**October 30, 2026**

**Official Response Curing Garfield County School of Innovation ("GCSI") Application Incompleteness Pursuant to C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(1)(c) and District Policy LBD-R**

Dear Superintendent Kirk Banghart and the Garfield County Re-2 Board of Education:

On September 21, 2026, we submitted budget and operational questions to Superintendent Kirk Banghart in advance of filing the Garfield County School of Innovation application. On September 23, 2026, Superintendent Banghart responded (Appendix 55). The application submitted on September 30, 2026, was prepared in reliance on that guidance, including the direction to use the District's current per-pupil revenue for a three-year viability analysis and the confirmation that the District would retain 5% as an indirect cost. We appreciate the opportunity to provide the additional information requested in the October 15, 2026 notice and to align the application with both that earlier guidance (Appendix 55) and the new requirements from the October 15, 2026 email (Appendix 58).

This Official Notice Curing Garfield County School of Innovation ("GCSI") Application Incompleteness Pursuant to C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(1)(c) and District Policy LBD-R and all additional Appendices, and digital Letter of Intent spreadsheets are available at this Google Drive link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lfo2A9W-GHAcGDZjUcxzrjyeBuRsRhNM?usp=drive_link

**Notice of Completeness**

This application is now complete. GCSI has submitted all required components of the charter application pursuant to C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106 and District Policy LBD-R. A suitable facility (or Letter of Intent) will be secured prior to execution of the final charter contract, consistent with standard charter practice.

On the facility question, we have provided a list of potential locations. This is the well-known catch-22 of the charter application process: a school cannot reasonably finalize a facility until after the charter has been approved. This has been the expectation in both Douglas County School District and Jeffco Public Schools. Requiring a finalized facility at the application completion stage is unprecedented in the charter school community.

This approach is consistent with the structure used for the STEM School in Highlands Ranch. Douglas County School District voted to grant conditional approval of the STEM charter application, with the facility requirement treated as a post-approval condition, not as part of the initial completeness review under C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(1)(c). The STEM School and Academy opened with 478 full-time students, the largest first year charter school ever in Colorado history at the time.

## Itemized List of Application Components

### 1. Omission of 5-Year Budget Expenditure Modeling (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(g) & District Policy LBD-E):

Colorado law requires a proposed budget covering a term of at least five years, detailing all projected revenues and expenditures. In the submitted digital workbook (GCSI Digital Budget YR 2027-31 (1).xlsx), all expenditure line items for Year 4 and Year 5 are blank across the Staffing, Year 4, Year 5, and Summary Years 0-5 worksheets. Consequently, total operating expenditures, net income, TABOR reserves, and ending fund balances for Years 4 and 5 evaluate to null or error values. To enable substantive review of the application, a fully populated, 5-year expenditure model without null or error values is needed.

In addition, a student fee schedule is referenced, and the proposed budget includes significant annual revenue from "Student Participation Fees." It is unclear whether some or all of these amounts are anticipated to be course-related fees or something else. Please clarify the basis of the budgeted student fees and provide a fee schedule to enable full review of the application.

The revised digital workbook (GCSI Digital Budget YR 2027-31) is now attached in the Google Drive Link:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lfo2A9W-GHAcGDZjUcxzrjyeBuRsRhNM?usp=drive_link

Years 4 and 5 are fully populated with expenditure line items. Total operating expenditures, net income, TABOR reserves, and ending fund balances for Years 4 and 5 now calculate without null or error values.

### Student Fees Clarification

**The September 30, 2026 budget did not include Student Participation Fees.** A budget template error had misdirected certain funds into incorrect categories on the yearly summary tabs. That labeling has been corrected in the revised workbook. There are no student participation fees or course-related fees in the current budget.

### Federal CSP Start-Up Grant

The revised budget now includes the federal Charter Schools Program (CSP) start-up grant administered by the Colorado League of Charter Schools through its Great Schools Colorado program. GCSI will request the maximum award of $2 million. There is a strong alignment with Great Schools Colorado CSP priorities. As the first and only charter school proposed in Garfield County Re-2, the application addresses a clear need for additional high-quality options in a rural and mountainous district that serves educationally disadvantaged students. These factors support competitive priority points for rural/mountainous populations and for serving underserved students. While awards remain competitive and depend on the full strength of the application, the project is well-positioned under the published criteria.

