

# **U.S. Department of Education**

**Washington, D.C. 20202-5335**



## **APPLICATION FOR GRANTS UNDER THE**

**CHARTER SCHOOLS PROGRAM STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY  
CFDA # 84.282A  
PR/Award # U282A100004**

OMB No. 1894-0006, Expiration Date:  
Closing Date: MAY 07, 2010

# **\*\*Table of Contents\*\***

## **Forms**

1. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)	e1
2. Standard Budget Sheet (ED 524)	e5
3. SF 424B - Assurances Non-Construction Programs	e7
4. Disclosure of Lobbying Activities	e9
5. ED 80-0013 Certification	e10
6. 427 GEPA	e11
Application - GEPA Requirements	e13
7. Dept of Education Supplemental Information for SF-424	e14
Application - 424 S - Human Subjects	e16

## **Narratives**

1. Project Narrative - (Abstract Attachment Form...)	e17
Application - Abstract.PDF	e18
2. Project Narrative - (Application Narrative Attachment Form...)	e19
Application - Narrative FINAL.PDF	e20
3. Project Narrative - (Other Attachment Form...)	e80
Appencides - FINAL.PDF	e81
4. Budget Narrative - (Budget Narrative Attachment Form...)	e167
Application - CO 2010-15 budget	e168

This application was generated using the PDF functionality. The PDF functionality automatically numbers the pages in this application. Some pages/sections of this application may contain 2 sets of page numbers, one set created by the applicant and the other set created by e-Application's PDF functionality. Page numbers created by the e-Application PDF functionality will be preceded by the letter e (for example, e1, e2, e3, etc.).

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

Version 02

* 1. Type of Submission	* 2. Type of Application: * If Revision, select appropriate letter(s):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Preapplication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Continuation	* Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Changed/Corrected Application	<input type="checkbox"/> Revision	

* 3. Date Received:	4. Applicant Identifier:
5/4/2010	

5a. Federal Entity Identifier:	* 5b. Federal Award Identifier:
	NA

**State Use Only:**

6. Date Received by State:	7. State Application Identifier:

**8. APPLICANT INFORMATION:**

\* a. Legal Name: Colorado Department of Education, Schools of Choice Unit

* b. Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):	* c. Organizational DUNS:
840644739	152196168

**d. Address:**

* Street1:	201 East Colfax Avenue, Room #300
Street2:	
* City:	Denver
County:	Denver
State:	CO
Province:	
* Country:	USA
* Zip / Postal Code:	80203

**e. Organizational Unit:**

Department Name:	Division Name:
Colorado Departement of Education	Schools of Choice

**f. Name and contact information of person to be contacted on matters involving this application:**

Prefix:	Mrs.	* First Name:	Denise
Middle Name:			

\* Last Name: Mund

Suffix:

Title: Principal Consultant

Organizational Affiliation:

\* Telephone Number: (303)866-6740

Fax Number: (303)866-4739

\* Email: MUND\_D@CDE.STATE.CO.US

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

Version 02

**9. Type of Applicant 1: Select Applicant Type:**

A: State Government

Type of Applicant 2: Select Applicant Type:

Type of Applicant 3: Select Applicant Type:

\* Other (specify):

**10. Name of Federal Agency:**

U.S. Department of Education

**11. Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:**

84.282A

CFDA Title:

Charter Schools Program State Educational Agency

**\* 12. Funding Opportunity Number:**

ED-GRANTS-032310-002

Title:

Office of Innovation and Improvement: Charter Schools Program (CSP): State Educational Agencies CFDA 84.282A

**13. Competition Identification Number:**

Title:

**14. Areas Affected by Project (Cities, Counties, States, etc.):**

**\* 15. Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project:**

Colorado Public Charter Schools Startup and Implementation Grant Program

Attach supporting documents as specified in agency instructions.

**Attachment:**

Title :

File :

**Attachment:**

Title :

File :

**Attachment:**

Title :

File :

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

Version 02

**16. Congressional Districts Of:**

\* a. Applicant: CO-all

\* b. Program/Project: CO-all

Attach an additional list of Program/Project Congressional Districts if needed.

**Attachment:**

Title :

File :

**17. Proposed Project:**

\* a. Start Date: 7/1/2010

\* b. End Date: 6/30/2015

**18. Estimated Funding (\$):**

a. Federal	\$ 47262082
b. Applicant	\$ 0
c. State	\$ 0
d. Local	\$ 0
e. Other	\$ 0
f. Program	\$ 0
Income	
g. TOTAL	\$ 47262082

**\* 19. Is Application Subject to Review By State Under Executive Order 12372 Process?**

☐ a. This application was made available to the State under the Executive Order 12372 Process for review on .

☐ b. Program is subject to E.O. 12372 but has not been selected by the State for review.

☒ c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372.

**\* 20. Is the Applicant Delinquent On Any Federal Debt? (If "Yes", provide explanation.)**

☐ Yes ☒ No

**21. \*By signing this application, I certify (1) to the statements contained in the list of certifications\*\* and (2) that the statements herein are true, complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I also provide the required assurances\*\* and agree to comply with any resulting terms if I accept an award. I am aware that any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or claims may subject me to criminal, civil, or administrative penalties. (U.S. Code, Title 218, Section 1001)**

**☒ \*\* I AGREE**

\*\* The list of certifications and assurances, or an internet site where you may obtain this list, is contained in the announcement or agency specific instructions.

**Authorized Representative:**

Prefix: Mr. \* First Name: Dwight  
Middle Name: D  
\* Last Name: Jones  
Suffix:

Title: Commissioner of Education

\* Telephone Number: (303)866-6646 Fax Number: (303)830-0793

\* Email: JONES\_D@CDE.STATE.CO.US

\* Signature of Authorized Representative: \* Date Signed:

**Application for Federal Assistance SF-424**

Version 02

**\* Applicant Federal Debt Delinquency Explanation**

The following field should contain an explanation if the Applicant organization is delinquent on any Federal Debt. Maximum number of characters that can be entered is 4,000. Try and avoid extra spaces and carriage returns to maximize the availability of space.



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

**BUDGET INFORMATION**

**NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Control Number: 1894-0008

Expiration Date: 02/28/2011

Name of Institution/Organization:  
Colorado Department of Education...

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION A - BUDGET SUMMARY**  
**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1(a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	\$ 236,772	\$ 243,875	\$ 251,191	\$ 258,727	\$ 266,489	\$ 1,257,054
2. Fringe Benefits	\$ 49,722	\$ 51,214	\$ 52,750	\$ 54,333	\$ 55,963	\$ 263,982
3. Travel	\$ 15,000	\$ 17,500	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 19,000	\$ 89,500
4. Equipment	\$ 4,900	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 12,900
5. Supplies	\$ 1,750	\$ 2,200	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 12,950
6. Contractual	\$ 41,934	\$ 48,128	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 360,062
7. Construction	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
8. Other	\$ 7,230,794	\$ 8,508,691	\$ 9,760,026	\$ 9,760,026	\$ 9,760,026	\$ 45,019,563
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	\$ 7,580,872	\$ 8,873,608	\$ 10,177,967	\$ 10,187,086	\$ 10,196,478	\$ 47,016,011
10. Indirect Costs*	\$ 24,310	\$ 49,869	\$ 57,297	\$ 57,297	\$ 57,297	\$ 246,070
11. Training Stipends	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	\$ 7,605,182	\$ 8,923,477	\$ 10,235,264	\$ 10,244,383	\$ 10,253,775	\$ 47,262,081

**\*Indirect Cost Information (To Be Completed by Your Business Office):**

If you are requesting reimbursement for indirect costs on line 10, please answer the following questions:

(1) Do you have an Indirect Cost Rate Agreement approved by the Federal government? ☒ Yes ☐ No

(2) If yes, please provide the following information:

Period Covered by the Indirect Cost Rate Agreement: From: 7/1/2010 To: 6/30/2011 (mm/dd/yyyy)

Approving Federal agency: ☒ ED ☐ Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_ The Indirect Cost Rate is 11.2%

(3) For Restricted Rate Programs (check one) -- Are you using a restricted indirect cost rate that:

☒ Is included in your approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement? or, ☐ Complies with 34 CFR 76.564(c)(2)? The Restricted Indirect Cost Rate is 0%

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION****BUDGET INFORMATION****NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS**

OMB Control Number: 1894-0008

Expiration Date: 02/28/2011

Name of Institution/Organization:  
Colorado Department of Education...

Applicants requesting funding for only one year should complete the column under "Project Year 1." Applicants requesting funding for multi-year grants should complete all applicable columns. Please read all instructions before completing form.

**SECTION B - BUDGET SUMMARY****NON-FEDERAL FUNDS**

Budget Categories	Project Year 1(a)	Project Year 2 (b)	Project Year 3 (c)	Project Year 4 (d)	Project Year 5 (e)	Total (f)
1. Personnel	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
2. Fringe Benefits	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
3. Travel	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
4. Equipment	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
5. Supplies	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
6. Contractual	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
7. Construction	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
8. Other	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
10. Indirect Costs	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
11. Training Stipends	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
12. Total Costs (lines 9-11)	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0



## ASSURANCES - NON-CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMS

Standard Form 424B (Rev.7-97)

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0348-0040), Washington DC 20503.

**PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO THE OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET. SEND IT TO THE ADDRESS PROVIDED BY THE SPONSORING AGENCY.**

**NOTE:** Certain of these assurances may not be applicable to your project or program. If you have questions, please contact the awarding agency. Further, certain Federal awarding agencies may require applicants to certify to additional assurances. If such is the case, you will be notified.

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant:

1. Has the legal authority to apply for Federal assistance, and the institutional, managerial and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the non-Federal share of project cost) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in this application.
2. Will give the awarding agency, the Comptroller General of the United States, and if appropriate, the State, through any authorized representative, access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers, or documents related to the award; and will establish a proper accounting system in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards or agency directives.
3. Will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that constitutes or presents the appearance of personal or organizational conflict of interest, or personal gain.
4. Will initiate and complete the work within the applicable time frame after receipt of approval of the awarding agency.
5. Will comply with the Intergovernmental Personnel Act of 1970 (42 U.S.C. "4728-4763) relating to prescribed standards for merit systems for programs funded under one of the 19 statutes or regulations specified in Appendix A of OPM's Standards for a Merit System of Personnel Administration (5 C.F.R. 900, Subpart F).
6. Will comply with all Federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. "1681-1683, and 1685-1686), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. '794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of handicaps; (d) the Age Discrimination Act
9. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Davis-Bacon Act (40 U.S.C. "276a to 276a-7), the Copeland Act (40 U.S.C. '276c and 18 U.S.C. "874) and the Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act (40 U.S.C. " 327-333), regarding labor standards for federally assisted construction sub-agreements.
10. Will comply, if applicable, with flood insurance purchase requirements of Section 102(a) of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973 (P.L. 93-234) which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.
11. Will comply with environmental standards which may be prescribed pursuant to the following: (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (P.L. 91-190) and Executive Order (EO) 11514; (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to EO 11738; (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to EO 11990; (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with EO 11988; (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved State management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. "1451 et seq.); (f) conformity of Federal actions to State (Clear Air) Implementation Plans under Section 176(c) of the Clear Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. "7401 et seq.); (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended, (P.L. 93-523); and (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, (P.L. 93-205).
12. Will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (16 U.S.C. "1721 et seq.) related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.
13. Will assist the awarding agency in assuring compliance

of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. " 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) the Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) the Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) " 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. " 290 dd-3 and 290 ee 3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. ' 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the specific statute(s) under which application for Federal assistance is being made; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.

7. Will comply, or has already complied, with the requirements of Titles II and III of the uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-646) which provide for fair and equitable treatment of persons displaced or whose property is acquired as a result of Federal or federally assisted programs. These requirements apply to all interests in real property acquired for project purposes regardless of Federal participation in purchases.
8. Will comply, as applicable, with the provisions of the Hatch Act (5 U.S.C. "1501-1508 and 7324-7328) which limit the political activities of employees whose principal employment activities are funded in whole or in part with Federal funds.

with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. '470), EO 11593 (identification and protection of historic properties), and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. "469a-1 et seq.).

14. Will comply with P.L. 93-348 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.
15. Will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966 (P.L. 89-544, as amended, 7 U.S.C. "2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.
16. Will comply with the Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act (42 U.S.C. "4801 et seq.) which prohibits the use of lead- based paint in construction or rehabilitation of residence structures.
17. Will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."
18. Will comply with all applicable requirements of all other Federal laws, executive orders, regulations and policies governing this program.

<b>Signature of Authorized Certifying Representative:</b>
<b>Name of Authorized Certifying Representative:</b> Dwight D. Jones
<b>Title:</b> Commissioner of Education
<b>Date Submitted:</b> 04/20/2010

## Disclosure of Lobbying Activities

Complete this form to disclose lobbying activities pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352

<b>1. Type of Federal Action:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Contract <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grant <input type="checkbox"/> Cooperative Agreement <input type="checkbox"/> Loan <input type="checkbox"/> Loan Guarantee <input type="checkbox"/> Loan Insurance	<b>2. Status of Federal Action:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bid/Offer/Application <input type="checkbox"/> Initial Award <input type="checkbox"/> Post-Award	<b>3. Report Type:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initial Filing <input type="checkbox"/> Material Change <b>For Material Change only:</b> Year: 0Quarter: 0 Date of Last Report:
<b>4. Name and Address of Reporting Entity:</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prime <input type="checkbox"/> Subawardee Tier, if known: 0 Name: Colorado Department of Education Address: 201 East Colfax Avenue City: Denver State: CO Zip Code + 4: 80203-1799  <b>Congressional District, if known: 01</b>	<b>5. If Reporting Entity in No. 4 is a Subawardee, Enter Name and Address of Prime:</b>  Name: Address: City: State: Zip Code + 4: -  <b>Congressional District, if known:</b>	
<b>6. Federal Department/Agency:</b> Office of Innovation and Improvement	<b>7. Federal Program Name/Description:</b> Charter School Program  CFDA Number, if applicable: 84.282A	
<b>8. Federal Action Number, if known:</b>	<b>9. Award Amount, if known:</b> \$0	
<b>10. a. Name of Lobbying Registrant</b> (if individual, last name, first name, MI): NA Address: City: State: Zip Code + 4: -	<b>b. Individuals Performing Services</b> (including address if different from No. 10a) (last name, first name, MI): NA Address: City: State: Zip Code + 4: -	
<b>11.</b> Information requested through this form is authorized by title 31 U.S.C. section 1352. This disclosure of lobbying activities is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed by the tier above when this transaction was made or entered into. This disclosure is required pursuant to 31 U.S.C. 1352. This information will be reported to the Congress semi-annually and will be available for public inspection. Any person who fails to file the required disclosure shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.	Name: Dwight D. Jones Title: Commissioner of Education Applicant: Colorado Department of Education, Schools of Choice Unit Date: 05/06/2010	
<b>Federal Use Only:</b>		Authorized for Local Reproduction Standard Form LLL (Rev. 7-97)

## CERTIFICATION REGARDING LOBBYING

Certification for Contracts, Grants, Loans, and Cooperative Agreements.

The undersigned certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

(1) No Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid, by or on behalf of the undersigned, to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of any Federal contract, the making of any Federal grant, the making of any Federal Loan, the entering into of any cooperative agreement, and the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of any Federal contract, grant, loan or cooperative agreement.

(2) If any funds other than Federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this Federal contract, grant, loan or cooperative agreement, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form - LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions.

(3) The undersigned shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly. This certification is a material representation of fact upon which reliance was placed when this transaction was made or entered into. Submission of this certification is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required certification shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

Statement for Loan Guarantees and Loan Insurance.

The undersigned states, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

If any funds have been paid or will be paid to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee or any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with this commitment providing for the United States to insure or guarantee a loan, the undersigned shall complete and submit Standard Form-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions. Submission of this statement is a prerequisite for making or entering into this transaction imposed by section 1352, title 31, U.S. Code. Any person who fails to file the required statement shall be subject to a civil penalty of not less than \$10,000 and not more than \$100,000 for each such failure.

### APPLICANT'S ORGANIZATION

Colorado Department of Education, Schools of Choice  
Unit

### PRINTED NAME AND TITLE OF AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE

Prefix: Mr.      First Name: Dwight      Middle Name: D  
Last Name: Jones      Suffix:  
Title: Commissioner of Education

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 05/06/2010

ED 80-0013

03/04

## Section 427 of GEPA

### NOTICE TO ALL APPLICANTS

The purpose of this enclosure is to inform you about a new provision in the Department of Education's General Education Provisions Act (GEPA) that applies to applicants for new grant awards under Department programs. This provision is Section 427 of GEPA, enacted as part of the Improving America's Schools Act of 1994 (Public Law (P. L.) 103-382).

#### **To Whom Does This Provision Apply?**

Section 427 of GEPA affects applicants for new grant awards under this program. **ALL APPLICANTS FOR NEW AWARDS MUST INCLUDE INFORMATION IN THEIR APPLICATIONS TO ADDRESS THIS NEW PROVISION IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUNDING UNDER THIS PROGRAM.**

(If this program is a State-formula grant program, a State needs to provide this description only for projects or activities that it carries out with funds reserved for State-level uses. In addition, local school districts or other eligible applicants that apply to the State for funding need to provide this description in their applications to the State for funding. The State would be responsible for ensuring that the school district or other local entity has submitted a sufficient section 427 statement as described below.)

#### **What Does This Provision Require?**

Section 427 requires each applicant for funds (other than an individual person) to include in its application a description of the steps the applicant proposes to take to ensure equitable access to, and participation in, its Federally-assisted program for students, teachers, and other program beneficiaries with special needs. This provision allows applicants discretion in developing the required description. The statute highlights six types of barriers that can impede equitable access or participation: gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. Based on local circumstances, you should determine whether these or other barriers may prevent your students, teachers, etc. from such access or participation in, the Federally-funded project or activity. The description in your application of steps to be taken to overcome these barriers need not be lengthy; you may provide a clear and succinct

description of how you plan to address those barriers that are applicable to your circumstances. In addition, the information may be provided in a single narrative, or, if appropriate, may be discussed in connection with related topics in the application.

Section 427 is not intended to duplicate the requirements of civil rights statutes, but rather to ensure that, in designing their projects, applicants for Federal funds address equity concerns that may affect the ability of certain potential beneficiaries to fully participate in the project and to achieve to high standards. Consistent with program requirements and its approved application, an applicant may use the Federal funds awarded to it to eliminate barriers it identifies.

#### **What are Examples of How an Applicant Might Satisfy the Requirement of This Provision?**

The following examples may help illustrate how an applicant may comply with Section 427.

- (1) An applicant that proposes to carry out an adult literacy project serving, among others, adults with limited English proficiency, might describe in its application how it intends to distribute a brochure about the proposed project to such potential participants in their native language.
- (2) An applicant that proposes to develop instructional materials for classroom use might describe how it will make the materials available on audio tape or in braille for students who are blind.
- (3) An applicant that proposes to carry out a model science program for secondary students and is concerned that girls may be less likely than boys to enroll in the course, might indicate how it intends to conduct "outreach" efforts to girls, to encourage their enrollment.

We recognize that many applicants may already be implementing effective steps to ensure equity of access and participation in their grant programs, and we appreciate your cooperation in responding to the requirements of this provision.

### **Estimated Burden Statement for GEPA Requirements**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is **1894-0005**. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1.5 hours per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. **If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to:** U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20202-4537.

Applicants should use this section to address the GEPA provision.

**Attachment:**

Title : Application - GEPA Requirements

File : J:\PCSP 2010-15\2010 Application\Application - GEPA Requirements.pdf

## **GEPA REQUIREMENTS, SECTION 427**

Federal funding from the Charter School Grant Program is used for salaries and benefits of at-will and classified staff. These federal funds are also used to provide presenters for staff development, purchased services staff as needed and/or consultants. CDE does not discriminate on hiring staff or utilizing presenters and/or consultants. There is no discrimination due to gender, race, national origin, color, disability or age toward any employee of CDE.

CDE policy prohibits discrimination against any person, charter school, public school, Local Education Agency (LEA) or Board of Cooperative Education Service (BOCES). At no time will CDE discriminate against any person, charter school, public school, LEA or BOCES because of gender, race, creed, national origin, color, disability or age.

Materials and equipment, staff development, and other related programs or services needed to implement and maintain our programs are not used nor are they purchased with any knowledge of discrimination.

CDE makes every reasonable attempt to make its programs and facilities available to all people regardless of gender, race, national origin, color, disability, or age. In conjunction with the proposed grant projects, CDE foresees no physical barriers, as all facilities used are ADA compliant.

CDE will make every reasonable attempt that all charter schools applying for Federal Charter School Grant Funds include in their Request for Proposal the applicable GEPA requirements.

All programs with regard to all circumstances within our administrative unit prohibit the use of discrimination at all times for both students and staff.

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION  
REQUIRED FOR  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION GRANTS**

**1. Project Director:**

Prefix: \* First Name: Middle Name: \* Last Name: Suffix:  
Mrs. Denise Mund

Address:

\* Street1: 201 East Cofax Ave, Room 300  
Street2:  
\* City: Denver  
County: Denver  
\* State: CO\* Zip / Postal Code: 80203 \* Country: USA

\* Phone Number (give area code) Fax Number (give area code)  
(303)866-6740 (303)866-4739

Email Address:

MUND\_D@CDE.STATE.CO.US

**2. Applicant Experience**

Novice Applicant ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Not applicable

**3. Human Subjects Research**

Are any research activities involving human subjects planned at any time during the proposed project period?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Are ALL the research activities proposed designated to be exempt from the regulations?

☒ Yes Provide Exemption(s) #: 1, 2, 4, 5

☐ No Provide Assurance #, if available:

**Please attach an explanation Narrative:**

**Attachment:**

Title : Application - 424 S - Human Subjects

File : J:\PCSP 2010-15\2010 Application\Application - 424 S - Human Subjects.pdf





## **Exempt Human Subjects Research Narrative**

The research and evaluation components described in this grant proposal qualify as exempt under “Protection Of Human Subjects In Research” I.B.(1)(2)(4) and (5). First, all of the research and evaluation components will be “conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices.” Human subjects will not be placed in contrived or laboratory settings or subjected to unique, unusual, or novel treatments beyond routine or normal educational practices. Second, the research and evaluation components will involve the use of educational tests, surveys, interviews, and observations, but in all of these measurements data will be shielded to protect the identities of subjects, from the data collection phase to reporting. Third, many of the data that will be used in the research and evaluation components are publicly available through the state department of education. Finally, the research and evaluation projects will be subject to the approval of state department or agency heads and are designed to study and evaluate the public benefit of the programs described herein; the procedures for obtaining benefits under those programs; and possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures for the benefit of education in Colorado. In short, we anticipate no physical, emotional, or psychological harm to the participants, no risk of criminal or civil liability as a result of the research and evaluation in this application, and no damage to the subjects’ financial standing, employability, or reputation.

# Project Narrative

## Abstract Attachment Form

Attachment 1:

Title: **Application - Abstract.PDF** Pages: **1** Uploaded File: **J:\PCSP 2010-15\2010 Application\Application - Abstract.pdf**

## Colorado Department of Education

Over the past 15 years, the Charter School Program (CSP) has played a significant role in the creation of high quality charter schools that assist educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve state academic content standards and state student academic achievement standards. While we are pleased with the progress the state has made in creating a robust charter school sector of approximately 150 schools, we are determined to increase the number of high quality charter schools and take existing charter schools to a new level of excellence.

While we are encouraged by the progress our state has made in terms of previous grant results, we remain sobered by the need for more high quality education options for Colorado's school children. Despite an upward trend in math and reading achievement on the National Assessment of Educational Progress over the past decade, 16% of Colorado fourth graders are not proficient in math and 28% lack proficiency in reading. Clearly we must do more.

In addition to administering a well designed sub-grant program, CDE is working with its partners, the Colorado League of Charter Schools (The League), reform-minded districts and the Charter School Institute (CSI) at an unprecedented level to disseminate best practices, standardize contract and application processes, encourage quality replication, and provide technical assistance to charter school leaders, administrators, and instructional staff members.

The need is great and with the support of CSP funds, we can make a significant contribution to the education of our students. The goal of this grant is to support the creation and continuous improvement of high quality charter schools that assist educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve academic content and achievement standards. To meet this goal, we have two specific objectives:

**Objective 1: Increase the number of new high quality charter schools that enable all students to achieve state content standards, graduate from high school and enter college or a career with the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed.** To meet this objective, CDE will conduct a sub-grant program providing start-up and implementation grants to new charter school applicants. CDE, in collaboration with The League and the CSI, will increase the number of new high quality charter schools. CDE estimates the following number of 16-18 start-up sub-grants will be awarded each year and 22-35 implementation sub-grants. Sub-grantee schools will receive abundant training and technical assistance to help them build a strong foundation.

**Objective 2: Build capacity among authorizers, board members, administrators, and teachers at new and existing charter schools to conduct quality authorizing, exert effective school leadership, and engage in high-impact teaching so that students will achieve state content standards, graduate from high school and enter college or a career with the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed.** In addition to the sub-grant program, CDE will use CSP administrative funds together with state funds to build capacity in all of the state's charter schools (new and established schools) to help them raise achievement and enable all students to make progress toward meeting state standards. This objective includes the following activities: resource development; trainings, seminars, and luncheons; reporting; and research studies.

The CSP grant will be managed by an experienced director and highly qualified staff and consultants. CDE has secured an agreement with an outside evaluator who will pursue the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data annually. Information will be used for reporting and continuous improvement purposes.

# Project Narrative

## Application Narrative Attachment Form

Attachment 1:

Title: **Application - Narrative FINAL.PDF** Pages: **60** Uploaded File: **J:\PCSP 2010-15\2010 Application\Application - Narrative FINAL.pdf**

## Table of Contents

I.	Priority Preference	
a.	Priority 1.....	2
b.	Priority 2.....	3
c.	Priority 3.....	4
d.	Priority 4.....	5
e.	Invitational Priority.....	5
II.	Application Requirements	
a.	Objectives of the SEA’s Grant Program.....	7
b.	Communicating Federal Fund Eligibility.....	7
c.	Ensuring Federal Program Funds.....	8
d.	Disseminating Best Practices.....	8
e.	Revolving Loan Fund.....	9
f.	Waiver Request.....	9
g.	IDEA Compliance.....	10
III.	Selection Criteria	
a.	Academic Content Standards.....	11
b.	Degree of Flexibility.....	38
c.	Number of High-quality Charter Schools.....	40
d.	Management Plan.....	41
e.	Authorizer Support.....	55
f.	Dissemination Activities.....	56
g.	Evaluation Plan.....	56

## **I. Priority Preference**

### *(a) Priority 1--Periodic Review and Evaluation (10 points).*

In Colorado, charter schools are evaluated and reviewed by their authorizer, school districts or the Charter School Institute (CSI), every three to five years depending on the terms of the charter school's contract to determine whether the charter school is meeting its operational, fiscal and academic achievement goals as defined by the charter contract. The charter renewal process is part of the state's overall accountability framework established in the Colorado's Education Accountability Act of 2009.

According to the law, the State Board of Education accredits school districts and the CSI, which in turn accredit schools, including charter schools. The new accreditation process contains four main areas of focus: academic achievement as measured by the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP), student academic growth as measured by the Colorado Growth Model, closing achievement gaps (for low income, minority, special education, and non-proficient students), and post secondary readiness as measured by the ACT college entrance exam, graduation rates, and drop-out rates. Auxiliary areas include CSAP test participation, finance and safety. The state anticipates significant changes to the CSAP test during the 2011-2012 school year in response to the adoption of new state model content standards.

The Colorado Growth Model is a statistical model which calculates each student's progress on state assessments. On the CDE web site, parents can examine the growth and achievement results for districts, schools, and student subgroups from the past three school years. This tool, called School View, provides parents with direct access to evaluative data on school performance. The Colorado Growth Model and School View are in direct alignment with the US Secretary of Education's expectations outlined in the *Blueprint for Reform*.

State law requires a triennial report on the state of charter schools in Colorado. Detail on this report is provided under selection criteria (i).

(b) *Priority 2--Number of High-Quality Charter Schools (10 points).*

**Number of Charter Schools Open Each Year**

2000-2001	79
2001-2002	86
2002-2003	91
2003-2004	94
2004-2005	105
2005-2006	117
2006-2007	127
2007-2008	131
2008-2009	138
2009-2010	150

Colorado has substantially increased the number of high-quality charter schools over the past 10 years. In Colorado's round one Race to the Top application, the charter schools section received a score of 40 points out of a possible 40. This demonstrates not only the responsible and managed growth of the charter movement in Colorado, but also the alignment of state and federal objectives in school choice. Managed growth includes incentives for creating high performing charter schools and the closure of underperforming and financially failing schools.

During the 2009-2010 school year, 150 charter schools operated in the state of Colorado. These schools served 67,538 students, an increase of 19% from the total number of students (56,772) served in the fall of 2007 (beginning of the previous CSP grant period). Charter school enrollment this year represented 8.11% of the total public school enrollment. If all of the charter schools were combined into an imaginary district, the enrollment of that district would be the third largest in the state. According to the state's most recent survey, a majority of charter schools have a waitlist.

Colorado charter students are achieving high levels of academic achievement and growth. Comparisons of academic growth among students with similar demographics show positive



trends. Charter and non-charter school students performed similarly on the CSAP reading assessment in the elementary grades. In grades 6, 7 and 8, charter students tended to show greater percentages of proficient or advanced, a trend that reversed in the high school grades. Median growth percentile scores indicate non-charter students tended to show greater growth in the elementary grades in reading, but beginning in 7th grade, the pattern grew more mixed.

Charter students in elementary and middle school grades showed higher rates proficiency rates than traditional public school students. Charter schools had lower proficiency rates among low-income students compared to traditional public schools. However, growth scores were mixed throughout the grades.

Although charter schools, in general, are serving students well, some are struggling. CDE, the Colorado League of Charter Schools and authorizers provide evaluation, technical assistance and other services, to these schools. Charter schools that are unable to improve are closed down. Twenty-one charter schools in Colorado have closed since 1998.

*(c) Priority 3--One Authorized Public Chartering Agency Other than a Local Educational Agency (LEA), or an Appeals Process (10 points).*

The state of Colorado has both a strong appeals process and a second authorizer, the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI). Twenty-six charter schools have opened due to the appeals process and only one of those has since closed. In addition, there has been a significant reduction in the number of appeals in recent years due to the implementation of a standard application and increased technical assistance for authorizers. The CSI, authorized by the state Assembly in 2004, is increasing the number of high quality charter schools in the state. There are currently 19 schools authorized by the CSI with two more opening in the fall of 2010. The CSI will be closing one school at the end of the 2009-10 school year as a result of poor academic performance. CSI has developed a transparent reauthorization plan based on student achievement

data, a site review process that complements the Charter School Support report, and regular “dashboard” reports. Additional detail is provided in selection criteria (i) and (ii).

