



CSI New School Application



Application Checklist

The Application Checklist should be used by the applicant to ensure all sections of the New School Application as well as any required supporting documentation have been completed. The CSI Review Team will also use this checklist during the Completeness Check process. *Note: Click on each application component to be taken to the corresponding section/requirement of the new school proposal.*

Application Components		Applicant Completeness Check	Reviewer Completeness Check
Letter of Intent		✓	
New School Application Narrative Items to be completed that are found within the New School Application Narrative	New School Application Assurances	✓	
	A. Executive Summary & School Overview	✓	
	B. Evidence of Need, Support, and Involvement	✓	
	C. School Culture	✓	
	D. Education Program	✓	
	E. Student Services	✓	
	F. Goals, Objectives, and Pupil Evaluation	✓	
	G. Budget & Finance	✓	
	H. Governance & Leadership	✓	
	I. Operations	✓	
Required Attachments Items to be completed that require the applicant to create separate attachments	Notice to Geographic District <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	
	Geographic District Board Resolution <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	
	B Letters of Support <i>(include all letters in one folder)</i>	✓	
	B LOI Form	✓	
	C Discipline Policy	✓	
	D Sample Scope and Sequence	✓	
	D School Calendar	✓	
	D Student Schedule	✓	
	D Homeschool Addendum <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	
	D Preschool Addendum <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	
	D Online Addendum <i>if applicable</i>	✓	
	D AEC Addendum <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	
	G Budget <i>(using CSI budget template)</i>	✓	
	H Conflict of Interest Policy	✓	
	H Board Matrix	✓	
	H Resumes of Board Members	✓	
	H Board Member Agreement	✓	
	H Board Bylaws	✓	
	H Articles of Incorporation	✓	
	I Enrollment Policy	✓	
	I Grievance Policy	✓	
	I Waiver Request	✓	
	I Organizational Chart	✓	
	I Service Provider Agreements <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	
	I School Leader Resume <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	
	I School Leader Evaluation	✓	
	I Educator Evaluation	✓	
	I Start Up Plan	✓	
	I Facility Documentation <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	
	I ESP Addendum <i>if applicable</i>	N/A	
Electronic copy of entire application		✓	



New School Application Assurances

By signing below and submitting a New School Application to the Colorado Charter School Institute, the Applicant hereby affirms the following:

- The Applicant is one or more individuals, a nonprofit, governmental, or other entity or organization (§22-30.5-510, C.R.S.)
- All individuals, corporations, or other entities associated with the Applicant and the New School Application have been identified using legal names, and any aliases, prior names, or business names have been included in the application.
- The proposed school will at all times during the term of any charter contract be organized as a Colorado nonprofit organization established and operated solely for the educational purposes described in the charter contract (§22-30.5-507, C.R.S.)
- The Applicant has reviewed and accepts the Voluntary Dispute Resolution procedures contained in the CSI Model New School Contract and the Applicant agrees that such provisions will be included in any charter contract (§22-30.5-509(r), C.R.S., §22-30.5-107.5, C.R.S.)
- The Applicant complies and shall continue to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, ancestry, disability, need for special education services, or any other protected class.

Printed Name: Amber Robinson

Signature: 

Date: July 19, 2025

A. Executive Summary & School Overview

1. Provide an Executive Summary and School Overview.

a) Provide an overview of the proposed school. *This overview should include:*

- *The proposed school's name, grade levels to be served, school model, proposed region/community in which the school will be located.*
- *Student body to be served, such as key demographic data, targeted geographic area, etc.*
- *A description of the need for this school model offering the proposed grade levels for the target population in the proposed community.*
- *A description of the various forms of community support garnered to date.*
- *A short explanation of the key features of the educational program the school will implement to accomplish its vision and mission in alignment with the selected school model and support the needs of the anticipated student population.*
- *Any other unique features, such as a non-traditional school year, longer school day, key partner organizations, multiple campuses, school culture, preschool, online offerings, etc.*

Colearn Academy Colorado (CAC) will serve students across the state in all grade levels (K-12), seeking a target population of “curious, engaged families.” These families have expectations and ambitions which can not fully be served by local district schools, current charter schools, or even current online schools. These families may have considered or attempted to homeschool and/or “unschool,” and may be doing so currently. They desire a more rigorous, real-world, and relevant learning opportunity than what is available to them in the current crop of Colorado online charter schools, and therefore CAC seeks to improve upon the outdated, online instructional model that has received widespread criticism of poor learning outcomes.

Colearn Academy is unlike any other virtual school out there. It is not strictly a virtual school. Students learn in their homes, using real-world experiences, books, and online resources. Students also participate in live and interactive virtual classes and clubs, and have the opportunity to engage their peers through monthly field trips, community service projects, and local events. Students demonstrate mastery through a range of holistic assessment techniques including projects and personalized learning PATHs — a personalized learning plan that accounts for Proficiency, Achievement, Talent, and Heart — in addition to benchmark and state assessments. They are monitored and encouraged by their Program Mentor (a consultant similar to a paraprofessional in a traditional school), and their Educational Specialist, which is a teacher credentialed in the state of Colorado assigned to oversee the student's progress.

CAC is built on an innovative model in which far greater student learning is unleashed by moving beyond the limited, brick-and-mortar school building. Colearn Academy is an online public charter school, and as such, student achievement is made possible by — but certainly not limited to — online learning. All Colearn students have unlimited access to the highest quality digital curriculum in an online learning environment, and mastery of skills, competencies, and standards are continually assessed to then generate students' responsive recommended learning paths online. Additionally, Colearn students form an active and engaged community within and outside their online school environment. The Colearn online platform surfaces high-rigor and high-relevance engagement opportunities and facilitates “colearning” in the world and the students' communities.

The need for this school model in Colorado is significant and timely. Colorado has long had a strong and values-driven homeschooling community, and the number of families seeking nontraditional schooling options has surged since the pandemic. Many of these families desire more structure, academic guidance, and social opportunities than traditional homeschooling provides, yet they do not want to return to rigid, one-size-fits-all school environments. Meanwhile, many full-time online programs in the state are underperforming academically and fail to offer truly personalized, engaging learning experiences. Colearn Academy Colorado seeks to meet this growing demand for flexible, high-quality public education with a research-informed, learner-centered model that prioritizes academic excellence, whole-child development, and authentic community connection for students in grades K-12.

In addition to the general demand for flexible, high-quality learning options, Colearn Academy Colorado addresses several specific and unmet needs in the state. Many home-educating families want to maintain their role as the primary educator but recognize the value of structure, accountability, and external support to ensure their children stay on track academically. Colearn offers this accountability in a collaborative and non-intrusive way, providing regular assessments, progress monitoring, and access to certified teachers while still allowing families to direct their child's day-to-day learning.

There is also a pressing need for students with special needs who are learning from home to receive the full spectrum of services and supports they are entitled to. Many virtual and homeschool models struggle to meet these students' IEP goals in meaningful ways. Colearn Academy is uniquely positioned to deliver high-quality special education services in a virtual setting, with a proven model that includes individualized support, progress tracking, and a strong team of specialists. Finally, Colearn's enrichment funds open the door for educational opportunities that would otherwise be cost-prohibitive for many families, allowing them to invest in curriculum, community programs, extracurriculars, and learning tools that truly enrich each student's educational experience.

Colearn Academy makes learning experiences possible for enrolled families through an online charter school with a best-in-class digital learning platform, access to proven curriculum, funding, and coordination/facilitation of in-person engagement opportunities for all enrolled students. Colearn Academy is committed to high expectations for our students, and we believe it is possible to maintain those high expectations while delivering a highly personalized educational experience.

The Colearn model has already seen great success as a charter school in Arizona and is opening in South Carolina in the fall of 2025. Colearn Academy Arizona opened for the 2021-2022 school year. During the course of that school year, and the ensuing student successes that were observed, along with excited parents and students, it was apparent that this innovative "colearning" model could increase student success in other states. Thus, the founding team was formed and began researching the possibility of opening another independent school in other states. Colearn Academy has a proven track record of operating, staffing, general management, professional development and technology development for both homeschooled students and Charter School students. This expertise is what will be utilized at Colearn Academy Colorado.

Colearn Academy sees a need for an innovative virtual school in Colorado. The state has always had a formative and impactful homeschool community, which has grown even larger after the pandemic. We want to be a conduit to these families — families who want to homeschool, but don't want to do it alone — as well as other families that would like to transition to at-home learning. We have found that families are craving more support that Colearn can provide through its model, as well as through live sessions, clubs, field trips, and one-day dropoff communities.

To date, Colearn has already begun forming a strong foundation of community support in Colorado, including the following groups:

- Colorado families who intend to enroll their children if approved
- Community members who believe this model supports educational choice
- Education advocates who see this model as complementary to existing homeschool and charter offerings
- Local business owners who support the school's emphasis on parent partnership, enrichment, and community-based engagement

Additionally, two members of the founding team live in Colorado while working remotely at Colearn Academy Arizona. They have been approached by many curious families who would like to see the Colearn model find success in Colorado.

Informational meetings and outreach events have been held virtually and in person to introduce families and potential partners to the Colearn model. Through surveys and family feedback loops, hundreds of interested

families have expressed a desire for this kind of hybrid-at-home learning option in Colorado. Local homeschool leaders, microschool organizers, and educational vendors have also shown interest in supporting the model and participating in regional engagement events. Colearn is actively building a network of community learning facilitators and partners across the state to support enrichment opportunities, field trips, and service-learning projects. (Letters of support have been provided as attachments to indicate the local community support across the state of Colorado.) This grassroots support confirms what the data and interest suggest: Colorado families are eager for an education option that provides both freedom and support.

b) Provide vision and mission statements. *The vision and mission narrative should:*

- *Provide a clear, focused, and compelling purpose for the school.*
- *Address how the school will help CSI achieve its mission of fostering high quality schools that serve all students.*
- *Articulate how the vision and mission will be measured (i.e. what will success look like)*
- *Be focused on educational outcomes*

The mission of Colearn Academy Colorado is to inspire, enable and empower all students to be responsible, resilient and personally successful in a rapidly changing world. Our vision is to ensure our students discover their interests and passions, create authentic work, and harness curiosity and motivation to pursue accelerated learning with connections to their peers, adult mentors, communities, and the world. Given the right trust, tools and support, parents and mentors will make the world a classroom that always serves their children. By partnering with parents and technology, Colearn enables the pursuit of extraordinary learning.

This mission and vision provide a clear, focused, and compelling purpose: to personalize education so that each student is prepared to thrive both academically and personally. Colearn Academy Colorado reimagines the educational experience by blending digital learning, community connection, and real-world application. Through this approach, the school builds the skills students need to become lifelong learners, independent thinkers, and engaged citizens.

This purpose directly aligns with the Colorado Charter School Institute's (CSI) mission to foster high-quality charter schools that serve all students. Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to serving a diverse statewide student population, including those historically underserved by traditional models — such as homeschooled learners, students needing flexibility, and those seeking more rigorous or enriched learning paths. By emphasizing student agency, academic rigor, and access to meaningful support systems, CAC supports CSI's commitment to quality, equity, and innovation.

Success will be measured through a combination of academic achievement and personal growth. Key indicators will include:

- Student proficiency and growth on Colorado Academic Standards
- Completion and reflection on personalized PATH plans (Proficiency, Achievement, Talent, and Heart)
- Participation in authentic learning experiences, including projects, fieldwork, and service learning
- High levels of student engagement, attendance, and retention
- Strong parent and student satisfaction as reported through surveys and feedback loops
- Postsecondary readiness as demonstrated through early college/career exploration and skill development

Ultimately, educational outcomes will be at the center of Colearn's work, ensuring that every student makes measurable progress, feels known and supported, and is empowered to take ownership of their learning journey.

c) Address the founding team's capacity to execute the vision and mission articulated in this application and how they will serve the school's educational program and operations.

Amber Robinson and Becki Krueger lead the founding team. Amber is an experienced and passionate educator. With 17 years of experience as an educator, mentor teacher, curriculum developer, department lead, and school administrator, she brings an innovative approach to fostering a culture of academic excellence, student engagement, and empowering families to partner with the school to promote student success both inside and outside of the classroom. Amber currently serves as the Executive Director of Colearn Academy Arizona and assisted in opening the school in its first year as the Math Content Lead. Becki Krueger is the founder and owner of Education Compliance Services. She has been aiding Colearn with its expansion plans, as well as serving as a board member in Arizona, providing an expertise in financial compliance, grant management, and integrity. Most recently, Becki served as the Interim Chief Financial Officer for Edkey schools in Arizona, where she played a critical role in supporting the network's financial turnaround. Her work included stabilizing budgets, improving financial reporting systems, and aligning fiscal practices with state and federal requirements. Becki brings decades of experience in charter school finance and operations, with a strong reputation for transparency and accountability.

Colearn teachers Courtney Cullen and Taylor Bennett round out the Colearn Academy Colorado founding team, both of whom live and work in Colorado. Courtney currently serves as the K-3 content lead and teacher for Colearn Academy Arizona. She has been a teacher for over 15 years, and her passion for education has only grown stronger with time. As a homeschooling mom of four and one of the founding educators at Colearn, she's deeply committed to supporting families on their unique learning journeys. She loves helping parents discover what works best for their children and finding a homeschooling and educational approach that truly fits their needs. She believes every family deserves guidance, encouragement, and the freedom to learn in a way that works for them. Taylor Bennett is an experienced virtual educator and Secondary Math Content Lead who brings a decade of K-12 teaching and leadership to Colearn Academy Colorado's founding team. Recognized for her commitment to student success and family partnerships, Taylor specializes in creating engaging, standards-aligned online learning that supports every learner.

With their combined experience, all members of the founding team will be able to execute the vision and mission of Colearn Academy Colorado with equal attention to school operations and the educational program.

NOTE: The application, in its entirety, should reflect the vision and mission of the school and should be observable throughout the application. Other than the vision and mission, all other information included in the Executive Summary and School Overview should reflect the information presented in the corresponding section of the application.

B. Evidence of Need, Support, and Involvement

CSI seeks to foster high quality school options that serve all students and are reflective of the communities in which they are located. To that end, CSI prioritizes proposals that seek to serve a similar or higher percentage of special populations than the identified community. Community stakeholders including families, organizations, and other community members, whom the application team engaged to learn of the aspirations and needs of the community and seek input into the design of the proposed school. Community stakeholders can include members of the community in the proposed region/community in which the school will be located as well as members of the community that might be interested in the proposed school.

Target Student Population

1. Identify the projected number of students that will be enrolled.

- a. Complete the table identifying the anticipated number of students enrolled at each grade level¹ for each of the first five years of operation.

Grade	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
PreK3					
PreK4					
K	18	23	25	32	35
1	20	25	30	30	40
2	22	24	30	35	42
3	23	25	29	35	42
4	20	28	30	34	42
5	22	25	32	35	42
6	27	28	30	36	42
7	23	33	32	35	40
8	25	27	35	38	40
9	10	28	30	38	40
10	10	20	30	35	40
11	5	19	22	35	40
12	5	10	20	32	40
TOTAL	230	315	375	450	525

- b. Provide the rationale for how the projected enrollment and the matriculation plan were determined. Applicants should ensure projected enrollment reflects data collected from an assessment of desire and need by the community for this school (which may include evidence such as intent to enroll forms received to date, data on the capacity of existing schools in the local community, geographic enrollment trends, etc.).

Colearn Academy Colorado anticipates full enrollment in grades K-12 in our first year. School leaders have met with our targeted demographic, which includes home educating families, local homeschool groups, preschool groups, Waldorf groups, nature study groups, and moms' groups, resulting in a core group of interested families. Many of these meetings have been one-on-one with interested families who have expressed support and interest in the Colearn model. These preliminary meetings and interest groups are the basis for our first year enrollment number of 230.

Colearn Academy also participates in various social media groups for families, the homeschooling community, as well as the special needs community. The enrollment progression over the next five years is conservative, so we can build capacity as we grow in enrollment. We have a strong focus on marketing, while not sacrificing

¹ For applications that seek to serve preschool students, please complete the preschool addenda linked in the Educational Program section in question 16.

a quality education for our students. Based on enrollment trends for the early years of Colearn Academy Arizona and South Carolina, Colearn projects similar enrollment trends within Colorado. CAC is utilizing similar recruitment and enrollment strategies as were used in Arizona and South Carolina to engage families. These targeted strategies are used as these states have comparable student populations, as well as homeschool communities, thus serving as the basis for the growth plan illustrated. CAC expects to be at full capacity in Year 5 with 525 students in grades K-12.

2. Describe the target student population² you are proposing to serve.

- a. Complete the table showing the anticipated demographics of the proposed school as well as the demographics of the district in which you are proposing to locate as a point of comparison and, if appropriate, nearby districts or schools.**

Year	% Students of Color*	% Free/ Reduced Lunch Eligible	% Special Education	% Multi-Lingual Learner	% Gifted
Anticipated Demographics	45%	40%	10%	10%	5%
Demographics of the Geographic District	50%	36%	9%	15%	4%
Demographics of Nearby District or Schools	*50% *Based on statewide as an AOI.	*45% *Based on statewide as an AOI.	*13% *Based on statewide as an AOI.	*12% *Based on statewide as an AOI.	*8% *Based on statewide as an AOI.
<i>*For the purposes of consistency throughout the application and comparability to publicly available district and state data, use the following definition of students of color within your application materials. Students of color is defined as all non-White federal race categories: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African America, Hispanic or Latino, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.</i>					

- b. Provide the rationale for how the projected demographics were determined. If the school's anticipated demographics do not closely reflect the geographic district in which the school is proposing to locate or nearby districts as applicable, provide rationale for the variance.**

As a virtual school that will serve students statewide, we do not intend to enroll students from specific districts. Using statewide educational outcomes as our guide, the rationale for selecting our location and student body are driven by the greatest needs that we see in Colorado. Serving the entire state, Colearn Academy Colorado will be able to focus its recruitment efforts on under-resourced and rural communities, as well as communities with higher proportions of low-income students, where our effective and innovative model will have the most impact. While we hope to serve underserved students statewide, we also may be able to focus outreach in more specific geographic areas that are considerable drive time to high quality schools. Students in rural communities often lack access to resources found in densely populated cities for enrichment and engagement.

Colearn Academy Colorado, operating under the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI), is designed to serve a diverse group of learners across the state, including rural families, students with medical or unique needs, multilingual learners, and those seeking a more personalized educational environment. Our target demographics (45% students of color, 40% eligible for free/reduced lunch, 10% special education, 10% multilingual learners, 5% gifted) reflect both our equity-focused mission and regional demand.

Comparative Context

² For applications that seek to serve students identified as high-risk and seek designation as an Alternative Education Campus, please complete the AEC addenda linked in the Educational Program section in question 16.

- CSI-authorized schools statewide currently enroll around 50% students of color, 36% eligible for free/reduced lunch, 9% with IEPs, 15% multilingual learners, and 4% gifted.³
- Overall, schools throughout Colorado reflect similar diversity (50% students of color), with 45% in FRL, 13% in special education, 12% multilingual learners, and approximately 8% identified as gifted.

Colearn Academy Colorado will focus on ensuring enrollment reflects the demographics of the state and will monitor these figures quarterly.

Existing Performance & Educational Options

3. Describe the educational options currently available to your target population. *In your description of existing options, applicants should include:*

- *Existing schools and school models in the local community serving the same grade level as the proposed school*
- *Programmatic offerings and other characteristics of local schools (ex: before/after school, transportation, food service, grade levels, extracurriculars)*

Colorado families seeking educational alternatives have a range of options, including traditional district schools, innovation schools, charter schools, magnet programs, and online or hybrid learning environments. However, options that offer the same level of personalized, flexible, and parent-partnered learning as Colearn Academy Colorado remain limited, especially for students who benefit from non-traditional learning models.

Existing Schools and School Models

In communities across Colorado, particularly those served by the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI), most schools serving grades K-12 operate as either:

- Traditional brick-and-mortar district schools, offering in-person, standardized instruction,
- Charter schools, with varying themes (e.g., STEM, classical, Montessori), or
- Full-time online schools, such as Colorado Connections Academy or Colorado Preparatory Academy, which typically offer highly structured virtual instruction with limited parent partnership.

While these models may work for many students, they often do not provide the hybrid flexibility, hands-on learning options, and family-coaching support that Colearn families seek.

Programmatic Offerings & Characteristics of Local Schools

Most local educational options offer:

- Standard academic programming aligned to state standards,
- Extracurriculars such as sports, clubs, and fine arts (largely tied to traditional campuses),
- Before/after-school care at elementary levels (if space and funding allow),
- Transportation limited to district-assigned zones, often not available for choice or charter students,
- Food service, especially in FRL-eligible schools,
- Limited parent-directed or experiential learning opportunities, particularly in full-time virtual programs.

Notably, many full-time online programs do not incorporate community-based partnerships or project-based learning, which are key features of Colearn Academy Colorado's model.

At-home Learning Communities

Colorado also has a large and active homeschooling population. Families can choose to homeschool under the state's homeschool law, enroll in an umbrella (or independent) school, or participate in public school enrichment or part-time programs. However, these options often come with tradeoffs:

³ Colorado CSI 2022-2023 Annual Report, "Championing Charters"

- Traditional homeschooling requires families to manage all aspects of instruction, assessment, and compliance independently, with limited access to special education services or state funding.
- Umbrella schools offer varying levels of support but often lack oversight or alignment with public school expectations.
- Public school enrichment programs, offered through districts or some charter schools, are generally limited to specific geographic areas and have varying quality, consistency, and funding availability.

These homeschool options, while valuable, often leave parents feeling overwhelmed or unsupported, especially when navigating special education services, high-quality curriculum choices, or access to enrichment opportunities. There are few programs like Colearn Academy Colorado that provide both the flexibility of educating at home and the robust support of a public school.

4. Describe the overall academic performance of schools located near the proposed school and the geographic district overall. *This description should include:*

- *A review of achievement, growth, postsecondary and workforce readiness (if applicable).*
- *The performance of student groups (students of color, free/reduced lunch eligible, special education, multilingual learners, and gifted) within the context of overall school performance.*
- *A focus on the specific geographic area, student population, and grade level(s) that the applicant proposes to serve.*

Because Colearn Academy Colorado is a virtual school serving students statewide, it is not limited to enrolling students from a single geographic district. However, using statewide academic performance data, we find that many rural and under-resourced communities across Colorado continue to face significant academic challenges, including lower proficiency rates and limited access to high-quality educational opportunities compared to urban areas. By locating our virtual program in Colorado, we aim to serve students in areas with lower overall academic performance, particularly in communities that are geographically distant from high-performing schools. This approach allows us to address academic gaps and provide innovative learning opportunities to students who may otherwise have limited options.

CSI evaluates its schools through the Annual Review of Schools (CARS), using Colorado's four-part School Performance Framework: Achievement, Growth, Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness, and subgroup performance.⁴ In recent years, high-performing CSI schools, such as Stone Creek Charter, have earned "Performance with Distinction" ratings, indicating they surpass statewide benchmarks in achievement and growth, and meet postsecondary readiness standards.

The 2025 Colorado Charter Schools Performance Report highlights that charter schools, including many CSI-authorized schools, generally outperform traditional district schools. Notably, they deliver stronger academic growth for traditionally underserved students, including those who are low-income or multilingual.⁵ A national meta-analysis shows that Colorado charter students gain an additional ~8 days of reading and math progress annually, with particularly strong results (+14-43 days) for subgroups like MLLs, students of color, and low-income students.

While student performance varies significantly by district, many public schools serving our target grades (K-12) face challenges:

- District schools often show average proficiency rates on CMAS exams, with growth metrics that frequently hover around median statewide norms.
- Subgroup analysis reveals persistent gaps: most district schools see lower growth and achievement among students of color, FRL-eligible students, multilingual learners, and students with IEPs. Gifted students typically perform well but often drive overall averages upward, masking equity gaps.

⁴ CSI Annual Review of Schools (CARS)

⁵ 2025 Colorado Charter Schools Performance Report

CSI high schools are held to performance standards including graduation rates, ACT/SAT benchmarks, and remediation-free college entry. They often exceed state averages, especially when schools earn top tier CARS ratings.⁶ In contrast, conventionally-authorized district schools show more variability. For example, some alternative campuses (e.g., Colorado High School Charter-GES) receive “Yellow” SPF ratings and rank low on college readiness, with graduation rates below state norms and limited standardized test outcomes

Colearn Academy Colorado's target grades (specify K-12 mix) and anticipated population (45% students of color, 40% FRL, 10% SPED, 10% MLL, 5% Gifted) align with subgroups that get proven boosts in charter environments:

- Colorado charter schools authorized through CSI have demonstrated strong outcomes specifically for FRL, SPED, and MLL populations.
- District schools, while providing core services, struggle to deliver similar subgroup-level growth and readiness, creating a clear opportunity for Colearn’s model to fill that gap.

CSI-authorized schools outperform district counterparts in achievement, growth, and readiness — notably for traditionally underserved students. This strong track record, together with Colorado’s equity imperative, positions Colearn Academy Colorado to effectively meet the needs of its target student population and offer a compelling, high-quality alternative.

5. Describe the extent to which the school will provide an educational option that substantially differs from the educational opportunities provided by existing schools of the local community. *Applicants should consider:*

- *Availability of proposed school model in the geographic area.*
- *Factors such as academic and non-academic programming, curriculum and instruction, academic performance, etc.*
- *Capacity of existing schools and/or demonstrated success in supporting the target population*

Colearn Academy Colearn is built on an innovative model — one that is already demonstrating efficacy in Arizona at Colearn Academy Arizona and South Carolina — in which far greater student learning is unleashed by moving beyond the limited, brick-and-mortar school building. CAC is an online public charter school, and as such, student achievement is made possible by — but certainly not limited to — online learning. All CAC students have unlimited access to the highest quality digital curriculum aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards in an online learning environment, and mastery of skills, competencies, and standards are continually assessed to then generate students’ responsive recommended learning paths online. In addition to time online, CAC students form an active and engaged community within their community. The Coleran online platform surfaces high rigor and high relevance engagement opportunities and facilitates “colearning” in the world and the students’ communities.

Our guiding beliefs also set our model far apart from the schools that are now serving our targeted student population:

- We believe that traditional schooling limits students’ creativity and individuality.
- We believe that traditional classroom settings with one or two teachers do not and cannot, structurally, allow students even a fraction of the access to talent, teaching, and mentorship that they need and deserve.
- We believe that education is more effective through “pull” rather than “push.”
- We believe that “school” and “home” must operate in harmony in order for students to make the greatest growth.
- We believe that there is no need to wait — and every reason to move forward — for a technology-enabled, transformed school model that delivers the true promise of an engaging, effective education community beyond the four walls of a traditional school.

⁶ CARS Reports

- As the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated, the world is rapidly-changing, at times at an unstable pace. We cannot predict the future; however, we believe that we must diversify learning opportunities to ensure our students' access to high-quality learning materials.
- We believe that parent engagement and support is critically important to students' learning success and students' engagement. A key component of enrollment and onboarding at Colearn Academy includes resources and workshops geared specifically toward parents.

The learning environment at Colearn Academy Colorado will be virtual, hybrid, independent self-study, and asynchronous project-based learning — with an innovative mix of class and group formats, learning modalities, and experiential learning. The class size will vary, depending on enrollment in each grade level. We anticipate assigning no more than 40 students to each teacher. Program Mentors will work with smaller groups of students, acting as a paraprofessional as in a traditional brick-and-mortar school. Thus, they ensure students stay on track, complete their work and projects, meet educational goals, and have opportunities for educational experiences and internships outside of the virtual classroom hours — creating an individualized learning experience for each student. Each family and Program Mentor who works with the students has the opportunity to design and facilitate a learning environment that best meets the needs of learners and motivates them for academic achievement. This includes accommodations for students with an IEP or strategies that best serve special populations, such as MLL students or gifted and talented students. Program Mentors will be guided by and work alongside the classroom teachers, or Education Specialists, in order to ensure all students meet or exceed expectations of the Colorado Academic Standards and provide guidance for differentiating based on the curriculum and needs of the students.

Meet our Student Personas

Through Colearn Academy Colorado, students like Sophia and Edward — student personas introduced below — discover a cornucopia of resources, both online and in their communities. When they log in to the Colearn portal and work with their parents/guardians and our staff, they find programs, courses, experiences, places, mentors, and teachers for both the core curriculum and their interest-based pursuits.

SOPHIA

Sophia's mom has always seen a precocious side to Sophia. In school, however, Sophia struggled with reading, got average marks in math, and had shallow/nonexistent relationships with most of her peers. Finally, in 3rd grade, Sophia's mother Maria made the difficult decision to pull her out of traditional public school and try homeschooling.

That decision, however, was hardly the most difficult part. Maria had to start from scratch finding appropriate curriculum, organizing social outings and cultivating a support network. Maria saw improvement in Sophia every day. However, at the end of the year, Maria was not certain that she would be able to keep up with the demands, both mental and financial, of schooling Sophia at home. Luckily, Maria heard about CAC from a friend.

At the start of Sophia's 4th grade year, Maria suddenly had access to the top-notch online curriculum provided by Colearn Academy. Maria had always felt confident in guiding Maria through her work, but was slightly worried that she might "miss something" — that is, forget to teach a state standard. The online curriculum, aligned to state standards, solved that issue. With enrichment funding provided by Colearn Academy, Sophia was able to join the local youth soccer league where she began two close, flourishing relationships with peers. At sessions led by Colearn Academy's content lead teachers, Sophia found that she had a natural predisposition to coding in the Construct3 programming language. Sophia caught up in reading and finished her "grade-level" work in March of the school year and had time to teach herself about opera costume design.

A Colearn Academy 4th Grade Student

Sophia's "School Year"



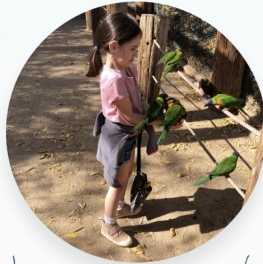
Music & Fine Arts

- Online recorder lessons
- Attends monthly musical concerts
- Saw community college's productions of the Nutcracker and Cinderella with nearby Colearn students



Experiential Learning

- Milked a cow and learned about the food supply chain at a small dairy
- Took a tour of the mirror lab at University of Arizona and learned how the telescopes on Mt. Lemmon in Tucson are constructed



Academics

- Closed reading gap
- Finished all "grade-level" coursework by mid-march
- Completed 1.5 grade levels in an adaptive online reading curriculum
- Took public speaking course



Academic Enrichment

- Joined youth soccer league
- Sold handmade bracelets at farmer's market
- Learned how to code and created a "happy bird" clone that she and friends play

EDWARD

Edward disenrolled from his local school at the age of 15. In his first year of "colearning," he explored the performing arts (playing the lead character in a Shakespearean play, attending eight operas, four plays, five bluegrass concerts, three classical concerts; and, he learned to play Swing, Jazz, and Blues on Violin), creative writing (wrote a novel and submitted it into a national competition and edited his uncle's memoir), science (completed a solar energy experiment, presented it at a science fair, and attended a wind tunnel test). Simultaneously, he also completed more than a full year of core coursework. He passed three semesters' worth of math and a year of each of the following: English, Geography, Anatomy, and German, as well as AP Biology. To boot, Edward enriched his interest in Biology with college-level courses in Regenerative Medicine and Bioethics.

A Colearn Academy High School Student

Edward's "School Year"



Music & Fine Arts

- 8 live Operas, 4 plays, 5 Bluegrass Concerts, 3 Classical Concerts, 1 Bagpipe Concert, 1 Rock Concert
- Played the Lead in a Shakespearean play
- Learned Swing, Jazz, & Blues on Violin



Experiential Learning

- Disassembled Washing Machine with Friends
- Attended Historic Wind Tunnel Test
- Saw Record-Breaking Landing of Solar Airplane



Academics

- 2 Semesters of Geometry, 1 Semester of Algebra II, Advanced AP Biology, Regenerative Medicine Series, Bioethics Seminar, Anatomy & Physiology Class, English, Geography, and German Classes



Academic Enrichment

- 2-Month Solar Energy Experiment and Science Fair
- National Novel Writing Competition
- Edited Uncle's Memoir (Now on Amazon)

This is colearning. This is the promise of what Colearn Academy makes possible for students for whom traditional schooling might be holding them back rather than lifting them up.