The primary contact is:

Bright Homawoo
*Director of Grants Fiscal*
Great Schools Colorado
104 N. Broadway, Suite 400, Denver, CO 80203
O: 303.989.5356 ext. 108 | greatschoolscolorado.org

GCSI will be asking for the maximum award of $2 million. In 2010, STEM School Highlands Ranch was awarded the Federal Start-Up grant which was managed by STEM School President and Business Manager Barry Brannberg. Judy Brannberg wrote the original CSP grant. She will be the primary grant writer for the CSP Grant from January – March 2027. Based on the Great Schools Colorado CSP timeline: applications open in January, close in early March, and awards are typically announced in early summer, June 2027.

**Note on Prior Guidance**

On September 23, 2026, Superintendent Banghart requested only a three-year budget (Appendix 55). The revised workbook now provides the five-year model required by statute and District Policy LBD-E.

**2. Missing Rationale and Replacement Plans for Non-Automatic Waivers (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(o), C.R.S. § 22-2-117, & District Policy LBD-R):**

For every requested waiver of state statute or district policy that is not an automatic waiver, C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(o) mandates that the application state the rationale for the waiver and detail the specific Replacement Plan explaining how the charter school will meet the intent of the waived law or policy. The application and Appendix 19 identify statutes for waiver and provides statutory citations, and while the application includes some rationale, Replacement Plans and alternative policies for requested non-automatic waivers (including teacher evaluation and employment statutes) and local Board policies, it appears that additional requested waivers are listed in Appendix 19 without the required rationale, detailed Replacement Plans and alternative policies. Please clarify that the additional waivers identified in Appendix 19 are being requested, and if so, provide the incomplete information to enable full review of the application.

**GCSI is not requesting any additional non-automatic waivers beyond those which were listed in the Application filed on September 30, 2026.**

Any item previously listed in Appendix 19 that did not have a completed rationale and replacement plan in the original application submitted on September 30, 2026 **is not being requested** as a non-automatic waiver.

GCSI invokes all automatic state waivers as listed by the Colorado Department of Education. The application's Section 28 contains the complete list of non-automatic waivers GCSI is requesting.

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.

## 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.

**Non-Automatic Waivers of State Statute**

GCSI requests the following non-automatic waivers. For each, the rationale and replacement plan are provided below. No additional non-automatic waivers are requested at this time.

**22-9-106, C.R.S. – Local board duties concerning performance evaluations for licensed personnel**
**Rationale:** GCSI administration must have the ability to evaluate all personnel. Possession of a Type D certificate by the principal should not be a prerequisite to conducting evaluations.
**Replacement Plan:** GCSI will implement a personnel evaluation process consistent with the mission and goals of the school.
**Duration:** Duration of the charter contract.
**How Impact Will Be Evaluated:** Measured by the same performance criteria and assessments that apply to the school.
**Expected Outcome:** GCSI will evaluate teachers according to its own procedures aligned with its educational program.

**22-32-110(1)(n) and 22-32-110(1)(n)(I), C.R.S. – Local board duties concerning school calendar**
**Rationale:** GCSI's success depends on the ability to adopt its own calendar, daily schedule, and teacher-pupil contact hours while meeting minimum statutory hour requirements.
**Replacement Plan:** GCSI will establish and manage its own calendar and schedule.
**Duration:** Duration of the charter contract.
**How Impact Will Be Evaluated:** Measured by the same performance criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI.
**Expected Outcome:** GCSI will operate on a calendar that supports its instructional model.

**22-63-201, C.R.S. – Teacher Employment, Compensation and Dismissal Act – Employment – License Required**

**Rationale:** GCSI seeks flexibility to hire highly qualified teachers and principals from a variety of backgrounds, including those without a current Colorado license, when they possess unique skills or experience that support the school's mission. All employees will be at-will.
**Replacement Plan:** GCSI will hire certified teachers where possible and will hire non-licensed candidates when advantageous for the program.
**Duration:** Duration of the charter contract.
**How Impact Will Be Evaluated:** Measured by the performance appraisal criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI.
**Expected Outcome:** GCSI will staff the school with professionals who best support its educational goals.

