows with enrollment. Salaries and benefits will be competitive for the region while remaining sustainable within projected revenues.
- **Reserves**: The school will maintain a reserve in accordance with TABOR requirements and will target an additional operating reserve as recommended by best practice for new charter schools.

Contracted Services
The budget includes line items for contracted services such as:

- Special education related services (as needed)
- Business/accounting support
- IT support
- Legal and audit services
- Custodial/maintenance (depending on facility arrangement)
- Other professional services

Services Expected from the District
At this time the school does not anticipate purchasing a large package of services from Garfield Re-2. Any specific services that may be purchased (for example, certain special education services, food service, or transportation support) will be identified by function in the final budget and negotiated in the charter contract or subsequent agreements.

Personnel Costs
Personnel costs will be detailed by function and activity (administration, instruction, special education, support services, etc.) in the budget spreadsheets. The staffing plan will grow in alignment with enrollment so that the school maintains appropriate student-to-staff ratios while remaining financially sustainable.

Reserves
The school will hold:

- The constitutionally required TABOR reserve
- An additional operating reserve target (to be specified in the final budget) to provide a cushion for enrollment fluctuations or unexpected expenses

Student Fees
Any student fees (for example, optional enrichment activities, athletics, or consumable materials) will be clearly identified, reasonable, and consistent with Colorado law regarding fees in public schools. Fee schedules will be approved by the Board and communicated to families in advance.

Cash Flow
A monthly cash-flow projection for the first year (and annual projections thereafter) will be included in the budget attachments to demonstrate that the school can meet its obligations throughout the year, including the typical timing differences between expense obligations and revenue receipts.

Contingency Planning
If enrollment falls short of projections, the school will implement contingency measures that may include delayed hiring, adjusted staffing ratios, reduced non-essential expenditures, or accelerated fundraising. The Board will monitor enrollment and financial performance closely, especially in the early years.

Federal funds for the Friday and after-school program

The school-day budget is per-pupil revenue and the categorical amounts the School is entitled to receive. The Friday and after-school program at the Rosie's School Campus is a separate cost. GCSI will seek a Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant, Title IV, Part B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, to pay for it.

Title IV, Part B is not a formula grant. The United States Department of Education makes a formula grant to the state. The Colorado Department of Education then awards competitive subgrants to schools and community organizations for academic enrichment and after-school or summer programs, with priority for high-poverty communities. It is not Title IV, Part A. Part A is the Student Support and Academic Enrichment formula grant and, if GCSI qualifies after opening, would come through Re-2 with the other formula funds. Part B is the after-school competition. GCSI will apply to CDE for a Part B subgrant for the staffed Friday and after-school program in robotics, rocketry, aviation, and other STEM activities. The application will be filed when the School is eligible. No award is in hand at filing.

Section 12 does not count a Title IV, Part B award as revenue. If CDE does not award the subgrant, the Friday and after-school program will run only on donations, gifts and volunteered time actually in hand, or it will be reduced. The school-day program will still open on the per-pupil budget. The District will not be asked to fund the difference.

13. AN ECONOMICALLY SOUND PLAN

Evidence that the plan is economically sound for the district charter school and the district, including a discussion of the listed criteria for economic soundness prepared by the district.

The plan is economically sound for Garfield County School of Innovation and for Garfield School District Re-2. The School is funded by the per-pupil revenue and the categorical amounts state law assigns to a district charter. It does not ask the District for an extra appropriation, a building, a bus, or repayment of startup costs. Policy LBD-R requires the evidence below. The dollar figures are in Section 12. This section states why those figures are a sound plan for both parties.

Sound for the School. Section 12 is the budget for the term requested in Section 7. It states every revenue assumption, the enrollment on which that revenue is calculated, and the expenditures required to operate. Personnel costs are identified by function and activity. Contracted services are identified. The amount held in reserve is stated. A cash-flow schedule shows that the School can pay its bills through the year, including the months before the state payments arrive. A student-fee schedule is included. GCSI does not charge tuition to a Colorado student. A fee is not a condition of entering the lottery. A student eligible for free or reduced-price meals will not be kept out of a school activity because a fee is unpaid.

The School will not hire a position, sign a facility payment, or buy a bus that Section 12 does not fund. If enrollment is below the figure used in Section 12, the School will reduce expenditures to the enrolled count, as Section 5 describes. It will not open a cost that the enrolled students cannot carry.

Sound for the District. Funding follows the student under C.R.S. § 22-30.5-112. The District may retain the charter school's actual per-pupil share of central administrative overhead, not to exceed five percent. GCSI does not ask the District to waive that retention or to subsidize the difference. Pupils and staff are not displaced from a District school. Section 16. The sites in Section 17 are not District buildings. The District is held harmless for repayment of initial startup costs. Section 14.

Grants and donations. Section 12 labels any grant or donation as its own revenue line. Per-pupil revenue and categorical funding are what the School relies on to operate. If a grant or donation is not received, the School will not hire against it and will not sign a lease against it. The expenditure that money was meant to pay is cut. The District is not the backstop. Policy LBD-R.

The Friday and after-school program is the one cost for which GCSI will compete for a 21st Century Community Learning Centers subgrant under Title IV, Part B. That subgrant is not in the operating budget. If it is not awarded, that program is reduced and the school day is not.

Fiscal accountability. The Governing Board adopts the budget and approves expenditures above the threshold in the School's procurement policy. The Executive Director spends only inside the adopted budget. Cash and interest earnings are handled as Section 11 describes. The financial controls are Appendix 3. The procurement rules are Appendix 4. An independent auditor will audit the financial statements and the administrative operations each year, including any service provided by the District or a third party. Section 15. The audit will comply with state and federal law. The Board will receive the audit and will give it to the District.

Services purchased from the District. Section 12 lists each service the School expects to buy from Re-2, identified by function, at the District's cost for that service. A service that is not on that list is provided by the School. The list will be written into the charter contract.

Insurance and liability. Coverage and the division of legal liability are in Section 21. The package includes workers' compensation, general liability, and coverage for the facility and its contents. The District is not the insurer of the School's operations except where the contract says a District policy applies.

Facilities. Section 17 describes the Rosie's School Campus for Year 1 and the Aviation Campus for Year 2, how each site will be obtained, and that neither site is under contract at filing. The reasonable cost of each site is the facility line in Section 12. No facility payment will be signed unless that line can pay it from the revenues Section 12 relies on. Contracted facility services, and the contractor if one has been identified, are named in Section 12 or Section 17.

Transportation and food service. Section 22 is the transportation plan. In the opening year the School does not run a bus fleet and does not charge a transportation fee. A low-income family is not charged for a bus the School does not operate. Section 23 is the food-service plan, including students who qualify for free and reduced-price meals. If either service is later provided by a second party, the contract will be brought to the District as Policy LBD-R requires, and the cost will be added to the budget only when the revenue is there to pay it.

Conclusion. The plan is sound for GCSI because Section 12 funds the program the School will actually open, and spending stops where that budget stops. The plan is sound for Re-2 because the District keeps its lawful overhead, gives up no building and no bus, and is not liable for the School's startup costs or for any grant the School does not receive.

14. INITIAL COSTS

Initial startup costs and the amount of money needed in advance with an explanation of where these funds will come from and any re-payment schedule. The school district shall be held harmless for repayment of initial startup costs.

Initial startup costs are the costs of preparing the Rosie's School Campus before per-pupil revenue is paying for instruction. They are the fit-out and the equipment required for the first day: polished concrete flooring; furniture, desks, and shelves; technology; and electrical, drywall, paint, and related interior work.

The amount needed in advance is the initial-cost total in Section 12. That amount will be raised before it is spent. GCSI will not ask Garfield School District Re-2 to advance it.

The funds will come from fundraising and from in-kind donation. Barry and Judy Brannberg have a proven record of securing this kind of support. To open their STEM charter school in Highlands Ranch, they secured significant donations and in-kind contributions for the same opening work: polished concrete flooring; furniture, desks, and shelves; technology; and electrical, drywall, paint, and related interior construction.

The Rosie's School building is part of New Castle. Rosie B. Ferrin taught second grade in the town from 1968 to 1991, and she and Cleyo Ferrin later made the old brick school a place the town used. The building is a local historic landmark. Returning it to use as a school is the restoration the town has wanted. Members of the community have already promised donations of labor and materials to restore the building to that original purpose. Those promises are in-kind contributions toward the initial costs above. They are not a debt of the District, and they are not counted as cash until the work or the gift is in hand. Restoration of the building will begin as soon as the Re-2 Board votes to approve the charter and the Estate of Rosie B. Ferrin has authorized the work. The fit-out will not wait for the first day of school. No restoration cost will be charged to the District.

There is no repayment schedule. A cash gift and an in-kind donation are not loans. No lender is to be repaid, and the District is not to be repaid.

The school district shall be held harmless for repayment of initial startup costs. If a pledged gift does not arrive, the School will reduce the fit-out to the cash and donated work actually in hand. The District will not be asked to cover the difference. Operating costs after the school opens are paid from the per-pupil budget in Section 12, not from this startup fund.

15. ADMINISTRATIVE AUDIT

A description of plans for an annual audit of the school's financial and administrative operations, an outside review of operations. Administrative audit includes whether or not laws, rules, and policies affecting the school were followed. A financial audit serves to ensure the expenditures of public funds are properly made and accounting procedures complete. Both audits must comply with the accreditation process of the State.

GCSI will engage a qualified (CPA) and independent auditor each year. The board will officially approve the auditor each spring. The audit will take place as soon after the end of the fiscal year as prudent, usually in late August or September. The audit will be conducted within generally accepted accounting standards and practices. The audit will be submitted to the GCSI board upon completion. Garfield Re-2 School District will also be given a copy of the audit upon completion, in time to include in the district reports to CDE. Beginning in year one, GCSI will be TABOR compliant. The GCSI audit will be

unqualified with no significant financial concerns. GCSI will manage operations and finance in compliance with best practice and all legal requirements. GCSI will meet all authorizer-reporting deadlines. GCSI will comply with all requirements of the Public School Finance Transparency Act (HB 10-1036) by posting accurate budgetary and financial documents on the school's website in a timely manner.

16. DISPLACEMENT OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

A description of the plan for relocating pupils and staff if the creation of the district charter school means pupils and staff will be displaced from their current school or a school in an adjacent district.

Garfield County School of Innovation does not plan to displace students or staff from existing Garfield Re-2 schools.

The school's enrollment strategy is focused on attracting families who are seeking a different educational option, including:

- Families who left the district (or public education more broadly) during the COVID-19 period and have not returned;
- Families who are currently homeschooling or using other alternative options and are looking for a high-quality public school choice with a STE³M + Business focus; and
- Families from neighboring communities and districts who are looking for a content-rich, character-focused school that is not currently available in their area.

Garfield Re-2, like many Colorado districts, experienced an enrollment decline during the COVID-19 period and has seen modest fluctuations in recent years. Some parents have left the public school system entirely in favor of homeschool or private school options. GCSI will endeavor to entice these parents (and these students) back to public school options. The creation of Garfield County School of Innovation is intended to expand public school choice and help retain and attract families to public education in the region, rather than to draw students away from existing district schools through displacement.

No current Garfield Re-2 students or staff will be required to relocate as a result of the opening of this charter school. Enrollment will be voluntary and conducted through an open lottery process as described in the Admissions section of this application.

17. SITE FOR THE SCHOOL

A description of the proposed site and how the site will be obtained and maintained. If the use of a district facility is proposed, the maintenance and security of the facility should be described. In addition, evidence should be submitted as to whether the space is available.

Garfield County School of Innovation will open in Fall 2027 with grades 6–9. The Board is pursuing a permanent campus that can serve the middle and high school and, as the school grows, the full K–12 program.

Experienced Commercial Real Estate Broker Dave Drahn



GCSI has engaged **David Drahn** of Coldwell Banker Realty, South Metro DTC office, as its commercial real estate broker. Dave has worked the Denver and Colorado market since 1973, in general brokerage, office, land and development, industrial, and retail, and he has been managing broker of three firms. He is the broker who secured the original STEM School facility in Highlands Ranch for this founding group. Dave tirelessly attended DCSD Board Meetings and Parent Information Meetings to promote the school and bring public awareness. Dave has worked with several charter schools and understands how to navigate the complex process.

GCSI is negotiating a Letter of Intent with the Estate of Rosie B. Ferrin for 151 West Main Street in New Castle. Appendix 47 - Rosie's School - Letter of Intent

On October 20, 2026 at 7 p.m., the GCSI Development Team will go before the New Castle Town Council to present our strategic plan for Rosie's School and the charter. Appendix 50

GCSI is further working to negotiate the education land site adjacent to the Rifle Garfield County Airport.

Those two LOI will be finalized after the Garfield Re-2 Board votes to approve this charter, and before that Board signs the charter contract with Garfield County School of Innovation. C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(2) requires that all negotiations on the contract be concluded, and all terms of the contract agreed upon, no later than ninety days after the Board rules by resolution on the application, or September 30, whichever date is later. It states:

> "All negotiations between the charter school and the local board of education on the contract shall be concluded by, and all terms of the contract agreed upon, no later than ninety days after the local board of education rules by resolution on the application for a charter school or September 30, whichever date is later."

The parties may jointly extend that timeline under C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(2.5):

> "The charter applicant and the local board of education may jointly waive or extend the timelines set forth in this section. As specified in section 22-2-117, the local board of education may apply to the state board of education for a modification or waiver of the timelines set forth in this section. If the state board of education approves the waiver, the local board of education must publish notice of the waiver on the local board of education's website within thirty days after the approval. The new timeline only applies to the applications submitted following the date of the public posting of the waiver."

Two campuses, in order

Year 1, Fall 2027. Grades 6 through 9 open at Garfield County School of Innovation at the Rosie's School Campus, 151 West Main Street, New Castle, Colorado 81647. The Letter of Intent with the Estate will be finalized in the window between the Board's approval vote and the signing of the charter contract. A lease or a purchase still has to be signed before students occupy the building. See Appendix 47



The Rosie's School Campus. The building at 151 West Main Street is the old New Castle School. The Town of New Castle designated it a Historic Landmark in 2022, at the request of the Estate of Rosie B. Ferrin.



The Town plaque reads “Old New Castle School, circa 1913.” The state site number is 5GF.2369. A 1996 survey found the building not eligible for the National Register. It is a local landmark. This application does not claim that it is on the National Register or on the State Register. The 1913 school is a two-story building. In 1939 the Works Progress Administration added a gymnasium, an auditorium, and classrooms on the east side. The cornerstone still in the floor reads: “Erected through the cooperation of federal, state, and local governments by Works Progress Administration. Dedicated to the enrichment of human lives. A record of permanent achievement.”



Public records show the building in use as the town’s public school from 1913 until about 1978. Photographs of the building, the Town plaque, the WPA stone, and the front door are included with this section.

Rosie B. Ferrin Legacy. Rosie B. Ferrin was born on July 1, 1944, in the Philippines, to Jose Ocuma and Severa Ocaso. She came to New Castle in July 1968, married Cleyo Ferrin, and taught second grade in the New Castle schools from 1968 until 1991. Cleyo died on March 10, 2019. Rosie died on June 3, 2019, at Valley View Hospital in Glenwood Springs. Her obituary in the *Post Independent* is the source for this account. After her teaching years, she and Cleyo bought this building and kept it in the life of the town, as a day care, a restaurant, a roller rink, a dance hall, and low-income housing. People in New Castle still call it Rosie’s. GCSI uses “Rosie’s School Campus” so that her name stays on the building. The school’s own name remains Garfield County School of Innovation. Any public use of her name beyond that campus description will be confirmed with the family. The Estate has not, by this application, given that permission.

The Estate of Rosie B. Ferrin is the owner. On September 26, 2026, GCSI met with the estate’s property manager. The building has been renovated and used again as a school. The memorandum with the Estate will be finalized after the approval vote and before the charter contract is signed, as stated above. Before students occupy the building, GCSI will have, in writing, the price, the date the building will be empty, a current certificate of occupancy, and a statement of what the fire code still requires. Landmark status means the Town’s historic-preservation rules apply to exterior changes. GCSI will follow them.

Because the building is a locally designated landmark, it may be eligible for a History Colorado grant. GCSI will apply. An application is not an award. The Fall 2027 opening does not depend on one.