The average school day for a Colearn student varies from their experience at a nearby school. Students and families have a certain amount of autonomy to begin and end their school day at a time that works best for them. They also can choose their physical space and environment for learning. While CAC provides recommended daily schedules, families and students can adjust these based on their daily or weekly needs. Students are not restricted on working ahead, thus allowing students to advance and progress academically as quickly as meets the student's individual needs. Students have their core academic content to work on, as well as electives and enrichment and experiential learning. Students and families are able to select these based on their strengths, aptitudes, and interests of the student in partnership with the CAC Program Mentors and Teachers. The primary difference between the CAC experience and a nearby school is how much the learning experience and environment are tailored to the individual student.

Evidence of Support

6. **Describe the ways in which local students, families, and organizations in the intended community were engaged regarding the proposed charter school.** *Within this description describe:*
 - *The stakeholders engaged (individuals and organizations), how they became involved with the application, and why the stakeholder believes this proposed school will benefit the community*
 - *A reflection of stakeholders not engaged and potential barriers to their inclusion*
 - *The method and nature of feedback received from community stakeholders and the process for considering that feedback when developing the application*
 - *Strategies used to solicit community input regarding the educational and programmatic needs of students and the plan to meet those needs*
 - *The extent to which the proposal incorporates community input regarding the educational and programmatic needs of students*
 - *How stakeholders can continue to support the proposed schools if the application is approved*
 - *Include letters of support for each notable stakeholder group identified in this section that addresses how the organization will support the school as appropriate. Letters should be included as attachments.*

The development of Colearn Academy Colorado has been shaped by direct input and enthusiasm from families, educators, and community members across the state. Our model was not designed in isolation; it

reflects the voices of those who have expressed a desire for a flexible, family-partnered public school that meets the needs of students learning from home.

Stakeholders Engaged

Stakeholders include Colorado families who are currently homeschooling or enrolled in online programs, local educators, especially teachers affiliated with Colearn Academy Arizona who reside in Colorado, and community members who support innovative, personalized education models. Several teachers currently working at Colearn Academy Arizona have strong ties to Colorado and have organically shared the model with friends, neighbors, and parent networks in their communities. These conversations have generated consistent feedback that the Colearn model would fill a much-needed gap in the state, offering structure, support, and resources for families who wish to educate at home but do not want to do it alone.

We also launched an interest survey to gather data from Colorado families. The survey reached homeschooling communities, Facebook groups, educational co-ops, and parent forums. Responses indicated high interest in a school that combines flexible curriculum choices, live virtual instruction, enrichment funding, and special education services. Many parents shared that they were looking for an option that allows them to remain deeply involved in their child's learning while accessing the benefits of a public education system.

Feedback Process and Community Input

Feedback from families and educators has played a central role in shaping this proposal. Recurring themes included a desire for:

- Flexibility in curriculum and scheduling
- Meaningful access to live classes and clubs
- Local field trips and in-person engagement opportunities
- Funding for educational tools and extracurriculars
- Support for students with special needs in a virtual or home-based setting
- A school that respects the role of the parent while offering accountability and high expectations

This feedback was used to inform key design elements of Colearn Academy Colorado, including our program structure, enrichment funding model, staffing plan, and commitment to supporting special populations.

Barriers to Stakeholder Engagement

While we have built strong initial momentum, we acknowledge that there are voices we have not yet reached, particularly in underserved communities, rural areas, and with Spanish-speaking families. Some of these barriers include limited access to digital outreach tools, the decentralized nature of homeschooling communities, and the relatively short timeline between initial interest-gathering and proposal submission. As we move forward, we are committed to expanding our outreach through community events, multilingual materials, and partnerships with local organizations.

Ongoing Stakeholder Support

If the application is approved, we have strong indications that families are ready to enroll, promote the school, and participate in shaping the school's culture and offerings. Teachers and parent advocates in Colorado are eager to assist with outreach, onboarding, and community-building efforts. We plan to continue engaging our community through town halls, family advisory boards, and feedback surveys to ensure Colearn Academy Colorado remains responsive to the needs of the families it serves.

Letters of Support

Attached to this application are letters from a variety of stakeholders, including:

- Colorado families who intend to enroll their children if approved
- Community members who believe this model supports educational choice

- Colearn Academy Arizona staff who reside in Colorado and can speak to the model's success and applicability in the state
- Education advocates who see this model as complementary to existing homeschool and charter offerings
- A local business owner who supports the school's emphasis on parent partnership, enrichment, and community-based engagement

7. **Complete the table below to summarize the Letters of Intent to Enroll (LOI) received to date.** *Given historic trends regarding the relationship between Letters of Intent, projected enrollment, and actual Year 1 enrollment, CSI expects that applicants have more than 100% of Year 1 enrollment in Letters of Intent at the time of application submission. LOI's are considered meaningful if they are from families who will have students eligible for enrollment in the grades served when the proposed school opens if approved. The table below should be completed based on that expectation and should reflect the grades of the prospective students at opening.*

Include the number of LOI's that have been received for Year 1. Counts should be included in the table below by student school district of residence and grade level for Year 1.

	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Statewide	0	15	13	17	22	17	25	18	20	16	9	13	6	4
TOTAL	0	15	13	17	22	17	25	18	20	16	9	13	6	4

8. **If you have received additional LOI's that are not included in the above table for students outside of the proposed grades at opening, provide a summary of other LOI's here.** *If all LOI's received are included in the above table, you do not need to provide a response here.*

Not applicable.

9. **Include the following attachment:**

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
LOI Form	Provide a copy of the Letter of Intent (LOI) form being used to solicit interest in enrollment	B_LOI Form

Opportunities for Family/Community Involvement

10. **Describe the expectations and plans for regular, ongoing, and accessible opportunities for parental and community partnership with the school.** *In your description address:*
- *The plan for building family-school-community partnerships that strengthen support for learning and encourage family involvement*
 - *How family voice is considered in school decision-making*
 - *Any commitments or volunteer activities the school will seek from, offer to, or require of families*
 - *Strategies for ensuring all families can access opportunities for involvement*
 - *Past experiences building family-school-community partnerships and how that impacted this application/approach.*

Colearn Academy Colorado was founded on the belief that parents are partners in their child's education. Because parents are seen as an integral component of the education program, parents and community members have had ample opportunity to provide input and feedback during informational meetings. We believe that listening to parent input and surveys is key to the design of our programs to meet the needs of students.

CAC's target population is "curious, engaged families." These families have expectations and ambitions which can not fully be served by local district schools, current charter schools, or even current online schools. These families may have considered or attempted to homeschool and/or "unschool," and may be doing so currently.

They desire a more rigorous, real-world, and relevant learning opportunity than what is available to them currently.

Most importantly, CAC fosters deep integration among students, its parents/guardians, and the curriculum. CAC will break from the traditional “put your child in front of a computer and hope he/she learns” approach to online education, and will instead create a new tradition of supporting and empowering parents. CAC makes parent involvement in online instruction the new norm by offering training and resources. CAC allows parents wide latitude to help select supplemental curriculum for their children. Thus, parents have heightened levels of “buy-in” to the educational process, while students legitimately benefit from a “custom-made” curriculum co-created by someone who loves them, knows them, and has a genuine interest in their success. Current online instruction methodologies — no matter how well-intentioned — cannot offer this level of differentiated instruction because the instruction is divorced from physical interactions.

CAC recognizes that not all parents will be able to oversee their child’s education; however, it is still the school’s goal to keep parents engaged in student learning and success. All parents are invited and welcome to attend our monthly parent workshops. These workshops provide parents the opportunity to connect with other families and receive high quality professional development from experts in the field of education. The Colearn portal also allows for opportunities for families to connect through a family directory, finding other Colearn families within their communities.

Our Education Specialist staff role will engage at least monthly with families, as well as take meetings upon request. Parents will also be able to request 1:1 time with the teacher. During these monthly check-ins, the teacher will give an overview of how they observe progress, address any changing situations or evolving needs, and make recommendations on how to proceed with the learners so they can best succeed.

Colearn Academy Colorado provides a set of services that makes learning outside of the classroom radically easier and less stressful for engaged parents and curious kids of all socioeconomic backgrounds. It recreates some of the value-propositions that families get from quality brick-and-mortar schools and makes them available outside of school — things like social interactions, multiple adult support structures, diverse learning opportunities, and direct access to curriculum resources. Families enrolled in CAC do not want to be molded to fit into the confines of traditional schools; they want a radically personalized option that will flex to meet the needs, interests, and passions of their children.

At Colearn Academy, family-school-community partnership is the foundation. Our approach in both Arizona and South Carolina has demonstrated how deeply impactful this integrated partnership can be when it is intentionally designed, consistently nurtured, and locally grounded.

In Arizona, where Colearn Academy has been operating successfully for several years, we have built deep relationships with local communities. Our commitment to parent partnership has led to high retention rates and strong parent satisfaction. We offer regular family events and parent workshops, provide enrichment funds that allow families to choose local vendors and field trips that align with their learning styles, and maintain consistent communication. Over time, we’ve cultivated a robust network of local vendors, educational co-ops, and field trip hosts, all of whom help us provide meaningful real-world experiences for our students.

In South Carolina, we have replicated and adapted this approach with a deep respect for local context. Before our first year officially launched, we held multiple virtual info sessions and engaged directly with families to understand their needs. We’ve partnered with local organizations to host regional vendor fairs to families to learn more about Colearn and local vendors, as well as Back-to-School Kickoff events in the Upstate, Midlands, and Lowcountry. Parents are viewed as co-educators, and our teachers support their role. Our enrollment growth and overwhelming response from families in South Carolina show how deeply this model resonates.

These experiences have directly influenced our approach in Colorado. We are not simply replicating a virtual model. We are bringing a community-based, flexible public education option that respects parent choice, supports diverse learning needs, and actively invests in local community partnerships.

C. School Culture and Discipline

Culture

- 1. Describe the culture⁷ of the proposed school.** Explain how it will promote a positive academic environment and reinforce student intellectual and social development.

Colearn Academy Colorado will promote a positive school culture of engaged learners and families. Because of the freedom of choice within the program, students and families will have opportunities to truly customize learning experiences to the strengths and interests of each child. Students will be able to make real-world connections and application of their learning through enrichment activities, field trips, and project-based learning. High school students will have opportunities for internships to apply their learning and learn more about career paths. All of these programmatic opportunities promote deep intellectual and social development. The reality is that as adults, we have choices in our career paths, work environments, social networks, and more. By fostering a school environment with similar choices and opportunities, students and families have a role in the development of their academic environment in partnership with Colearn Academy. Through enrichment activities and field trips, students can put into practice the academics they have learned in an environment that creates opportunities for socialization. Students will have the opportunity to learn with students of similar interests and develop their social self through these program activities.

Based on all of these instructional and programmatic opportunities for students, a positive school culture and ethos will be developed within the Colearn Academy model. Colearn Academy sees families as partners in the education of their child, with Colearn Academy providing resources and support to facilitate an educational model to fit the needs of the target population and their families. While Colearn Academy has intentionally developed a model that offers virtual learning, it also blends opportunities for social development. By offering enrichment opportunities, field trips, and internships for high school students, Colearn Academy fosters connections to others, real-world application of learning, and intellectual and social development.

- 2. Explain how this culture for students, teachers, administrators, and parents will be established from the first day of school in order to realize the school's mission and within the framework of its academic model.** Include experiences the founding team has developing and sustaining school culture.

Colearn Academy Colorado plans to adopt the following cultural values for all stakeholders — instructional and administrative staff, as well as Program Mentors and students:

- Catalytic Curiosity
- Imaginative Inquiry
- Enthusiastic Engagement
- Deliberate Dedication
- Purposeful Persistence
- Integrated Independence
- Active Accountability
- Model Maturity
- Rigorous Responsibility
- Outward Ownership
- Continuous Contribution
- Aspiring Achievement

During Program Mentor and student onboarding, all community participants will come to understand these values and their deeper meaning, their implications, and their importance in the community culture. Behavior

⁷ *School Culture refers to intentional systems-level environmental, relational, and instruction factors that support students cognitively, socially, and emotionally (Fischer, K.W., & Bidell, T.R., 2006). This may include the following: Mental Health/Trauma Awareness, Behavior/Discipline, Social Emotional Learning, School Safety (physical, social-emotional, identity, academic), Relationships/Connectedness, Equity/Inclusiveness/Cultural Responsiveness, Whole Child Efforts, Student Engagement, Family, School and Community Partnering, Staff Retention and Wellbeing*

that is seen as inconsistent with these values will be noticed, and the instructional team will have a low-stakes, one-on-one meeting with the student and ask to review these values and point to ones where they feel they might improve and give examples of how they might improve.

To establish this culture from the first day of school, Colearn Academy Colorado will embed these values into the onboarding, orientation, and training processes for students, staff, and families. All students and parents will participate in a Welcome Orientation led by Educational Specialists and Program Mentors, which introduces the school's vision, mission, and cultural expectations. Teachers and Program Mentors will model these values through relationship-building, consistent communication, and student-centered coaching. Students will co-develop personalized learning plans (PATHs) that reflect these values in action, fostering ownership and intrinsic motivation from the outset. Classroom routines, daily virtual schedules, and student work habits will be introduced during onboarding to support a consistent structure for learning. Virtual norms, live session etiquette, and field trip expectations will be aligned to these cultural traits to reinforce a cohesive and supportive learning environment.

The Colearn founding team brings extensive experience in developing and sustaining strong school cultures in both brick-and-mortar and virtual settings. In Arizona and South Carolina, the team has successfully built engaged learning communities that blend academic rigor with relational support. This includes designing and launching onboarding pathways, student goal-setting frameworks, Program Mentor training, and a virtual Student Code of Engagement centered on shared values. Colearn's intentional approach to school culture has led to high levels of student retention, family satisfaction, and teacher commitment — all of which will guide the rollout of a thriving school culture in Colorado.

3. Describe the plan for social and emotional development and learning. If the school will use a specific curriculum or approach describe how it will align with the needs of the proposed student population. If no curriculum is planned describe how the school will support all students in developing social and emotional skills.

Colearn Academy Colorado's approach to social and emotional development is intentionally aligned with the Colorado Department of Education's Emotional & Social Wellness (ESW) Standards, which are part of the state's Comprehensive Health & Physical Education standards. Rather than implementing a single, packaged curriculum, Colearn integrates social and emotional learning into every aspect of the student experience — from personalized academic planning to community engagement — ensuring that students build the competencies outlined in the ESW Standards, including self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision-making, social awareness, and relationship-building.

The school's model emphasizes CDE's recommended approach to SEL by embedding it within:

- Daily instruction and academic content, through goal setting and reflection tied to students' PATH (Proficiency, Achievement, Talent, and Heart) plans;
- School-wide practices and culture, including consistent mentor-student relationships, cultural values, and restorative conversations;
- Weekly live sessions for students in K-5, known as "Weekly Wellness," which is made possible through Studies Weekly;
- Family and community partnerships, supported through onboarding, communication, and in-person engagement opportunities.

Every student at Colearn is supported by both an Educational Specialist and a Program Mentor. These adults meet with students regularly to provide guidance, encouragement, and accountability, helping students build critical social and emotional competencies as part of their individualized learning journey. Live class sessions, clubs, and collaborative projects also serve as opportunities for students to practice effective communication, empathy, and group problem-solving.

Additionally, Colearn's regional field trips and service learning events are intentionally designed to foster connection, citizenship, and a sense of belonging. Program Mentors use regular check-ins and coaching to

help students navigate interpersonal challenges, set personal goals, and reflect on growth in a way that supports emotional regulation and resilience.

Because many Colearn families are coming from homeschooling, traditional schools that lacked flexibility, or environments that did not support the whole child, the school prioritizes creating safe, affirming, and developmentally responsive structures from day one. This approach ensures that social and emotional learning is not treated as a separate program, but as a core function of how learning happens, consistent with CDE's guidance.

Colearn Academy Colorado will meet the social and emotional needs of its diverse student population through an integrated, relationship-centered, and values-based approach grounded in the Colorado Emotional & Social Wellness Standards — preparing students to thrive both academically and personally.

4. Explain how the school culture will be supportive and inclusive of students with a variety of needs and backgrounds, including students receiving special education services, multilingual learners, gifted students, and students at risk of academic failure.

Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to building a school culture that is inclusive, supportive, and reflective of the diverse strengths, needs, and identities of all students. Rooted in our core values and aligned with the Colorado Department of Education's commitment to equity and access, the school will foster an environment where every learner — including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, gifted students, and those at risk of academic failure — is empowered to thrive academically and socially.

Our culture begins with intentional relationship-building through the Program Mentor and Educational Specialist model. These roles allow staff to understand each student's academic profile, cultural background, learning style, and social-emotional needs. This knowledge informs how instruction is differentiated, how supports are delivered, and how students are coached to develop agency, persistence, and pride in their learning.

The school's inclusive culture will reflect the expectations outlined in the Colorado Equity Toolkit, which calls for schools to ensure that students feel a sense of belonging, using the five sections of the toolkit provided by CDE:

1. Understanding SELF
2. Understanding OTHERS
3. Understanding CONTEXT
4. Implementation
5. Evaluation

Colearn will establish practices that promote educational equity by:

- Offering Universal Design for Learning (UDL)-aligned instruction to allow multiple pathways for engagement, representation, and expression;
- Providing scaffolded supports for students at risk of academic failure, including weekly check-ins, personalized learning plans, and targeted intervention supports in core content areas;
- Delivering services for students with IEPs and 504 plans, in compliance with IDEA and Section 504, with specially designed instruction provided by certified special education teachers and related service providers;
- Supporting multilingual learners through Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) instruction aligned with Colorado English Language Proficiency (CELP) standards, and ensuring access to high-quality language development supports;
- Challenging gifted and advanced learners through acceleration opportunities, enrichment projects, independent study options, and creative problem-solving aligned with the Colorado Department of Education's Programming Standards for Gifted Education.

Colearn's virtual and real-world learning opportunities allow students to learn in ways that respect and reflect their backgrounds, preferences, and needs. Students can access core content in multiple formats, receive instruction at their just-right level, and engage in community-based projects that make learning personally relevant. Live class sessions, clubs, and field-based events are intentionally designed to support both academic collaboration and social belonging.

By embedding high expectations with flexible, personalized supports, Colearn Academy Colorado will cultivate a learning culture in which all students are valued and included. This approach reflects the CDE's vision of schools that are "equitable, inclusive, and rigorous" and ensures every student has what they need to succeed, not just academically, but as whole people.

Discipline

5. Describe the proposed school's discipline approach and address how it will support the culture described above. This description should include:

- *Practices the school will use to promote positive discipline practices, including both penalties for infractions and incentives for positive behavior*
- *How the school's approach to discipline is culturally responsive, consistent with the school's proposed culture and climate, and provides the opportunity for all students to achieve personal and academic success.*

Colearn Academy Colorado's discipline approach is grounded in restorative, culturally responsive practices that align with the school's inclusive, student-centered culture and are designed to promote personal growth, academic success, and a safe, respectful learning environment for all students.

CAC students must be engaged in curriculum, show weekly evidence of learning, and participate in state testing. Student learning is our focus at CAC. As a diverse community of learners, students must strive to work together in a respectful setting that facilitates our commitment to academic inquiry and reflection. With this in mind, the following behaviors are expected from Colearn students:

- Participation in group dialogue requires respect and mutual consideration of the opinions and ideas of fellow students.
- Offensive comments, language and gestures are not a part of our learning environment.
- Impersonating another person within an online platform is prohibited.
- Students must not share their username and passwords with other students.

An infraction of these expectations that is deemed to be disruptive to the learning environment is cause for removal of a student from an activity, and may result in disciplinary action.

Colearn Academy believes in a proactive and positive approach to discipline. Through the educational program design with its foundation in student choice, students have positive opportunities to look forward to participating. Additionally, because Colearn Academy is a virtual online learning experience, students are working from home and not in a traditional environment. Students have the opportunity to take breaks, including movement throughout their day and scheduling their learning to best meet their needs. This reduces the opportunity for "disciplinary infractions" that are typical in a traditional environment. Parents may also serve as the Program Mentors and monitor student behavior at home. Within an online learning environment, the primary offenses are typically related to academic dishonesty.

The "colearning" model requires a belief that "disciplinary procedures" are a measure of last resort, and that if they are common it is a signal that more systemic challenges must be addressed. Behavior requiring disciplinary action are a "lagging indicator" — the leading indicators are cultural, organizational, and human.

Behavior that is seen as inconsistent with the Colearn cultural values will be noticed, and the instructional team will have a low-stakes, one-on-one meeting with the student and ask to review these values and point to ones

where they feel they might improve and give examples of how they might improve. If the inconsistent behavior continues, they will be asked to follow up in written form. If the inconsistent behavior continues for a third time, the teacher, counselor, or relevant staff member will contact the Program Mentor and set up a meeting. If inconsistent behaviors continue beyond that, a more formal disciplinary process will commence.

6. Provide an explanation of how the school will take into account the rights of students with disabilities in disciplinary actions and proceedings and how the school will review and respond to instances of disproportionality in the administering of discipline.

Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to implementing fair, equitable, and legally compliant disciplinary practices that protect the rights of all students, including students with disabilities. The school will ensure that all disciplinary actions are conducted in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and applicable Colorado Department of Education (CDE) guidance.

In accordance with IDEA, the school will not suspend or expel students with disabilities for behaviors that are a manifestation of their disability without first conducting a Manifestation Determination Review (MDR). If a student with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan is removed from their educational setting for more than 10 consecutive school days (or a pattern of removals exists), the school will initiate an MDR and ensure the student continues to receive educational services as required by law.

To ensure compliance and protect students' rights, Colean Academy Colorado will:

- Develop and follow clear disciplinary procedures that differentiate between general student infractions and behaviors impacted by disability.
- Conduct MDRs within 10 school days of any disciplinary decision that could result in a change of placement.
- Involve the IEP or 504 team — including the parent or guardian — in all decisions regarding disciplinary actions for students with disabilities.
- Provide access to alternative educational services during any period of removal to maintain progress in the general curriculum and support the IEP goals.
- Utilize restorative and instructional approaches whenever possible to reduce exclusionary discipline practices.

The school will also actively monitor and respond to disproportionality in discipline, in alignment with both CDE guidance and federal monitoring requirements under IDEA Section 618. Colean will review disaggregated discipline data regularly to identify trends in suspensions, expulsions, or other consequences based on disability, race/ethnicity, MLL status, or other factors. If disproportionality is identified, the school will take corrective action, which may include:

- Conducting root cause analyses in collaboration with stakeholders,
- Providing staff training in culturally responsive behavior management and de-escalation strategies,
- Adjusting schoolwide discipline policies and practices to reduce implicit bias and increase equity.

Colean's culture is rooted in relationship-based, proactive supports — including the mentorship model, personalized learning, and social-emotional development — designed to minimize the need for punitive discipline in the first place. Staff will receive ongoing training in trauma-informed practices, restorative approaches, and legal obligations under IDEA and Section 504. These efforts will create a safe, inclusive learning environment where discipline is instructional, not exclusionary, and students with disabilities are fully supported.

7. Provide procedures for due process when a student is suspended or expelled as a result of a discipline incident, including a description of the appeal process that the school will employ for

students facing expulsion and a plan for providing services to students who are expelled or out of school for more than ten days.

Culturally, expulsion at Colearn Academy is rare, if not, unheard of, but in the event that a student is expelled, they may appeal through the following steps:

- Request a hearing in front of the Governing Board to determine if the student should be expelled for their behavior. The hearing must take place within 15 days after the expulsion recommendation.
- Parents of the expelled student will be notified in writing of the time and place of the hearing. The hearing may be conducted by the Governing Board or a person designated by the board.
- After the hearing, a decision must be made and given to the student and parent within 10 days.
- If the student appeals the decision, a circuit court will determine if the decision is appropriate.

Appropriate conduct is expected of all students at the school. Students are guaranteed due process of law as required by the 14th Amendment of the United States Constitution. A parent/student that fails to comply with the above expectations is in violation of school policy. In order to maintain active student status at Colearn Academy Colorado, all students will be monitored for academic participation and engagement. It is the Program Mentor's responsibility, in partnership with the school, to ensure that students meet these requirements. Students not found in compliance may be placed on academic probation. Disciplinary responses, when called for, will be determined at the discretion of school leadership. Suspension or dismissal may be warranted particularly when behaviors demonstrate a serious disregard for the welfare of other individuals or the community as a whole.

8. Discuss how students and parents will be informed of the school's Discipline Policy.

Students and parents will be informed of the school's Discipline Policy via dissemination of the Student and Parent Handbook, as well as available on the school's website.

9. Include the following attachment:

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
Discipline policy	Include the school's discipline policy, which addresses, among other things, suspension and expulsion. Policy should align with state law, support the safety of students and staff, provide a level of due process for students that, at a minimum, complies with the requirements of IDEA, and explain how the school will provide expelled students with alternative education, if applicable. CSI developed resources on Student Conduct and Discipline are accessible here , including a sample discipline policy .	C_Discipline Policy

Culture and Discipline Capacity

10. Describe the experience the founding team has building school culture and implementing the proposed approach to discipline.

The founding team of Colearn Academy Colorado brings deep, proven experience in building and sustaining school cultures that are student-centered, inclusive, and aligned with personalized learning models. Through their work launching and operating Colearn Academy Arizona — and expanding the model to South Carolina — Amber Robinson, Becki Krueger, Courtney Cullen, and Taylor Bennett have demonstrated how to establish and nurture strong, values-based cultures in virtual and hybrid learning environments.

Amber Robinson, who leads the founding team as Executive Director for Colearn Academy Arizona, has spent over 17 years fostering cultures of academic rigor, family partnership, and student agency. She has guided the development of Colearn's core cultural framework, which emphasizes shared community values such as Purposeful Persistence, Active Accountability, and Continuous Contribution. These values are embedded in daily practice: they are introduced during staff onboarding, reinforced through Program Mentor and teacher interactions, and integrated into student reflection routines that build ownership and growth mindsets.

Becki Krueger, as an experienced board member and compliance advisor, ensures that the school's approach to culture and discipline aligns with state and federal laws, board policy, and best practices in equity and non-discrimination. She works closely with leadership to review discipline trends, monitor compliance, and recommend improvements that strengthen a positive, supportive environment for all students.

Courtney Cullen and Taylor Bennett contribute directly to building strong student and family connections at the classroom level. Courtney, Colearn's K-3 Content Lead, models relationship-driven practices that promote trust, clear expectations, and consistent communication with families. Taylor, as Secondary Math Content Lead, ensures that older students understand community expectations, reflect on their choices, and build executive functioning skills that reduce discipline issues in virtual spaces.

In terms of discipline, the team's approach emphasizes proactive, restorative, and relationship-based strategies — a key fit for Colearn's flexible, family-centered model. Staff are trained to handle behavioral concerns through student-centered conversations, reflective check-ins, and goal-setting activities, often facilitated by Program Mentors or Educational Specialists. These restorative practices promote accountability and help students reconnect with the community's shared values. When more significant discipline is necessary, the team ensures that fair, consistent, and legally compliant due process procedures are followed, including all protections under IDEA and Section 504 for students with disabilities.

The founding team also has experience building and maintaining data systems and feedback loops to track behavioral trends, monitor for disproportionality, and guide continuous improvement. In Arizona, regular review of disaggregated behavior data has helped the team adjust training, implement targeted supports, and address emerging needs before they escalate.

By combining clear community values, proactive strategies, family partnerships, and a strong commitment to equity and compliance, Amber, Becki, Courtney, and Taylor ensure that Colearn Academy Colorado will open with a responsive, inclusive discipline approach that supports every student's academic, social, and emotional development.

D. Education Program

School model

1. **Summarize the school model, including primary instructional methods or approach and any non-negotiable elements of the proposed school. Briefly describe the evidence that promises success for this model with the anticipated student population.**

Colearn Academy Colorado is built on an innovative model — one that is already demonstrating efficacy in Arizona and South Carolina — in which far greater student learning is unleashed by moving beyond the limited, brick-and-mortar school building. CAC is an online public charter school, and as such, student achievement is made possible by, but certainly not limited to, online learning. All CAC students have unlimited access to the highest quality digital curriculum aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards in an online learning environment, and mastery of skills, competencies, and standards are continually assessed to then generate students' responsive recommended learning paths online. In addition to time online, CAC students form an active and engaged community within their community; the Colearn online platform surfaces high rigor and high relevance engagement opportunities and facilitates “colearning” in the world and the students' communities.

Our guiding beliefs also set our model far apart from the schools that are now serving our targeted student population:

- We believe that traditional schooling limits students' creativity and individuality.

“As we face a very uncertain future, the answer is not to do better than what we've done before. We have to do something else. The challenge is not to fix this system but to change it; not to reform it but to transform it. The great irony is the current malaise in education is that we actually know what works. We just don't do it on a wide enough scale. We are in a position as never before to use our creative and technological resources to change that. We now have limitless opportunities to engage young people's imaginations and to provide forms of teaching and learning that are highly customized to them.” — Ken Robinson, *Creative Schools*

- We believe that traditional classroom settings with one or two teachers do not and cannot, structurally, allow students even a fraction of the access to talent, teaching, and mentorship that they need and deserve.

“In a distributed teaching and learning system there need not be, and rarely is, one mentor/teacher. Rather, for different activities and skills there are different people to serve as mentors/teachers; there are different places to go; and there are different sorts of tools, technologies, and media to act as surrogate mentors/teachers. The distributed system is a hive of connected activities. Learners at all different levels can traverse this hive and dive into the places that have mentors and tools that are right for their current ZPD for a given skill.” — James Paul Gee, *Teaching, Learning, Literacy in our High-Risk High-Tech World: A Framework for Becoming Human*

- We believe that education is more effective through “pull” rather than “push.”

Colearn Academy believes that at the heart of deep learning is engagement. Students deserve to be exposed to more than a classroom alone can offer — to a broad set of real-world roles, scenarios, and possibilities, especially where they express the most interest. If students are interested and engaged, they will want to learn; they will “pull” education through a set of experiences instead of having it “pushed” upon them. The key is identifying those interests. Once it is found, curriculum and educational experiences can be embedded within and around organic interests.

- We believe that “school” and “home” must operate in harmony in order for students to make the greatest growth.

Colearn Academy emphasizes the benefits of positive family relationships (while never using any given circumstance that may affect a student at home as an excuse for lowered expectations). As depicted in the landmark book, *The Second Shift*, many parents are now dealing with compounding stress at home, and that stress is having negative effects on marriages and family communication. So, there is now a need for children

to participate in family responsibilities in order to diffuse stress at home, appropriately. In addition, quality communication between parents and their children is a necessary precursor to peak performance at school.

“How parents help children to think about (process, edit) experiences in the world and in media, and how they teach children what it is important to pay attention to (what matters and why), are the foundation of the child’s initial and enduring perspectives on (theories about) the world. All later learning is layered onto this foundation, and this foundation deeply affects that later learning. If the foundation is not solid or not finished, the child needs help. That help involves teachers and mentors designing good experiences and meaningful play opportunities for the child, allowing time for horizontal learning at each level of learning, and lots of nurturing experiential dialogic talk with adults or more advanced peers.” — James Paul Gee, *Teaching, Learning, Literacy in Our High-Risk High-Tech World: A Framework for Becoming Human*

- We believe that there is no need to wait — and every reason to move forward — for a technology-enabled, transformed school model that delivers the true promise of an engaging, effective education community beyond the four walls of a traditional school.
- As the Covid-19 pandemic has demonstrated, the world is rapidly-changing, at times at an unstable pace. We cannot predict the future; however, we believe that we must diversify learning opportunities to ensure our students’ access to high-quality learning materials.
- We believe that parent engagement and support is critically important to students’ learning success and students’ engagement. A key component of enrollment and onboarding at Colearn Academy includes resources and workshops geared specifically toward parents.

Curriculum and instruction⁸

2. Describe the basic learning environment (e.g., classroom-based, independent study), including class size and structure.