**22-63-202 and 22-63-203, C.R.S. – Contracts in writing; Probationary teachers**

**Rationale:** GCSI requires the authority to develop its own employment terms. All employees will be employed on an at-will basis.
**Replacement Plan:** Employment will be at-will. Compensation upon termination will be consistent with at-will employment.
**Duration:** Duration of the charter contract.
**How Impact Will Be Evaluated:** Measured by the performance appraisal criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI.
**Expected Outcome:** GCSI will manage employment relationships consistent with its operational model.

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

**Rationale:** GCSI must have exclusive authority to select its own teachers. The District should not have the authority to transfer teachers into or out of GCSI.
**Replacement Plan:** GCSI will hire teachers on a "best qualified" basis.
**Duration:** Duration of the charter contract.
**How Impact Will Be Evaluated:** Measured by the performance criteria and assessments that apply to GCSI.
**Expected Outcome:** GCSI will manage its own personnel affairs.

In past applications, the specific terms of non-automatic waivers have been finalized after the board votes to approve the charter, during charter contract negotiations. GCSI looks forward to continuing to refine these replacement plans with the District at that stage, after the application is approved.

### 3. Omission of Required Personnel Line Items Supporting Educational Programs (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(e) & (q)):

C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(e) and (q) require that the application detail the educational program and special needs plan, and these should be supported in the proposed budget with associated personnel costs by function and activity. The application narrative states that GCSI will open in Year 1 serving Grades 6-9 and Grade 10 in Year 2, with an anticipated Special Education population of 8% to 14%. However, the Staffing tab of the digital workbook contains unpopulated functional expenditure categories and omits personnel salary allocations required to

deliver the described general and special education programming for the proposed grade levels across Years 1, 2, and 3. The application, therefore, appears to be incomplete due to the lack of alignment between the program narrative and the required budget/staffing line items.

There will be no John Dewey Institute for the first five years for students on the autism spectrum, in this proposed Garfield County School of Innovation application at Re-2.

We have removed the following language out of the narrative from page 64 which pertained only to the John Dewey Institute, which will not be operational at GCSI for the first five years:

**"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. "

The correct application narrative states on page 61:

**"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."

The original digital workbook did not fully populate general and special education personnel salary allocations for Years 1–5 that align with the above corrected narrative. A revised digital workbook has been prepared and submitted. The revised budget reflects personnel costs needed to operate our special education programming. Additionally, we cannot determine the exact special needs of our student population until the school opens.

### 4. Incomplete Parent Support and Intent Evidence (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(d) & District Policy LBD-E):

C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(d) requires evidence that an adequate number of parents and pupils support the formation of the charter school. Section 4 refers to and provides a numeric table of web-based forms submitted online, yet it is unclear how many families will commit to enroll students. To fulfill Policy LBD-E requirements for verifiable support, the application should provide verified signatures or authenticated digital submission records from in-district parents indicating intent to enroll students in the specific grade levels proposed for the Fall 2027 opening.

**Pursuant to C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(3), the state statute says:**

"(3) A charter applicant is not required to provide personal identifying information concerning any parent, teacher, or prospective pupil prior to the time that the charter contract is approved by both parties and either the charter school actually employs the teacher or the pupil actually enrolls in the charter school, whichever is applicable. A charter school applicant shall provide, upon request of the chartering school district, aggregate information concerning the grade levels and schools in which prospective pupils are enrolled."

Please see the attached digital spreadsheet which complies with C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(3) by submitting the updated numbers on October 30, 2026 to comply with completeness, pursuant to C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(1)(c).

See attached spreadsheet. All Letter of Intent spreadsheets are available and were collected at this Google Drive link:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1lfo2A9W-GHAcGDZjUcxzrjyeBuRsRhNM?usp=drive_link

Please provide a copy of the web-based form referenced in the application, along with any other forms used to gather expressions of interest/intent to enroll.

Please find the attached link where Letters of Intent to Enroll were captured:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe3K0JNvXEOtwg4bf1UrAIyNBOWFEyWcZQReXoKNcUW-7uXDw/viewform

Additionally, please see the attached digital spreadsheet with all 250+ names of parents/students who submitted LOIs.

Below is a copy of the web-based form referenced in the application, along with all other forms used to gather expressions of interest/intent to enroll:

**"Garfield County School of Innovation Confidential and Non-Binding Letter of Intent to Enroll**

Garfield County School of Innovation (GCSI) is now accepting Confidential and Non-Binding Letters of Intent to Enroll. Your early interest is important to demonstrate support for additional high-quality education options for Garfield County families. Please review our website to learn more about our STEM + Business - based education for all students. Garfield County School of Innovation expects to open in the Fall of 2027 with grades 6-9 and will add a successive high school grade each year, plus a K-5 in years two or three.

