

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Ute Mountain Ute Charter School Progresses Towards Fall 2021 Opening**

Towaoc, CO (February 4, 2021) – [Kwiyagat Community Academy](#) (KCA), the charter public school approved by the [Charter School Institute](#) (CSI) Board this past fall, is moving closer to making its proposal for an elementary school on the Ute Mountain Ute reservation into a reality.

The CSI Board [conditionally approved](#) the charter application in October and, following the fulfillment of contract conditions, approved the charter contract at its January 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. The charter contract was approved by the Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Council during its January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Tribe Chairman Manuel Heart shared the importance of having an educational option on the Ute Mountain Ute reservation so students can incorporate their past while preparing for their future.

The Ute Mountain Ute Tribal Council has since appointed a five-person Board of Directors to oversee the school's operation and strategic direction.

This charter contract moves the proposed school one step closer to reality and comes shortly after the applicant team, along with CSI, presented to the Colorado State Board of Education.

This information presentation sought to provide background about the unique context for the charter public school, which will be located on the Ute Mountain Ute reservation in the southwest corner of the state. Kwiyagat Community Academy will be the first charter school located on an Indian reservation in Colorado.

"We are proud to authorize a charter school that will serve the Ute Mountain Ute community. Given the uniqueness of this school option, we continue to partner with the Tribe, the Kwiyagat Community Academy team, and the state to navigate this process collaboratively," shares Dr. Terry Croy Lewis, Executive Director of CSI.

As the Kwiyagat Community Academy team continues to make progress in the school's development, it has also recently been awarded grant funding to support its school development efforts:

### **RISE Grant**

Of the nearly 60 teams that applied for the RISE Planning and Design grants this fall, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe with Keystone Policy Center as its Design Support Partner was one of the 15 teams selected to receive the [planning and design grant awards](#). Upon completion of the planning grant, the Tribe submitted its proposal. The Tribe was

recently awarded \$2.7 million for its proposal, which includes Kwiayat Community Academy, to integrate STEAM into Ute arts, language, and culture.

### **Charter School Program Grant**

Kwiayat Community Academy was one of five schools that received the three-year, Colorado Charter School Program (CCSP) Grant. CCSP grants can support reasonable, one-time expenses related to the planning, design, and implementation of a new school. “The Colorado Charter School Program grant of \$210,500 allows Kwiayat Community Academy to purchase the necessary school curriculum materials, facility upgrades, and playground equipment to have a new and fully outfitted school,” shares Richard Fulton, educational consultant and member of the applicant team.

As a public charter school, Kwiayat Community Academy is tuition-free and open to all students. The school is currently enrolling for its inaugural year. For more information, visit the Kwiayat Community Academy website at <https://utekca.org/>.

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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 18,000 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) and follow CSI on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).*