A public park next door can be used for physical education if the Town permits it. GCSI will maintain the building, insure it, and provide its own security.

The first year and the Youth Center

Grades 6 through 9 will use the Rosie's School Campus in Fall 2027: Grade 6 and Grade 7 robotics, Grade 8 aviation, and the Grade 9 SMART@ER courses, as described in Section 9. Simulators and classroom aviation can start in New Castle in the initial Engineering and Aviation Lab which will be located in what is now the school gymnasium.

GCSI will follow the Re-2 four-day calendar. On Fridays, the day Re-2 is not in session, and on school-day afternoons, the Rosie's School Campus will be open as a staffed youth center for GCSI students and, as room allows, for other students in Garfield County School of Innovation Homeschool Enrichment Program and the greater community. The work will be robotics, rocketry, aviation, and other STEM-focused clubs, activities, and competitions. It is a supervised program, not a drop-in. Staff who are with students will be employees or cleared volunteers. The center stays at the Rosie's School Campus after the upper grades move, so the elementary building is still a town youth center when the school day ends. The culinary pathway itself is at the Aviation Campus in Rifle.

The Aviation Campus, in Year Two or Three

Commercial Land, Rifle, CO - Adjacent Airport NE" - 75 acres Water rights are deeded to the city of Rifle as part of development approvals. Mineral rights to be excluded from property sale. Broken up parcels subject to filing and processing preliminary and final plat.

GCSI will move to land adjacent to the Rifle Garfield County Airport when that land is available and the campus is built. The Letter of Intent for that education site will be finalized in the same window, after the approval vote and before the charter contract is signed. The County has not

agreed to donate or to lease. Any conveyance of airport land has to satisfy the County and, where federal obligations apply, the FAA. This application is not an airport contract.

That campus is Garfield County School of Innovation at the Aviation Campus. It is where the Aviation Tech Lab belongs, beside the field and the single-engine air tanker base. The culinary pathway is housed there, with the aviation pathway, and not at the New Castle campus. Students will run a restaurant for the school and for the public, under a qualified instructor. It will not serve the public until the health department has licensed it. The school's name is not changed to the name of the restaurant. Commercial Land, Rifle, CO - "Adjacent Airport NW" - 70 acres Water rights are deeded to the city of Rifle as part of development approvals. Mineral rights to be excluded from property sale. Broken up parcels subject to filing and processing preliminary and final plat.



Land near Rifle Garfield County Airport

The Development Team has located a 70-acre parcel of land (or possible donation of land), to build a new school facility as a permanent GCSI campus near the Rifle Garfield County Airport (RIL). The acreage is close enough to the airport that the Aviation Tech Lab (ground school and simulators) can use the field as a teaching context — visits, flight instructors, and, later, flight with an FAA-certificated provider.

This option is consistent with the Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership recommendation of a wildfire-aviation and training presence at Rifle Garfield County Airport. It is not a claim that the County, the airport board, or any broker has awarded GCSI a site. Until a letter of intent or purchase contract is signed, Option A remains the interim occupancy path. See Appendix 22 - CRVEDP Economic Development Version 4



Third Option — Former middle school gymnasium, 9th Street and Orchard Avenue (Silt)

This building is the former middle school gymnasium at **North 9th Street and Orchard Avenue**. It is vacant, appears to be in sound condition, and sits next to a large empty lot to the west and a soccer field to the east. Temporary classrooms could be placed on the property west of the gym for opening the 6-9 school. Photographs are included with this section.

If the property can be leased or licensed on reasonable terms, it would serve as:

- **An Interim Campus** for grades 6-9 in 2027;
- **A Youth Center** after school and in the evening (FIRST Robotics, BEST Robotics, rocketry, and similar clubs); and
- **A Friday program** for working families. Garfield Re-2 currently operates Monday through Thursday. GCSI can use this site for supervised Friday activities for school-age

children whether or not those children are GCSI students, so that the building is useful to the town from the first month it is occupied.

If the gymnasium is District-owned, GCSI will request a facility-use or lease discussion with Garfield Re-2. That request is not a demand to displace a District program. If it is Town- or privately owned, GCSI will negotiate with that owner. No occupancy will begin until insurance, life-safety, and occupancy approvals are in place.





18. GOVERNANCE AND OPERATION

A description of the proposed governance and operation, including the nature and extent of parent, educator, community, and student involvement.

Garfield County School of Innovation will be governed by a Board of Directors responsible for the academic, organizational, and financial success of the school. The Board will ensure the school fulfills its mission and the terms of its charter contract with Garfield School District Re-2.

Development Team. The GCSI Board will not be named and seated until after the Garfield Re-2 Board of Directors votes to approve the charter. Currently the GCSI consists of a Development Team of the following members:

Judy A. Brannberg, MSc, Co-Founder. Judy and her husband Barry are the Co-Founders of the Garfield County School of Innovation. She previously Co-Founded the STEM School and Academy in Highlands Ranch in 2009 and served as the Executive Director of STEM Academy, the after-school, fundraising, and CMO of the school, where she helped build a rigorous, project-based STEM learning environment with over 100 different after-school STEM-focused activities, competitions and clubs, and fund-raised nearly $500,000 the first year. Judy holds a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction in Science Teaching from the University of Colorado in Colorado Springs. She and her husband Barry are the parents of three grown sons and seven grandchildren, all who attend charter schools.

Barry Brannberg, Co-Founder. Barry is the Co-Founder of Garfield County School of Innovation and previously Co-Founded the STEM School in Highlands Ranch, where he served as President and Business Manager. Under his leadership, STEM School became one of only three charter schools in Colorado to secure a CECFA Bond during its first year of operation — saving the school over $1 million in costs as the rent would have increased by $500,000.00 and the buy-out price would have increased by $500,000.00. Barry is a licensed Real Estate Broker with a background in Science Education and Mechanical Engineering, and has also devoted significant years to a career in ministry.

Amy Campagna, RN. Amy Campagna is a Registered Nurse at Grand River Hospital in Rifle and a graduate of Colorado Mountain College. Amy is known for her exceptional care and compassion and received a Daisy Award for going above and beyond in her work each and every day. Amy is married to Chris who is a graduate of the University of California Davis and holds a BS Degree in Agricultural Science & Management with an Animal Science emphasis. Amy and Chris are the parents of four sons, all who excel in the STEM disciplines. Amy is an active volunteer in the community, church, and in all of their sons' activities.

Clay and Ashley Buerger. Clay is a native to Garfield County and an Embry-Riddle alumni, engineer and property manager. Clay is an experienced professional with a demonstrated history in the construction, property management and petroleum industries, skilled in Water, Fire and Mold Restoration, Occupational Health & Safety, Asbestos Testing and Abatement, Estate and Property Management. Clay holds a Bachelor of Science (BS) focused in Aerospace Engineering

from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Ashley is an Arizona import, Embry-Riddle alumni and owner of Afternoon Delight Bakery.

Robin Robinson. Robin is a local business owner and graduate of Roaring Fork High School in Carbondale. She is mom to four amazing adults and grandmother to eight wonderful young people. She is President of the Garfield County Republican Women, active in her grandchildren's education, and a promoter of expanded educational choice for all students in Garfield County through GCSI. Robin is a community activist and has the skills and talents necessary to rally the troops in Garfield County in support of choice education and for the approval of the GCSI Charter.

Salomi Gonzalez. Salomi is a proud Belizean-born immigrant who came to the United States in 1986. In 2026, she celebrates 40 years in this Country, where she has built her life, raised her family, and dedicated herself to helping others. She is a proud mother of five children, including two adults and three younger children, and a loving grandmother. Salomi is the founder and director of Circulo de Apoyo (Circle of Support), where she advocates for women who have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, and trauma. She works to ensure women have access to resources, emotional support, translation services and court assistance.

The nature and extent of involvement from key stakeholders will be as follows:

Parents - Parents will be treated as essential partners and the primary customers of the school. Parents will have meaningful opportunities to volunteer, serve on committees, participate in school events, attend Board meetings, and provide input through surveys and regular communication.

Educators - Teachers and staff will be actively involved in the continuous improvement of the school through Professional Learning Communities, staff meetings, and opportunities to provide professional input on curriculum, instruction, and school culture.

Community - The school will actively seek partnerships with local businesses, higher education institutions, civic organizations, and community leaders to support its STE³M + Business focus, real-world learning experiences, mentoring, and internship opportunities as the school grows.

Students - As the school expands into middle and high school grades, age-appropriate opportunities for student voice, leadership, and input will be developed.

This collaborative approach is intended to create a strong sense of shared ownership and ensure that the school remains responsive to the families and community it serve.

Describe how a governing body representative of the community served will be responsible for carrying out the district charter.

The Board will hold the charter contract with Garfield School District Re-2 and will be accountable for ensuring that the school fulfills the terms of that contract, including academic performance, financial stewardship, organizational compliance, and fidelity to the school's

mission. The Board will provide strategic oversight, hire and evaluate the Head of School, approve policies and the annual budget, and monitor progress toward the goals set forth in this application and the charter contract.

Through regular public meetings, transparent reporting, and ongoing engagement with families and community members, the Board will remain representative of and responsive to the community the school serves while fulfilling its legal and fiduciary responsibilities under the charter.

Define the committee composition and selection, and specify how it will be selected and maintained.

Pursuant to CO Rev Stat § 22-30.5-104 (4) (a) A charter school shall be administered and governed by a governing body in a manner agreed to by the charter school applicant and the chartering local board of education. Initially, there will be five Founding Board Directors from the original Development Team. The three Class A Directors will serve on the GCSI Board of Directors for an initial term of three years. After three years, they may choose to continue to serve another term on the Board of Directors or they may choose to retire. When a Class A Board Director retires, the Class A Board of Directors will appoint new Class A Board Directors.

The organizational structure of the district charter school shall be summarized.

The by-laws read, there are 3 Class A (self appointed) and 2 Class B members (parent elected).

All proposed organizational documents, including articles, bylaws, or similar organizational documents, shall be submitted with the application.

Appendix 5 - Draft Board Member Agreement
Appendix 20 – GCSI Articles of Incorporation for a Nonprofit Corporation
Appendix 21 – GCSI EIN Number
Appendix 32 - GCSI Bylaws

Identify qualifications for membership on the governing body, terms of office, and how vacancies will be filled.

Qualifications, terms, and vacancies

The governing body is the Board of Directors of Garfield County School of Innovation, a Colorado nonprofit corporation. The bylaws are Appendix 32. The Board Member Agreement is Appendix 5. The Board has five directors: three Class A and two Class B. Bylaws § 3.2(a).

Qualifications. A director must agree with the mission and vision of Garfield County School of Innovation, be committed to the charter-school concept, and serve in order to secure the educational success of the students. Appendix 5. Prior board experience is useful. It is not required. A director directs the School and does not manage it. The work is the vision, the relationship with the staff and the community, and oversight of the budget. Appendix 5. Each director attends a yearly board conference, takes part in the annual Board Visit Day, and takes part in the Board's annual self-evaluation. Appendix 5.

A director must also meet the standard of care in Bylaws § 3.15: act in good faith, in what the director reasonably believes to be the best interests of the corporation, and with the care of an ordinarily prudent person in a like position. A director may not use the seat for a personal business that conflicts with the School. Bylaws § 3.15. A director who misses three consecutive meetings without an excuse is deemed to have resigned. Bylaws § 3.2(d). A director may be removed under the Colorado Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act. Bylaws § 3.2(e). Married directors are permitted only on the founding board. Bylaws § 3.2(f).

The bylaws do not require a particular profession, a degree, or residence inside a single town. Parents and legal guardians of enrolled students are the voting members of the corporation, and they elect the Class B directors, so the Board remains tied to the families the School serves. Bylaws §§ 2.1 and 3.2(b).

Board meetings follow the Colorado Open Meetings Law, C.R.S. §§ 24-6-401 and 24-6-402. A gathering of a quorum to discuss public business is public. A conversation between two directors of this five-member Board is not, by itself, a meeting.

Terms. Class B directors are elected by the parent members at the annual meeting. Class A directors are elected each year by majority vote of the Class A directors then in office. Bylaws § 3.2(b). The Chair is elected by the Board from among the directors for one year, or until a successor is elected and qualified. Bylaws § 3.3. Section 3.2(c) also says each director holds office for a term the Board designates. Before the charter contract is signed, the Board will adopt a resolution that states the number of years for each class and whether the terms are staggered. Until that resolution is adopted, Class A seats are filled annually, and Class B seats are filled at the annual meeting of members.

Vacancies. A director may resign by written notice to the president or the secretary. The resignation takes effect at the time stated in the notice. Acceptance is not required. The Board fills a vacancy at a special meeting called for that purpose. The director appointed to the vacancy serves the unexpired term of the predecessor. Bylaws § 3.4. A seat opened by three unexcused absences, or by removal under the Nonprofit Act, is filled the same way. At the end of that unexpired term, a Class B seat returns to an election by the parent members, and a Class A seat returns to a vote of the Class A directors then in office.

Identify a plan for communicating with students, parents, and staff.

Plan for Communicating with Students, Parents, and Staff

Garfield County School of Innovation will maintain clear, consistent, and multi-channel communication with students, parents, and staff.

The same website carries a Google “Español” translation button, so a Spanish-speaking parent can read announcements, the calendar, and enrollment information. When a family needs an official notice in Spanish, the School will provide that notice in Spanish. The button does not take the place of that notice.

Parents

- Regular email updates and a family newsletter
- School website and parent portal for announcements, calendars, and student information
- Scheduled parent-teacher conferences
- Opportunities for two-way communication through surveys, meetings, and direct contact with teachers and administration
- Public Board meetings open to families

Staff

- Regular staff meetings and Professional Learning Community time
- Email and internal communication systems for operational updates
- Clear protocols for sharing student data, instructional expectations, and school priorities
- Opportunities for staff input through meetings and surveys

Students

- Age-appropriate classroom and school-wide communication of expectations, events, and recognition
- As the school grows into middle and high school grades, additional channels for student announcements and leadership communication will be developed

The school is committed to timely, respectful, and transparent communication so that families and staff remain well-informed and actively engaged in the life of the school.

Discuss the accountability process that will be followed and provide information about how the district charter school will be accountable to the public, as follows:

- Outline specific plans for meeting state guidelines for building accountability membership.

Building Accountability Membership

Garfield County School of Innovation will establish and maintain a School Accountability Committee (SAC) in accordance with Colorado state guidelines (C.R.S. § 22-11-401 et seq.).

The SAC will include the required categories of membership, which will include:

- The Head of School (or designee)
- At least one teacher
- At least three parents of students enrolled in the school
- At least one adult member of an organization of parents, teachers, and students recognized by the school
- Other community members as appropriate

The school will actively recruit parent and community members to ensure the committee is representative and meets statutory composition requirements. The SAC will meet regularly to review the school's performance, provide input on the school improvement plan, and fulfill the other responsibilities outlined in state law.

The school will maintain records of SAC membership and meetings and will ensure the committee operates in compliance with Colorado accountability requirements.

- Development of an annual school improvement plan with supporting profile information.

Annual School Improvement Plan

Garfield County School of Innovation will develop and implement an annual school improvement plan in accordance with Colorado accountability requirements.

Each year the school will prepare a school performance profile that includes key data on student achievement, academic growth, postsecondary readiness (as applicable), attendance, and other relevant indicators. Using this profile, the School Accountability Committee and school leadership will identify priority performance challenges, root causes, and major improvement strategies.

The resulting annual school improvement plan will set clear goals, action steps, timelines, and measures of progress. The plan will be reviewed by the Board of Directors, shared with the school community, and used to guide professional development, resource allocation, and continuous improvement efforts throughout the year.

Progress on the plan will be monitored regularly and reported to the Board and, as required, to Garfield School District Re-2.

- Representation on the district accountability committee.

Representation on the District Accountability Committee

Garfield County School of Innovation will participate in the Garfield School District Re-2 Accountability Committee process as required. The school will appoint or elect an appropriate representative to serve on the District Accountability Committee in accordance with district procedures and Colorado law, ensuring that the charter school has a voice in district-level accountability discussions.

- Reporting procedures to the Board and school community.

Reporting Procedures to the Board and School Community

Garfield County School of Innovation will maintain clear and regular reporting procedures to both the Board of Directors and the school community.