The learning environment at Colearn Academy Colorado will be virtual, hybrid, independent self-study, and asynchronous project-based learning — with an innovative mix of class and group formats, learning modalities, and experiential learning. The class size will vary, depending on enrollment in each grade level. We anticipate assigning no more than 40 students to each teacher. Program Mentors will work with smaller groups of students, acting as a paraprofessional as in a traditional brick-and-mortar school. Thus, they ensure students stay on track, complete their work and projects, meet educational goals, and have opportunities for educational experiences and internships outside of the virtual classroom hours — creating an individualized learning experience for each student. Each family and Program Mentor who works with the students has the opportunity to design and facilitate a learning environment that best meets the needs of learners and motivates them for academic achievement. This includes accommodations for students with an IEP or strategies that best serve special populations, such as EL students or gifted and talented students. Program Mentors will be guided by and work alongside the classroom teachers, or Education Specialists, in order to ensure all students meet or exceed expectations of the Colorado academic standards and provide guidance for differentiating based on the curriculum and needs of the students.

Learning in Colearn Academy Colorado will take place using one of the five modalities:

1. Curriculum Assignments (content-specific and competency-based) All grades:

The Curriculum Assignments are administered by the Program Mentor with the supervision of the Content Lead teacher. Colearn Academy Colorado utilizes traditional core subjects as inputs into other curriculum arcs. We hold foundational assumptions about academic learning: 1) students can learn the requirements of the State of Colorado in a compressed time frame by tapping into standards-aligned curriculum resources, textbooks and workbooks, and our process of self-study protocols, 2) non-traditional cognitive and

⁸ This section should focus on the model for the K-12 program. If the school intends to provide a preschool, please complete the addenda linked in question 16 of this section.

noncognitive skills should be emphasized, 3) standard core curriculum requirements can be met through interdisciplinary content included in skill development, and 4) support for student learning can come from family, friends, and others in a scholarly yet non-scholastic environment.

2. *Learning Projects: All grades:*

Colearn Academy's software will provide a framework for projects that students self-select to work on in small collaborative groups with the support of adult mentors (parents or experts from a specific field) and a Content Lead (credentialed) teacher. As students provide evidence of meeting content standards, it will be tracked in the software. Students and teachers will see that a student has completed a percentage of two or three specific subject areas for each project completed. The software will resemble elements of popular video games, where a student experiences opportunities to try again until they are successful and "levels up" once they've achieved baseline milestones and are ready for more advanced projects.

3. *Collaborative Workshops (synchronous interactive courses): All grades with intensive focus 6-12:*

For this instructional modality, there will be a menu of live, synchronous learning opportunities that students can opt-in to. These learning workshops occur using a video conference platform or in some cities via face to face meet-ups. Learning workshops offer students the chance to participate in live discussions with credentialed teachers, experts and Program Mentors, and other students to learn specific content skills. Access to these courses will be available based on students' readiness and skill-level abilities. This modality is led by the Content Lead teacher, with assistance from the Program Mentor as needed. The learning workshop modality is particularly valuable for Colearn Academy's future ready content.

4. *Experiential Learning: Internships for 9–12 and field trips for K–8:*

An important element of the education at Colearn Academy is that students learn in the real world. A component of every student's education is an option for one or more internships, beginning in ninth grade if the student is ready. In this internship with an expert mentor in the field of the student's interest, the student completes an authentic project that benefits the student's learning PATH — a personalized learning plan that accounts for Proficiency, Achievement, Talent, and Heart — and the mentor at the internship site. The projects are connected to the student's interests and meet the needs of the mentors, and are the main root to deepening student learning and academic growth. This modality is supervised by the Content Lead teacher, with assistance from the Program Mentor as required. In the K-8 grades, experiential learning is embodied through meet-ups, field trips, shared labs and learning experiences within their community. These types of experiences are coordinated by the Experiential Lead with input from the Content Lead and Program Mentor parent.

5. *Guided Pathway Portfolio Development (summative assessment of mastery and student reflection on their experiences from modalities one, two, three, and four):*

Guided Pathway Portfolio Development refers to a ten step process that can be repeated across the curriculum. This modality is supervised by the Content Lead, with assistance from the Program Mentor and students themselves. Students approach a unit/lesson by planning ten activities they will use to create a portfolio, one for each of the stages in the unit/lesson.

3. Identify the curriculum.

a) Provide an overview of the planned curriculum the school would use in the first five years.

Colearn Academy Colorado will implement a comprehensive, standards-aligned curriculum designed to meet the needs of a diverse student body through personalized, flexible, and student-centered learning. CAC's academic program blends high-quality online platforms with print materials, project-based learning, and enrichment opportunities to ensure all students have access to rigorous, engaging learning experiences aligned to Colorado Academic Standards.

Core Curriculum Platforms

In Years 1-5, students will access a curated selection of standards-aligned, research-based core curricula through the Colearn Planner, CAC's digital learning hub. Core curriculum options will include:

- Calvert Learning (K-8): Provides comprehensive, standards-aligned content across ELA, math, science, and social studies. Strong integration of critical thinking, writing, and problem-solving.
- Imagine Learning (ELA, Math, and Español): Adaptive, data-driven instruction supporting core literacy and numeracy for elementary and middle school students, with built-in multilingual learner supports.
- Accelerate Education (6-12): Online, standards-aligned secondary courses across core and elective areas, offering credit-bearing options aligned with college and career readiness goals.

These platforms support differentiated instruction, standards-based assessment, and personalized learning pathways, allowing each student's learning to be tailored by licensed teachers and Program Mentors to reflect individual strengths, interests, and learning profiles.

Supplemental and Benchmarking Resources

To further meet the needs of students across a range of abilities and interests, CAC will provide access to supplemental and benchmarking curricula, including:

- Amplify (Science, ELA): Phenomena-based instruction aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and CAS, emphasizing inquiry and literacy
- McGraw Hill & Savvas Learning: Used selectively for mathematics, literacy, and science to support targeted skills and instructional enrichment.
- Studies Weekly (Social Studies): Interactive, standards-aligned print and digital curriculum for K–5 students aligned to Colorado's revised social studies standards, as well as materials for the Colearn "Weekly Wellness" SEL lessons.
- MAP Growth Assessments (NWEA): Benchmarking tool used 2-3 times per year to assess academic progress and growth, driving data-informed instructional planning.

CAC will ensure alignment with Colorado Academic Standards through internal reviews and partnerships with vendors. When publishers do not provide crosswalks, CAC will convene a Curriculum Review Committee composed of licensed teachers, administrators, and family stakeholders to conduct rigorous reviews and alignment checks using vetted tools (e.g., EdReports, state rubrics).

Instructional Model & Curriculum Implementation

CAC's model prioritizes student agency, inquiry-based learning, and real-world application. Instruction is delivered through a hybrid approach, including:

- Direct instruction (synchronous and asynchronous)
- Project-based learning tied to academic standards
- Literature-based thematic units and guided reading
- Experiential learning through field trips, service learning, and internships
- Personalized student portfolios and learning journals
- Regular use of the Colearn Planner to align assignments, assessments, and pacing

Teachers work collaboratively with students and Program Mentors to develop Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs) each semester that include curriculum pacing, supplemental resources, goals, and accommodations.

Curriculum Development & Review Cycle

Over the first five years, CAC will:

- Pilot and expand high-quality curriculum options based on student needs and feedback.
- Conduct annual curriculum reviews to ensure vertical alignment, coherence, and ongoing alignment with state updates.
- Continuously integrate culturally responsive content, SEL competencies, and enrichment aligned to student interests and career pathways.

Curriculum Choice

Students will have access to a variety of standards-aligned curriculum in the Colearn Planner, including established curriculum and online platforms that align with Colorado Academic Standards, such as Calvert Learning, Imagine Learning and Accelerate Education, while other curriculum will be used as supplemental and/or benchmarking material that will evolve and expand over time.

CAC's academic program is designed to provide flexibility and customization for each student's needs and to reflect students' interests, while meeting state-level standards and academic goals. Teachers personalize each student's learning program, utilizing a blend of online learning platforms, textbooks, project based learning opportunities, literature, field trips, internships, and other resources.

CAC will ensure all core and supplemental curriculum are aligned with state standards by requesting crosswalks from the curriculum provider or by following a rigorous process to evaluate curriculum alignment to the state standards. This process includes a committee made up of certificated teachers, administrators, parents, and other key stakeholders to provide an intensive review process of curriculum and its alignment to the state standards for core and supplementary curriculum. The committee will make recommendations for the adoption of curriculum to key stakeholders prior to adoption.

b) If the curriculum is fully developed, summarize curricular choices such as textbook selection, by subject, and the rationale for each. Describe the evidence that these curricula will be appropriate and effective for the targeted students.

OR

If the curriculum is not already developed, provide a plan for how the curriculum will be developed between approval of the application and the opening of the school, including who will be responsible, the resources necessary (financial and otherwise) and when key stages will be completed.

Colearn Academy Colorado has selected its core and supplemental curriculum based on a shared set of values: alignment to Colorado Academic Standards, adaptability to diverse learning needs, support for student agency, and evidence of effectiveness with a broad range of learners, including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, and gifted students.

Standards Alignment & Academic Rigor: All selected curriculum platforms, such as Calvert Learning, Imagine Learning, and Accelerate Education, are research-based and fully aligned to Colorado Academic Standards. These programs offer vertically articulated scope and sequence documents and rigorous assessment tools, ensuring students are progressing toward college and career readiness benchmarks.

Flexibility & Personalization: Each platform allows for differentiated pacing and instructional pathways. This is essential to CAC's hybrid model, where learning is individualized and supported by both teachers and Program Mentors. Platforms like Imagine Learning and Accelerate Education include diagnostic assessments and adaptive learning features that allow instruction to be tailored in real-time to student needs.

Support for Diverse Learners: The selected curricula include embedded supports for English language development, accommodations for students with IEPs or 504 plans, and extensions or enrichment options for gifted students. For example, Imagine Learning is especially effective for multilingual learners, while Calvert offers scaffolded writing instruction and multiple modalities for comprehension. Supplemental tools like Studies Weekly, Amplify, and MAP Growth provide both targeted intervention, social-emotional learning, and enrichment.

Balanced Approach to Learning: CAC emphasizes both foundational skill development and real-world, project-based learning. The chosen resources support a balance of explicit instruction, guided exploration, and student-driven inquiry. By combining online platforms with literature, fieldwork, and personalized projects, students engage in deeper learning that connects academics to their interests and the world around them.

Suggested Sequence of Courses, K-8:

English Language Arts: Colearn Academy Colorado's adopted curriculum will cover the Colorado Academic Standards in Reading Informational Texts, Reading Literary Texts, Writing, Speaking, and Listening. The curriculum aims to give teachers and Program Mentors instructional autonomy by allowing them to choose multiple resources as they present content to their students in a meaningful way. The goal is to develop readers, writers, and speakers who can critically analyze information from all content areas. Additionally, the K-3 curriculum will focus on Reading competency to ensure alignment with the READ Act. Specific to the five modalities central to instruction at Colearn Academy Colorado:

1. Curriculum assignments: The curriculum modality will likely take the form of an online, adaptive reading system such as Lexia, Lalilo, or similar for K-8. Curriculum assignments for 9-12 students are presented in an asynchronous, online fashion and will be prepared by the Content Lead teachers or purchased from a vendor (who will align them to state standards).
2. Learning Projects: The learning projects modality will be included in every learning project across the curriculum, as reading and writing is an integral part of a learning project in any content area. Most learning projects across the curriculum involve a verbal presentation. For the elementary grades, these projects focus on imitation and repetition.
3. Collaborative Workshops: Our certificated, online teachers (called Content Lead teachers) will provide targeted, online, synchronous lessons that align with the Colorado Academic Standards and allow for student-to-student and student-to-teacher collaboration.
4. Experiential Learning: Our students engage with this modality through field trips. Every student will be given an opportunity to research before, take notes during, and then complete a written reflection after the field trip. High school students also engage with this modality through professional internships. These internships require a written application, person-to-person spoken interactions, and reading/research as required by the specific internship.
5. Portfolio Development: Our Program Mentors will set aside time for our students to complete a "portfolio" of their learning. The elementary grades will typically do this by creating a photo or picture collage using Bulb, Google Photos or similar, and be given the opportunity to share their portfolio in a written or verbal fashion with other members of their family. Portfolios in the high school grades will be completed using our own, proprietary curriculum that guides the students through two-week cycles in which students focus on content and select a deliverable which is added to their portfolio at the end of the two-week cycle.

Math: CAC's math curriculum will be aligned to the state standards in all of the Mathematics domains. The curriculum aims to give teachers and Program Mentors instructional autonomy by allowing them to choose multiple resources as they present content to their students in a meaningful way. The goal is to develop students who engage with math in every facet of their life, and are not rote regurgitators of algorithms but instead understand the "why" behind the mathematical operations. Specific to the five modalities central to instruction at Colearn Academy Colorado:

1. Curriculum assignments: For K-8 students these will take the form of a complete, standards-based curriculum such as Math Mammoth, Saxon Math, or similar. These students will also use a variety of online tools, some of which are adaptive, including Prodigies Math, Dreambox, or similar. High school students will receive math instruction in an asynchronous, online fashion and these courses will be prepared by the Content Lead teachers or purchased from a vendor (who will align them to state standards).
2. Learning Projects: Students will complete grade-level-appropriate learning projects that allow them to focus on a real-world problem and create a solution to it. Younger students might try to determine how many pencils it would take to cross a room, while older students might be presented with an

architecturally-themed project in which they compute a number of measurements/angles/etc. In the construction of their project. Students at CAC have the freedom to choose from among a curated collection of such projects, all of which are standards-aligned.

3. Collaborative Workshops: Our certificated, online teachers (called Content Lead teachers) will provide targeted, online, synchronous lessons that align with the Colorado Academic Standards and allow for student-to-student and student-to-teacher collaboration.
4. Experiential Learning: Our students engage with this modality through field trips. Field trips will incorporate math in several ways. They may be to locales that specialize in math-related activities. Students will also be expected to learn math in the planning of these activities (“How much will it cost?” “How many vehicles are needed?”, etc.) Students in grades 9-12 also engage with this modality through professional internships. These internships require various math applications as required by the specific internship.
5. Portfolio Development: Program Mentors will set aside time for our students to complete a “portfolio” of their learning. The elementary grades will typically do this by creating a photo or picture collage using Bulb, Google Photos or similar, and completed math projects will be included. Portfolios in the high school grades will be completed using our own, proprietary curriculum that guides the students through two-week cycles in which students focus on content (in this case math) and select a deliverable which is added to their portfolio at the end of the two-week cycle.

Science: CAC’s science curriculum will be aligned to the state standards, and will teach students the eight processes critical to scientific literacy (as found in the standards document). The curriculum aims to give teachers and Program Mentors instructional autonomy by allowing them to choose multiple resources as they present content to their students in a meaningful way. The goal is to develop student-scientists who use their science knowledge to explain the world around them, and develop a sense of wonder. Specific to the five modalities central to instruction at Colearn Academy Colorado:

1. Curriculum Assignments: K-8 students will experience science using a video and hands-on combination, such as Generation Genius or similar. High school students will receive science instruction in two ways. First, many high school courses have integrated science components. Second, students are taught in an asynchronous, online fashion and these courses will be prepared by the Content Lead teachers or purchased from a vendor (who will align them to state standards).
2. Learning Projects: Students will complete grade-level-appropriate learning projects that allow them to focus on a real-world problem and create a solution to it. Younger students might try to determine how the amount of sunlight affects the growth of a flower, while older students might be presented with an environmentally-themed project in which they design a plan to save/repair an ecosystem while paying careful attention to the adaptations necessary for animals to continue surviving. Students at CAC have the freedom to choose from among a curated collection of such projects, all of which are standards-aligned. Additionally, high school students may elect to participate in a job site internship, completing a project that aligns to state content standards and also authentically serves the business or organization. Examples abound for Science standards-embedded internship projects, especially in city health management, hospitals and health care, research and development in all fields, etc.
3. Collaborative Workshops: Our certificated, online teachers (called Content Lead teachers) will provide targeted, online, synchronous lessons that align with the state standards and allow for student-to-student and student-to-teacher collaboration.
4. Experiential Learning: Our K-8 students engage with this modality through field trips. Field trips to locales that conduct science-specific activities will allow the students the opportunity to interact with science outside the classroom. Many of our 9-12 students will also find internships in science- and STEM-focused firms, such as construction, public utilities, animal management, etc.
5. Portfolio Development: Our Program Mentors will set aside time for our students to complete a “portfolio” of their learning. The elementary grades will typically do this by creating a photo or picture

collage using Bulb, Google Photos or similar, and completed science projects will be included. Portfolios in the high school grades will be completed using our own, proprietary curriculum that guides the students through two-week cycles in which students focus on content (in this case science) and select a deliverable which is added to their portfolio at the end of the two-week cycle.

Social Studies: CAC's Social Studies curriculum will be aligned to the state standards, and will teach students the grade-level storylines and content foci in the core social science disciplines. The curriculum aims to give teachers and Program Mentors instructional autonomy by allowing them to choose multiple resources as they present content to their students in a meaningful way. The goal is to develop students who inquire about the world around them using the six elements of the inquiry arc as outlined in the standards. Specific to the five modalities central to instruction at Colearn Academy Colorado:

1. Curriculum Assignments: K-8 students will learn about social studies using a video- and literature-based combination, such as Curiosity Chronicles, Time for Learning, or similar. High school students will receive social studies instruction in two ways. First, many high school courses have integrated social studies components. Second, students are taught in an asynchronous, online fashion and these courses will be prepared by the Content Lead teachers or purchased from a vendor (who will align them to state standards).
2. Learning Projects: Students will complete grade-level-appropriate learning projects that allow them to focus on a real-world issue. Younger students might create a replica of a historically significant building, while older students might research a Native Population, creating a solution to a community challenge or producing an informative ad, article, live event, website or blog, or public service announcement. Students at CAC have the freedom to choose from among a curated collection of such projects, all of which are standards-aligned.
3. Collaborative Workshops: Our certificated, online teachers (called Content Lead teachers) will provide targeted, online, synchronous lessons that align with the state standards and allow for student-to-student and student-to-teacher collaboration.
4. Experiential Learning: Our K-8 students engage with this modality through field trips. For example, students might visit the building they selected as their learning project in Modality #2, or museums, etc. Many of our 9-12 students will find internships in social-studies-related fields, such as local/state government, etc.
5. Portfolio Development: Our Program Mentors will set aside time for our students to complete a "portfolio" of their learning. The elementary grades will typically do this by creating a photo or picture collage using Bulb, Google Photos or similar, and completed science projects will be included. Portfolios in the high school grades will be completed using our own, proprietary curriculum that guides the students through two-week cycles in which students focus on content (in this case science) and select a deliverable which is added to their portfolio at the end of the two-week cycle.

The instructional methods outlined above are CAC's way of operationalizing the five modalities, which themselves are created from research-proven teaching techniques. These methods also correspond to the techniques most frequently used (or desired to be used) in our target population of curious, engaged families. These families want more than just "book-" or "computer-" learning and instead want to connect learning with everyday life. Hands-on Learning, Project-based Learning, Experiential Learning, and portfolio reflections are modalities which aid not only in mastery of the core content but they also allow the students to gain critical thinking skills, all while allowing the student's family to be involved. In one short sentence, this is why we are applying for a charter — the instructional methods (which we call five modalities) mentioned above. We have found that there is no similar option available to our target population, and Colearn Academy Colorado seeks to rectify this.

Suggested Sequence of Courses, High School (9-12)

ENGLISH

	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Standard	English I	English II	English III	English IV
Advanced	Honors English I	Honors English II	Honors English III	Honors English IV

MATHEMATICS*

	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Standard	Algebra 1	Geometry	Algebra 2	Math 4
Advanced	Honors Geometry	Honors Algebra 2	Honors Precalculus	AP Calculus

*Levels of math will be determined by the student's graduation pathway.

SCIENCE

	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Standard	Biology	Physical Science	Chemistry or other science	Physics or other science
Advanced	Honors Biology	Honors or AP Chemistry	Honors or AP Physics	Other AP Lab Science

SOCIAL STUDIES

	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Standard	World History/ Geography	Social Studies elective	American History	American Government (0.5 credit) and Principles of Economics (0.5 credit)
Advanced	Honors World History/ Geography	Honors American History and Literature	AP United States History and/or AP Social Studies elective	AP US Government and Politics or AP Microeconomics and/or AP Macroeconomics

Subject-Specific Curricular Choices and Rationale:

- English Language Arts (ELA):** CAC utilizes Calvert Learning for elementary literacy and Accelerate Education or Imagine Learning Language & Literacy for upper grades. These platforms emphasize structured literacy, vocabulary development, and literary analysis. Calvert's scaffolded writing process and cross-disciplinary reading selections promote strong communication skills and critical thinking. Amplify Reading is used as a supplemental resource in early grades due to its phonics-based instruction and support for foundational skills.

- **Mathematics:** Imagine Math and Accelerate Education’s math programs were selected for their alignment to college and career readiness standards and their strong digital supports. These include visual models, interactive lessons, and real-time feedback tools, which are especially effective for students who benefit from conceptual and procedural reinforcement. For early math development, Calvert provides a spiraled curriculum that reinforces mastery over time.
- **Science:** Science instruction draws from Accelerate Education and Studies Weekly Science, providing students with hands-on, standards-aligned explorations. These platforms emphasize inquiry-based learning, real-world application, and cross-curricular connections. They also include options for lab simulations, virtual experiments, and project-based learning, supporting students with varying access to materials.
- **Social Studies:** Studies Weekly and Calvert Learning provide core instruction that integrates civics, history, geography, and economics, with strong literacy connections. These programs offer rich primary sources and culturally responsive content that encourages analysis, discussion, and engagement with diverse perspectives.
- **World Languages & Electives:** For middle and high school students, CAC offers world language and elective courses through Accelerate Education, which includes options such as Spanish, Coding, Art, and Health. These courses are interactive, standards-aligned, and support independent learning with mentor guidance.
- **College & Career Readiness:** CAC incorporates soft skills development, digital literacy, and pathways exploration through career-connected projects and platforms like Naviance (if adopted) or integrated advisory curriculum. This ensures students are not only academically prepared but also self-aware and goal-oriented.

Family & Mentor Integration: Curriculum delivered through the Colearn Planner is accessible not only to students and teachers but also to Program Mentors and families. This transparency empowers families to actively participate in their child’s education and aligns with CAC’s unique mission of building strong learning partnerships between school and home.

Ongoing Evaluation & Community Input: CAC has developed a rigorous curriculum review and adoption process that includes teachers, administrators, and families. Curriculum choices will continue to be evaluated annually for effectiveness, relevance, and alignment, ensuring that the academic program evolves to meet the needs of students and reflects current standards and best practices.

4. Include the following attachment:

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
Scope and sequence	Include a sample course scope and sequence for one subject for each level (elementary, middle, high school).	D_Sample Scope and Sequence

5. Describe how the selected curriculum will align with and/or be incorporated into the proposed school model.

Colearn Academy Colorado is a virtual school that offers full-time online instruction supported by certified teachers, family-based Program Mentors, and a flexible, hybrid learning model. The selected curriculum is intentionally aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards and tailored to meet the unique requirements of

online instruction, including asynchronous delivery, standards-based instruction, progress monitoring, and student engagement.

Calvert Learning (K-8): Calvert Learning provides comprehensive, modular lessons that are well-suited for asynchronous online learning. It includes offline components and hands-on activities that allow students to complete work at their own pace, while still meeting attendance and instructional hour requirements. Teachers and Program Mentors work together to scaffold and personalize instruction using Calvert's built-in tools.

Imagine Learning (K-8 ELA, Math): Imagine Learning's adaptive diagnostic and personalized learning paths make it an ideal tool for monitoring progress and adjusting instruction in an online setting. This platform helps ensure students are mastering standards, regardless of when or where they engage in learning, and supports the Colorado Growth Model.

Accelerate Education (6-12): Accelerate Education offers self-paced, credit-bearing online courses that meet Colorado graduation requirements and support individualized pathways. These courses are led by licensed teachers and include assessments, pacing tools, and real-time feedback — all features required by the state performance framework.

Supplemental Tools

- **Amplify Science** supports asynchronous science instruction with hands-on inquiry projects that align with Colorado science standards and NGSS, enhancing the project-based component of the virtual model.
- **Studies Weekly** supplements social studies instruction in grades K-5 with interactive print and digital content, ideal for students working at home or on flexible schedules.
- **iReady** provides formative benchmarking required for progress monitoring and ILP development, helping the school meet requirements for measuring and documenting student learning.

Live Instruction and Flexible Support: To further support student success and maintain alignment with the selected curriculum, Colearn Academy Colorado offers weekly live lessons taught by certified teachers that directly complement the curriculum content in core subjects. These lessons provide guided instruction, peer interaction, and an opportunity to reinforce key concepts in real time.

Additionally, the school hosts a weekly "Power Hour" (office hours) where students and families can receive targeted academic help, check in with teachers, and ask questions about pacing, content, or expectations. This balance of structured support and asynchronous flexibility allows families to manage their time while still receiving consistent guidance from educators.

All curriculum and instructional tools are delivered through the Colearn Planner, which acts as the central platform for coordinating assignments, tracking progress, managing ILPs, and supporting communication between students, teachers, and Program Mentors in alignment with performance expectations.

6. Describe the school's teaching and instructional philosophy and how you plan to implement that philosophy with fidelity to the school's model. *Include a rationale for the chosen teaching and instructional philosophy, including any research-based evidence that supports the effectiveness of the selected instructional philosophy with the target population.*

Colearn Academy Colorado's teaching and instructional philosophy is grounded in the belief that learning is most effective when it is personalized, purposeful, and connected to the real world. The school's instructional model is built on the principles of student agency, mastery-based learning, and relationship-driven support, designed to meet the needs of a diverse population of K-12 students seeking a flexible, engaging, and individualized learning experience. This approach is especially well-suited to families seeking alternatives to traditional schooling, including homeschoolers, students with advanced or unique interests, and those requiring more adaptive pacing.

At the core of Colearn's philosophy is the idea that students learn best when they are empowered to co-author their own learning journey. Each student develops a PATH Plan (Proficiency, Achievement, Talent, and Heart), which sets personalized academic and personal growth goals and reflects individual strengths, interests, and learning needs. Instruction is delivered through a combination of digital curriculum, live virtual instruction, and community-based experiences, allowing for a high degree of flexibility while maintaining rigorous academic standards.

To implement this philosophy with fidelity, Colearn ensures that every student is supported by two key roles: a Program Mentor, who provides consistent coaching and accountability, and an Educational Specialist, a certified teacher who oversees academic progress and instructional alignment. These staff members collaborate with families and students to select appropriate instructional resources, monitor progress, and adjust pacing or strategies as needed. Instruction is delivered through evidence-based digital curricula, such as Imagine Learning, which align with Colorado Academic Standards and offer built-in supports for multilingual learners and students with diverse needs.

This philosophy is supported by a strong body of research. The principles of personalized learning are backed by studies from the RAND Corporation, which found that students in schools implementing personalized learning approaches made greater academic gains than their peers in traditional settings. Similarly, mastery-based learning has been shown to increase student motivation and deepen understanding, particularly when paired with timely feedback and clear learning targets (Bloom, 1984; Guskey, 2010). Colearn's emphasis on student agency also aligns with the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework, which is widely recognized for supporting diverse learners by offering multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression.

For Colearn's target population — students who crave autonomy, flexibility, and relevance in their education — this model offers an optimal balance of structure and freedom. Whether a student is academically advanced, in need of support, or simply seeking a more personalized path, Colearn's teaching and instructional philosophy is designed to meet them where they are and help them grow.

7. Describe the process and methods that teachers will use to differentiate instruction based on identified student needs. Include a rationale for these approaches.

Teachers and Program Mentors at Colearn Academy Colorado will utilize a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to identify and address the diverse academic and behavioral needs of students. MTSS is a proactive, data-driven framework that enables educators to deliver differentiated and responsive instruction through a tiered system of increasingly intensive interventions. This approach ensures that all students, regardless of ability level, receive the right level of support at the right time. The goal of MTSS at Colearn is to ensure that 100 percent of students achieve academic and personal success by providing high-quality, evidence-based instruction and early, targeted interventions.

Teachers will gather and analyze data from multiple sources, including diagnostic assessments, progress monitoring tools, formative assessments, and parent observations, to determine where students are along the learning continuum. These data points will guide the instructional decisions made at each tier:

- **Tier I:** Core instruction will be differentiated using flexible grouping, scaffolded supports, and varied instructional modalities to meet the needs of most students.
- **Tier II:** Students who need additional academic or behavioral support will receive targeted small-group instruction and supplemental interventions.
- **Tier III:** Students requiring intensive support will receive individualized instruction and more frequent progress monitoring, often with the support of interventionists or special education staff.

Teachers will leverage best practices for online and blended learning to meet students' needs in the virtual environment, including the use of interactive platforms, adaptive digital curriculum, and synchronous and

asynchronous instructional tools. Instruction will be tailored using standards-aligned, competency-based pathways that allow students to move at their own pace, while still being held accountable for mastery.

A unique strength of Colearn's model is the strong partnership between teachers and Program Mentors (typically parents or guardians). Program Mentors are trained and supported to provide daily, in-home instructional facilitation. Teachers will meet with Program Mentors at least monthly (more frequently if needed) to review student data, provide coaching on differentiation strategies, and adjust learning plans based on progress and emerging needs. This close collaboration ensures that learning is personalized, engaging, and supportive of each child's strengths and challenges.

This approach to differentiated instruction is grounded in the belief that all students can learn when instruction is tailored to their unique needs, learning styles, and interests. By integrating the MTSS framework with strong family partnerships and adaptive curriculum tools, Colearn Academy Colorado will create equitable learning opportunities that support every student's academic growth and social-emotional development.

8. For Applicants proposing to offer online programming⁹, describe the extent to whether the educational program is fully online or blended, and grade levels in which online programming will be offered. *Online programming may require single-district online program or multi-district online school status.*

The learning environment at Colearn Academy Colorado will be virtual, hybrid, independent self-study, and asynchronous project-based learning for grades K-12 — with an innovative mix of class and group formats, learning modalities, and experiential learning. Almost all learning will happen at home through independent study or online live sessions with teachers.

9. For Applicants proposing to offer a middle or high school, detail the plans for meeting the state's graduation requirements, including implementation of the Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP).

Colearn Academy Colorado will require all students to meet Colorado Graduation Guidelines, as adopted by the State Board of Education, as well as any additional graduation requirements outlined by CSI. Rather than requiring a specific set of credit-based coursework, Colorado graduation requirements are built upon two components:

1. Successful completion of a local school's academic program, which includes required credits in English, mathematics, science, social studies, physical education, and electives, and
2. Demonstration of College and Career Readiness (CCR) in English and math by completing one or more items from the Graduation Guidelines Menu of Options, which may include assessment scores (SAT, ACT, Accuplacer), Capstone Projects, industry certifications, or concurrent enrollment coursework.

Colearn Academy Colorado will establish a credit-based graduation pathway that is aligned with the Colorado Graduation Guidelines and meets or exceeds the expectations of CSI's graduation policy. CAC's default graduation plan will include at least 22 credits across core content and electives, with flexibility for students to personalize their paths through online coursework, parent-selected curriculum, community-based learning experiences, and concurrent enrollment. Credit hours will be earned at the conclusion of the course and grade point averages (GPA) will be calculated at this time based on a 4.0 scale, which will be documented on transcripts. The process for awarding course credit is based upon successful completion of the course with a final grade of 70% or higher. The grading scale deems 90-100% as an "A", 80-89% as a "B", 70-79% as a "C", 60-69% as a "D", and 59% and below as an "F."

As part of this graduation framework, all high school students will complete an Individual Career and Academic

⁹ For applications that intend to provide a fully online program or school, please complete the addenda linked in question 16 of this section.

Plan (ICAP) beginning in 9th grade. CAC will implement the ICAP process through the support of Program Mentors and Educational Specialists, guiding students through career exploration, academic goal setting, financial planning, college/career research, and transition planning. Students will revisit and revise their ICAP annually, with artifacts and milestones tracked through their PATH Plans.