*(d) Priority 4--High Degree of Autonomy (10 points).*

Colorado charter schools have a very high degree of autonomy. Each school is responsible for its own operations, including preparation of budgets, curriculum, instructional programs, contracting for services, facilities and personnel matters. Districts must give charter schools 100 percent of their per pupil funding, and may retain up to 5% for administrative activities. For more information see selection criteria (ii).

*(e) Invitational Priority: High-Quality Charter Schools in Urban or Rural Areas:*

The state of Colorado meets this invitational priority in three ways: 1) the state has begun to engage in charter turnaround efforts, 2) Denver Public Schools (DPS), the state’s largest urban district, has embraced charter schools, particularly replication of successful models, as a means to boost district achievement, and 3) in the past five years, school districts and Colorado’s statewide authorizer (CSI) have successfully authorized schools in the state’s underserved rural mountain and plains regions.

1) Turnaround efforts: In 2009, the state identified three DPS charter schools for turnaround under Title I. Two of those schools will be closed; one will follow a turnaround model using the assistance of a Charter Management Organization (CMO). This school will replace the school leadership and a large percentage of the instructional staff, while the children remain enrolled. In addition, the Brighton School District (north Denver) has identified one charter school for closure at the end of the 2009-2010 school year to be reopened with the assistance of a CMO in the fall of 2010 under a new charter contract.

CDE will continue to provide technical assistance to the CMOs and school districts throughout the process. CDE is proposing that CSP funds be used to conduct a case study of the

DPS turnaround effort (see selection criteria (i)). As the project progresses, the department will use the information to increase capacity among charter school administrators to meet the challenges of turnaround projects. CDE will disseminate best practice information through the leadership mentoring program and the administrative support systems (see selection criteria (i)). These mentoring programs are in concert with the state's initiative to provide leadership academies that develop high quality school leaders. CDE anticipates providing ongoing support for administrators as additional charter schools are targeted for turnaround. The Colorado League of Charter Schools (The League) received Title I funding for school improvement to work with seven of the lowest performing charter schools. CDE will collaborate with The League to best leverage funding for these schools.

2) Urban charter schools: In Colorado's CSP Monitoring report, WestEd stated that Colorado "has taken steps, to the extent possible, to award sub-grants such that they are distributed throughout the state and to assist charter schools representing a variety of educational approaches." Denver Public Schools (DPS), the state's largest urban school district, has aggressively solicited charter school applications to address high need areas of the district. DPS created a new Request for Proposal (RFP) process upon the recommendations of a National Association of Charter School Authorizer's (NACSA) review. In the last 12 months, DPS has either opened or approved applications for several replication charter schools to broaden choice within the district's portfolio of schools.

3) Like most states, the majority of Colorado's charter schools have historically existed along the populous Front Range. In the past eight years, however, the state has significantly increased the number of rural charter schools on the eastern plains and western slope.

## II. Application Requirements

- (i) *Describe the objectives of the SEA's charter school grant program and how these objectives will be fulfilled, including steps taken by the SEA to inform teachers, parents, and communities of the SEA's charter school grant program;*

See selection criteria (i) and (iv) for the program objectives and management plan. Under the past grant, during the CSP Monitoring report, WestEd analysts determined that Colorado fully meets this requirement. Objectives in this application build upon successful programs under the previous grant.

- (ii) *Describe how the SEA will inform each charter school in the State about Federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and Federal programs in which the charter school may participate;*

To ensure that school administrators, educators, parents, and community organizations know about the sub-grant program and other activities funded by federal and state funds, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) uses multiple methods for information distribution. The CDE Schools of Choice Unit utilizes an email distribution list that has approximately 650 email addresses for communicating with school administrators, board members, parents, charter school developers, and other individuals interested in charter school issues. On a weekly basis, ListServ participants receive information on federal, state, local and private funding opportunities, upcoming conferences, meetings, seminars, new research, legislative changes, and other resources. CDE will inform everyone on the ListServ of the activities supported by this grant. The information will also be featured prominently on CDE's web site, in charter school trainings, on the "Start a Colorado Charter" web site, and through one-on-one technical assistance. Updates will also be announced in "The Scoop", CDE's regular newsletter distributed to superintendents and district staff state-wide. The Schools of Choice Unit holds semi-monthly professional development opportunities for charter school Business Managers and an annual Finance Seminar. Information on federal program funds is routinely provided at these trainings.

*(iii) Describe how the SEA will ensure that each charter school in the State receives the school's commensurate share of Federal education funds that are allocated by formula each year, including during the first year of operation of the school and a year in which the school's enrollment expands significantly;*

In addition to the sub-grant program and the array of services that the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) provides are described further in selection criteria (i) and (iii). The Schools of Choice Unit at CDE has commissioned a report on Special Education finance in charter schools (see application requirement (vii)). Results of this study are anticipated to be released in the summer of 2010.

*(iv) Describe how the SEA will disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the State;*

CDE is committed to disseminating the best practices developed through federal and state funded activities. Presently the CDE web site provides an extensive online library of materials, sample documents, research studies, and handbooks used in high performing Colorado charter schools. (See Appendix G.) CDE plans to augment and expand the materials and resources provided on the web site (see selection criteria (i) for more information). As new material and research results become available they are distributed via email, training, and other venues.

CDE is collaborating with The Colorado League of Charter Schools (The League) and with the Charter School Institute (CSI) to provide resources and support activities specifically for charter authorizers in the state (see selection criteria (i)). The League, as a membership organization, draws a significant number of schools and authorizers to training events and their annual conference where CDE staff participates as presenters. The CSI, statutorily designed to be a model authorizer, works closely with the program staff at CDE to disseminate best practices to the 42 school districts that have authorized charter schools. In addition, representatives from CDE have presented alongside representatives from The League and CSI at several statewide

conferences, including the Colorado Association of School Business Officials (CASBO). (See Appendix H for letters of support from The League and CSI.)

Under selection criteria (i), there is a thorough description of Colorado's Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI) process which is used as an evaluative tool for school self-improvement. The final CSSI reports are one means by which CDE distributes best practices to schools and their authorizers. CDE provides technical assistance to authorizers when interpreting the reports.

*(v) If an SEA elects to reserve part of its grant funds (no more than 10 percent) for the establishment of a revolving loan fund, describe how the revolving loan fund would operate;*

Colorado will not reserve funding for a revolving loan fund.

*(vi) If an SEA desires the Secretary to consider waivers under the authority of the CSP, include a request and justification for any waiver of statutory or regulatory provisions that the SEA believes is necessary for the successful operation of charter schools in the State;*

Colorado is seeking a waiver from Section 5202(c)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (Title V, Part B, Subpart 1) as reauthorized, which currently limits the CSP program period to 36 months. Colorado is seeking an extended project period of 60 months in order to effectively complete the proposed objectives of this grant application. CDE is proposing an aggressive agenda for the five year grant period that includes research projects and training programs that will benefit from an extended period of focus and implementation. The sub-grant program will continue to be a 36 month program.

Colorado is seeking to continue a waiver from a portion of the Nonregulatory Guidance allowed under the previous grant that is an impediment to the success of Colorado charter schools. Specifically, another waiver is requested from section C, which deals with lottery requirements. We want to be able to allow our charter schools the opportunity to employ the best personnel by permitting teachers' children to supersede the lottery. In particular, we want to

allow teachers' children to have a priority preference not to exceed 10% of enrollment. Founding families in Colorado's charter schools already have a priority preference as long as the number of students does not exceed 10%. We want to continue the same priority preference for teachers' children, for a total of both categories not to exceed 20% of enrollment. Colorado charter schools report that it is an incentive to offer placement in the school for teachers' children that allows the school to hire the most capable teachers. Offering teachers the opportunity for their children to attend the charter school is especially important for our new schools receiving start-up or implementation grant funds. During the critical first years of a school's life when a reputation is established, a culture developed, and teachers are often working extended hours, is the most important time to be able to offer teachers' children priority. The Colorado League of Charter Schools and the Colorado Charter School Institute support the Colorado Department of Education's request for this waiver.

*(vii) Describe how charter schools that are considered to be LEAs under State law and LEAs in which charter schools are located will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(e)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.*

Colorado's charter schools are a part of their authorizing LEA and not their own LEA.

Charter schools receive funding and direct services through their authorizing LEA (a school district or the Charter School Institute). PL 108-446, 20 USC 1400 section 613(a)(5) requires that districts serve students with disabilities in charter schools in the same manner as it serves those in non-charter schools and provides funds to charter schools for special education on the basis as it funds non-public schools. Section 613(e)(1)(B) regards charter schools that are LEAs which does not apply to Colorado.

Colorado is considered a model for providing quality technical assistance to charter schools and their LEAs in regard to Special Education issues. As a part of the Charter School Grant Program, Schools of Choice Unit staff conducts a site visit of every school that receives a start-

up and/or implementation grant. During site visits, team members investigate compliance with state and federal Special Education law and examine school finances, including assurance that schools are receiving their commensurate share of funding (see selection criteria (i)).

CDE designates a charter school representative in the department's Exceptional Student Services Unit. Since 2002 the state has had a state advisory committee with representatives from school district special education directors, charter school administrators, charter school special education teachers, the state charter school association, CDE's Exceptional Student Services Unit, CDE's Schools of Choice Unit, the Office of Civil Rights and the state Charter School Institute. This committee has effectively addressed "hot topics" such as online education and excess costs and has designed technical assistance and resources for school district special education directors and charter school special education staff. (See Appendix G)

In March 2002, the Schools of Choice Unit first surveyed perceptions of how charter schools were providing and funding special education services. In 2007, a follow-up study was released. Both recommended that charter schools have a solid plan for special education in their contracts. CDE has commissioned a Special Education Finance Study; results of that study will be released in the summer of 2010. Early analysis suggests that special education dollars are more difficult to track than previously believed. At a minimum, the report will recommend new methods for accurately tracking special education dollars. The report will also inform legislators, district personnel, and the public of the unique challenges faced by charter schools in serving students with special needs.

### **III. Selection Criteria**

- (i) The contribution the charter schools grant program will make in assisting educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve State academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards (30 points).*



Over the past 15 years, the Charter School Program (CSP) in Colorado has played a significant role in the creation of high quality charter schools that assist educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve state academic content standards and state student academic achievement standards. In addition to awarding sub-grants to new and upcoming charter schools through a rigorous process, the state has utilized CSP grant funds to help new and established charter schools to improve through technical assistance, networking opportunities, training, evaluation, and dissemination of best practices. In June 2009, the Schools of Choice Unit at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) received a CSP monitoring visit from WestEd. WestEd is conducting monitoring visits to all states and schools receiving CSP funds to ensure grantees are implementing programs that meet the letter and the spirit of the law. WestEd rates each state on 23 indicators on a scale of 1-3 (“3” equals full compliance) in the following areas: (1) Sub-grant Application and Award Process; (2) Outreach, Guidance, and Technical Assistance; (3) State CSP Quality and Performance Assessment; (4) Sub-grantee Monitoring and Performance; (5) Administrative and Fiscal Responsibilities; and (6) Dissemination Sub-grant Applications and Awards. On its Monitoring Report, released June 5, 2009, the CDE Schools of Choice Unit received a rating of “3” on 20 of the indicators and a “2” on three indicators. The report shows that we are maximizing our CSP dollars to encourage the creation and continuous improvement of charter schools. (See report in Appendix I.)

While we are pleased with the progress the state has made in creating a robust charter school sector of approximately 150 schools, we are determined to increase the number of high quality charter schools and take existing charter schools to a new level of excellence. In the past year, the state has adopted new state accreditation requirements, a new growth model, new content standards, and a new school performance framework. A leader in the K-12 standards and

accountability movement, Colorado has had state model content standards in 13 disciplines since 1996. Last year, the State Board of Education and the General Assembly refined its K-12 standards and added early childhood, postsecondary and workforce readiness outcomes so that students will enter college or career with the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed. CDE is enhancing the Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP), the statewide testing system, to accurately measure student progress toward meeting the improved state standards. To more accurately measure student progress and achievement on these tests, the state adopted a statistical model that calculates each student's progress year-to-year on state assessments. CDE reports the results from the Growth Model on its web site so that parents, educators, policy leaders, and the public can view student, school and district information. These developments parallel the reform ideas of the federal Department of Education's Blueprint for Reform and other departmental priorities, such as Race to the Top.

To help charter schools meet and exceed these higher standards, CDE is working with its partners, The Colorado League of Charter Schools (The League), reform-minded districts and the Charter School Institute (CSI) at an unprecedented level to disseminate best practices, standardize contract and application processes, encourage quality replication, and provide technical assistance to charter school leaders, administrators, and instructional staff members.

While we are encouraged by the progress our state has made in terms of previous grant results, state changes to our accountability framework and the fruitfulness of our partnerships, we remain sobered by the need for more high quality education options for Colorado's school children. Despite an upward trend in math and reading achievement on the National Assessment of Educational Progress over the past decade, 16% of Colorado fourth graders are not proficient in math and 28% lack proficiency in reading. Nearly a quarter of eighth graders are struggling in

these subjects. The NAEP statistics for low income students are worse with nearly half of disadvantaged fourth graders below grade level and nearly a third behind in math. On state assessments, 86.9% of fourth and 88.5% of eighth graders are not proficient in reading. Twenty-eight percent do not graduate. The state's growing number of high quality charter schools cannot meet the demand; approximately twenty-four thousand students languish on waiting lists.

The need is great and with the support of CSP funds, we can make a significant contribution to the education of our students. The goal of this grant is to support the creation and continuous improvement of high quality charter schools that assist educationally disadvantaged and other students to achieve academic content and achievement standards. To meet this goal, we have two specific objectives:

**Objective 1: Increase the number of new high quality charter schools that enable all students to achieve state content standards, graduate from high school, and enter college or a career with the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed.**

CSP funds will be used to conduct the following activities in order to meet this objective: conduct a sub-grant program; provide support and training to sub-grantees; maintain the "Start a Colorado Charter" web site; and conduct the Charter School Support Initiative process.

### **SUB-GRANT PROGRAM**

To meet this objective, CDE will conduct a sub-grant program providing start-up and implementation grants to new charter school applicants. CDE, in collaboration with The League and the CSI, will increase the number of new high quality charter schools. CDE estimates the following number of sub-grants to be awarded:

- Start-up Grants (\$180,000 to \$200,000 per year)  
16 schools will receive start-up grants in FY 2010-2011,  
17 in FY 2011-2012,  
17 in FY 2012-2013

- 18 in FY 2013-2014\*, and
- 18 in FY 2014-2015\*.
- Implementation Grants (\$180,000 per year)
  - 22 will receive implementation grants in 2010-2011,
  - 27 in FY 2011-2012,
  - 33 in FY 2012-2013,
  - 34 in FY 2013-2014\*, and
  - 35 in FY 2014-2015\*.

\*note: seeking a waiver from 3 year limitation for a 5 year grant - ESEA 1965, Title V, Part B, Subpart 1, Sec. 5202 (c)(1) (see application requirement (vi))

CDE offers start-up and implementation grants. Schools may apply for and receive a start-up grant a year before opening. A school that successfully fulfills its goals under a start-up grant is eligible to apply for an implementation grant in year 2 and in year 3. Schools may receive grants for a total of three years.

Under previous federal grants, CDE developed and refined a rigorous Request for Proposal (RFP) for the start-up grant that encourages applicants to engage in intensive planning before opening their doors. Prior to submitting an application, applicants must submit information detailing their degree of autonomy, the identity of their board membership, and their lottery policy. The RFP also includes an emphasis on literacy; schools requesting funds for reading curriculum or professional development must demonstrate that they are supported by scientific research. Applicants must provide information on how they will recruit, identify and serve the needs of low income and at-risk students, and, if qualified for Title I funding, how student needs will be addressed. They must show how they meet the federal definition of a new charter school.

Every applicant must submit a data management plan to be updated annually along with the school's progress report/implementation grant request. If a school requests funds for professional development (board or staff), a library, or technology, it must provide a professional development plan, technology plan or library plan in the grant application. Further, all grant

applicants are required to submit their Accreditation Plan and a detailed description of the school's financial practices. The RFP (available online) includes samples of these plans.

To help applicants develop a high quality proposal and undergo effective school planning, we require at least one representative from each new applicant to attend a grant writer's training. CDE holds training twice a year, six to eight weeks prior to Tier I and II start-up grant deadlines (August/January). We accept applications twice a year to accommodate schools receiving their charters during the winter months. Implementation grant training, for year two and three schools, is also required and held once a year (August). Additionally, CDE's web site contains extensive information about the grant program, including links to a current grant calendar, a description of the grant program, a list of current sub-grantees, Non-Regulatory Guidance, EDGAR regulations, and other state and federal grant opportunities. The information, training, and criteria (including the scoring rubric) of the RFP itself ensures higher quality grant applications and increases the likelihood the application will be funded. CDE also assigns each applicant a grant consultant to review the application and provide feedback.

The process for awarding start-up grants is competitive to make certain only the highest quality proposals receive funding. Because of the rigor of the process, each year approximately 10-20% of the applications are rejected, most often due to inadequate preplanning. CDE conducts sub-grant reviews twice annually. Start-up grant proposals are due by the middle of October or February. Schools awarded start-up sub-grants must become operational the following school year.

CDE program staff reviews applications for adherence to assurances, budgetary restrictions, eligibility and compliance with formatting requirements to determine if they are in compliance with EDGAR and the basic requirements of the grant program. For content review and rubric

scoring, CDE draws from a pool of roughly 25 individuals with expertise and experience in charter school governance, finance, or leadership and grant reading. Reviewers serve without compensation and receive training in conflict of interest, review instructions, rubric and scoring guidelines, and application components. Each reviewer receives a copy of four to six grant applications approximately two weeks in advance of the review date. Reviewers use this time to individually evaluate the applications and develop preliminary scores. On the review date, teams of three grant reviewers discuss each application, scrutinizing each section and discussing any discrepancies in the individual scoring results. Rubric scoring data from all grant reviewers is used as the basis for comparison. Where there are significant scoring variances, the grant review team may turn to a fourth reviewer to make a final scoring determination.

To encourage applicants to prepare high quality applications, the highest scoring proposals will receive a “high potential school” designation. Such schools will receive higher funding awards and supplemental funding. We estimate that, at a minimum, 10% of applicants will receive this special designation.

While start-up grants are competitive in nature, implementation (continuation) grants are awarded based on satisfactory progress toward meeting grant project goals. Schools seeking grants are judged on the appropriateness of the proposed grant budget, student enrollment, need, student academic achievement, and progress made toward grant goals as outlined in the start-up application. In the Monitoring Report, WestEd analysts observed, “The state’s peer review process is rigorous and transparent. The state fully meets the indicator. There is substantial evidence that the state is effectively supporting the creation of high-quality charter schools through its grant application process. Furthermore, the state continues to monitor charter school quality to ensure the continuation of high-quality charter schools.”

Once awarded, all sub-grantees are monitored. They must provide an annual progress report, including academic achievement data. CDE provides technical assistance when reporting is insufficient or incomplete. The monitoring process includes a desk review during the start-up year, an onsite review with approximately 25 data collection points during year two of the grant, and a Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI) site visit during year three. (The CSSI process is discussed below in further detail.)

In Colorado, charter schools are not their own LEA. The charter school authorizer, therefore, acts as the fiscal agent for the sub-grant funds. Districts distribute funds on a reimbursement basis. They must transfer the full grant amount to the charter school and may not pose any indirect costs. This process is monitored through occasional internal system audits and regular monitoring visits conducted over the grant period.

### **SUPPORT AND TRAINING FOR SUBGRANTEES**

CDE places great value on providing support and training to sub-grantees as a means of ensuring high quality school programs. Content, target audiences, and delivery methods for training are based on the best practices identified in the “Standards and Indicators for Continuous School Improvement”, the evaluation tool used by the CSSI team, and the team’s observations from over 40 site visits. The sub-grantee training program is a subset of the full spectrum support and services provided through CDE and described in more detail under Objective 2.

Trainings for sub-grantees fall into three categories: “Required” mandatory trainings, trainings with “Expected” participation, and “Recommended” trainings. In addition to attending all Required trainings, sub-grantees may select from a menu of the Expected and Recommended trainings. (See Appendix E.) The following trainings were developed to address the specific needs of sub-grantee charter schools:

***Grant Writers' Training:*** All prospective sub-grant applicants must attend the "Required" Grant Writers' Training previously discussed in the description of the sub-grant program. At the end of the start-up grant training sessions, Intent to Submit forms are collected from participants as a means of tracking this requirement. If travel to the training session would present a hardship, applicants receive personal training and consultation over the phone and through email.

***Board Member Training and Certification:*** By the completion of their third year of sub-grant funding, all sub-grantee schools must participate in governing board training and ensure their board members are certified. The certification process is available to all charter schools in the state. The program is discussed in detail under Objective 2.

***Performance Management Training for Sub-grantees:*** Sub-grantees must attend Performance Management Training which is provided by The League in collaboration with CDE. Performance Management trainings are designed for targeted audiences, such as board members, administrators, or lead teachers, and are based the best practices identified in the "Standards and Indicators for Continuous School Improvement". The Performance Management trainings address topics such as curriculum alignment, standards based instruction and assessment, and data driven decision making. The League and CDE select and train consultants based on their demonstrated track record of success and expertise. In the grant application, sub-grantees must outline in which performance management trainings the sub-grantee wishes to participate in, and which staff members will attend. If the school will not be participating in any of the trainings, the sub-grantee must explain how those training needs will be met.

***Charter School Application Writers' Boot Camp:*** CDE, in collaboration with The League and CSI, provides a workshop for potential charter school developers, including interested parents, on the requirements of the charter school application process. In 2009, this workshop



was expanded to a three-day intensive examination of the application requirements, the Standard Application, Checklist, and Review Rubric (discussed below in more detail) and the state's accountability frameworks. Speakers at the event include authorizers, administrators, teachers, board members, and charter school founders who have demonstrated success in charter school best practices. While this training is not designated as a Required training for sub-grantee schools, the content of the training parallels and complements the department's sub-grant program. CDE includes this training on the list of Expected training opportunities for sub-grantees because a solid charter application lays the foundation for a high quality grant application. This workshop is held once per year, usually in June, in preparation for fall submission deadlines.

#### **“START A COLORADO CHARTER” WEB SITE**

The CSI, The League, and CDE have collaborated to create a web site to help potential charter school developers navigate the process of opening a new charter school in Colorado. The web site's charter application process flowchart guides individuals through the steps required to submit an application in user-friendly language. The process is divided into an initial exploratory stage, followed by four clear steps for submitting an application. Each step includes a description of the critical milestones of the process, recommended reading and training (such as the CSP sub-grant training), and critical networking and relationships that support the process.

The web site houses the Standard Application, Checklist, and Review Rubric, Sample Charter Contract Language, and a five-year budget template specific to Colorado. The Standard Application includes a checklist and review rubric for new charter applicants and charter school authorizers to encourage high quality, complete charter applications. Authorizers and charter

schools may also access the Sample Contract and guidelines for the development of charter contracts. These resources are discussed further under Objective 2.

CDE will update to the resources on the “Start a Colorado Charter” web site as required by legislative changes; additional resources as they become available; and additional information as needs indicate. Through evaluation, the department will monitor the number of charter school authorizers adopting the Standard Application, language from the Sample Contract, and best practices suggested on the web site.

### **CHARTER SCHOOL SUPPORT INITIATIVE (CSSI)**

In late 2005, CDE piloted the Colorado School Support Initiative (CSSI) for charter schools, replicating the Colorado Title I School Support evaluation process. Since then, CSSI teams have visited 42 schools. It is expected that at least 90% of implementation sub-grant recipients will undergo a CSSI visit during this five-year grant. Under the CSSI, specially trained teams of education experts provide schools a comprehensive evaluation using the Standards and Indicators for School Improvement, the research-based, 9-part rubric for evaluating underperforming Title I schools. For charter schools, CDE added a 10th standard covering board leadership and an 11th standard addressing charter school financial practices. Sub-grantee charter schools are expected to participate in a CSSI site visit during their third year of receiving the grant. The purpose of engaging in the process is to set a course for self-improvement in the early years of development. The CSSI process begins with an intensive three or four day site visit. After the CSSI site visit, the school receives a detailed report based on the rubric and recommendations for research-based steps to improve school performance.

CDE provides schools with written and electronic resources to address deficits identified in their reports. In 2008, CDE prepared a resource manual with detailed information and resources

for addressing each of the standards in the rubric. The manual will be expanded to address the governance and finance standards this year.

The Schools of Choice Unit at CDE will collaborate on an update of the 9-part rubric this summer. CDE will re-train all School Support team members. Both Title I and the CSSI will begin using the new rubric in the fall.

The success of the CSSI evaluation has engaged the interest of school districts, the CSI, and the mature charter schools. Two 14 year old charter schools independently funded and received a CSSI evaluation in the 2008-2009 school year. Several authorizers have requested charter schools purchase a CSSI visit to prepare for their charter renewal. Many other school districts are recognizing the value of this report as a school self-improvement tool and have endorsed the use of the process. The Charter School Institute has made the CSSI evaluation mandatory for all of its two year old schools regardless of whether or not the school is receiving CSP funds. In addition, the CSI has built an abbreviated process to follow-up with schools several years after they have received a CSSI visit to evaluate actions taken in response to the report recommendations.

CSSI has also played a role in turnaround efforts. In 2009, the CSSI process was instrumental in identifying the needs of a struggling Denver charter school. The school has since begun an intensive turnaround effort. The CSSI process will continue to diagnose issues in underperforming schools, as well as to evaluate effective turnaround projects.

**Objective 2: Build capacity among authorizers, board members, administrators, and teachers at new and existing charter schools to conduct quality authorizing, exert effective school leadership, and engage in high-impact teaching so that students will achieve state**

**content standards, graduate from high school and enter college or a career with the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed.**

In addition to the sub-grant program, CDE will use CSP administrative funds together with state funds to build capacity in all of the state's charter schools (new and established schools) to help them raise achievement and enable all students to make progress toward meeting state standards. This objective includes the following activities: resource development; trainings, seminars, and luncheons; reporting; and research. Some of these activities are institutionalized as a part of the service and support program provided by CDE. The activities that fall into this category may not be specifically monitored under the grant or in the Management Grid, but are described here to convey the full spectrum of support offered through the department.

### **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

***Online Resources – CDE Web Site:*** Administrative funds will be used to continue to augment and refine the CDE web site. Audio recordings and copies of handouts from training sessions are provided on the web site for individuals unable to attend. A full list of the online resources, sample documents, handbooks, research studies, and CDE publications is available in Appendix G. The Schools of Choice web site includes a Best Practice Guidebook which is a subset of resources organized to best suit the needs of different charter school user groups. The entirely electronic Administrator's Guidebook, developed under the previous grant and discussed in more detail below, will drive the augmentation and alignment of the Best Practice Guidebook and other resources as they are further developed, modified, and updated.

***Online Resources – Collaborative:*** In addition to resources available on the web site and the "Start a Colorado Charter" web site described under Objective 1, CDE has collaborated with The League and the CSI to provide a statewide online training resource—the online Charter School

Governing Board Training Modules. The modules, which constitute approximately 15 hours of training, address 30 essential topics (see Appendix D) regarding state statutes and best practices in board governance. Upon satisfactory completion of all modules, individual users receive a certificate of completion. Administrative funds will be used to refine and augment the modules. The program will be updated to address trends and pertinent statutory changes.

***Resource Projects:*** Over time, CDE has developed a number of handbooks as a means of compiling best practices in a single location. All handbooks developed by CDE are widely distributed to charter school developers, leaders, and authorizers through the CDE web site. In 2010, the department released an entirely electronic Administrators Guide to Leading a Colorado Charter School. Aligned with the CSSI Standards and Indicators for School Improvement, the handbook provides an overview on each topic, electronic links to more detailed additional information, best practices, and resource references. During this grant cycle, administrative funds will be used to develop a charter school Authorizer's Handbook outlining the practical application of the state adopted charter school authorizer quality standards, and a charter school Governing Board President's Handbook with information pertinent to the role of board leaders.

In addition, The League and CDE will be developing a common Charter School Governance Resource that will replace previous handbook resources used by the separate entities and provide a unified message on best practices. The Charter School Governance Resource will be based on the content of the CSSI standard 10 rubric on board governance. This resource will be used when developing specialized training sessions for schools requesting technical assistance beyond the content provided in the online board training modules.

### **TRAININGS, SEMINARS, AND LUNCHEONS**

CDE conducts the following trainings, seminars and luncheons to equip charter school

authorizers, leaders, administrators, and employees with knowledge and skills and to enable them to network and collaborate. Many of these networking and training opportunities have become institutionalized at the department. (See Appendix E.)

***Authorizer Support and Training:*** The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) recently conducted an evaluation of three large Colorado charter school authorizers: the Charter School Institute (CSI), Pueblo 60, and Denver Public Schools, and is in the process of evaluating the Aurora Public Schools system. The review process, conducted at the request of the authorizer, is based on a quality school performance framework. NACSA shares the evaluation results statewide to improve authorizing practices and add to the body of information on quality authorizing practices. This spring (2010), the Colorado General Assembly considered adopting Colorado authorizer quality standards based on those developed by NACSA. If adopted, these could be tied to district accreditation, requiring the CSI and school districts to certify to the State Board of Education that they meet the standards. Even if the legislature does not mandate the standards, districts have begun to recognize the need for quality authorizing and are seeking the help of CDE and The League. To support authorizers, CDE and its partners will continue to develop resources that further define quality in authorizing, frame policy implications, and guide implementation of best practices, including the development of an Authorizer's Handbook.

***1. Authorizer Training Luncheons:*** CDE, with The League and CSI, provides charter school authorizer training on the proposed quality standards, the charter application process, contracting, the charter renewal process, monitoring, oversight, charter replication, and charter school restart and turnaround models. Training luncheons are offered regionally, five times during the school year. The authorizer training sessions are formatted to allow resource sharing

and networking with an emphasis on highlighting best practices.

*2. Application Reviewer Training:* Inundated with charter applications of varying quality, charter school authorizers asked CDE to develop a model Standard Application, Checklist and Review Rubric. This resource was developed to provide guidance for charter developers and for authorizers as they evaluate applications for quality and completeness. The Standard Application has been adopted by at least ten authorizers to date. After the resource was published, authorizers requested and received Sample Charter Contract Language and a Resource for Developing Charter Contracts. CDE will collaborate with the CSI and The League to develop a state-wide training program for charter application reviewers. The intent of this training program will be to work within the framework of the authorizer quality standards to establish protocols for best practices in application review. CDE will provide this training once a year to best meet the needs of school districts.

*3. Building on Research:* In order to provide authorizers and those interested in opening charter schools information on which schools have the greatest impact, CDE commissioned researchers to create a typology that compares achievement levels of Colorado charter schools based on their educational approach. The study sorted the state's charter schools into five pedagogical categories (traditional, progressive, general, vocational, and alternative delivery) and into two student population types (targeted enrollment and open enrollment) and compared their achievement levels. CDE encourages authorizers to use the results of this study to evaluate replication models and to develop requests for new charter school proposals.