To the Board of Directors The Head of School will provide regular reports to the Board on academic performance, enrollment, finances, operations, and progress toward school goals. A data dashboard covering key performance indicators will be presented multiple times per year. Financial reports will be provided monthly or as otherwise directed by the Board.

To the School Community The school will communicate with families and the broader school community through regular newsletters, the school website, parent portal updates, and public Board meetings. An annual School Performance Report summarizing academic results and school progress will be published and made available to families and the public.

These reporting practices are designed to ensure transparency, support informed oversight by the Board, and keep families well-informed about the performance and direction of the school.

Number of positions on the Board voted on by parents, vs number of positions filled by appointment.

Three Board positions shall be filed by appointment and two positions shall be voted on by parents.

Number of community members to serve on the Board

Two Board positions shall be voted on by parents.

Parent Election Process of Two, Class B Board of Directors
During the spring of the first year of operation of the school, the members, or parents of the school, will vote two parent board members onto the Board of Directors.
The Class B Board Directors will be elected from the members to serve a three-year term.

The GCSI Board will reflect diverse experience and skills, including but not limited to education, management, financial planning, law, and community outreach.

A director having three or more consecutive unexcused absences from the meetings of the board of directors shall be deemed to have resigned as a director. Directors shall be removed following the procedure provided by the Colorado Revised Nonprofit Corporation Act.

The following process will be implemented to elect two new Class B Members

The current Board President of GCSI Class A will oversee and manage the following process to elect two parent board members:

- The election will be announced in the weekly electronic school newsletter published by the school in January of the first year of operation of the school.
- In February of the first year of operation parents may nominate themselves to serve on the Board of Directors and must be willing to serve a 2-year term.
- In March of the first year of operation, the candidates and their bios will be posted on the Alexandria website during the entire month of March.
- In April, during the second week, elections by electronic secret ballot will be conducted.
- There will be just one vote per parent of each child enrolled at the school.
- Parents will be given a weeklong window to vote for the 2 candidates of their choice.
- Election results will be announced the 3rd week of April.
- The two new Class B Parent Board Members will be seated officially on the GCSI Board of Directors during the May meeting.

- The two new Class B Parent Board Members will participate in the May Events as prescribed by the above Annual Board Calendar.

Draft of GCSI Initial Board Policies
Appendix 1 - LOI - Garfield County School of Innovation
Appendix 2 - GCSI_Enrollment_Policy_CSP_Compliant
Appendix 5 – Draft Board Member Agreement Policy
Appendix 6 – Draft of Conflicts of Interest Policy
Appendix 7 – Draft Board Confidentiality Policy
Appendix 8 – Draft Grievance Policy
Appendix 9 – Draft GCSI "opt in" and "opt out" Procedures
Appendix 10 – Draft Policy of Selection of Controversial Learning Resources
Appendix 11 – Draft Policy Adoption Process
Appendix 12 – Draft Policy of Use of Garfield County Re-2 District Policies
Appendix 13 – Draft Head of School/Executive Director Evaluation
Appendix 14 – Draft Board of Directors Self Evaluation
Appendix 15 – Draft Employee Handbook
Appendix 16 – Draft Discipline Handbook
Appendix 17 – Draft Right of Students to Organize Religious Groups and Activities
Appendix 18 – Draft GCSI SAC Bylaws
Appendix 36 - Draft GCSI_Charter_Parental_Rights_Policy

- Compliance with statutory requirements regarding the staffing and role of the SAC

19. RELATIONSHIP WITH DISTRICT

A description of the relationship between the district charter school and the district.

Garfield County School of Innovation is a public, nonsectarian, nonreligious, non-home-based school which operates within a public school district, pursuant to C.R.S. § 22-30.5-104 (2025) (1). GCSI will operate as a public charter school authorized by Garfield School District Re-2. The relationship between the school and the District will be defined by the charter contract and guided by a spirit of collaboration, mutual respect, and shared commitment to student success.

The school will be responsible for its own governance, academic program, personnel, budget, and day-to-day operations, while remaining accountable to the District through the terms of the charter contract, the District's accreditation process, and applicable state and federal law.

The school intends to maintain open communication with District leadership. The Head of School and Board leadership will be available to meet with District administrators as needed to discuss matters of mutual interest, share data, and address any issues that may arise. The school will submit all required reports to the District in a timely manner and will participate in the District Accountability Committee process as required.

Where it is mutually beneficial, the school is open to exploring shared services or partnerships with the District (for example, in areas such as special education, professional development, or

facilities), provided such arrangements support the school's mission and are consistent with the charter contract.

Garfield County School of Innovation views itself as a partner in expanding high-quality public school options for families in Garfield County. The school's goal is to complement the existing educational offerings in the District by providing a distinctive STE³M + Business, content-rich program that begins with a strong K–4 foundation and grows responsibly into a full K–12 school.

The Board of Directors and school leadership are committed to a professional, transparent, and cooperative working relationship with Garfield School District Re-2 throughout the term of the charter.

20. EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIP

A description of the school's employment policies and the agreements between the district charter school and the teachers and other staff, including salary, benefits, working conditions and rights, plans for resolving employee relation problems, determination of seniority, determination of probationary status, evaluation procedures, and the coordination of the issues with the District. Any proposed written employment agreements or policies must be submitted with the application.

At-Will Employees – Termination and Resignation
In accordance with Colorado state law governing "at-will" employees, GCSI staff member's employment may be terminated at any time with or without cause and with or without notice at any time, at the option of either GCSI or the employee. Because GCSI is an educational organization providing daily student instruction, GCSI will attempt to provide at least two weeks' prior notice of a termination, and requests that employees also provide at least two weeks' prior notice of resignation in order to provide the least amount of interruption to student instructional time. Upon resignation, staff members must submit a letter to their immediate supervisor and to the GCSI principal. All potential staff understands that all employees hired by the school shall be employees of the school and not the District, and that all employee decisions, including discipline and termination, shall be made solely by the school.

Include the proposed charter school's employment policies or a plan for the timely development of employment policies, including a draft staff handbook as attachments, if available.

Please see GCSI Employment Handbooks: Appendix O – Draft Employee Handbook

The Principal will oversee recruitment, hiring, and retention of highly qualified teachers and service providers. When the hiring process occurs, the Principal will specifically recruit and target highly qualified teachers who have experience in one or more of the following: Core Knowledge, a STE³M + Business expertise, and teachers with relevant, real-world experience from the business, industry, and the corporate community.

Recruiting and interviewing Process
Finding a high-quality, highly motivated, skilled staff is a challenge that every charter school must overcome. Our recruitment plan includes:

- Attend job fairs for both charter school and traditional public school.
- Utilize the Colorado League of Charter Schools website for recruiting potential educators and staff members.
- Depend on and utilize our parent network to gain referral and recommendations on stellar educators who want to teach at a school with an emphasis on parent and community engagement.
- Leverage our current STEAM networking and STEAM education contacts. Since 2009, we have received regular calls and emails from potential staff members who want to come and work at our school because of the innovative, STE^{3}AM-focused curriculum with a business and entrepreneurship focus. Many potential employees have contacted us from out-of-state and want to move to Douglas County to teach at our school.

Diversified Approach to How Positions will be Publicized.
The positions be posted to the school website, Colorado League of Charter Schools website, and other professional sites.

Hiring Process
Prospective teachers at Garfield County School of Innovation will undergo a rigorous hiring process that may include (but may not be limited to) the following steps:

- Meet and greet – to widen the number of candidates considered
- Receipt and review of completed application, resume, cover letter and/or references
- Orientation information to learn more about the school mission/vision, philosophy, schedule, student population, and teacher expectations
- Formal interview with Executive Director and/or Principal and/or interview team
- Reference checks
- Demonstration lesson or observation at the teacher's current school and debrief
- Job offers

Garfield County School of Innovation employees will meet certification or licensing requirements of state or federal law, except where waivers have been approved. Each teacher at GCSI will meet "highly qualified" standards, for applicable positions. Highly qualified status of employees will be tracked in conjunction with Garfield Re-2 School District staff as is normal practice in the district.

No wage scale for employees exists, and starting salaries will be based on education, experience, and alignment with GCSI philosophies. Some positions that are hard to fill may receive extra pay incentives, on a case by case basis. In addition, a bonus plan and raise criteria will be developed with teaching staff once they are hired. Current budget calls for average salaries above the stipulated amount, several thousand dollars higher than average for Colorado charter schools.

For some part-time positions in the areas of special education, GCSI hopes to purchase services from Garfield Re-2 School District, so these personnel would meet district expectations.
A sample job posting follows:

GCSI – Purpose Driven Education

OUR PURPOSE: To prepare students for college and life beyond by equipping them with quality academic skills and relevant content knowledge through a classical instructional philosophy. GCSI will offer a high-quality academic program while also cultivating in students an appreciation for wisdom, a desire to seek truth, the joy of learning, and an internal thirst for character growth.

GCSI is highly interested in communicating with candidates who: Embrace ***Purpose Driven Education*** ideals and faithfully strive to implement them daily.

Value High Character as part of who they are, serve as good character role models for the students, and view their own character development as a life-long journey.

Desire a Challenging Opportunity to be part of a highly professional team dedicated to creating an outstanding school where students enjoy learning at the highest levels.

GCSI Teachers Will:

- ✓ Have a deep passion for ***Purpose Driven Education***
- ✓ Deliver engaging lessons for students on a consistent basis
- ✓ Embrace classical instructional philosophy of Grammar, Logic, Rhetoric
- ✓ Differentiate instruction to address various learning styles
- ✓ Demonstrate effective classroom management
- ✓ Communicate proactively with students, parents, and fellow staff
- ✓ Attend Capturing Kids Hearts, a 3-day training, during the summer
- ✓ Develop curriculum with the assistance of Administration
- ✓ Understand that student learning ***is*** the measure of successful teaching
- ✓ Accept feedback from administration in a continuous improvement modality
- ✓ Implement the GCSI standards based grading philosophy
- ✓ Build appropriate professional relationships with students
- ✓ Collaborate with other GCSI staff in creating a joyful learning culture

Minimum Qualifications:

- ✓ Bachelor's Degree (education degree preferred)
- ✓ Meet Highly Qualified status
- ✓ Ability to collaborate with a high functioning team
- ✓ High level of oral and written communication skills
- ✓ Entrepreneurial outlook

Position Details:

If interested, please send a resume and cover letter to judy.brannberg@gmail.com. Indicate the position you are applying for in the subject line. The position is open until filled. GCSI is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of any status protected by law or regulation.

A sample employment application is shown below:

EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION

PERSONAL DATA:
Name: _____ Date_____

Address, City, State, Zip: _____
Cell Phone (____)_____Home Phone (___)_____E-mail _____
Position(s) for which you are applying:_____

Expected Salary? _____ Would you work full-time? _____ Part-time? _____
Specify days and hours if part-time: _____
List any relatives working for the school: _____
If your application is considered favorable, on what date will you be available for work: _____
What skills or qualifications do you feel especially qualify you for a position with GCSI?
_____
_____
_____
_____

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE: List all positions held (most recent first).

Position	Dates	District, School or Organization	Reason/Leaving

EDUCATIONAL HISTORY: List all high school/college/university/other preparation (most recent first).

HS/College/Other-City, State	Dates	Course of Study	Diploma/Degree

REFERENCES:
Please list three (3) professional references and one (1) personal reference that we may contact.

Name Title Organization Phone

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

LEGAL INFORMATION:

_____

1. Have you ever been convicted of, pleaded nolo contendere to, or received probation for, any offense involving moral turpitude? (Moral turpitude includes, but is not limited to such offenses as theft, attempted theft, murder, rape, embezzlement, unlawful sexual behavior involving a child, unlawful behavior involving a child, or indecency with a minor).

[ ] Y ES [ ] N O

2. Have you ever been dismissed by, or resigned from, a school district as a result of an allegation of unlawful behavior involving a child, including unlawful sexual behavior?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

3. Has your certificate, license or letter of authorization, ever been annulled, suspended, or revoked for unlawful sexual behavior or unlawful behavior involving a child?

[ ] YES [ ] NO

If you answered YES to any of the above questions, please provide complete details on a separate sheet of paper.

- I certify that the information in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge and understand that an omission or falsification of any information in this application may result in refusal of, or immediate discharge from, employment.
- I understand that employment is contingent upon investigation of any or all statements contained in this application and I authorize the release of any information from persons or organizations named in this application.
- I understand that employment is contingent upon satisfactorily passing a physical examination, if such examination is required.
- In the event I am employed by GCSI, I agree to abide by all its applicable policies, rules and regulations.

Signature_____Date_____

How professional development is aligned and will help teachers operationalize the vision, mission, values, culture and goals of the school

Professional Development
Before the school opens its doors to students for the initial year, GCSI will provide a 2-week "boot-camp" PD in-depth training to align teachers which will focus on:

- Capturing Kids' Hearts™
- Core Knowledge™ (for K-8)
- College Prep Expectations (HS)
- Project Based Learning Instruction
- Core Virtues
- Differentiated Instruction
- Data Analysis and Decision Making

Teachers will be mentored and coached by administration using the works of Marzano[12] and Wong[13]. As the school matures, the professional development program will be less "one size fits all" and more individualized, as discussed below. In addition, academic performance data, staff surveys and professional development needs analysis will be used by administration to guide PD in future years.

How the daily schedule, staffing plan and budget align with the professional development plan

GCSI will follow the Garfield Re-2 School District traditional/conventional calendar[14] which will include 17 days set aside for professional development, including several weeks prior to the start of our school for our "boot camp."

Proposed Calendar – GCSI 2027-2028
GCSI will follow the Garfield County Re-2, 4-day a week calendar. Teachers at each grade level will have common plan time each day. This will allow for curriculum development, lesson planning, student performance data analysis, and revision of lesson plans. At least once a week, PLC grade level teams will meet with their supervising administrator to discuss student progress and data.

Sample Bell Schedule

Rifle High School

Garfield Re-2. The school day starts at 7:45 a.m. and ends at 4:00 p.m. Coal Ridge High School is the school with an optional zero hour at 7:15 a.m. Rifle High School is not.

Garfield County School of Innovation

A/B block. Classes meet every other day for 80 to 90 minutes. A student has four classes on an A day and four different classes on a B day. The day runs from 7:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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[12] Marzano, R. J., Pickering, D., & Pollock, J. E. (2001). *Classroom instruction that works: Research-based strategies for increasing student achievement*. ASCD.
[13] Wong, H. K., & Wong, R. T. (2001). *The effective teacher*. Harry K. Wong Publishing Company.
[14] https://cdn5-ss14.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_220400/File/Academic-Calendar/2024-2025/BOE%20Approved%20Calendars%202024-25%20(C)%20V.2.0.pdf

Time	Minutes	Period
7:45–8:00 a.m.	15	Arrival, homeroom, and morning announcements, Capturing Kid's Hearts
8:00–9:25 a.m.	85	Block 1, for example mathematics or science
9:25–9:29 a.m.	4	Passing
9:29–10:54 a.m.	85	Block 2, for example English or social studies
10:54–10:58 a.m.	4	Passing
10:58 a.m.–12:28 p.m.	90	Block 3 and lunch rotation
12:28–12:32 p.m.	4	Passing
12:32–1:12 p.m.	40	Advisory and intervention (WIN time)
1:12–1:16 p.m.	4	Passing
1:16–2:41 p.m.	85	Block 4, for example physical education, art, band, or an elective
2:41–4 p.m.	49	Block 5, extended elective or study hall
4 p.m.	—	Dismissal

Lunch A is 10:58–11:28 a.m. Lunch B is 11:58 a.m.–12:28 p.m. One group eats while the other is in Block 3. Each lunch is 30 minutes. Each group has 60 minutes of Block 3 inside the same 90-minute window.

Individual Professional Development Plans

GCSI understand that school years are made up of teachable moments. Counting each day as precious, we will strive to live out the vision and mission deliberately in all aspects of the school including professional development.