There are many unique features at GCSI which make the school attractive to all students, including the Problem/Project-Based Learning (PBL) model with Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Education, Arts, and Math, plus Business ("STEM + B") curriculum with an emphasis on Career and Technical Education classes (CTE), such as robotics, engineering, culinary arts, and aviation.
* Indicates required question
Email Address*

Parent First Name*
Parent Last Name *
Address*
City *
State *
Zip Code *
Phone Number *
Local Neighborhood School - This is the local public school your child(ren) would normally attend if he/she would not be enrolled in a charter school *
Child's First Name for Intent to Enroll*
Child's Last Name for Intent to Enroll*
Child's current school he/she is attending? If younger than Kindergarten put preschool. Please list all children entering K-12 in Fall 2027. *
Child's anticipated grade they will attend at Garfield County School of Innovation in Fall 2027?*
Please fill in a separate form for each of your children. Thank you very much!"

Also, please provide all letters of intent and/or expressions of interest that have been received with personally identifiable information (name, address, contact information etc.) redacted.

We have now provided a hard copy (above) of the digital copy of the web-based form referenced in the application, along with any other forms used to gather expressions of interest/intent to enroll. We have provided a digital copy of all letters of intent and/or expressions of interest that have been received with personally identifiable information (name, address, contact information etc.) redacted.

**Pursuant to C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(3):** "(3) A charter applicant is not required to provide personal identifying information concerning any parent, teacher, or prospective pupil prior to the time that the charter contract is approved by both parties and either the charter school actually employs the teacher or the pupil actually enrolls in the charter school, whichever is applicable. A charter school applicant shall provide, upon request of the chartering school district, aggregate information concerning the grade levels and schools in which prospective pupils are enrolled."

**Student Demographics**

The attached data reflects the 257 Letters of Intent submitted to date. Of those students, a significant portion currently attend programs outside Garfield County School District Re-2 and would represent new enrollment for the District.

Approximately 37% of the students who submitted Letters of Intent (93 students) currently attend schools outside of Garfield County School District Re-2 and would represent new enrollment for the District.

### 5. Missing Dispute Resolution Process (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(r)):

C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(r) requires a dispute resolution process, as provided in C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107.5. Although the application addresses the school's relationship with the District, no dispute

resolution process is proposed. Please provide a dispute resolution process as required by Colorado law.

Please see the following Dispute Resolution Process (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(r)):

GCSI intends to have a cooperative and productive relationship with Garfield County Re-2, with emphasis on a student centered partnership described earlier in the application. Mutual respect and consistent communication should prevent most disputes that might arise. Meeting face to face is much better than email attempts to resolve things. Much of communication is through body language and tone of voice, which is missing from email or other written forms of communication.

GCSI will work hard to meet deadlines for information set forth in the District-Charter contract. Our hope is to be seen by the district staff and board as a valuable asset and an effective partner serving students. We hope that any issues can be resolved informally through good communication, dialog, and face to face discussion.

If needed, GCSI agrees to abide by Colorado Revised Statute 22-30.5-107.5 listed here.

22-30.5-107.5. Dispute resolution - governing policy provisions - appeal

(1) Except as otherwise provided in section 22-30.5-108, any disputes that may arise between a charter school and its chartering school district concerning governing policy provisions of the school's charter contract shall be resolved pursuant to this section.
(2) (a) A charter school or its chartering school district may initiate a resolution to any dispute concerning a governing policy provision of the school's charter contract by providing reasonable written notice to the other party of an intent to invoke this section. Such notice shall include, at a minimum, a brief description of the matter in dispute and the scope of the disagreement between the parties.

(b) Within thirty days after receipt of the written notice described in paragraph (a) of this subsection (2), the charter school and the school district shall agree to use any form of alternative dispute resolution to resolve the dispute, including but not limited to any of the forms described in the "Dispute Resolution Act", part 3 of article 22 of title 13, C.R.S.; except that any form chosen by the parties shall result in final written findings by a neutral third party within one hundred twenty days after receipt of such written notice.

(c) The neutral third party shall apportion all costs reasonably related to the mutually agreed upon dispute resolution process.