CDE anticipates the release of the Special Education Finance Study in the summer of 2010, which will be shared with authorizers. The report will shed light on special education funding at charter schools and the unique challenges they face in providing services.

Recently, there has been much focus on establishing protocols for turning around the lowest performing schools. CDE will use administrative grant funds to conduct a five-year case study on charter school restart and turnaround in Colorado (details are provided below under Research Studies). As the state redefines accreditation frameworks and implements new school performance expectations, CDE anticipates that the lowest performing schools, those that fall within the bottom 5%, will be targeted for turnaround. CDE will assist authorizers in identifying best practices and turnaround strategies in charter schools, and will provide technical assistance to authorizers as they navigate the state's expectations.

***Governing Board Support and Training:*** As the number of charter schools in the state grows, there is a constant need for high quality charter school governing board members. CDE encourages charter school boards to improve their leadership capacity and model continuous improvement through training. The following trainings are available to all charter schools in the state and are categorized as either Required or Recommended for sub-grantee charter schools.

1. *Online Governing Board Training Modules and Certification:* CDE, The League, and the CSI developed the Online Governing Board Training Modules described previously under Online Resources. CDE recommends that all charter school board members obtain certification. Sub-grantee school board members are required to become certified during the first 12 months of grant funding. The CSI and at least one school district in the state mandate certification of all charter school board members as part of their charter agreement. CDE will continue to refine and update the web resource based on feedback and legislative changes. (See Appendix D.)

2. *Regional and Specialized Board Training:* CDE, in collaboration with The League, will continue to offer free regional board training once per semester. These trainings offer an abbreviated examination of the module training topics, and are aligned with CSSI board



governance standard. Schools may also request differentiated training, which is provided through The League and may be purchased with sub-grant funds. CDE will be collaborating with The League to develop a common board governance resource, described previously under Resource Projects, as the basis for these specialized trainings.

3. *Board President's Network:* CDE's emphasis on collaboration and the sharing of best practices among charter schools resulted in the successful development of the Business Manager's Network and the regional charter school leader/administrator groups. To expand these efforts, CDE will facilitate the development of a Board President's Network with the aim of providing support and resources to governing board leadership. CDE will build upon a small group of charter board presidents in one Denver-metro school district, who spontaneously united to address a common need and to negotiate collectively. The Board President's Network will target current and future board leaders and chairpersons, and will provide a venue for troubleshooting, networking, technical assistance, and discussion. Recognizing the geographic distribution of charter schools, CDE will ensure the opportunity for online participation and webinar formats. Board president meetings will be held four times per year (two regionally and two via webinar). The Board President's Network will also provide a venue for review and feedback on the content of a Governing Board President's Handbook as it is developed.

***Administrator Support and Training:*** CDE is committed to providing support and assistance to lead administrators in both new and existing charter schools. Training is highly encouraged for sub-grantee administrators, whether they are new to the role or not.

1. *School Leadership Mentoring Program:* To build leadership capacity among new charter school administrators and those aspiring to be charter school administrators, CDE will implement a mentoring program. Building administrators' skills and capacity to lead will

positively impact teachers, school culture, school operations and ultimately student achievement. It will also help stem feelings of isolation among new leaders by providing a peer network, while enabling mature leaders to develop their mentoring skills. Full program implementation will take two years. During the first year, CDE will use grant funds to create a curriculum based on the Administrator's Guide to Leading a Colorado Charter School and begin the first year of the mentoring sessions. This electronic handbook will be augmented and refined to meet the needs of the mentoring program. As a supplement, a resource library that complements the handbook will be developed. Using CSP funds, these resources will be acquired, catalogued, and made readily available to participants in the program, and other administrators in Colorado charter schools. CDE will work with experienced charter school administrators with demonstrated success to design the mentoring program curriculum, make selections for the resource library, and serve as mentors.

Participants in the program may be new to administrative roles, principals with prior experience but new to charter schools, or principals of turnaround schools. Administrators outside those categories will be welcome to participate for a fee. The two year program follows an instructional model that includes work as a cohort team, work with a mentor, written reflections, and site visit observations. Mentoring sessions will be conducted regionally, and may include school visits, phone conferences, and shadowing. Participants who successfully complete the program may be identified and invited to continue in the program as a mentor, thus perpetuating the growth of the mentoring program and an administrator network in Colorado. A list of program components is provided in Appendix F.

2. *Leadership Development Workshop*: CDE will host an annual one-day workshop for administrators and lead teachers in all charter schools. CSP funds will be used to develop the

content of the workshop and to provide stipends to workshop facilitators and presenters. The purpose of the workshop is to facilitate the development of a charter school community in Colorado, to develop new charter school leadership from within that community, and to support the needs of new and developing schools. The workshop will focus on best practices in instruction, classroom strategies, the Colorado Growth Model, Colorado's new academic standards and accreditation framework, and charter school accountability structures.

3. *Pikes Peak Leadership Development Luncheons:* The Pikes Peak region (Colorado Springs) contains the highest concentration of charter schools in the state, outside of the Denver-metro area. These luncheons are held once a month during the school year and are open to all charter school administrators, or those aspiring to be charter school administrators, including sub-grantees. Led by an experienced charter school administrator, these luncheons help improve knowledge through book studies and discussions, and reduce the sense of isolation. The model for this program differs from the School Leadership Mentoring Program, in that the focus text varies from year to year depending on the interests and needs of the group. Feedback indicates that these luncheons are highly valued by attendees.

***Business Office Support and Training:*** Charter school closures in Colorado have been primarily the result of financial mismanagement. CDE offers support structures for administrators, business managers, and board treasurers to address the financial aspects of charter management. The department takes the CSSI finance standard, Standard 11, into consideration when establishing the agenda for these trainings.

1. *Annual Finance Seminar:* The Annual Finance Seminar is an interactive, day-long workshop on charter school finance issues that are specific to charter school board members, business managers, and administrators. This event is institutionalized at the department. The

seminar is conducted in the fall in the Denver Metro area, and once per year (date varies) on the Western Slope (Grand Junction area).

2. *Business Manager Network Meetings*: At these meetings, schools receive the most current and practical, experience-based technical information on topics pertinent to business management of charter schools. Demonstrated success and best practices are shared openly among participants, fostering a sense of community and networking. CDE assembles an agenda for each meeting based on requests from participants and relevance to the business environment. Meetings are typically held four times per year (every other month following the Denver-metro Annual Finance Seminar).

***General Support and Training***: The following activities are institutionalized and are included here as part of the full description of the support and services provided through CDE.

1. *Regional Charter School Luncheon Groups*: These luncheons provide networking and training opportunities to regional charter school personnel and are offered twice a semester.

2. *Charter School Special Education Advisory Committee*: State advisory committee meetings, which are open to the public, inform attendees on current issues and regulations specific to charter school special education programming and are offered three times a year.

## **REPORTING**

***Triennial State of Charter Schools in Colorado Report***: State law requires a triennial report on the state of charter schools in Colorado. This report examines all available data about charter schools in Colorado, including the number of schools operating, demographic data, school and student performance, teacher and administrator salaries, and comparison of such data to traditional public schools. The report also details any changes to Colorado's charter law since the

prior report and compares current data to those of prior analyses. Finally, each report contains special topic chapters on important and emerging issues pertinent to Colorado's charter schools.

Part of the grant funding during this cycle will be used to produce the triennial report(s). Because this application covers five years rather than three, two triennial reports will be produced during this grant cycle. Dr. Dick Carpenter and Krista Kafer will co-author these reports. Carpenter and Kafer wrote the most recent report (Carpenter & Kafer, 2009), so they are already familiar with the data needs and processes required to produce it. The practice of producing these reports is institutionalized at the department.

## **RESEARCH**

### ***Charter School Grant Program Research Projects:***

1. *Replication Study:* CDE will commission researchers Carpenter and Kafer to determine how many charter schools have been created through replication, the rate of replication, trends in locations and other exigencies of replication, what process have been and are currently being used, the performance of replication schools, state and local policies relevant to replication, barriers to replication, and recommendations for future replication. This study is particularly pertinent given the loss of momentum in the charter school movement. The rapid pace of charter school growth has slowed in recent years (Bennett, 2008; Bulkley, 2005). Among the reasons for this diminishment is charter school operators' increasing awareness of the difficulties of opening and managing schools (Bulkley, 2005).

Even educational management organizations (EMOs) or charter management organizations (CMOs) which have the capacity, experience, and specialized knowledge to open more schools, are also slowing down (Bennett, 2008; Bulkley, 2005; Education Sector, 2009). The slow pace of new school creation has the potential to undermine the promise of charter schools. Many are

concerned that charter schools will be too few to fulfill their potential, unless successful charter schools can be replicated (Bennett, 2008).

Although some research is beginning to surface on the replication process and barriers to new school creation (Bennett, 2008; Bulkley, 2005; Bulkley & Hicks, 2005; Education Sector, 2009; Garcia, Barber, & Molnar, 2009; Hendrie, 2005; Rhim, 1998), the utility of this research is somewhat limited for policy leaders and educational decision makers in specific states given their policy, demographic, educational, and political idiosyncrasies. Thus, CDE will commission a study of charter school replication in Colorado. The study will be guided by two primary questions: what is the current state of replication in Colorado?; and, what are the dominant replication processes used in Colorado? The report will be completed in the first year of this grant cycle and published and made public by the CDE.

*2. Leadership Needs Assessment:* Recently, charter school researchers identified the issue of leadership as one requiring greater attention by researchers, policy leaders, and educational decision makers (Campbell & Gross, 2008; Campbell & Grubb, 2008; Gross & Pochop, 2007; National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, 2008). Much like the importance of educational leadership generally (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003), charter school leadership plays a critical role in the success of a school. Charter school leadership preparation and the needs of charter leaders, however, are just beginning to receive attention in the form of unique charter school leadership preparation programs and continuing education opportunities (Berman, 2008).

During the previous grant cycle, the CDE commissioned a study of charter school leadership in Colorado (Carpenter & Kafer, 2010). That study built on prior work (Campbell & Gross, 2008; Dressler, 2001; Griffin & Wohlstetter, 2001; Gross & Pochop, 2007) to examine the background characteristics of Colorado charter leaders, perceptions held by these leaders, how

they spend their time and resources, and their relationships with their boards. As a follow-up to that study, CDE will commission a needs assessment of charter leaders in Colorado. This study will focus on three primary questions: 1) What preparation did charter school administrators receive that served them well for their jobs?; 2) What preparation did charter principals not receive that they needed in order to carry out their jobs successfully?; and 3) What continuing education do charter leaders need to do their jobs?

The CDE will use the information to design or enlist others to design continuing education opportunities for charter leaders, and to refine current training opportunities. Additionally, a university in Colorado is exploring the opportunity to create a leadership preparation program specifically for aspiring charter leaders. Results from the needs assessment would be used in the design of that program. The research will be completed by Dr. Dick Carpenter, with the assistance of doctoral students from the University of Colorado. The needs assessment will be completed in year two of this grant cycle.

*3. Longitudinal Evaluation of Charter Leader Mentoring Program:* Beginning in fall 2010, the CDE will offer a charter school principal mentorship program described earlier in this grant. Throughout this grant cycle, we will also implement a program evaluation of this mentoring program. The evaluation will include both formative and summative elements.

Formative: Elements for the formative evaluation will include monthly online logs, annual closed- and open-ended surveys completed by both the mentor and mentee, and observations of quarterly meetings by the program evaluator. The logs will track time spent in and content of mentorship activities. The surveys will ask mentors and mentees to evaluate the quality and utility of the mentorship program and relationship. Mentors will also be asked on the annual survey to evaluate the performance of the mentee in the content areas covered in the program.

Summative: Elements for the summative evaluation will include pre and post surveys of board presidents for each mentee, annual school performance data for mentees, and aggregate survey data from the formative assessments.

This evaluation will be completed by Dr. Dick Carpenter. It will include semester and annual reports provided to the director of the program and Denise Mund for formative purposes. A final, summative report will be written at the end of this grant cycle.

4. *Case Study of a Turnaround School*: Although the topic of turnaround schools has been studied for some decades, the idea has received greater attention in recent years (Murphy & Meyers, 2009), particularly with the new administration (Duncan, 2009). Case studies of successful turnarounds provide the most information about the turnaround process (Rourke & Hartzman, 2008; Rourke & Mero, 2008; Sizemore, 1988). These lessons have been aggregated into reports (Herman et al., 2008) and journal articles (Boyne & Meier, 2009; Duke, 2004, 2006; Eilers & Camacho, 2007; Meyers & Murphy, 2007; Murphy, 2009; Murphy & Meyers, 2009) containing “lessons learned” and recommendations.

Although this literature is important and helpful, they do not cover charter schools. As a result of some state policies and NCLB, failing schools can be reconstituted into charter schools under the assumption that they will turnaround. To date, failing charters have simply closed, but now efforts are underway to turnaround failing charter schools, too.

An underperforming charter school in metro-Denver has just begun a turnaround process, creating an opportunity to study the process in a charter school. CDE will commission a case study to examine the turnaround process in real time. The charter school is following a turnaround model that may be described more as a “transformation” or “restart”, where the school leadership and a large percentage of the instructional staff are replaced, while the children



maintain enrollment and the school remains open. The process will be managed by a CMO created by and based on the model of a highly successful charter school in Fort Collins, Ridgeview Classical Schools. The goal is for the turnaround charter school to be self-sufficient within three to five years of assistance from the CMO. Thus, in addition to the unusual feature of a charter assisting another charter in the turnaround process, there is also an element of replication in the process.

The project will be guided by the following research questions: what does turnaround look like when a charter school assists another charter in the process?; what are the perceived strengths and challenges in the process?; what is the effect of turnaround processes, as measured by achievement and school performance data, in which a charter school assists another charter?; what role does culture play in the turnaround process?; and what is the relationship between purpose or mission and the success of the turnaround process?

Because turnaround processes routinely take two to four years (Herman et al., 2008; Rivero, 2009), this study will span the length of this grant cycle. The research will be completed by Dr. Dick Carpenter and Krista Kafer, with the assistance of doctoral students from the University of Colorado. Although the final report will not be completed until the end of this grant cycle, the researchers will complete annual reports containing ongoing findings from interviews, surveys, observations, document analysis, and data monitoring. All data will be maintained and available only to the research team. Results will be reported in such a way so as to protect the identity of individuals.

**Interviews:** Confidential interviews with turnaround leaders (the school principal and authorizer staff liaison) will be conducted by the research team each semester. The interviews will be semi-structured and designed to measure perceptions and opinions about the turnaround

process that cannot be measured by a closed-ended survey. Interviews will also facilitate an examination and description of the turnaround process. Interview results will be reported in the aggregate, or when quotes are used, individual identities will be protected.

**Surveys:** Annual surveys will be administered to turnaround participants (authorizer staff liaison, board, and staff) to measure perceptions and opinions about the turnaround process and its successes and challenges. Questions will be closed-ended. The surveys will be administered online. No identifying information (such as names or IDs) will be collected, further maintaining the confidentiality of respondents. Results will be reported only in the aggregate.

**Observations:** Observations of the school environment will be conducted by the research team once per quarter. These observations are designed to triangulate the data; observations will enable the research team to verify the data produced by the other methods (surveys, interviews, etc.). Observations will be open-ended, meaning no structured observation tools or checklists will be used.

**Document Analysis:** Any large-scale process such as a school turnaround produces documents that capture and codify decisions, policies, actions, processes, and so forth. These documents will be analyzed using inductive content analysis to determine dominant themes and patterns—a process consistent with standard qualitative research procedures. These documents may include meeting minutes and agendas, emails, brochures, journals, curricula, and the like. When necessary, confidentiality will be maintained for individuals; although, this will not always be necessary or possible with names that appear on public documents.

**Data Monitoring:** The primary purpose of any turnaround process is to increase student achievement and school performance. Therefore, the research team will gather and analyze achievement and performance data routinely produced by schools, including assessment and

growth model data. Most, if not all of these data will be requested from the CDE and analyzed using standard quantitative procedures. Only aggregate student data results will be reported.

A list of references is provided in Appendix A.

*(ii) The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA to charter schools under the State's charter school law (30 points).*

Colorado's charter schools are afforded a large degree of flexibility under the state's charter school law – the Colorado Charter Schools Act [Colo. Rev. Stat. 22-30.5-101 et.seq.] including automatic waivers, multiple authorizers, and equalized funding. In the CSP Monitoring report, analysts determined that Colorado “affords a high degree of flexibility and autonomy to charter schools,” and our “technical assistance and waiver forms could be considered a best practice to be shared with other SEAs.” Due to the strength of Colorado's charter law, in 2010 the Center for Education Reform ranked Colorado 7<sup>th</sup> out of 39 states and the District of Columbia.

Charter schools are responsible for their own operations, including preparation of budgets, contracting for services, facilities and personnel matters. Charter schools have significant flexibility with regard to hiring, evaluating, compensating and dismissal of employees. Teachers must meet the federal Highly Qualified definition but do not need to be certified or part of a union agreement and are employed At Will by the school. Charter school boards develop their own approach to compensation for staff and faculty which may include merit incentives.

Charter schools may, at their discretion, contract with their authorizing districts for the purchase of district services. Authorizing districts are required to provide such services to the charter school at cost. Authorizing districts may not charge charter schools rent for district facilities deemed available as negotiated by contract.

A charter school may offer any educational program that a school district may offer. In other words, charter schools choose their own curriculum, scope and sequence, instructional strategies,

professional development, support programs, and thematic approach.

Charter schools have standing to sue and be sued in their own name for purposes of enforcing any contract. Charter schools, like all public schools, are not subject to local zoning and building regulations. Charter schools may institute a longer school day or school year.

In 2005, the State Board of Education adopted a rule providing automatic waivers for 13 state statutes. (See Appendix C.) School may also request waivers from other state statutes. The state has granted an average of 16 waivers per charter school. Charter schools may also seek waivers from district policy.

In Colorado, there are two types of authorizers – school districts and the state Charter School Institute (CSI). The CSI has chartered 17 schools and has approved two additional schools to open in the fall of 2010. The state also has an appeals process for rejected applications. Under the state appeal procedures, the decision of a local board of education or the Charter School Institute to deny, refuse to renew, revoke a charter or to unilaterally impose conditions that are unacceptable to the charter school or charter applicant, can be appealed to the State Board of Education. There are 26 charter schools open today as a result of an appeal.

Colorado has also made equal funding of charter schools a priority. Pursuant to C.R.S. 22-30.5-112 charter schools are funded at 100% of the Per Pupil Revenue minus up to 5% administrative funds. Authorizers can only deduct administrative funds according to specific Chart of Account codes and must provide a detailed itemization to their charter schools within 90 days of the end of the fiscal year. If a charter school believes administrative funds were inappropriately withheld, they may ask CDE to settle the dispute. Any services provided to a charter school outside of the administrative fees are up to the charter school's discretion and cannot be imposed by the authorizer.

*(iii) The number of high-quality charter schools to be created in the State (30 points).*

CDE anticipates that 16 to 18 high quality charter schools will open each year during the five-year grant period. This number is ambitious but not unrealistic given the pace of charter school openings over the past several years. CDE's sub-grant program, training and mentoring programs, and handbooks and other on-line resources are designed to encourage charter school growth and ensure high quality.

CDE will inform each charter school in the state about federal funds the charter school is eligible to receive and ensure that each charter school in the state receives the school's commensurate share of federal education funds that are allocated by formula each year, including during the first year of operation of the school and during a year in which the school's enrollment expands significantly. Federal program funding is based enrollment data which is collected on October 1 each year. CDE distributes formula funding spreadsheets, as they become available during the annual reauthorization of the state's School Finance Act, through the email distribution list and through regular training opportunities.

The state has a definition for "significant expansion" that includes situations for unusual and unplanned expansion. Further, CDE's Federal Program's Unit requires authorizers to fund charter schools within five months of opening. The Federal Programs Unit periodically reviews districts and charter schools to ensure charter schools are receiving the commensurate share of federal funding. Should a complaint be filed or a discrepancy found, there is a process for more in-depth review. As stated in the CSP Monitoring report, "The state has trainings, technical assistance, and verification systems in place to inform each charter school in the state about federal funds that the charter school is eligible to receive. The state's trainings, technical assistance, and verification systems to inform charter schools about federal funds may be considered a best practice."

The sub-grant program RFP includes a cover sheet on which the charter school founder must note the federal program funds the school will be applying. The purpose of this is to ensure that charter school founders are aware of their possible eligibility for these funds. The RFP is very specific about who is eligible for federal funding as a sub-grantee.

The Schools of Choice Unit personnel are in close communication with staff members in the CDE Federal Programs and Grants Fiscal Management offices. The Schools of Choice Unit is participating in a number of projects across the department with the added benefit of additional opportunities to share information and ensure alignment of programs.

On two occasions, CDE has become aware of a school district failing to provide a charter school with the correct amount of federal program funding. In these situations, CDE renders a “final determination” as to the reconciliation of accounts. Both schools ultimately received the correct funds.

*(iv) The quality of the management plan for the proposed project. (30 points).*

The management plan has two parts. The first part provides a master grid that places the proposal activities (with milestones) within a time frame and links them with the outcome, evaluation measure, and the person who is responsible for their completion. For more details about the activities see criteria (i) and for more details about the evaluation measures see criteria (vii). The second part provides information about each person on the team.

## MANAGEMENT GRID

**Objective 1: Increase the number of new high quality charter schools that enable all students to achieve state content standards, graduate from high school and enter college or a career with the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed.**

Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>1.1 Conduct a sub-grant program providing start-up and implementation grants to new schools with a rigorous application process.</b>			100% of sub-grantee applicants will receive grant writing training.	The number of schools receiving sub-grants will be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	The total number of charter schools in operation will increase to 160 in 2010, 175 in 2011, and 190 in 2012, 205 in 2013, 220 in 2014.*	The number of sub-grantees receiving training will be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.
Issue RFP for grant program	Annually in July; 07/2010-07/2014	Mund/McMillen/Bisbee	16 schools will receive start-up grants (\$180,000 to \$200,000 per year) in FY 2010-2011; 17 in FY 2011-2012; 17 in 2012-2013; 18 in 2013-2014; and 18 in 2014-2015.**	
Conduct grant writing training	Annually in August and January; 08/2010-01/2015	Mund/McMillen/Bisbee	22 schools will receive implementation grants (\$200,000 per year) in 2010-2011 27 in 2011-2012; 33 in 2012-2013; 34 in 2013-2014; and 35 in 2014-2015.**	
Award grants	Annually in October and March; 10/2010-03/2015	Mund/McMillen/Bisbee	*Note: quantities account for school openings and closures  **Note: quantities are proposed	
Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>1.2 Provide support services and training for all sub-grantees as required by the grant program (those designated as “Required”, “Expected”, and “Recommended” in the RFP), upon request, and based upon needs assessment (CSSI).</b>			100% of sub-grantee schools will receive specialized board member training upon request during the three year sub-grant period. (Board training is differentiated to meet the needs of	The number of schools participating in required, expected, and recommended training will annually be counted, documented, and

			the school.)	compared to the goal.
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>		
Conduct specialized board member training	As needed, upon request	The League	100% of sub-grantee schools will participate in the professional development offerings designated as “Required” by CDE by the end of the three year sub-grant period.	The quality of the training and professional development will be rated as at least “good” by participants on post-training surveys.
Conduct regional Performance Management trainings and include topics such as Data Driven Decision Making, Curriculum Alignment, and Standards Based Assessment and Instruction	08/2010-04/2015 as needed based on sub-grantee request and needs assessment. Trainings are conducted regionally based on sub-grantee geographic distribution.	Trainings are conducted in collaboration with The League	85% of sub-grantee schools will participate in at least five “Expected” professional development offerings per year during the school’s three year sub-grant period.  70% of sub-grantee schools will participate in at least three “Recommended” professional development offerings per year during the school’s three year sub-grant period.	Participants will report at least a moderate amount of penetration of new knowledge into practice on post-visit surveys.
Conduct Charter Application Writers’ Boot Camp	Annually in June; 06/2010-06/2015	Mund/Dauzvar dis/The League/CSI	Performance Management training (Data Driven Decision Making, Curriculum Alignment, and Standards Based Assessment and Instruction) will be conducted in at least 70% of the sub-grantee schools by the end of the three year sub-grant period.  70% of charter school applicants attending the Application Writers’ Boot Camp, participating in The League’s New School Development process, and submitting charter applications to a Colorado charter authorizer will successfully secure charter contracts and sub-grantee funding.	



Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>1.3 Perfect and augment the “Start a Colorado Charter” web site (<a href="http://www.startacoloradocharter.org">www.startacoloradocharter.org</a>) and associated resources, an online resource for charter school applicants and authorizers.</b>			The number of charter school authorizers adopting the Colorado Charter School Standard Application will increase each year.	The number of charter school authorizers following the process and protocols outlined in “Start a Colorado Charter” will annually be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.
Milestone	Timeline	Responsibility	The number of charter school authorizers utilizing the Colorado Charter School Sample Contract Language and the accompanying narrative, the Resource for Developing Colorado Charter School Contracts, will increase each year.	
Provide updates as required by legislative changes; additional resources as they are developed or become available; and additional information as needs indicate	As needed	Mund/Dauzvar dis/The League/CSI		
Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>1.4 CSSI will conduct evaluations in implementation sub-grantee schools.</b>			90% of implementation sub-grantee schools will receive a CSSI site visit during the school’s three year sub-grant period.	The number of schools receiving a CSSI site visit will annually be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.
Milestone	Timeline	Responsibility		
Conduct one CSSI site visit per sub-grantee school	09/2010-04/2015; CSSI site visits are conducted during the second or third (implementation) year of the sub-grant program	CSSI team led by Kafer		<p>The quality of the CSSI process is rated as at least “good” by participants on post-visit surveys.</p> <p>Participants will report at least a moderate amount of penetration of new knowledge into practice on post-visit surveys.</p>

Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>1.5 Supplement the existing CSSI Resource Manual with an additional resource manual that addresses Standard 10 (Board Governance) and Standard 11 (Sound Fiscal Management).</b>			The supplemental resource will be completed and disseminated to 100% of sub-grantee schools.	The evaluator will track the completion of the supplement, its dissemination, its online status, and whether it was completed by June 2012.
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	The supplemental resource will be available online on the CDE web site by June of 2012.	
Develop and disseminate the resource using the same format as the existing CSSI Resource Manual	06/2012	Mund/Dauzvar dis/CSSI Team		

**Objective 2: Build capacity among authorizers, board members, administrators, and teachers at new and existing charter schools to conduct quality authorizing, exert effective school leadership, and engage in high-impact teaching so that students will achieve state content standards, graduate from high school, and enter college or a career with the requisite knowledge and skills to succeed.**

	Overall Objective Outcomes	Measure
<i>(The Overall Objective Outcomes at the right are the anticipated collective result of all Activities under Objective 2.)</i>	<p>Seventy percent of elementary school-aged charter school students will achieve proficient/advanced and 50% of secondary school-aged charter school students will achieve proficient/advanced on the mathematics CSAP in 2011; 73% elementary and 52% secondary in 2012; and 75% elementary and 55% secondary in 2013; 76% elementary and 57% secondary in 2014; 78% elementary and 59% secondary in 2015.</p> <p>Seventy five percent of elementary school-aged charter school students</p>	The evaluator will analyze yearly CSAP performance and growth percentiles from Colorado's Growth Model data for charter schools that have been in existence at least three years to measure growth and compare results to the respective benchmarks.

