

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) welcomed its first class of 9th graders in 2004 and has since become one of the most successful high schools in the state of Colorado. DSST added a middle school program to its model in 2008. Over the last five years, DSST has consistently been the highest performing secondary school in the district according to the DPS School Performance Framework both in growth and absolute performance. Both of DSST's first two graduating classes have earned 100% acceptances into four-year colleges. DSST has been the only high school in the state to earn the highest SAR growth rating four years in a row. And most importantly, DSST has demonstrated that all students, regardless of income, background or ethnicity, can earn a truly rigorous high school diploma and attend a four-year college. As a result, DSST has become a national model for school reform, hosting thousands of educators from all over the country and the world.

Learning that the Denver Public Schools, through its RFP process, has announced a significant need and desire for new and improved secondary schools (6-12), DSST believes that it has an obligation to help fill this identified need for Denver. Towards that end, DSST proposes to open four additional secondary schools (6-12) in Denver in the next five years. Through this expansion, DSST intends to double the number of four-year college-ready DPS graduates over the next 11 years – truly helping transform public education for Denver's deserving young people. DSST is pleased to be able to collaborate with DPS to undertake such an important vision. Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper supports DSST's expansion and believes it fills a critical need for Denver. The Mayor recently stated, "DSST's expansion fits perfectly with our long-term vision of developing a highly educated workforce that will help the Denver region attract and retain the best jobs and companies."

DSST will be creating a charter management organization which will manage each of the five schools and will be referred to as "DSST Schools" or "CMO" in this application. This organization, led by Bill Kurtz, will continue to develop and implement DSST's nationally renowned school culture and instructional approach throughout all of its schools.

DSST is proud to be a Denver Public School, the only "Distinguished" secondary school in Denver and one of the top-performing secondary schools in the state. In collaboration with higher education partners, industry partners, and DPS, DSST aims to create the national model for science education in the country. US Senator Michael Bennet, the former Superintendent of Denver Public Schools, has expressed support for DSST's expansion. "As President Obama said last week, the future belongs to the nation that best educates its citizens. I believe that DPS has the chance to become the best school district in urban America, and that this collaborative initiative is another big step in that direction." We look forward to collaborating with DPS to making greater contributions to the District's success through our network of five schools.

Mission

DSST Schools is dedicated to providing a diverse student body in a network of five charter schools with an outstanding secondary liberal arts education with a science and technology focus. By creating powerful learning communities centered on core values and a shared commitment to academic excellence, we will increase the number of underrepresented students (women, minorities and economically disadvantaged) who attain college science and liberal arts degrees. Our graduates will be responsible, engaged citizens who are prepared to be leaders of the future.

Vision

DSST School intends to create a network of five secondary schools serving 4,000 students in grades 6-12. The vision of the DSST Schools is the following:

- To double the number of college ready graduates attending four-year colleges from Denver Public Schools by 2020.
- To create an innovative school network where students acquire a rigorous academic foundation that they can apply to the community and world around them in meaningful ways.
- To create an academic program where 100% of our students earn college acceptance and are prepared to successfully earn a college degree.
- To graduate students with character and a sense of civic responsibility of whom a significant percentage will assume leadership positions in an increasingly science-based society.
- To be an innovative charter school network that creates the national model and center for STEM education in the country
- To create a school model that redefines the approach to successful secondary education.
- To work collaboratively with Denver Public Schools to create the leading urban public school system in the country.

Educational Plan

Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) will open future schools employing the DSST' model. The core components of the education model include:

- An academic program that has graduation requirements that exceed CCHE's requirements for students entering four-year colleges.
- A diverse student body economically, racially and academically that mirrors the Denver city population.
- An intentional school culture, centered on core values, that provides all students with the opportunity to become future leaders.
- A core instructional model based on an innovative approach to standards, assessment, data, and technology.
- A culture of individual support for all students through advisory and early student intervention programs,
- Experiential, project-based learning through internship and senior project programs.
- 21st century teaching and learning through an extensive and personalized technology program.

- All students earning an acceptance to four-year colleges and universities.

Leadership and Governance

DSST Schools will be led by the strong team of educators and an outstanding Board of Directors who have created the DSST Model.

Charter Management Organization: DSST is currently creating a charter management organization (CMO), DSST Schools, to create, manage and oversee DSST's current school and the next four schools. DSST schools will be led by Bill Kurtz, Founding Head of School of DSST. Larry Hester, who has served in various leadership capacities at DSST over the last three years will be the Director of Operations. DSST has experience opening the original high school in 2004 and middle school in 2008 and now has a strong leadership team with a proven track record to open four more 6-12 schools.

Board of Directors: DSST's Board is currently chaired by Founder David Greenberg. The Board is experienced, with expertise in all the critical areas of organizational leadership and management. The DSST Board is well positioned to lead the organization in its next phase of growth with strong knowledge of education, fundraising, organization-building, legal issues and school governance.

Rationale: Partnership between DSST Schools & Denver Public Schools

With the support of Denver Public Schools, DSST seeks to accomplish the following in collaboration with the District to help Denver become the nation's premier urban district:

- DSST and Denver Public Schools will create the national center of excellence for STEM education. DSST has created one of the top STEM models in the country in its first school. Through extensive partnerships with higher education, research organizations and business, we intend to create a region-wide center of excellence.
- Adding more DSST schools will provide educational choice for secondary school students, helping DPS better serve its secondary school-aged population.
- Based on DSST's outstanding track record of student performance, DSST schools will help the District meet its student achievement goals.
- DSST will help the District meet its goal of attracting new students to Denver Public Schools – thus increasing the Districts overall revenue stream. Currently, approximately 20% of DSST students come from out-of-district schools.
- DSST has attracted nearly \$18 million in private capital to increase the District's capacity to serve Denver children.
- DSST will double the number of DPS four-year college ready students and quadruple the number of four-year STEM college graduates.
- DSST and DPS together will attract national foundation support and new sources of revenue, thus becoming one of the leading urban school districts in the country.

DSST is proud to build this partnership with Denver Public Schools and looks forward to making greater contributions to the District's success through our network.