



# **NSA West Meeting - Parent Information**

December 2009



# Agenda

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- What is a Charter School?
- Community Need
- NSA West Overview
- Educational Program
- Enrollment Policy
- Facility Plan
- Timeline
- How to Get Involved



# What is a Charter School?

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- Publicly funded school of choice; not affiliated with any religious institution
- Founded by any group or person motivated to create successful and innovative learning environments
- Accountable to the local district's board of education or state authorizer
- Subject to the same safety regulations, civil rights regulations, standardized testing, and financial accountability as other public schools
- More info: [www.coloradoleague.org](http://www.coloradoleague.org)



# Charter Schools – Key Stats

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- CO Charter Schools Act passed in 1993
- Over 160 charter schools in CO
- More than 1 million charter school students nationwide
- 66,000 students attend charter schools in CO (7.6% of total K-12 enrollment)
- DCSD has 7 charter schools in its district
- Tend to produce test scores that are equal to or better than their counterparts in centrally managed public schools on CSAPs



# Community Need

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Top requests from parents in the community:

- Core Knowledge curriculum
- Spanish language program
- Character education and service learning programs
- Uniforms
- Traditional calendar year



# NSA Overview

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- Grassroots effort started by local parents
- Core Knowledge school with integrated Spanish language program
- Scheduled opening: August 2010
- Traditional calendar year
- Preschool – 5<sup>th</sup> grade in opening year
- School uniforms
- Tuition free
- Parent involvement – 40 hours per year



# Replication Strategy

- North Star Academy opened August 2006 in Parker
  - 575 students enrolled for 2009-2010
  - Currently serves grades K-7
  - Same founding team
- Goal is to replicate their educational programs and practices
- Business practices will be separate and distinct



# Educational Program

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NSA West will provide students with an academic approach in 3 key areas:

1. Core Knowledge curriculum for core discipline areas
2. Integrated Spanish language program
3. Character education and service learning programs



# Core Knowledge Curriculum

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- Research-based program utilized by over 83 schools in Colorado
- Colorado CK schools regularly post CSAP scores 10-30 points higher than the state average
- Provides a clear outline of what students are expected to learn
- Supplemental programs: Saxon Math, Open Court, Shurley Grammar, Accelerated Reader, Junior Great Books, Sitton Spelling, Pearson Science, Pearson History & Geography
- More info at [www.coreknowledge.org](http://www.coreknowledge.org)



# Spanish Language Program

- Hispanics are the largest and fastest growing minority population in the United States
- Foreign Language in Elementary Schools (FLES) – content-based FLES program begins in kindergarten
- Goal is for students to acquire proficiency in interpersonal communication, interpretive communication and presentational communication through listening, speaking, reading and writing.
- Students participate in language instruction for a minimum of 30 minutes per day, five days per week

U.S. Census Bureau, 2004, "U.S. Interim Projections by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin," <http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/usinterimproj/>



# Character Education & Service Learning

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- 5 character traits taught at NSA: respect, integrity, excellence, responsibility, and citizenship
- Teaches students the skills they need to make responsible choices and be respectful of others
- Integrates school-based curriculum with student participation in organized community service projects
- Curriculum centered on great historical figures (ie Helen Keller, Benjamin Franklin)



# Additional Components

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- Music, Art and PE offered on rotating schedule
- Technology integrated into program:
  - Student computer lab
  - SMART boards in every classroom
- School-wide discipline program
- Assessments: CSAP, NWEA, AR, STAR, DRA2, informal and program assessments



# Early Childhood Education

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- Opening August 2010 to 3 and 4 year olds
- Core Knowledge program with Spanish instruction
- Class size: 18-20 kids per class
- Highly qualified Core Knowledge teachers
- Follows NSA West school calendar
- Lottery for enrollment: Jan 19<sup>th</sup>, 2010
- Located in NSA West facility



# Before/After School Program

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- Opening August 2010 for K-5<sup>th</sup> graders
- Initial focus is on general wellness of kids (homework help, physical exercise)
- 40 open seats in first year
- Program will be expanded in future years to include sports, fine arts and clubs
- Enrollment and tuition details in development
- Online survey available on school website



# Enrollment

- Lottery process required for any grade that is oversubscribed to receive federal startup grants
- Priority given to Founding Families, siblings and accepted students from fall 2008 lottery
- Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> birthday cut-off for program placement
  - Kindergarteners must be 5 years old
  - Preschoolers must be 3 or 4 years old
- Now accepting Intent to Enroll forms
  - Deadline: Jan 15<sup>th</sup> to participate in lottery for 2010
  - All families receive email confirmation when ITE submitted



# Facility Update

- A Highlands Ranch facility has been acquired!
  - 6161 Business Center Drive
  - Approx C-470 & Quebec (west of Walmart)
- Large warehouse will require extensive tenant improvements
  - Primary and Elementary programs will occupy half of building
- Working with SlaterPaull architects, Inline Management, JHL Construction
  - All consultants have extensive charter school experience



# Timeline

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Charter Application Submitted	June 2008
Initial Lottery Event	Oct 2008
Charter Application Approved	Nov 2008
Financing Proposal Approved	Oct 2009
CDE Grant Application Approved	Nov 2009
Facility/Financing Closed	Dec 2009
Staff Recruitment Begins	Dec 2009
Lottery for Enrollment	Jan 2010
Ground Breaking	Feb 2010
Intended School Opening	Aug 2010



# How to Get Involved

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- Volunteer!
- Looking for assistance in the following areas:  
grant writing, school budgets, technology and  
website development
- Spread the word about NSA West



# Contact Info

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**For more information:**

Email: [info@nsawest.org](mailto:info@nsawest.org)

School Voice Mail: 303.471.6677

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