			<p>will achieve proficient/advanced and 70% of secondary school-aged charter school students will achieve proficient/advanced on the reading CSAP in 2011; 77% elementary and 72% of secondary in 2012; and 78% elementary and 75% secondary in 2013; 80% elementary and 77% secondary in 2014; 81% elementary and 78% secondary in 2015.</p> <p>Charter schools that have operated for more than three years will achieve a median growth percentile of 48 in math in 2010-2011 and demonstrate an increase of one percentile point each year through 2014-2015.</p> <p>Charter schools that have operated for more than three years will achieve a median growth percentile of 51 in reading in 2010-2011 and demonstrate an increase of one percentile point each year through 2014-2015.</p>	
Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>2.1 Provide charter school authorizers networking luncheons and training in best practices in relation to the charter application process, the charter renewal process, monitoring, turnaround, and oversight of charter schools. (authorizer capacity)</b>			<p>Authorizers participating in networking luncheons and training will report an improvement in their policies and procedures related to their role.</p>	<p>Authorizers participating in training will report an improvement in their policies and procedures related to their role, as indicated by post-training surveys.</p>
Milestone	Timeline	Responsibility	<p>An authorizer's handbook will be completed and disseminated by June of 2015.</p>	
Conduct regional authorizer networking luncheons and training	Quarterly; 08/2010-05/2015	Mund/CSI/The League		

Develop a Charter School Authorizer's Handbook outlining the practical application of the state adopted charter school authorizer quality standards	06/2015	Mund/CSI/The League		
Develop and implement a state level training program for charter application reviewers	06/2012	Mund/Dauzvar dis/The League		
Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>2.2 Develop and implement a Charter School Leadership Mentoring Program using the Administrator's Handbook as the foundational text. (<i>administrator capacity</i>)</b>			60% of sub-grantee administrators will participate in the leadership development mentoring program by the end of the three year grant period.	The number of sub-grantee administrators participating in the mentoring program and luncheons will annually be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.
Milestone	Timeline	Responsibility		
Establish the mentoring 2010-2013 mentoring cohort	08/2010	Fontana/Holmes	40% of sub-grantee administrators will complete the entire two-year leadership development mentoring program by the end of the grant period. (Attendance at 60% of mentoring program events over the course of two the two year program will constitute program completion.)	80% of participating charter administrators will be rated at least 'proficient' in their leadership performance by their board presidents, as indicated by annual surveys.
Develop a two-year mentoring program curriculum	06/2012	Fontana and mentoring cohort	80% of charter administrators will be rated at least 'proficient' in their leadership performance by their board presidents.	Participating administrators will report an improvement in their practices, policies, and procedures related to their role, as indicated by annual surveys.
Identify the 2011-2012 administrator cohort group, and implement the first year of the curriculum	09/2011	Fontana and mentoring cohort		
Identify the 2012-2013 administrator cohort group. Implement the second year of the curriculum	09/2012	Fontana and mentoring cohort	Administrators and school leaders participating in training will report an improvement in their practices, policies, and procedures related to their	

			role.	
Establish the 2013-2014 mentoring cohort and identify the administrator cohort group	09/2013	Fontana and mentoring cohort	Pikes Peak Leadership Luncheons will average at least 12 attendees.	
Establish the 2014-2015 mentoring cohort and identify the administrator cohort group	09/2014	Fontana and mentoring cohort		
Hold Pikes Peak Leadership Luncheons	Monthly during the school year; 08/2010-06-2015	Holmes		
Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>2.3 Develop a resource library that complements the Administrator's Handbook and Charter School Leadership Mentoring Program. (<i>administrator capacity</i>)</b>			100% of the identified resources will be catalogued, included in the Administrator's Guidebook, made available online (where possible) and made available the leadership mentoring program participants.	Track whether resources are catalogued and made available by 2015.
Milestone	Timeline	Responsibility		
Identify the list of resources	08/2011	Fontana and mentoring cohort		
Purchase and catalogue the resources for use	06/2015	Mund and consultants		
Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>2.4 Develop and implement a one day Leadership Development Workshop for charter school administrators and curriculum leaders. (<i>administrator capacity</i>)</b>			Administrators and school leaders participating in training will report an improvement in their practices, policies, and procedures related to their role.	Track workshop offerings to ensure it is offered every year. The quality of the seminar is rated as at least "good" by participants on post-workshop surveys.
Milestone	Timeline	Responsibility		
Develop the curriculum for the workshop	03/2011	Fontana		

Implement the one day workshop	Annually; 04/2011-04/2015	Fontana		Participants will report at least a moderate amount of penetration of new knowledge into practice as measured by post-workshop surveys.
Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>2.5 Expand and augment charter school board governance training resources. (<i>board member capacity</i>)</b>			By the final year of sub-grant funding, 80% of sub-grantee school board members will be certified.	The number of board members achieving certification will annually be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.
Milestone	Timeline	Responsibility	<p>By the final year of sub-grant funding, 100% of sub-grantee schools will access board training resources or trainings.</p> <p>A board president's network will be established by the end of the 2010-2011 school year.</p> <p>80% of all charter school boards will be rated at least 'proficient' in their leadership performance by their administrators.</p> <p>Board members participating in training will report an improvement in their practices, policies, and procedures related to their role.</p> <p>A board president's handbook will be completed and disseminated.</p>	<p>The number of board members accessing training and resources will annually be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.</p> <p>80% of charter boards will be rated at least 'proficient' in their leadership performance by their administrators, as indicated by annual post-training surveys.</p> <p>Board members participating in training will report an improvement in their practices, policies, and procedures related to their role, as indicated by annual post-training surveys.</p>
Perfect and augment the online board training modules and web site	Annually; 2010-2015	Mund/Dauzvar dis/The League		
Provide specialized and differentiated governing board training	As needed, upon request	The League		
Collaborate with the League on a common board training resource	06/2015	Mund/Dauzvar dis/The League		
Establish a state-wide board president's network that meets via regional meetings and webinar format meetings	Quarterly meetings; 06/2011-06/15	Mund/Dauzvar dis		
Develop and disseminate a Charter School Governing Board President's Handbook	2014	Mund/Dauzvar dis		

Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>2.6 Develop and conduct an Annual Finance Seminar with topics focused on current issues and needs in the charter school community. (administrator/business office//board member capacity)</b>			90% of sub-grantee schools will attend the Annual Finance Seminar each year of the three year sub-grant period.	The number of sub-grantee schools participating in the seminars will annually be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	40% of existing charter schools in Colorado will send at least one representative to the Annual Finance Seminar each year.	The number of non-sub-grantee schools participating in the seminars will annually be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.
Conduct seminar	Annually in the fall; 09/2010-09/2014	Dauzvardis/Mund	Participants in the training will report an improvement in their practices, policies, and procedures related to their role.	Participants in training will report an improvement in their practices, policies, and procedures related to their role, as indicated on an annual post-seminar survey.
Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>2.7 Develop and conduct Business Manager Network meetings with topics focused on current issues and needs in the charter school community. (administrator/business office/board member capacity)</b>			Each business manager meeting will average at least 30 attendees.	The business managers participating in the seminars will annually be counted, documented, and compared to the goal.
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	Business managers and administrators participating in training will report an improvement in their practices, policies, and procedures related to their role.	Participants in meetings will report an improvement in their practices, policies, and procedures related to their role, as indicated on an annual post-meeting survey.
Conduct meetings	Four times per year in November, January, March, May; 11/2010-05/2015	Dauzvardis/Mund		

Activity			Outcome	Measure
<b>2.8 Conduct research projects that generate information regarding the quality of replication charter schools in Colorado, advance the body of knowledge regarding charter school leadership, and track the progress of and lessons learned from charter school turnaround in Colorado.</b>			Results of the charter replication study will be disseminated and will be used to establish best practices in replication.	Track the publication of the reports to ensure completion by deadlines.
<b>Milestone</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	Results of the leadership needs assessment will be disseminated and used to develop training programs and resources to meet the identified needs.	Additional resources developed during the grant period will be built on the studies' results.
Conduct a study on charter school replication in Colorado	06/2011	Carpenter/Kafe r		
Conduct a charter school leadership needs assessment study	06/2012	Carpenter	Results of the longitudinal evaluation of the leadership mentoring program will be disseminated and used to augment and improve the program.	
Conduct a longitudinal evaluation of the Charter School Leadership Mentoring Program	Annual surveys and summary report; 2010-2015	Carpenter/Kafe r	Results of the school restart case studies will be disseminated and used to establish best practices in charter turnaround and transformation.	
Conduct a case study on two charter school restart models (one "turnaround" school and one "transformation" school) in Colorado	5 year study; 2010-2015	Carpenter/Kafe r		



## **MANAGEMENT TEAM MEMBERS**

See Appendix B for Resumes/Curricula Vitae for all members.

1. Denise Mund, Project Director, Principal Consultant, Schools of Choice Unit, CDE. Full time.

Denise Mund supervises the Schools of Choice Unit at CDE where she has been employed over the past eleven years. Mrs. Mund has managed the Charter School Grant for CDE since 1999. She has been integral in the development of a high quality sub-grant RFP, which has been replicated by other states. She has mentored other SEA personnel. At CDE, she collaborates with numerous programs and individuals across the department, and provides technical assistance on extensive topics to authorizers, governing boards, administrators, accountability members, and parents in charter schools. As project director, Mrs. Mund assists in the preparation of required reports and evaluations regarding charter schools; and insures that the project goals are met. Mrs. Mund was a primary author of Colorado's common charter application and sample contract language resources.

With more than seven years experience as a governing board president, Mrs. Mund also conducts board training and is familiar with charter school operating issues. Mrs. Mund is a founder of four charter schools, and is currently serving on two charter school boards. In 2002 Mrs. Mund received the Charter Friend Award from The League of Charter Schools. Mrs. Mund reports to Dr. Barbara Medina, Asst Commissioner for Innovation and Transformation, State Director Language Culture and Equity.

2. Peg McMillen, Consultant, Schools of Choice Unit, CDE. Part-Time (50%)

Peg McMillen has been involved in charter schools since 1994 and is a member of the Charter School Special Education Advisory Committee. She oversees the sub-grantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award

notifications, records management, on site monitoring, and budget review. She provides technical assistance in regarding start-up and charter implementation issues, state accreditation, standards and assessments, federal regulations and the grant process. This position is shared with Jeri Bisbee, who also works part time. Ms. McMillen and Ms. Bisbee divide the work by assigning one consultant to each sub-grantee school, however, trainings and resource materials are developed collaboratively.

3. Jeri Bisbee, Consultant, Schools of Choice Unit, CDE. Part-Time (50%)

Jeri Bisbee is an education consultant and former teacher with experience in charter schools. As stated above, this part-time position is a job-share with Peg McMillen, where tasks and technical assistance associated with oversight of the sub-grant process are split evenly.

4. Jennifer Dauzvardis, Consultant, Schools of Choice Unit, CDE. Part-Time (65%)

Jennifer Dauzvardis was a charter school founder and served on the board for four years including two years as board secretary and one year as board president. Ms. Dauzvardis worked as a grant consultant, and was a member of the CSSI team prior to joining the School's of Choice program staff in 2008. Ms. Dauzvardis works closely with sub-grantee schools to provide technical assistance and training, in areas that include board governance, accountability and accreditation structures, standards implementation, start-up and implementation strategies, and school improvement. Ms. Dauzvardis also collects and assembles data, and assists in the preparation of the annual grant reporting documents for the CSP.

5. Pahmela Hines, Program Assistant, Schools of Choice Unit, CDE. Full-time

Pahmela Hines provides support and assistance to the Schools of Choice Unit. She also coordinates data collection, web site development, logistics, and other support as needed.

6. Andy Lake, Grant Consultant, Grants Fiscal Management Unit, CDE. Full-time.

Andy Lake works full-time for CDE, but part-time on the charter school grant program. Mr. Lake develops all fiscal management forms used in the sub-grant program. He also ensures that LEAs and charter schools are in compliance with federal regulations pertaining to the Charter School Grant Program. This includes monitoring budgets, financial reporting and funding for sub-grantees. He provides fiscal oversight services for federal and state grant programs.

7. Linda Lockwood, contracted consultant.

Linda Lockwood, Ph. D., provides training and consultation to sub-grant application writers, has served on the CSSI team, and provided training on curriculum, instruction and classroom management. Dr. Lockwood is a charter school founder and former board member.

8. Kelly Reeser, contracted consultant.

Kelly Reeser provides training and consultation to sub-grant application writers and is a member of the CSSI team. Her expertise as a charter school founder and parent provides insight into start-up issues important to charter school grant applicants.

9. Tony Fontana, contracted consultant.

Tony Fontana is a charter school principal who will lead the development of the Leadership Mentoring Program and will design and implement the Leadership Development Workshop. Mr. Fontana previously worked for the Schools of Choice Unit and is a member of the CSSI team.

10. Merlin Holmes, contracted consultant.

Merlin Holmes previously worked for the Schools of Choice Unit, was a charter school principal before employment, and is currently a principal for a new charter school opening in 2010. Mr. Holmes leads the Pike's Peak Leadership Luncheons and will be integral in the development of the Leadership Mentoring Program. Mr. Holmes serves on the board of The Colorado League of Charter Schools and is a member of the CSSI team.

11. Krista Kafer, contracted consultant.

Krista Kafer serves as a lead team member on CSSI site visits and provides other consulting services to CDE. She has been a board member of a charter high school that serves drop-outs and other at-risk students. Further, she is a researcher on several studies for CDE.

12. Jere Percy, contracted consultant

Jere Percy serves as a lead team member on CSSI site visits and is a charter school principal.

13. Dick Carpenter, contracted consultant.

Dick Carpenter, Ph.D. will be conducting the grant evaluation during this grant period. He serves as an associate professor of educational leadership and research at the University of Colorado. His research focuses on leadership, educational policy, and school reform. Before his position at the university, Dr. Carpenter worked as an educational policy analyst, a high school teacher, and a charter school principal.

14. Colorado League of Charter Schools (The League)

The Colorado League of Charter Schools, an organization with a mission “to improve student achievement and expand choice among high quality public schools by serving and supporting Colorado’s charter schools.” The League partners and collaborates closely with CDE on trainings, technical assistance, and the communication of information to charter schools.

15. Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI)

CSI was established in 2004 as an agency within CDE. CSI is a statewide authorizer chartering 19 schools. Enabling legislation designated CSI as a best practice resource for charter school authorizers. CSI will closely collaborate with CDE on training and resources for authorizers.

*(v) The SEA’s plan to monitor and hold accountable authorized public chartering agencies*

Support and technical assistance for charter school authorizers is discussed throughout the activities described in Objective 1 and Objective 2 under section (i). Authorizers are always

welcome at any of the professional development training events offered by CDE. Authorizers with demonstrated implementation of best practices in charter school authorizing are often incorporated into training agendas where individuals may be asked to present or share best practices and information pertinent to schools and/or other authorizers.

*(vi) In the case of SEAs that propose to use grant funds to support dissemination activities*

Colorado is not applying for any funds for dissemination grant purposes.

*(vii) The Secretary considers the quality of the evaluation to be conducted of the proposed project.*

CDE has secured an agreement with an outside evaluator (see section (iv) and resume in Appendix B for information about Dr. Carpenter). The evaluation of the CSP grant will include the collection and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data. Data sources will include annual surveys; student performance data; number of schools created; rubrics used by consultants, mentors, and evaluators, and original research on charter school leadership and development, replication, and turnarounds. Analyses will include descriptive statistics in the case of quantitative data (such as percentages, means, standard deviations, etc.) and content analysis of qualitative data (which entails the coding and thematic analysis of narrative data). In all analyses, confidentiality of participants will be protected by limiting access to the data to the project director (or her designee), the evaluator, and his team, reporting results publicly in the aggregate.

Using the data generated herein, the formative phases of the evaluation will include all indicators measured on an annual basis, including survey data, student performance data, number of schools created, training and resources created, and rubrics used by consultants, mentors, and evaluators. These formative data will be collected and sent to the evaluator for comprehensive analysis. The project director will also use these data to monitor the quality of the activities described in this application and the progress of schools in integrating new knowledge into

practice. Summative evaluations will include those data collected once during the grant period and an aggregation of the formative data into a summative treatment.

The evaluation plan below includes the data sources/measures, a brief description of the measure (when necessary), the persons responsible for data collection, frequency of data collection, method of analysis, and the specific objectives and activities addressed by each. This evaluation plan builds upon previously established processes. In the CSP Monitoring report, analysts from WestEd recommend that, “The state’s use of research to guide the development of its application objectives as well as to support the strategy for assessing the achievement of its application objectives could be considered a best practice and shared with other grantees.”

#### **1. Annual survey of authorizers, administrators, board presidents, and business managers**

The evaluator will design an instrument with both closed-ended and open-ended questions to facilitate quantitative and qualitative analyses. The evaluator will build the online surveys and solicit responses from authorizers, administrators, board presidents, and business managers.

The survey will include questions designed to gather data for multiple objectives and activities, which are listed below. Questions designed for training, luncheons, meetings, and so forth will ask the respondents to rate the resources they accessed, training they received or sessions they attended, the use of new knowledge in the leadership and operation of their schools, and feedback on the improvement of the training, meetings, and resources in the domains of personnel (where appropriate), content, and applicability. The surveys will also collect data on board and administrator turnover. Analyses will include tracking responses over time (to measure penetration of new knowledge, again, when applicable) and comparing the number of participants or session offerings to the respective benchmarks.

Both objectives will be addressed with questions on this measure. The following activities will also be addressed through questions on this measure: 1.2, 1.5, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, and 2.7.

## **2. Percentage of students meeting proficiency benchmarks as measured by CSAP**

These data will be collected and provided to the evaluator in spreadsheet format by the project director or her designee. Analysis will include tracking data over time to measure growth and annually comparing results to the respective benchmarks. (Objective 2 measure)

## **3. Student academic growth as measured by the Colorado Growth Model**

These data will be collected and provided to the evaluator in spreadsheet format by the project director or her designee. Analysis will include tracking data over time to measure growth and annually comparing results to the respective benchmarks. (Objective 2 measure)

## **4. Number of schools receiving start up and implementation grants.**

Each year, the number of grantees will be collected by the project director and provided to the evaluator, who will compare these numbers to identified benchmarks. (Activity 1.1 measure)

## **5. Consultant, mentor, and CSSI team evaluations**

Consultants, mentors, and CSSI teams will complete performance evaluations of the schools and personnel they work with. These evaluations will take the form of rubrics that include both quantitative rating scales and qualitative open-ended prompts. Data will be collected by the project director or her designee and forwarded to the evaluator. Quantitative data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics and qualitative data will be analyzed using content analysis. These measures will be used for activities 1.5 and 2.2.

## **7. Replication study**

This special study will determine how many charter schools have been created through replication, the rate of replication, trends in locations and other exigencies of replication, what

process have been and are currently being used, the performance of replication schools, state and local policies relevant to replication, barriers to replication, and recommendations for future replication. The report will be completed By Dr. Carpenter and Ms. Kafer in the first year of this grant cycle and published and made public by the CDE.

## **8. Leadership needs assessment**

During the prior grant cycle, the CDE commissioned a study of charter school leadership in Colorado (Carpenter & Kafer, 2010). As a follow-up to that study, we will commission a needs assessment of charter leaders in Colorado. The results of the needs assessment will be used in several ways. First, the CDE will use the information to design or enlist others to design continuing education opportunities for charter leaders. Second, the results will be used to refine current training opportunities. Third, a university in Colorado is exploring the opportunity to create a leadership preparation program specifically for aspiring charter leaders. Results from the needs assessment would be used in the design of that program. The needs assessment will be completed by Dr. Carpenter in year two of this grant cycle.

## **9. Longitudinal evaluation of Leadership Mentoring Program**

Throughout this grant cycle, we will evaluate the mentoring program addressed in activity 2.2. The evaluation will include both formative and summative elements.

Formative: Elements for the formative evaluation will include monthly online logs, annual closed- and open-ended surveys completed by both the mentor and mentee, and observations of quarterly meetings by the program evaluator. The logs will track time spent in and content of mentorship activities. The surveys will ask mentors and mentees to evaluate the quality and utility of the mentorship program and relationship. Mentors will also be asked on the annual survey to evaluate the performance of the mentee in the content areas covered in the program.



Summative: Elements for the summative evaluation will include pre and post surveys of board presidents for each mentee, annual school performance data for mentees, and aggregate survey data from the formative assessments.

This evaluation will be completed by Dr Carpenter and include semester and annual reports provided to the director of the program and Denise Mund for formative purposes. A final, summative report will be written at the end of this grant cycle.

#### **10. Turnaround case study**

School turnarounds have garnered much attention as of late, but recently a unique aspect has been added to the issue of turnaround schools that has received scant attention—the advent of charter schools. One failing charter school in metro-Denver has just begun a turnaround process, creating an opportunity to study the process, in real time, in a charter school. Because turnaround processes routinely take two to four years (Herman et al., 2008; Rivero, 2009), this study will span the length of this grant cycle. Although the final report will not be completed until the end of this grant cycle, the researchers, led by Dr. Carpenter, will complete annual reports containing ongoing findings from interviews, surveys, observations, document analysis and data monitoring.

#### **11. Statewide charter school evaluation**

Every three years, the state completes a comprehensive, statewide charter school evaluation. This evaluation includes descriptive data concerning characteristics of schools, students, teachers, administrators, and boards. CDE program staff will be responsible for the data collection and the evaluator will participate in the writing of the report. All results will be reported to the project director. Release of the report will be January 2012 and January 2015. This measure will be used as an overall indicator for Objectives 1 and 2.

# Project Narrative

## Other Attachment Form

Attachment 1:

Title: **Appencides - FINAL.PDF** Pages: **86** Uploaded File: **J:\PCSP 2010-15\2010 Application\Appendix info\Appendices - FINAL.pdf**

# Appendices

- I. Appendix A: References
- II. Appendix B: Resumes
- III. Appendix C: Waivers
- IV. Appendix D: Charter School Governing Board Online Training Modules
- V. Appendix E: Professional Development Menu
- VI. Appendix F: School Leadership Mentoring Program Components and Topics
- VII. Appendix G: CDE Website Resources
- VIII. Appendix H: Letters of Support
- IX. Appendix I: Charter School Program Monitoring Report for Colorado

## Appendix A

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## Appendix C

### Automatic Waivers

<b>Thirteen State Board Approved Automatic Waivers Granted to Colorado Charter Schools (upon request)</b>	
<b>Statute</b>	<b>Description of State Statute</b>
22-9-106	Local Board Duties Concerning Performance Evaluations for Licensed Personnel
22-32-109(1)(f)	Local Board Duties Concerning Selection of Personnel and Pay
22-32-110(1)(h)	Local Board Powers-Terminate employment of personnel
22-32-126	Employment and Authority of Principals
22-63-201	Teacher Employment Act - Compensation & Dismissal Act-Requirement to hold a certificate
22-63-202	Teacher Employment Act - Contracts in writing, damage provision
22-63-203	Teacher Employment Act-Requirements for probationary teacher, renewal & nonrenewal
22-63-206	Teacher Employment Act-Transfer of teachers
22-63-301	Teacher Employment Act-Grounds for dismissal
22-63-302	Teacher Employment Act-Procedures for dismissal of teachers
22-63-401	Teacher Employment Act-Teachers subject to adopted salary schedule
22-63-402	Teacher Employment Act-Certificate required to pay teachers
22-63-403	Teacher Employment Act-Describes payment of salaries

Appendix D  
Charter School Governing Board  
Online Training Modules

1. Board assessment
2. Legal and policy issues
3. Board member conduct
4. Board structure and responsibilities
5. Productive board meetings
6. Promoting the vision and mission of the school
7. Strategic planning
8. Special Education
9. Board Financial Oversight
10. Charter School Finance
11. Policy development
12. Building relationships
13. Pitfalls to avoid
14. Waivers
15. Data Driven Decision-Making
16. Accountability / program assessment
17. Sunshine Law
18. Selecting, reviewing & supporting the administrator
19. Professional development & training
20. Contract renewal, & Accreditation
21. Grant writing
22. Communication
23. Charter Schools Act
24. Effective committees
25. Board Officer roles and responsibilities
26. Parental Involvement
27. Capital Improvements
28. Fundraising resources
29. Needs assessment & SIP
30. Additional board best practices: Transition, retreats, visit days, org. capacity, etc.

## Appendix E

### Professional Development Menu

Professional Development Events	Required Subgrantee Participation (Start-up Grant)	Required Subgrantee Participation (Implementation Grant)	Expected Subgrantee Participation (Sub-grantees must participate in at least 5 training events per year during the 3-year grant cycle)	Recommended Subgrantee Participation (Sub-grantees must participate in at least 3 training events per year during the 3-year grant cycle)	Pre-approved training (sub-grant funds may be used)	Free Training	Training available to schools after completion of the grant cycle (fees may be charged)	Training provided in collaboration with The League
<i><b>Sub-grantee School</b></i>								
Charter School Boot Camp			X		X		X	X
Start-up grant training	X					X		
Implementation grant training		X				X		
Performance Management			X		X		X	X
Charter School Support Initiative		X			X		X	
<i><b>Authorizer Support</b></i>								
Authorizer Luncheons						X		
Application Reviewers Training								X
<i><b>Governing Board Support</b></i>								
Online governing board training	X	X				X	X	X
Regional Governing Board Training				X		X	X	X
Board Presidents Network				X		X	X	
Specialized Governing Board				X	X		X	X
Performance Management training			X		X		X	X
<i><b>Administrator Support</b></i>								
School Leadership Mentoring			X		X		X	
Leadership Development				X	X	X	X	
Pikes Peak Leadership Luncheons				X	X		X	
<i><b>Business Office Support</b></i>								
Annual Finance Seminar	X	X			X		X	
Business Manager Network			X		X		X	
<i><b>General Support</b></i>								
Regional Charter School				X			X	
Special Education Advisory				X		X	X	



## Appendix F

### School Leadership Mentoring Program Components and Topics

#### *Components of the Principal Training Program*

- Fall Mentor Cohort Training
- Fall Principal Cohort Training
- Quarterly Cohort Meetings
- Monthly Mentor Visits
- Bi-Monthly Mentor Phone Calls
- Monthly Written Reflections
- Site Visit Observations
- Annual Professional Development Conference

#### *Sample Topics for Training Meetings*

- Safety
- School Culture
- Instructional Strategies
- Use of Time and Resources
- Leadership Models
- Staff Evaluations and Observations

## Appendix G

### CDE Website Resources

#### Publications

- The Leadership Report (2010)
- The State of Charter Schools in Colorado Report (2009)
- A Typology of Colorado's Charter Schools (2009),
- Colorado Charter Schools Evaluation Study (2009),
- Special Education in Charter Schools (2006),
- Effect of House Bill 99-1113 on Charter School Funding (2004),
- Capital Finance Study (2000).

#### Handbooks and Guidebooks

- Charter Start-up/Operating Handbook
- Capital Construction Manual
- Colorado Charter Schools Special Education Guidebook
- Colorado Charter Schools Special Education Guidelines: Negotiating New and Renewal Charter
- Windows on Leadership: A Manual for Developing Leadership in Charter Schools
- Contracts for Colorado Charter Schools
- Human Resources Handbook for Charter Schools
- Finance Management Guide for Colorado Charter Schools
- Developing Leadership in Charter Schools Manual
- Administrator's Guide to Leading a Colorado Charter School
- Charter School Support Initiative Resource Manual

#### Authorizer Information and Support

- Standard Application, Checklist, and Review Rubric
- Sample Contract Language
- Links to the Charter School Institute
- Waiver information
- Exclusive Chartering Authority data and resources
- Accountability resources
- Appeal Dispositions
- Training Meeting notes

#### Charter School Development and Operation Resources

- Colorado's Start-up and Implementation Grant Program
- Standard Application, Checklist, and Review Rubric
- Sample Contract Language
- Charter School Support Initiative information and resources
- Legal and legislative resources and information
  - Links to Colorado's Charter Schools Act and other state laws
  - Links to The Elementary and Secondary Education Act and other federal laws

- Links to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act and relevant information
  - Links to civil rights laws
  - Links to special education laws
- Charter school finance information and resources
- Human resource information and resources
- Parent and student relationship information and resources
- Sample Documents
  - Applications
  - Evaluations
  - Interview questions
  - Bylaws
  - Minutes
  - Accountability plans
  - Discipline policies
  - Governance policies
  - Job descriptions
  - Parent surveys
  - Special education forms
  - Grievance procedures
  - Safety plans
  - Surveys
  - Parent/student handbooks
  - Bulletins
- Training Resources
  - Audio recordings
  - Handouts
  - PowerPoint Presentations
  - Events Calendar
- CDE Information and Links
  - Capital construction
  - Special education
  - Civil rights
  - Federal programs

#### General information

- Lists of external resources
- Curriculum models
- Grant opportunities
- Charter school accomplishments
- Data
- Contacts for each charter school
- FAQ sheets
- Links to national publications
- Links to national research

Appendix H  
Letters of Support



COLORADO LEAGUE of  
CHARTER SCHOOLS  
*focus on achievement*

March 30, 2010

Ms. Denise Mund  
Schools of Choice  
201 East Colfax Avenue  
Suite 300  
Denver, CO 80203-1799

Re: Letter of Support

Dear Denise:

The Colorado League of Charter Schools is pleased to continue its collaboration with the Colorado Department of Education Schools of Choice Unit in implementing efforts as outlined in the Federal grant application for the Charter School Program.

Our recent collaboration through the Colorado League of Charter Schools 2010-2013 strategic planning process has identified specific initiatives which focus on New School Development and Replication, and Authorizer Quality, which are crucial objectives in charter school growth. As part of these efforts, and as the charter school market in Colorado continues to mature, the League will continue to work with CDE to design and support policy features that make it easier for schools with proven models of academic excellence to replicate and build charter networks. The League will also collaborate with CDE to establish NASCA authorizer standards as the *expected standard* for all authorizers in our state and to embed *Accreditation Plus*, an initiative to make charter and authorizer quality relevant, within the state's accreditation rules.

By combining our efforts and resources, and aligning with the objectives as outlined in this grant application, our partnership with CDE will create a win-win scenario for the over 160 charter schools currently operating in Colorado, the 34 schools currently in start up operations, as well as future Colorado charter schools.

Denise, we have enjoyed our work together and look forward to continuing our support of your efforts and the implementation of this grant. On behalf of Colorado's charter schools, thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely,

James W. Griffin  
*President*



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## CHARTER SCHOOL INSTITUTE

April 14, 2010

To whom it may concern:

The Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) is honored to write a letter supporting the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) Schools of Choice Unit renewal of its Charter School Program (CSP) funding. Over the past three years CSI and the Schools of Choice Unit have collaborated with the ultimate goal of ensuring high student academic achievement.

CSI has expanded and today authorizes 19 charter schools throughout the state. CDE was instrumental in aiding CSI during its expansion from 1 to 19 charters. It has provided templates, and other necessary tools to ensure that CSI's authorizing department was on solid ground. CDE has also provided assistance to other charter authorizers (school districts) throughout the state. A common theme heard from many of Colorado's school districts is that they do not feel that they have the staff or knowledge to properly authorize a charter school within their district. In response, CDE established an authorizers' quarterly meeting to discuss data, current issues and best practices. The initial attendees were charter friendly districts who already had a collaborative relationship with CDE's School of Choice Unit. However, in the past year several adversarial school districts have started attending. We understand that districts have heard that the meetings are helpful: they are not about the pros and cons of charters; rather about how to hold charters accountable using best practices. It is CSI's opinion that these meetings have shifted the conversation from "should we even allow charters?" to "how do we monitor and provide oversight of a charter?"

In the fall of 2008 CDE took the initiative and created the "3C's." This collaborative consisted of CDE, CSI and The Colorado League of Charter Schools (The League). Its main goal was to establish frequent communication among the three largest charter organizations in Colorado and to ensure that these organizations have a consistent message to all charter schools, currently operating and soon to open. Last year the "3C's" developed a Charter School Application now available online. The need for this application was clear: there were too many small and medium sized school districts that were unclear about what a rigorous application should look like. Today, the "3C's" application has been adopted by CSI and several other school districts throughout the state. During the past year the 3C's continued to meet and created a model contract including steps for school closure. The 3C's will continue to work together this spring. The focus is now on collaboratively developing a renewal application available for any of Colorado's charter authorizers.

In late summer of 2009 National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) performed an audit of CSI. In response to the report CSI is revamping its organizational structure. This restructuring has been discussed at both the quarterly authorizer meetings

as well as ongoing meetings with the 3C's. It is CSI's goal to be transparent and provide CDE with a plan of action and lessons learned so that both CDE and the 3C's can disseminate the information to other authorizers.

The Colorado General Assembly is currently considering two pieces of legislation pertaining to charter school quality. One bill addresses charter school quality and the second addresses authorizer quality. The authorizer quality standards are predicated on NACSA's quality standards. Both of these bills support the work produced in CDE's Schools of Choice Unit over the years utilizing CSP funds.

CSI believes that the CDE's Schools of Choice Unit has been instrumental in improving opportunities for the parents and students to have more choice in their children's education. In addition, the Unit provides leadership and training programs for both new and existing operators as well as authorizers that improve the quality of K-12 education in our state.

Colorado's children are being served by this highly successful program. Please continue funding Colorado's CSP.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Mark Hyatt' with a stylized star or flourish at the end.

Mark Hyatt  
Executive Director  
Colorado Charter School Institute  
[Markhyatt@csi.state.co.us](mailto:Markhyatt@csi.state.co.us)  
(303) 866 2298

## Appendix I

### Charter School Program Monitoring Report for Colorado



**Charter Schools Program (CSP)**

# **Colorado Monitoring Report**

**Prepared for the  
U.S. Department of Education**

**June 5, 2009**



## CONTENTS

<b>I. Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. Data Collection Process and Methodology .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>III. Background Information on Colorado.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>IV. Findings.....</b>	<b>6</b>
1. <i>Subgrant Application and Award Process.....</i>	6
2. <i>Outreach, Guidance, and Technical Assistance .....</i>	16
3. <i>State CSP Quality and Performance Assessment .....</i>	23
4. <i>Subgrantee Monitoring and Performance.....</i>	33
5. <i>Administrative and Fiscal Responsibilities.....</i>	35
6. <i>Dissemination Subgrant Applications and Awards .....</i>	40
<b>V. Summary.....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>46</b>

## **I. Introduction**

Monitoring is the regular and systematic examination of a State's administration and implementation of a Federal education grant, contract, or cooperative agreement administered by the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Monitoring the use of Federal funds has long been an essential function of ED. ED monitors programs under the general administrative authority of the U.S. Department of Education Organization Act. Section 80.40(e) of Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) also permits ED to make site visits as warranted by program needs.