Our most prominent goal is the growth of students. Our most constant influencer in that growth is the teacher with whom they interact daily. We know that quality teachers produce students that demonstrate learning. Using best practices to build up our teachers and to develop effective pedagogy, we approach professional development with the skills and needs of adult learners, also called *andragogy,* in mind. As the *Chesterfield County Public Schools Professional Growth and Performance Plan for Teachers (2)* did, we have taken this into account in the following ways:

*Because Adult Learners…	The Individual Professional Development Plan…
Want to control their own learning and decide what, where, when, and how they learn,	Engages teachers in self-reflection to determine their individual professional growth needs.
Expect immediate utility and the knowledge that what they are learning is urgent and useful,	Involves teachers in identifying professional growth goals that are based on immediate needs as indicated by student performance, self-reflection, performance evaluation, and other sources of input.
Test their learning in an ongoing manner on the way to mastery,	Encourages use of job-embedded professional development to engage teachers in "attempting" new strategies and sharing results with others.

Anticipate how they will use their learning and have a clear expectation for transfer to practice,	Engages teachers in identifying a plan of action for improving teaching and learning in their classrooms.
Expect performance improvement and self-appraise to determine if there is noticeable improvement,	Relates professional growth to performance evaluation so that teachers can examine change in performance to inform professional growth needs.
Maximize available resources by gathering and sharing experiences and resources,	Includes a process to seek and provide supportive time, people, learning opportunities, and/or material resources that address individual professional growth needs.
Require a collaborative, respectful, mutual, and informal climate,	Engages teachers in collaborating with administrators to identify professional growth goals, consider performance on standards, and provide documentation about performance.
Require information that is appropriate and developmentally paced and is based on their natural metacognitive tendencies,	Gives teachers greater autonomy in reflecting on their practice to determine what they learn and how they learn for the purpose of improving student achievement.

* Based on Fogarty, R. & Pete, B. (2007). From the staff room to classroom: A guide to planning and coaching professional development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

An Individual Professional Development Plan allows teachers the opportunity to critically examine their own teaching practice. It allows them to target specific areas for learning and growth. The aim is to target these areas collaboratively so that our perspective is broadened and our approach is multi-faceted. We do not plan to merely check boxes but to really improve teaching and learning. There need not be a gap between workshop and book "knowledge and real life career knowledge," though there often seems to be.

Some of the guidelines that will lead to such transformative goals are found again in *Chesterfield County Public Schools Professional Growth and Performance Plan*:

- Teachers' professional growth and performance should have a positive impact on student learning and achievement.
- The process should define clear, consistent expectations for all teachers and should support continuous learning.
- The process should foster collaboration among the teacher, administrator, and peers.
- The process should be a professional growth experience based on trust and mutual respect.
- The process should provide multiple ways of developing and documenting skills and knowledge.
- The process should provide for differentiation based on teacher support needs and experience.
- The process should engage teachers in reflective practice and active involvement in their own professional growth.

Effective goals meet the following SMART criteria. The goals are:

S specific, significant, stretching

M measurable, meaningful, motivational

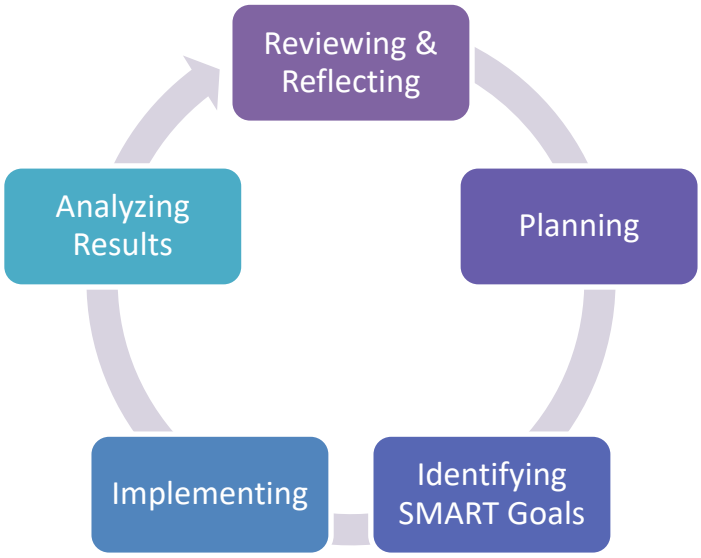
A attainable, agreed upon, achievable, action-oriented

R realistic, relevant, reasonable, rewarding, results-oriented

T time-based, timely, tangible (NH Professional Development Master Plan Toolkit 29)

The Living Document

As growth is a living entity, Individual Professional Development Plans are meant to be living documents. Each teacher's will be slightly different from others. The goals will come from various sources including: the current Unified Improvement Plan (UIP), supervisor evaluation data, student data, and personal passion. Each teacher will determine between one and three goals to work on at a time. Some goals will take longer than others, but all will work through the process in the graphic below (Reviewing & Reflecting, Identifying SMART Goals, Planning, Implementing, and Analyzing Results).



The process will be both personally reflective and collaborative (through discussions with teammates, the Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Director, and your supervisor). The graphic captures the classroom reality and adaptability of a process whose ultimate goal is student growth through teacher growth.

Goal setting

Beginning with the end in mind is an effective teaching practice that makes sense when setting professional development goals as well. Reflection is an essential part of setting individual goal(s). Therefore, in order to reflect on your teaching practice broadly, questions may be helpful. To begin, consider these and follow up with your own:

- What was your biggest joy in the previous school year?
- What was your biggest frustration in the previous school year?
- Describe a teaching moment where you felt pure pleasure in your craft/you were "in the zone".
- What is your teaching strength? / What could you teach someone else about teaching?
- What area is your weakness? / What area is awkward and costly to you?
- What area would you like to have coaching in so that you can get better/more comfortable?
- What is your educational passion? In what area would you like to become an expert for your future, your team, and for the school?
- Is there a subject/area where you are already the "go-to" person for your team?
- About what are you professionally curious/fascinated?

Professional Dispositions and Transformational Practices

Teacher evaluation will examine classroom leadership (CL), content knowledge (CK), instructional skill (IS), professionalism (P), communication (C), and teamwork and collaboration (T&C). Our culture is also based on character (Ch) and servant leadership (SL). All eight of

these expectations are practiced in two categories: professional dispositions and transformational practices.

Professional Dispositions defined

Impact in the classroom flows from the teacher's identity and integrity. An educator's overall effectiveness hinges upon the attitudes, relational skills, instructional philosophy, personal character, and communication style that flavor one's work with others. Dispositions reflect *who the educator is* as a professional. These qualities shape the ethos of a school: they are the fuel of trust, mutual respect, and influence among the members of a learning community. Therefore, professional dispositions are a non-negotiable aspect of school culture, for the good of students.

Transformational Practices defined

Teachers deliver the school's mission on a daily basis through their work in the classroom with students. Successful implementation of research-validated approaches that maximize student learning is only possible through studious planning, disciplined reflection, and constructive feedback. Transformational practices are the combined decisions, habits, and actions that evidence ***what the educator consistently does***. Every educator is invited and expected to continuously improve, to allow oneself to be transformed, to never stop growing. By so doing, each teacher can and will have a positive, transformational effect upon students, colleagues, and parents. The chart below shows how the big ideas foundational to the culture and specific evaluation standards fit into these two categories.

PROFESSIONAL DISPOSITIONS	TRANSFORMATIONAL PRACTICES
____ Shows respect for roles and responsibilities (Big 3)	____ Uses the Social Contract and Four Questions (CL)
____ Displays individual character (Big 3)	____ Establishes and protects a positive environment (CL)
____ Models servant-leadership (Big 3)	____ Demonstrates a mastery of the subject(s) (CK)
____ Is open and accountable to others (SL)	____ Helps students appreciate big picture CK ideas and themes (CK)
____ Practices receptive listening (SL)	____ Appropriately infuses relevant and engaging supporting content (CK)
____ Seeks and offers constructive feedback for ongoing growth (P)	____ Sets expectations of learning goals & gives helpful feedback (IS)
____ Is dependable, proactive, and constructive in meetings (P)	____ Engages students with meaningful lesson/unit plans (IS)
____ Cultivates a reputation of being trustworthy, reliable, & positive (P)	____ Guides students to interact with, deepen, & test knowledge (IS)
____ Contributes to team / department (T&C)	____ Responds promptly to contact by phone & email; follows EXCEL (C)
____ Celebrates and affirms others' strengths (T&C)	____ Updates IC, website, folders weekly; homework current daily (C)
____ Models good & getting better (T&C)	____ Contacts each student monthly or Creates opportunities to showcase student work (C)
____ Invests in relational capacity with students, staff, and parents (CKH)	____ Shares resources; creates or prepares materials for the team (T&C)
____ Incorporates and models character	____ Regularly visits other classrooms, affirms others' teaching, & champions the CKH process

In our approach to professional development, these individual professional development plans (IPDP) flow naturally from the growth component into the evaluation component. Adapting *Chesterfield County Public Schools* "Nuts and Bolts of Implementation" , this chart captures each step and its accompanying actions.

Steps	Actions to Take
Review & Reflect	☐ Review your students' achievement, the school's unified improvement plan, performance evaluation results, career goals, and self-reflect on your efficacy as a teacher. ☐ Reflect on how you might link your professional growth goal(s) to the needs found through your review.
Identify & Plan SMART Goals	☐ Target one to three professional growth goals that are student results oriented and based on your review on the sources above. ☐ Discuss the goal(s) with your supervisor. ☐ Identify experts in the field, articles, books, workshops, technology, and local people that may help you learn and improve in your goal area(s). ☐ Identify the actions you will take for professional growth for the year and complete the appropriate section of the IPDP ☐ Write down a method of documenting and reflecting on each of the actions you will take. ☐ Consider how you will examine the impact that your professional growth has on your students' progress.
Implement & Collect	☐ Consider what data you will use to examine how your professional growth impacts your students and collect baseline data. ☐ Make necessary arrangements to accomplish the actions outlines in your IPDP. (A calendar is a great place to start.) ☐ Implement your actions. ☐ Maintain documentation of your actions and reflections on what you have learned. ☐ Invite/schedule formal and informal observations to get broaden your perspective on the efficacy of your practice. ☐ Share progress toward your goals during a PLC meeting, with a designated resource educator, or with your supervisor.
Analyze Results	☐ Participate in post-observation discussions of what was observed and of recommendations for tweaks to your practice. ☐ Examine how your professional growth actions impacted your students. ☐ Review your accomplishments with your supervisor and other colleagues. ☐ Discuss and determine whether you achieved your growth goals. ☐ Reflect on what subsequent goals or tweaks to your original goal you might target going forward. ☐ Meet with your supervisor for a summative evaluation. ☐ Consider your summative evaluation results for developing future individual professional development plans.

Resources that Inform this Professional Development Philosophy

Brandt, Ron. Prologue. *Rethinking Leadership: A Collection of Articles.* By Thomas J. Sergiovanni. Arlington Heights, IL: SkyLight Training and Publishing, Inc., 1999. vii-xiii. Print.

Chesterfield County Public Schools. *Professional Growth and Performance Plan for Teachers.* Nov 2009. PDF file.
Mason, Charlotte M. *A Philosophy of Education.* China: Charlotte Mason Research & Supply, 1989. Print.
New Hampshire Department of Education Division of Program Support. *Professional Development Master Plan Toolkit.* Oct 2006 – ed. Mar 2009. PDF file.
Palmer, Parker J. *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2007. Print.
Tisdell, E. J., & Taylor, E. W. "Adult Education Philosophy Informs Practice." *Adult Learning*, 11, 6-10. 2001. Print.

How professional development will support staff to meet the needs of students with academic challenges, students with IEP's and 504's, Gifted and Talented students and English language learners

Professional development opportunities that address the specific needs of students with academic challenges, those with IEPs and 504s, Gifted and Talented students, and English language learners will support staff to differentiate their instruction and create inclusive learning environments. These opportunities will help staff understand and implement best practices in identifying and supporting the diverse learning needs of their students, including those on the Autism Spectrum, which will ultimately enhance student outcomes and success. By providing teachers with the skills, knowledge, and resources to meet the needs of all learners, professional development will help create an equitable and supportive learning environment for all students.

Specific professional development opportunities will include workshops on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), differentiated instruction, and assessment strategies to meet the needs of diverse learners. Training in culturally responsive teaching and language acquisition for English language learners can also help teachers create inclusive learning environments. Workshops on supporting students with disabilities, including those on the Autism Spectrum, and gifted and talented learners can provide teachers with strategies to challenge and engage these students, helping them to reach their full potential. Additionally, teachers can benefit from opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and specialists, such as speech therapists and school psychologists, to develop integrated and supportive approaches to student learning. Regular check-ins and feedback sessions with administrators can also provide teachers with ongoing support and professional growth opportunities.

GCSI teachers and staff will receive training on Universal Design for Learning (UDL), which is a framework for designing instructional materials and educational environments that are accessible and usable by all learners, including those with disabilities, diverse learning styles, and cultural backgrounds. The goal of UDL is to create flexible and adaptable learning experiences that can be customized to meet the individual needs and strengths of each student. UDL is based on the principles of Universal Design, which seeks to create products, environments, and technologies that are usable by as many people as possible, regardless of their abilities or disabilities. UDL applies these principles to education, creating learning environments that are inclusive and accessible to all students. The UDL framework consists of three main components: multiple means of representation, multiple means of expression, and

multiple means of engagement. These components provide multiple ways for students to access information, demonstrate what they know, and become engaged in the learning process. This approach supports all students, including those with disabilities, English language learners, and students with diverse learning styles.

- How the professional development plan and teacher evaluations will use and be aligned with performance data
- How professional development supports vertical and horizontal alignment
- How professional development will change as the school grows and matures based on data
- How professional development will be evaluated

The GCSI comprehensive professional development plan will be aligned with the school's performance data, with the goal of continuously improving student outcomes. The teacher evaluation process will be used to assess the effectiveness of the professional development plan, with performance data serving as a key metric in evaluating the success of professional development efforts. The professional development plan will also support vertical and horizontal alignment, ensuring that the school's curriculum, assessments, and instruction are consistent and coherent across grade levels and subject areas. As our schools grows and mature, the professional development plan will be adaptable and flexible, evolving based on the changing needs of the students and the school community. To evaluate the effectiveness of professional development, regular assessments of student learning, teacher performance, and school culture will be used to gather data and inform ongoing improvement efforts. Additionally, surveying teachers and administrators about their perceptions of the professional development program can provide valuable feedback on its impact and effectiveness.

Describe how the school's teacher evaluation system will meet the intent of Colorado SB 10-191.

The Colorado Senate Bill 10-191 (SB 10-191) was enacted in 2010 to improve teacher and school leader effectiveness in the state. The bill established a comprehensive evaluation system that assesses educators based on multiple measures of student growth, including standardized test scores and other locally-determined measures. Our teacher evaluation meets the intent of SB 10-191 and includes the following components:

- Student Growth Measures: Student growth data, such as standardized test scores and locally-determined measures, should be used to evaluate the effectiveness of teachers. Multiple measures of student growth to provide a comprehensive picture of teacher effectiveness.
- Teacher Practice: Observations of teachers in the classroom will be a key component of the evaluation system, allowing for the assessment of teacher practices and the alignment of instruction with the school's academic standards.
- Professional Responsibilities: Evaluations will also assess teachers' contributions to the school community, including their ability to communicate effectively, collaborate with colleagues, and engage in professional development activities.
- Ongoing Feedback: The evaluation system will provide teachers with ongoing feedback and opportunities for improvement, with regular check-ins and professional development opportunities to support growth and development.

- Implementation and Training: Our evaluation system should be implemented consistently and fairly across the school, with appropriate training and support provided to teachers and administrators.

Be sure to address:
- The role student progress and achievement play in teacher evaluations
- The position that will have primary responsibility for evaluation
- The frequency of teacher evaluations

Evaluations
Teachers will be evaluated multiple times throughout the school year in a variety of ways, always with the idea that student learning is the primary way to demonstrate effective teaching. Teacher evaluations will have the following components:
- Class Average student growth/progress on NWEA or similar assessment, for reading and math
- School-wide average of student growth/progress on NWEA or similar assessment
- School performance on state assessments
- Supervisor's evaluation
- Parent and/or student confidential survey data
- GCSI will use a teacher performance scorecard developed by our proposed CAO which rewards teachers for student learning. The Principal will have primary responsibility for teacher evaluations the first year, but will shift that responsibility to the Lead Administrator after a successful pattern of training and growth is established. Administration and staff at GCSI will be involved in creating the evaluation plan and documents, which will be communicated to the staff In addition, bonuses and raises are based on teacher performance, not just education and longevity. Our philosophy is that excellence should be recognized and rewarded.