In alignment with CDE guidance, CAC will ensure students have multiple opportunities to meet the required college and career readiness benchmarks through:

- SAT or ACT testing,
- Capstone Projects,
- CTE certifications,
- Work-based learning and internships,
- Concurrent enrollment and postsecondary credit-earning opportunities.

CAC's instructional model supports readiness for postsecondary success by embedding real-world learning, project-based coursework, and self-directed planning into every student's experience. Upon graduation, students will be prepared to pursue one or more of the following pathways: enrollment in a two- or four-year college, enlistment in the military, or direct entry into the workforce. Program Mentors and college/career counselors will guide students through FAFSA completion, scholarship and job applications, and postsecondary transition planning to ensure graduates are equipped with both academic credentials and workforce readiness skills.

School calendar and schedule

10. Discuss the annual academic schedule for the school. Explain how the calendar reflects the needs of the educational program.

Colearn Academy Colorado's academic calendar will fulfill the Colorado state requirement of a minimum of 160 "student contact days" and 1,080 instructional hours for students in grades 6-12, and 990 hours for students in K-5, as outlined in C.R.S. 22-32-109. While CAC will exceed this minimum by offering a 180-day instructional calendar, the school's flexible, student-centered model will also allow for asynchronous learning outside traditional school hours.

Colearn Academy Colorado will follow a traditional academic calendar with a start date in early August and an end date in late May, including breaks for major holidays, fall and spring breaks, and a winter recess. This calendar structure supports consistency for families while offering enough flexibility to accommodate the personalized pacing of the online learning experience. The calendar will include professional development days for teachers, as well as planning and progress review windows built into each semester to monitor student academic growth and update PATH plans.

Although the calendar includes official instructional days, students will be permitted to engage with content and complete coursework beyond scheduled school hours and breaks. This flexibility is essential to Colearn's model, which emphasizes mastery learning, student agency, and real-world application. However, while the learning platform and curriculum resources will remain accessible year-round, teachers, Program Mentors, and administrative staff will only be available during standard school hours, Monday through Friday, except during designated school holidays.

This calendar design supports the academic model by:

- Providing consistency and structure for families and staff,
- Allowing students to accelerate or revisit content at their own pace,
- Enabling personalized academic interventions and enrichment,
- Aligning with community-based events, field trips, and in-person enrichment opportunities.

By combining a clearly defined academic calendar with flexible access to instruction, Colearn Academy Colorado ensures all students have the time, support, and autonomy they need to meet academic goals and experience success.

11. Describe the structure of the school day and week. Include the number of instructional hours/minutes in a day for core subjects such as language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies.

Colearn Academy Colorado allows parents to determine the daily and weekly schedule that best supports the mastery-based learning of their child. CAC also provides a calendar within the CAC portal to support planning instruction.

However, students enrolled in Colearn Academy Colorado are expected to focus on learning for the equivalent of extended school days with no dictated start or dismissal time. All learning occurs at home with their Program Mentor. The following minutes are required per week:

- Grades K-8: 1,800 minutes/week (this includes lunch break)
- Grades 9-12: 1,800 minutes/week (this excludes lunch break)

The following are suggested schedules for students based on grade levels:

Primary & Elementary Students (6 hours/day including lunch)

9:00 Live Instruction
 10:00 Coursework in Curriculum
 11:00 Live Instruction
 11:30 Lunch Break
 12:30 Coursework in Curriculum
 1:30 Enrichment Club Live
 2:30 Coursework in Curriculum

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00	<i>Math Skills K-1st</i>	<i>Fun with Phonics K - 1st</i>	<i>Where are we Wednesday Social Studies</i>	<i>Hands on Science K - 1st</i>	<i>Power Hour K - 1st</i>
9:00	<i>Math Skills 2nd-3rd</i>	<i>Read Aloud & Comprehension 2nd-3rd</i>	<i>Where are we Wednesday Social Studies</i>	<i>Hands on Science 2nd - 3rd</i>	<i>Power Hour 2nd - 3rd</i>
9:00	<i>Math Skills 4th-5th</i>	<i>Book Club 4th-5th</i>	<i>Where are we Wednesday Social Studies</i>	<i>Hands on Science 4th - 5th</i>	<i>Power Hour 4th - 5th</i>
12:30	<i>Writer's Workshop K - 1st</i>	<i>Lego Builder/History K - 1st</i>	<i>Math Skills K-1st</i>	<i>Fun with Phonics K - 1st</i>	<i>Art Time! K - 1st</i>
12:30	<i>Writer's Workshop 2nd - 3rd</i>	<i>Lego Builder/History 2nd - 3rd</i>	<i>Math Skills 2nd-3rd</i>	<i>Reading Comprehension 2nd - 3rd</i>	<i>Art Time! 2nd - 3rd</i>
12:30	<i>Writer's Workshop 4th - 5th</i>	<i>Lego Builder/History 4th - 5th</i>	<i>Math Skills 4th-5th</i>	<i>Reading Comprehension 4th - 5th</i>	<i>Art Time! 4th - 5th</i>
1:30	<i>Robotics/Coding</i>	<i>Jr. Chef's Cooking Club</i>	<i>Show-N-Tell Public Speaking</i>	<i>Minecraft Club</i>	<i>Elementary Spanish</i>
1:30	<i>Jr. Chef's Cooking Club</i>	<i>Robotics/Coding</i>	<i>Elementary Spanish</i>	<i>Show-N-Tell Public Speaking</i>	<i>Minecraft Club</i>
1:30	<i>Elementary Spanish</i>	<i>Minecraft Club</i>	<i>Jr. Chef's Cooking Club</i>	<i>Robotics/Coding</i>	<i>Show-N-Tell Public Speaking</i>

High School Students (7 hours/day including lunch)

8:30 Review Schedule for the day/Meet with Academic Coach (weekly)
 9:00 Live Instruction
 10:00 Coursework in Curriculum
 12:00 Lunch Break
 1:00 Live Instruction

2:00 Secondary Enrichment Activities
 3:00 Coursework in Curriculum

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:00	Middle School Social Studies	Middle School ELA	Middle School World Languages	Middle School Writer's Workshop	Middle School Power Hour/Study Hall
9:00	High School Math	High School Science	High School Fine Arts	High School Career/Technology	High School Power Hour/Study Hall
1:00	Middle School Math	Middle School Science	Middle School Fine Arts	Middle School Career/Technology	Middle School Power Hour/Study Hall
1:00	High School Social Studies	High School ELA	High School World Language	High School Writer's Workshop	High School Power Hour/Study Hall
2:00	Enrichment Clubs	Enrichment Clubs	Enrichment Clubs	Enrichment Clubs	Enrichment Clubs

These weekly instructional expectations are designed to meet or exceed the state minimum instructional hour requirements under C.R.S. 22-32-109(1)(n)(l), which include 990 hours for grades K-5 and 1,080 hours for grades 6-12. While families may personalize daily schedules, Colearn Academy Colorado monitors student progress to ensure alignment with state-defined instructional time and academic expectations.

12. Provide start and dismissal times for the school day. Explain why the school's daily and weekly schedule will be optimal for student learning. Provide the minimum number of hours/ minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade

Students enrolled in Colearn Academy Colorado are expected to focus on learning for the equivalent of extended school days with no dictated start or dismissal time. Program Mentors work with their Education Specialist (also called their Homeroom Teacher) to set up an ideal weekly routine in the Colearn Planner. Program Mentors set up "Blocks" with their chosen curricula and resources, and fill their schedule based on the state requirements for daily attendance below:

Learners D Darshan Billie Enroll To Academy My Family M

Drawer Learner Launch

Weekly Planner
Daily Planner
Learner Resources
Copy Routine
Print week

	Monday Aug 15	Tuesday Aug 16	Wednesday Aug 17	Thursday Aug 18	Friday Aug 19
PLANNED	5 hrs 5 mins	5 hrs 30 mins	5 hrs 5 mins	4 hrs 30 mins	6 hrs 5 mins
MORNING	<div>Young Rembrandts Visual Arts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Pathbooks Reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Accelerate Curriculum ELA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>	<div>Tiny Broadway Performing Arts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Edgi Current Events <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Pathbooks Reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>	<div>Young Rembrandts Visual Arts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Pathbooks Reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Accelerate Curriculum ELA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>	<div>Tiny Broadway Performing Arts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Edgi Current Events <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Pathbooks Reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>	<div>Young Rembrandts Visual Arts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Pathbooks Reading <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Accelerate Curriculum ELA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>
AFTERNOON	<div>Math Practice Math <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Trace Soccer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>	<div>Accelerate Curriculum ELA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Studies Weekly Social Studies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Trace Soccer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>	<div>Math Practice Math <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Trace Soccer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>	<div>Studies Weekly Social Studies <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Trace Soccer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>	<div>Math Practice Math <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Trace Soccer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div> <div>Accelerate Curriculum ELA <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></div>
ANYTIME THIS WEEK					

Program Mentors check off the Blocks as they are completed. Or, the Learner can use their Launch screen to mark things complete on their own. As things are marked Complete, the Education Specialist can observe meeting attendance requirements. They approve the attendance records, and once they are approved they are submitted through an SIS compliant with Colorado's state reporting requirements.

The minimum number of hours/ minutes per day and week that the school will devote to academic instruction in each grade are as follows:

Grades K-3 Students:

Every week, students in kindergarten-3rd grade are expected to devote approximately 30 hours per week to their education. We recommend the following weekly regimen for our students:

- 1,200 minutes, 20 hours per week of Core Instruction
 - 360 minutes of Reading/Reading intervention (This should be spread out each day, and increased as needed if progress is not being made)
 - 180 minutes of Writing / Speaking/ Language
 - 300 minutes of Math
 - 180 minutes of Social Studies
 - 180 minutes of Science
- 150 minutes, 2.5 hours set aside for lunch
- 150 minutes, 2.5 hours Collaborative Workshops, Learning Projects, Experiential Learning
- 180 minutes, 3 hours in physical activity
- 120 minutes, 2 hours provides flexibility for students pursue clubs of interest

Grade 4-8 Students:

Every week, students in grades 4-8 are expected to devote approximately 30 hours to focused school work, and will likely devote more time pursuing their personal/family interests. We recommend the following weekly regimen for our students:

- 1,200 minutes, 20 hours of core subjects
 - 300 minutes of English Language Arts
 - 300 minutes of Math
 - 300 minutes of Science
 - 300 minutes of Social Studies
- 150 minutes, 2.5 hours set aside for lunch
- 150 minutes, 2.5 hours Collaborative Workshops, Learning Projects, Experiential Learning
- 180 minutes, 3 hours in physical activity
- 120 minutes, 2 hours provides flexibility for students pursue clubs of interest

Grade 9-12 Students:

Every week, students in grades 9-12 are expected to devote approximately 30 hours to focused school work, and will likely need to devote many more. We recommend the following weekly regimen for our students:

- 1,200 minutes, 20 hours of core subjects
 - 300 minutes of English Language Arts
 - 300 minutes of Math
 - 300 minutes of Science
 - 300 minutes of Social Studies
- 300 minutes, 5 hours dedicated to dedicated interests/electives
 - Four 75-minute blocks
- 240 hours, 4 hours of experiential learning which could consist of:
 - Independent work on portfolio development
 - Job Shadowing
 - Internships
 - Career Development
 - Community Volunteering
- 60 minutes, 1 hour for Academic Coach Check-in

13. Include the following attachments:

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
School Calendar	Provide a draft calendar for the first year of operation identifying number of school days and hours of instruction, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements .	D_SchoolCalendar
Sample Schedule	Provide a sample student schedule or master schedule that shows start and end times of the school day for each school level (elementary, middle, and/or high) as well as for daily activities (lunch, class periods)	D_StudentSchedule

Supplemental programming

14. Describe any plans for supplemental programming¹⁰ (ex: electives or special courses, summer school, extracurricular activities, social/emotional programming, remediation and intervention).

Students enrolled at Colearn Academy Colorado have many opportunities to engage in supplemental programming, including live sessions, electives, clubs, internships, and a designated drop-off program called Colearn Communities. These programs are currently well established and well attended by students at our Arizona campus.

¹⁰ For applications that intend to provide homeschool enrichment programming, please complete the addenda linked in question 16 of this section.

Live sessions with Content Lead Teachers are available to students three hours a day, as well as open office hours daily. Colearn Academy has also developed Colearn Communities, in which students may be dropped off once a week at a designated facility for a more traditional school day experience, focusing on enriching science and social studies programming. A full list of available live sessions and clubs may be found [here](#) (a snapshot is included below).

Elementary Live Virtual Course Offerings

<p>Phonics 1</p> <p>K-1st</p> <p>Welcome to Phonics Foundations, a lively and interactive class designed for kindergarten and 1st-grade students! This course focuses on building essential phonics skills through engaging activities that help young learners understand the relationship between letters and their sounds, laying the groundwork for successful reading and writing.</p>	<p>Phonics 2</p> <p>2nd-3rd</p> <p>Welcome to Phonics and Sight Words, an engaging class for beginning readers ready to take their skills to the next level! This course blends advanced phonics with sight word recognition to help students become confident, capable readers. Through interactive and fun activities, students will build strong foundational skills for reading success.</p>	<p>Read Alouds</p> <p>K-2nd</p> <p>Welcome to our Read-Alouds: Comprehension for K-2 Students class! This interactive course is designed to enhance young learners' listening and comprehension skills through the joy of storytelling. Join us as we explore a variety of captivating books that will spark imagination and foster a love for reading while building comprehension skills.</p>
<p>Math Foundations</p> <p>K-1st</p> <p>Welcome to Math Explorations, an exciting class designed for beginning mathematicians! This course focuses on helping young learners develop foundational skills in counting, number recognition, and understanding shapes. Through hands-on activities and engaging lessons, students will build confidence and enthusiasm for math.</p>	<p>Math Fluency</p> <p>2nd-3rd</p> <p>Welcome to Mastering Multiplication and Division, an engaging class designed specifically for 2nd and 3rd-grade students! This course focuses on building a strong foundation in multiplication and division facts, enhancing fluency through a variety of fun and interactive activities. Students will develop confidence in their math skills and learn to apply these concepts in real-world situations.</p>	<p>Math 3</p> <p>3rd Grade</p> <p>Welcome to 3rd Grade Math! This class is for 3rd graders who are doing Colearn's Math Curriculum. This course will cover a variety of topics, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, fractions, and geometry, preparing students for more advanced mathematical challenges.</p>

15. How the school will support equitable access to supplemental programming, including extracurricular and other unique programming aspects of the school.

The Colearn Academy school network provides enrichment funds for all of its students. The enrichment funds included in our budget ensures that all students have access to extracurricular programs, clubs, and sports activities that contribute to holistic student development. Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to removing financial and logistical barriers that could otherwise prevent participation in supplemental programming. Through intentional outreach, flexible scheduling, and partnerships with local organizations, we will ensure our diverse student population — including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, students of color, and students from rural or underserved communities — can engage meaningfully in enrichment opportunities. This commitment reflects our belief that supplemental programming is not a privilege, but an integral part of every learner's educational experience.

Addenda (as applicable)

16. Please download and complete the following addendum if applicable.

- Homeschool.** The homeschool addendum should be completed if the school intends to offer a homeschool enrichment program, in which homeschool students participate in programming options at the school on a part-time basis. Applicants are required to review [CSI's Homeschool Guidance](#) prior to completing the addendum. If completed, save the file as "D_Homeschool Addendum".
- Preschool.** The preschool addendum should be completed if the school intends to offer a preschool program. Additional CSI resources for early learning programs can be found on the [CSI website](#). If completed, save the file as "D_Preschool Addendum".

- c. **Online.** *The online addendum should be completed if the school is proposing to be a fully online program or school as defined on the [CDE website](#). If completed, save the file as “D_Online Addendum”.*
- d. **Alternative Education Campus (AEC).** *The AEC addendum should be completed if the school intends to apply for designation as an AEC as defined on the [CDE website](#). If completed, save the file as “D_AEC Addendum”.*

Educational Program Capacity

17. Describe the experience the founding team has implementing this educational program including the proposed school model, curriculum, and/or instructional philosophy.

The founding team of Colearn Academy Colorado brings deep, demonstrated experience in designing, implementing, and sustaining the innovative educational model proposed for the school. Together, they have successfully launched, operated, and expanded Colearn Academy in Arizona since the 2021-2022 school year and are preparing to open Colearn Academy South Carolina in fall 2025. This multi-state track record shows their ability to deliver high-quality virtual and hybrid programs that combine academic rigor, student agency, and strong family partnerships.

Amber Robinson, one of the founders of Colearn Academy Colorado, is an experienced educator with 18 years in teaching, curriculum development, leadership, and virtual education. She currently serves as Executive Director of Colearn Academy Arizona and played a key role in launching both the Arizona and South Carolina campuses. Amber holds graduate degrees in Special Education, Curriculum Development, and Educational Leadership, and is known for her innovative, family-centered approach. She is deeply passionate about supporting families who choose to educate at home, empowering parents as partners, providing students with the resources and support they need to thrive, and fostering a love of learning through personalized, flexible pathways. Amber is also highly effective in training and supporting staff, helping them implement the model with fidelity while maintaining a strong culture of excellence and collaboration.

Becki Krueger, founder and owner of Education Compliance Services, brings deep expertise in financial compliance, grant management, and charter school operations to the Colearn team. As a trusted advisor and current board member for Colearn Academy Arizona, Becki has been instrumental in supporting the school's successful launch and growth, ensuring that financial operations, regulatory compliance, and governance structures are sound, sustainable, and aligned with best practices. A firm believer in the Colearn model, Becki played a key role in helping replicate the school in South Carolina and was actively involved in its startup planning and implementation. Becki's involvement ensures that Colearn Academy Colorado will launch with a strong operational foundation and long-term fiscal health.

Rounding out the founding team are Courtney Cullen and Taylor Bennett, two veteran educators located in Colorado who bring hands-on expertise in implementing Colearn's model in the virtual classroom. Courtney, the K-3 Content Lead for Colearn Academy Arizona, has more than 15 years of teaching experience and is also a homeschooling mom of four. She is deeply committed to helping families discover flexible, personalized approaches that meet their children's unique learning needs. Taylor Bennett, the Secondary Math Content Lead, has over a decade of K-12 virtual teaching and leadership experience. She is known for building strong family partnerships and delivering engaging, standards-aligned instruction that supports mastery-based learning. Taylor is also a certified special education teacher and has extensive experience working with students with a wide range of learning challenges, ensuring that all learners receive the support they need to succeed.

Collectively, the team has extensive experience implementing Colearn's personalized, mastery-based instructional model. This includes leveraging high-quality digital curricula such as Calvert Learning, Imagine Learning, and Accelerate Education, while supporting students through Colearn's signature dual-coach system. Each student works with an Educational Specialist (a certified teacher) and a Program Mentor (typically a parent, who is trained and supported by staff). Together, they develop and maintain individualized PATH Plans (Proficiency, Achievement, Talent, and Heart) to align each student's learning with Colorado Academic Standards, personal interests, and goals.

The founding team has also developed Colearn's custom learning management platform, designed the instructional calendar, built robust training for staff and families, and implemented systems for tracking mastery, attendance, and compliance. Beyond academics, they have prioritized creating a positive, inclusive school culture that builds students' executive functioning, SEL skills, and career readiness. Their leadership has resulted in strong student engagement, family satisfaction, and academic growth among a diverse population of students, including homeschoolers, gifted learners, multilingual students, and those seeking an alternative to traditional models.

Together, Amber, Becki, Courtney, and Taylor represent a team with a proven record of success in virtual and hybrid schooling, innovative program design, financial integrity, and family partnership. Their combined experience and commitment will ensure that Colearn Academy Colorado is launched successfully, operated sustainably, and remains faithful to its mission of empowering families and students through flexible, student-centered learning.

E. Student Services

CSI schools are responsible for serving all students and ensuring that individual students' needs are met. Schools are responsible for hiring licensed and endorsed special educators pursuant to law. School personnel shall participate in developing Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), identify and refer students for assessment of special education needs, maintain records, and cooperate in the delivery of special education instruction and services, as appropriate. This section of the Application should demonstrate the founding team's understanding of applicable laws for special populations, however detailed information related to identification, assessments, redesignation/exiting, and progress monitoring procedures will be documented in each school's Program Plans for special populations. This work will occur in collaboration with CSI Staff during Year 0 Program Plan development for all special populations.

1. Provide information on student services for students that might need additional support.

- a) Describe the overall plan to serve students with specific instructional needs, including but not limited to students with Individualized Education Programs, Section 504 plans, multilingual learners, students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out.**

Colearn Academy Colorado will have a continuum of special education services and range of placements available to ensure it is providing a free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment (LRE). Related services (for example: occupational or physical therapy, counseling) will be provided face-to-face, via computer, in homes, community sites, and/or therapist offices, depending on the needs of each individual student and as provided in the student's IEP.

CAC will meet the needs of Multilingual Learners (MLL) as required by State and Federal law. Gifted and high ability students will be identified through a placement process and provided the most appropriate grade-level curriculum, pacing and teaching approaches from day one. Content Lead Teachers will work closely with Program Mentors or parent/guardian, and the Colean Planner will be individualized to ensure a steady flow of enrichment activities for students working above grade level. Students will further benefit from the advantages of virtual gifted education as they will be able to work significantly above grade level without the restraints of traditional school classroom pacing.

CAC will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including but not limited to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR), and all local and applicable special education policies and practices. Subject to any specific state limitations, the school complies with the requirements described in the IDEA, as well as state special education statutes, providing a FAPE to students requiring special education services. In general, this includes (but is not limited to) identifying and evaluating the needs of students with disabilities under the IDEA, developing Individualized Educational Programs (IEPs), determining appropriate placements for students with IEPs, and implementing IEPs in the educational placement determined necessary by the IEP team. To comply with state-specific standards and requirements, special education policies may vary from school to school.

A student with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined by law, and who does not otherwise qualify for special education services, may qualify for protections under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 is a federal law designed to prohibit discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

When an evaluation is requested, a committee will be formed to determine whether the student needs services and supports under Section 504 in order to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE), as defined in federal law.

For other special populations, such as homeless or military families, CAC will implement policies and systems to identify and support these special populations of students to best meet their individual needs. A designated

liaison will be appointed at the school level as a point of contact to provide resources to students and families, as well as coordinate support at the school level to minimize educational disruptions and support the unique needs of these students.

b) Discuss how the course scope and sequence, daily schedule, staffing plans, and support strategies and resources will meet or be adjusted for the diverse needs of students.

Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to serving all students through a flexible, mastery-based instructional model that is personalized, rigorous, and inclusive. The school's scope and sequence, daily schedule, staffing plan, and support strategies are intentionally designed to ensure that students with diverse academic, linguistic, behavioral, and social-emotional needs are met with appropriate resources, accommodations, and instructional supports.

Course Scope and Sequence: CAC's curriculum offers families a menu of standards-aligned instructional options, including programs such as Lexia, Imagine Learning, and Accelerate Education. These platforms include adaptive, diagnostic tools that allow students to begin at their current level and receive content tailored to their needs. For example, Lexia provides ongoing assessments and automatically assigns targeted lessons when students are not mastering specific skills. These lessons can be delivered in one-on-one or small-group formats and include scaffolded instruction designed for remediation or acceleration.

Because Colearn students can work at their own pace, the course sequence allows for individualized pacing and frequent progress monitoring. Gifted students can access accelerated pathways and enrichment projects, while students needing more time and support receive interventions aligned to their learning profiles. Program Mentors help implement offline interventions and act as instructional partners under the guidance of Education Specialists and Content Lead Teachers.

Daily Schedule and Instructional Time: The daily schedule is flexible and built collaboratively by the Program Mentor and Educational Specialist using the Colearn Planner. While there is no mandated start or dismissal time, all students are expected to engage in 30 hours of instructional activity per week, with time allocated for core subjects, enrichment, physical activity, and specialized services. This structure allows for both consistent academic focus and the flexibility needed to accommodate related services, one-on-one support, and asynchronous interventions.

Staffing Plan to Support Diverse Learners: Colearn Academy Colorado will hire a licensed Special Education (SPED) teacher to oversee all students with IEPs or 504 Plans and to support teachers and Program Mentors with implementing accommodations, modifications, and progress monitoring. Related services such as speech-language therapy, occupational and physical therapy, and mental health services will be delivered through contracts with qualified Colorado-based providers, some of whom currently work with Colearn students in Arizona and South Carolina and know the Colearn model and target population well.

To ensure coverage across grade levels and service areas, CAC will contract with or hire additional providers as enrollment and student needs dictate. These professionals will be experienced in both virtual and in-person service delivery and capable of supporting students from early elementary through transition-aged high school students.

Support Strategies and Resources: Colearn embeds support for all learners through its instructional design and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), which is used to identify students at risk of academic failure and to deliver targeted interventions. Core programs offer built-in scaffolds, and progress monitoring tools alert teachers when students need intervention. Intervention lessons are shared with Program Mentors, who receive training and coaching to support their delivery. Education Specialists oversee fidelity of implementation and ensure that students receive services aligned to their plans.

Students receiving special education services must attend all prescribed sessions as outlined in their IEP. Services are scheduled during the academic year, and missed hours may be made up in June with advance planning. CAC's providers reserve time and prepare individualized materials to support students in making measurable progress toward their IEP goals.

Multilingual learners receive language support through curriculum embedded supports and scaffolds, access to English Language Development (ELD) resources, and strategies aligned with the Colorado English Language Proficiency (CELP) standards. Gifted learners benefit from flexible pacing, enrichment clubs, and project-based learning that allow for depth and complexity. Across all student groups, Colearn's personalized model fosters independence, critical thinking, and real-world application.

2. Explain more specifically how you will identify and meet the learning needs of students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities in the least restrictive environment possible. Specify the programs, strategies, and support you will provide, including the following:

- *Methods for identifying students with special education needs (and avoiding misidentification);*
- *Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to provide a full continuum of services; ensure students' access to the general education curriculum; and ensure academic success for students with special education needs;*
- *Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of special education students with mild, moderate, and severe needs to ensure the attainment of each student's goals as set forth in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and;*
- *Plans for promoting graduation for students with special education needs (high school only).*

Colearn Academy Colorado uses a robust, multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) to identify and meet the academic and behavioral needs of all students, including those with disabilities. This proactive model begins with high-quality Tier I instruction for all students and builds in intensity based on individual needs through Tier II and Tier III interventions. The school is committed to identifying learning needs early and providing support in the least restrictive environment (LRE), in alignment with IDEA and Section 504.

All families complete an initial screener at the beginning of the year to help identify potential learning or behavioral concerns. If parents or staff raise concerns, teachers collaborate with families to complete a 45-day screener and submit data to the school's Student Support Team (SST). The team meets monthly to review concerns, assess intervention efforts, and determine next steps. These decisions are data-driven and designed to distinguish between learning difficulties caused by disability, language acquisition, trauma, or instructional gaps, ensuring students are not misidentified.

Additionally, if teachers or parents have concerns regarding a student, the following process is implemented:

NEW Student Concerns:

1. Send Initial Screener Survey to all families at BOY
2. If parent responds 'YES, I have concerns for at least one of my students,' teacher and parent complete the 45-day screener together at PTC (September, or as needed)
3. SST meets monthly to review
 - a. Referring teacher presents student concern(s), interventions tried, outcome
 - b. Team reviews baseline data
 - i. What is the problem?
 - ii. Why is the problem occurring?
 - iii. What are we going to do about it? (Instructional decisions, plan, create intervention bank)
 1. Implement Tier 2 or 3 interventions = MTSS Referral Form
 2. -OR- continue with Tier 1 interventions
 - c. Team sets SMART goal(s), develops intervention plan(s), assigns responsibilities
4. Schedule follow-up*

5. Maintain communication with parents about student progress and learning needs

IN-PROGRESS Student Concerns:

1. Progress is monitored after 4-6 weeks of intervention
 - a. Is the intervention working (what is the RTI?)
 - i. If positive: return to lower tier intervention
 - ii. If questionable or poor: evaluate fidelity of implementation, modify intervention, move to next tier intervention, recommend additional testing

Tier I focuses on Quality Core Instruction and support that meet the academic needs of all students. Tier I instruction consists of scientific, research-based programs and frameworks that align to state standards and best practices proven to be effective for all students.

Tier II involves extra instruction and support beyond Tier I that serve students identified as needing more help. Often, this help is provided to these children in small groups. These students require strategic interventions that match their learning styles and additional support in addition to the core curriculum.

Tier III interventions are more intensive and longer in duration. Tier III requires that academic and behavioral supports adjust to the student's response to Quality Core Instruction and previous interventions. Tier III supports all students in need of individualized, intensive strategies to achieve or maintain desired student outcomes and prevent future difficulties.

If a student does not make adequate progress through MTSS Tier III interventions, the SST may recommend a formal special education evaluation. The school psychologist and special education team, following IDEA timelines, conduct multidisciplinary assessments to determine eligibility and service needs. Colearn will ensure that all evaluations, IEP meetings, and service planning are conducted in compliance with federal and state law.

Colearn Academy Colorado will provide a full continuum of services to support students with mild, moderate, and severe disabilities. Students will be educated alongside their peers to the greatest extent appropriate. Services may include:

- Co-teaching and push-in support from special education staff in the general education virtual environment.
- Small-group or 1:1 pull-out instruction for students needing more intensive interventions.
- Access to synchronous virtual resource rooms or specialized instruction blocks.
- Use of evidence-based instructional tools and accommodations, including text-to-speech, visual organizers, scaffolded assignments, and behavior support plans.

Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are developed in collaboration with parents and include specific goals aligned to Colorado Academic Standards. Content Lead Teachers and Special Education Teachers ensure each student's access to grade-level content and track their progress toward IEP goals through formative assessments, benchmarks, and curriculum data. IEP teams meet regularly to review and revise goals based on data and student growth.

Progress monitoring tools and systems (such as curriculum-based measures, teacher observations, and data dashboards) are used to track academic and behavioral progress. Special education staff will collect progress data aligned to IEP goals and report it to families on the same schedule as general education progress reports. The Special Education Teacher and Executive Director will regularly review schoolwide special education data for compliance and equity.

For students with disabilities in high school, Colearn will develop transition plans beginning no later than age 16. These plans will include postsecondary goals, career interests, and course planning aligned with

graduation requirements. Students may graduate with a standard diploma or, when appropriate, with modified pathways as outlined in their IEP.

Through intentional design, strong family collaboration, and personalized instruction, Colearn Academy Colorado will meet the needs of students with disabilities in a fully inclusive, supportive, and legally compliant virtual environment.

3. Explain how the school will meet the needs of multilingual learner (MLL) students, including the following:

- *Methods for identifying MLL students (and avoiding misidentification);*
- *Specific instructional programs, practices, and strategies the school will employ to ensure academic success and equitable access to the core academic program for these students; and*
- *Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of MLL students, including exiting students from MLL services.*

Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to providing equitable access to rigorous, standards-aligned instruction for all students, including Multilingual Learners (MLLs). The school will implement a clear process for identifying students who require language development support. During enrollment, families complete a home language survey. If a language other than English is indicated, students will be screened using an approved English language proficiency assessment to determine eligibility for MLL services. The identification process is culturally responsive and takes into account each learner's educational background, development, and primary language exposure to avoid misidentification.

Once identified, MLL students receive instruction designed to support both academic achievement and English language development. Instructional strategies are embedded within Colearn's core digital curriculum platforms, such as Imagine Learning, which offer built-in scaffolding tools including audio support, leveled texts, visual aids, and vocabulary development. These platforms align with Colorado's English Language Proficiency (CELP) standards and allow students to engage in grade-level content while building language skills.

In addition to these supports, Educational Specialists may provide targeted English Language Development (ELD) instruction through small-group or one-on-one virtual sessions, depending on a student's proficiency level and individual learning plan. Instruction is differentiated using strategies such as guided academic conversations, modeling, sentence frames, and language-rich learning activities that build both academic vocabulary and content knowledge. The flexible nature of the Colearn model also allows for extended time and individualized pacing, which benefits multilingual learners by providing additional processing time and opportunities for practice.