ED policy requires every program office overseeing discretionary or formula grant programs to prepare a monitoring plan for each of its programs. The plans are designed to link established monitoring to achieving program goals and objectives; adhering to laws, regulations, and assurances governing the program; and conforming to the approved application and other relevant documents. In a July 2002 memo from the Deputy Secretary, each principal office was advised to monitor (1) for results; (2) to ensure compliance with the law; and (3) to protect against waste, fraud, and abuse.

The purpose of the Charter Schools Program (CSP) Monitoring Plan is to assess the extent to which States are implementing their approved grant projects in compliance with Title V, Part B Public Charter Schools Program statutes, regulations, and guidance. The CSP monitoring objectives are threefold:

- Increase CSP fiscal and programmatic accountability at the State and local levels.
- Support and improve SEA capacity in carrying out the purpose of the CSP through the timely and efficient administration of Federal funds awarded under this program and other Federal education programs.
- Assist SEAs with the planning and implementation of high-quality charter schools.

Thus, monitoring serves not only as a means for helping States achieve high-quality implementation of their CSP grant project, it also helps ED to be a better advisor and partner with States in that effort. CSP monitoring efforts are designed to focus on the results of States' efforts to implement critical requirements of the CSP using available resources and guidance. Information and data from State monitoring also assists to inform the programs' performance indicators under the Government Performance Results Act.

## II. Data Collection Process and Methodology

The CSP Monitoring Plan is being conducted with the assistance of WestEd (Contract # ED-04-CO-0060/0001 Task Order 22). The plan assesses State performance and compliance using indicators based on Federal charter school law including statutes, EDGAR, and non-regulatory guidance. The indicators were provided in advance of the site visit and used to guide the monitoring process. (See Appendix 1: *Monitoring Handbook for SEA Grantees 2008–2009 Monitoring Cycle*.)

In conducting this comprehensive review, the monitoring team carried out a number of major activities. These included:

- Reviewing key background documents on the State's CSP grant provided by ED, including the grant application, annual performance report, and reviews of the annual performance report by the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP). (See Appendix 2: *Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007)*; Appendix 3: *Annual Performance Report (2008)*; Appendix 4: *U.S. Department of Education Charter School Program Review of 2007 Grantee Evaluation Plans (CEEP)*; and Appendix 5: *CSP Data Collection Template Colorado 2007*.)
- Researching and synthesizing other available information about the State's charter schools program including relevant statutes, reports and evaluations, newspaper articles, and other data from government, research, and advocacy organizations.
- Consulting with ED prior to the site visit about issues of special concern in the State's administration of the CSP.
- Arranging the site visit in coordination with State and charter school officials, including identifying State officials for interviews and selecting subgrantees for visits.
- During the site visit interviews, collecting evidence of the State's compliance or performance with respect to each indicator. Materials and artifacts were collected at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and subgrantee school sites to document compliance with Title V, Part B Public Charter Schools Program statutes, regulations, and guidance.
- Analyzing the evidence obtained and collecting any follow-up information necessary to produce this report.

The site visit was conducted over a five-day period from January 26 through January 30, 2009. The first two days of the visit were devoted to interviews at the CDE with the Schools of Choice Unit staff (also the CSP grant office), representatives from the Grants Fiscal Management Services Unit, Exceptional Student Leadership Unit (special education), Office of Federal Program Administration (Title grants), and charter school authorizers. The team also met with representatives from the Colorado League of Charter Schools. (See Appendix 6: *Colorado Onsite Monitoring Visit Agenda*.)

The remaining portion of the visit was devoted to interviews with subgrantees of the 2007 CSP grant. At the subgrantee sites, the monitoring team met with charter school directors, business

managers, and, where possible, governing board members and representatives from charter management organizations (CMOs). The monitoring team visited the following schools:

- Vanguard Classical School – a K–8 school in Aurora developed in part by Cerebral Palsy of Colorado and authorized by Aurora Public Schools. Vanguard specializes in serving students with mild to moderate disabilities alongside traditional students using an inclusion program;
- Lotus School for Excellence – a middle school in Aurora, authorized by Aurora Public Schools, with a science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) focus;
- Banning Lewis Ranch Academy – a K–8 school outside of Colorado Springs, authorized by Falcon Public School, that is operated by Mosaica Education, Inc.;
- Colorado Springs Early Colleges – a high school in Colorado Springs, authorized by the Charter School Institute (CSI), that partners with other local colleges and universities to provide access and exposure to college courses and degree programs; and
- Justice High School – a high school in Boulder founded by a local magistrate and housed in the county court house. Justice High School is authorized by Boulder Valley Public Schools and serves adjudicated, chronically truant, and traditional students.

All interviews were organized around the CSP monitoring protocol. (See Appendix 1: *Monitoring Handbook for SEA Grantees 2008–2009 Monitoring Cycle*.) This report is an analysis and assessment of the data, grant award documents, interviews, and information gathered prior and during the site visit to the State. Findings in this report reflect the monitoring team's observations and conclusions about the State's compliance and performance under the CSP grant from the beginning of the current grant period to the time of the site visit.

A draft copy of the monitoring report was provided to State officials for review, with a request for technical edits and corrections accompanied by supporting documentation. The State's response is shown in Appendix 49: *Colorado's Response to the Charter Schools Program Monitoring Report*. This final report takes into consideration the State's response as well as all of the other evidence gathered during the monitoring process.

### III. Background Information on Colorado

#### Policies and Context

Charter schools have been in operation in Colorado since the ratification of the Charter School Act of 1993. (See Appendix 7: *The Colorado Charter Schools Act*.) Under the original provisions of the Act, only local Boards of Education could authorize charter schools. As such, charter schools are considered a part of the local school district under which they are authorized.

Charters can be authorized for periods of three to five years and charter renewals by the local Boards of Education cannot exceed five years. There is no cap on the number of charter schools authorized or the number of students enrolled in charter schools. In the event that an LEA denies a charter application, the State Board of Education can review appeals from charter schools. In accordance with the statute and as a function of operating within the authorizing LEA, charters schools are audited in a manner consistent with public school audits, are included in consolidated applications, and are bound by State and Federal requirements including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

In 2004, the State's charter schools statute was amended to include the Charter School Institute (CSI) as an alternate, statewide authorizer. The CSI can authorize charter schools across the State, but only those within districts that have not received and retained exclusive chartering authority. As of the 2007–2008 school year, approximately ten districts did not have exclusive chartering authority.

To receive and retain exclusive chartering authority, a district must provide evidence of fair treatment of charter schools including full and accurate accounting practices (specifically regarding administrative overhead costs); permission and ability for charter schools to purchase district services (at the school's discretion); an absence of enrollment or charter caps; and cooperation with valid State orders. Additionally, districts desiring to receive exclusive chartering authority must also show some combination of the following (among others): distribute a pro rata share of mill levies to charter schools; provide assistance to meet charter school facilities needs; distribute a pro rata share of Federal and State grant funds received by the district; and provide adequate staff and resources at cost. (See Appendix 8: *Exclusive Chartering Authority Request Checklist*.) State staff explained that they routinely monitor districts to ensure they are complying with exclusive chartering provisions.

The criteria by which a district achieves and retains exclusive chartering authority from the State Board means it demonstrates an openness and capacity to authorize charter schools, but several people the monitoring team interviewed felt that the "exclusivity" label has been bestowed on some districts that have been openly hostile to chartering even in the face of litigation.

The vast majority of charter schools in the State are authorized by LEAs and developed by independent developers. Very few of the State's current subgrantees contract with CMOs. Several of the subgrantees interviewed during the monitoring visit explained that they have had multiple experiences developing and opening charter schools. Only one subgrantee, currently

operated by a CMO, did not have developers, board members, or school administrators with experience opening more than one charter school around the State.

#### Charter Schools Program Grant

Colorado has received five CSP grants dating back to 1995. To date, the State has received grant awards totaling over \$75,000,000. The current 2007 CSP grant was awarded on June 7, 2007 for \$20,887,813. The State received first-year funding of \$6,323,094. In the second year of the grant, the State received funding for two years totaling \$14,564,719.

Colorado's CSP grant application approved for 2007–2010 cites the following three objectives. The State's objectives directly reflect current gaps that the State has determined exist in its programming. The State has focused the use of CSP funds to directly address what it considers to be its weakness: high-quality charter high schools, charter school capacity in existing schools, and charter school leadership. The State's three objectives are:

- 1) Increase the number of new high-quality charter schools, and in particular high-quality high schools, that enable all students to make Adequate Yearly Progress toward meeting State content standards.*
- 2) Build capacity in existing charter schools to improve academic achievement and enable all students to make Adequate Yearly Progress toward meeting State content standards.*
- 3) Strengthen the skills and knowledge of administrators, boards, and authorizers to build their leadership capabilities and to reduce turnover. (See Appendix 2: Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007).)*

This monitoring review is focused on the administration of the 2007 grant. Prior to the monitoring site visit, ED expressed a concern about entries in the CSP Data Collection Form and the possible extension of subgrants beyond allowable time periods. During the site visit, the monitoring team and State officials determined that the issues surrounding the data collection template were the result of data entry errors and did not imply excessive grant award periods. See Indicator 1.6 for an additional discussion on grant award periods.

## IV. Findings

Monitoring focused on six areas: (1) Subgrant Application and Award Process; (2) Outreach, Guidance, and Technical Assistance; (3) State CSP Quality and Performance Assessment; (4) Subgrantee Monitoring and Performance; (5) Administrative and Fiscal Responsibilities; and (6) Dissemination Subgrant Applications and Awards. Within each area, the protocol identifies two to seven indicators of State compliance or performance. This section presents the monitoring team's observations, assessment of the State's performance, and recommendations for each indicator. The indicator rating system is as follows:

- 1 – State does not meet the indicator.
- 2 – State partially meets the indicator.
- 3 – State fully meets the indicator.

### 1. Subgrant Application and Award Process

A major function of CSP grantees is to conduct an application and award process to distribute CSP funds to subgrantees in the State. Up to 95 percent of each State's CSP allocation is distributed to subgrantees through this process. This section focuses on the State's requirements of subgrant applicants and its processes for evaluating, selecting, and awarding subgrants. Specifically, this section addresses the State's performance in fulfilling its responsibilities to:

- Require subgrant applicants to submit an application with certain information and assurances;
- Determine that applicants are eligible for subgrants;
- Ensure that eligible applicants meet Federal definitions of a charter school;
- Employ a peer review process to evaluate subgrant applications;
- Award subgrants to achieve geographic diversity and support a variety of educational approaches; and
- Ensure CSP planning and implementation subgrants are used within the allowable time periods.

**Indicator 1.1: The State requires each eligible applicant desiring to receive a subgrant to submit an application to the SEA that includes the required descriptions and assurances. In accordance with section 5203 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the State demonstrates that it includes each of these descriptions and assurances in its subgrantee application and that successful applicants adequately address each of them in their applications.**

- A description of the educational program to be implemented by the school, including (i) how the program will enable all students to meet challenging State student academic achievement standards, (ii) the grade levels or ages of children to be served, and (iii) the curriculum and instructional practices to be used;
- A description of how the charter school will be managed;



- A description of (i) the objectives of the charter school and (ii) the methods by which the charter school will determine its progress toward achieving those objectives;
- A description of the administrative relationship between the charter school and the authorized public chartering agency;
- A description of how parents and other members of the community will be involved in the planning, program design, and implementation of the charter school;
- A description of how the authorized public chartering agency will provide for the continued operation of the school once the Federal grant has expired, if such agency determines that the school has met its objectives;
- A request and justification for waivers of any Federal statutory or regulatory provisions that the eligible applicant believes are necessary for the successful operation of the charter school and a description of any State or local rules, generally applicable to public schools, that the applicant proposes be waived or otherwise not applied to the school;
- A description of how the subgrant funds will be used, including a description of how such funds will be used in conjunction with other Federal programs administered by the U.S. Secretary of Education (the Secretary);
- A description of how students in the community will (i) be informed about the charter school and (ii) be given an equal opportunity to attend the charter school;
- An assurance that the eligible applicant will annually provide the Secretary and the SEA such information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in subparagraph (C)(i);
- An assurance that the applicant will cooperate with the Secretary and the SEA in evaluating the program assisted under this subpart;
- A description of how a charter school that is considered a local education agency (LEA) under State law or an LEA in which the charter school is located will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(c)(1)(B) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA);
- If the eligible applicant desires to use subgrant funds for dissemination activities under section 5202(c)(2)(c) of the ESEA, a description of those activities and how those activities will involve charter schools and other public schools, LEAs, developers, and potential developers;
- Such other information and assurances as the Secretary and the SEA may require.

Observations: The State's Request for Proposals (RFP) for subgrant applicants is a comprehensive 52-page guide available on the web. (See Appendix 9: *Charter School Grant Program Request for Proposal*.) The RFP includes 13 required elements and the scoring criteria for each section. The State's RFP also includes guidance on the definition of eligible applicant, lottery requirements, fundable activities, funding levels, application timelines, a writer's guide, frequently asked questions, and a final checklist. The following table depicts how the State RFP aligns with Federal application requirements.

<b>Federal Subgrant Application Requirements</b>	<b>State RFP for Subgrant Applicants</b>
Educational program	Research-Based Program / Comprehensive Design Aligned to Standards (p. 15; 12 points)
Charter school management	Charter School Governing Board (p. 17; 5 points) Business Capacity – Fiscal Practices and Policies (p. 19; 5 points) Networking and External Support (p. 21; 2 points)
Subgrantee objectives and progress measures	Project Goals (p. 12; 8 points)
Relationship between the charter school and the authorizer	Business Capacity – Role of the Sponsoring School District (p. 19, 5 points)
Parent and community involvement	Parent/Community Involvement (p. 17, 5 points)
Continued operation	Continued Operation (p. 23; 8 points) Facilities – Long-range Facility Planning (p. 20; 2 points)
Waivers	Contractual Autonomy (p. 23; 8 points) List of Waivers (Appendix H)
Use of funds, including in conjunction with other Federal programs	Project Budget Narrative (p. 13; 8 points) Professional Development (p. 22; 5 points) Continued Operation – use of Federal title funds (p. 23; 8 points) Federal Funds Will Be Applying For (item 23) Appendices B-F: Grant Budget Form, Charter School Budget/Audit, Technology Plan, Library Development Plan, Professional Development Plan
Student and community outreach and equal opportunity	Low-Income / At-Risk Students (p. 18, 5 points) Lottery / Enrollment Requirements (p. 6, Certification #4, Appendix A)
Assurances on satisfactory progress	Accountability / Accreditation (p. 16; 8 points) Data Management Plan (Appendix G) Certification #2
Assurance on evaluating the program	Certification #2
IDEA compliance	Certifications #3, 7, 8, 18
Dissemination activities	Not applicable
Other information and assurances	Certifications (a total of 20)

The RFP addresses the descriptions required by Section 5203 of the ESEA, although the language used by the State is not identical with the Federal statute in every case. The RFP is particularly light in the area of special education. While it includes certifications as noted above related to the transfer of IDEA records, it does not ask for a description of how the charter school

or its LEA will comply with sections 613(a)(5) and 613(c)(1)(B) of IDEA. Indeed, “special education” receives brief mention only twice in the 13 “Required Elements” sections:

- In “(4) Accountability” on page 16: “The [accountability] plan should include how you will track performance across all aspects of the school, including the Board of Directors, administration, staff, faculty, finance management, Special Education, etc.”
- In “(9) Networking and External Support” on page 21: “Technical assistance and external support is encouraged in areas such as ... Federally funded programs (e.g., Special Education and Title I).”

This limited attention to the provision of special education services may be a function of a charter school’s location within an LEA, which is expected to have primary responsibility for these services.

As a condition of submitting a CSP subgrant application, the State requires the eligible applicant to file an “Intent to Submit” form and for at least one person from each charter school to attend the State’s grant writer’s seminar. (See Appendix 10: *Charter School Start-Up Grant Writer’s Training January 20, 2009* and Appendix 11: *Intent to Submit Form*.) Upon receipt of the “Intent to Submit” form, the prospective applicant is assigned a consultant who serves as a resource throughout the grant submission process. A former grant consultant that the monitoring team interviewed said it was typical to interact with the applicant twice weekly and often daily during the final two weeks leading up to the grant submission deadline. The State’s website also includes a variety of other resources, including a *Best Practices Guidebook* (available online and discussed further in Indicator 2.4) and a separate portion of the website devoted to waiver requests (discussed further in Indicator 2.5).

The monitoring team reviewed the completed proposals from the five schools visited and found them to be complete and responsive to the State’s RFP requirements. During the SEA interviews, the monitoring team also reviewed the RFP evaluation rubrics for each of the subgrantees visited as a part of the grant files review (discussed further in Indicator 5.5). It bears noting that one of the subgrantees visited during the monitoring visit was denied a CSP subgrant when it first applied. The team also reviewed the RFP and rubric of applicants that were not funded. (See, for example, Appendix 12: *Colorado Charter School Grant Program Application for Patricia Miranda Charter Academy*.) One application was denied for several reasons, including (among other reasons) because project goals were not specific enough and because there was not data to support goals; because the educational program was not supported by research; and because the budget narrative was vague and unrealistic. (See Appendix 13: *PCPSP Start-up Grant Team Summary Score Sheet*.)

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. All required descriptions and assurances are included in the State’s subgrant application process, though the State could more directly request applicants to explain how the charter school or its LEA will comply with IDEA.

Recommendation: None.

**Indicator 1.2: The State ensures each applicant desiring to receive a subgrant meets the term “eligible applicant.” In accordance with section 5210(3) of the ESEA,** the State demonstrates that it determines that developers have (1) applied to an authorized public chartering authority to operate a charter school and (2) provided adequate and timely notice to that authority of their intentions to apply for CSP grant funds, plus a copy of their CSP subgrant application. In those cases in which a State awards pre-charter planning grants, the State demonstrates how it determines that the authorized public chartering agency to which a charter school proposal will be submitted has not yet been determined at the time that the subgrant application is submitted in accordance with section 5203(d)(3) of the ESEA.

Observations: The State’s RFP defines an “eligible applicant” as a “brand new startup that did not previously exist or a school that has substantially changed its curriculum, staff or school design.” The RFP goes into detail about how an existing public school can become eligible as a “conversion” charter school and the “separate and distinct” criteria (e.g., separate staff, facility, administrator, governing board) that would be applied in assessing the eligibility of an additional campus under a single charter, including “that its lottery is completely separate and that no students transition between campuses.”

The RFP includes an Eligibility Form that requires applicants to identify the selected authorizer, the status of the applicant’s charter (i.e., approved or submitted), as well as the origins of the charter school (i.e., grassroots startup, public school conversion, private school conversion, or other). The Eligibility Form also requires applicants to briefly describe charter school autonomy, distinction with previous school (if applicable), governing board members, and lottery policy. (See Appendix 14: *Colorado Charter School Grant Program Eligibility Form*.)

The State does not allow pre-charter planning grants and requires a signed contract between the subgrantee and authorizer prior to release of grant funds. The RFP also includes signature lines for the authorizer, but makes plain that such signatures are not mandatory but would constitute evidence that proper notice has been given. The requirement for “adequate and timely notice” to the authorizer is also covered in Certification #6 of the RFP. In the subgrantee files the monitoring team examined, appropriate authorizer signatures were in evidence. (See Appendix 9: *Charter School Grant Program Request for Proposal*.)

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State ensures that entities requesting CSP funding are eligible applicants and have provided timely notice to the authorizer, as required in Federal statute and guidance.

Recommendation: None.

**Indicator 1.3: The State ensures each eligible applicant planning and implementing a charter school meets the term “charter school.” In accordance with section 5210 of the ESEA,** the term “charter school” means a public school that:

- In accordance with a specific State statute authorizing the granting of charters to schools, is exempt from significant State or local rules that inhibit the flexible operation and

management of public schools, but not from any rules relating to the other requirements of this paragraph;

- Is created by a developer as a public school or is adapted by a developer from an existing public school and is operated under public supervision and direction;
- Operates in pursuit of a specific set of educational objectives determined by the school's developer and agreed to by the authorized public chartering agency;
- Provides a program of elementary or secondary education, or both;
- Is nonsectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations and is not affiliated with a sectarian school or religious institution;
- Does not charge tuition;
- Complies with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and part B of IDEA;
- Is a school to which parents choose to send their children and that admits students on the basis of a lottery if more students apply for admission than can be accommodated;
- Agrees to comply with the same Federal and State audit requirements as do other elementary schools and secondary schools in the State unless such requirements are specifically waived for the purpose of this program;
- Meets all applicable Federal, State, and local health and safety requirements;
- Operates in accordance with State law; and
- Has a written performance contract with the authorized public chartering agency in the State that includes a description of how student performance will be measured in charter schools pursuant to State assessments that are required of other schools and pursuant to any other assessments mutually agreeable to the authorized public chartering agency and the charter school.

The State demonstrates how it determines at the time of application that each applicant meets the term "charter school" during the period of Federal funding.

Observations: The State's RFP includes the Federal definition of "charter school." The RFP also notes that grantees must conform to the Federal term to be eligible to receive grant funds and requires all first year applications to demonstrate their eligibility. (See Appendix 9: *Charter School Grant Program Request for Proposal*.) As noted previously, a signed contract between the school and the authorizer is required prior to the release of grant funds. The Schools of Choice Unit retains a copy of each executed contract as part of the official grant file. Contract language will vary by authorizer, but examples that the monitoring team reviewed also underscore many of the definitional requirements such as required State curriculum, nonsectarian programs, free admission, IDEA compliance, health and safety rules, nonprofit status, and student performance. (See Appendix 15: *Caprock Academy Charter School Contract*.)

The State also monitors that subgrantees continue to meet the Federal term "charter school" in the course of the grant. In addition to verifying information contained in the Eligibility Form, executed charter school contract, and applicable certifications on the RFP, the State's Year 2 on-site monitoring protocol looks for evidence of fidelity in a school's described and actual governance structure and a lottery process that is consistent with the policy in the grant

application. (See Appendix 16: *Colorado Charter School Grant Program CDE Schools of Choice Unit Monitoring Visit Protocol*.)

At least one of the subgrantees visited has a separate but related pre-K component on-site. When questioned about this, the CSP director noted that the State clearly communicates to subgrantees that they cannot use Federal funds to support the pre-K grade and such students must be part of an open enrollment process when advancing to kindergarten. The State scrutinizes the budget requests of these subgrantees to look for any irregularities in spending that might appear to be subsidizing the pre-K level.

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State uses a number of data collection methods to ensure compliance with the Federal term “charter school.”

Recommendation: None.

**Indicator 1.4: The State uses a peer review process to review and select applications for assistance under this program. In accordance with section 5204(c) of the ESEA,** the State demonstrates that it employs a systematic process for identifying and selecting peer reviewers; that reviewers are provided adequate guidance and training in the review process; and that their reviews are consistently used in selecting applications for funding under this program.

Observations: The State conducts subgrant reviews on a regular schedule twice annually. Start-up grant proposals are typically due by the 15th (or the nearest business day) of October (Tier I) or February (Tier II). The only difference between the tiers is timing. (See Appendix 17: *Colorado Public Charter School Grant Program 2008–2009 Calendar*.) Subgrantees can choose to submit an application for either tier; however, if an application is denied in Tier I, the applicant must wait until the following year to reapply. A Tier I application date allows for more use of planning and program design funds at the cost of less time to prepare the subgrant application. A Tier II application date allows for more time to prepare the application but less time to use the planning and program design funds. Subgrantees awarded planning and program design subgrants (regardless of tier) must be operational for the following school year. The State requires applicants to resubmit their subgrant applications in the event that they cannot open their doors for the following school year.

The State issues a call for reviewers via its listserv and maintains a prospect pool of about 25 reviewers who serve without compensation. (See Appendix 18: *LISTSERV: Grant Reviewers Needed for Charter School Grant Program and Grant Reviewers Needed Handout Attachment*.) The State collects basic background information on reviewers and ensures that all have a connection to charter schooling as school administrators, financial managers, or governing board members. The State has also used professors from area colleges. The State makes sure it has a variety of perspectives represented on each review team, including a blend of new and experienced reviewers.

Each reviewer receives training on the scoring process. The peer reviewer training covers conflict of interest, independent review instructions, rubric and scoring guide, as well as descriptions of specific application components (i.e., technology plans, professional development



plans, and data management plans). (See Appendix 19: *Grant Reviewers PowerPoint*.) Reviewers must sign an agreement that explains the scope of work involved, conflicts disclosure, and related due diligence points. (See Appendix 20: *Conflict of Interest Questions for Grant Application Reviewers*.)

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State uses a peer review process to review and select applications for assistance under the CSP grant program.

Recommendations: None.

**Indicator 1.5: The State awards subgrants in a manner, to the extent possible, to ensure that such subgrants: (a) are distributed throughout different areas of the State, including urban and rural areas, and (b) will assist charter schools representing a variety of educational approaches. In accordance with section 5204(d) of the ESEA, the State demonstrates that the manner in which it awards subgrants results in the distribution of subgrants throughout different areas of the State and to charter schools representing a variety of educational approaches.**

Observations: The director of the Schools of Choice Unit noted that the State is not an approved authorizer and does not have direct control over where charters are authorized. However, the State conducts authorization-related workshops to aid developers in the charter authorization process.

One of the State's major efforts to facilitate the authorization process has been to work with the Colorado League of Charter Schools (CLCS) and the CSI to design and implement a common charter application. The joint effort hopes to develop a common application for charter schools, which will take some of the mystery out of the chartering process and make it easier for districts to authorize charter schools. The common application will consist, first, of a common application narrative with links to helpful statewide resources for applicants; second, a checklist for a complete application; and third, a sample evaluation rubric that includes a recommended interview protocol developed by the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA). Individuals interviewed by the monitoring team who were working on the joint project conjectured that State law would have to change to increase incentives for the common application's use, including giving authorizers who use the process a certain benefit of the doubt on appeal to the State board. Still, the State hopes that this "best practices" effort will enhance the quality of reviews in districts that are currently putting few resources toward chartering, and inspire more districts to take the leap and begin to authorize charter schools.

The State has also conducted several evaluations to study the distribution of charter schools in the State. According to its *State of Charter Schools in Colorado: 2004–05* report (p. 26), only a fourth of all districts (45 of 181 districts) have authorized charter schools. (See Appendix 21: *State of Charter Schools in Colorado: 2004–05*.) The State has also commissioned a typology of charter schools across the State. (See Appendix 22: *A Typology of Colorado Charter Schools*.) The *Typology* reported that most of Colorado's charter schools exist along the Front Range cities and suburbs and that nearly half of the charter schools authorized in the State are located in only 11 districts. Denver accounts for 26 of the State's charter schools and Colorado Springs is

responsible for chartering 22 more. The *Typology* also notes that Colorado has a high percentage of suburban charter schools, at 47 percent, relative to the norm nationally. This is largely attributable to charters being used as a strategy by districts, such as Douglas County, to meet the education demands brought on by high population growth. Notwithstanding this, the report cites a number of rural charter schools across the State.

One of the State's three objectives under its grant application relates tangentially to this indicator. In increasing the number of high-quality charter schools, one sub-objective addresses the need to increase the number of charter high schools. Correspondingly, the State's RFP assigns 10 priority points to secondary school applicants during the peer review process. Another sub-objective relates to serving a higher percentage of at-risk and special needs populations; up to 5 points on the RFP are assigned based on how subgrant applicants report they "will recruit, identify and serve the needs of low-income and at-risk students." The State's relative progress on these fronts will be covered under Indicator 3.3.

The State explains that it is encouraging diversity by geographic region and educational approaches "to the extent possible," but has limited success especially in the former category because districts are the exclusive authorizer in all but a few districts. The territory of the statewide authorizer, the CSL, is constrained because all but six districts have been granted "exclusive" chartering authority.

The State reports a greater degree of success in encouraging a variety of education approaches. It has chronicled this in the *Typology* report in hopes of increasing statewide awareness of the many successful education models that are in use among charter schools. The State's subgrant RFP takes direct aim at encouraging success by requiring applicants to demonstrate that their education programs have "a proven track record ... supported by scientifically-based research."

The State's most recent *State of Charter Schools* report (p. 28) cited 77.5 percent of Colorado's charter schools as using as the foundation of their educational program a comprehensive national reform model such as Core Knowledge (41 percent), Expeditionary Learning/Outward Bound (8.4 percent), and Montessori (4 percent). In terms of varying approaches, the *Typology* report (p. 18) cited 65 percent of Colorado charters as traditional, 27 percent as progressive, 2 percent as vocational, and 3 percent each as general or alternative delivery. (See Appendix 21: *State of Charter Schools in Colorado: 2004–05*.)

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State has taken steps, to the extent possible, to award subgrants such that they are distributed throughout the State and to assist charter schools representing a variety of educational approaches.

Recommendation: None.

**Indicator 1.6: CSP subgrants awarded by the State do not exceed the maximum program periods allowed. In accordance with section 5202(c)(2) of the ESEA,** subgrants awarded by the SEA to eligible applicants shall be for a period of not more than three years, of which the eligible applicant may use not more than 18 months for planning and program design and not more than two years for the initial implementation of a charter school.



Observations: Currently, CSP subgrant applicants for newly started charter schools may request up to \$450,000 over a three-year period, provided a request never exceeds \$1,300 per full-time student. Conversion schools may only request \$75,000 per each of three years, for a total of \$225,000. No funding level is guaranteed. (See Appendix 8: *Charter School Grant Program Request for Proposal*, p. 8.) According to the State's CSP Data Collection Template for the 2007 grant, no current subgrantee has received more than \$300,000. (See Appendix 5: *CSP Data Collection Template Colorado 2007*.) However, the monitors observed that 13 subgrantees under the previous grant received more than \$450,000. The State's RFP is specific about its deadlines, the timeline for start-up and implementation, fundable activities, and the grant process. Notwithstanding the date of acceptance (i.e., the date when a subgrant is approved), the State does not award the grant until a signed contract between the subgrantee and the authorizer is presented, thus ensuring it has spending authority for the full planning period between contract execution and opening, to not exceed 18 months. The State's fiscal office reports that almost every Tier I subgrantee, whose filing deadline is mid-October, is officially awarded its grant by the time that Tier II applications are due in mid-February. However, lag times do vary and subgrantees experiencing substantial delay in the execution of their charter contracts may have to resubmit their CSP application a year later if they miss the appropriate deadlines.