- How the evaluation system will be communicated to staff

Effective communication by school administration is key to ensuring that a teacher evaluation system is understood and supported by staff. Here are some best practices for communicating the teacher evaluation system to staff:

1. Clear Explanation: The evaluation system will be clearly explained to all staff, including the purpose, components, and criteria for evaluation. This will be done through a variety of channels, including the initial teacher "boot camp", staff meetings, workshops, and written materials.
2. Collaborative Development: The evaluation system should be developed in collaboration with staff, allowing for input and feedback from teachers. This can help build buy-in and ensure that the system is fair and relevant to the needs of the school community.
3. Regular Communication: Regular communication is important to ensure that teachers/staff are informed about the evaluation process and how it is being implemented. This will include regular updates and reminders about the process and criteria, as well as opportunities for staff to ask questions and provide feedback.

4. Professional Development: Professional development opportunities will be provided to support staff in understanding and implementing the evaluation system, including training on the use of student data and the criteria for evaluation.
5. Clear Expectations: Expectations for staff will be clear and consistent, with clear guidelines for how evaluations will be conducted and how the results will be used to support professional development and improvement efforts.

By following these best practices, the teacher evaluation system can be effectively communicated to staff, building understanding and support for this important aspect of professional development.

- How the evaluation program will inform instruction

The evaluation program will inform instruction by providing regular, actionable feedback to teachers, allowing them to make data-driven decisions to continuously improve their practice and meet the needs of their students.

21. LIABILITY AND INSURANCE

Provisions for insurance coverage and any agreements limiting liability between the district charter school and the Board of Education. The district charter application should provide information relating to the responsible party and amount of different insurance coverage: workers' compensation; comprehensive general liability; automobile and bus liability; property, boiler and machinery insurance coverage; blanket crime public school employees' blanket bond; individual public official bonds; school officials' errors and omissions; international travel liability; excess accident insurance for volunteers; field trip and high risk accident insurance; and a student accident policy.

Pursuant to C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(j), the GCSI Board of Directors submits the following proposal on the parties' respective legal liabilities and applicable insurance coverage. That statute requires, at a minimum, workers' compensation, liability insurance, and insurance for the school's facility and its contents. Policy LBD-E further asks the application to identify the responsible party and the coverages listed below.

Respective legal liabilities. GCSI is a public school and a public entity. Its liability is limited by the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act, C.R.S. § 24-10-101 et seq., including the Claire Davis School Safety Act, C.R.S. § 24-10-106.3. Under C.R.S. § 22-30.5-104(4.5), GCSI's leases and financial obligations are not debt or obligations of Garfield Re-2 unless the District expressly assumes them. GCSI will purchase and maintain its own insurance (or buy into a District or Colorado School Districts Self Insurance Pool program of equal or greater protection). The District will be named as an additional insured on general-liability and automobile policies where the carrier allows. GCSI will not extend the faith and credit of the District to any third party and has no authority to bind the District to a contract.

GCSI will notify the District promptly of pending or threatened claims, file notices of claim on time, cooperate in the defense of claims, and comply with the defense and reimbursement

provisions of the Governmental Immunity Act. GCSI will not compromise, settle, or dispose of a claim that could bind the District without the District's prior written approval.

Coverages and planning limits. GCSI is the responsible party for each line unless a later purchased-service agreement places a line with the District (for example, student transportation). Limits below are customary 2026 Colorado charter planning minimums, not a statutory floor. Final limits and premiums will be set with a licensed Colorado broker or CSDSIP before any employee or student is on site, and will meet or exceed any minimum written into the charter contract. Carriers will be admitted in Colorado and rated no lower than A.M. Best A- VII. Certificates of insurance will be delivered to the District before opening and annually thereafter. Cost assumptions are in the budget. GCSI has requested planning figures from HUB International, 125 17th Street, Suite 900, Denver, CO 80202, 303.893.0300.

Workers' compensation and employer's liability. Statutory workers' compensation under C.R.S. Title 8, Article 40, in force before any employee starts work. Employer's liability not less than $1,000,000.

Commercial general liability. $1,000,000 per occurrence / $2,000,000 aggregate, occurrence form, including bodily injury, property damage, personal and advertising injury, products-completed operations, and contractual liability. Abuse and molestation not less than $1,000,000 per occurrence / $2,000,000 aggregate.

Automobile and bus liability. $1,000,000 combined single limit for owned, hired, and non-owned autos. If GCSI does not own or operate buses in year one, hired and non-owned auto will still be carried. If the District later provides transportation under a purchased-service agreement, bus coverage remains with the District.

Umbrella / excess liability. Not less than $5,000,000 over general liability and automobile.

Property, boiler and machinery. Replacement-cost coverage on GCSI contents, tenant improvements, equipment, and technology, including business income and extra expense. If GCSI owns a building or is contractually responsible for one, the structure is included. Boiler and machinery / equipment-breakdown coverage where the facility has that exposure.

Blanket crime / public-employee fidelity. Employee dishonesty, theft, and faithful-performance coverage protecting public funds, not less than $500,000, or a public-official bond program of equivalent protection.

Individual public official bonds. As required for officers who handle public money, or crime insurance in lieu of individual bonds pursuant to C.R.S. § 22-32-104(4)(d).

School officials' errors and omissions; directors and officers; educators' legal liability; employment-practices liability. $1,000,000 per claim / $1,000,000 aggregate, covering the Board, Head of School / Executive Director, and employees.

International travel liability. Purchased only if the Board approves foreign travel. Not carried in year one unless such travel is scheduled.

Excess accident insurance for volunteers. Accident medical-expense coverage for volunteers while on school business.

Field trip and high-risk activity accident. Off-campus student activities, including field trips, athletics, robotics, service learning, CTE labs, culinary service, and aviation ground-school / simulator activities as those programs come online.

Student accident policy. Excess medical coverage for enrolled students injured in school-sponsored activities.

Cyber liability. Data breach, ransomware, and media / social-media exposure. Not listed in LBD-E; included because student and staff records are electronic.

Health insurance. GCSI will offer health insurance to full-time employees. The school may later ask to join a District group plan if both parties agree; otherwise GCSI will purchase a separate group policy. Premium assumptions are in the budget.

Second option. GCSI will also ask whether equivalent coverage can be purchased through Garfield Re-2 or CSDSIP at district cost. If that package meets or exceeds the lines and limits above and is cheaper, the Board may elect it in the charter contract. Until then, GCSI budgets to buy the coverage itself.

Emergency Management Plan

GCSI will create and maintain an emergency management plan that works with federal, state, and local emergency services (police, sheriff, fire, and medical) and with any Garfield Re-2 emergency plan. The Head of School / Executive Director will establish and oversee a Safety Team of three to six staff members, in compliance with C.R.S. § 22-32-109.1(2) and (4)(d)(I), appoint a crisis-response spokesperson, and run the claims-management follow-up described in that plan. The plan will address fire, earthquake, tornado, civil unrest, and other emergencies identified in the state school-safety framework.

A building security system will be installed. Visitors will check in at the front office and present identification before entering. Parent volunteers may serve as crossing guards and carpool attendants. GCSI will use a student-device and network filter appropriate to a public school so that on-campus technology is used safely. Emergency management is a safety program. It does not replace the insurance coverages listed above.

22. TRANSPORTATION PLAN

A description of how students will get to school, including whether any services will be provided by a second party. If the school will provide transportation, a description should be provided of how transportation needs of low-income and low-achieving students will be met. If the target

population is at-risk students, the plan should indicate how these students will have access to the school. If transportation will not be provided, the plan should indicate why lack of transportation will not be an impediment to achieving a diverse student population and making the district charter school equally available to all students, and how the impediments will be overcome. A description of how safety of buses will be monitored and provided should be included.

This section answers C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(m) and Policy LBD-E.

GCSI will comply with the federal and Colorado laws on pupil transportation, including C.R.S. § 22-32-113, the Colorado Rules for the Operation, Maintenance, and Inspection of School Transportation Vehicles, 1 CCR 301-26, the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, C.R.S. § 22-32-138, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Section 504 when transportation is a related service.

Opening year. In Fall 2027, GCSI will not operate a school-bus fleet. Students will get to campus by parent or guardian transport, carpool, and public transit where it exists. GCSI will not charge a transportation fee. Lack of a yellow-bus fleet will not be used to limit who may enroll.

Enrollment is not transportation. Under C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(1)(a) and § 22-30.5-104(2)(a), a district charter may be authorized if a majority of its pupils, other than online pupils, reside in the chartering district or in a school district contiguous to it. GCSI welcomes enrollment from Garfield Re-2 and from contiguous districts. Those statutes say who may enroll. They do not authorize a bus.

Students who live in another district. C.R.S. § 22-32-113(1)(c) provides that a board may furnish transportation "to and from public schools for any reasonable classification of pupils enrolled in the schools of the district who are residents of any other school district, if the district of residence is adjacent to the district of attendance, and if the board or other governing body of the district of residence consents to such transportation." C.R.S. § 22-32-113(4) provides that a board "shall not reimburse any person for transportation furnished to a pupil resident in another school district without the consent of the board or other governing body of the district of residence." GCSI will not pick up a student inside another district, and will not pay a parent for that pickup, unless the board of the district of residence has given written consent. Authority to enroll a student from a contiguous district is not authority to bus that student.

If funds later become available for a fleet. GCSI does not plan to buy buses in its opening year. If funds later become available to buy and operate a fleet, GCSI may add busing, and only if every law that applies to that service is met before the first route runs. Those laws include:

- C.R.S. § 22-32-113(1)(a), which allows transportation "to and from public schools of the district for any reasonable classification of resident pupils enrolled in the schools of the district."
- C.R.S. § 22-32-113(1)(c) and (4), quoted above. No route, and no parent reimbursement, will cross into another school district unless that district is adjacent and its board has consented in a written memorandum of understanding. GCSI will not offer that route before the memorandum is executed.

- 1 CCR 301-26, which requires a charter school that operates school transportation vehicles to use qualified operators and to inspect, maintain, repair, and operate the vehicles as the State Board's rules provide, including a passed annual inspection before a vehicle carries students.

If a transportation fee is ever charged, it will be imposed only as C.R.S. § 22-32-113(5) allows: for excess transportation costs, under a fee schedule adopted by resolution. No such fee is planned for the opening year.

Transportation the law requires anyway. The decision not to run a general-education fleet does not delay transportation a student is entitled to receive. When transportation is required by the McKinney-Vento Act, by C.R.S. § 22-32-138 for a student in out-of-home placement, or by an IEP or a Section 504 plan, GCSI will provide or arrange it.

Carpools and equal access. GCSI will help families find carpools by neighborhood, including Rifle, Silt, New Castle, and any contiguous community from which a student enrolls. The school will keep a carpool board and connect families who ask for a match, with priority for low-income households and for students who would otherwise be unable to attend. No student will be charged a fee to ride in a parent carpool organized through the school. Staff will not transport students in private vehicles except in an emergency documented under school policy. Carpool recruitment will cover every neighborhood from which families apply, not only higher-income areas.

23. FOOD SERVICE PLAN

A description of the plan of how it will provide for students who qualify for free and reduced lunch. All students should be provided with an equivalent lunchtime experience.

Garfield County School of Innovation intends to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Garfield Re-2 Nutrition Services. Under Colorado's universal free lunch / Healthy School Meals for All program, Garfield Re-2 will provide lunch (and breakfast, if offered) to all students at no cost. Students may bring their own lunches if preferred. GCSI will provide microwaves and seating areas as needed. No significant food-service costs are included in the operating budget, as services will be fully managed through the Garfield Re-2 partnership.

24. ADMISSIONS PROCESS

A description of the student selection and admission process if the applications exceed enrollment capacity. Describe the admissions process to be followed to help ensure that the student body is representative of the diversity of the community served, and demonstrate how equal access is provided for all who apply. Describe the school's plan for inclusion of low-achieving students, exceptional students, and students with special needs.

Pursuant to CRS 22-30.5-106(1)(l), GCSI submits the following enrollment policy. (See Appendix 2.) This policy is required to be consistent with the requirements of section 22-30.5-104(3) of the Charter Schools Act. GCSI's enrollment policies will fully comply by that section

of the law. GCSI's enrollment policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, sexual orientation, need for special education services, or any other group that would be unlawful.

See Appendix 2 - GCSI Draft Enrollment Policy

GCSI Draft Enrollment Policy

All students are welcome to apply to attend GCSI. If the number of applicants received by the application deadline exceeds the number of available spots at any grade level a lottery will be used to determine the placement of students at that grade level. All students who are of eligible age and have submitted a completed application will be eligible for the lottery.

Lottery Process

The lottery process shall commence on the first school day occurring on or after February 5th. All students for whom an Intent to Enroll was received prior to the end of the open enrollment period and are eligible for enrollment will be assigned a unique number and placed on a list (by number). If the student is eligible for more than one weight in the lottery, their number will be included in the list multiple times corresponding with the number of weights they are eligible for. The list is sorted using computer-generated, randomized numbers. Each entry is assigned a Lottery ID from 1 to n depending on where they landed in the sort. Students with multiple entries will be assigned the smallest Lottery ID assigned to their entries. The Lottery ID will be utilized for the upcoming academic year only. Enrollment vacancies will be filled by grade, beginning with the highest grade for which there is one or more vacancies, and will continue in descending order (grade eight, grade seven, grade six, and so forth) until all vacancies are filled for all grades; enrollment invitations will be extended to students in order of their assigned Lottery ID (lowest to highest). To ensure authenticity and integrity of the lottery process, the randomization of computer-generated Lottery ID assignments will be overseen by a committee comprised of: a parent member of the school, the GCSI ED, Registrar, and one GCSI Board Member.

If applications exceed capacity

If the number of timely applications exceeds the seats in a grade, GCSI will select students by a public random lottery. The rules are in Appendix 2, the Enrollment Policy. Returning students, siblings of enrolled students, and children of current employees may be seated before the lottery. Children of employees may not exceed 20 percent of enrollment. There is no Founding Family preference. Re-2 residents and students from contiguous districts are in the same lottery. Neither group is placed ahead of the other. A student from a Colorado district that is not contiguous is offered a seat only after that waitlist is empty, and only before the pupil enrollment count day. A vacancy during the year goes to the next name on the waitlist. Staff do not choose who is next.

Letters of intent signed before the Re-2 Board approves the charter are not applications. After approval, every family submits a new Intent to Enroll during the posted window.

Equal access

Any student in a grade the School is open to serve may apply. There is no entrance examination, no interview, no fee, and no required essay. The Intent to Enroll form does not ask about disability, an IEP, a 504 plan, grades, or discipline. Those records are requested only after a seat is accepted. A family has five business days to accept. An out-of-school suspension does not keep a student out of the lottery. The only bars before the lottery are an expulsion in the preceding 12 months, or a student who has already finished high school.

The School will post the opening date, the closing date, and the lottery date on its website and will give the same notice through local media and community organizations in Rifle, Silt, New Castle, Parachute, and the contiguous districts, with particular attention to families who are less likely to hear of a new school. The notice will say that letters signed before charter approval do not carry forward. The lottery does not reserve seats by race, income, disability, language, or prior achievement. GCSI will not use a quota. A weighted chance for educationally disadvantaged students will not be used unless the Governing Board adopts a plan and CDE accepts it.

Low-achieving students, exceptional students, and students with special needs

Enrollment is not a screen for readiness. A student who is behind, a student who is gifted, and a student with a disability apply on the same form and enter the same lottery. A student who is behind is admitted on the same terms as any other applicant. After enrollment, the School will use the placement assessments described in Section 10 to find the gap and will teach the missing Core Knowledge and mathematics rather than deny the seat. Low achievement is not a reason to counsel a family out.

A student who is gifted, or twice-exceptional, is admitted on the same terms. The School will not require a test score to apply. Identification and services after enrollment follow Section 9 and C.R.S. § 22-20-201 and following. The advanced work in engineering, aviation, and Core Knowledge is open to every enrolled student, not only to students already identified as gifted.

A student with a disability, an IEP, or a 504 plan is admitted on the same terms. GCSI will not deny a seat because the School would have to provide special education. The School will provide a free appropriate public education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504, and *Endrew F. v. Douglas County School District*. Services, the administrative unit, and funding are described in Section 9. The enrollment decision is made first. The services are arranged after the seat is accepted.