Student progress is monitored regularly through a combination of formative assessments, benchmark data, and annual English language proficiency assessments. Educational Specialists work in partnership with Program Mentors to ensure students are progressing toward both academic and language goals. When a student demonstrates English proficiency and sustained academic success, they may be exited from MLL services in accordance with state criteria. Exited students will continue to be monitored for a minimum of two academic years to ensure continued growth and engagement in the core academic program.

Colearn's learner-centered model, which blends digital tools, educator support, and family partnership, is well-suited to meet the needs of multilingual learners. By embedding English language development into the instructional design and providing personalized supports, Colearn Academy Colorado ensures that MLL students are not only included, but empowered to thrive academically.

4. Explain how the school will identify and meet the learning needs of students who are performing below grade level and monitor their progress. Specify the programs, strategies, and supports you will provide for these students.

At Colearn Academy Colorado, we set high academic goals and standards for our students and collaboratively as an educational institution. To meet these goals, we provide robust professional development, top-notch curriculum and instruction platforms, and formative and summative assessments in order to differentiate instruction for all our students.

For individual students whose achievement may fall below our standard we have the following process in place:

- The Education Specialist will meet with the student's parents/guardians to discuss the current academic achievement gap and suggest ways to close the gap. They may suggest a different curriculum or supplemental curriculum that is available.
- Monthly academic and proficiency goals will be set for the student.
- Monthly meetings will continue to track the students' progress.
- If progress is not achieved within 90 days after adjustments and interventions, then the student may be referred to the Special Education department for assessment. Retention may be suggested if warranted.
- K-8 grade students may participate in remediation programs for credit recovery, summer remediation, or intensive reading or math instruction before, during, or after the regular school day the next academic school year.

The Education Specialist is the primary contact for any concerns that a Program Mentor has regarding academic progress, behavior, or social-emotional wellbeing. They will recommend any appropriate academic interventions and accommodations. In the event that additional concerns regarding student progress arise, the Program Mentor and/or Education Specialist can request a Student Study Team (SST) to be held. This meeting will document the concerns of school staff, the Program Mentor, and families, and will identify any interventions attempted and possibly recommend additional interventions. Interventions should be attempted for 6-8 weeks and a second SST meeting will be held to document the student's response to intervention. Depending on the outcome of the interventions, additional resources and recommendations may be made by the SST team.

5. Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of gifted students, including the following:

- *Specific research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies, and opportunities the school will employ or provide to enhance their abilities; and*
- *Plans for monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of gifted students.*

Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to identifying and serving gifted and high-ability students through a responsive and flexible educational model that emphasizes individualized pacing, academic enrichment, and opportunities for depth and complexity. Gifted learners will be identified through a formal placement process that may include multiple measures, such as achievement data, observations, performance tasks, and parent or teacher referrals. The school will align its identification procedures with guidance from the Colorado Department of Education's Office of Gifted Education, ensuring equitable access to services across diverse student populations.

Once identified, gifted students will have personalized learning experiences designed to extend beyond grade-level expectations. From day one, the student's Colearn Planner will be individualized by the Content Lead Teacher in collaboration with the Program Mentor (typically a parent, guardian, or learning coach). This plan will include flexible pacing, curriculum compacting, and tiered assignments that allow students to accelerate through content while engaging in deeper, more complex learning experiences.

Instructional strategies will reflect best practices in gifted education, including:

- Problem-based and project-based learning to foster critical and creative thinking;
- Socratic seminars and guided inquiry to encourage analytical discussion and exploration;
- Independent studies and enrichment electives aligned to student interests and talents;
- Flexible grouping and cross-grade opportunities where appropriate to match readiness levels;

- Integration of depth, complexity, and novelty into core content using tools like Kaplan's Icons or Renzulli's enrichment triad model.

Because Colearn's virtual model allows students to progress at their own pace, gifted students are not restricted by grade-level curriculum or classroom norms. They may work significantly above grade level in one or more subjects, and the school will offer opportunities for dual enrollment, career exploration, and advanced electives as students reach higher levels of mastery.

Progress monitoring for gifted students will include both academic and affective indicators. Teachers and Program Mentors will review the student's personalized learning goals and performance data regularly to ensure continued growth, engagement, and challenge. Adjustments will be made to the student's Colearn Planner to reflect progress, shifting interests, or areas of advanced potential. Student reflections, portfolio work, and engagement in enrichment activities will also serve as indicators of success.

By offering flexible, enriched, and intellectually stimulating learning experiences, Colearn Academy Colorado will ensure that gifted students are not only challenged academically, but are also supported in developing curiosity, resilience, and a lifelong love of learning.

Student Services Capacity

6. Describe the experience the founding team has supporting the unique needs of students including but not limited to students with Individualized Education Programs, Section 504 plans, multilingual learners, students identified as intellectually gifted, and students at risk of academic failure or dropping out

The founding team of Colearn Academy Colorado brings deep, practical experience supporting a wide range of learners, including students with disabilities, multilingual learners, gifted students, and students at risk of academic failure or disengagement. As the leaders behind Colearn Academy Arizona and the upcoming Colearn Academy South Carolina, this team has designed and sustained flexible, student-centered learning models that ensure all students have equitable access to high-quality instruction, personalized support, and meaningful pathways for growth.

Amber Robinson, who leads the founding team alongside Becki Krueger, has spent 18 years as an educator, mentor teacher, curriculum developer, and school administrator, with extensive experience designing inclusive instructional models that blend rigorous academics with strong family partnerships. She holds a Master's Degree in Special Education, and as Executive Director of Colearn Academy Arizona, she has overseen the implementation of robust special education and Section 504 compliance systems. These systems ensure that individualized services, accommodations, and modifications not only meet all state and federal requirements but are also delivered through a personalized, family-centered lens.

Becki Krueger's expertise in financial compliance and oversight ensures that specialized programs are sustainably resourced, properly staffed, and monitored for quality. Her leadership in budgeting and compliance has directly supported the sustainable growth of Colearn's special education, multilingual, and intervention services.

Taylor Bennett, a seasoned virtual educator and Secondary Math Content Lead, holds dual certification in general education and special education. With over a decade of K-12 online teaching experience, she brings strong expertise in co-leading IEP meetings, integrating accommodations into virtual lessons, and supporting students with diverse learning needs. Her ability to individualize instruction and build strong relationships has been especially effective for students requiring additional scaffolding or enrichment.

Courtney Cullen, Colearn Academy Arizona's K-3 Content Lead, has more than 15 years of experience and a personal commitment to partnering with families to help each child succeed, especially younger learners who may have unique developmental or language needs. She plays a key role in supporting differentiated instruction, early intervention, and language acquisition strategies for primary students.

Together, the team has developed and refined systems to support students with IEPs and 504 Plans in a virtual setting. This includes hiring and supervising certified special education teachers, managing related service providers for speech, OT, and PT, and coordinating timely evaluations, re-evaluations, and progress monitoring. They have experience implementing digital platforms for service delivery and ensuring that teachers, students, and families work collaboratively to meet individual goals in compliance with IDEA, Section 504, and state law. Because of Colearn's personalized, relationship-based model, students with IEPs not only receive their mandated services, but also benefit from an individualized and supportive environment that adapts to their learning style and family context.

In serving multilingual learners, the team has successfully implemented comprehensive identification procedures, language proficiency screenings (such as WIDA), and ELD supports embedded in core instruction. They have trained teachers to use scaffolded curriculum and language acquisition strategies, monitored English language development through ACCESS testing, and developed systems that ensure multilingual students build language proficiency while accessing grade-level content.

For gifted and high-ability students, the founding team has designed personalized pathways with flexible pacing, curriculum compacting, project-based enrichment, and opportunities for acceleration. They work closely with families to use multiple measures for identification, create individualized plans, and monitor growth, ensuring that students are both challenged and supported.

To support students at risk of academic failure or dropping out, the team has led the implementation of robust MTSS frameworks in virtual environments. This includes data-driven early warning systems that track student engagement, pacing, and assessment results; regular check-ins with Program Mentors; and strong family partnership practices. Personalized PATH Plans, developed in collaboration with students and families, help re-engage learners, build executive functioning skills, and address social-emotional needs. High school students, in particular, receive personalized support not only to stay on track for graduation, but also to explore and prepare for postsecondary goals — whether that be college, career, or technical training. The flexibility of the model allows families and educators to design learning plans aligned with each student's strengths and future aspirations.

The team's proven approach balances high-quality digital curricula, customized supports, and a commitment to meaningful family engagement. Their leadership has consistently resulted in strong outcomes for students who often struggle in more traditional settings, including homeschoolers, neurodiverse students, English learners, and students seeking a flexible, student-centered option.

Amber, Becki, Courtney, and Taylor's combined experience ensures that Colearn Academy Colorado will launch with the systems, staff, and expertise needed to serve all students well, honoring their diverse strengths while addressing their unique challenges. Their commitment to inclusive practices, family empowerment, and student success will be the foundation for the school's lasting impact.

The Applicant is required to submit a budget as part of the application submission as detailed in the CSI Budget Template. The description provided above should clearly align to and reference the submitted CSI Budget Template line items.

F. Goals, Objectives, and Pupil Evaluation

The CSI approach to authorizing charter schools balances autonomy and accountability. CSI offers its schools the flexibility to choose the educational models and methods that best meet the unique needs of their students and communities and holds its schools accountable to clear expectations for academic, financial, and organizational performance.

The CSI Annual Review of Schools (CARS) is used to evaluate and accredit CSI charter schools annually based on the CSI Performance Framework which includes measures of academic, financial, and organizational performance. For more information on what charter school accountability looks like for CSI schools, the measures CSI uses to evaluate school performance, and the types of supports CSI offers its schools, visit the school accountability page on the CSI website.

In this section, the applicant should describe its plan for an appropriate, consistent, clear, and measurable accountability system.

- 1. Summarize the school's goals, including academic, organizational, and financial goals. For each goal, identify the specific measure and any data that will help evaluate progress towards achieving the goal.** *While not explicitly part of the CSI or state accountability system, the CSI Board considers schools' unique measures (if established) as part of regular authorization decisions. If known, include any mission-specific or model-specific goals.*

By providing an innovative model in partnership with families and parents, Colearn is committed to seeing all students reach their greatest potential. This is accomplished through the design of the Colearn model, monitored through various academic data metrics throughout the school year and measured by the academic outcomes of students. In order to prepare each student to develop the competencies to become contributing citizens of the world, Colearn Academy Colorado focuses on the following goals:

I. Academic Goals

1. Personalized Student Growth

- **Goal:** Each student will make measurable academic progress aligned with their Personalized PATH Plan (Proficiency, Achievement, Talent, Heart).
- **Measure:** Benchmark and diagnostic assessment data (e.g., i-Ready, MAP) showing one year's growth annually in reading and math.
- **Data Sources:** Internal academic trackers, curriculum-embedded assessments, student portfolios, state assessments.

2. Academic Proficiency & State Assessment Performance

- **Goal:** Students will meet or exceed state standards in core subjects.
- **Measure:** CMAS and PSAT/SAT scores; % of students meeting or exceeding expectations.
- **Targets:** 35% proficiency in ELA, 30% in Math by Year 2; Median Growth Percentile ≥ 55 in both.
- **Data Sources:** CDE School Performance Framework (SPF), CMAS/ACCESS/WIDA scores.

3. College & Career Readiness

- **Goal:** All high school students will engage in postsecondary planning.
- **Measure:** 100% completion of ICAP (Individual Career and Academic Plan); participation in internships, concurrent enrollment, or CTE pathways.
- **Data Sources:** ICAP records, graduation cohort data, postsecondary outcomes, SAT participation.

4. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

- **Goal:** Students will demonstrate growth in SEL competencies and engagement.
- **Measure:** SEL survey participation and responses; Program Mentor observations.

- **Data Sources:** SEL screeners, reflection journals, student check-ins, PATH Plan SEL indicators.

II. Organizational Goals

1. Family Partnership and Engagement

- **Goal:** 90% of families report satisfaction with communication, support, and involvement opportunities.
- **Measure:** Annual family surveys and feedback tools.
- **Data Sources:** Parent satisfaction surveys, participation in workshops, parent-teacher communication logs.

2. Implementation Fidelity

- **Goal:** The school will implement the Colearn model — including scheduling, curriculum delivery, and mentorship — with fidelity.
- **Measure:** Internal implementation reviews, platform usage data, coaching records.
- **Data Sources:** Weekly planner completion rates, mentor and teacher logs, instructional audit results.

3. Support for Diverse Learners

- **Goal:** All students with IEPs, 504 Plans, and MLL designations will receive services in compliance with federal/state laws.
- **Measure:** 100% of IEP services delivered as scheduled; monitored progress toward individualized goals.
- **Data Sources:** IEP/504 documentation, service logs, ACCESS scores, progress reports.

III. Financial Goals

1. Financial Sustainability

- **Goal:** The school will maintain a balanced budget and meet financial targets annually.
- **Measure:** End-of-year fund balance; adherence to CSI financial performance framework metrics.
- **Data Sources:** Annual audit, quarterly financial reports, CSI financial ratings.

2. Efficient Resource Allocation

- **Goal:** At least 70% of the school's annual expenditures will directly support instructional services and student programs.
- **Measure:** Budget-to-actual spending ratios and programmatic investment tracking.
- **Data Sources:** Budget documents, audit records, vendor contracts, school financial reports.

Mission-Specific Goals (Model-Aligned)

- **Goal:** At least 85% of students will meet their personalized learning goals as outlined in the Colearn PATH Plan by the end of the academic year.
- **Measure:** Review of progress updates, student reflections, and goal achievement logs.
- **Data Sources:** Colearn Planner, teacher/mentor check-ins, PATH progress dashboards.

By aligning with these academic, organizational, and financial goals, Colearn Academy partners with families of home-educated students in Colorado to provide a comprehensive and enriching educational experience that meets the unique needs of each student, while nurturing their academic growth and personal development. Through sound organizational practices, effective governance, and a commitment to operational excellence, the school ensures that its systems and structures support high-quality instruction and responsive student services. Additionally, responsible fiscal stewardship and transparent financial management allow Colearn Academy to allocate resources efficiently and sustainably, ensuring that funding directly supports student learning, innovative programs, and continuous improvement.

2. For state accountability purposes, identify goals related to the school's anticipated plan type on the CDE School Performance Framework and performance on each of the state performance indicators (achievement, growth, and post-secondary and workforce readiness, if applicable) in Year 1 and Year 2.

Colearn Academy Colorado anticipates receiving an initial "Performance Plan" or "Insufficient State Data" rating on the CDE School Performance Framework (SPF) in Year 1, depending on enrollment size and the number of valid state assessment results. Given the school's virtual and mastery-based instructional model, goals are intentionally designed to demonstrate strong foundational academic outcomes, early growth trajectories, and implementation fidelity in Years 1 and 2.

Year 1 (Initial Operational Year) - Anticipated Plan Type: *Performance Plan* (if sufficient data is available); otherwise, *Insufficient State Data*

Performance Indicator Goals:

- Academic Achievement (CMAS/PARCC):
 - 25% or higher of students meeting or exceeding expectations in ELA and Math (compared to state online school averages)
- Academic Growth (if sufficient N size):
 - Median Growth Percentile (MGP) ≥ 50 in ELA and Math
- Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness (HS only):
 - 80% 9th-12th grade students complete Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAPs)
 - On-track graduation indicator $> 85\%$
 - Preliminary PSAT/SAT participation $\geq 95\%$

Implementation Benchmarks:

- MTSS fully implemented with regular student progress monitoring
- 100% of MLLs and students with IEPs receive required services
- All students receive baseline benchmark assessments for growth tracking (e.g., MAP, i-Ready)

Year 2 - Anticipated Plan Type: *Performance Plan*

Performance Indicator Goals:

- Academic Achievement:
 - 35% or more of students meet or exceed expectations on state assessments in ELA
 - 30% or more meet or exceed in Math
 - Subgroup performance gaps (MLLs, SPED, FRL) narrow by 5%
- Academic Growth:
 - Median Growth Percentile (MGP) ≥ 55 in ELA and Math
 - At least one disaggregated group (e.g., MLLs or SPED) shows MGP > 60
- Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness (HS only):
 - 90%+ ICAP completion
 - 100% PSAT/SAT participation
 - Postsecondary credential opportunities (e.g., internships, concurrent enrollment) accessed by $\geq 25\%$ of 11th/12th graders
 - On-time graduation rate $\geq 85\%$

Implementation Benchmarks:

- Interim assessments show 1+ year growth in core content for 70% of students
- MTSS, data review cycles, and instructional interventions fully embedded

- Parent/student satisfaction surveys show $\geq 85\%$ agreement on academic support

These goals are designed to reflect a strong trajectory toward long-term success on the SPF while acknowledging the typical ramp-up period for a new school. The school's flexible model, combined with robust support systems and personalized instruction, will drive student growth and position Colearn Academy Colorado to achieve or exceed state expectations in academic outcomes, equity, and college/career readiness.

3. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress – of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole – throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year.

- a) Describe how the school will collect and analyze student academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community.**

Colearn Academy Colorado will implement a comprehensive, data-driven approach to student academic achievement that includes systematic collection and analysis of assessment data, continuous refinement of instruction based on student progress, and transparent reporting to families, staff, and the broader school community.

Assessments are an incredibly important component of Colearn Academy Colorado's potential for success. While we use "traditional" benchmarks, Colorado state assessments, and summative assessments to track student learning and mastery, we also provide a bevy of alternative options for summative and formative assessment. This is for several reasons. First, we truly believe in a holistic assessment strategy that allows all the different facets of a student's intelligence to shine through. Second, our target population of "curious, engaged families" is often rather suspect of the utility of state-mandated testing. It is for this reason that many choose to homeschool instead. We know that our mixture of traditional and holistic assessment techniques will allay many of these families' concerns while providing useful data necessary to ensure that all students are meeting content-area standards. This is good for families and students — they can be certain that their pupils are learning what they need to. It's good for Colorado — we can be sure that our future citizens have the skills needed to form a strong society.

Colearn Academy does not "teach to the test," though it does use formative assessments as important data points. Rather than relying solely on standardized tests, we now have the ability to keep track of what happens to students. And rather than relying on standardized proficiency targets, districts, schools and students can use better information to create individualized growth targets. CAC uses a personalized student dashboard to track student interests, strengths, aptitudes, learning goals, and experiential learning — which carry more meaning and insight than the scores of a standardized assessment.

These formative and summative assessments allow for Content Lead Teachers and Program Mentors to monitor student progress and learning of key concepts and standards. By monitoring student data frequently, Program Mentors and Content Lead Teachers can collaborate to develop strategies to help students who are not making adequate progress and provide support immediately to ensure student mastery of standards.

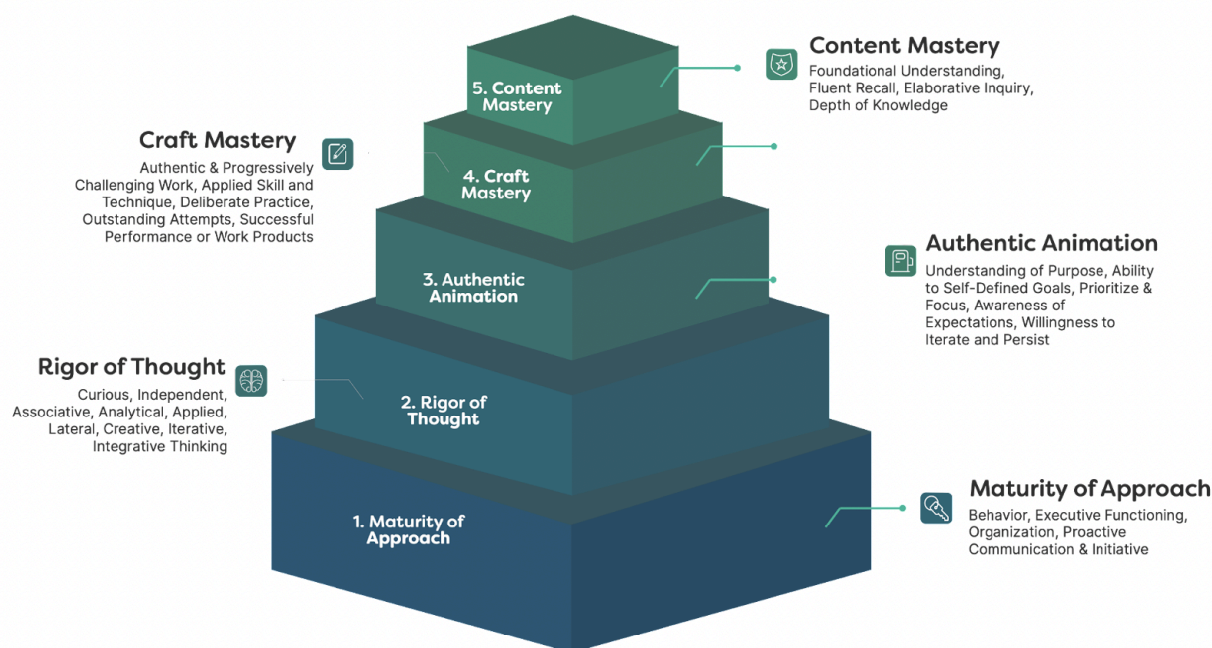
Colearn Academy Colorado will follow and prioritize the State of Colorado's academic standards, skills and knowledge that students are expected to attain at the conclusion of each grade level in order to advance to the next level, or in the case of 12th grade, post-secondary and work-ready.

Success at Colearn Academy isn't about reciting facts and taking tests. Too many students disengage from learning at school because schools have somehow mainly come to rely on "content knowledge" as their main goal of instruction. This method often fails to promote learning, and many students disengage. In this sense, the way many schools educate is counterproductive to learning.

Colearn Academy opens the door for more students to re-engage in learning and succeed through multiple paths. Our simple belief is that "content knowledge" is the result of a lot of important habits of mind and

deliberate actions over time. We believe we can help all students build these success patterns. At Colearn Academy, we look at the whole picture, and allow students to demonstrate success through our five Aspects of Mastery.

Work will be assessed through productive conversations in cooperation with teachers, parents, and the students themselves. We do this through our unique Aspects of Mastery framework, which looks at the “whole picture” of a students’ learning and growth. We have developed the Colearn Aspects of Mastery Pyramid featuring the way we evaluate student learning and work:



We use this framework in creative ways to help students set their own goals, evaluate their own work with the collaboration of teachers, mentors and peers, and succeed step by step as they grow and thrive.

- b) Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible and involved in the collection and analysis of assessment data and who will be responsible for managing the data, interpreting it for classroom teachers, and leading or coordinating professional development to improve student achievement.**

Colearn Academy’s Content Lead Teachers and school leaders will be responsible for collecting, managing, and interpreting student data. Teachers will review data weekly, but will also look at the benchmark data after each benchmark to identify trends and address student needs. Based on benchmark and state assessment data, the school leader will lead and coordinate professional development based on the needs of the staff and student needs as identified in the data.

Colearn Academy Colorado will provide training and support for the school leadership and teachers in analyzing, interpreting, and using performance data to improve student outcomes. These training sessions will happen throughout the school year and cover a variety of student data topics: formative assessments, interpreting data from iReady, analyzing state assessment data, and using a variety of data to ensure student mastery of standards to improve student outcomes. Because the design of CAC allows for a variety of curriculum options selected by Program Mentors, teachers will receive ongoing support and training on how to manage and interpret data from a variety of sources to ensure student progress on standards.

In addition, teachers and Program Mentors commonly use various instructional technologies or formative assessment methods that enable data-driven feedback, decision making, intervention, and support. Examples include quiz games with Quizizz, Kahoot, and 99math. Core curriculum progress tracking in Accelerate, Kiddom, and Albert. Work Sample collection using our PATH unit portfolio method. Because the Colearn Academy model supports Program Mentor agency, and learner-driven choice, the tools themselves may change. However, as an organization we are building a culture of data-driven iteration to improve student learning to drive meaningful student achievement and growth.

- 4. Provide information on school-selected assessments.**
- a) In addition to all mandatory state assessments, identify the primary interim assessments the school will use to assess student learning needs and progress throughout the year. Explain how these interim assessments align with the school’s model, curriculum, performance goals, and state standards.**

By philosophy and design, Colearn Academy Colorado uses a variety of performance indicators to assess student learning throughout the school year. CAC will use iReady diagnostic in August, January, and May to assess students progress in Math and Reading. Data from this diagnostic is used to work with parents or Program Mentors to develop individualized learning plans for students and determine interventions needed. Based on data in January, CAC will work with parents or Program Mentors of students who show no or low growth and potentially switch up their curriculum and/or supplemental curriculum to provide more one-on-one support to those learners.

Additionally, each student in grades 9-12 creates an annual portfolio of their work; produces deliverables for a public audience either through presentations, authentic and/or creative products, internships, publications, community projects, or competitions; and works collaboratively with other students and adult mentors to show mastery of learning competencies and personalized goals. K-8 students are assessed through a similar, albeit slightly less rigorous portfolio method. These students, with help from their Program Mentors, use tools such as Bulb, Bookcreator.com or a Google Photos slideshow to record completion of their projects, share with others, and reflect on the work. This reflection time is crucial in deepening the cognitive gain accomplished from the completion of the projects, which are based on state standards.

Utilizing key resources for assessment and monitoring progress is key to ensuring students master academic standards and close any educational gaps. Mastery is achieved when a student can demonstrate proficiency in skills and content as described in grade level state standards. To ensure that students are on track to demonstrate mastery on state mandated summative assessments, formative assessment opportunities will be utilized in an ongoing manner. These assessments will provide teachers with the information required to monitor progress and adjust instruction.

- Formative assessment will include:
- Qualitative and observational data obtained by teachers through student level interactions over Zoom and through live class and club settings.
 - Embedded course assignments and assessments at the lesson and unit level (Example: Formative)
 - Frequent, brief standards aligned short-cycle assessments sequenced to assess mastery of content recently learned, either independently or in a live class
 - Local benchmark assessments administered three times per year
 - Common mock assessments administered three times per year (Example: Edulastic)
 - Quiz games and other forms of engaging assessment (Examples: Quizizz, Kahoot!, and 99math.)

The table below provides a summary of the assessments Colearn Academy Colorado proposes to utilize to monitor student performance:

Assessment Type	Platform/Tool
Local Benchmark/Diagnostic (Computer Adaptive	iReady

Nationally Normed)	
Incoming Assessment	Example: iReady, Edulastic
Short Cycle Assessments (Progress Monitor)	Example: iReady (K-8), Lexia, Edulastic
Reading Fluency	Example: Dibels
Classroom Assessments	Examples: Formative, iReady Standards Mastery, Lexia Course assessments
State of Colorado Summative Assessments	CMAS, CoAlt, SAT/PSAT

When student level data indicates that a student is not on track for mastery of grade level content school staff will implement tiered academic interventions within a multi-tiered support system (MTSS). These supports will happen organically in the Colearn model, as courses are individually designed for each student. Students will work with Content Lead teachers and Program Mentors, along with support from home, to achieve mastery.

b) For schools serving students in K-3, identify the assessment(s) the school plans to use to comply with the Kindergarten School Readiness requirements and the READ Act.

For Colearn Academy Colorado, which will serve students in grades K-3, the school will meet Colorado's Kindergarten School Readiness and READ Act requirements using the following assessments:

Kindergarten School Readiness Assessment

- Planned Assessment Tool: Teaching Strategies GOLD
- Purpose: To assess each kindergartener's readiness across developmental domains, including language and literacy, physical well-being, social-emotional development, and cognition.
- Timeline: Administered within the first 60 calendar days of the school year, per C.R.S. 22-7-1014.
- Use: Results will inform personalized instruction and support early intervention strategies.

This assessment will be administered within the first 60 calendar days of the school year, consistent with state law. Results will be used to guide each student's individualized learning plan, ensuring that teachers, program mentors, and families collaborate to address any areas where additional support is needed. Colearn's virtual curriculum for kindergarten will include evidence-based early literacy instruction, developmentally appropriate social-emotional learning (SEL), and age-appropriate physical and cognitive activities, ensuring that students build the foundational skills they need to succeed in later grades.

READ Act Compliance (Grades K-3)

- Planned Assessment Tool: DIBELS 8th Edition (or Acadience Reading, depending on final vendor approval)
- Purpose: To identify students with significant reading deficiencies (SRDs), monitor reading progress, and inform individual READ plans.
- Timeline: Administered three times per year (beginning, middle, and end of year) in compliance with the Colorado READ Act (C.R.S. 22-7-1201 et seq.)
- Use: Results will be used to develop and update READ plans for identified students and track progress toward grade-level reading proficiency.

Colearn's K-3 literacy curriculum aligns with the Colorado Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, and Communicating and incorporates explicit, systematic phonics, phonemic awareness, vocabulary development, and fluency building. Teachers and program mentors will use data from the READ assessments to differentiate

instruction and provide additional tutoring or small-group support as needed. Families will receive timely updates on their student’s reading progress, as required by the READ Act, and will be provided strategies to support reading development at home.

c) For schools planning to serve more than 20% multilingual learners and/or students with IEPs, what assessments or progress monitoring tools will the school use to monitor academic progress of these students?

Colearn Academy Colorado does not anticipate serving more than 20 percent multilingual students and/or students with IEPs.

5. Describe the corrective actions the school will take if school-wide, classroom, or individual student level performance does not meet state or authorizer expectations and/or falls below the identified goals. The description should include:

- *The school’s plan for identifying and reducing the opportunity gaps among its student populations*
- *How data will be used to inform areas such as professional development, instruction, and teacher evaluations.*
- *A corrective action timeline, the person responsible, and possible changes to be considered as appropriate.*

If our school-wide academic goals are not met, the Governing Board will be responsible for forming a school improvement team that consists of all stakeholders. This team will complete a comprehensive needs assessment and create a continuous improvement plan that covers all of the school functions: academic, operational, fiscal. The team will collaborate to find the root cause of the academic decline and formulate a plan to improve.

Colearn Academy Colorado will measure and evaluate academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, subgroups, and the school as a whole using benchmark data throughout the school year, as well as state assessment results. iReady benchmark data and state assessment data will allow CAC to analyze data based on individual students, cohorts, subgroups, and the whole school, which will allow CAC to identify trends and gaps in learning. This data will be reviewed to improve instruction by identifying gaps and needs, whether that is additional instructional resources, professional development, or adopting new curriculum. Additionally, teachers and program mentors will monitor formative and summative data throughout the school year to ensure student progress of standards. These variety of data points will help teachers identify students who need additional supports through the Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS).

To further reduce opportunity gaps among student populations — including multilingual learners, students with disabilities, and historically underserved groups — Colean Academy Colorado will regularly disaggregate and analyze subgroup data. The MTSS framework will be used to ensure students receive timely and tiered interventions. Where gaps are identified, the school will consider additional instructional supports, culturally responsive teaching strategies, and stronger parent outreach efforts to address root causes of underperformance.

Academic data will also drive professional development planning and educator support. The school will align professional development opportunities with identified areas of need, such as reading intervention, differentiation, or data-driven instruction. In addition, the use of formative and summative student data will factor into teacher and Program Mentor evaluations and coaching cycles, ensuring that staff are supported in improving their instructional practices.

Corrective Action Timeline and Roles:

Step	Timeline	Responsible Party	Action
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Data Review & Initial Diagnosis	Within 30 days of concern	Principal, Educational Specialists	Review benchmark/state data, identify student groups needing support
School Improvement Team Formed	Within 45 days	Governing Board	Convene team to launch needs assessment
Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP)	Within 60 days	School Improvement Team	Develop action plan with measurable goals
Implementation Begins	Month 3	School Leaders, Teachers, Mentors	Begin targeted interventions, PD, curriculum adjustments
Monitoring and Adjustment	Ongoing (monthly check-ins)	Principal, Governing Board	Track progress, adjust supports as needed
Re-Evaluation	End of Semester or Benchmark Cycle	School Improvement Team	Evaluate impact of interventions, revise plan if goals not met

If progress remains insufficient after two full benchmark cycles, the School Improvement Team and Governing Board will consider more intensive interventions, such as curriculum replacement, leadership restructuring, or consultation with external improvement partners.