After the first year, subgrantees submit an implementation funds request for years two and three at the same time in the fall. The implementation grant RFP is included in the State's RFP package. (See Appendix 9: *Charter School Grant Program Request for Proposal*.) The implementation grant review process is non-competitive and less exhaustive. The subgrantee must demonstrate satisfactory progress and submit a revised budget and narrative, which is reviewed and scored by external peer reviewers. (See Appendix 23: *Colorado Charter School Grant Program Application for Vanguard Classical Charter School Year Three Implementation Grant*.) The subgrantee is evaluated on the basis of responsible use of grant funds, progress toward grant objectives, satisfactory student academic achievement, enrollment, and need.

The State's grant award letter for each period includes specific information about the start and end date of the award. (See Appendix 24: *Grants Fiscal Management Services Unit Award Notification*.) The State does not have a statewide eGrant system, so payment requests received from the district's grants coordinator on behalf of the school are processed by the State, by hand, once a month. The State's fiscal office tracks the level of expenditures based on the monthly drawdowns for each subgrantee and through annualized reporting. This is sufficient tracking for ensuring that the maximum award period is not exceeded (though related recommendations for tighter fiscal controls are discussed under Indicator 5.1 of this report). Extensions each year are permissible, but only for activities and expenses encumbered during the life of the grant. Ensuring that each subgrantee receives only one CSP grant is made easy because each subgrantee is given a unique grant code for the three-year duration of the grant.

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State awards and monitors grant timelines to ensure that subgrants do not exceed maximum program periods.

Recommendation: None.

## 2. Outreach, Guidance, and Technical Assistance

The ability of the SEA to provide outreach, guidance, and technical assistance to subgrantees is vital to the achievement of CSP goals such as expansion of the number of charter schools and promotion of high-quality charter schools. This section focuses on communication between the SEA and key stakeholders as well as on guidance and technical assistance the State provides to all charter schools. It includes indicators that cover the State's responsibilities in:

- Informing teachers, parents, and communities about the charter school program;
- Informing all charter schools about Federal funding opportunities;
- Making sure charters receive their commensurate share of Federal education funds allocated by formula each year;
- Disseminating best or promising practices of charter schools;
- Affording flexibility and autonomy to charter schools;
- Assuring the authorizing agency provides sustainability after the Federal grant has expired; and
- Ensuring that student records are transferred according to Federal and State laws.

**Indicator 2.1: The State informs teachers, parents, and communities about the SEA's charter school grant program. In accordance with section 5203(b)(1) of the ESEA,** the State demonstrates how the objectives of the SEA's charter school grant program will be fulfilled, including the steps taken to inform teachers, parents, and communities of the SEA's charter school grant program.

Observations: The State's approved CSP application highlights Grant Writer's Trainings as one of the main efforts to inform teachers, parents, and communities about the charter school grant program. (See Appendix 2: *Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007).*) Attendance at the grant writer's workshops is not mandatory, but it is strongly encouraged for at least one representative from interested parties. The Grant Writer's Training covers budget drafting, State statutes, Federal regulations (i.e., OMB Circular A-87), unallowable costs, grant funds access, records retention, and resources. (See Appendix 10: *Charter School Start-Up Grant Writer's Training January 20, 2009.*) In addition to the Grant Writer's Trainings, the State provides each applicant with a consultant to review applications before submission and provide feedback as appropriate. (See Appendix 25: *Typical Intro Email to Grant Applicants.*) Subgrantees visited during the monitoring visit mentioned participating in the grant writer's workshops and using the grant consultants during the application process.

State officials described several other efforts geared toward charter school grant program outreach, including annual charter school finance seminars and charter school business manager trainings. The Schools of Choice Unit also uses its listserv to forward CDE's weekly electronic newsletter, *The Scoop*, to inform interested parties about the charter school grant program.

The State collaborates with the CLCS and the CSI for grant-related outreach. One of the State's goals in working with the CLCS and CSI has been to provide guidance and support to charter developers. Together they have created a flow chart that outlines four major steps in the charter authorization process. Included in the fourth step, Contract and Negotiations, under Training and

Education, is mention of the charter school grant program and related training opportunities. (See Appendix 26: *Charter Development Flow Chart*.)

Lastly, the State's website contain extensive information about the grant program, including links to a 2008–2009 grant calendar (see Appendix 17: *Colorado Public Charter School Grant Program 2008–2009 Calendar*), a description of the grant program, a list of current subgrantees for 2008–2009, Non-Regulatory Guidance, EDGAR regulations, and other State and Federal grant opportunities. (See Appendix 27: *Charter School Grant Program Website*.)

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State informs teachers, parents, and communities about the charter school grant program.

Recommendation: None.

**Indicator 2.2: The State informs each charter school in the State about Federal funds that the charter school is eligible to receive and Federal programs in which the charter school may participate. In accordance with section 5203(b)(2)(A) of the ESEA and 34 CFR 76.789,** the State demonstrates that each charter school is informed about available Federal funds and Federal programs they may be eligible to participate in and provided assistance in applying for Federal education funds that are allocated by formula, including assistance with filing deadlines and submission of applications.

Observations: In its approved CSP application, the State indicated that it uses an email distribution list to share information on a variety of charter-related topics, including available Federal funds. The State also highlighted semi-monthly charter school business manager meetings and annual charter school finance seminars as avenues of information regarding available Federal funds. Furthermore, the State also noted including a Federal funds checklist as a part of the subgrant RFP. (See Appendix 2: *Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007)*.) In practice, the State provides information and training to charter schools on Federal programs in the manners described in its approved application.

The Federal programs checklist included in the RFP (*Federal Program Funds the Charter School Will Be Applying For*), though brief, lists Titles I through VI and asks subgrant applicants to indicate which Federal programs they intend to apply for. The directions also encourage the applicant to check with the LEA to understand who is eligible for funds and how funds are made available. (See Appendix 9: *Charter School Grant Program Request for Proposal*, p. 47, Box 22.)

The State provides additional information on Federal funding opportunities in the *Colorado Charter School Handbook*; however, this refers to Federal grant opportunities and private philanthropy rather than Federal formula funds. (See Appendix 28: *The Colorado Charter School Handbook*, p. 46.) The Handbook also directs interested parties to the State's website for additional information on competitive State and Federal grants (i.e., 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers, Education for Homeless Youth, IDEA Part B, Reading First, etc.).

The State also discusses Federal funding opportunities at monthly business manager and administrator meetings. At a business managers' meeting in March 2008, the CDE had a session called "Title Money and Charter Schools" that was led by staff from the State's Federal programs office. (See Appendix 29: *Charter School Business Manager Network Meeting Agenda*.)

Finally, as a part of an LEA, charter schools are included in an LEA's consolidated grant application for Federal funds. LEAs must consult and inform charter schools of Federal programs and include the signature of a representative from each charter school in the district on a district's consolidated grant application. (See Appendix 30: *Charter Schools: Verification of Consultation*.) The LEA receives Title funds after the charter consultation form has been submitted to the State. State officials noted that, in the past, they have withheld funds from districts until the form was completed. The State provided consolidated grant-related documentation for four of the five subgrantees visited by the monitoring team. Two of the subgrantees visited were not aware of the consultation and sign-off procedures, but documentation from the State clearly shows signatures from authorized school representatives. (In one case, the signature was from a previous principal and this may explain why the current principal and board president were not aware of the consultation. In another case, neither the board president nor the CMO representative were aware of the consultation, but the business manager's signature was on the form.) (See Appendix 31: *Aurora Public Schools 2008–2009 Consolidated Application Charter Sign Off*; Appendix 32: *Boulder Valley School District Consolidated Federal Programs Planning 2008–2009 Consultation with Charter Schools*; and Appendix 33: *Falcon School District 49 2008–2009 Consolidated Application Charter Sign Off*.)

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State has trainings, technical assistance, and verification systems in place to inform each charter school in the State about Federal funds that the charter school is eligible to receive.

Recommendation: The State's trainings, technical assistance, and verification systems to inform charter schools about Federal funds may be considered a best practice.

**Indicator 2.3: The State ensures that each charter school in the State receives its commensurate share of Federal education formula funds for which it is eligible. In accordance with sections 5203 and 5206 of the ESEA, the State demonstrates that for purposes of the allocation to schools by the States or their agencies of funds under Part A of Title I and any other Federal funds that the Secretary allocates to States on a formula basis, each SEA shall take such measures as are necessary to ensure that every charter school receives the Federal funding for which the charter school is eligible not later than five months after the charter school first opens, notwithstanding the fact that the identity and characteristics of the students enrolling in that charter school are not fully and completely determined until that charter school actually opens. The measures similarly shall ensure that every charter school expanding its enrollment in any subsequent year of operation receives the Federal funding for which the charter school is eligible not later than five months after such expansion. To do so, the State and the CSO need to have a definition of "significant expansion."**

Observations: The State's approved CSP application indicates that the State relies on Federal program staff and LEAs to treat charter schools fairly (as they would any other school) and provide access to Federal funds. Furthermore, the application notes that the State regularly audits the Federal programs that charter schools participate in to ensure that schools are receiving their commensurate share of Federal formula funds. (See Appendix 2: *Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007)*, p. 48.)

The State definition of "significant expansion" covers unusual and unplanned expansion. Student enrollment counts are taken once a year on October 1, and the October 1 count is used to determine a school's eligibility for Federal funds. State officials from the Federal programs office explained that Federal funds would be appropriately adjusted if a school significantly expands within the first five months of opening. The State has a five-year monitoring cycle for Federal programs that includes annual desk review for an LEA's Title programs. If there were a complaint, a more detailed review would occur. However, there are no mechanisms in place to accommodate growth after October 1 or to audit October 1 counts mid-year. State officials from the Federal programs office also explained that they have made an effort to educate the LEAs on eligible Federal funds and commensurate share and reinforce the expected roles and responsibilities of LEAs and charter schools.

Representatives from one charter school visited by the monitoring team felt that the use of a single October 1 count was not a proper reflection of their student needs. The subgrantee anecdotally described how area schools were more inclined to request student transfers to the charter school after October 1, thus inflating the charter school's enrollment numbers at a time when the school would not be able to adjust adequately for new school needs.

While the State has made many efforts to inform charter schools about available Federal funds, subgrantees interviewed during the monitoring visit indicated that they experienced some problems regarding their commensurate share of some Federal funds. Specifically at issue was the quality and quantity of special education services, including the transparency of IDEA Part B and other special education funding. At the time of the monitoring visit, five charter schools authorized by Aurora Public Schools were working with legal counsel to address these issues with the district. (See Appendix 34: *Re: Charter School Special Education Issues*.) The issue has remained between the district and the charter schools and the State has not officially been involved. However, the State still has a responsibility to ensure that charter schools receive their commensurate share of Federal funds, including IDEA Part B.

Rating and Justification: 2 – The State partially meets the indicator. The State plays a supportive role, but is not fully involved in ensuring that charter schools receive their commensurate share of Federal funding, especially in regards to special education funds.

Recommendation: The State needs to strengthen its efforts to ensure that charter schools receive their commensurate share of Federal formula funds for which they are eligible, which may include adjusting how the State determines school enrollment.

**Indicator 2.4: The State disseminates best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the State. In accordance with section 5203(b)(2)(C) of the ESEA, the State**



demonstrates a process for identifying best or promising practices of charter schools and disseminates these best or promising practices to each LEA in the State as described in its approved application.

Observations: The State's approved CSP application proposes that the State's website and online library will provide information on charter school best practices. The application notes that the website includes materials from high-performing charter schools, such as subgrant applications, evaluations, interview questions, handbooks, bylaws, minutes, accountability plans, policies, job descriptions, parent surveys, and special education forms. These are generally intended as models for other charter schools. The application also notes that the website includes several manuals and handbooks directed toward charter school administrators, governing boards, and developers. The application does not mention how the website and resources will be targeted towards or accessed by LEAs. (See Appendix 2: *Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007).*)

The State's electronic *Best Practices Guidebook* for charter schools is located on the State's website under Technical Assistance (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/guidebook/>). Topic areas include administration and supervision; charter school development; curriculum and instruction; finance; governance and leadership; human resources; legal resources; parent and student relationships; school districts; special education and gifted/talented; and the State's 2007–2008 charter school survey. Within each section are relevant documents, resources, and, where appropriate, examples of policies or procedures the State has decided to highlight as best practices. For example, under the school district section are example documents pertaining to accountability, charter school appeal dispositions, checklists, contracts, and exclusive chartering authority. The information on the State's website is geared towards charter school administrators, governing boards, business managers, and parents.

During interviews, the officials from the Schools of Choice Unit explained that there has been a lot of indirect transmission of best practices between charter schools and LEAs. They noted that in response to recent State legislation promoting innovative schools, both Denver and Boulder area school districts had created new choice options within their districts that resemble charter schools. However, State officials cautioned that the impetus behind this action might be to stem the tide of charter school applications rather than to replicate the best or promising practices of charter schools.

Rating and Justification: 2 – The State partially meets the indicator. While the State collects and publishes examples of charter school best practices across many areas, the State does not have a system in place to disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools specifically to LEAs.

Recommendation: The State needs to strengthen its efforts to disseminate charter school best practices by designing and implementing a process to disseminate best or promising practices of charter schools to each LEA in the State.

**Indicator 2.5: The SEA affords a high degree of flexibility and autonomy to charter schools. In accordance with sections 5204(b)(2) and 5202(e)(3)(C) of the ESEA, the State**

demonstrates that it provides charter schools with a high degree of flexibility and autonomy over the school's budget, expenditures, personnel, and daily operations.

Observations: The Colorado Charter Schools Act sets up the expectation that charter schools in the State are to be administered and governed by a governing body separate from the LEA. State statute provides for waivers from State and local regulations; autonomy over budgeting, contracting, and personnel matters; and standing to sue or be sued. (See Appendix 7: *The Colorado Charter Schools Act*.)

The State's approved CSP application states that charter schools are afforded a high degree of flexibility and autonomy through automatic waivers, multiple authorizers, and equalized funding. Furthermore, the application notes that charter schools may, at their discretion, contract with LEAs to purchase district services at cost. Charter schools may also seek additional waivers from State statutes. (See Appendix 2: *Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007)*.)

The State has published an automatic waiver request form on the State's website to facilitate the waiver request process. Automatic waivers covered on the form include various provisions for performance evaluations, and selection, compensation, and termination of personnel. Seven of the 13 waivers cover State statutes regarding teacher employment, compensation, and dismissal. (See Appendix 35: *Request for Waiver from Colorado Statutes and/or Rules*.) In addition to the automatic waivers, a charter school may also request other waivers. A completed waiver request form must include a rationale for the request, a replacement plan, and a description of how the impact will be evaluated. The State's *Charter School Handbook* also includes a discussion about waivers and the charter application process. (See Appendix 28: *The Colorado Charter School Handbook*, p. 19.) Schools of Choice Unit staff explained that most, if not all, charter schools apply to use the automatic waivers during the charter application process and that only a small minority of schools ask for additional waivers.

Subgrantees interviewed during the monitoring visit described LEAs as traditionally being hands off, with the exception of issues surrounding contractually negotiated provisions of special education services and annual district audits. As schools are within an LEA and because LEAs are the fiscal agents for charter schools, charter schools must participate in the LEA's Federal and State audits.

Rating and Justification: 3 – The State fully meets the indicator. The SEA affords a high degree of flexibility and autonomy to charter schools.

Recommendation: The State's technical assistance and waiver forms could be considered a best practice to be shared with other SEAs.

**Indicator 2.6: The SEA assures that the authorized public chartering agency will provide for the continued operation of successful charter schools. In accordance with section 5203(b)(3)(F) of the ESEA,** the State demonstrates that each authorized public chartering agency provides for the continued operation of CSP subgrantees meeting their charter school

objectives once the Federal grant has expired. The SEA works with authorized public chartering agencies and others as necessary to ensure the continued operation of successful charter schools.

Observations: According to the State's approved CSP application, charter schools are to receive the full amount of Per Pupil Revenue (PPR) less 5 percent for administrative costs. (See Appendix 2: *Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007).*) This measure allows charter schools a steady stream of funding for operational costs that is nearly the same as that of surrounding traditional schools. The application also explains that the State can intervene to settle disputes over charter school funding. Further, the SEA does not play a direct role in the charter renewal process because renewal is the purview of authorizers, but the State will intervene in the renewal process if an authorizer wants to close a successful charter school.

The SEA is not an approved authorizer in the State; however, the SEA works within its boundaries to create a support system that builds charter school capacity to ensure continued operation of successful charter schools. A main focal point of the State's approach is to highly encourage subgrantees to participate in trainings in five different areas to ensure the viability and success of the charter school. Training topics include CSAP 101 (related to the Colorado Student Assessment Program), data-driven decision-making, curriculum alignment, governing board training, and administrator training.

The State is in the process of changing the delivery model of several of its trainings from in-person to online. Currently, CDE is bringing online the board trainings which cover 33 modules including, among others: strategic planning; contract renewal, negotiations, and accreditation; public school funding and budgeting; organizational capacity; and roles and responsibilities. As of the monitoring visit, two of the 33 modules had been posted online and 11 others were in various stages of development. (See Appendix 36: *Board Training Modules Work Plan.*)

The Schools of Choice Unit director noted that the State also holds regular trainings and meetings with authorizers. Furthermore, authorizers have started to designate charter school liaisons within district administrative offices to facilitate relationships with charter schools. As the fiscal agent for the charter schools, LEAs and the authorizer liaisons are responsible for collecting proper reimbursement documentation and disbursing funds. Authorizer liaisons described their primary role (related to the grant) as to ensure that grant funds are used in the manner in which they were proposed in the subgrantee's application.

A group of authorizer liaisons have also formed an Authorizer's Network. One liaison explained that the network is helpful to share information and "bounce ideas" off each other. The authorizer's liaisons network meets approximately every eight weeks and Schools of Choice Unit staff facilitate and host the network meetings. Another goal of the authorizer network has been to promote the common charter application that the State, CSI, and the CLCS are working on. (The common charter application is discussed in more detail in Indicator 1.5.)

Rating and Justification: 3 – The State fully meets the indicator. The State assures that the authorized public chartering agency will provide for the continued operation of successful charter schools.



Recommendation: None.

**Indicator 2.7: The SEA ensures that a student's records and, if applicable, individualized education program accompany the student's transfer to or from a charter school in accordance with Federal and State law. In accordance with section 5208 of the ESEA,** the State demonstrates that, to the extent practicable, a student's records and, if applicable, a student's individualized education program (IEP) as defined in section 602(11) of IDEA, are transferred to a charter school upon the transfer of the student to the charter school and to another public school upon the transfer of the student from a charter school to another public school, in accordance with applicable State law.

Observations: As designed by statute, charter schools are completely incorporated into the authorizing LEA for the purposes of PPR funding, Federal programs, assessment, student record keeping, and special education services. As such, subgrantees have experienced very few issues with records transfers, including IEPs as well as general student records. Any issues related to the transfer of special education records would be monitored through the State's formal complaint process and are also included in the Exceptional Student Unit's district monitoring plan.

Similarly, the CSI is its own LEA; charter schools authorized under the CSI are treated like any other charter school within an LEA. Assessment materials are provided to and collected from the CSI as with any other district, and the CSI must also adhere to the same reporting requirements. The CSI is also considered its own administrative unit for the purposes of special education. Issues with transferring records would be dealt with in the same manner as for charter schools authorized by an LEA.

The State currently tracks student assessment and achievement data longitudinally with an individual student identifier system. The director of the Schools of Choice Unit explained that this practice has greatly reduced issues charter schools may have had with transferring records to or from another school.

None of the subgrantees visited during the monitoring visit expressed issues or concerns regarding the transfer of student records to or from other schools.

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State ensures that a student's records and, if applicable, individualized education program accompany the student's transfer to or from a charter school in accordance with Federal and State law.

Recommendation: None.

### **3. State CSP Quality and Performance Assessment**

One of the goals of the CSP is to support and encourage the proliferation of high-quality charter schools. To do so, the SEA needs to establish and apply a definition of "high quality." This

section focuses on how the SEA uses its definition of high quality to assess and award subgrants and how it assesses and demonstrates progress toward meeting its own application objectives and improving educational results. It includes three indicators that cover:

- How the SEA's application and award process supports the creation of high-quality charter schools;
- How the State assesses its own achievement of its application objectives; and
- How the State demonstrates progress in meeting those objectives and improving educational results for all students.

**Indicator 3.1: The SEA's application assessment and award process supports the creation of high-quality charter schools in the State. In accordance with section 5204 of the ESEA,** the SEA awards subgrants to eligible applicants on the basis of the quality of the applications submitted, after taking into consideration such factors as:

- The quality of the proposed curriculum and instructional practices;
- The degree of flexibility afforded by the SEA and, if applicable, the LEA to the charter school;
- The extent of community support for the application;
- The ambitiousness of the objectives of the charter school;
- The quality of the strategy for assessing achievement of those objectives;
- The likelihood that the charter school will meet those objectives and improve educational results for all students; and
- In the case of an eligible applicant that proposes to use subgrant funds to support dissemination activities under subsection (f)(6)(B) of the ESEA, the quality of those activities and the likelihood that those activities will improve student achievement.

Observations: The State has several efforts in place to ensure that the subgrant application assessment and award process results in high-quality charter schools. These include (1) guiding principles, (2) application standards, (3) approval process (including TA), and (4) the application review process. The State requires subgrantees to participate in a grant writer's training, assigns a grant consultant to each subgrantee, and, once approved, makes training available on CSAP 101, curriculum alignment, data-driven decision-making, administrator training, and governing board basics. Plus, it hosts periodic network meetings for authorizers, business managers, and school administrators, including mandatory mentors for high school subgrantees.

Undergirding the State's approach to chartering is a philosophy that high-quality charter schools "adopt best practices in curricula alignment, assessment and data analysis, teacher quality, leadership, and successful business practices." These criteria of quality are enumerated in the State's Federal grant application, but not specifically identified as a definition of high-quality charter schools. (See Appendix 2: *Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007)*.) However, in its entirety, the State's CSP application builds both a case for this approach and a roadmap to support its execution through a very precise management plan that outlines objectives, activities, timelines, and responsibilities.

In total, the RFP has 13 standards, of which 12 have associated rubrics. The topic areas are as follows:

- Executive Summary and Project Goals (8 points);
- Project Budget Narrative (8 points);
- Research-based Program/Comprehensive Design Aligned to Standards (12 points);
- Accountability/Accreditation (8 points);
- Parent/Community Involvement and Board Governance (5 points);
- Low Income and At-Risk Students (5 points);
- Business Capacity (5 points);
- Facilities (2 points);
- Networking and External Support (2 points);
- Professional Development (5 points);
- Continued Operation (8 points); and
- Technical Assistance Needs (no score).

The last standard (Technical Assistance Needs) does not have a point value attached to the description; however, subgrantees are required to describe which State-provided trainings they will participate in or explain how those training needs have already been met. (See Appendix 9: *Charter School Grant Program Request for Proposal*.) The State cautions applicants that the application review process is very rigorous and that approximately 10–20 percent of applications are not funded. An application that does not score well just on one criterion would likely not meet the minimum point threshold established for approval.

The State's peer review process is rigorous and transparent. The submitted proposals first undergo an internal screening for legal compliance and completeness by the Schools of Choice Unit. If there are any glaring omissions, the proposal may be rejected at this point and the applicant is invited to revise the proposal and submit it in the next round.

A team of three external reviewers is assigned to review each proposal submitted. A fourth reviewer is used to read and score proposals but is not a member of the review team for any particular proposal. Each reviewer individually scores the rubric. The State then transfers the scores to a summary sheet and looks for patterns to see if the applicants are being treated fairly across the scorers. If there is a perennially low scorer, the State may use the fourth reviewer's scores to adjust for possible bias.

The peer reviews are the entire basis for acceptance or denial. A general cut-off level is established under the rubric and any proposal with averaged scores falling below that minimum threshold is denied. The State reports that rejections have averaged 10–20 percent per year and have run as high as 40 percent in some years. An appeals procedure consists of another review by a separate three-member advisory board using the same criteria. There is no overlap between the reviewers on appeal and the initial reviewers.

Furthermore, the State also conducts monitoring of charter schools to ensure ongoing charter school quality. Subgrantees are strongly encouraged to participate in a Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI) visit during their third year; other charter schools must apply to participate in a

CSSI visit. The CSSI visit can last up to a week, though more typically it lasts three or four days. A team of trained reviewers, including Schools of Choice Unit staff and consultants, as well as charter school founders, administrators, and parents unrelated to the school conduct the CSSI visits. (See Appendix 37: *CSSI Team Roster/Bios.*)

At the time of the monitoring visit, the CSSI monitoring teams were using a 10-standard protocol, which was adapted from a monitoring protocol for underperforming Title I schools in the State. Nine of the standards were taken directly from the State's Title I monitoring protocol and address the following areas of school quality: (1) Curriculum; (2) Classroom evaluation/assessment; (3) Instruction; (4) School culture; (5) Student, family, and community support; (6) Professional growth, development and evaluation; (7) Leadership; (8) Organizational structure and resources; and (9) Comprehensive and effective planning. (See Appendix 38: *Standards and Indicators for School Improvement.*) The Schools of Choice Unit has adapted the *Standards and Indicators for School Improvement* to include a 10th standard for strong board governance and plans to add an 11th standard on financial issues. Within each standard is a subset of related indicators, for a total of nearly 80 indicators. The State has produced the *CSSI Resource Handbook* that details the indicators within each standard, including definitions, related research, step-by-step processes to address each indicator, related references, and helpful resources. (See Appendix 39: *Sample Standard from CSSI Resource Handbook.*)

After a CSSI visit has been completed, the State's monitoring team produces a color-coded summary sheet with each standard and indicator highlighting areas of concern. State staff indicated that it was typical for many subgrantees to have a majority of lower ratings (1's and 2's on a 4-point scale) because exemplary findings are not expected in the second or third year of a school's operation. The CSSI monitoring team also produces a comprehensive report that describes findings for each standard and indicator, as well as recommended strategic actions to address immediate, short-term, and long-term major themes. (See Appendix 40: *CDE School Support Team Report Lotus School Excellence Section 1 – Executive Summary and Section 2 – Detail Report.*)

At the time of the monitoring visit, only one subgrantee visited had completed a CSSI visit. The current board president of the subgrantee explained that the school had found the visit helpful and used findings from the monitoring report to make significant adjustments in their governance, organization, and communication structures. Specifically, they created and posted a mission and vision statement, prepared a board manual with clear roles and responsibilities, and held events to make the board more visible.

**Rating and Justification:** 3 – State fully meets the indicator. There is substantial evidence that the State is effectively supporting the creation of high-quality charter schools through its grant application process. Furthermore, the State continues to monitor charter school quality to ensure the continuation of high-quality charter schools.

**Recommendation:** None.

**Indicator 3.2: The State has a high-quality strategy for assessing the achievement of its application objectives. In accordance with section 5204 of the ESEA, the quality of the**

State's strategy for assessing achievement of its application objectives demonstrates progress toward the objectives of its approved application.

Observations: The State's approved Federal grant application lists three objectives:

- 1. Increase the number of new high-quality charter schools, and in particular high-quality high schools, that enable disadvantaged and other students to make Adequate Yearly Progress toward meeting State content standards.*
- 2. Build capacity in existing charter schools to improve academic achievement and enable all students to make Adequate Yearly Progress toward meeting State content standards.*
- 3. Strengthen the skills and knowledge of administrators, boards, and authorizers to build their leadership capabilities and to reduce turnover.*

The State's objectives are grounded in research about major gaps that the State would like to fill to improve the success of charter schools in the State. Each objective is further refined through a set of performance measures, which are directly tied to activities that the State has outlined in the managerial timeline section of its grant application. The State's Management Grid (in their CSP application) outlines activities, timelines, responsibilities, outcomes, and measures for each objective. (See Appendix 2: *Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007)*, pp. 25–32.) With only a few exceptions, the State has made consistent progress toward achieving the activities it specified under its objectives. (See Indicator 3.3 for a more detailed conversation of the State's progress toward its objectives.)

The State uses data to drive its decision-making to best allocate CSP funds. It sets strong expectations that its charter schools will receive "high" ratings on the School Accountability Reports (SARs), make AYP, and receive proportionally higher scores on the CSAP than traditional public schools. It used these data sources and its triennial evaluation of the CSP to uncover major gaps to be addressed by the CSP under objectives it quantified in the Federal grant application.

The State's use of the Charter School Support Initiative (CSSI) evaluation, in particular, represents a significant new effort to comprehensively monitor for quality charter schools. Developed originally as an on-site monitoring tool for use by the State's Title I division, the CSSI evaluation examines a host of issues related to raising standards of academic performance (curriculum, assessment, instruction), improving learning environments (school culture, family and community support, professional development), enhancing organizational effectiveness (leadership, structure and resources, planning), and supporting effective board governance. (See Section 4 for additional information about the CSSI monitoring.)

The Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) reviewed the State's objectives and found all three met the criteria for relevance, applicability, focus, and measurability. However, CEEP recommended the refinement of the State's approach to performance measures. Of the 20 measures, all as originally written answered the "what" and "who" questions, while 60 percent

also addressed the by “how much” and “when” questions. (See Appendix 4: *U.S. Department of Education Charter School Program Review of 2007 Grantee Evaluation Plans (CEEP)*.)

The State’s program evaluation strategy includes ongoing data collection and monitoring procedures. The State has hired an external evaluator to administer program satisfaction surveys, the triennial evaluation, and original research into charter school typologies as well as a pending school leadership and development evaluation (the last of which will encompass the issue of turnover, among others). The State also collects academic and achievement data and extensive charter school monitoring data (discussed further in Indicators 4.1 and 4.2). The State uses the data it collects to guide technical assistance for subgrantees and all charter schools (especially in the areas of training needs) as well as to target support to individual charter schools. These efforts fit well into both a data-driven culture and a mantra of service and support being cultivated by the State.

The State puts a strong emphasis on student academic data collection and triangulates the data through measures under SAR, AYP, and CSAP. Each school receives a SAR with an annual rating based on student academic performance on State assessments (excellent, high, average, low, or unsatisfactory) and on their annual performance compared to the prior year, or academic growth (improving, stable, or declining). (See Appendix 41: *Colorado Springs Early Colleges School Accountability Report*.) The State is also piloting a longitudinal student data system that tracks individual student achievement to determine AYP (for all schools), rather than a traditional cohort comparison system.

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State has a high-quality strategy for assessing the achievement of its objectives.

Recommendation: The State’s use of research to guide the development of its application objectives as well as to support the strategy for assessing the achievement of its application objectives could be considered a best practice and shared with other grantees.

**Indicator 3.3: The State demonstrates substantial progress in meeting its application objectives and improving educational results for all students. In accordance with section 5204(e)(4) of the ESEA,** the State has demonstrated progress in meeting the objectives of its application, which has resulted in increasing the number of high-quality charter schools that are held accountable in the terms of the schools’ charters for meeting clear and measurable objectives for the educational progress of the students attending the schools.