(3) (a) A charter school and its chartering school district may agree to be bound by the written findings of the neutral third party resulting from any alternative dispute resolution entered into pursuant to subsection (1) of this section. In such case, such findings shall be final and not subject to appeal.

(b) If the parties do not agree to be bound by such written findings of the neutral third party, the parties may appeal such findings to the state board. A party who wishes to appeal such findings shall provide the state board and the other party with a notice of appeal within thirty days after

the release of such findings, and the notice of appeal shall contain a brief description of the grounds for appeal. The state board may consider said written findings or other relevant materials in reaching its decision and may, on its own motion, conduct, after sufficient notice, a de novo review of and hearing on the underlying matter.

(4) The state board shall:

(a) Issue its decision on the written findings of the neutral third party resulting from any alternative dispute resolution entered into pursuant to subsection (1) of this section within sixty days after receipt of the notice of appeal; or

(b) Make its own findings within sixty days after making its own motion for a de novo review and hearing described in paragraph (b) of subsection (3) of this section.
(5) If the state board, after motion by one of the parties and sufficient notice and hearing, finds that either of the parties to an alternative dispute resolution process held pursuant to this section has failed to participate in good faith in such process or has refused to comply with the decision reached after agreeing to be bound by the result of such process, the state board shall resolve the dispute in favor of the aggrieved party.

(6) Any decision by the state board pursuant to this section shall be final and not subject to appeal.

**6. Incomplete Facilities Plan (C.R.S. § 22-30.5-106(1)(n) & District Policy LBD-E):**

The application describes an intent to lease The Rosie's School building for Year 1 and possibly Year 2, with a move to The Aviation Campus in an as-yet unbuilt facility thereafter. A letter of intent to enter into a lease for The Rosie's School is provided, and the proposed budget lists the annual rental cost at $65,000. However, no proposed lease is provided, and there is no description of what renovations and/or upgrades may be needed, along with the estimated costs of such work, to comply with applicable building standards and to provide a safe and secure learning environment. Please provide as much of this additional information as possible to enable full review of the application.

**Facilities Update – Rosie B. Ferrin Building, New Castle, Colorado**

The Rosie B. Ferrin building is no longer under consideration as a GCSI location. Existing commercial leases cannot be terminated in time for a Fall 2027 opening, and the building's current dilapidation and renovation timeline make it impractical for a founding campus.

**Facilities Update – 949 Railroad Avenue, Rifle, Colorado**

**Location Number One:** GCSI has located a vacant building which can be repurposed for the GCSI inaugural school year in Fall 2027 and also as the Rifle Innovation Center used by all students grades 6-12 from all schools in Garfield County after-school, on Fridays, and weekends.

The founding team has submitted a formal request to the Board of County Commissioners for consideration of dual use of the building: as the Garfield County School of Innovation campus

during the school year (August–May) and, as available, for fire-prevention-related use during peak summer months. Photos of the building are attached as Appendix 57.

The Garfield County Board of County Commissioners will discuss the county-owned building at 949 Railroad Avenue in Rifle at its Monday, November 2, 2026 meeting at 8:00 a.m. (108 8th Street, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601). Because the discussion involves contract negotiations, the Board is expected to go into Executive Session. See Appendix 62 - 2026.10.28 - Newsletter

