

**For Immediate Release**

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## **CSI Charter School Portfolio Sees Enrollment Growth Amidst the Pandemic**

DENVER, CO (December 16, 2020) – As the state’s preliminary release of 2020 October Count data shows, the Charter School Institute (CSI) portfolio of public charter schools is serving just over 20,700 students this school year, making it the 15<sup>th</sup> largest local education agency in the state of Colorado.

CSI’s 42 charter public schools are located across the state, from Durango to Steamboat Springs, Grand Junction to Colorado Springs. Schools range in size from around 50 students to just over 2,100 students and offer sixteen unique educational models including alternative education campuses, classical education, project-based learning, and language immersion.

While the state saw a 3.3% decrease in overall enrollment from the prior year, CSI student enrollment saw an increase. Contributing to this increase was the addition of two schools to the CSI portfolio and the expansion of program offerings at existing CSI schools.

### **CSI Schools Respond to Community Need**

As statewide data showed an increase in homeschool students this year, CSI saw an increase in the percentage of students seeking homeschool enrichment options. Twelve CSI schools worked to establish or expand homeschool enrichment options for the 2020-21 school year based on community interest, resulting in an increase in homeschool enrichment program enrollment across the CSI portfolio.

Also contributing to this increase was the way in which many CSI schools were able to nimbly respond to the needs of their local communities. After remote learning in the Spring, many CSI schools established return to school committees made up of school leadership, staff, and families. These committees met over the summer to understand the challenges and needs of their families, and were able to incorporate that feedback, along with state and local public health guidance, into planning for the 2020-21 school year. For many of our schools anticipating these shifts in learning formats and adjusting their offerings, student enrollment increased. In fact, over half of CSI schools saw increases in enrollment this year.

### **A Continued Focus on Serving All Students**

In addition to the overall state enrollment decreases, CDE also reported a statewide decrease in the number of gifted and talented students, English Learners, and students eligible for free- or reduced-price lunch identified.

While less pronounced, CSI saw a decrease in the number of English Learners but saw growth in numbers of other special populations served from the prior year.

CSI Executive Director, Dr. Terry Croy Lewis, shares: “We continue to be proud of the increases in the number of students of color, gifted and talented students, students with disabilities, and students with 504 plans within the CSI portfolio over the past five years. CSI staff continue to partner with our schools in accessing resources and implementing strategies to more effectively reach and serve all students.”

The CSI Board recently approved three new school applications. These schools will provide opportunities for historically educationally disadvantaged students to access high-quality education options:

[Kwiyagat Community Academy](#) will be the first charter school located on a Native American reservation in the state of Colorado. The school will offer an educational program that focuses on academics, character, well-being, and community involvement while incorporating the Ute Mountain Ute culture and language to students in grades K-5.

[Prospect Academy](#) plans to open in Jefferson County, serving 5-12<sup>th</sup> grade initially and building out to serve K-12<sup>th</sup> students. As a charter public school, Prospect Academy is open to all students, and it will have a specific focus on serving students with diagnoses of autism, dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, and ADHD, or those who might have similar profiles or learning styles to these diagnoses.

[Pueblo School for Arts & Sciences \(PSAS\) e-Learning Academy](#) is planning to serve K-8 students, primarily in and around the Pueblo region in an online format and seeks to mirror the student demographics of Pueblo. The school is part of the PSAS network that was established in 1995 and now includes two brick and mortar campuses and a homeschool enrichment program.

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### ***About the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI)***

*CSI is a statewide charter public school authorizer in Colorado, currently authorizing 42 schools from Durango to Steamboat Springs, Grand Junction to Colorado Springs and serving over 20,000 PK-12 students. As a charter authorizer, CSI focuses on the outputs—that is, the quantitative evaluation of academic, organizational, and financial school performance—providing schools the flexibility to focus on and make decisions about inputs like instructional strategies, educational programming, internal assessment system, facility selection, and staffing. The focus on outcomes rather than processes allows CSI to be neutral on educational model and maintain a diverse portfolio of school models, which include Classical, Early College, Alternative, and Montessori models. Learn more at [www.csi.state.co.us](http://www.csi.state.co.us) or read our [Media Kit](#), and follow CSI on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*