DRAFT ENROLLMENT POLICY
Garfield County School of Innovation
Grades 6–9 | Opening Fall 2027

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to outline the enrollment process for grades 6–9 at Garfield County School of Innovation ("GCSI" or "the School"). This policy is designed to comply with the Colorado Charter Schools Act (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-104), State Board rules (1 CCR 301-88), the federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) requirements administered through the Colorado Charter Schools Program (CCSP), and Garfield School District Re-2 Policies JF, JEB, JFBA, JFBA-R, JFBB, JFBB-R, JFABA, JJJ, JLCB, and JKD/JKE-R, so that the School remains eligible for startup and implementation grant funding. Where a neighborhood-school rule conflicts with the Charter Schools Act or with CSP lottery rules, the statute and the CSP rule control.

Non-Discrimination

Garfield County School of Innovation will not discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, national origin, religion, ancestry, hair texture, hair type, or a protective hairstyle, or need for special education services. Enrollment decisions shall be made in a nondiscriminatory manner, consistent with Re-2 Policy JF and C.R.S. § 22-32-109(1)(ll) and § 22-32-110(1)(k). There are no entrance examinations. The Intent to Enroll form will not ask about a disability, an IEP, or a 504 plan. Diagnostic or placement assessments, and a request for those records, may occur only after a student has been offered a seat and has accepted it. This follows Re-2 Policy JFBB.

Enrollment Window

Re-2 does not publish a day on which its enrollment window opens. Policy JFBA and Policy JFBB-R set a deadline, not a start. A neighborhood application, and a nonresident application, must be filed on or before May 1 for the following academic year.

The Intent to Enroll window for Fall 2027 opens on the date Garfield County School of Innovation posts on its website after the Garfield School District Re-2 Board of Education votes to approve the charter. The window closes on the date posted on that website. For Fall 2027, the closing date will be in February 2027. Every Intent to Enroll form received during that posted window is considered for that school year. A form received before the Board's vote is not in that window.

That February close is before May 1. A nonresident application that meets the GCSI deadline therefore also meets Policy JFBB-R.

A request to change neighborhood schools after August 15 is a transfer under Policy JFBA and Policy JFBA-R. Those dates do not open or close enrollment at GCSI. Policy JFBA-R and Policy JFBB-R make the district forms available in each school and at the central office. GCSI uses its own Intent to Enroll form and its own posted dates.

In later years, the School will post the opening date and the closing date on its website before the window opens. The closing date will remain in February of the year the school year begins, and prior to May 1, unless the Governing Board posts a different date that still falls before May 1.

Lottery Process — Date Only - February 2027

The lottery shall commence on a date publicly announced on the School website. For Fall 2027, that date will be in February 2027. In later years, the lottery will be held in February of the year the school year begins, unless the Board posts a different date that still falls before May 1.

Letters Collected Before Charter Approval

Any Letter of Intent to Enroll, or other statement of interest, that a family signed before the Re-2 Board votes to approve this charter is not an application. It does not reserve a seat. It does not enter a student in a lottery. It does not create a place on a waitlist. It does not count as the GCSI Online Intent to Enroll required by this policy. It is not binding on the family or on the School.

After the Board approves the charter, enrollment starts over. Every family, including a family that already signed a letter, must submit a new Intent to Enroll during the posted window. The School will tell those families, in writing, that the earlier letter has expired and that a new form is required. Silence is not an application. A family that does not submit the new form is not considered.

Open Enrollment / Intent to Enroll

Parents or legal guardians request enrollment by submitting a GCSI Online Intent to Enroll form on or after the posted opening date and no later than the posted closing date. Submission of an Intent to Enroll form does not guarantee an Invitation to Enroll.

The waitlist rule starts with the first official lottery. It does not apply to letters signed before charter approval. After that first lottery, a family that applied on time and was not offered a seat remains on the waitlist for later lotteries and does not need to reapply, unless the School has notified the family that a new application is required. A family that was offered a seat and declined it is removed from the waitlist and must reapply.

Who May Apply

GCSI has no neighborhood attendance area. A student does not have to live in Rifle, Silt, or New Castle to apply, and a student is not required to register first at a neighborhood school in order to enter the GCSI lottery.

Colorado Charter Schools Act — C.R.S. § 22-30.5-104(a) (2025) states:

"A charter school applicant cannot apply to, or enter into a charter contract with, a school district unless a majority of the charter school's pupils, other than online pupils, will reside in the chartering school district or in school districts contiguous thereto."

Therefore, Garfield County School Of Innovation welcomes students from the following contiguous districts:

- Garfield Re-1
- Garfield Re-2
- Garfield 16
- Plateau Valley 50
- Roaring Fork RE-1
- Meeker RE-1

Students from Aspen School District 1 and other districts are also welcome; however, the majority of enrolled students must reside in the chartering district (Garfield Re-2) or in a contiguous district.

A student may enter the lottery if the student will be in a grade GCSI is open to serve and lives in Garfield School District Re-2 or in a school district contiguous to Re-2. C.R.S. § 22-30.5-104(2) and § 22-30.5-107(1)(a). Students who live in Re-2 and students who live in a contiguous district are in the same lottery. Neither group is placed ahead of the other.

A Colorado student who lives in a district that is not contiguous may be offered a seat only after the lottery and the waitlist of Re-2 and contiguous-district applicants have been exhausted, and only if a seat remains. That offer is space-available, carries no tuition, and will not be made after the pupil enrollment count day. Re-2 Policies JFBB and JFABA. An out-of-state student may be enrolled only if the Re-2 Board's annual tuition rate is paid, as Policy JFABA provides.

Age and prior schooling follow Re-2 Policy JF and Policy JEB. A student who has graduated from twelfth grade, or who holds a document showing completion of the equivalent of a secondary curriculum, will not be enrolled. Policy JF.

Priority for Enrollment (Lottery Exemptions)

The following categories of applicants may be exempted from the lottery and offered seats before the lottery is conducted:

1. Currently enrolled students who intend to return the following consecutive school year. A letter signed before charter approval does not make a student currently enrolled. A returning student's seat is not rescinded because enrollment grew at a neighborhood school. The rescission rule in Policy JFBA-R for choice students in a boundary school does not apply to GCSI.
2. Siblings of currently enrolled GCSI students (including half-siblings, step-siblings, and adopted siblings living in the same household).
3. Children and legal dependents of current employees of GCSI, as defined below. The number of students enrolled under this staff preference shall not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the School's total enrollment in any year.

All other eligible applicants who submitted a timely Intent to Enroll form during the posted window will be selected by one lottery. Re-2's class-size guidelines in Policy JFBA-R (fewer than 25 in grades 6–12, and the other grade bands) are standards for neighborhood open

enrollment. They are not GCSI's enrollment cap. GCSI's cap is the capacity stated in the charter contract.

Definition of Staff

"Staff" means a full-time or part-time employee of Garfield County School of Innovation (teacher, administrator, or classified staff) who is the parent or legal guardian of the student seeking the preference. The employee must be employed by the School at the time the preference is claimed. A grandchild is not eligible under this preference unless the employee is that child's parent or legal guardian. Re-2 Policy JFBA-R, which allows children of district employees who live outside the district to attend regardless of class size, does not add a further preference at GCSI and does not lift the 20% cap.

20% Cap (Staff Preference Only)

The staff preference is the only lottery exemption subject to a percentage cap. Students admitted because a parent is a current employee shall not exceed twenty percent (20%) of total enrollment. Seats for returning students and for siblings are not counted against that cap. The School will track the staff-preference percentage annually as required for continued grant eligibility. When the cap is reached, remaining children of employees enter the lottery with all other applicants.

Inbound Active-Duty Military Families

This paragraph follows Policy JFBB, under the heading "Military Children," and Policy JFBA-R.

A parent or guardian who is an inbound active-duty service member may submit the Intent to Enroll electronically and may use the school-liaison office address of the military installation to which the member is or will be assigned. No other proof of a Colorado address is required at application. Policy JFBB. A child accepted under this paragraph has guaranteed matriculation to the next grade GCSI serves, including when the next grade opens in a later year, for so long as the child remains enrolled and the family remains entitled to that protection under Policy JFBB and Policy JFBA-R. A younger sibling of that child receives sibling priority in a later year, under the sibling rule above.

Lottery Process

If the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of available seats after the exemptions above have been applied, a public lottery will be conducted. Re-2 residents and contiguous-district residents are drawn in that single lottery.

The lottery shall commence on a date publicly announced on the School website. For Fall 2027, that date will be on or after February 5, 2026, or such other date as the Board posts. In later years, the lottery will typically be held on the first school day on or after February 5 of the year preceding enrollment, unless the Board posts a different date.

Each eligible student will be assigned a unique random number generated by a computer-based randomization process. Students eligible for a weighted entry under the section below will receive the corresponding number of entries only after CDE has accepted that weighted-lottery plan. The list will be sorted by computer-generated random numbers. Enrollment vacancies will be filled by grade level, beginning with the highest grade for which vacancies exist and proceeding in descending order, according to Lottery ID (lowest to highest).

To ensure integrity, the randomization process will be overseen by a committee that includes at least one parent member, the Executive Director (or designee), the Registrar, and one member of the Governing Board.

Students not selected in the lottery will be placed on a waitlist in the order determined by the lottery. The waitlist order is the random order, not the order in which forms arrived. Policy JFBA-R's first-come waiting list, which that policy keeps until October 1, is not the GCSI waitlist. The GCSI waitlist stands until the next lottery, unless the family is notified that a new application is required. Letters signed before charter approval are not on this waitlist..

Enrollment Acceptance

Upon receiving an Invitation to Enroll (by telephone and/or email), the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must provide written Enrollment Acceptance to the School no later than five (5) business days after the invitation is extended. Registration forms must be completed and submitted within one week after acceptance.

If Acceptance is not received within five business days, or if registration forms are not submitted timely, the School will assume the family has declined the seat and will extend an Invitation to Enroll to the next student on the waitlist.

A student who accepts enrollment is deemed a currently enrolled student and will continue to be enrolled in subsequent years without re-entering the lottery, provided the student remains enrolled and the family completes any required annual intent-to-return process. Once enrolled, the student may remain through the end of that school year unless the student is expelled or the application contained a material misstatement or omission. Policy JFBA-R.

Conditional Enrollment and Denial

A student new to Re-2 is enrolled conditionally until records, including discipline records, arrive from the previous school. The conditional status will be stated on the enrollment form. If those records show a lawful ground to deny admission, the School will revoke the conditional enrollment, give the parent or guardian written notice, and tell the family of the right to request a hearing. Policy JF. The hearing follows Re-2 Policy JKD/JKE-R. C.R.S. § 22-33-105(2)(c).

Admission may be denied on these grounds: the student was expelled from any school district in the preceding 12 months, or the student has already completed high school or its equivalent. Policies JF and JFBA-R. An out-of-school suspension, by itself, does not keep a student out of the lottery and is not a ground to deny a seat. Lack of space is resolved by the lottery and the

waitlist, not by a separate denial after a seat has been offered and accepted, except the non-contiguous rule above.

GCSI will not deny admission because the student has a disability, an IEP, or a 504 plan, or because a staff member believes the School is not equipped for that student. The ground in Policy JFBA-R and Policy JFBB-R that a school "is not structured or equipped with the necessary facilities to meet the student's special needs" does not authorize GCSI to turn a student away for that reason. The School will provide a free appropriate public education.

Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs before or during the school year, the School will offer the seat to the next student on the waitlist, in lottery order, within the grade. The Executive Director does not choose among waitlisted students and does not consider mission, academics, or behavior in deciding who is next. If a priority exemption in this policy applies to a student who is entitled to the open seat, that student is offered the seat first, subject to the 20% staff cap. A non-contiguous Colorado student is offered the seat only if no Re-2 or contiguous-district student remains on the waitlist, and only if the offer is made before the pupil enrollment count day. Policies JFBB and JFABA. A student who accepts the seat is a currently enrolled student. A letter signed before charter approval is not a claim on the seat.

Tuition

A student who lives in Colorado, including a student who lives outside Re-2, is not charged tuition. Policy JF and Policy JFABA. If the student has a disability and lives in another Colorado district, notice goes to that district and, if applicable, to that administrative unit, which remains responsible for the tuition charge state law places on the district of residence. Policy JFABA. An out-of-state student pays the tuition rate the Re-2 Board adopts for that year.

Transportation

How students get to school is in Section 22 of the charter. GCSI does not run a bus fleet in the opening year. Under Policy JFBB, a nonresident student's parent or guardian provides transportation, except where state or federal law requires transportation for a student who is homeless, in foster care, or a student with a disability. GCSI will not pick up a student inside another school district, and will not pay a parent for that trip, unless that district's board has consented in writing, as C.R.S. § 22-32-113(1)(c) and (4) require.

Activities

A student enrolled at GCSI has the same curricular and extracurricular status as other Re-2 students, under Policy JFBA, Policy JFBB, Policy JFBB-R, section 5, Policy JJJ, and the bylaws of the Colorado High School Activities Association. If GCSI does not offer an activity the District offers, the student may seek to participate at a District school on the same basis as Policy JJJ provides for charter students.

District Open Enrollment Interaction

By providing Enrollment Acceptance to GCSI, the student may forfeit automatic enrollment rights in his or her neighborhood school under Garfield County School District Re-2 open enrollment policies. Families should consult the District website for current open enrollment rules. A family that also wants a neighborhood seat must follow Policy JFBA-R with that school. Acceptance at GCSI is not an application under JFBA-R.

Required Enrollment Documents

After lottery selection and acceptance, families will be required to submit standard registration materials, which may include: district registration forms; proof of residency, except for an inbound active-duty family using the liaison-office address; birth certificate or other proof of identity and age, as Policy JF requires; immunization records under Policy JLCB; and any existing IEP, 504 Plan, or English learner documentation. The Registrar will handle incoming records in accordance with FERPA. None of these documents is required in order to submit an Intent to Enroll or to enter the lottery.

Community Notice and Outreach

GCSI will provide adequate public notice of the School's opening, the posted enrollment window, and the lottery date through the School website, local media, community organizations, and targeted outreach designed to reach a diverse cross-section of families in Garfield County and contiguous districts, with particular attention to educationally disadvantaged students. The notice will state that letters signed before charter approval do not carry forward. Re-2 notifies residents annually of neighborhood open-enrollment options under Policy JFBA. GCSI will give its own notice of the GCSI lottery on the same public footing.

Outreach to the Spanish Speaking Community

GCSI has added a Google "Espanol" Translation button on our website, www.GCSIK12.org in order to specifically reach more prospective families from the Spanish-speaking community for our school.

Withdrawal and Transfer

If a student withdraws, the School will request completion of a withdrawal packet that includes reason for withdrawal, contact information, destination school (if known), and a records-release authorization so that academic records and any required special education documents may be transferred.

When a student transfers into GCSI mid-year, the School will request academic records (including any IEP or 504 Plan) from the previous school. Parents must inform the School of any existing IEP at the time of transfer paperwork submission. A mid-year seat, if one exists, is a vacancy under this policy and is filled from the waitlist. It is not a Policy JFBA-R transfer approved by a neighborhood principal.

Statutory Compliance Statement

In accordance with C.R.S. § 22-30.5-104(2), a majority of the School's pupils (other than online pupils) will reside in Garfield County School District Re-2 or in school districts contiguous thereto.

This Enrollment Policy is intended to satisfy the Colorado Charter Schools Act, State Board of Education rules, the federal Charter Schools Program, and Re-2 Policies JF, JEB, JFBA, JFBA-R, JFBB, JFBB-R, JFABA, JJJ, JLCB, and JKD/JKE-R, so that Garfield County School of Innovation remains eligible for Colorado Charter Schools Program startup and implementation grant funding. It grants no Founding Family preference. Letters of intent signed before the charter is approved are not enrollments.

Adopted by the Governing Board of Garfield County School of Innovation on the _____ day of _____**, 20**.

Board Chair

25. WAIVERS

A listing of district policies and state statutes and/or State School Board rules from which waivers are requested. The specific citation, explanation of waiver sought, what will be done instead, and how the waiver will help achieve the school's goals. The justification should indicate how the requested waiver will help the school improve educational achievement or enhance educational opportunity. Any significant financial impact of the proposed waiver should be described.