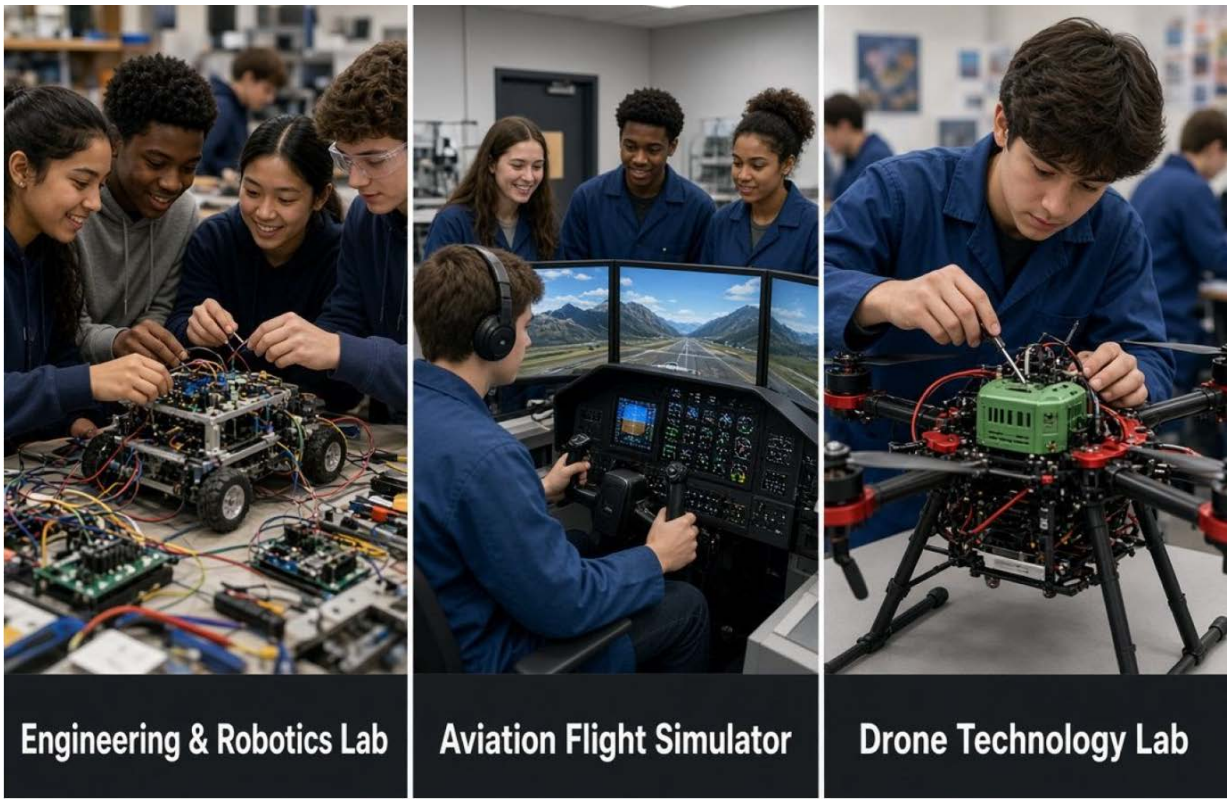
The Rifle Innovation Center would offer after-school, Friday, and weekend programming open to all students grades 6-12—GCSI students and students from every other school in the area. The space would give students access to hands-on labs in STEM, engineering, entrepreneurship, and aviation, including 3-D printers, CNC routers, laser engravers, drone and aviation labs, robotics and engineering labs, and business and innovation entrepreneurial projects. STEM-focused clubs and competitions such as Technology Student Association (TSA), FIRST Robotics, Best Robotics, and 4-H would have a dedicated home.

Innovator-Mentors would support students during these Expanded Learning Time hours. The Center would also be open to the homeschool community. This dual use would allow the building to serve as the founding campus of GCSI during the school day and as a broader community innovation resource outside regular school hours.

**The Rifle Innovation Center** - *A flagship community asset for the entire county*

On Monday, November 2, 2026, at 8:00 a.m., GCSI will present its vision to the Garfield County Board of County Commissioners: transforming the county-owned building at 949 Railroad Avenue into the **Rifle Innovation Center** — a dual-purpose facility that will serve as the founding campus of the Garfield County School of Innovation during the school year and as a after-school, Friday, and weekend innovation hub for students and families across the region.

The Innovation Center is designed to become a destination for hands-on learning and real-world creation. It will house dedicated labs for robotics, drones, aviation simulation, 3-D printing, CNC routing, laser engraving, alternative energy, and engineering design. Students will move from concept to prototype under the guidance of Innovator-Mentors — working engineers, pilots, entrepreneurs, and industry professionals who volunteer their expertise. The space will also be open to the broader homeschool community and to students from other schools, creating a shared regional resource that multiplies the impact of the facility beyond the regular school day.




STEM-focused clubs, competitions, and activities include: Technology Student Association ("TSA"), First Robotics, Best Robotics, and 4-H, along with many more. This GCSI and Innovation Center dual use allows the building to function both as the founding campus of GCSI during the school day and as a broader community innovation resource outside regular school hours.






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**STEM and Aviation Focused Partnerships**

GCSI is currently developing more partnerships with engineering, aviation, and other entrepreneurship mentors, innovators, business and industry leaders, higher education partners, and public policy makers (Appendix 59).We are grateful to offer the prestigious Embry-Riddle Aviation and Engineering curriculum at our school for the fall of 2027 for grades 6-9. GCSI has already secured an excellent partnership with Colorado Northwestern Community College, a long-time leader in aviation education in Colorado (Appendix 39 - LOS - CNCC - Nathan Hardin).