Goals and Evaluation Capacity

6. Describe the experience the founding team has implementing the school design successfully, including capacity in areas such as evaluation, assessment, and performance management.

The founding team of Colearn Academy Colorado has a proven track record of successfully implementing and scaling Colearn’s innovative virtual and hybrid school design — combining digital curriculum, personalized learning, and strong family engagement — while maintaining high standards for evaluation, assessment, and performance management. Their leadership has driven Colearn Academy Arizona’s steady growth since its launch in 2021 and has positioned the model for successful replication in South Carolina and now Colorado.

Amber Robinson, who leads the founding team alongside Becki Krueger, brings 18 years of experience as an educator, curriculum developer, department lead, and school administrator. As Executive Director of Colearn Academy Arizona, Amber oversees the implementation of mastery-based progression, individualized PATH Plans (Proficiency, Achievement, Talent, and Heart), and the school’s integrated data systems. She has provided guidance to teachers and families in using formative and summative assessments to inform real-time instructional adjustments and long-term goal setting.

Becki Krueger, with her extensive background in education compliance and grant management, ensures that Colearn’s performance management systems align with state accountability frameworks and financial best practices. Her expertise supports data-driven decision-making processes that tie student performance metrics to sustainable resource allocation and compliance with federal and state reporting requirements.

Courtney Cullen and Taylor Bennett, experienced Colearn educators, play vital roles in putting the school’s assessment and performance systems into practice. Courtney, the K-3 Content Lead, supports early literacy and numeracy assessments, including implementation of Colorado READ Act requirements and Kindergarten Readiness assessments. Taylor, the Secondary Math Content Lead, uses real-time data to adjust instruction,

track mastery, and coach families on student progress, all while ensuring alignment with Colorado Academic Standards.

Together, the team has implemented Colearn's custom learning management system and Colearn Planner, which integrate diagnostic, benchmark, and formative assessment data from platforms like iReady, Imagine Learning, and Calvert Learning. These tools enable teachers, students, and families to monitor progress, identify learning gaps, and personalize instruction to each student's needs and pacing.

In addition, the founding team has:

- Designed and refined professional development focused on assessment literacy, effective use of data to inform instruction, and implementation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) for both academic and behavioral interventions.
- Led the development of evaluation frameworks for staff performance, including goal-setting aligned with student achievement data, regular observations and feedback cycles, and transparent improvement plans.
- Built a culture of continuous improvement, using disaggregated student achievement data to identify opportunity gaps and develop action steps that directly impact student outcomes.

Under this leadership, Colearn Academy Arizona has demonstrated measurable student growth in core subject areas, strong family satisfaction, and operational excellence — all of which will be replicated in Colorado. The founding team's combined experience ensures that evaluation, assessment, and performance management systems will be implemented with fidelity, driving continuous improvement and maintaining high expectations for every student.

G. Budget and Finance

Budget

1. Complete the [CSI Budget Template](#) and include as an attachment. Use the per pupil revenue and other revenue assumptions provided by CSI.

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
School Budget	Provide a draft budget using the CSI Budget template provided per pupil and other revenue assumptions.	G_Budget

Financial Management

2. Describe the systems, policies and processes the school will use for financial planning, accounting, purchasing, and payroll, including a description of how it will establish and maintain strong internal controls and ensure compliance with all financial reporting requirements. *This description should include details regarding adherence to best practices in budget preparation, cash receipts, purchasing, accounts payable, adjusting entries, and contract.*

Colearn Academy Colorado will be a “single site” virtual school and not part of a Network of Schools in Colorado. Therefore the daily day-in, day-out fiscal roles and responsibilities for the school fall mainly with the school administration. The Executive Director and other administrative staff will be responsible for executing purchase orders, routing invoices, reporting time and effort for payroll, local bank deposits, and supply orders and tracking. The Executive Director will also be required to have knowledge of the schools budget and be available for any questions the Governing Board may have about purchases. The Governing Board is tasked with providing oversight to the Executive Director concerning budgeting, the annual audit and any fiscal reporting requirements both Federal and State. The Board will receive reports at each Governing Board meeting, which will include an Income Statement – Actual vs Budget for the Month and YTD, a Balance Sheet, Cash Flow statements and enrollment updates. The Governing Board responsibilities will also include engaging the CPA for the annual Audit, assisting in financial forecasting and overseeing the internal financial controls.

Following best financial practices is essential to the mission, vision, and educational program of Colean Academy Colorado. The Year 0-5 budgets include all the necessary elements needed to increase student achievement, provide innovative instructional methodology, and utilizes student and school level data to drive the financial decisions concerning resource allocation. The budget shows a balance between staffing, student support and technology driven curriculum, all items necessary to create a highly performing virtual school. We identified and funded our unique instructional strategies and curricular components that contribute to student achievement: innovative teaching methods, specialized programs, and technology integration. We have allocated funds for hiring and retaining qualified teachers and support staff, while also considering the necessary professional development to support student achievement. As a virtual school, we have included technology integration, investing in educational technology tools and infrastructure to support modern teaching methods and enhance student engagement. The enrichment funds included in our budget ensures that all students have access to extracurricular programs, clubs, and sports activities that contribute to holistic student development. We have already formed business partnerships throughout Colorado that align with our goals and objectives, potentially helping with fundraising, financial support or in-kind contributions. Since none of these are firm funding sources, we have not included business support in our Year 0-5 budgets.

We will implement regular assessments to measure progress and identify areas for improvement. A strategic plan will be put into place that outlines how budget allocations will be adjusted based on performance data, regularly reviewing the budget and its impact on educational outcomes. Allocations will be adjusted based on the effectiveness of the budget priorities on student outcomes. By incorporating these elements, the school will have a sustainable and flexible financial framework that supports the successful implementation of its educational program and contributes to the ongoing improvement of student achievement.

Colearn Academy Colorado produces a yearly budget that reflects the school's unique mission, vision, priorities and strategies for optimal learning within the educational model. These financial systems are well established and are reviewed and approved by the District Finance Department to ensure appropriate fiscal responsibility. CAC creates a yearly balanced budget that considers revenue estimation based off of Per Pupil Revenue (PPR), mill levy dollars, and categorical grant funding. Expenditure estimation is based on review of previous year spending with the appropriate modifications as projected by need or anticipated increase of cost. CAC makes every effort to be financially transparent by providing the initial budget and any re-adoptions to the authorizer, as well as the CAC Governing Board and stakeholders.

Revenue

Colearn Academy Colorado yearly revenue projections are based on expected state per pupil revenue and federal entitlement grants Title I and IDEA. The enrollment projections below serve for the basis of the State revenue found in the Year 0-5 budget plans.

In Year 1 the school assumes state funding of \$10,480/student. This does not include add-ons for Special Education Students, Gifted Students, English Language Learners and Poverty. Total state funding in Year 1 is anticipated to be \$2,410,400 not including the subgroup add-ons.

Year 1 federal revenues are calculated based on per pupil estimates and assumptions. The budget includes an assumption of \$1,900/SPED student of additional Federal IDEA Funding and \$305/student in additional Federal Title I funding. These are just estimations and anticipate being able to adjust our budgets once the demographics of our school enrollment is known since Title I and IDEA funding is based on Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility and Special Education enrollment respectively.

Revenues in Years 2-5 reflect an anticipated 1.5 percent increase in state funding due to inflation adjustments and level per pupil amounts in Title I and IDEA funds.

Colearn Academy did not include any variable income in the budget (e.g., non federal grants, donations, fundraising), in order to remain conservative in our revenue projections.

Expenses

All expense assumptions are conservatively based on price quotes, current market rate, and/or thorough research, conversations with Operations Directors at comparable charter schools and the experience of the founding team.

Staffing:

- Year 1 staffing will include an Executive Director (School Leader) at a salary of \$90,000, The budget includes six teaching positions averaging \$56,500 each, a Reading Interventionist at \$58,000, a Registrar at \$48,000, a Director of Engagement at \$65,000, an estimate for substitute teachers at \$140/day, and a Special Education Teacher at \$60,000. These salaries equal \$886,795 with employee related expenses of \$208,734 for a total of \$899,734.
- Year 2 budget also includes the addition of a School Psychologist at a salary of \$60,000 and adding two teachers to accommodate growth in student enrollment. The other administrative positions remain the same as Year 1. The salary rates assume an increase of 3% in pay and benefit costs each year for a total of \$958,270 in salaries and \$294,465 in employee related expenses in Year 2.
- Year 3 budget includes an increase to the administrative positions, adding an Administrative Assistant at a salary of \$48,000 and an Assistant Principal at an \$80,000 salary. The budget also includes adding two teachers to accommodate growth in student enrollment. The other positions remain the same as Year 2. The salary rates assume an increase of 3% in pay and benefit costs each year for a total of \$1,250,445 in salaries and \$389,449 in employee related expenses in Year 3.

- Year 4 sees the need to hire another Special Education teacher and two more teachers because of the expected increase in enrollment. The other positions remain the same as Year 3. The salary rates assume an increase of 3% in pay and benefit costs each year for a total of \$1,482,320 in salaries and \$468,710 in employee related expenses in Year 4.
- Year 5 assumes the need to add an Assistant Principal, having one to oversee Primary and Elementary grades, and one to oversee Middle and High School grades. The budget also assumes having the need to hire additional Administrative Assistant, and adding two more teachers to accommodate student enrollment growth. The other positions remain the same as Year 4. The salary rates assume a 3% increase in pay and benefit costs each year for a total of \$1,801,375 in salaries and \$577,531 in Employee related expenses in Year 5.

Colorado Charter School Institute Fee: 2 percent of the state funding base

Legal Services: Assumes a possible \$7,500/year for legal fees in Year 1 and will increase 1.5%. This is based on our current legal fee pricing and estimated number of contracted hours that may be necessary.

Travel: Travel expense assumptions are based on researched expenses and experience from other Charter Schools operation experience.

Dues & Fees: Assumptions are based on researched expenses of similarly sized Charter Schools and Charter School operation experience.

Banking and Payroll Fees: Assumption based on previous experience of the founding team.

Rent or Other Facility Costs: Rent expenses are based on research of available office space in Colorado. It is assumed that we will need to rent enough space to have a small office for the three employees in Years 1-3 to work out of, storage of student files and a conference room for Board meetings. The budgeted yearly increase in the facility lease is based on expected inflationary trends in the office lease market and the need to house additional staff in Years 4 and 5.

Utilities: Utility assumptions are based on research of current rates in the vicinity of the proposed rented office space and previous experience of the founding team.

Total Insurance Costs: Total Insurance costs for Property, General Liability, Cyber, Student accident, Workers Compensation, Directors & Officers, etc. is based on a quote provided by Wright Speciality and Oasis PEO. The increase in insurance costs over the years is based on possible inflationary measures.

Professional Education Services: Special Education contracted services budgeted expenses are based on experience of the application team and research of special education providers in Colorado. As our student enrollment increases, Special Education expenses will increase accordingly through years 1-5.

Payroll Services: Assumes \$1,200 a year for each employee. This assumption is based on current pricing quotes from Oasis.

Complete Curricula: Colearn Academy Colorado assumes that there will be curriculum expenses that each student will incur. This is based on previous experience of the application team. We have budgeted \$500/student in Year 1, in following years we incrementally increase the budget accounting for student enrollment numbers and inflation. Year 5 shows that budgeted expenses increased to \$650/student.

Field Trips: Colearn Academy believes that field trips for students are an integral part of the educational experience. We want all our students to have the ability to go on Field Trips and therefore have budgeted

\$10/month per student for field trip expenses in Year 1. As enrollment grows, and to account for inflation, these costs are estimated to be \$15/month per student by Year 3.

Audit & Accounting Services: We are assuming an average cost of \$5,000 in Year 1 for local accounting services. These services will be integral to the integrity of our Financial Controls. Due to increased enrollment and staffing we can anticipate that these costs will increase year over year. Included in the total expense is the anticipated expense of \$15,000 for Audit services beginning in Year 2.

Travel: Travel costs are unique at Colearn Academy because they include the annual cost to send all staff, students and their families to testing centers for the required state testing. We hold a conference for families at the same venue. Past experience has held that this costs on average \$2,000/employee each year.

Consultant Services: Colearn Academy Colorado assumes that various types of consultants will be necessary to assure compliance with state and federal laws. The amount is comparable to amounts incurred by other virtual Charter Schools of similar size.

Assessment Materials: Colearn Academy is budgeting a nominal amount per student each year (and adjusting for possible inflation) for both formative and summative assessment materials that may be necessary, or requested by families, for progress monitoring or additional benchmark testing. We anticipate expenditures ranging from \$125/student in Year 1 to \$145/student in Year 5.

Website & Marketing: The expenses for the website and marketing will be contracted services. The budget assumes \$20,000 in Year 1. The assumption is based on current market rates with costs increasing every year as we reach more markets in Colorado.

Contracted Technology Services: The assumption is based on current market rates incurred by members of the founding team. Subsequent years the assumption is that the contracted expense will increase for inflation yearly.

Professional Development: Colearn Academy Colorado is budgeting \$10,000 in year 1 for professional development expenses. We anticipate spending about the same in Year 2 and increasing professional development opportunities, and therefore expenditures, through years 3-5 with the increase in teaching and support staff needed. The assumed expenses in Years 3-5 range from \$10,500-\$12,000.

Telephone/Telecommunications: Communication costs are based on research of current rates in the vicinity of our proposed office location and the expected increase in rates year to year due to inflation.

Office Supplies: Assumptions based on current costs for miscellaneous office supplies on Amazon.com.

Non-Capital Equipment (Computers/Chromebooks): Assumes that up to half of our student population will need to have Chromebook?Computers provided at an average cost of \$400 to the school in Year 1. This budgeted expense increases slightly year over year assuming that some new students will need to have Chromebooks/Computers provided. In Year 1 all staff will need new computers, in subsequent years we have budgeted for new employees and replacement costs.

Software (Student Information Services/Productivity): Colearn Academy Colorado is planning to utilize Powerschool SIS. This cost is based on a quote from Powerschool of \$45,000 (\$25,000 of the cost being paid in the planning year). We expect the yearly costs to increase as student enrollment increases and this has been reflected in the budget. Included in this line item are other productivity products necessary for instruction such as Word Suite, Adobe, and Zoom.

Furniture and Equipment: Furniture and Equipment costs for the office assume the need for desks, chairs, filing cabinets, tables, etc. The budgeted costs are based on past experience and research of the necessary items.

Office Furniture and Equipment will be purchased for the initial three employees to utilize. In subsequent years additional Furniture and Equipment will be purchased for the additional employees. It is anticipated that in Year 5 some of the FF&E will need to be replaced or upgraded, so there is a slight budget increase for that purpose in Year 5.

Miscellaneous (Enrichment Account): Unique to Colearn Academy is our Enrichment Accounts. Enrichment Account Funding is assumed to be \$1,000 per pupil in the first year, with enrollment based adjustments in following years. The Enrichment Account allows parents to choose what supplemental and any additional curriculum, technology, and services they believe will best suit their learners.

Loan Payments: Our Interest Free Loan payments begin in Year 3 with the loan paid off completely in Year 5.

Contingency: Assumes a contingency line item at 15 percent in the budget beginning in Year 1 and increasing incrementally as enrollment increases annually.

The majority of Colearn Academy South Carolina's funding will come from the State funding according to the per pupil allocation for virtual schools. The remaining funding will consist of funds from Federal Formula grants (Title I, II, and IDEA). The budget includes an assumption for additional Federal Funding. These are just estimations and anticipate being able to adjust our budgets once the demographics of our school enrollment is known since Title I, II and IDEA funding is based on Free and Reduced Lunch eligibility and Special Education enrollment respectively. The remaining "local" funds will consist of any fundraising revenues and donations. The only funds on which the school's core operations will depend are the State per-pupil fund allocations.

Revenues in Years 2-5 reflect an anticipated 1.5 percent average increase in state funding due to inflation adjustments and corresponding increases in Title I and IDEA funds.

The founding team has a central fiscal office team and also we also will contract with a third party accounting firm to maintain accurate accounting, billing, and cash control policies, procedures, and records which are consistent with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP), and which meet the requirements of State and Federal statutes and regulations. The financial control system is designed to track and safeguard all assets, assign all expenditures according to the coding requirements (local, state and federal), maintain appropriate records, and ensure fiscal responsibility of the school.

The Governing Board of Colearn Academy Colorado will establish and maintain effective administrative guidelines to implement internal control standards and procedures consistent with the State Board of Accounts, including financial grants and awards from Federal and State sources.

The Governing Board must approve expenditures over \$20,000, except for expenditures required by local, state or federal statute, such as annual insurance, payroll expenses and taxes, management fees, and ongoing contractual services.

Our financial internal control policy and procedures shall provide reasonable assurance that transactions are properly recorded and accounted for in order to permit the preparation of reliable financial statements that are consistent with Federal and State reporting requirements; maintain accountability over assets; and demonstrate compliance with Federal and State statutes, Federal and State regulations, and the terms and conditions of any awards as applicable. Our financial internal control system includes the following:

Controls for processing income:

Local income received via our internet portal, state per pupil income, and federal grant income will be posted to the general ledger by the contracted accounting service. Local income sent in via USPS or hand delivered will be documented by the administrative staff. The deposit will be verified and deposited by the site Executive Director. This separation of duties creates the accountability system necessary to achieve financial integrity.

Expenditures:

- Purchase Orders:
 - Purchase Orders will be necessary for local purchases of computers, field trips, student supplies, other equipment and curriculum materials
 - Completed Purchase Orders are approved by the Executive Director, who will have the responsibility for verifying the available funds against the budget and approving the request as a necessary purchase.
 - The Executive Director will submit a copy of the purchase order to the accounting contractor for expense fund accounting tracking purposes.
 - Once authorized, the staff member is responsible for making the purchase, and upon delivery, sending the documentation to the appropriate personnel for remittance.
- Invoices:
 - Invoices received will be approved for remittance by the Executive Director and sent to the accounting contractor for payment. Ongoing, regular payments for such items as insurance, curriculum, and instructional supplies shall be sent directly to the accounting contractor for remittance.

Payroll and Benefits controls:

- Payments to Employees:
 - All payments to employees for services rendered will be processed through the payroll system by a third party payroll processor. This includes bonuses, stipends, and additional duty compensation.
 - The Board may elect to choose a Professional Employer Organization rather than a payroll system to streamline compliance issues and tax filings. This is functionally a payroll provider, though they offer more services.
 - Any spending for teacher appreciation and/or employee gifts will be approved in advance by the Board and be only in alignment with the budget and with laws, rules, and regulations relating to public school spending.
 - No employee reimbursement payments shall be made except from a receipt.

Reconciliation and review:

- Bank Statements must be reconciled each month. Online banking access will be available to the accounting contractor for the purpose of retrieving monthly bank statements for reconciliation and for cash flow monitoring.
 - Reconciliation of the bank statement(s) must be made within a reasonable period of time after the start of the new month.
- Financial Statements:
 - The following schedules are required for presentation to the Board for review each month:
 - Income Statement – Actual vs Budget for the Month and YTD
 - Balance Sheet – Month End account balances

Colearn Academy Colorado is considering the following contracted services:

- Innovative, Proprietary Program Offerings and Curriculum
- Special Education Services
- Payroll Services
- Bookkeeping, Accounting and Financial Services
- Legal and Legal Advisory Services
- Compliance and Regulatory Support Services
- Website Hosting and Maintenance Services

Additional contracted services will include a registered CPA firm to perform the annual audit and a third party accounting firm to ensure financial accountability. No other contracted services have been acquired or decided at this time.

The budget will align with the school's mission, vision, and strategic educational goals. These will be the focus of all budget discussions and decisions. The stakeholders that will be involved include the Executive Director/Principal, teachers, support staff, Governing Board members and the school community. Stakeholders will adhere to the following processes:

- We will gather input from teachers and staff to understand their needs, challenges, and insights. Their input is valuable for aligning budget priorities with the realities of the classroom.
- Parents and the school community will be involved in developing the annual budget through surveys, meetings or advisory committees.
- We will hold an annual comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) in order to study student achievement data, and other performance indicators to identify possible areas needing improvement.
- Resources will be allocated based on the needs identified in the needs assessment. Spending will be prioritized to directly contribute to student achievement and that aligns with our mission and goals.

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of the budget trends throughout the school year may mean that the budget be revised. Budget reviews may show a need to address any unforeseen challenges or opportunities. In that case, the stakeholder team can use the same process for making budget decisions mid-year.

At the end of each academic year, a comprehensive review and annual audit should be completed in order to measure the effectiveness of the budget on student achievement. Using this review the budget for the upcoming year can be refined and adjusted to fit the evolving needs of the school.

3. Describe how the school will ensure financial transparency to the authorizer and the public, including its plans for public adoption of its budget, compliance with financial reporting requirements including the Financial Transparency Act (C.R.S. 22-44-301-304), and public dissemination of the annual independent audit.

The school complies with the Finance Transparency Act (C.R.S. 22-44-301-304) and has developed internal financial controls, policies and procedures that are aligned to charter school best practices. All required elements are posted on its website, and financial information is provided to the authorizer for inclusion in its financial transparency postings.

To further ensure compliance with Colorado's Financial Transparency Act and related regulations, Colearn Academy Colorado will adopt policies that address budget adoption in accordance with C.R.S. 22-44-109 and ensure that all budget hearings and adoptions are conducted publicly with required notice and access. The school will publish the adopted budget, financial statements, and independent audit reports in alignment with state timelines and make them accessible to the public through its website.

Colorado state statute requires schools and other government entities to implement a specific internal control methodology. As a new charter school, Colearn Academy Colorado will adopt and implement financial policies and procedures to ensure the school is compliant with the statute and the accompanying regulations from the State Board of Accounts (SBOA). In addition, the school will train its staff and prepare written certification on SBOA forms.

These internal controls will include procurement and expenditure approval workflows, cash handling protocols, regular reconciliations, and dual authorization processes. These measures will safeguard the financial integrity of the school and reduce the risk of fraud, error, or misuse of funds.

As a public charter school, Colearn Academy Colorado will be financially open and transparent and will comply with all public records requests per Colorado law. CAC will engage an independent Certified Public accountant to perform the independent financial and compliance audit on an annual basis. We estimate first year audit

costs to be \$15,000. The audit report will be submitted to the authorizer, the Colorado Department of Education, and posted publicly on the school's website in compliance with the Financial Transparency Act.

Additional financial transparency will include monthly financial reports to the Governing Board that include all financials, a comparison to budget, and variance analyses. CAC policies will maintain clear segregation of responsibilities on all financial transactions and have a multi-level approval for all expenditures, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) and best practices for charter schools.

Colearn Academy Colorado founding team has included participating in PEBA in our Year 0-5 budgets. We have not made a final decision about offering this benefit. The budget shows that this cost fits into our budget and does not place undue stress on our bottom line. A final decision to either provide other retirement plans (i.e., 401(k), IRA) or PEBA will be made in a timely manner upon Charter approval.

4. Provide a contingency plan to mitigate the impact of decreased funding or increased expenditures.

This plan should include:

- *The minimum enrollment the school could sustain and still implement its proposed programming with fidelity.*
- *The timeline by which the school team would determine whether to open based on student enrollment numbers in Year 0 and what percentage of Year 1 enrollment would need to be secured by when.*

Creating effective contingency plans is crucial for schools, especially in the early years of operation when uncertainties and financial challenges may arise. Our Year 0-5 budget includes setting aside 15 percent of all income in order to begin to build up a cash reserve right away. This reserve fund will cover any short-term cash flow challenges or be used in unexpected situations. In case of a budget shortfall, it may be necessary to prioritize spending ensuring that only critical educational and operational needs are met. We will be regularly reviewing the Budget vs Actual expenditures, making adjustments as needed if circumstances change. We may need to reallocate funds, reducing nonessential expenditures or implementing cost saving measures. In the case of lower than expected enrollment we will develop a flexible staffing plan that can be adjusted based on enrollment. We may hire contracted staff or implement part-time positions to match the schools new enrollment numbers. While making these necessary adjustments, we can also implement targeted marketing and outreach strategies in order to boost enrollment. Stakeholder communication and financial transparency can foster collaboration and problem solving during any financial challenge. By communicating the challenges and school needs, we can collectively use data and feedback to come up with strategies to rise above and difficulty.

The minimum enrollment the school could sustain while still implementing its proposed programming with fidelity is 150 students in Year 1. Enrollment below this threshold would require a significant restructuring of staffing and services, and would impact the school's ability to provide high-quality programming as designed.

Creating a robust cash flow contingency plan for the planning year is crucial to navigate uncertainties, especially if revenue projections are not met or are delayed. Colearn Academy has a start-up budget that is conservative and leaves a "cushion" if we run into unexpected costs or delays. In addition to our start-up funding, we will implement a system that monitors revenue, expenses, and cash flow. Monitoring any early warning indicators (enrollment numbers, staffing issues or inflationary indicators) will allow us to shift resources if necessary. We will have a fundraising and investor plan that will go into effect if key indicators deem it necessary.

Another possible solution for any revenue challenges in the planning year is to establish lines of credit with local financial institutions. While not an ideal solution, this will make it possible to have emergency funds on hand if needed. We can also be prepared to negotiate flexible payment plans with our vendors. In the case of lower than expected enrollment, we will develop a flexible staffing plan that can be adjusted based on enrollment. We may hire contracted staff or implement part-time positions to match the school's adjusted enrollment numbers. While making these necessary adjustments, we can also implement targeted marketing and outreach strategies in order to boost enrollment.

The school will make a final determination to open no later than July 1 of the planning year. To proceed with opening, the school must have secured at least 75% of its Year 1 enrollment target by June 15. Enrollment projections will be monitored weekly beginning March 1, and adjustments to staffing and operations will be made on a rolling basis if actual enrollment lags behind projected benchmarks.

By implementing these measures, the school can establish a comprehensive cash flow contingency plan for the planning year, providing the flexibility and resilience needed to navigate potential revenue challenges successfully. Regular monitoring, scenario planning, and stakeholder engagement are critical components of a proactive approach to cash flow management.

Budget and Finance Capacity

5. Describe the experience the founding team has related to individual and collective qualifications for implementing the financial plan successfully, including capacity in areas such as financial management, fundraising and development, accounting and internal controls, including details regarding finance personnel and/or service providers with governmental accounting experience, and developing and implementing budgets.

The founding team of Colearn Academy Colorado has the collective and individual qualifications to implement its Financial Plan with fidelity and accountability. Together, they bring demonstrated experience managing multimillion-dollar school budgets, startup grant funds, and compliance systems across multiple states.

Amber Robinson, who leads the founding team alongside Becki Krueger, has extensive experience in school leadership, personnel development, and operational management. As Executive Director of Colearn Academy Arizona, Amber oversees budget development, staff hiring, vendor contracts, and financial reporting processes that ensure compliance with state and federal requirements. She has successfully managed annual audits, federal grants (including Title and CSP funds), and has ensured that all expenditures align with programmatic goals and the school's mission.

Becki Krueger, founder and owner of Education Compliance Services, provides the team's strongest direct expertise in financial management and internal controls. She has supported Colearn's expansion plans in multiple states and serves as a board member for Colearn Academy Arizona, advising on grant management, charter financial compliance, and best practices in governmental fund accounting. Becki has extensive experience developing and implementing fiscal policies, conducting internal audits, training boards in financial oversight, and ensuring that state and federal reporting requirements are met with accuracy and integrity.

Courtney Cullen and Taylor Bennett round out the founding team with complementary operational experience. As long-time educators and lead teachers for Colearn Academy Arizona, they understand how programmatic decisions impact budgetary planning — from staffing allocations to resource procurement — and help ensure that spending aligns with instructional priorities and student needs.

To ensure strong day-to-day financial operations and compliance with Colorado charter school standards, Colearn Academy Colorado will contract with an experienced third-party financial services provider specializing in Colorado charter schools. This provider will:

- Maintain accurate accounting, billing, and cash control policies that comply with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the requirements of Colorado state statutes and CSI's Financial Policies and Procedures;
- Develop monthly financial reports and revenue forecasts that align with the Colorado Department of Education's Chart of Accounts;
- Provide grant compliance monitoring for federal and state funding, including startup CSP funds and Title programs; and
- Support the implementation of board-approved internal controls, segregation of duties, and fiscal procedures that safeguard school assets and ensure accountability.

All financial transactions will be reviewed and approved by the Executive Director and the Board Treasurer, ensuring clear separation of duties. The founding team has a strong record of working collaboratively with boards to build governing capacity in fiscal oversight and ensure that fiduciary responsibilities are carried out with transparency.

Through this combination of experienced leadership, financial oversight, strong board governance, and trusted third-party support, Colearn Academy Colorado is well-positioned to develop, implement, and sustain a sound Financial Plan that meets authorizer expectations, ensures compliance, and aligns spending with the school's mission and educational goals.

H. Governance

Board Structure

1. Describe the governance structure of the proposed school, including the primary roles of the governing board and how it will interact with the principal/head of school and any advisory bodies.

Include a discussion of the plans for board committees, including the School Accountability Committee and any advisory bodies or councils to be formed. For both committees and advisory bodies, include information about roles and duties, planned composition of members, the strategy for achieving that composition, the role of parents, students, and teachers (if applicable), and the reporting structure as it relates to the school's governing body and leadership.

The Colearn Academy Colorado Governing Board supports a strategic governance philosophy wherein the Board will participate in creating and approving broad policies based on CAC's obligations, mission, vision, and goals. The Board strives to have each member bring value to the school through active participation, to sustain cooperation between school faculty and the Board, and to seek input from various stakeholders including school leadership, staff, students, parents, and other community members we have partnered with. The Governing Board members must perform their duties to the highest professional and ethical standards. Members will be expected to participate and bring unique value, perspective, and contribution to the Governing Board.

The administrative structure of the school is as follows:

- The Executive Director oversees the administrative team, including the Director of Engagement and Registrar, as well as all other key employees of the school, such as Education Specialists, Content Lead Teachers, School Psychologist, and the SPED Teacher.
- As the school grows and assistant principals are added, these staff members will report to the Executive Director. Staff reporting directly to the Executive Director may shift to provide more responsibilities to the Assistant Principal.
- Content Lead Teachers will oversee Program Mentors and paraprofessionals.
- The SPED Teacher will oversee any interventionists, other support staff, and related services.
- The Executive Director reports to the Governing Board.
- The Governing Board reports to the Charter Authorizer.

At Colearn Academy Colorado, the responsibilities for the school's management and leadership beyond that of the Executive Director will lay mainly with the Governing Board. The relationship between the Executive Director and the Board is such that they will work very closely together to contribute to the success of the school. The Board will begin recruiting for the management roles such as, Education Director and Director of Engagement, in February 2026. The Governing Board will also contribute their expertise when needed and help in the recruitment process.

The School Governing Board will help institute school policies that promote CAC's priorities while advancing the school's mission and vision. The Board will regularly interact with school leadership, staff, parents and diverse stakeholders and will maintain high professional and ethical standards. School leadership will provide monthly data reports to the Board that includes school level data, student outcomes and stakeholder feedback for the board to evaluate and review.

The founding team will draft the initial governing policies and operational framework in order to establish concrete guidelines for the Governing Board. Soon after the Charter is granted approval, the process to form the Governing Board will begin. This will involve identifying individuals with the necessary skills, experience and qualifications to serve on the Governing Board, taking into consideration the requirements of Colorado Revised Statutes (C.R.S.) 22-30.5-104(4) and 22-30.5-110(2), which outline charter school governing responsibilities and expectations.

Working together, the founding team and Governing Board members will create a transition plan. The plan will include a phased approach to ensure a smooth handover of duties and responsibilities. By following a

well-structured transition plan and maintaining open communication, the governance transition from the founding team to the Governing Board in the first year of operation can be a positive and successful process, setting the stage for effective leadership and organization.

The School Governing Board may have at least one committee, the Operations Committee, which will provide guidance and oversight to effective organizational leadership and excellent organizational practices, including finance and budgets. In addition, the School Governing Board may create and absolve special committees or working groups with a majority vote, and may appoint members or non-members to special committees or working groups with a majority vote, as they deem relevant. Any officer or employee of Colearn Academy Colorado may be removed and/or terminated with or without cause by a majority vote of the directors. CAC does not plan to form any advisory bodies or councils at this time.