A listing of district policies and state statutes and/or State School Board rules from which waivers are requested. The specific citation, explanation of waiver sought, what will be done instead, and how the waiver will help achieve the school's goals. The justification should indicate how the requested waiver will help the school improve educational achievement or enhance educational opportunity. Any significant financial impact of the proposed waiver should be described.

The State Board has updated the list of automatic waivers and made these waivers truly automatic. Upon entering into a charter contract with their authorizer, all charter schools are automatically granted the waivers from state statute listed below. Only non-automatic waiver requests need to be reviewed and approved by the State Board.

Automatic Waivers for Charter Schools

GCSI invokes all Automatic State Waivers currently recognized by the Colorado Department of Education. The complete list of Automatic State Waivers, the number of charter schools that have received each waiver, and the standardized descriptions prepared by CDE are included as Appendix 19 – State Waivers Charter (July 2026).

The General Assembly enacted the Colorado Charter Schools Act of 1993 (Act), C.R.S. 22-30.5-101 et seq., to encourage new and innovative methods of educating students by allowing for public charter schools which would have greater control over decisions related to educational programming in exchange for increased accountability for performance. C.R.S. 22-30.5-102. Consistent with this legislative intent, the Act allows charter schools to request waivers from certain state statutes and rules. There are two types of waivers: automatic and non-automatic waivers. Automatic waivers are automatically granted to charter schools upon the establishment and renewal of a charter contract, whereas non-automatic waivers require rationale and replacement plans.

Pursuant to C.R.S. 22-30.5-104(6)(b), the State Board of Education has promulgated rules that list the automatic waivers for all charter schools. 1 CCR 301-35, 2217-R-3.01. In promulgating the list of automatic waivers, the State Board of Education considers the overall impact and complexity of the requirements specified in the statute and the potential effects that waiving the statute may have on the practices of a charter school.

Pursuant to C.R.S. 22-44-305(2), the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI), working with the Colorado League of Charter Schools (CLCS), developed the following standardized description and rationale for each of the statutes included on the list of automatic waivers.

C.R.S. 22-1-112 School Year – National Holidays. This statute sets a state school year and national holiday schedule. A waiver of this statute authorizes a charter school to develop its own school calendar that fits its unique needs.

C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(f) Local Board Duties Concerning Selection of Staff and Pay. This statute authorizes each school district to employ and compensate all personnel required to maintain the operations and carry out the educational program of the district. A waiver of this statute allows a charter school to hire its own staff and set compensation structures independent from the district.

C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(t) Determine Educational Program and Prescribe Textbooks. This statute authorizes each school district to determine its educational programs and prescribe textbooks for such programs. A waiver of this statute enables a charter school to choose its own educational program and textbooks in accordance with its charter application as approved by its authorizer.

C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(h) Local Board Powers – Terminate Employment of Personnel. This statute authorizes each school district to terminate the employment of personnel. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to terminate its own personnel.

C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(i) Local Board Duties – Reimburse Employees for Expenses. This statute authorizes each school district to reimburse employees for work-related expenses. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to adopt its own policies and procedures for employee expense reimbursement.

C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(j) Local Board Powers – Procure Life, Health, and Accident Insurance. This statute authorizes each school district to obtain insurance coverage for its employees. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to negotiate and procure its own group life, health, or accident insurance coverage for its employees.

C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(k)(I) Local Board Powers – Policies Related to In-service Training and Official Conduct. This statute authorizes each school district to adopt written policies relating to employee efficiency, in-service training, professional growth, official conduct, and welfare of employees. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to adopt its own policies in these areas.

C.R.S. 22-32-110(1)(ee) Local Board Powers- Employ Teachers' Aides and Other Non-certified Personnel. This statute authorizes each school district to employ teachers' aides and other non-licensed personnel. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to employ its own teachers' aides and other non-licensed personnel.

C.R.S. 22-32-126 Employment and Authority of Principals. This statute authorizes each school district to employ licensed principals. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to employ its own, possibly non-licensed, principals.

C.R.S. 22-33-104(4) Compulsory School Attendance. This statute requires each school district to adopt a written policy setting forth attendance requirements. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to adopt its own attendance requirements in accordance with applicable laws and regulations (e.g., C.R.S. 22-33-104; 1 CCR 301-78).

C.R.S. 22-63-301 Teacher Employment, Compensation, and Dismissal Act – Grounds for Dismissal. This statute sets forth the grounds under which a school district may dismiss a teacher. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to exercise at-will employment and establish its own grounds for teacher dismissal, provided that employment decisions are made in accordance with applicable laws and regulations (e.g., anti-discrimination laws).

C.R.S. 22-63-302 Teacher Employment, Compensation, and Dismissal Act – Procedures for Dismissal of Teachers. This statute sets forth the state procedures for teacher dismissal. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to exercise at-will employment and determine its own procedures for teacher dismissal, provided that decisions are made in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

C.R.S. 22-63-401 Teacher Employment, Compensation, and Dismissal Act – Teachers Subject to Adopted Salary Schedule. This statute authorizes each school district to adopt a teacher salary schedule. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to create its own salary schedule that fits its unique needs.

C.R.S. 22-63-402 Teacher Employment, Compensation, and Dismissal Act – Certificate Required to Pay Teachers. This statute authorizes each school district to pay only licensed teachers. A waiver of this statute permits a charter school to pay non-licensed teachers, provided that the school has a waiver from C.R.S. 22-63-201 (relating to the requirement to employ licensed teachers).

C.R.S. 22-63-403 Teacher Employment, Compensation, and Dismissal Act – Payment of Salaries upon Termination. This statute requires that upon the dismissal of a teacher and prior to the end of that teacher's employment contract, each school district must pay the pro rata share of salary installments due and payable under the employment contract for the period during which no services are required to be performed. Consistent with the at-will nature of charter school employment, a waiver of this statute enables a charter school to terminate a teacher's pay upon dismissal, provided that decisions are made in accordance with applicable laws and

Non-Automatic Waivers of State Rule and Law

DESCRIPTION AND RATIONALE

GCSI respectfully requests the following Non-Automatic State waivers. For each waiver, a rationale and replacement plan are provided.

22-9-106, C.R.S. Local board duties concerning performance evaluations for licensed personnel

Rationale: GCSI administration must have the ability to perform the evaluation of all personnel. Should the principal not have a Type D certificate from the State of Colorado, this should not preclude him or her from administering the evaluations.

Replacement Plan: GCSI will implement a personnel evaluation processes and procedures consistent with the mission and goals of the school.

Duration of the Waivers: GCSI requests that the waiver be for the duration of its contract with GARFIELD RE-2 SCHOOL DISTRICT.

How the Impact of the Waivers will be Evaluated: Since teacher performance has a critical impact on the performance of the entire school, the impact of this waiver will be measured by the same performance criteria and assessments that apply to the school.

Expected Outcome: With this waiver, GCSI will be able to implement its program and evaluate its teachers in accordance with its own procedures. This will benefit staff members as well as students and the community.

22-32-110 (1)(n)(1), C.R.S. Local board duties concerning school calendar
22-32-110 (1)(n), C.R.S. Local board duties to adopt a district calendar

Rationale: The success of GCSI will be strongly influenced by the level of autonomy it has. GCSI will adopt its own calendar, daily schedule, and teacher-pupil contact hours. All GCSI decisions concerning calendar will meet minimum hour requirements set forth in this statute.

Replacement Plan: GCSI will be responsible for these matters rather than the district.

Duration of the Waiver: GCSI requests that the waivers be for the duration of its contract with GARFIELD RE-2 SCHOOL DISTRICT.

How the Impact of the Waivers will be Evaluated: The impact of the waivers will be measured by the same performance criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI.

Expected Outcome: As a result of these waivers, GCSI will adopt a calendar that fits its needs and philosophy.

22-63-201, C.R.S. Teacher employment, compensation and dismissal act of 1990; Employment – License Required – Exception

Rationale: GCSI should be granted the authority to hire teachers and principals that will support the schools goals and objectives. GCSI will seek to attract principals and teachers from a wide variety of backgrounds, including, but not limited to teachers from out-of-state, teachers with a lapsed Colorado certificate, persons with several years of successful teaching experience in a setting not requiring a license, as well as persons with business or professional experience. All employees of GCSI will be employed on an at-will.

Replacement Plan: GCSI will, where possible, hire certified teachers and principals. However, in some instances it may be advantageous to be able to hire highly qualified teachers and/or

principals without a Colorado certificate and who possess unique background and/or skills or fill the need of the School.
Duration of the Waivers: GCSI requests that the waivers be for the duration of its contract with Garfield Re-2 School District.
How the Impact of the Waivers will be Evaluated: The impact of these waivers will be measured by the performance appraisal criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI.
Expected Outcome: As a result of these waivers, the School will be able to employ professional staff possessing unique skills and/or background filling all staff needs.

22-63-202, C.R.S. Teacher employment, compensation and dismissal act of 1990; contracts in writing – duration – damage provision
22-63-203, C.R.S. Teacher employment, compensation and dismissal act of 1990; probationary teachers – renewal and nonrenewal of employment contract
Rationale: GCSI should be granted the authority to develop its own employment contracts and terms and conditions of employment. All employees of GCSI will be employed on an at-will basis.
Replacement Plan: GCSI will pay salaries upon termination of employment of a teacher consistent with at-will employment.
Duration of the Waivers: GCSI requests that the waivers be for the duration of its contract with Garfield Re-2 School District.
How the Impact of the Waivers will be Evaluated: The impact of these waivers will be measured by the performance appraisal criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI, as per this Charter School Application.
Expected Outcome: As a result of these waivers, GCSI will be able to employ professional staff possessing unique skills and/or background, filling all staff needs.

22-63-206, C.R.S. Teacher employment, compensation and dismissal act of 1990; transfer of teachers -- compensation
Rationale: GCSI should be granted the authority to select its own teachers. The district should not have the authority to transfer teachers into GCSI or transfer teachers from GCSI to district schools or any schools outside the district.
Replacement Plan: GCSI will hire teachers on a "best qualified" basis.
Duration of the Waiver: GCSI requests that this waiver be for the duration of its contract with Garfield Re-2 School District.
How the Impact of the Waiver will be Evaluated: The impact of this waiver will be measured by the performance criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI, as set forth in this Charter School Application.
Expected Outcome: GCSI expects that as a result of this waiver it will be able to manage its own personnel affairs.

26. STUDENT DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

Describe the school's discipline policy, including suspension and expulsion processes, that aligns with federal civil rights, special education law, applicable state statute (C.R.S. 22-33-105 and 22-33-106), and the authorizer's policies.

In order to ensure alignment with Garfield School District Re-2 disciplinary policies and procedures, and to ensure compliance with district, state, and federal requirements, Garfield County School of Innovation will follow the Garfield Re-2 student conduct and discipline code. GCSI will follow Garfield Re-2 policy with regard to discipline, suspension, expulsion, classroom removal, detention, restraint, habitually disruptive students, expulsion prevention, and educational alternatives for expelled students, in alignment with federal civil rights law, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504, C.R.S. 22-33-105 and 22-33-106, C.R.S. 22-32-109.1, and all Garfield Re-2 Board policies from which GCSI does not have a waiver.

This practice will continue as the school grows from the opening grades 6–9 into a full K–12 program.

The governing Re-2 policies include, without limitation:

- JIC / JICDA – Student Conduct / Code of Conduct
- JK / JK-R – Student Discipline, including remedial discipline plans and habitually disruptive students
- JK-2 – Discipline of Students with Disabilities
- JKA / JKA-R / JKA-E 2 – Use of Physical Intervention and Restraint; complaint procedures
- JKB – Detention of Students
- JKBA / JKBA-R – Disciplinary Removal from Classroom
- JKD/JKE / JKD/JKE-R / JKD/JKE-E – Suspension/Expulsion of Students (and Other Disciplinary Interventions); grounds
- JKF / JKF-R – Educational Alternatives for Expelled Students
- JKG – Expulsion Prevention

Copies of these policies will be attached as Appendix 16. GCSI will adopt successor versions of these policies as they are revised by the Garfield Re-2 Board of Education, unless a specific waiver is later requested and granted.

School culture (RISE-K)
Within that district framework, GCSI will build a positive, orderly school culture grounded in Respect, Integrity, Servant Leadership, Excellence, and Kindness (RISE-K). Disciplinary expectations will be taught, not merely posted. Teachers will address minor misconduct in the classroom first. When appropriate, and when it does not compromise safety, staff will use restorative practices so that students repair harm, restore relationships, and return to learning. A quality education program and a safe, orderly environment are both necessary; students who interfere with the learning or safety of others will be held accountable through the Re-2 code.

How expectations will be communicated
Parents and students will receive the Garfield Re-2 Code of Conduct (Policy JICDA and related JK-series policies) as part of annual online registration / check-in, together with a short GCSI RISE-K student-culture addendum describing school-level routines (classroom expectations, cell-phone rules, dress consistent with Policy JICA, and how to report concerns). Students will review behavior expectations with teachers at the start of the year and after breaks. Significant changes to the code will be provided to each student and posted, consistent with Policy JK. The Head of School / Executive Director (or designee) will be responsible for student discipline.

Students with disabilities (IDEA and Section 504)
Special education staff will be part of the discipline support team for students with disabilities. GCSI will follow Garfield Re-2 Policy JK-2 and federal law. In summary:

- Students with disabilities may be suspended for up to 10 school days in a school year (consecutive or not) without educational services during those days, consistent with JK-2.
- Beginning on the eleventh day of removal that does not constitute a disciplinary change of placement, educational services will be provided so the student can continue to participate in the general curriculum and progress toward IEP goals.
- Before expulsion or any other disciplinary change of placement, parents will receive notice and procedural safeguards, and a Manifestation Determination Review will be held within 10 school days by the parent and relevant IEP-team members.
- If the behavior is not a manifestation of the disability, ordinary disciplinary procedures apply, with services determined by the IEP team during any expulsion or change of placement. An FBA/BIP will be considered as appropriate.
- If the behavior is a manifestation, expulsion / change-of-placement proceedings will stop (except for the 45-school-day special-circumstances removals for weapons, illegal drugs, or serious bodily injury). The IEP team will conduct or review an FBA and implement or modify a BIP.
- Students not yet identified as disabled will be treated as students with disabilities if the school had "knowledge" of a disability under JK-2 / IDEA.

Section 504 students will receive comparable manifestation and procedural protections. In any conflict between school practice and state or federal law, state or federal law controls.

2. Detail how the charter proposes to handle student discipline, expulsion and suspension.

Classroom-level and school-level discipline
Minor misconduct will be addressed first by the teacher. If the behavior continues or is more serious, the teacher and/or Head of School / Executive Director will contact the parent and document the incident. Continued or more serious misconduct will result in a conference and, when warranted, a written remedial discipline plan consistent with Policies JK and JK-R, with the goal of addressing the behavior and educational needs while keeping the student in school. Students who cause a material and substantial disruption three or more times in a school year may be declared habitually disruptive, with the written and oral notices required by JK-R; declaration as habitually disruptive may result in suspension and/or expulsion under JKD/JKE.

Suspension
Consistent with Garfield Re-2 Policy JKD/JKE and JKD/JKE-R, and C.R.S. 22-33-105 and 22-33-106:

- The Head of School / Executive Director (as principal) may suspend a student for not more than five school days on the grounds in C.R.S. 22-33-106(1)(a), (1)(b), (1)(c), or (1)(e), or not more than 10 school days on the grounds in C.R.S. 22-33-106(1)(d), unless expulsion is mandatory. The total period of suspension shall not exceed 25 school days.
- Additional days of suspension, when needed, will be referred to the Garfield Re-2 Superintendent under the authority delegated in JKD/JKE.

- Due process for suspensions of 10 days or less will follow JKD/JKE-R (notice of charges, opportunity to be heard).
- Students returning from suspension will take part in a re-entry meeting with the family, a member of the student-support team, and an administrator, so that a plan is in place for restorative steps and ongoing support.

