

## Executive Summary

### ***Mission & Vision***

The mission of Envision Schools Colorado is to transform the lives of our students, especially those who will be the first in their family to attend college, by preparing them for success in college and in life. Our schools will be true communities, marked by intentional diversity, rigorous academic discipline, and excellence at every level. Compassion and high expectations will inspire and empower our students to succeed. As such, our first school, Envision Academy 1 (which will open in 2009) and its successor (Envision Academy 2) will become a model for secondary schools everywhere. ***This is our mission.***

Envision Colorado students will graduate ready for college and career, having mastered (1) core academic skills (2) leadership/personal skills (3) art skills and (4) technology skills. An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must have these skills. An educated person in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, including graduates of Envision Schools Colorado, should also be able to:

- Communicate effectively and persuasively when speaking and writing.
- Read and analyze information successfully in a variety of disciplines.
- Utilize mathematical knowledge and skills to analyze and solve problems.
- Apply scientific skills and consume scientific data critically.
- Use technology as a tool to access information, solve problems, and communicate.
- Interpret, experience, create, and/or perform artistic work.
- Speak and write effectively in a second language.
- Exhibit leadership through service in the community.
- Demonstrate interpersonal, critical thinking, and project management skills.

When fully built-out in 2014, our two schools will prepare about 1400 students per year, in grades 6-12, for such a world.

### ***Education Plan***

Based on the successful Envision Schools in California, Envision Schools Colorado will be a charter management organization that will ultimately operate a system of six schools (across the Front Range). This proposal seeks the approval of the Denver Public Schools to open the first two schools in Denver—one in Northwest Denver in 2009 and a second in Northeast Denver in 2010. Each school will serve students in grades 6-12 when fully built out (it will take 5 years to build out a school). The focus of Envision Schools is to serve those who will be the first in their family to attend college. Envision Schools Colorado prefers to choose the official names

of the schools after more CMO staff members and board members are in place. As such, for the purposes of this application, the schools will be referred to as Envision Academy 1 and Envision Academy 2. Key components of the Envision Schools education plan include the following:

- Students and teachers in Envision Academy 1 and Envision Academy 2 will be part of small learning communities (“houses”) that work collaboratively to build respect, trust, and openness to learning together.
- Students will utilize skillfully developed, tested and implemented project-based learning models. The **4 R’s** (Rigor, Relationships, Relevance, Results) will become institutionalized in day-to-day practice.
- All students will receive instruction in world languages, humanities, math, science, and digital media.
- Students will be required to demonstrate their understanding and depth of knowledge via public exhibitions and other means.
- Every student will have a personalized learning plan based on their interests, goals, academic and personal strengths, and areas for growth.
- Data from multiple assessments will be used by teachers, students, and parents in an inquiry process that informs teacher practice and student learning.
- All students will take a college prep curriculum and all students will graduate by demonstrating mastery and understanding of challenging and meaningful learning outcomes.
- Envision Academy 1 & 2 graduates will meet DP’s graduation criteria, C&CE college admission criteria, and present a College Graduation Portfolio that documents their mastery of Envision Schools’ Academic and Leadership Skills. All graduates will apply to and be accepted to at least one 4 year post-secondary institution.
- Students will work with mentors, guest artists and experts from the field on every project and participate in at-least two internships.
- Arts and technology will be used to investigate, analyze, communicate, create, and innovate across curricular areas. Every student will have access to a computer (2-1 ratio of computers to students)

## ***Leadership and Governance***

The Envision Schools Colorado board of directors will govern and have fiduciary responsibility for both Envision Academy 1 and Envision Academy 2. Envision Colorado presently has three board members: Tony Lewis, Executive Director, Donnell-Kay Foundation; Bob Lenz, Chief Education Officer and Co-Founder, Envision Schools; and Michael Johnston, Principal, Mapleton Expeditionary Learning School of the Arts.

Envision Schools Colorado, like its California counterpart, will be committed to allowing principals and teachers to focus on instruction and learning, and to remove many of the administrative burdens often placed on school leadership at single-site charter schools. To this end, Envision Schools Colorado will maintain a central “Support” office, which will support the network of individual schools and growth needs. The Support Office will provide comprehensive services to the schools including: professional development, assessment and use of data to improve instruction, curriculum development, charter acquisition, and back office services such as payroll, benefits administration, fundraising assistance, facilities acquisition, human resources, and technology set-up and maintenance. Management functions in the Envision Schools Colorado Support Office (CMO support office) will be led by the “Leadership Team,” which will be comprised of the Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Academic Officer. The design team that is launching Envision Schools Colorado is actively recruiting the Chief Executive Officer whose first job will be to hire the principal for Envision Academy 1. We have strong candidates for this CEO position and anticipate this person being hired by June 1, 2008.

The Board of Directors of Envision Schools Colorado retains ultimate fiduciary responsibility and accountability for Envision Academy 1 and Envision Academy 2. However, each school will be locally managed by School Site Leadership Councils comprised of the following representatives:

- Parents (4)
- Students (4)
- Teachers (4)
- Site Leadership Team (2)
- Student services (1)
- Support staff (1)
- Envision CO CMO staff or board member (1)
- Principal (1)

In addition to the support of the Charter Management Organization, each school will be led by a robust, school-based leadership team that includes the Principal, VP of Operations, VP of Students Services, and Division/House Leaders (one instructional leader per division).