Observations: The following chart details the objectives, performance measures, activities, and progress to date for each of the State’s three objectives.

**Objective 1: Increase the number of new high-quality charter schools, and in particular high-quality high schools, that enable disadvantaged and other students to make Adequate Yearly Progress toward meeting State content standards.**

<b>Performance Measure</b> (How is the State measuring progress?)	<b>Activities</b> (What has the State done/What is the State doing?)	<b>Progress</b> (To what extent has the goal been accomplished so far?)
A. Award 15 schools start-up grants in FY 2007–2008; 16 in FY 2008–2009; 18 in 2009–2010	The rigorous application/planning process and support helps ensure quality and sustainability.  The RFP is issued via website, Listserv, and in training venues.  All applicants receive grant writing training and one-on-one consulting.	A total of 9 start-up grants were awarded in FY 2007–08; 12 awarded thus far in FY 2008–09 with 4 more proposals pending. (See Appendix 3: <i>Annual Performance Report (2008)</i> and Appendix 42: <i>New Schools 2009 Opening</i> .)
B. The number of subgrantee charter schools making AYP will increase each year.	Established baseline using 07–08 data.	19 of 21 (90%) existing subgrantees made AYP in the 2007–08 year. (See Appendix 3.)
C. At least 50% of implementation subgrantees will undergo a CSSI visit by their third year of receiving the grant.	CSSI guide was completed and disseminated to CSSI-evaluated schools and is available online.  State conducts CSSI monitoring visits to all subgrantees in Year 3 of subgrant. (See Section 4 for additional information about the CSSI monitoring visits.)	In FY 2007–08, 4 of 9 implementation subgrantees were visited. In FY 2008–09, visits to 14 of 18 implementation subgrantees are scheduled. (See Appendix 3.)
D. At least 90% of charter schools serving high school students or student populations with greater than 50% qualifying for Free/Reduced-Price Lunch (FRPL) will undergo a CSSI visit by their third year of receiving the grant.	As of the monitoring visit, the State has identified 3 high school level charter schools with student populations with greater than 50 percent FRPL.	1 of 3 (33%) has undergone CSSI in 2007–08. (See Appendix 3.)
E. At least 90% of high school applicants will be awarded start-up/implementation grant funds.	Prioritize high schools by giving 10 priority points in the scoring of eligible subgrantee proposals.	To date, 100% of high school applicants were awarded grants.
F. Training (CSAP 101, curriculum alignment, data-driven decision-making, administrator and board training) will be conducted in at least 75% of the subgrantee schools by the end of the third year of grant funding.	Training is available to subgrantees on a schedule between August and April in areas judged important based on prior research: testing, curriculum alignment, data-driven decision-making, and leadership.  State monitors training attendance and participation annually.	6 of 45 subgrantees have completed the training in 2007–08. (See Appendix 3.)



G. 100% of subgrantee high schools will receive administrator mentoring, as appropriate, during their first and second year of operations.	Mentors exchange 10–15 emails per month on topical matters and schedule on-site visits once per semester or more often as needed (one school in need of turnaround was visited weekly).	100% of eligible subgrantees received the mentoring. (See Appendix 3.)
H. The number of charter schools in operation will increase to 150 in 2008, 160 in 2009, and 170 in 2010.	The State provides technical assistance and workshops for charter developers related to authorization and charter writing.  The State is working with the CLCS and CSI to develop a common charter application to be used across authorizers.	The number of charter schools in operation increased from 141 in 2007 to 147 in 2008.  The common application is in the final stages of development.

<b>Objective 2: Build capacity in existing charter schools to improve academic achievement and enable all students to make Adequate Yearly Progress toward meeting State content standards.</b>		
<b>Performance Measure</b> (How is the State measuring progress?)	<b>Activities</b> (What has the State done/What is the State doing?)	<b>Progress</b> (To what extent has the goal been accomplished so far?)
A. The number of existing charter schools making Adequate Yearly Progress will increase each year.	Established baseline using 07–08 data.	Of 229 reports, 186 charter schools made AYP, 25 did not, and 18 were exempt. (See Appendix 3.)
B. The number of existing charter schools receiving at least an Average on the SAR will increase each year.	Established baseline using 07–08 data.	Of 211 SAR reports, 170 scored at least an Average. (See Appendix 3.)
C. The level of new skills and knowledge gained as a result of financial training will be rated as at least Moderate by participants.	The State coordinates monthly business manager lunches across the State. Topic areas from a sample agenda include Title funds, payroll issues, related employment law issues. (See Appendix 30.)	State reports an average attendance of 35 at business manager meetings.  An independently administered survey of business manager participants showed an average rating of 4.75 on the 6-point Likert scale. (See Appendix 43: <i>Colorado Department of Education Charter Schools Program Federal Grant Program Evaluation Spring 2008</i> .)
D. The level of new skills and knowledge gained as a result of regional charter school networking luncheons will be rated as at least Moderate by participants.	The State conducts two annual Finance Seminar meetings (one on the Front Range and one on the Western Slope) that cover budget development, audit planning, and board relationships. Both business managers and board members are invited to attend.	State reports an average attendance of 15 at meetings.  An independently administered survey of regional charter school director participants showed an average rating of 4.2 on the 6-point Likert scale. (See Appendix 43.)



E. 66% of elementary school-aged charter school students will achieve Proficient/Advanced and 40% of secondary school-aged charter school students will achieve Proficient/Advanced on the mathematics CSAP in 2008, 68% elementary and 41% secondary in 2009, and 70% elementary and 42% secondary in 2010.	State is collecting and analyzing student data for its 2005–2008 <i>Triennial State of Charter Schools</i> report to be released in 2009.	2007–2008 CSAP math scores:  Elementary students: 71.1% Proficient High School students: 47.5% Proficient. (See Appendix 44: <i>Data Due on Progress Report</i> .)
F. 68% percent of elementary school-aged charter school students will achieve Proficient/Advanced and 65% of secondary school-aged charter school students will achieve Proficient/Advanced on the reading CSAP in 2008; 70% elementary and 66% of secondary in 2009; and 72% elementary and 68% secondary in 2010.	State is collecting and analyzing student data for its 2005–2008 <i>Triennial State of Charter Schools</i> report, to be released in 2009.	2007–2008 CSAP reading scores:  Elementary students: 74.1% Proficient High School students: 69.3% Proficient. (See Appendix 44.)

<b>Objective 3: Strengthen the skills and knowledge of administrators, boards, and authorizers to build their leadership capabilities and to reduce turnover.</b>		
<b>Performance Measure</b> (How is the State measuring progress?)	<b>Activities</b> (What has the State done/What is the State doing?)	<b>Progress</b> (To what extent has the goal been accomplished so far?)
A. By the final year of the subgrant funding, 80% of board members will be certified.	Board training handbook was published in 2007; online modules will be available by January of 2009, with a board certification process completed by June of 2009.	State is in the process of developing and uploading online board trainings. 2 of 33 training modules have been posted online. (See Appendix 36: <i>Board Training Modules Work Plan</i> .)  Certification process is still pending.
B. Authorizers participating in training will report an improvement in their policies and procedures related to their authorizer role.	State offers monthly networking events; hosts listserv.	Approx. 20 authorizer liaisons on the listserv; 12 tend to come to networking events every other month.  An independently administered survey of authorizer participants showed an average rating on improvements of 4.75 on a 6-point Likert scale (scores above 3.5 would indicate improvement). (See Appendix 43.)
C. 80% of charter boards will be rated at least Proficient in their leadership performance by their administrators.	State has conducted a survey of charter school administrators and board directors.	72% of administrators rated their boards as at least Proficient on the State survey. (See Appendix 43.)

D. 80% of charter administrators will be rated at least Proficient in their leadership performance by their board presidents.	State has conducted a survey of charter school administrators and board directors.  Developing a guidebook for charter school administrators.	91% of Board presidents rated their administrators as at least Proficient. (See Appendix 43.)
E. Charter school administrators who participate in monthly Developing Charter School Instructional Leaders meetings will show an increase in skill and knowledge.	State hosts monthly charter school administrator meetings focused on instructional leadership topics suggested by the group.	An independently administered survey of charter school administrator participants showed an average rating on increase in skill and knowledge of 4.4 on a 6-point Likert scale (scores above 3.5 would indicate improvement). (See Appendix 43.)
F. Administrator and board turnover will be measured annually.	Conducting a study on board and administrator turnover, which will delve into professional development and related issues.	Average tenure for administrators was 1.2 years and for board members was 1.6 years.

The State has set ambitious objectives for its 2007 CSP grant and is making substantial progress toward meeting its objectives. It lags behind its goals for the number of start-ups and total number of charters, but the cohort in the second year is close to meeting the target. The State has met and exceeded student proficiency benchmarks for 2008 for both elementary and secondary charter school students in both mathematics and reading. The State has also exceeded benchmarks set for satisfaction ratings by participants of its training and networking events.

The deliverables in the Federal grant application (outlined in the Management Grid) are well defined and relevant, and include an extensive amount of technical assistance and research. Every activity pledged under the grant is being fulfilled, with new deliverables joining a wide cadre of existing resources available on the web. The State has been effective at leveraging both internal and external resources to accomplish its three grant objectives. It garners a great deal of cooperation among several statewide partners, including the CSI, CLCS, and the Fund for Colorado's Future (a local philanthropic organization).

The State has partnered with an external evaluator to conduct a variety of different research studies. A recently released report on survey data helps document the relative merits of State activities aimed at five different audiences: authorizers, board presidents, administrators, business managers, and CSSI evaluation participants. Survey results indicated that all of the respondent groups rated the State's efforts to be of above average quality, with administrator mentoring receiving the lowest rating (3.5 on a 6-point Likert scale). (See Appendix 43: *Colorado Department of Education Charter Schools Program Federal Grant Program Evaluation Spring 2008*.)

**Rating and Justification:** 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State demonstrates substantial progress toward meeting its objectives and improving educational results for all students.

**Recommendation:** None.

#### **4. Subgrantee Monitoring and Performance**

The responsibility of an SEA to monitor subgrantees to ensure that they adhere to Federal rules and regulations and accomplish their performance objectives is an important condition of the Federal grant. This section focuses on the SEA's monitoring of subgrantees to assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements and progress toward subgrantee performance objectives. It includes indicators that cover the State's responsibilities for monitoring:

- Subgrantees' compliance with applicable Federal laws, rules, and regulations regarding the fiscal and administrative aspects of the program; and
- The performance of subgrantee projects with regard to desired results.

**Indicator 4.1: The SEA monitors subgrantee projects to assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements, including, but not limited to, those regarding fiscal procedures, competitive bidding processes and contracting procedures, conflicts of interest, direct administration or supervision of grant funds, recordkeeping, and compliance with IDEA. In accordance with 34 CFR 80.40, the State demonstrates that it regularly monitors subgrantee projects for compliance with applicable Federal requirements.**

Observations: The Schools of Choice Unit director described a subgrantee monitoring system that monitors subgrantees three times over the course of three years. The monitoring includes a desk review and two separate on-site monitoring visits of varying length and intensity. Over the course of three years the State monitors recordkeeping, technical assistance participation, grant application fidelity, use of grant funds, curriculum, instruction, professional development, and governing boards among many other aspects of charter school administration. Of the State's three years of monitoring, efforts during Year 1 and Year 2 focus specifically on subgrantee projects. Year 3, the CSSI visit, focuses more extensively on issues of charter school quality (see Indicator 3.1 for a more detailed discussion of the CSSI monitoring visit).

Year 1 monitoring is a subgrantee desk review performed by Schools of Choice Unit staff. The Year 1 monitoring protocol covers grant-related recordkeeping, requests for State waivers, participation (or planned participation) in required technical assistance, submission of an annual financial report, and grant expenditures to date. (See Appendix 16: *Colorado Charter School Grant Program CDE Schools of Choice Unit Monitoring Visit Protocol*.)

The Year 2 monitoring visits, conducted by the Schools of Choice Unit, include curricula reviews, procedures related to CSP grants (such as admissions lottery), and fiscal oversight. The fiscal oversight guide in the Monitoring Visit Protocol includes examination of expenditures for adherence to the proposed subgrant budget, identification of assets purchased with grant funds, and adherence to EDGAR regulations. The State uses a 16-indicator protocol in addition to a checklist of application certifications (i.e., assurances) to monitor subgrantees on areas of grant application fidelity (including progress towards grant objectives, spending according to budget, educational programming, and governance), lottery procedures, receipt of other Federal funds, use of subgrant funds, and reporting requirements (including required annual financial reports). (See Appendix 16: *Colorado Charter School Grant Program CDE Schools of Choice Unit Monitoring Visit Protocol*.) Of the State's three-year monitoring plan, Year 2 most extensively

monitors subgrants and subgrantee projects, especially with regards to progress toward grant objectives and proper use of grant funds.

The SEA does additional monitoring in Year 3 of the subgrant when the Schools of Choice Unit conducts CSSI visits to further evaluate and monitor subgrantee quality. This monitoring is focused more generally on areas of charter school quality and the Schools of Choice Unit has found the CSSI process to be very helpful to highlight areas of weakness in charter schools.

Special education monitoring is done separately through the State's Exceptional Student Unit. For the purposes of special education, the State uses administrative units, either large districts or networks of smaller districts, referred to as Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES). Charter schools are located within an administrative unit or a BOCES depending on who their authorizer is. All special education monitoring is done at the administrative unit level, rather than at the school level. Consequently, charter schools are included in special education monitoring as necessary, but they are not specifically targeted unless compliance issues arise. Staff from the Exceptional Student Unit and the Schools of Choice Unit agreed that they are in constant communication and kept apprised of relevant issues. The Exceptional Student Unit has a staff member dedicated to charter school issues.

Rating and Justification: 3 – The State fully meets the indicator. The State has a comprehensive subgrantee monitoring system in place that monitors subgrantee projects compliance with applicable Federal requirements including, but not limited to, those regarding fiscal procedures, competitive bidding processes and contracting procedures, conflicts of interest, direct administration or supervision of grant funds, recordkeeping, and compliance with IDEA.

Recommendation: None.

**Indicator 4.2: The SEA monitors subgrantee projects to assure that the charter school is meeting its performance objectives and improving educational results for all students. In accordance with 34 CFR 80.40, the State demonstrates that it regularly monitors subgrantee projects to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving the objectives described in its approved subgrant application that results in improving educational results for all students.**

Observations: Included in the State's current subgrant monitoring process described in Indicator 4.1 are two monitoring activities where the State specifically monitors subgrantee performance objectives and more generally monitors educational results for all students.

Subgrantees are required to outline five subgrant-related goals in their subgrant application. The State then uses the goals and objectives articulated in the application during Year 2 monitoring visits to ensure fidelity to the subgrantee's goals and objectives. The State's 16-indicator protocol for monitoring in Year 2 covers areas of grant application fidelity including progress towards grant objectives. Specifically, the first indicator asks whether or not the subgrantee is on target to meet grant goals. Additional indicators in the Year 2 monitoring protocol focus on progress made toward achievement objectives. (See Appendix 16: *Colorado Charter School Grant Program CDE Schools of Choice Unit Monitoring Visit Protocol*.)

The State monitors academic progress of subgrantees during the CSSI visit in Year 3 of a subgrant. Standards 1–3 on the CSSI monitoring protocol cover academic performance, evaluation, assessment, and instruction. Indicators under these standards include areas of curriculum rigor and alignment, data-based decision-making, use of multiple assessments to provide feedback, analysis of student work, and use of instructional strategies to promote mastery.

Additionally, every school in the State (including charter schools) receives SARs that rates overall academic performance on State assessments and the academic growth of students. (See Appendix 41: *Colorado Springs Early Colleges School Accountability Report*.) The SAR also includes data on student performance, school and staff information, safety and school environment, and school revenue.

Rating and Justification: 3 – The State fully meets the indicator. The State’s Year 2 monitoring protocol and aspects of the CSSI monitoring indicators ensure a monitoring system that assures that the charter school is meeting its performance objectives and improving educational results for all students.

Recommendation: None.

## 5. Administrative and Fiscal Responsibilities

CSP grantees incur a number of administrative and fiscal responsibilities under Federal statute and regulations. This section focuses on the SEA’s use of and controls over the grant funds and on the State’s administrative responsibilities with regard to the CSP grant. It includes indicators that cover the State’s responsibilities in:

- Properly disbursing and accounting for Federal funds;
- Using grant funds for administrative expenses and other defined purposes;
- Maintaining and retaining grantee and subgrantee financial and programmatic records related to the CSP grant funds;
- Directly administering or supervising the State CSP program;
- Ensuring against conflicts of interest in the CSP grant program; and
- Complying with Federal procurement standards.

**Indicator 5.1: The SEA uses fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that ensure proper disbursement of and accounting for Federal funds, including, but not limited to, allowable, allocable, and reasonable uses of CSP grant funds. In accordance with section 5204(f)(3) of the ESEA, the SEA demonstrates fiscal controls and accounting procedures to ensure an eligible applicant receiving a subgrant under this program uses the grant or subgrant funds only for:**

- Post-award planning and design of the educational program, which may include—

- Refinement of the desired educational results and of the methods for measuring progress toward achieving those results; and
- Professional development of teachers and other staff who will work in the charter school; and
- Initial implementation of the charter school, which may include—
  - Informing the community about the school;
  - Acquiring necessary equipment and educational materials and supplies;
  - Acquiring or developing curriculum materials; and
  - Other initial operational costs that cannot be met from State or local sources.

The State also demonstrates that both the SEA and the eligible applicants document and implement policies and procedures to avoid apparent and actual conflicts of interest in administering and awarding the CSP grant program, and that the SEA's and subgrantees' procurement standards conform to Federal and State procurement standards.

Observations: The State provides CSP subgrantees with guidance and technical assistance on allowable, allocable, and reasonable expenses in several different ways. The State quotes Federal statute regarding allowable activities for planning and implementation subgrants in the RFP. The Project Budget Narrative rubric on the RFP requires that the proposed budget include descriptions of reasonable uses of grant funds. The RFP also includes guidance on supplementing versus supplanting routine operational costs with grant funds and lists several areas that are not allowable (such as capital expenses, student travel, alcohol, school apparel, programs outside the school's charter, and others). (See Appendix 9: *Charter School Grant Program Request for Proposal*.)

The State also covers guidance on allowable, allocable, and reasonable costs in the grant writer's training. The training highlights OMB Circular A-87 requirements and unallowable costs; request for funds procedures, records retention, and State regulations. (See Appendix 10: *Charter School Start-Up Grant Writer's Training January 20, 2009*.) The CSP director has followed up on issues regarding the allowable use of funds by reviewing questionable purchases and freezing grant funds if necessary. The CSP director described an instance where a subgrantee used grant funds to purchase computers that were actually used in a sister school. The State responded quickly and appropriately by freezing the subgrantee's CSP grant funds until the matter was resolved.

The State reviews subgrant budgets annually to ensure that line items as listed are permissible under Federal statute. As with other public schools, all charter schools are also subject to financial audits, audit procedures, and audit requirements as set forth in generally accepted accounting and audit standards. Further, in support of proper fiscal management, the State offers Business Manager Network meetings five times annually on topics critical to charter school management as well as annual Finance Seminars. (See Appendix 45: *Charter School Events/Calendar*.) State statute also outlines financial reporting obligations and requirements. (See Appendix 7: *The Colorado Charter Schools Act*.)

CSP grant funds are disbursed by the State to the subgrantees on a reimbursement basis. Reimbursement requests and grant funds travel through the LEA, which acts as a fiscal agent for

the charter school. Requisition forms are submitted by the subgrantee to the LEA, which then forwards the requests to the State's Grants Fiscal Management Services Unit. The requisition form includes approved level of funding, expenditures to date, anticipated expenditures, and previously requested funds. (See Appendix 46: *Request for Funds Form FY 2007–08*.) The original paperwork for funds requests is kept with the Grants Fiscal Management Services team; however, the Schools of Choice Unit has access to the records.

At the time of the monitoring visit, the State did not have an operational eGrants system that specified the type or amount of information necessary for reimbursement requests. The State is currently evaluating eGrants systems that will allow grantees to upload additional documentation to support reimbursement requests; however, at the time of the monitoring visit, the State had yet to settle on a suitable eGrants system. It is up to each LEA to determine the quantity and quality of documentation required to support the request for funds forms; the State does not require backup documentation to be submitted with the request for funds form and assumes that the LEA maintains proper records.

The Grants Fiscal Management Services Unit adheres to guidelines and target days for reimbursement of funds. For example, the State disburses reimbursements on the 15th of the month for requisitions submitted before the 5th of the month.

The Schools of Choice Unit provides technical assistance prior to submission of CSP applications, ongoing technical support and workshops for subgrantees, and conducts a review of fiscal reports as part of Year 2 monitoring. Included in the technical assistance related to the monitoring are Federal and State requirements on allowable, allocable, and reasonable expenses, conflict of interest, and other Federal limits on the use of funds. Ongoing technical assistance includes support to business managers, principals, and board members.

Of concern, however, is the responsibility for more intensive fiscal oversight, including proper documentation to accompany the request for funds forms. Documentation collected during the monitoring visit as well as information gathered through interviews with key staff indicated that the State relies heavily on LEA fiscal monitoring of subgrantees. Further, the authorizers interviewed did not describe an adequate monitoring mechanism being employed by the LEAs.

A State official provided a clear example of the shortcoming in oversight: a subgrantee in Year 1 of funding had been requesting and receiving CSP grant reimbursement monthly without providing documentation to the LEA (the CSI). Only at the end of the grant year, when the subgrantee requested an extension for expending grant funds, did State officials learn the school had in excess of \$170,000 unspent. Had the subgrantee not requested an extension, the unspent funds may have gone undetected by the State and/or the LEA.

Rating and Justification: 2 – State partially meets the indicator. Although the State provided evidence of guidance, training, and technical assistance to subgrantees related to proper fiscal management and fund accounting procedures, direct oversight is limited because the State is partially dependent upon the actions of the LEAs to ensure sufficient and proper documentation of reimbursement requests.



Recommendations: The State should strengthen its fiscal control and fund accounting procedures to ensure proper and sufficient oversight of reimbursement requests.

**Indicator 5.2: The State uses no more than 5 percent of CSP grant funds for appropriate administrative expenses. In accordance with section 5204(f)(4)(A) of the ESEA,** the State demonstrates that it reserves no more than 5 percent of the total grant funds for administrative expenses associated with the State charter school grant program and that these funds are used for appropriate administrative purposes.

Observations: The State provided budget summary documentation for the 2007 CSP grant that outlines how grant funds will be spent over the course of the grant. The State budget documents include a breakdown of costs for personnel and benefits, supplies, contracts, facilities, and subgrants. The non-subgrant funds account for slightly less than 5 percent of the total grant award (just over \$900,000). (See Appendix 47: *Budget Summary – Years 1, 2, & 3 PR/Award Number U282A070006*.)

Besides covering portions of salaries for key Schools of Choice Unit staff (approximately 4 FTE), the State uses administrative funds for travel costs related to the National Charter School and NACSA conferences, as well as the annual Project Director's meeting. The State also uses administrative funds to cover the costs of ongoing research related to the grant program including the Typology study, leadership turnover study, and the triennial statewide evaluation. The State also uses grant funds for the various trainings and seminars it offers, such as the finance seminar and the business manager network meetings. In review of the *Budget Summary – Years 1, 2, & 3 PR/Award Number U282A070006*, the monitoring team observed expenditures were planned for meals provided to meeting and conference attendees. (See Appendix 47.) OMB Circular A-87 delineates allowable expenditures for meals provided during meetings and conferences and further explains that such purchases must be thoroughly evidenced and justified. In a review of the draft monitoring report, the State noted that it is aware of the limitations on allowable expenditures for meals outlined in OMB Circular A-87. The State further explained that they continue to monitor and provide technical assistance on this issue.

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State uses no more than 5 percent of grant funds for administrative purposes.

Recommendations: The monitoring team encourages the State to review OMB Circular A-87 to ensure compliance with allowable meal expenditures for meetings and conferences.

**Indicator 5.3: The State ensures that the LEA does not deduct funds for administrative expenses or fees unless the eligible applicant enters voluntarily into an administrative services arrangement with the relevant LEA. In accordance with section 5204(f)(4)(B) of the ESEA,** the State demonstrates that LEAs do not deduct funds for administrative fees or expenses from subgrants awarded to eligible applicants or, in the event such expenses or fees are deducted, that the eligible applicant has entered voluntarily into a mutually agreed-upon arrangement for administrative services with the relevant LEA.

Observations: The State makes it very clear in trainings and communications to LEAs and subgrantees that 100 percent of subgrant funds must pass through to the subgrantee. The Fiscal



Grants Management Unit explained that if a deduction for administrative fees occurred, it would be evident in a subgrantee's annual report. Subgrantees and authorizer charter liaisons all had a very clear understanding of this practice.

However, LEAs can deduct administrative fees from a subgrantee's PPR funds and several have done so to offset the cost of keeping a charter school liaison on staff. As a precaution, the State has gone so far as to eliminate any LEA set-asides from subgrantee budgets, regardless of the voluntary nature. One subgrantee explained that their second year budget had included a line item for district administrative costs, which was approved by the State. However, in Year 3 the State made the subgrantee revise the budget to no longer include those costs.

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The State ensures that the LEA does not deduct funds for administrative expenses or fees unless the arrangement is voluntary and mutually agreed upon.

Recommendations: None.

**Indicator 5.4: The State reserves no more than 10 percent of CSP grant funds for the establishment of a revolving loan fund. In accordance with section 5204(f)(5) of the ESEA,** the SEA demonstrates that it reserves no more than 10 percent of the total grant funds for the establishment of a revolving loan fund, and that if the State reserves funds for this purpose, such funds are used to make loans to eligible applicants that have received a subgrant for the initial operation of the charter school grant program of the eligible applicant, until such time as the recipient begins receiving ongoing operational support from State or local financing sources.

Observations: The State does not use grant funds to establish a revolving loan fund.

Rating and Justification: NA

Recommendations: NA

**Indicator 5.5: All financial and programmatic records, supporting documents, statistical records, and other records of grantees and subgrantees related to the CSP grant funds are maintained and retained for grant monitoring and audit purposes. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.730–75.732 and 34 CFR 80.42,** the State maintains all financial and programmatic records, supporting documents, statistical records, and other records of grantees and subgrantees. Grantee records should fully show:

- The amount of funds under the grant and subgrants;
- How the grantee and subgrantees use the funds;
- The total cost of the project;
- The share of the cost provided from other sources; and
- Other records to facilitate an effective audit.

Observations: The Schools of Choice Unit maintains all grant records and subgrantee records in a centralized location and for periods exceeding the requirements of the CSP grant. The State's

grant records include the original application, approved budget, related correspondence, and other financial records. Samples of subgrantee files reviewed by the monitoring team indicate a diligent recordkeeping process employed by the Schools of Choice Unit staff. The subgrantee records reviewed were organized by year and included email communications, extension requests and approvals, eligibility forms, agreements of understanding, supplemental award letters, original award letters, requests for funds forms, approved supplemental budgets, approved original budgets, application summary score sheet, and complete subgrant applications.

Rating and Justification: 3 – The State fully meets the indicator. The State maintains and retains all financial and programmatic records.

Recommendations: None.

**Indicator 5.6: The SEA directly administers or supervises the administration of the State CSP program. In accordance with 34 CFR 75.700 and 75.701,** the State demonstrates that CSO and/or other SEA personnel administer or supervise the administration of the grant project on a day-to-day basis.

Observations: The Schools of Choice Unit is responsible for administering and supervising the charter schools grant program and is located under the Assistant Commissioner for Innovation and Transformation. (See Appendix 48: *CDE Organization Chart*.) The Schools of Choice Unit directly oversees the subgrant application review, related technical assistance, and program monitoring. Interviews with the Schools of Choice Unit and other CDE departments revealed that the Schools of Choice Unit works very closely with related offices to support the administration, implementation, and monitoring of the charter schools grant program. The Budget Summary document (described in Indicator 5.2) further describes the specific roles, responsibilities, and related FTEs of the staff that support the administration and implementation of the CSP grant within the Schools of Choice Unit and the Grants Fiscal Management Services Unit. (See Appendix 47: *Budget Summary – Years 1, 2, & 3 PR/Award Number U282A070006*.)

The Schools of Choice Unit works closely with other units at the SEA. Throughout the interviews with various SEA offices, interviewees consistently mentioned being in close communication with the Schools of Choice Unit and working directly with the CSP director. Furthermore, subgrantees interviewed uniformly spoke of the State's accessibility and responsiveness with regards to questions or concerns.

Rating and Justification: 3 – State fully meets the indicator. The SEA directly administers or supervises the administration of the State CSP program.

Recommendations: None.

## **6. Dissemination Subgrant Applications and Awards**

This section focuses on the SEA's participation in and procedures regarding Dissemination Grants. Dissemination subgrant programs provide States with the opportunity to facilitate the

exchange of best practices and encourage learning from successful charter schools. Participation in the Dissemination portion of the CSP is optional and requires special approval. The following section includes indicators that covers the State's policies and procedures to:

- Set aside 10 percent of CSP funds for dissemination grants;
- Ensure that eligible applicants that receive dissemination grants have been in operation for at least three years;
- Require an application that includes a description of dissemination activities and involved parties;
- Use a peer review process to review dissemination grant applications;
- Award dissemination grants on the basis of the quality of proposed activities;
- Ensure that the award period does not exceed two years; and
- Monitor proposed dissemination activities and projects.

The State did not elect to participate in the dissemination grant option.

## V. Summary

The State has demonstrated the necessary program management and fiscal controls to meet the application objectives. The State's program includes a strong technical assistance component that reaches a broad array of charter school stakeholders and covers many areas related specifically to the subgrants and more generally to the continued operation of high-quality charter schools. A particular area to highlight is the State's monthly technical assistance meetings for business managers and charter school administrators.

Other practices that may be considered best practices and areas to share with other SEAs include its process for informing charter schools about available Federal funds; its use of automatic waivers to promote charter school flexibility and autonomy; and its subgrantee project monitoring system and protocol.

A summary table of all of the indicators and their ratings is provided below. To summarize by section the State's performance on these indicators:

**The subgrant application and award process** is rigorous and thorough, adhering to Federal descriptions, assurances, eligibility criteria, and grant periods while being peer-driven and encouraging a variety of educational approaches.

**Outreach, guidance, and technical assistance** for charter school subgrantees is comprehensive in topics covered and audiences reached. The State provides several opportunities for charter school developers, administrators, authorizers, and governing boards to participate in related trainings and provides extensive documentation on its website. However, the State still needs to address its responsibility to ensure that though informed, charter schools receive their commensurate share of Federal funds.

**State CSP quality and performance assessment** are strong. By most measures, the charter schools being created are of high quality, meeting State objectives and AYP benchmarks. The pursuit of quality is greatly aided by the State's dedication to progress on its objectives through a series of performance measures, training and technical assistance interventions targeted at building school capacity, and a holistic approach to program evaluation.