Expulsion
GCSI will not independently expel students. In all matters where expulsion is indicated, the matter will be referred to the Garfield Re-2 Superintendent or designee, who holds the authority delegated by the Board under Policy JKD/JKE to deny admission or expel for a period not extending beyond one year, in accordance with Title 22, Article 33, C.R.S. Grounds are those listed in Policy JKD/JKE-E and C.R.S. 22-33-106, including (among others) continued willful disobedience; willful destruction of property; behavior detrimental to the welfare or safety of others; declaration as a habitually disruptive student; weapons; and other statutory grounds. Mandatory expulsion for a firearm will be handled in accordance with federal law and Re-2 Policy JICI.
Before recommending expulsion, GCSI will work with the family under Policy JKG (Expulsion Prevention) to identify at-risk students and offer available support services (educational services, counseling, drug or alcohol treatment, family support), including a remedial discipline plan when that is the appropriate vehicle. Failure to identify a student for an expulsion-prevention program, or failure of such a program to remediate behavior, shall not bar appropriate discipline, consistent with JKG.

Restraint, detention, and classroom removal
Physical intervention and restraint, if ever used, will comply with Policy JKA / JKA-R / JKA-E 2 and 1 CCR 301-45. Detention will follow Policy JKB. Disciplinary removal from the classroom will follow Policy JKBA / JKBA-R.

3. Detail how the charter will provide for an alternative education for expelled students.

Alternative education for expelled students will be provided in compliance with federal and state law and Garfield Re-2 Policies JKF and JKF-R. Upon request of the student or parent/guardian, educational services deemed appropriate will be provided, designed to enable the student to return to school, complete a high school equivalency examination, or enroll in another lawful educational setting. Services may include tutoring, alternative or online programs authorized by state law, and vocational programs that provide instruction in reading, writing, mathematics, science, and social studies. Parents will be notified in writing at the time of any expulsion of their right to request these services.

GCSI will coordinate with Garfield Re-2 on the delivery of such services and on credit toward graduation. In recognition that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach, the school will work with the student, the family, and the District to determine the best fit. Online platforms that may be used, as appropriate to the student's circumstances, include district-approved or comparable programs (for example, Edgenuity, i-Ready, or IXL). Students expelled for conduct involving a threat of harm will be served through home study or an alternative setting designed to address that conduct, at the District's discretion, consistent with JKF.

Students with disabilities who are expelled will continue to receive a free appropriate public education as required by IDEA. GCSI will not impose academic sanctions inconsistent with the Dropout Prevention and Student Re-Engagement Act, C.R.S. 22-14-101 et seq., or with Re-2 policy.

4. Provide a copy of the student discipline policy, including suspension and expulsion, as attachments.

See Appendix 16 - Discipline:

- Garfield Re-2 Policy JICDA – Code of Conduct
- Garfield Re-2 Policies JK, JK-R, and JK-2
- Garfield Re-2 Policies JKA, JKA-R, and JKA-E 2
- Garfield Re-2 Policies JKB, JKBA, and JKBA-R
- Garfield Re-2 Policies JKD/JKE, JKD/JKE-R, and JKD/JKE-E
- Garfield Re-2 Policies JKF, JKF-R, and JKG
- GCSI RISE-K Student Culture Addendum (school-level routines; does not replace Re-2 policy)

These policies will be reviewed annually by legal counsel to ensure compliance with existing law and with any changes adopted by the Garfield Re-2 Board of Education.

Positive Student Culture through Capturing Kids' Hearts

Capturing Kids' Hearts is a classroom management and school culture process developed by The Flippen Group[15]. All teachers and teacher assistants will attend professional development to faithfully implement this program. This three-day training will focus on outcomes. Participants will learn proven, repeatable skills that help:

- Develop safe, trusting, self-managing classrooms
- Improve classroom attendance by building students' motivation and helping them take responsibility for their actions and performance
- Decrease delinquent behaviors such as disruptive outbursts, violent acts, drug use and other risky behavior
- Utilize the EXCEL Model™ and reinforce the role of emotional intelligence in teaching
- Develop students empathy for diverse cultures and backgrounds

Schools that implement these processes report significant improvement in (1) academic performance, (2) increased teacher retention, and (3) reduced discipline referrals. See Appendix 34 - Capturing Kids' Hearts Research.

Drug-free culture. In addition to RISE-K and Capturing Kids Hearts, GCSI will maintain a drug-free campus culture using social-norms education.

[15] www.flippengroup.com

27. ADOPTION OF STANDARD DISTRICT CHARTER SCHOOL AGREEMENT PROVISIONS

From time to time, the district may develop new or revise existing provisions in its district charter school agreement form (the District Charter School Form Agreement) which it believes are in the best interest of the district charter school, the district, the pupils of both the district charter school and the district, and the community. The district charter school applicant shall agree to be bound by the District Charter School Form Agreement, except that the application may specifically request modifications to or alternatives to specific provisions of the Agreement. The application shall indicate why each modification or alternative will affect the district charter school, the district, the pupils of both the district charter school and the district, and the community. This documentation should be attached to the contract.

Garfield County School of Innovation agrees to be bound by Garfield School District Re-2's District Charter School Form Agreement, including revisions the District may adopt that are in the best interest of GCSI, the District, the pupils of both, and the community. GCSI is not requesting modifications to that Form Agreement in this application. Waivers, purchased services, facilities, insurance, and other school-specific terms already described in this application will be written into the charter contract during the negotiation required by Policy LBD-R and C.R.S. § 22-30.5-105, to be completed within 90 days after a Board resolution approving this application.

28. WAIVERS

A description of the district's policies for which waivers are requested. A reason for each request should be included.

Garfield County School of Innovation requests the Automatic State Waivers recognized by the Colorado Department of Education and the Non-Automatic State and District Policy Waivers described below.

Automatic State Waivers GCSI invokes all Automatic State Waivers currently recognized by the Colorado Department of Education. The complete list of Automatic State Waivers, the number of charter schools that have received each waiver, and the standardized descriptions prepared by CDE are included as **Appendix 19 – State Waivers Charter (July 2026)**.

Non-Automatic State and District Policy Waivers GCSI respectfully requests the following Non-Automatic waivers. For each waiver, a rationale and replacement plan are provided.

Garfield Re-2 Waiver Request Template for Charter Schools

Use the template below to list the non-automatic waiver(s) from policy and rule and the related replacement plans that the charter school is requesting.

Non-Automatic Waivers: Policy Description and Rationale and Replacement Plan	
Policy Citation and Title:	22-9-106, C.R.S. Local board duties concerning performance evaluations for licensed personnel
Rationale:	GCSI administration must have the ability to perform the evaluation of all personnel. Should the principal/Executive Director not hold a Type D certificate from the State of Colorado, this should not preclude him or her from administering the evaluations. As a small, innovative middle school program, GCSI requires the flexibility to implement an evaluation system aligned with its specific mission, goals, and instructional model.
Replacement Plan:	GCSI will implement personnel evaluation processes and procedures consistent with the mission and goals of the school and with applicable state requirements for licensed personnel evaluation systems. The School will ensure that evaluations are conducted in a manner that supports continuous improvement and student achievement.
Financial Impact:	None
How the Impact of the Waivers Will be Evaluated:	Since teacher performance has a critical impact on the performance of the entire school, the impact of this waiver will be measured by the same performance criteria and assessments that apply to the school, including student academic growth, school performance frameworks, and internal evaluation metrics.
Expected Outcome:	With this waiver, GCSI will be able to implement its program and evaluate its teachers in accordance with its own procedures. This will benefit staff members as well as students and the community.

Non-Automatic Waivers: Policy Description and Rationale and Replacement Plan	
Policy Citation and Title:	22-32-109(1)(n), C.R.S. Local board duties concerning school calendar; and related Board Policy IC/ICA – School Year/School Calendar/Instruction Time
Rationale:	The success of Garfield County School of Innovation will be strongly influenced by the level of autonomy it has over its calendar, daily schedule, and teacher-pupil contact hours. GCSI needs the flexibility to design a calendar and schedule that support its grades 6–9 innovation-focused program, including project-based learning, extended learning opportunities, and alignment with partner organizations. All decisions concerning calendar will meet or exceed the minimum hour and day requirements set forth in statute and State Board rule.
Replacement Plan:	GCSI will be responsible for developing, adopting, and implementing its own school calendar, daily schedule, and instructional time allocations rather than being bound by the district's calendar. The School will ensure full compliance with minimum instructional hour requirements.
Financial Impact:	None

How the Impact of the Waivers Will be Evaluated:	The impact of these waivers will be measured by the same performance criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI, including compliance with instructional hour requirements and student achievement outcomes.
Expected Outcome:	As a result of these waivers, GCSI will adopt a calendar and schedule that fit its educational philosophy, program design, and the needs of its students and families.

Non-Automatic Waivers: Policy Description and Rationale and Replacement Plan

Policy Citation and Title:	22-63-201, C.R.S. Teacher employment, compensation and dismissal act of 1990; Employment – License Required – Exception
Rationale:	GCSI should be granted the authority to hire teachers and administrators who will support the school's goals and objectives. The School will seek to attract educators from a wide variety of backgrounds, including, but not limited to, teachers from out-of-state, teachers with a lapsed Colorado certificate, persons with several years of successful teaching experience in a setting not requiring a license, as well as persons with relevant business, industry, or professional experience. All employees of GCSI will be employed on an at-will basis.
Replacement Plan:	GCSI will, where possible, hire licensed teachers and administrators. However, in some instances it may be advantageous to hire highly qualified educators without a current Colorado certificate who possess unique background, skills, or content expertise that fill a critical need of the School. All such hires will meet any applicable federal highly-qualified or state alternative authorization requirements.
Financial Impact:	None
How the Impact of the Waivers Will be Evaluated:	The impact of these waivers will be measured by the performance appraisal criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI, including student academic outcomes and staff effectiveness ratings.
Expected Outcome:	As a result of these waivers, the School will be able to employ professional staff possessing unique skills and/or background necessary to implement its innovative program and fill all staffing needs.

Non-Automatic Waivers: Policy Description and Rationale and Replacement Plan

Policy Citation and Title:	22-63-202, C.R.S. Teacher employment, compensation and dismissal act of 1990; contracts in writing – duration – damage provision; and 22-63-203, C.R.S. related probationary teacher provisions
Rationale:	As an at-will employer, GCSI requires the flexibility to structure employment relationships in a manner consistent with its small-school operational model and the need for rapid programmatic adjustment. The statutory requirements regarding written contracts of specific duration and

	related damage provisions are inconsistent with an at-will employment framework that best serves the School's mission.
Replacement Plan:	GCSI will employ all staff on an at-will basis. Written offer letters or employment agreements may be used for clarity of terms (compensation, duties, start date, etc.), but will not create a contractual right to continued employment beyond the at-will relationship. The School will comply with all applicable notice and due-process requirements that remain binding under other statutes or the charter contract.
Financial Impact:	None
How the Impact of the Waivers Will be Evaluated:	The impact will be evaluated through the School's ability to recruit, retain, and, when necessary, transition staff in a manner that supports continuous program improvement and student outcomes.
Expected Outcome:	GCSI will maintain an employment framework that allows it to attract mission-aligned talent and respond effectively to the operational needs of a new charter school.

Non-Automatic Waivers: Policy Description and Rationale and Replacement Plan

Policy Citation and Title:	Board Policy DJE – Bidding Procedures (and related purchasing policies), to the extent they impose district-level competitive bidding thresholds or processes that are impractical for a single-site charter school of GCSI's projected size
Rationale:	As a new, single-site charter school with a modest operating budget, GCSI requires streamlined purchasing and contracting procedures that allow timely acquisition of instructional materials, technology, furniture, and services while still ensuring fiscal responsibility and compliance with applicable state law. Strict application of district-wide bidding thresholds and multi-step processes designed for a large multi-school district would create unnecessary administrative burden and delay.
Replacement Plan:	GCSI will adopt its own purchasing and contracting procedures that require competitive quotes or bids for expenditures above thresholds appropriate to the School's size (to be set by the GCSI Governing Board), maintain documentation of all significant purchases, and comply with all applicable state statutory requirements for public funds, including background-check provisions for contractors who have direct contact with students. The School will remain subject to annual independent audit.
Financial Impact:	None (potential positive impact through reduced administrative cost and faster procurement)
How the Impact of the Waivers Will be Evaluated:	Impact will be evaluated through the School's annual financial audit, Board fiscal oversight, and ability to meet operational timelines for facility and program readiness.
Expected Outcome:	GCSI will be able to procure necessary goods and services efficiently while maintaining full transparency and accountability for the use of public funds.

Note: GCSI is not requesting waivers from student discipline, code of conduct, suspension/expulsion, or related safety policies. The School will operate consistent with applicable state law and will develop student conduct expectations aligned with its mission while remaining fully accountable for a safe learning environment.

29. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Any further data which may be helpful in supporting the application.

Alignment with the Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership Strategy

Source: Colorado River Valley Economic Development Partnership, *Economic Development Strategy* (Alvarium Economics, Triple Point Strategic Consulting, and SMG Consulting; October 2025 / Version 4 updated March 2026) ("CRVEDP Strategy"). The Strategy is a public regional planning document. It is evidence of need and program fit. Appendix 22 - CRVEDP Economic Development Version 4

Table A. Educational attainment — Western vs. Eastern Garfield (CRVEDP Strategy, Table 2-5)

Category (adults 25+)	Western Garfield	Eastern Garfield
High school diploma as highest credential	31.4%	16.7%
Some college or associate's degree	34.4%	26.2%
Bachelor's degree	16.3%	26.4%
Graduate or professional degree	6.8%	18.9%
Median income (Table 2-6)	$43,089	$46,188

Nearly two-thirds of Western Garfield adults (65.8%) stop at a high school diploma, some college, or an associate's degree. GCSI is designed so that path is *chosen and credentialed*, not accidental.

Table B. CRVEDP finding → GCSI response

CRVEDP Strategy finding	Where it appears	GCSI response
Western Garfield should become a regional **training hub**; partner BOCES, CMC, CSU Extension, CMU; focus health care, energy technology, construction trades, and business services	§8.2.2.2	Standard #4; Goal #9; CTE + Concurrent Enrollment after GCSI is an LEA (Section 9)
"Expanding trade apprenticeships, **dual-credit high school programs**, and customized training in health care,	Economic Development Solutions	Dual-credit language in §§1 and 9; Aviation Tech Lab as secondary on-

CRVEDP Strategy finding	Where it appears	GCSI response
firefighting aviation, and renewable energy technology would raise income potential and keep young people in Western Garfield."		ramp only; flight training stays with licensed providers
"Youth want to stay, the region needs to create viable local career pathways." Expand CMC and trade training for energy, health care, tourism, child care, construction.	SWOT Opportunities	Opening grades K–10 in Rifle / Silt / New Castle area; engineering required; culinary/hospitality CTE; business/entrepreneurship
"Lack of skilled trades, hospitality, and service labor"; firms asked CRVEDP to expand workforce training "in partnership with CMC."	SWOT Threats; business survey	*Garfield Master Chef* / tourism CTE; CE on the same statutory basis CMC already serves other public high schools in its tax district
Education (school districts and CMC) is already a top Western Garfield employer and GDP contributor	Economic Assessment	GCSI adds a public-school feeder; it does not replace CMC or Re-2 high schools
Scenario C high-wage sectors include post-high school education / training hub and firefighting aviation	§7.3.3	Pathway maps under Goal #9; airport-aligned ground school, not a promise of a county aviation contract

https://www.garfieldre2.net/school-board/search-page/single-policy/~board/l-school-board-policies-education-agency-relations/post/lbd-r-relations-with-district-charter-schools

Conclusion

Garfield County School of Innovation asks the Board to authorize our tuition-free public charter school of Garfield School District Re-2. The school will open in Fall 2027 with grades 6 through 9 at Rosie's School in New Castle and grow to a full kindergarten through twelfth grade. The aviation pathway and the student culinary pathway and restaurant are planned for a later campus on land adjacent to the Rifle Garfield County Airport. Section 17 states how each site will be obtained.

The program is a content-rich foundation, engineering for every student beginning in sixth grade, United States history taught from primary sources, and career pathways tied to Western Garfield: the trades, health care, energy, culinary arts and hospitality, teacher apprenticeship, and aviation ground and flight school. Concurrent enrollment with Colorado Mountain College, Colorado Northwestern Community College, and Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University waits until GCSI is an approved local education provider and the cooperative agreements are signed.

GCSI is the first charter school public option inside Garfield County Re-2. It is not a private school. Students are funded at Re-2's per-pupil revenue. Families in Rifle, Silt, New Castle, and the rest of Re-2, and contiguous districts have asked for this choice. Our application is the plan for giving it to them, and for preparing young people for skilled work in Garfield County.