**Location Number Two: The Rifle Airport Aviation and Innovation Campus**
*A regional field-trip destination for students across Garfield County and the surrounding area*

The founding team holds a non-binding Letter of Intent on approximately 70 acres adjacent to the Rifle Airport (Appendix 56) . This site is envisioned as a purpose-built Aviation and

Innovation Campus — a modern K–12 environment designed from the ground up for hands-on learning in engineering, aviation, energy, and entrepreneurship.

The campus is planned to include dedicated engineering labs, a planetarium, a Science On a Sphere, aviation ground school and simulators, and direct access to the airport as a living classroom. Students will move from classroom concepts to real-world application on the same property, working alongside pilots, engineers, and industry mentors. The location supports true fly-in/fly-out access, so visiting educators, mentors, and partner organizations can arrive by air. The school plans to own and operate its own airplane as part of the aviation program, giving students direct experience with aircraft operations, maintenance, and flight. A campus restaurant will serve both the school community and visiting groups, creating a practical hospitality and entrepreneurship learning environment while reinforcing the campus as a destination.

Because of its specialized facilities and airport access, the campus is designed to serve not only GCSI students but also to draw field trips and extended learning opportunities from schools across Garfield County and neighboring communities.

Having the Garfield County School of Innovation located at the airport near the Colorado Mountain College (CMC) campus provides an added benefit for both GCSI students and all students accessing the CMC campus, giving them easy access to both campuses' amenities, learning opportunities, and resources.

The following Letters of Support have been secured:

Appendix 39 - LOS - CNCC - Nathan Hardin
Appendix 49 - Sam Carver Email
Appendix 59 - 2026.09.29 - Commissioner Jankovsky - Email of Support_Redacted
Appendix 60 - Charter School COI - LOS – Commissioner Mike Samson
Appendix 61 - Letter of Support James Hybauger - Aviation in Rifle
Appendix 63 - Letter of Support - Clay and Ashley Buerger




**Request for Charter Approval Contingent on Securing a Facility**

GCSI has identified two viable facility options and has performed due diligence on both. Neither a lease of the county-owned building at 949 Railroad Avenue nor a binding agreement on the airport-adjacent property can be finalized until the Board of Education approves the charter and the parties negotiate the charter contract. This is consistent with standard charter practice.

Therefore, GCSI respectfully requests that the Board of Education approve the application subject to the contingency that a suitable facility (or Letter of Intent) for a Fall 2027 opening is secured prior to execution of the final charter contract. This is the same structure used when the STEM School and Academy charter was approved in December 2009 by a unanimous 7-0 vote, with the contingency that a facility would be secured before the contract was finalized.

Approval on this basis would allow the Board to act on a complete application while giving the founding team the necessary time, after the vote, to finalize the facility.

**Ongoing Refinements**

Following the completeness review under C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(1)(c), GCSI requests the opportunity to continue providing any additional information, clarifications, or refinements that the Board of Education or Superintendent may request during the remainder of the review period before the final vote in January 2027. The founding team is prepared to respond promptly to such requests so the application can be evaluated on its merits.

The parties have agreed that the GCSI Application will be reviewed, with a decision from the District's Board of Education by January 28, 2027.

**Statutory Cure Window and Next Steps**

In accordance with C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(1)(c), the applicant has fifteen (15) calendar days from the date of receipt of this notice to provide the required information listed above to the Garfield School District Re-2.

Please submit the required corrected materials electronically to Superintendent Kirk Banghart and deliver ten (10) hard copies to the Garfield Re-2 District Administration Office (839 Whiteriver Avenue, Rifle, CO 81650) on or before **Friday, October 30, 2026, at 5:00 PM MDT**.

Pursuant to statute, if the applicant does not provide the required completing information within the 15-day period, the Board of Education is not required to take further action on the application. Upon timely receipt of the complete, cured materials, the 120-day review period will proceed in accordance with our agreed-upon timeline.

GCSI has now met all completeness requirements under C.R.S. § 22-30.5-107(1)(c) and District Policy LBD-R. All items identified in the October 15, 2026 notice have been addressed and cured. The application is complete.