**Subgrantee monitoring and performance** covers several key aspects of program monitoring including academic performance, learning environment, organizational effectiveness, fiscal responsibilities, and strong board governance. It includes monitoring for subgrantee projects as well as overall charter school quality.

**Administrative and fiscal responsibilities** are generally a strong suit of the State. The State properly administers and supervises the grant and provides an abundance of technical assistance services to subgrantees while operating within the 5 percent limit for administrative expenses. One area of concern is the lack of documentation that accompanies requests for funds from the

subgrantees through the LEAs to the SEA. It would behoove the State to reconsider how it processes fund requests.

#### Summary of Indicator Ratings

Section 1: Subgrant Application and Award Process		Rating
Indicator 1.1	The State requires each eligible applicant desiring to receive a subgrant to submit an application to the State education agency (SEA) that includes the required descriptions and assurances. (See section 5203. Applications)	3
Indicator 1.2	The State ensures each applicant desiring to receive a subgrant meets the term "eligible applicant." (See section 5210. Definitions)	3
Indicator 1.3	The State ensures each eligible applicant planning and implementing a charter school meets the term "charter school." (See section 5210. Definitions)	3
Indicator 1.4	The State uses a peer review process to review and select applications for assistance under this program. (See section 5204. Administration)	3
Indicator 1.5	The State awards subgrants in a manner, to the extent possible, to ensure that such subgrants: (a) are distributed throughout different areas of the State, including urban and rural areas, and (b) will assist charter schools representing a variety of educational approaches. (See section 5204. Administration)	3
Indicator 1.6	CSP subgrants awarded by the State do not exceed the maximum program periods allowed. (See section 5202. Program Authorized)	3
Section 2: Outreach, Guidance, and Technical Assistance		Rating
Indicator 2.1	The State informs teachers, parents, and communities about the SEA's charter school grant program. (See section 5203. Applications)	3
Indicator 2.2	The State informs each charter school in the State about Federal funds that the charter school is eligible to receive and Federal programs in which the charter school may participate. (See section 5203. Applications)	3
Indicator 2.3	The State ensures that each charter school in the State receives its commensurate share of Federal education formula funds for which it is eligible. (See section 5203. Applications)	2
Indicator 2.4	The State disseminates best or promising practices of charter schools to each local education agency (LEA) in the State. (See section 5203. Applications)	2
Indicator 2.5	The SEA affords a high degree of flexibility and autonomy to charter schools. (See sections 5204. Administration and 5202. Program Authorized)	3
Indicator 2.6	The SEA assures that the authorized public chartering agency will provide for the continued operation of successful charter schools. (See section 5203. Applications)	3
Indicator 2.7	The SEA ensures that a student's records and, if applicable, individualized education program, accompany the student's transfer to or from a charter school in accordance with Federal and State law. (See section 5208. Records Transfer)	3

Section 3: State CSP Quality and Performance Assessment		Rating
Indicator 3.1	The SEA's application assessment and award process supports the creation of high-quality charter schools in the State. (See section 5204, Administration)	3
Indicator 3.2	The State has a high-quality strategy for assessing the achievement of its application objectives. (See section 5204, Administration)	3
Indicator 3.3	The State demonstrates substantial progress in meeting its application objectives and improving educational results for all students. (See section 5204(a)(6))	3
Section 4: Subgrantee Monitoring and Performance		Rating
Indicator 4.1	The SEA monitors subgrantee projects to assure compliance with applicable Federal requirements, including, but not limited to, those regarding fiscal procedures, competitive bidding processes and contracting procedures, conflicts of interest, direct administration or supervision of grant funds, recordkeeping, and compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. (See 34 CFR 80.40 and 34 CFR parts 74-86 and 97-99)	3
Indicator 4.2	The SEA monitors subgrantee projects to assure that the charter school is meeting its performance objectives and improving educational results for all students. (See section 5204(b)(6) and 34 CFR 80.40)	3
Section 5: Administrative and Fiscal Responsibilities		Rating
Indicator 5.1	The SEA uses fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that ensure proper disbursement of and accounting for Federal funds, including, but not limited to, allowable, allocable, and reasonable use of CSP grant funds. (See 34 CFR 75.702 and 80.20-80.37)	2
Indicator 5.2	The State uses no more than 5 percent of CSP grant funds for appropriate administrative expenses. (See section 5204(f)(4))	3
Indicator 5.3	The State ensures that the LEA does not deduct funds for administrative expenses or fees unless the eligible applicant enters voluntarily into an administrative services arrangement with the relevant LEA. (See section 5204 (f)(4))	3
Indicator 5.4	The State reserves no more than 10 percent of CSP grant funds for the establishment of a revolving loan fund. (See section 5204(f)(5))	N/A
Indicator 5.5	The SEA keeps required records related to grant funds. (See 34 CFR 75.730-75.732)	3
Indicator 5.6	The SEA directly administers or supervises the administration of the State CSP program. (See 34 CFR 75.700-75.701)	3
Section 6: Dissemination Subgrant Applications and Awards		Rating
Indicator 6.1	The State reserves no more than 10 percent of CSP grant funds to support dissemination activities. (See section 5204 (f))	N/A
Indicator 6.2	The State ensures that each eligible applicant desiring to receive a dissemination subgrant is a charter school that has been in operation for at least three consecutive years and has demonstrated overall success. (See section 5204 (f)(6))	N/A

Indicator 6.3	The State requires each eligible applicant desiring to receive a dissemination subgrant to submit an application to the SEA that includes a description of those activities and how those activities will involve charter schools and other public schools, LEAs, developers, and potential developers. (See section 5203. Applications)	N/A
Indicator 6.4	The State uses a peer review process to review applications for dissemination grants. (See section 5204. Administration)	N/A
Indicator 6.5	The State awards dissemination grants to eligible applicants on the basis of the quality of the proposed activities and the likelihood those activities will improve student academic achievement. (See section 5204. Administration)	N/A
Indicator 6.6	CSP dissemination grants awarded by the State do not exceed two years. (See section 5202 (c))	N/A
Indicator 6.7	The SEA monitors subgrantee dissemination projects to assure that the activities assist other schools in adapting the charter school's program (or aspects of that program) or improving educational results. (See 34 CFR section 80.40 and 34 CFR parts 74–86 and 97–99)	N/A

## **Appendices**

### **Data Collection Process and Methodology**

Appendix 1: Monitoring Handbook for SEA Grantees 2008–2009 Monitoring Cycle

Appendix 2: Application for Grants Under the Charter School Program State Education Agency (2007)

Appendix 3: Annual Performance Report (2008)

Appendix 4: U.S. Department of Education Charter School Program Review of 2007 Grantee Evaluation Plans (CEEP)

Appendix 5: CSP Data Collection Template Colorado 2007

Appendix 6: Colorado Onsite Monitoring Visit Agenda

### **Background Information**

Appendix 7: The Colorado Charter Schools Act

Appendix 8: Exclusive Chartering Authority Request Checklist

### **Findings**

#### **Section 1: Subgrant Application and Award Process**

Appendix 9: Charter School Grant Program Request for Proposal

Appendix 10: Charter School Start-Up Grant Writer's Training January 20, 2009

Appendix 11: Intent to Submit Form

Appendix 12: Colorado Charter School Grant Program Application for Patricia Miranda Charter Academy

Appendix 13: PCPSP Start-up Grant Team Summary Score Sheet

Appendix 14: Colorado Charter School Grant Program Eligibility Form

Appendix 15: Caprock Academy Charter School Contract

Appendix 16: Colorado Charter School Grant Program CDE Schools of Choice Unit Monitoring Visit Protocol



Appendix 17: Colorado Public Charter School Grant Program 2008–2009 Calendar

Appendix 18: LISTSERV: Grant Reviewers Needed for Charter School Grant Program and Grant Reviewers Needed Handout Attachment

Appendix 19: Grant Reviewers PowerPoint

Appendix 20: Conflict of Interest Questions for Grant Application Reviewers

Appendix 21: State of Charter Schools in Colorado: 2004–05

Appendix 22: A Typology of Colorado Charter Schools

Appendix 23: Colorado Charter School Grant Program Application for Vanguard Classical Charter School Year Three Implementation Grant

Appendix 24: Grants Fiscal Management Services Unit Award Notification

## **Section 2: Outreach, Guidance, and Technical Assistance**

Appendix 25: Typical Intro Email to Grant Applicants

Appendix 26: Charter Development Flow Chart

Appendix 27: Charter School Grant Program Website

Appendix 28: The Colorado Charter School Handbook

Appendix 29: Charter School Business Manager Network Meeting Agenda

Appendix 30: Charter Schools: Verification of Consultation

Appendix 31: Aurora Public Schools 2008–2009 Consolidated Application Charter Sign Off

Appendix 32: Boulder Valley School District Consolidated Federal Programs Planning 2008–2009 Consultation with Charter Schools

Appendix 33: Falcon School District 49 2008–2009 Consolidated Application Charter Sign Off

Appendix 34: Re: Charter School Special Education Issues

Appendix 35: Request for Waiver from Colorado Statutes and/or Rule

Appendix 36: Board Training Modules Work Plan

**Section 3: State CSP Quality and Performance Assessment**

Appendix 37: CSSI Team Roster/Bios

Appendix 38: Standards and Indicators for School Improvement

Appendix 39: Sample Standard from CSSI Resource Handbook

Appendix 40: CDE School Support Team Report Lotus School Excellence Section 1 – Executive Summary and Section 2 – Detail Report

Appendix 41: Colorado Springs Early Colleges School Accountability Report

Appendix 42: New Schools 2009 Opening

Appendix 43: Colorado Department of Education Charter Schools Program Federal Grant Program Evaluation Spring 2008

Appendix 44: Data Due on Progress Report

**Section 4: Subgrantee Monitoring and Performance**

**Section 5: Administrative and Fiscal Responsibilities**

Appendix 45: Charter School Events/Calendar

Appendix 46: Request for Funds Form FY 2007–08

Appendix 47: Budget Summary – Years 1, 2, & 3 PR/Award Number U282A070006

Appendix 48: CDE Organization Chart

**State Comments and Additional Documentation**

Appendix 49: Colorado’s Response to the Charter Schools Program Monitoring Report

***Colorado Response to Draft  
Monitoring Report***

## Colorado's Response to the Charter Schools Program Monitoring Report

April 28, 2009 Draft

Thank you for this opportunity to clarify some items cited in the Colorado Monitoring Report. We are generally very pleased with the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the report and wish to simply clarify some information.

- Indicator 1.1: The report indicates CDE's "lack of detailed attention to the provision of special education services may be a function of a charter school's location within an LEA..." The report overlooks the 2006 Special Education Services in Charter Schools: Surveying Perceptions of Charter School Administrators and Special Education Directors, which is a follow-up to the 2002 report.  
[[http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/download/pdf/MAIN/2006\\_Sped\\_ServicesCS.pdf](http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdechart/download/pdf/MAIN/2006_Sped_ServicesCS.pdf)] Both reports surveyed the people working on the delivery of special education services in charter schools, both from the charter school and the school district level. The 2006 report determined that progress had been made in the provision of special education services in charter schools. Further, it reviewed recommendations made in the 2002 report, made additional recommendations and detailed the progress made on the 2002 recommendations.
- Indicator 1.4, page 12, "Observations" paragraph: Startup grant proposals are not due by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, but instead are due at an advertised deadline in October and February.
- Indicator 2.1, page 16: The Scoop is a CDE newsletter that is distributed electronically throughout the state to school districts and other interested persons. The Schools of Choice Unit forwards this CDE newsletter to its charter schools listserv.
- Indicator 2.6, page 22: The report states that SOC staff "usually participate" in authorizer network meetings. In fact, the SOC unit facilitates and hosts each meeting and thus, SOC staff always participates.
- Indicator 3.1, page 25, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph under the bullets: This should read, "A fourth reviewer also reads and scores the application, but is not a member of the review team for that particular proposal. The state transfers individual reader scores to a spreadsheet and looks for patterns to see if the applicants..."
- Indicator 4.1, page 33: Year 2 monitoring visits are not conducted in "conjunction with the CLCS." These visits are conducted by SOC staff.

- Indicator 5.1: CDE is currently evaluating e-grants systems. One of the requirements of the system that is selected, is the ability for grantees to upload additional documentation that supports their reimbursement requests.
- Indicator 5.2: CDE has reviewed OMB A-87, and believes the current practice of providing meals is limited to training/professional development meetings only. We will continue to monitor this activity and provide technical assistance to ensure only allowable meals are being provided.

# Budget Narrative

## Budget Narrative Attachment Form

Attachment 1:

Title: **Application - CO 2010-15 budget** Pages: **5** Uploaded File: **J:\PCSP 2010-15\Budget\Application - CO 2010-15 budget.pdf**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Section C, Budget Summary -Year 1  
Colorado Department of Education**

Budget Items	% of Effort (F.T.E.)	Year 1 Request	Comments
<b><u>Personnel</u></b>			
Barbara Medina	0.1	\$12,491	Asst. Commissioner who reports directly to the Commissioner of Education. Supervises the Project Director.
Denise Mund	1	\$71,783	Project Director. Ensures all project goals are met; supervises the Schools of Choice Unit; assists new charter schools and oversees development of technical assistance resources. Facilitates the charter school authorizer meetings. Reports to the Asst. Commissioner.
Dauzvardis, Jennifer	0.79	\$32,500	Consultant. Oversees the delivery of technical assistance resources to subgrantee schools; coordinates Business Manager Network; assists in the preparation of required reports and studies regarding charter schools; and develops best practice resources for charter school leaders. Reports to the Project Director.
Peg McMillen	0.5	25,000	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
Jeri Bisbee	0.5	\$25,000	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
Pahmela Hines	1	\$ 41,472	General Professional II, administrative support. Fulfills data requests, updates the website, edits documents, maintains waiver records, and provides administrative support as needed.
Admin Asst.	1	\$18,526	Provides administrative support and assistance to the Schools of Choice Unit staff.
Andy Lake	0.2	\$10,000	The Grants Fiscal Unit at CDE oversees the fiscal side of the Charter School Grant Programs. Ensures that LEA's and charter schools are in compliance with federal regulations pertaining to the Charter School Grant Program, monitors budgets, financial reports and funding.
<b>Sub-Total Personnel</b>	5.09	\$236,772	
<b><u>Fringe Benefits</u></b>			
Applicable to all F.T.E.		\$49,722	Rate 21%
<b><u>Travel</u></b>			
In State		\$5,000	Project Director and Project Consultants travel in-state to assist charter school developers and operators on-site. One-third of the charter schools receiving grant funds will receive site visits. The travel funds also cover in some cases, costs of various conferences relating to charter schools.
Out-of-State		\$10,000	Attend National Charter School Conference and other Out-of-State conferences to keep informed of charter school issues.
<b>Sub-Total Travel</b>		\$15,000	
<b><u>Equipment</u></b>			
Various		\$4,900	As needed by Unit
<b><u>Supplies</u></b>			
General Office Supplies		\$1,750	Supports Schools of Choice Unit
<b><u>Contractual</u></b>			
Various		\$41,934	Grant program consultants for new applicants; researchers and writers for state evaluation and special interest studies; leaders for administrator meetings; presenters for subgrantee trainings; mentors for administrator training; development of new TA resources; and other grant projects.
<b><u>Other</u></b>			
Distribution		\$7,200,000	Fund start-up and implementation grants
Building Rental		\$10,689	\$2100 per year per F.T.E.
Network		\$2,405	Internal Charges (Internet Access, E-Mail)
Telephone/Fax		\$3,200	Phone/Fax to support Schools of Choice Unit.
Printing/Reproduction		\$2,000	Printing/copying in support of Charter School Grant Program.
Postage		\$2,000	Various information related to Charter School Grant funding will be mailed to charter schools.
Official Functions		\$4,000	As needed to bring Charter School groups together. Includes room rental, speaker, etc.
Workshops/Conferences		\$2,000	Finance, administrator and business manager seminars
Registration Fees		\$3,000	Conferences including NACSA, Natl Charter School Conf, & other charter school conferences
Other Operating		\$1,500	Resource library, professional development, etc.
<b>Sub-Total Other</b>		\$7,230,794	
<b><u>Indirect Costs (11.2%)</u></b>		\$24,310	
<b>Sub Total</b>		\$7,580,872	
<b>Grand Total (Includes Indirect)</b>		\$7,605,182	

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Budget Summary - Year 2  
Colorado Department of Education**

Budget Items	% of Effort (F.T.E.)	Year 2 Request	Comments
<b><u>Personnel</u></b>			
Barbara Medina	0.1	\$12,866	Asst. Commissioner who reports directly to the Commissioner of Education. Supervises the Project Director.
Denise Mund	1	\$73,936	Project Director. Ensures all project goals are met; supervises the Schools of Choice Unit; assists new charter schools and oversees development of technical assistance resources. Facilitates the charter school authorizer meetings. Reports to the Asst. Commissioner.
Dauzvardis, Jennifer	0.79	\$33,475	Consultant. Oversees the delivery of technical assistance resources to subgrantee schools; coordinates Business Manager Network; assists in the preparation of required reports and studies regarding charter schools; and develops best practice resources for charter school leaders. Reports to the Project Director.
Peg McMillen	0.5	\$25,750	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
Jeri Bisbee	0.5	\$25,750	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
Pahmela Hines	1	\$42,716	General Professional II, administrative support. Fulfills data requests, updates the website, edits documents, maintains waiver records, and provides administrative support as needed.
Admin Asst.	1	\$19,082	Provides administrative support and assistance to the Schools of Choice Unit staff.
Andy Lake	0.2	\$10,300	The Grants Fiscal Unit at CDE oversees the fiscal side of the Charter School Grant Programs. Ensures that LEA's and charter schools are in compliance with federal regulations pertaining to the Charter School Grant Program, monitors budgets, financial reports and funding.
<b>Sub-Total Personnel</b>	5.09	\$243,875	
<b><u>Fringe Benefits</u></b>			
Applicable to all F.T.E.		\$51,214	Rate 21%
<b><u>Travel</u></b>			
In State		\$5,500	Project Director and Project Consultant travel in-state to assist charter school developers and operators on-site. One-third of the charter schools receiving grant funds will receive site visits. The travel funds also cover in some cases, costs of various conferences relating to charter schools.
Out-of-State		\$12,000	Attend National Charter School Conference and other Out-of-State conferences to keep informed of charter school issues.
<b>Sub-Total Travel</b>		\$17,500	
<b><u>Equipment</u></b>			
Various		\$2,000	As needed by Unit
<b><u>Supplies</u></b>			
General Office Supplies		\$2,200	Supports Charter School Unit.
<b><u>Contractual</u></b>			
Various		\$48,128	Grant program consultants for new applicants; researchers and writers for state evaluation and special interest studies; leaders for administrator meetings; presenters for subgrantee trainings; mentors for administrator training; development of new TA resources; and other grant projects.
<b><u>Other</u></b>			
Distribution		\$8,460,000	Fund start-up and implementation grants.
Building Rental		\$11,223	\$2205 annually per F.T.E.
Network		\$2,189	Internal Charges (Internet Access, E-Mail)
Telephone/Fax		\$4,000	Phone/Fax to support Charter School Unit.
Printing/Reproduction		\$5,000	Printing/copying in support of Charter School Grant Program.
Postage		\$3,000	Various information related to Charter School Grant funding will be mailed to charter schools.
Official Functions		\$5,000	As needed to bring Charter School groups together. Includes room rental, speaker, etc.
Workshops/Conferences		\$7,000	Finance, administrator and business manager seminars
Registration Fees		\$2,000	Conferences including NACSA, Natl Charter School Conf, & other charter school conferences
Other Operating		\$9,279	Resource library, professional development, etc.
<b>Sub-Total Other</b>		<b>\$8,508,691</b>	
<b><u>Indirect Costs</u></b>		<b>\$49,869</b>	
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>\$8,873,608</b>	
<b>Grand Total (Includes Indirect)</b>		<b>\$8,923,477</b>	



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Budget Summary - Year 3  
Colorado Department of Education**

Budget Items	% of Effort (F.T.E.)	Year 3 Request	Comments
<b><u>Personnel</u></b>			
Barbara Medina	0.1	\$13,252	Asst. Commissioner who reports directly to the Commissioner of Education. Supervises the Project Director.
Denise Mund	1	\$76,155	Project Director. Ensures all project goals are met; supervises the Schools of Choice Unit; assists new charter schools and oversees development of technical assistance resources. Facilitates the charter school authorizer meetings. Reports to the Asst. Commissioner.
Dauzvardis, Jennifer	0.79	\$34,479	Consultant. Oversees the delivery of technical assistance resources to subgrantee schools; coordinates Business Manager Network; assists in the preparation of required reports and studies regarding charter schools; and develops best practice resources for charter school leaders. Reports to the Project Director.
Peg McMillen	0.5	\$26,523	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
Jeri Bisbee	0.5	\$26,523	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
		\$43,998	General Professional II, administrative support. Fulfills data requests, updates the website, edits documents, maintains waiver records, and provides administrative support as needed.
Pahmela Hines	1	\$19,654	
Admin Asst.	1		Provides administrative support and assistance to the Schools of Choice Unit staff.
Andy Lake	0.2	\$10,609	The Grants Fiscal Unit at CDE oversees the fiscal side of the Charter School Grant Programs. Ensures that LEA's and charter schools are in compliance with federal regulations pertaining to the Charter School Grant Program, monitors budgets, financial reports and funding.
<b><u>Sub-Total Personnel</u></b>	5.09	\$251,191	
<b><u>Fringe Benefits</u></b>			
Applicable to all F.T.E.		\$52,750	Rate 21%
<b><u>Travel</u></b>			
In State		\$6,000	Project Director and Project Consultant travel in-state to assist charter school developers and operators on-site. One-third of the charter schools receiving grant funds will receive site visits. The travel funds also cover in some cases, costs of various conferences relating to charter schools.
Out-of-State		\$13,000	Attend National Charter School Conference and other out-of-state conferences to keep informed of charter school issues.
<b><u>Sub-Total Travel</u></b>		\$19,000	
<b><u>Equipment</u></b>			
Various		\$2,000	As needed by Unit
<b><u>Supplies</u></b>			
General Office Supplies		\$3,000	Supports Charter School Unit.
<b><u>Contractual</u></b>			
Various		\$90,000	Grant program consultants for new applicants; researchers and writers for state evaluation and special interest studies; leaders for administrator meetings; presenters for subgrantee trainings; mentors for administrator training; development of new TA resources; and other grant projects.
<b><u>Other</u></b>			
Distribution		\$9,720,000	Fund start-up and implementation grants.
Building Rental		\$11,783	\$2,315 per month per F.T.E.
Network		\$2,182	Internal Charges (Internet Access, E-Mail)
Telephone/Fax		\$5,000	Phone/Fax to support Charter School Unit.
Printing/Reproduction		\$4,000	Printing/copying in support of Charter School Grant Program.
Postage		\$3,000	Various information related to Charter School Grant funding will be mailed to charter schools.
Official Functions		\$4,000	As needed to bring Charter School groups together. Includes room rental, speaker, etc.
Workshops/Conferences		\$4,000	Finance, administrator and business manager seminars
Registration Fees		\$2,000	Conferences including NACSA, Natl Charter School Conf, & other charter school conferences
Other Operating		\$4,061	Resource library, professional development, etc.
<b><u>Sub-Total Other</u></b>		\$9,760,026	
<b><u>Indirect Costs</u></b>		\$57,297	
<b>Sub Total</b>		\$10,177,968	
<b>Grand Total (Includes Indirect)</b>		\$10,235,265	

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Budget Summary - Year 4  
Colorado Department of Education**

Budget Items	% of Effort (F.T.E.)	Year 3 Request	Comments
<b><u>Personnel</u></b>			
Barbara Medina	0.1	\$13,649	Asst. Commissioner who reports directly to the Commissioner of Education. Supervises the Project Director.
Denise Mund	1	\$78,439	Project Director. Ensures all project goals are met; supervises the Schools of Choice Unit; assists new charter schools and oversees development of technical assistance resources. Facilitates the charter school authorizer meetings. Reports to the Asst. Commissioner.
Dauzvardis, Jennifer	0.79	\$35,514	Consultant. Oversees the delivery of technical assistance resources to subgrantee schools; coordinates Business Manager Network; assists in the preparation of required reports and studies regarding charter schools; and develops best practice resources for charter school leaders. Reports to the Project Director.
Peg McMillen	0.5	\$27,318	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
Jeri Bisbee	0.5	\$27,318	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
		\$45,318	General Professional II, administrative support. Fulfills data requests, updates the website, edits documents, maintains waiver records, and provides administrative support as needed.
Pahmela Hines	1	\$20,244	
Admin Asst.	1		Provides administrative support and assistance to the Schools of Choice Unit staff.
Andy Lake	0.2	\$10,927	The Grants Fiscal Unit at CDE oversees the fiscal side of the Charter School Grant Programs. Ensures that LEA's and charter schools are in compliance with federal regulations pertaining to the Charter School Grant Program, monitors budgets, financial reports and funding.
<b><u>Sub-Total Personnel</u></b>	5.09	\$258,727	
<b><u>Fringe Benefits</u></b>			
Applicable to all F.T.E.		\$54,333	Rate 21%
<b><u>Travel</u></b>			
In State		\$6,000	Project Director and Project Consultant travel in-state to assist charter school developers and operators on-site. One-third of the charter schools receiving grant funds will receive site visits. The travel funds also cover in some cases, costs of various conferences relating to charter schools.
Out-of-State		\$13,000	Attend National Charter School Conference and other out-of-state conferences to keep informed of charter school issues.
<b><u>Sub-Total Travel</u></b>		\$19,000	
<b><u>Equipment</u></b>			
Various		\$2,000	As needed by Unit
<b><u>Supplies</u></b>			
General Office Supplies		\$3,000	Supports Charter School Unit.
<b><u>Contractual</u></b>			
Various		\$90,000	Grant program consultants for new applicants; researchers and writers for state evaluation and special interest studies; leaders for administrator meetings; presenters for subgrantee trainings; mentors for administrator training; development of new TA resources; and other grant projects.
<b><u>Other</u></b>			
Distribution		\$9,720,000	Fund start-up and implementation grants.
Building Rental		\$11,783	\$2,315 per month per F.T.E.
Network		\$2,182	Internal Charges (Internet Access, E-Mail)
Telephone/Fax		\$5,000	Phone/Fax to support Charter School Unit.
Printing/Reproduction		\$4,000	Printing/copying in support of Charter School Grant Program.
Postage		\$3,000	Various information related to Charter School Grant funding will be mailed to charter schools.
Official Functions		\$4,000	As needed to bring Charter School groups together. Includes room rental, speaker, etc.
Workshops/Conferences		\$4,000	Finance, administrator and business manager seminars
Registration Fees		\$2,000	Conferences including NACSA, Natl Charter School Conf, & other charter school conferences
Other Operating		\$4,061	Resource library, professional development, etc.
<b><u>Sub-Total Other</u></b>		\$9,760,026	
<b><u>Indirect Costs</u></b>		\$57,297	
<b>Sub Total</b>		\$10,187,086	
<b>Grand Total (Includes Indirect)</b>		\$10,244,383	

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
Budget Summary - Year 5  
Colorado Department of Education**

Budget Items	% of Effort (F.T.E.)	Year 3 Request	Comments
<b><u>Personnel</u></b>			
Barbara Medina	0.1	\$14,059	Asst. Commissioner who reports directly to the Commissioner of Education. Supervises the Project Director.
Denise Mund	1	\$80,792	Project Director. Ensures all project goals are met; supervises the Schools of Choice Unit; assists new charter schools and oversees development of technical assistance resources. Facilitates the charter school authorizer meetings. Reports to the Asst. Commissioner.
Dauzvardis, Jennifer	0.79	\$36,579	Consultant. Oversees the delivery of technical assistance resources to subgrantee schools; coordinates Business Manager Network; assists in the preparation of required reports and studies regarding charter schools; and develops best practice resources for charter school leaders. Reports to the Project Director.
Peg McMillen	0.5	\$28,138	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
Jeri Bisbee	0.5	\$28,138	Consultant. Oversees the subgrantee process including application writer trainings, the review process, reviewer training, grant award notifications, records management, budget review, and technical assistance, as needed.
		\$46,677	General Professional II, administrative support. Fulfills data requests, updates the website, edits documents, maintains waiver records, and provides administrative support as needed.
Pahmela Hines	1	\$20,851	
Admin Asst.	1		Provides administrative support and assistance to the Schools of Choice Unit staff.
Andy Lake	0.2	\$11,255	The Grants Fiscal Unit at CDE oversees the fiscal side of the Charter School Grant Programs. Ensures that LEA's and charter schools are in compliance with federal regulations pertaining to the Charter School Grant Program, monitors budgets, financial reports and funding.
<b><u>Sub-Total Personnel</u></b>	5.09	\$266,489	
<b><u>Fringe Benefits</u></b>			
Applicable to all F.T.E.		\$55,963	Rate 21%
<b><u>Travel</u></b>			
In State		\$6,000	Project Director and Project Consultant travel in-state to assist charter school developers and operators on-site. One-third of the charter schools receiving grant funds will receive site visits. The travel funds also cover in some cases, costs of various conferences relating to charter schools.
Out-of-State		\$13,000	Attend National Charter School Conference and other out-of-state conferences to keep informed of charter school issues.
<b><u>Sub-Total Travel</u></b>		\$19,000	
<b><u>Equipment</u></b>			
Various		\$2,000	As needed by Unit
<b><u>Supplies</u></b>			
General Office Supplies		\$3,000	Supports Charter School Unit.
<b><u>Contractual</u></b>			
Various		\$90,000	Grant program consultants for new applicants; researchers and writers for state evaluation and special interest studies; leaders for administrator meetings; presenters for subgrantee trainings; mentors for administrator training; development of new TA resources; and other grant projects.
<b><u>Other</u></b>			
Distribution		\$9,720,000	Fund start-up and implementation grants.
Building Rental		\$11,783	\$2,315 per month per F.T.E.
Network		\$2,182	Internal Charges (Internet Access, E-Mail)
Telephone/Fax		\$5,000	Phone/Fax to support Charter School Unit.
Printing/Reproduction		\$4,000	Printing/copying in support of Charter School Grant Program.
Postage		\$3,000	Various information related to Charter School Grant funding will be mailed to charter schools.
Official Functions		\$4,000	As needed to bring Charter School groups together. Includes room rental, speaker, etc.
Workshops/Conferences		\$4,000	Finance, administrator and business manager seminars
Registration Fees		\$2,000	Conferences including NACSA, Natl Charter School Conf, & other charter school conferences
Other Operating		\$4,061	Resource library, professional development, etc.
<b><u>Sub-Total Other</u></b>		\$9,760,026	
<b><u>Indirect Costs</u></b>		\$57,297	
<b>Sub Total</b>		\$10,196,478	
<b>Grand Total (Includes Indirect)</b>		\$10,253,775	