As required by Colorado statute, the school will establish a School Accountability Committee (SAC), which will serve in an advisory capacity to the Governing Board and school leadership. The SAC will be responsible for reviewing student achievement data, the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP), and budget priorities to ensure alignment with the school's performance goals. The SAC will include at minimum one parent, one teacher, one school administrator, and one community member, with the majority of members being parents of enrolled students. The SAC will meet quarterly and report its recommendations directly to the Governing Board.

While CAC does not anticipate establishing additional advisory bodies during the start-up years, the school may revisit this as student enrollment grows. If formed, any additional councils or advisory committees would be clearly structured to include representation from parents, students (for grades 9-12), and instructional staff. Their role would be consultative, with defined reporting lines to school leadership and the board.

2. Describe the size, current and desired composition, powers, and duties of the governing board.

Identify key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies that will be represented on the governing board.

The Governing Board for Colearn Academy Colorado will maintain at least seven (7) local members, pursuant to C.R.S. 22-30.5-104(4). The Governing Board will be made up of a diverse array of people with backgrounds in areas that will support the school's mission to inspire and empower all students to be responsible, resilient, and personally successful in a rapidly changing world.

Using our eventual student demographics as our guide, we will construct our Governing Board to reflect the ethnic, gender, racial, and socio-economic diversity of our student body. At this early stage, we are prioritizing people with backgrounds in school operations, pedagogical innovation, public engagement, service learning and internships, finance, and employability.

The goal is that initially the Governing Board will be composed of seven (7) members. We intend for these members to include, but not be limited to, a local educational leader, a member with financial or business background, a parent, a member with a Charter School operations background, and a member at large. While Colorado statute does not mandate specific backgrounds for charter school board members, Colearn Academy Colorado recognizes the importance of strong board capacity in education, business, and governance. As such, more than 50 percent of Governing Board members will be selected for their professional experience in education, business, or nonprofit leadership, ensuring the board can fulfill its statutory responsibilities under C.R.S. 22-30.5-104(4) and meet the Charter School Institute's expectations for effective school governance.

The School Governing Board of CAC will participate in overseeing all academic and operational activities and work closely with school staff to ensure the school is running effectively, efficiently, compliantly, and up to state standards.

The Governing Board will have the responsibility of hiring the key positions of Executive Director and Director of Engagement. The positions of Registrar, Administrative Assistant, Teachers and other support staff will be recruited and hired by the Executive Director under authority given to them by the Governing Board. The

Governing Board will work closely with the Executive Director during the hiring process to ensure that Highly Qualified and mission-sensitive personnel are employed.

3. Explain how this governance structure and composition will help ensure that the school will be an educational and operational success, the board will be able to evaluate the success of the school and school leader and there will be active and effective representation of key stakeholders, including parents.

As part of the academic and operational oversight, the Governing Board will evaluate the school's academic and operational performance annually. The performance review will be based on the school's academic achievements, financial reports and a review of compliance indicators. The school evaluation tool will be developed by Fall of 2026, using the guidelines for evaluation from the CDE website. The Board will be responsible for evaluating the performance of the Executive Director using the developed evaluation tool. If the performance of the Executive Director is found to be lacking, problematic, or they are in direct violation of school policy, then the Governing Board will meet to vote on termination. The actual termination of employees will be handled by a contracted HR service and reported to the Governing Board when complete.

The Governing Board of Colearn Academy Colorado will operate in alignment with all guidelines established by the Authorizer. This includes responsibilities related to academic oversight, financial management, regulatory compliance, leadership support and evaluation, board composition and structure, meeting protocols, and goal setting with accountability measures.

In fulfilling its governance role, the Board will actively participate in the development and approval of operational policies, strategic plans, and annual budgets. These responsibilities are carried out to ensure the Board maintains full confidence in the school's ability to meet its mission and serve the community effectively.

The Governing Board is committed to upholding Colearn Academy Colorado's mission and vision while fostering transparency, accountability, and regulatory compliance. The Board will ensure the school remains responsive to both state requirements and the expectations of the families and communities it serves.

Board Development

4. Describe how and when the existing governing board was formed and how members were identified. *Include a description of the nature and extent of parental, professional educator, and community involvement in the governance and operation of the proposed school and the procedure by which board members have been and will be selected.*

The governing board of Colearn Academy Colorado was formed in early 2024 in anticipation of submitting a charter application to the Colorado Charter School Institute. The founding team prioritized assembling a diverse group of individuals with expertise in education, school operations, governance, finance, and community engagement. Board members were identified through professional networks, community outreach, and referrals based on their qualifications, shared vision for innovative education, and commitment to serving families through a personalized and flexible school model.

The selection process focused on recruiting members who not only brought relevant professional experience but also reflected the communities the school aims to serve. The founding Governing Board includes parents of home-educated and alternatively educated students, licensed educators, professionals with charter school leadership experience, and members with legal, financial, or nonprofit backgrounds. This broad expertise and representation ensures the board is well-equipped to govern a unique hybrid learning environment effectively.

As part of its formation process, the board developed initial governance policies and bylaws aligned with state and authorizer expectations. These include term limits, conflict of interest policies, and transparent processes for board recruitment and succession planning.

Going forward, the board will maintain an open and inclusive process for selecting new members. Vacancies will be filled through a nomination and vetting process that includes interviews and a majority vote by existing board members. The board will continue to seek members who represent the interests of parents, educators, and the broader Colorado community. Colearn Academy Colorado is also committed to parental involvement in governance through participation in the School Accountability Committee (SAC), which will advise the board on matters of academic performance, budget priorities, and school improvement efforts.

Through this structured approach to governance and community engagement, Colearn Academy Colorado will ensure its board remains responsive, representative, and aligned with the mission of supporting students through high-quality, personalized education.

5. Describe the extent to which the board reflects key skills, areas of expertise, and constituencies identified above and the plan to recruit new members to fill any identified gaps.

As the founding team recruits members for the Colearn Academy Colorado Governing Board, we will search for members with a variety of backgrounds to ensure that we have a well-rounded team of expertise. We seek to actively engage members of the community with experience in education, law, politics, finance, business, teaching, and agriculture. We look for professionals who exhibit the following attributes: commitment to educational innovation, expertise in a particular field, time and energy to devote to their board commitments, and a well-rounded background.

Our ideal board will consist of at least seven (7) members. The timeline process for board member recruitment is as follows:

- Potential Board members are identified.
- The Governing Board schedules and conducts the initial interview.
- Potential board members who are still interested after the round one interview will be asked to formally apply. After applying and passing the necessary background checks, the second interview is held with the team and/or current Governing Board members.
- The potential member will go before the Governing Board at the next scheduled meeting for a vote of approval.

The newly elected Governing Board will align to the Governing Board requirements outlined in C.R.S. 22-30.5-104(4) and C.R.S. 22-30.5-110(2), including the capacity to provide strong governance and oversight in accordance with Colorado law and Charter School Institute standards: 50 percent will have a background in education or business.

- No more than 50 percent will be appointed by the Board.
- The Board will consist of at least seven (7) members.
- Elections will be held every two years.
- Board training and orientation will occur for all new members.
- Board members will not be paid school employees.
- First election will be held in the fall of the first year of opening.
- Only parents and staff will vote for the board members.

The Governing Board at Colearn Academy Colorado will utilize the same criteria utilized when forming the first Governing Board when recruiting Board Members to fill any vacancies that may occur.

6. Describe plans for increasing the capacity of the governing board. This plan should include:

- *How will the board expand and develop over time?*
- *How and on what timeline will new members be recruited and added, and how will vacancies be filled?*
- *What are the priorities for the recruitment of additional board members?*
- *What kinds of orientation or training will new board members receive, and what kinds of ongoing development will current board members receive?*

To ensure the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of its governance, the Colearn Academy Colorado Governing Board has developed a clear plan for expanding and increasing its capacity over time. This includes thoughtful recruitment, succession planning, structured onboarding, and continuous development of board members.

Board Expansion and Development Timeline: The Board plans to gradually expand its membership during the first three years of operation, ultimately reaching 7-9 members with diverse skills and community representation. In Year 0 (planning year), the Board will fill any initial vacancies to ensure all essential areas — finance, education, legal, operations, and parent representation — are covered. Beginning in Year 1, the Board will evaluate additional needs annually based on strategic goals and committee work.

Recruitment and Vacancies: The Board will use a formal nomination and vetting process to recruit new members. Vacancies will be filled through outreach to professional networks, charter school support organizations, and the broader community. The Governance Committee (or designated leadership) will be responsible for managing this process. Candidates will be evaluated based on their qualifications, alignment with the mission, and ability to add value to board oversight. The Board seeks to maintain representation from parents, educators, and members with expertise in school finance, legal compliance, marketing, and nonprofit governance.

Recruitment Priorities: Priorities for recruitment include:

- A licensed educator or former school leader with K-12 experience
- A finance/accounting professional with school finance or nonprofit expertise
- Parents or guardians of Colearn Academy Colorado students
- Community members from underrepresented regions or backgrounds
- Individuals with experience in legal compliance, HR, fundraising, or charter school leadership

Orientation and Training: In partnership with BoardOnTrack, the Governing Board will implement a robust onboarding process for all new members. This includes:

- Orientation to the Colearn Academy Colorado mission, model, and charter goals
- Training on the Board's roles and responsibilities, Open Meeting Laws, and fiduciary duties
- Access to governance tools, sample policies, and compliance calendars via BoardOnTrack
- Shadowing current board members and participating in committee work

Ongoing Board Development: To strengthen governance capacity, the Board has allocated a modest professional development budget for each member. Board members will attend relevant conferences, CSI trainings, and other learning opportunities. The Board will also conduct an annual self-evaluation using tools provided by BoardOnTrack and set goals for board effectiveness. Ongoing training topics may include equity in education, performance monitoring, school finance, authorizer expectations, and academic data analysis.

Through this comprehensive plan, Colearn Academy Colorado will ensure that its Governing Board remains effective, strategic, and equipped to lead the school toward long-term success.

Board Operations

7. Describe the board's ethical standards and procedures for identifying and addressing conflicts of interest. *Identify any existing relationships that could pose actual or perceived conflicts if the application is approved and discuss specific steps that the board will take to avoid any actual conflicts and to mitigate perceived conflicts.*

Colearn Academy Colorado's Governing Board is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in all areas of oversight and decision-making. The Board will operate with transparency, integrity, and accountability in accordance with Colorado's open meetings laws, public records requirements, and conflict of interest statutes, including C.R.S. § 24-18-101 et seq.

Conflict of Interest Policy and Procedures: The Board will adopt a formal Conflict of Interest Policy that requires all members to disclose any potential, actual, or perceived conflicts of interest annually and as they arise. Board members must recuse themselves from any discussion, vote, or decision-making process where a conflict exists. The policy will include:

- Annual signed conflict of interest disclosures for all board members
- A process for identifying and disclosing conflicts at the start of each board meeting
- Clear guidance for recusal from voting or participation when conflicts arise
- Documentation of recusals and related decisions in board minutes

Ethical Standards: Board members will adhere to a written Code of Ethics that emphasizes their duty to act in the best interest of Colearn Academy Colorado, avoid personal gain from board service, maintain confidentiality, and ensure fairness and transparency in governance. Board members will receive annual training on ethical responsibilities and compliance with charter law and fiduciary duties.

Addressing Existing or Potential Conflicts: At this time, there are no known existing financial or familial relationships among members of the founding team, proposed board, or contracted partners that would present a legal conflict of interest. However, the Board acknowledges that perceived conflicts, such as prior working relationships or dual roles in affiliated organizations, could arise.

To mitigate perceived conflicts:

- The Board will document all relationships that may pose perceived conflicts
- The affected individual will be excluded from any deliberation or vote related to the matter
- Independent third-party reviews will be sought, when necessary, to ensure objectivity
- All financial transactions and contracts will be reviewed for fairness and arm's-length standards

By adopting these practices, Colearn Academy Colorado's Governing Board will ensure ethical leadership and foster public trust while complying fully with Colorado law and best practices for nonprofit and charter school governance.

8. Include the following attachment:

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
Conflict of Interest Policy	Provide the board's proposed Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest policy	H_Conflict of Interest Policy

9. Describe how the board plans to operate in compliance with the Colorado Open Meetings Law (C.R.S. 24-6-401) and Public Record Act (C.R.S. 24-72-204), as well as the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. Sect. 1232). If the board is not formally meeting currently, identify when the board plans to start meeting formally and operate in accordance with the Colorado open Meeting Law.

The Colearn Academy Colorado Governing Board is committed to operating in full compliance with all applicable laws, including the Colorado Open Meetings Law (C.R.S. 24-6-401), the Colorado Open Records Act (CORA, C.R.S. 24-72-204), and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 20 U.S.C. § 1232g).

Open Meetings Compliance

The Governing Board will ensure that all meetings are conducted in accordance with the Colorado Open Meetings Law. This includes:

- Providing public notice of all meetings at least 24 hours in advance, including posting the meeting time, date, location (or virtual platform), and agenda on the school website and a designated physical location.
- Allowing public attendance at all regular and special meetings unless the Board enters into executive session in compliance with statutory requirements.
- Recording and posting meeting minutes in a timely manner.
- Ensuring that discussions and decisions that must be conducted in public are not conducted via email or other unofficial means outside of a properly noticed meeting.

Open Records Compliance:

The Board will also comply with the Colorado Open Records Act by:

- Designating a custodian of records responsible for handling requests from the public.
- Making public records available for inspection within the statutory timeframe.
- Charging only permissible and reasonable fees for fulfilling records requests.

FERPA Compliance

To protect student privacy, the school and Board will comply with all aspects of FERPA, including:

- Limiting access to personally identifiable student information to authorized individuals.
- Requiring staff and board members to complete FERPA training.
- Ensuring that any discussion involving student-level data occurs only in closed session, consistent with both FERPA and the Open Meetings Law.

Formal Meeting Timeline

The Colearn Academy Colorado Governing Board will begin holding formal meetings upon charter approval or within 30 days of receiving conditional authorization, whichever occurs first. These meetings will be scheduled regularly and conducted in accordance with all open meetings requirements.

By implementing these practices, the Governing Board will uphold transparency, public accountability, and the privacy rights of students and families.

10. Include the following attachments.

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
Board Member Matrix	<p>Complete the Board Membership Matrix</p> <p><i>Applicants are required to have a governing board in place and to submit the Board Membership Matrix as part of the New School Application. Information regarding terms and positions below should align with the board membership information included in your bylaws. Resumes for board members are required to be submitted as described in Section H8.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Board Member Name row, identify all board members by full legal name. If there are any vacant seats, identify them by typing "Vacant" in the cell. This form has room for 10 board members. Use only as many cells as you need based on the range for the number of board members identified in your bylaws. • In the Term row, identify each board member's term (ex: June 2016-June 2017) 	H_Board Matrix

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the Board Position row, identify each board member's current role (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, etc.) • In the Competency column, list the competencies you are seeking for the school board. "Finance" and "legal" competencies have been listed as a starting point; applicants are expected to include additional competencies as appropriate. • Place an X in the box to identify which competencies each of the board members fill. For any vacant positions, place an X in the box to identify which competencies you are seeking in the vacant position. 	
Resumes of board members	One file for each member of the applicant team and board listed in the board matrix.	H_Resume_LastFirst Ex: H_Resume_DoeJane
Board Member Agreement	Board member agreement that is signed by all board members and addresses conflicts of interest	H_BoardAgreement
Board bylaws	<p><i>Bylaws should address:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • board election or appointment process • board member criteria • board size • terms and term limits • duties and expectations • requirements for how often the board will meet • attendance requirements • procedures for board meetings and voting • board officers and their roles • board committees • removal • Conflict of Interest (or reference a standalone Conflict of Interest policy). 	H_Bylaws
Articles of Incorporation	File Articles of Incorporation with the Colorado Secretary of State.	H_ArticlesOfIncorporation
Enrollment policy	<p>The policy should be consistent with state law [22-30.5-507(3)] and applicable state board rules and must not have the effect of excluding students based on socioeconomic, family or language background, prior academic performance, special education status, or parental involvement.</p> <p>The policy must include information about enrollment eligibility, a description of the admissions process and timeline, and information about the selection process. The policy should include a plan for outreach and recruitment of students whose race, gender and ethnicity reflect the demographics of the community that the school intends to serve.</p>	I_Policy_Enrollment

	<p><i>If intending to apply for the Colorado Charter Schools Program Grant (CCSP), the applicant must comply with lottery and enrollment requirements listed as part of the Request for Proposals.</i></p> <p><i>Additional guidance is available here. A sample enrollment policy is available here.</i></p>	
Grievance Policy	<p>Consistent with the CSI Grievance Policy, the Grievance Policy should clearly describe the grievance process, provide a multi-tiered process for grievances, and describe the board's role in resolving complaints. A sample grievance policy is available here.</p>	I_Policy_Grievance
Requested Waivers	<p>Complete the CSI Waiver Request Template to include and describe any desired waivers. The template and sample with commonly requested waivers are available here.</p>	I_Waivers

Governance Capacity

11. Describe the experience the founding team has related to individual and collective qualifications related to school governance.

The founding team of Colearn Academy Colorado brings substantial individual and collective experience in effective, compliant charter school governance. Together, Amber Robinson and Becki Krueger have successfully overseen school leadership, board relations, and organizational development in multiple states, demonstrating the governance expertise needed to launch and sustain Colearn Academy Colorado with fidelity to its mission and authorizer expectations.

Amber Robinson, who serves as Executive Director for Colearn Academy Arizona, has over 18 years of experience in education, including roles as teacher, mentor teacher, department lead, curriculum developer, and school administrator. With 14 of those years in virtual education, Amber has firsthand knowledge of the unique operational and accountability requirements for virtual and hybrid programs. As Executive Director, she works closely with the Colearn Academy Arizona Governing Board to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations, to align program design with board-approved performance goals, and to build transparent, collaborative governance practices.

Under Amber's leadership, Colearn Academy Arizona successfully transitioned from a for-profit charter structure to a nonprofit corporation and charter school. She guided the restructuring process, working in partnership with the governing board and authorizer to ensure full compliance with nonprofit governance requirements, improved financial integrity, and sustainable operational systems. Amber supports her board by providing timely and comprehensive reporting on financials, academic performance, special education compliance, and operations, ensuring that the board is fully equipped to fulfill its oversight responsibilities.

Becki Krueger, the founder and owner of Education Compliance Services, is an experienced charter school board member and governance advisor. She brings over 14 years of experience as a Charter School Operations Director and CFO for the nonprofit Arizona Charter Solutions (CMO for the LEAD Charter School Network). She has extensive expertise in nonprofit charter operations, financial oversight, internal controls, and compliance with state charter laws and authorizer requirements.

Becki currently serves as a Governing Board member for multiple nonprofit organizations, including Colearn Academy Arizona and Beat the Odds Basketball Academy, as well as other charter schools over the years. Her governance experience also includes serving on budget committees for nonprofit church boards and leading successful charter application processes for new schools. She provides direct support and training to board

members to strengthen their roles in fiduciary oversight, budget approval, audit processes, and academic accountability.

Together, Amber and Becki understand the vital role that an engaged, well-trained governing board plays in ensuring the school's success. They have designed and maintained governance systems that promote transparency, integrity, and compliance with nonprofit charter law. They have actively participated in board development, policy adoption, and strategic planning, and they bring this experience to the design of Colearn Academy Colorado's governance framework.

The team's commitment to strong governance is further demonstrated through their experience working with multiple authorizers, maintaining clear separation between management and oversight, and implementing best practices in board meetings, conflict-of-interest policies, and performance monitoring. Their collective qualifications ensure that Colearn Academy Colorado's board will be fully prepared to uphold its fiduciary, academic, and legal responsibilities while keeping students and families at the center of every decision.

I. Operations

Student and Staff Data

1. Describe how data will be maintained at the school to ensure accurate reporting that complies with state and federal reporting requirements. Specifically address:

- *The data system or systems (i.e., student information system, plan management system, HR system) that will be used to maintain student and staff level data. (Data includes student demographic information, enrollment and completion information, coursework and grades, attendance, and behavior).*
- *The staff/position(s) responsible for maintaining and updating the systems as well as the staff/position(s) responsible for entering data into the systems.*
- *The proposed training (contracted vs. in-house training) to ensure proper setup and use of the system(s).*

Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to maintaining accurate, secure, and compliant student and staff data in alignment with Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and federal reporting requirements, including but not limited to the Student October Count, School Discipline, HR, and End-of-Year submissions. The school will use a secure and CDE-compliant Student Information System (SIS), such as Infinite Campus, which allows for the accurate collection and maintenance of student demographic data, enrollment, attendance, discipline records, grades, coursework, and graduation/completion data.

For staff-level data, including licensure, position assignments, and highly qualified teacher status, the school will maintain an HR data management system such as Gusto, and ensure alignment with the Human Resources snapshot data required by CDE. Staff responsible for IEPs and MLL plans will use a secure plan management platform (e.g., IEP Pro, or a comparable service), which integrates with the SIS and allows for compliant documentation, monitoring, and reporting of Individualized Education Plans and English Language Development plans.

The Registrar and Director of Engagement will be primarily responsible for maintaining and updating the SIS, including enrollment, attendance, and demographic data. The SPED Teacher will ensure accurate documentation for students receiving special education services, in partnership with contracted service providers. The Education Specialists and Content Lead Teachers will be responsible for entering grades, behavior notes, and progress monitoring data directly into the appropriate platforms. The Executive Director will oversee data accuracy and reporting in coordination with a third-party back-office provider, who will also help ensure financial and HR data align with state reporting requirements.

All staff responsible for entering or managing data will receive targeted, role-specific training on the use of the SIS and other relevant platforms. Initial setup and training will be contracted through the SIS provider and/or the school's back-office partner. Ongoing training, including updates to reporting procedures and compliance protocols, will be provided in-house and updated annually or as needed based on system updates or changes to CDE data requirements. CAC will also participate in any CDE-provided training sessions and webinars to ensure consistent understanding of timelines and formatting requirements.

These procedures and systems will ensure Colean Academy Colorado maintains the highest level of data accuracy and compliance, supporting strong accountability and transparency.

Staffing

2. Describe the school's organizational structure¹¹ and staffing plan that allows for full implementation of the curriculum, including details about staff qualifications and in-field requirements. The organizational chart and accompanying notes or roster should identify the following:

- *Year 1 positions, as well as positions to be added in future years;*
- *Administrative, instructional, and non-instructional personnel;*
- *The number of classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, and specialty teachers; and*
- *Operational and support staff.*

¹¹ If the school plans to contract for educational services with an educational service provider, please also complete the addenda linked in question 19 of this section of the application.

The organizational structure of the school is as follows:

- The Executive Director oversees the administrative team, including the Director of Engagement and Registrar, as well as all other key employees of the school, such as Education Specialists, Content Lead Teachers, School Psychologist, and the SPED Teacher.
- As the school grows and assistant principals are added, these staff members will report to the Executive Director. Staff reporting directly to the Executive Director may shift to provide more responsibilities to the Assistant Principal.
- Content Lead Teachers will oversee Program Mentors and paraprofessionals.
- The SPED Teacher will oversee any interventionists, other support staff, and related services.
- The Executive Director reports to the Governing Board.
- The Governing Board reports to the Charter Authorizer.

At Colearn Academy Colorado, the responsibilities for the school's management and leadership beyond that of the Executive Director will lay mainly with the Governing Board. The relationship between the Executive Director and the Board is such that they will work very closely together to contribute to the success of the school. The Board will begin recruiting for the management roles such as, Executive Director and Director of Engagement, in February 2026. The Governing Board will also contribute their expertise when needed and help in the recruitment process.

As the process for recruitment progresses, CAC will utilize multiple media outlets and strategies in our search for the talent that will embrace the mission and vision of CAC. Recruiting will take place via job board postings, social media, personal referrals, and the partnerships we are forming with the community and various stakeholders.

The school leader (Executive Director) position will originally be hired by the founding team in order to have the position filled before the start of the school year. The Colearn Academy Colorado founding team will be recruiting for the right school leader to carry out the mission of our innovative model after the proposed Charter is approved. The job opening will be advertised through various channels, including online job boards, education publications, and our website. Based on the recruitment process, the right candidate for the Executive Director position will begin in their role by April 1, 2026. This will provide an opportunity for the Executive Director to complete onboarding and be involved in the recruitment of other key individuals within Colearn Academy Colorado. This includes being involved in the recruitment and hiring process of instructional staff in order to build a team to carry out the mission and vision of the school.

The Executive Director will also be able to participate in enrollment and recruitment efforts of students and connect with community partners that are key to the success of Colearn Academy. Once the Executive Director is hired the planned transition of duties can begin. The committee will work closely with the Executive Director making sure that they are familiar with our culture, policies and expectations of the role. We will hold orientation sessions, professional development, and specific charter school training to ensure a smooth transition.

In addition to the Executive Director, we expect the following required staff for years 1-5:

- Year 1 staffing will include an Executive Director, six teaching positions, a Reading Interventionist, a Registrar, a Director of Engagement at \$65,000, and a Special Education Teacher.
- Year 2 will include the addition of a school psychologist and two teachers to accommodate growth in student enrollment.
- Year 3 includes an increase in the administrative positions, adding an Administrative Assistant and an Assistant Principal. The budget also includes adding two teachers to accommodate growth in student enrollment.
- Year 4 sees the need to hire another Special Education teacher and two more teachers because of the expected increase in enrollment.
- Year 5 assumes the need to add an Assistant Principal, having one to oversee Primary and Elementary grades, and one to oversee Middle and High School grades. The budget also assumes having the need

to hire additional Administrative Assistant, and adding two more teachers to accommodate student enrollment growth.

3. Include the following attachment:

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
Organizational Chart	If there is a plan for organizational growth after the first year of operation, include charts for the first and fifth years of operation.	I_OrgChart

4. Explain how the relationship between the school's senior administrative team and the rest of the staff will be managed. *Note the teacher-student ratio, as well as the ratio of total adults to students for the school.*

The relationship between Colearn Academy Colorado's senior administrative team and staff is rooted in collaboration, transparency, and clearly defined roles. The senior leadership team — composed of the Executive Director and Director of Engagement — will provide vision and operational oversight while supporting instructional and student support teams. Education Specialists (homeroom teachers) and Content Lead Teachers will serve as the instructional bridge between the administrative team and Program Mentors, who are often the primary facilitators of learning in the home environment.

The administrative team will host regular virtual meetings and professional learning communities (PLCs) with instructional staff to review academic progress, compliance benchmarks, and family engagement strategies. Through shared planning tools such as the Colearn Planner and SIS dashboards, all staff members will have access to student data and learning plans to ensure alignment across the school.

Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to maintaining low student-to-teacher ratios to support personalized learning. For grades K-8, the typical ratio will be approximately 25:1 for Education Specialists. Program Mentors (parents or designated learning facilitators) are integral members of the learning team, meaning the total adult-to-student ratio will be closer to 2:1 or better in most households. At the high school level, Content Lead Teachers may work with multiple cohorts, with ratios around 30:1, supported by specialized academic coaches and interventionists as needed.

Staff performance will be monitored and supported through regular check-ins, goal-setting, and annual evaluations conducted by school leadership. Feedback from instructional staff is actively sought and used to inform school planning and improve practices. The team-based, communicative structure supports Colearn's mastery-based, flexible instructional model and ensures all students receive the individualized attention they need to thrive.

5. Identify the key members of the school's leadership team. *Identify only individuals who will play a substantial and ongoing role in school development, governance and/or management, and will thus share responsibility for the school's educational success. These may include current or proposed governing board members, school leadership/management, and any essential partners who will play an important ongoing role in the school's development and operation.*

The key members of Colearn Academy Colorado's leadership team are experienced educators and operational leaders who are deeply committed to the school's success and bring extensive backgrounds in virtual education, charter school development, instructional leadership, and compliance. These individuals will play substantial and ongoing roles in the school's governance, management, and development:

Executive Director: The Executive Director will serve as the chief school leader, responsible for executing the school's vision, managing day-to-day operations, overseeing academic outcomes, supervising staff, and

ensuring compliance with local, state, and federal regulations. This leader will report directly to the Governing Board and will be central in building a strong school culture rooted in Colearn's personalized, learner-centered approach. The Executive Director will also work closely with families, Program Mentors, and instructional staff to ensure educational excellence and strong student outcomes.

Governing Board Members: The Governing Board will provide strategic oversight and long-term vision for Colearn Academy Colorado. Board members bring professional expertise in finance, education, nonprofit leadership, and legal compliance. Their responsibilities include approving the school's budget, evaluating organizational performance, monitoring academic results, ensuring legal and fiduciary compliance, and supervising the Executive Director. The Board will also lead hiring efforts for executive roles and support early operational planning and accountability structures.

Director of Engagement: The Director of Engagement will lead all aspects of family and student support, communications, and community outreach. This role is critical to Colearn's mission of treating parents as essential partners in their child's education. The Director will manage the Program Mentor team, oversee family onboarding, coordinate live events and virtual community-building opportunities, and maintain regular communication systems to ensure strong family engagement and retention. This role will also provide key insight into program development and ensure the school remains responsive to family needs and feedback.

Founding Team Members: Members of the founding team, including Amber Robinson (Executive Director of Colearn Academy Arizona) and Becki Krueger (Board Member and education compliance expert), have played central roles in launching Colearn's schools in other states. They bring valuable experience in curriculum development, school governance, grant management, and operational startup. These individuals will continue to support the school through its launch and early years, offering mentorship, strategic planning, and capacity-building support. As virtual instructors in the state of Colorado, Courtney Cullen and Taylor Bennett understand the need for the Colearn model in the state, and they will be able to communicate and establish a positive and welcoming school culture for students, families, and fellow educators.

Together, this leadership team ensures that Colearn Academy Colorado launches with the vision, expertise, and infrastructure needed to deliver high-quality, personalized education across the state. Their combined experience in both school operations and instructional innovation positions the school to meet the needs of diverse learners while fostering meaningful family engagement and academic success.

6. Provide a detailed description of staff recruitment, selection, and orientation timeline and process.

This description should include planned outreach to recruit a pool of high-quality candidates, any priorities the school is considering in the staff selection process, including experience or alignment with proposed school model, and a description of the employee/employer relationship (at-will vs. contract). If the school will use contracts, explain the nature and purpose of the contracts.

Recruitment of instructional staff for Colearn Academy Colorado will begin immediately upon charter approval. This process will be jointly led by the Governing Board and founding committee, with involvement from the Executive Director once hired. The school will implement a multi-phase recruitment and selection process designed to identify high-quality candidates who align with the school's mission, instructional model, and virtual learning environment.

Recruitment and Outreach

To attract a diverse and talented pool of applicants, Colearn Academy Colorado will post job openings on multiple platforms including the Colorado Department of Education job board, Indeed, LinkedIn, Teachers-Teachers, and other relevant virtual and charter school job boards. The school will also conduct outreach through professional networks, university career services, and educational organizations to recruit candidates with experience in virtual education, personalized learning, mastery-based instruction, and family engagement.

Priority will be given to candidates who:

- Hold valid Colorado teaching credentials and meet “Highly Qualified” status;
- Have demonstrated experience or training in virtual instruction or blended learning environments;
- Align with Colearn’s student-centered, flexible, and family-supported learning model;
- Exhibit strong communication and collaboration skills essential for working with Program Mentors and families.

Selection Process

The staff selection process consists of three stages:

1. Initial Interview with the Executive Director
The Executive Director will meet with each applicant to discuss Colearn Academy’s mission, culture, and instructional model. This step assesses the candidate’s general fit with the school’s philosophy and expectations for virtual education.
2. Panel Interview
Candidates who advance will participate in a second interview with a panel of 3-4 individuals, which may include board members, academic leaders, and the Executive Director. The panel will evaluate alignment with Colearn’s core values, teaching competencies, and ability to foster engagement in a virtual setting. Candidates may be asked to provide a teaching portfolio or complete a performance task relevant to online instruction.
3. Final Verification and Background Checks
Finalists will undergo a comprehensive background check, including reference checks and verification of state certifications and endorsements as required by Colorado law. Employment offers will be extended contingent on successful completion of these checks.

Timeline

All instructional staff will be hired by July 1, 2026, to ensure participation in required onboarding, professional development, and pre-launch planning activities. Early hires will support family onboarding and school setup during summer months.

Orientation and Onboarding

During the onboarding process, all new staff will:

- Review and sign off on the employee handbook, including school policies and procedures;
- Receive training on Colearn’s learning management systems, virtual engagement strategies, and compliance protocols;
- Select benefits and complete relevant HR documentation;
- Be paired with experienced staff or mentors for ongoing support.

The Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring that all staff receive timely updates on policy or operational changes throughout the school year via team meetings and email communications.

Employment Relationship

All staff will be at-will employees. At-will employment will be clearly communicated during the hiring process and reflected in offer letters and employee handbooks. This structure allows for flexibility while maintaining mutual accountability between staff and school leadership. If any staff are hired under contracts in the future (e.g., for special education or part-time roles), the contracts will specify scope of services, term of service, and performance expectations, and will be aligned with Colorado charter school HR regulations.

7. **Describe a plan to provide adequate numbers of qualified, in-field staff to meet the needs of exceptional students in alignment with state requirements.** *Describe how adequate staffing was determined, citing suggested ratios from professional organizations, for example, as applicable. Include information about the proposed contract model to employ staff, any secured agreements or MOUs, and describe the onboarding process for any contract staff. If applicable, attach any secured agreements or MOUs to the application. Save the file as “I_Service Provider Agreements.”*

Colearn Academy Colorado is committed to providing all students with exceptional needs — those with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs), 504 Plans, or other identified learning differences — access to a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) in the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). CAC will employ or contract with qualified, in-field professionals in compliance with Colorado Department of Education (CDE) licensure requirements and adhere to national best practices for staffing ratios.

To determine adequate staffing, CAC will use guidelines from the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC), the National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASSET), and Colorado’s Exceptional Children’s Educational Act (ECEA). We anticipate the following staffing ratios, with flexibility to adjust based on enrollment and student needs:

- **Special Education Teacher to Student Ratio:** 1:20 (aligned with virtual best practice and adjusted for caseload complexity)
- **Speech/Language Pathologist (SLP):** 1:30-1:40, depending on service frequency
- **School Psychologist:** 1:500-700 for evaluations and consultative services
- **Occupational/Physical Therapists and Other Related Services:** As indicated in student IEPs and driven by student needs, using contracted specialists

We will begin with a credentialed Special Education Teacher (SPED) on staff who will oversee compliance and ensure implementation of services. Based on projected enrollment and needs identified through initial IEPs, CAC will contract with additional related service providers (e.g., SLPs, OTs, PTs, School Psychologists).

CAC will utilize a hybrid model of employment and contracted services to ensure flexibility and access to a wide provider network. The school has initiated agreements and is finalizing MOUs with the school psychologist, who is familiar with the Colean target population, having worked with students in Arizona and South Carolina. Additionally, we are pursuing individual contracts for OT, PT and SLP services. Several of these providers currently support Colean students in other states, so they have an established knowledge of the Colean culture and student population.

Contracts will include clear expectations regarding licensure, background checks, scope of services, documentation, FERPA compliance, and billing.

All contracted and staff providers will go through an onboarding process that includes:

- Review of student data and assigned caseloads
- Training on Colean’s MTSS and IEP/504 compliance processes
- Access to CAC’s student information system (SIS) and special education data systems (e.g., Enrich)
- Orientation on communication protocols with Program Mentors, Education Specialists, and families
- Annual and ongoing professional development aligned with CDE requirements

The Special Education Teacher will collaborate with Program Mentors and Content Lead Teachers to ensure that students receive required services and accommodations/modifications. The SPED teacher will also monitor service delivery logs and participate in IEP reviews.

8. **If the school leader has been identified:**

- Summarize the process used to identify the proposed school leader as well as how the proposed school leader meets the skills, qualifications, and characteristics listed above and how those characteristics enhance school model and curriculum.
- Attach a resume of the selected school leader and save the file as "I_School Leader_Resume."

If the school leader is not yet identified:

- Detail the responsibilities of the school leader as well as the skills, qualifications, experiences, and characteristics of your ideal school leader and how those characteristics enhance school model and curriculum.
- Provide a detailed description of the leadership recruitment and selection timeline and process as well as a proposed start date.

The School Leader ("Executive Director") has not yet been identified. The Executive Director will be responsible for the following:

- Participate in hiring, managing and developing all instructional staff
- Supervising teachers to ensure all student academic compliance is met
- Lead staff meetings for academy faculty and staff
- Develop and oversee all curriculum, instructional, and assessment programs
- Collaborate in collecting and analyzing the creation and revision of all academic data analysis and intervention programs
- Identify or lead teacher training and development programs
- Oversee and participate in the development of a personalized education plan for each student
- Assure compliant and informative assessment practices: maintain a calendar and data profiles for families and students. Supervise and collaborate with school testing coordinator to ensure all rules and regulations are followed
- Oversee and manage school-wide curriculum, course content creation, data and budget. Ensure that all curriculum is aligned with state standards
- Report school academic performance to the Department of Education, Charter Authorizer, and board members/stakeholders
- Collects, analyzes and uses data to identify school needs and plan for needed changes in the instructional program
- Oversee clubs and classes schedule, and ensure that teachers are fulfilling class and club requirements. Hiring of additional teachers as needed to ensure student options for success
- Promotes collaborative problem solving and open communication
- Work with contracted staff to ensure accounting, finance and state/federal compliance is being upheld

The Board will begin recruiting for the management roles such as, Education Director and Director of Engagement, in February 2026. The Governing Board will also contribute their expertise when needed and help in the recruitment process.

As the process for recruitment progresses, CAC will utilize multiple media outlets and strategies in our search for the talent that will embrace the mission and vision of CAC. Recruiting will take place via job board postings, social media, personal referrals, and the partnerships we are forming with the community and various stakeholders.

The Executive Director position will originally be hired by the Governing Board and founding team in order to have the position filled before the start of the school year. The Colearn Academy Colorado founding team will be recruiting for the right school leader to carry out the mission of our innovative model after the proposed Charter is approved. The job opening will be advertised through various channels, including online job boards, education publications, and our website. Based on the recruitment process, the right candidate for the Executive Director position will begin in their role by April 1, 2026. This will provide an opportunity for the Executive Director to complete onboarding and be involved in the recruitment of other key individuals within

Colearn Academy Colorado. This includes being involved in the recruitment and hiring process of instructional staff in order to build a team to carry out the mission and vision of the school.

9. Provide information on the proposed approach for evaluation, development, and support.

a) Explain how the school leader will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year.

Colearn Academy Colorado's school leader will receive ongoing support, professional development, and performance evaluations each year through a collaborative process with the Governing Board, ensuring continuous growth, effective leadership, and alignment with the school's mission and accountability goals.

As part of the academic and operational oversight, the Governing Board will evaluate the school's academic and operational performance annually. The performance review will be based on the school's academic achievements, financial reports and a review of compliance indicators. The school evaluation tool will be developed by Fall of 2026 and will serve as a comprehensive framework for monitoring progress toward strategic goals. (We will be implementing the evaluation tool provided on the CDE website.) The Board will be responsible for evaluating the performance of the Executive Director using the developed evaluation tool. This evaluation will include both quantitative and qualitative data, including progress toward academic goals, staff retention and development, fiscal management, stakeholder engagement, and alignment with the school's mission. If the performance of the Executive Director is found to be lacking, problematic, or they are in direct violation of school policy, then the Governing Board will meet to vote on termination. The actual termination of employees will be handled by a contracted HR service and reported to the Governing Board when complete.

The Colean Academy leadership evaluation tool will be aligned with the State Model Evaluation System for Principals/Assistant Principals and will be used by the governing board to help facilitate leadership development and provide feedback for our leaders. This tool is aligned with the Colorado Principal Quality Standards and includes professional practices such as instructional leadership, strategic planning, human capital management, and culture-building, as well as student outcomes where applicable. The tool will be utilized on an annual basis, and coupled with observations and frequent check-ins, will help shape the professional development plan for our leaders. Ongoing coaching, leadership goal-setting, and progress monitoring will ensure the Executive Director, Principal/Assistant Principal receives the support needed to continuously grow in their role while maintaining high expectations for performance and accountability.

b) Explain how teachers will be supported, developed, and evaluated each school year.

Colean Academy Colorado will adopt the State Model Evaluation System (SMES) for Teachers as a comprehensive approach to teacher evaluation with the following key components:

- **Orientation:** Teachers will undergo an orientation providing an overview of the SMES system, including evaluation processes, criteria, and expectations. This will include explicit training on how SMES applies in an AOI (Alternative Online Instruction) environment, such as expectations for asynchronous engagement, communication with students and families, and evidence of student learning in an online setting.
- **Self-Assessment & Goal Setting:** Teachers will conduct a self-assessment, reflecting on their teaching practices and establishing professional goals. This will lead to collaboration between teachers and administrators to set professional goals aligned with school or district priorities. This will lead to collaboration between teachers and administrators to set professional goals aligned with school or district priorities.
- **Observations:** Classroom observations by administrators or trained evaluators, with varying frequency and number. Observations may include synchronous virtual lessons, recorded instructional videos, or asynchronous content such as discussion board facilitation, feedback cycles, and pacing plans.
- **Pre-Conference and Post-Conference Meetings:** Meetings before and after observations where teachers and evaluators discuss lesson plans, strategies, and feedback. These meetings are essential

for reflecting on the teacher's use of digital tools, differentiation in online environments, and ability to build relationships and engagement remotely.

- **Evidence Collection:** Teachers will gather evidence of their teaching effectiveness, such as lesson plans, student work, and assessments. In an AOI context, this may also include analysis of learning data from digital platforms (e.g., Imagine Learning, Accelerate), parent communications, and examples of personalized learning plans.
- **Professional Growth and Development:** Ongoing engagement in professional development activities to enhance skills and address areas for improvement. Professional development will include opportunities specific to AOI instruction, such as data-driven instructional planning in virtual settings, culturally responsive digital teaching, and tools for engagement and accessibility.
- **Continuous Feedback:** Administrators will provide continuous feedback to support teachers throughout the evaluation cycle. This includes both formal and informal check-ins, coaching sessions, and targeted support aligned to teacher needs identified in observation or student performance data.
- **Mid-Year Review & End-of-Year Evaluation:** An assessment conducted mid-year to review progress, adjust goals, and provide additional support if needed. Finally, a comprehensive report generated at the end of the cycle, summarizing teacher performance based on SMES criteria. These reviews will inform professional development plans and staffing decisions and ensure alignment with academic priorities and school improvement goals.
- **Professional Development Plans:** Teachers will collaboratively develop plans based on evaluation results and identified areas for growth. Plans may include peer collaboration, participation in instructional rounds (virtual or in-person), workshops, or coaching related to specific SMES indicators.
- **Final Conference:** A concluding conference discussing overall evaluation results, acknowledging strengths, and outlining areas for continued growth in the following year. This conference will also connect to broader retention, leadership development, or support decisions, as appropriate.

The SMES system emphasizes formative evaluation, focusing on professional growth to improve the teaching and learning process. Teachers are encouraged to actively participate in their evaluation and development, with CAC administrators supporting them. In the context of a virtual and hybrid AOI model, this system ensures that teaching quality remains high, even in flexible environments, and that teachers are equipped with the tools, coaching, and support needed to meet diverse student needs in an online setting.

10. Include the following attachments:

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
School Leader Evaluation Process	Include the process the school will use for school leader evaluation that aligns with the school's mission and model and the intent of SB 10-191.	I_School Leader Evaluation
Educator Evaluation Process	Include the process the school will use for school leader evaluation that aligns with the school's mission and model and the intent of SB 10-191.	I_Educator Evaluation

11. Include the following attachment:

Required Attachments	Notes of what should be included in each attachment	Naming Convention for Saving Each Attachment
Start-up Plan	Include a detailed start-up plan for the school, specifying tasks, timelines, and responsible individuals.	I_Startup Plan

Professional Development

12. Describe the plan for selecting professional development activities during Year 0 and Year 1 to ensure staff can fully implement the proposed plan and achieve the school's goals. The description should include:

- *The core components of professional development and how these components will support effective implementation of the educational program. Discuss the extent to which professional development will be conducted internally or externally and will be individualized or uniform.*
- *How the plan will prepare teachers to work with the target student population and community*
- *How the plan will prepare teachers to implement the proposed program with fidelity*
- *How the plan will be informed by evaluated teacher needs*
- *How the plan will address inequities in education and student outcomes*

The Executive Director at Colearn Academy Colorado will be responsible for overseeing and scheduling professional development. The Executive Director will work with the Board to develop a professional development scope and sequence that aligns with the school's collaborative goals as well as individual personnel goals of the staff. The Board has a library of professional development experiences, as well as hosts collaborative design workshops that empower educators and state staff to meet the needs of families at Colearn Academy Colorado. The professional development plan will incorporate any needs that have been exposed during the leadership and teacher evaluations. All Colearn Academy Colorado instructors and staff will have access to an online library of professional development resources and microcredentials at BloomBoard, and personalized recommendations will be made where appropriate by either the Executive Director or through the Colearn support team.

At Colearn Academy Colorado, our staff will receive numerous opportunities for professional development. Our professional development program will be based on state requirements and any needs uncovered by surveys of professional staff, board members, students, parents and guardians, and other observations by stakeholders. Professional development will take place before the school year begins, and continue throughout the school year. The professional development focus may vary once our immediate needs are known, however, the initial plan will cover the following areas targeted for our instructional staff and new employees:

- State-required training in suicide awareness and prevention, Child Find screener, the MTSS process, and mandatory reporting
- Colearn Academy culture and innovative model
- Instructional planning and implementation in an online environment
- Student Engagement in the online environment
- Core Content
- Teaching to Multiple Intelligences
- Differentiated Instruction
- Social Emotional Learning
- Formative and Summative Assessments
- Data-driven Instruction

Prior to the first day of school Colearn Academy Colorado will conduct virtual inservice training and professional development to ensure that our instructional staff is prepared and fully understands the unique "colearning" model. In addition to this training our Education Specialists and Program Mentors will receive all required compliance training on child abuse, neglect, preventative supports, FERPA, IDEA, social-emotional learning, assessments, and state statutes unique to Colorado.

Teachers receive training in using full curriculum, supplementals, and how to administer diagnostic testing. Teachers will receive training on using the proprietary Colearn technology to allow them to track attendance and communicate with families. Staff will receive training on how to balance working at home, while providing support to online learners and parents for educating at home. Teachers will receive training on differentiating instruction, referring students to Student Services for support (emotional or educational), how to recognize gaps in education, and how to support SPED students.

Program Mentors work directly with an assigned credentialed teacher (Education Specialist) to help provide guidance, lesson planning, and overall oversight of student learning. Program Mentors have the opportunity to attend professional development workshops monthly in a variety of topics, such as mental health, reading strategies, note-taking, math instruction, writing workshops, scheduling and organization, planning for college, etc. Program Mentors will also receive professional development in tracking academic standards and priority standards using a student notebook tool designed by Colearn. Colearn Academy Colorado will also host a Parent Conference with a variety of sessions based on parent surveys, Program Mentor surveys and feedback, as well as input from Education Specialists each year. While students are taking the state assessments at a centralized location, parents and Program Mentors will have the opportunity to engage in professional development and workshops to support their role and engagement in their child's education, development, and post-secondary planning.

As a virtual school, Colearn Academy Colorado can be flexible in scheduling our professional development. This flexibility will allow us to be more focused on individual professional development since those sessions will be virtual as well. Teaching teams and Program Mentors will be able to collaborate and plan virtually using online platforms whenever it fits into their individual schedules. The Executive Director will facilitate the professional development schedule, making sure that the scheduled events take place and that the participants are engaged. Formal teacher professional development days will occur on non-instructional school days.

Over the course of the typical school year there will be, at a minimum, ten (10) days dedicated to structured professional development. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and teaching teams will meet weekly to discuss strategies and participate in ongoing training to effectively engage students in the online environment. Data meetings are held after each round of benchmark testing to analyze data and have professional development provided by the diagnostic provider on interpreting data and individualizing instruction.

Professional development will play a crucial role in aligning with Colearn Academy Colorado's vision to ensure students discover their passions, create authentic work, and harness curiosity in an online environment. It will provide our teachers with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively engage students in an online environment. This might include training on how to create interactive and authentic learning experiences that promote student curiosity and passion discovery. Professional development will also focus on helping CAC's design and adapt online curriculum to facilitate student-driven learning experiences. This will involve strategies for integrating project-based learning, real-world applications, and opportunities for students to explore their own interests within the at-home learning environment. Given the online nature of the learning environment, professional development will also be used to prepare CAC's teachers to become proficient in using digital tools and platforms that support student engagement and exploration. This might include training on using online collaboration tools, digital portfolios, and platforms for showcasing student projects and passions. Finally, the PD that CAC will provide will emphasize student-centered instructional approaches that foster curiosity, creativity, and self-discovery. Colearn teachers will learn how to facilitate online discussions, provide personalized feedback, and create opportunities for students to pursue their interests within the curriculum.

Colearn Academy Colorado partners with Dr. Dan Mulligan of Flexible Creativity to deliver high-impact professional development twice a year for CAC staff. Dr. Mulligan, a nationally recognized expert in differentiated instruction, student engagement, and data-informed teaching, brings a dynamic, research-based approach perfectly aligned with Colearn's personalized learning vision.

His sessions incorporate key elements of the Project Momentum Gears Framework, a school improvement methodology that emphasizes:

- Standards-aligned Tier I instruction, ensuring core lessons are both rigorous and responsive to state standards,
- Embedded coaching and feedback loops, supporting teachers in refining practice and driving learner growth,

- Data-informed instructional planning, using assessment data to guide differentiation and accelerate progress.

Across these gears, staff learn to weave standards into authentic, engaging tasks; use ongoing formative checks to adjust teaching; and build instructional strategies that engage diverse learners — especially students with IEPs, multilingual learners, and gifted students — in online and hybrid environments.

Trainings are customized for Colearn's context, with a focus on practical application. Teachers leave ready to:

- Design standards-aligned lessons that include scaffolds and extension opportunities for all learners,
- Analyze student data to inform instruction in real time,
- Engage students actively through project-based and differentiated tasks suited to virtual settings.

Through these sessions, CAC reinforces its culture of continuous improvement and instructional excellence, empowering teachers with tools to deliver truly personalized, effective learning experiences consistent with Colearn's commitment to student-centered education.

Evaluating the effectiveness of Colearn Academy Colorado's professional development is essential to ensure that it is meeting its intended goals and benefiting both the faculty and students. Conducting pre- and post-assessments of the faculty's knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to the topic can help measure growth and change. For example, if the professional development focuses on implementing project-based learning, assessments can measure the teachers' understanding of PBL principles before and after the training. Linking professional development goals to student outcomes can provide valuable insights into their effectiveness. Teachers and administrators can track and analyze student performance, engagement, and other relevant metrics before and after the implementation of professional development strategies. Encouraging the faculty to reflect on their professional development experiences will also provide qualitative insights into the impact of the training. Surveys, interviews, or reflective journals will be used to gather the faculty's perceptions of how professional development has influenced their teaching practices. Professional development initiatives should be aligned with the school's vision, goals, and improvement plans. Evaluating professional development effectiveness will involve assessing the degree to which the initiatives are contributing to the school's broader objectives. Finally, the long-term impact of professional development is important as well. This will involve tracking changes in educator practices and student outcomes over an extended period to determine the sustainability of the professional development's impact.

Teachers will have set times throughout the month to collaborate with one another. This scheduled time looks different each week with a goal to share best practices and promote student growth. Collaboration time will be used to vertically align curriculum, analyze and reflect on data, discuss professional development initiatives, and build professional learning communities within the school. It is important that teachers work together to ensure a cohesive and aligned curriculum which will lead to a more seamless learning experience for students and provide opportunities for faculty members to learn from each other. During collaboration meetings, the faculty will analyze student data, discuss assessment results, review students that need more targeted support, and reflect on instructional practices. By examining student performance as a team, the faculty can identify areas for improvement and develop future targeted professional development goals to address the needs of the school and students.

With Colearn Academy Colorado's virtual setting, the school calendar, daily scheduling, and staffing structure allows more flexibility for time to conduct, review, and provide guidance on professional development and growth for educators. CAC's virtual scheduling incorporates a balance of asynchronous and synchronous learning opportunities for both students and teachers. This flexibility allows the staff to engage in professional development activities at times that best suit their schedules, whether it's through self-paced online courses, live webinars, or collaborative meetings with colleagues. By incorporating a blended learning model into the daily schedule, Colearn teachers have the opportunity to engage in professional development activities while still fulfilling their teaching responsibilities. For example, the schedule can be structured to allow educators to

participate in professional development during non-teaching hours. The school's calendar provides dedicated professional development time built into the beginning of the year, as well as throughout the year during collaboration meetings. This time can be protected and prioritized to ensure that educators have regular opportunities to engage in ongoing learning, reflection, and collaboration.

Facilities

13. Provide a facility needs assessment. *The narrative should include:*

- *The school's requirements for number of classrooms, bathrooms, administrative and special services providers offices, library, outdoor, and common spaces.*
- *Cost per square foot.*
- *Zoning and occupancy requirements.*
- *Parking and transportation considerations.*
- *Planning for the safety and security of staff and students.*
- *How facility needs will allow for the educational program to meet the school's model and curriculum.*
- *Location considerations that are most important to the applicant.*
- *Important features or spaces needed in the facility.*

As a virtual school, Colearn Academy Colorado will not require facilities for its students.

14. Include proposed locations for the school that are selected based on school design and intended population with an explanation of prospective school sites and assistance to find them. *For each proposed location identified below, include the following:*

- *Address how each identified facility aligns with the facility needs assessment and plans for ensuring the facility is ADA compliant.*
- *Advantages and concerns of the facility's design or location.*

Colearn Academy Colorado will not require facilities for its students.

✓ Facility Search Not Yet Started (if this box is checked, proceed to question 16.)

a) Location 1

Address	Sq ft.	Sq ft./student at full build out	Cost/sq ft.	Current Zoning	Renovation Required (Y/N)	Renovation Cost (if known)

b) Location 2 (if applicable)

Address	Sq ft.	Sqft./student at full build out	Cost/sq ft.	Current Zoning	Renovation Required (Y/N)	Renovation Cost (if known)

c) Location 3 (if applicable)

Address	Sq ft.	Sqft./student at full build out	Cost/sq ft.	Current Zoning	Renovation Required (Y/N)	Renovation Cost (if known)

15. If you currently hold a facility or have an MOU or other proof of intent to secure a specific facility, provide proof of the commitment as and save the file as “I_Facility Documentation”. Briefly describe the facility including location, size, and amenities. You may provide, in the same file, up to 10 pages of supporting documents providing details about the facility. Charter school facilities must comply with applicable state, local and authorizer health and safety requirements.

OR

Describe the process for identifying and securing a facility, including any brokers or consultants you are employing, plans for renovations, timelines, financing partners, etc. Identify roles (school staff, board members, contractors, etc.) that will be responsible for overseeing this work.

As a virtual school, Colearn Academy Colorado will not require facilities for its students.

Safety

16. Provide the school plan for safety and security for students, the facility, and property. Explain the types of security personnel, technology, equipment, and policies that the school will employ.

As a virtual school, Colearn Academy Colorado prioritizes student safety, cybersecurity, and the protection of all data, systems, and physical assets related to school operations. While the safety considerations for an online learning environment differ from those of a traditional brick-and-mortar campus, Colearn Academy Colorado has developed a comprehensive plan to ensure the well-being of its students and the security of its technology and property.

Colearn Academy Colorado maintains clear Acceptable Use Policies (AUPs) for students and staff that outline appropriate online behavior, expectations for technology use, and protections against cyber threats. All students receive age-appropriate instruction in digital citizenship and internet safety, including how to protect personal information and report concerning behavior.

All learning platforms used by the school comply with FERPA and COPPA requirements and implement strong cybersecurity protections, including data encryption, user authentication, and secure cloud-based storage. Staff and vendors are trained on best practices in handling personally identifiable information (PII) and maintaining confidentiality in accordance with federal and state laws.

Despite being in a virtual setting, Colearn Academy Colorado maintains clear protocols for identifying and responding to student mental health concerns, bullying, harassment, and abuse. All educators and Program Mentors are trained as mandatory reporters and receive ongoing professional development to help identify red flags or warning signs of harm during online interactions.

The school partners with local authorities and community agencies to coordinate responses in cases that require welfare checks or crisis interventions. Students and families also have access to a secure reporting platform where they can submit safety concerns anonymously. School counselors and social-emotional learning (SEL) staff provide resources and support when concerns arise.

Colearn Academy Colorado uses industry-standard student information systems (SIS) and learning management systems (LMS) that are designed with secure authentication, audit trails, and administrative controls. School-issued devices (if applicable) are equipped with web filtering, remote device management, and monitoring software that limits access to non-educational content and enhances safety.

The school's IT team, in partnership with its contracted technology provider, performs regular security audits, software updates, and vulnerability assessments to ensure platforms are protected against cyberattacks and data breaches. Firewalls, antivirus protection, and endpoint security tools are maintained across all systems.

While student learning is virtual, Colearn Academy Colorado maintains administrative offices and may house physical materials such as testing kits, technology, or student records. These facilities are secured with restricted access, locked storage, and appropriate inventory control measures for all school-owned assets.

Staff working from administrative locations follow emergency procedures for fire safety and natural disasters and maintain emergency contact protocols for all enrolled students and staff.

Colearn Academy Colorado complies with all applicable state requirements, including providing students and families with information about the Safe2Tell program for anonymous reporting of threats or safety concerns. All staff undergo required background checks and training on mandatory reporting obligations in accordance with Colorado law. The school also maintains a written Emergency Operations Plan for its administrative offices, aligned with local fire and safety codes. Age-appropriate instruction in internet safety meets the requirements of C.R.S. 22-81-103, ensuring students know how to navigate online spaces responsibly.

Transportation

17. Identify which of the following options the proposed school will follow with regards to transportation. *Respond to all items within the option that you have selected.*

✓ Option 1: A school may choose not to provide any transportation services.

Provide a rationale for why the Applicant is not proposing to provide transportation services.

Include factors considered when making this decision and a description of the alternative transportation options families may use to access the school.

Colearn Academy Colorado is a virtual school. It will not provide transportation.

__ Option 2: A school may provide regular transportation services to and from school.

Provide a description of how the charter school plans to meet the transportation needs of students, including students who have been historically underserved. *Include a description of the daily route that aligns with the transportation plan to meet student needs, cost details within the school's budget and summarize details here, a plan to address insurance and liability issues pertaining to transportation services using private or school vehicles, and a description of adequate safety measures that will be implemented for the transportation of students.*

__ Option 3: A school may provide transportation services for extracurricular activities and events.

Provide a description of how the charter school plans to meet the transportation needs of all students, including students who have been historically underserved. *Include cost details within the school's budget and summarize details here, a plan to address insurance and liability issues pertaining to transportation services using private or school vehicles, and a description of adequate safety measures that will be implemented for the transportation of students.*

Food Services

18. Identify which of the following options the proposed school will follow with regards to food services. *Respond to all items within the option that you have selected.*

✓ Option 1: A school may choose not to participate in any federal Child Nutrition Program through a School Food Authority (SFA). Under this option, the school may elect not to operate a lunch program.

Provide a rationale for why the Applicant is not proposing to provide food services, including factors considered when making this decision.

__ Option 2: A school may choose not to participate in any federal Child Nutrition Program through a School Food Authority (SFA). Under this option, the school may choose to work with a meal vendor. Food services are provided but are unsubsidized by federal funds.

Provide a rationale for why the Applicant is proposing to operate its own meal service(s) unsubsidized by federal funds. *Include details about how the food service will be provided and address how the school will provide services to students who forget or cannot provide a lunch.*

__Option 3: A school may choose to participate in federal Child Nutrition Programs and receive federal reimbursement funds. Within this option, a school may elect to contract with a School Food Authority (either the CSI SFA or another SFA).

Provide rationale for why the Applicant is selecting this food service option. *Include details about how the food service will be provided, evidence of a plan for reimbursement through an authorized School Food Authority, and address how the school will provide services to students who forget or cannot provide a lunch.*

__Option 4: A school may choose to participate in federal Child Nutrition Programs and receive federal reimbursement funds. Within this option, a school may obtain state designation as a School Food Authority.

Provide rationale for why the Applicant is selecting this food service option. *Include details about how the food service will be provided, evidence of a plan for reimbursement, and address how the school will provide services to students who forget or cannot provide a lunch.*

Addendum (if applicable)

18. Please download and complete the following addendum if applicable.

- a. **Educational Management Provider (EMP)**. *The ESP addendum should be completed if the school is proposing to contract with an educational service provider, incubator, or collaborative. Applicants are required to review CSI's [Evaluating EMP Agreements](#) document prior to completing the addendum. If completed, save the file as "I_ESP Addendum".*

Operations Capacity

19. Describe the experience the founding team has related to individual and collective capacity for implementing the operations successfully, including capacity in each of the following areas: staffing, professional development, general operations, and facilities acquisition and management.

The founding team of Colearn Academy Colorado brings significant individual and collective experience in launching, leading, and sustaining high-performing charter schools with strong operational systems. Together, Amber Robinson, Becki Krueger, Courtney Cullen, and Taylor Bennett have demonstrated success across strategic staffing, high-quality professional development, compliant general operations, and facilities management — all tailored to the unique needs of a virtual learning model.

Staffing: Amber Robinson, as Executive Director of Colearn Academy Arizona, has designed and executed strategic staffing plans aligned to both academic programming and financial sustainability. She has successfully recruited, hired, and onboarded diverse, highly qualified staff, including general and special education teachers, counselors, program mentors, and operational support personnel. Amber ensures all credentialing and licensure requirements are met in each state Colearn serves, including compliance with Colorado's educator licensing standards.

Becki Krueger brings additional capacity in human capital oversight through her extensive experience as a Charter School Operations Director and CFO. She has managed personnel systems that include clear roles and responsibilities, separation of duties for fiscal integrity, and policies that align staffing with budget constraints and organizational growth.

Professional Development: As program leads, Courtney Cullen and Taylor Bennett have designed and facilitated job-embedded coaching, training for virtual instruction, and data-driven improvement cycles for teachers and program mentors. They have developed onboarding protocols that build staff confidence in delivering Colearn's personalized, student-centered model. Amber has led large-scale professional development initiatives focused on instructional quality, student engagement, and compliance. The team also leverages partnerships with trusted third-party providers to supplement internal coaching, ensuring all staff maintain high standards aligned with Colearn's mission.

General Operations: The founding team has strong expertise in back-office operations, finance, compliance, enrollment, and state reporting. Becki Krueger brings decades of experience managing fiscal processes, grant

compliance, and audits, while Amber oversees day-to-day operational systems that keep Colearn's virtual model effective and compliant. Together, they have implemented and refined student information systems (SIS), attendance and engagement tracking tools, and online safety and data privacy protocols that align with Colorado and federal requirements. They have also developed policies and procedures to ensure consistent, equitable access to learning while meeting state accountability standards.

Facilities Acquisition and Management: Although Colearn Academy Colorado will be primarily virtual, the team is experienced in securing and managing physical facilities needed for in-person activities, including state-required assessments, special education evaluations, or community learning hubs. Amber and Becki have successfully negotiated leases and contracts, ensured compliance with building codes and ADA standards, and managed insurance and risk requirements. Their proven approach keeps facility-related costs sustainable while maintaining safe, accessible spaces for students and staff.

Collective Capacity: Taken together, Amber, Becki, Courtney, and Taylor represent decades of leadership in charter management, virtual education, operational compliance, and innovative program design. Their combined experience ensures that Colearn Academy Colorado's operational infrastructure will be built with fidelity to its mission, aligned with state laws and CSI requirements, and sustainable for the long term.