

STEM SCHOOL

HIGHLANDS RANCH

STEM School Highlands Ranch

Board of Directors Meeting

Monthly Meeting

Published on October 31, 2025 at 3:57 PM MDT

Amended on November 3, 2025 at 2:13 PM MST

Date and Time

Tuesday November 4, 2025 at 5:30 PM MST

Location

8920 Barrons Blvd
P-TECH Mechatronics Room
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android: [https://zoom.us/j/95825391000?
pwd=msnclVBra97QrHttP6dmqMTMcpbaV9.1](https://zoom.us/j/95825391000?pwd=msnclVBra97QrHttP6dmqMTMcpbaV9.1)

Passcode:771384

Agenda

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
I. Opening Items			5:30 PM
A.	Record Attendance		2 m
B.	Call the Meeting to Order		1 m
C.	Pledge of Allegiance	Erin Quigley	1 m

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
D.	Reciting of the Mission Statement	Rudy Lukez	1 m
	Never Stop Innovating! We envision a world of exponential possibilities where every child develops the innate knowledge, skills, creativity and character to thrive, lead and succeed in an ever-changing future.		
II.	Approve Meeting Minutes		5:35 PM
A.	Board Meeting October 7th	Approve Minutes Carla Gustafson	2 m
III.	STEM School Highlands Ranch Updates		5:37 PM
A.	STEM School HR Update	FYI LynAnn Kovalesky	20 m
	Executive Director LynAnn Kovalesky provides Oct Count/Enrollment Update and general updates.		
IV.	KOSON Schools		5:57 PM
A.	CIO Update	Discuss Matt Cartier	20 m
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget status update • Strategic Planning and Annual Goals Update 		
B.	25/26 Budget Update	Discuss Darrell Lomelino	30 m
	Sean Milner, CFO, and Finance Committee present updated current year budget based on October count and Q&A		
C.	Policy Update	Discuss Carla Gustafson	30 m
	Discuss new proposed Board Reserve Policy and Q&A Discuss new proposed Fundraising Policy and Q&A Discuss proposed update to Policy Template and Q&A		
D.	Propose Re-Establishing Koson Foundation Board	Discuss Carla Gustafson	20 m

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
Discuss proposal to re-establish Koson Foundation Board and nominate Foundation Board members.			
V. Public Comment			7:37 PM
This is the time to voice opinions and provide feedback about specific agenda item(s) prior to any Board action. Speakers must complete the Public Comment Form and submit it electronically no later than 12 p.m. the day of each Board meeting. If written testimony or a handout is submitted, presenters are asked to supply one (1) copy via email to communications@stemk12.org			
A.	Public Comment Sign up link https://forms.gle/AM9H5q4sfTKYmYSp6		10 m
VI. Consent Agenda			7:47 PM
A.	Vote for Consent Agenda Items	Vote	Carla Gustafson
	Confirm Curriculum Policies:		5 m
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection of Controversial Learning Resources Policy • Viewpoint Neutrality Policy • Opt-in/Opt-out Policy 		
	Academic Course Additions for 2026/27:		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle School Digital Media • Autonomous Robotic Programming • Introduction to Organic Chemistry 		
VII. Board Committee Updates			7:52 PM
A.	Academic Excellence Committee Updates	Discuss	Ishmeet Kalra
			10 m
B.	CIO Support & Evaluation Committee Updates	Discuss	Erin Quigley
	Mid-Year Check-in; Reminder of the process		10 m
C.	Finance Committee Update	Discuss	Darrell Lomelino
			5 m
D.	Governance Committee Update	Discuss	Carla Gustafson
			15 m

	Purpose	Presenter	Time
E. Growth Task Force Update	Discuss	Kevin Leung	10 m
Highlights to proposed Growth Task Force one pager			
VIII. Board of Director's Updates			8:42 PM
A. Preview of Next Meeting	FYI	Carla Gustafson	5 m
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reminder to complete Training actions in Board on Track dashboard• Finance - Approve 25/26 Budget Update, 24/25 Audit Presentation• CIO Support & Evaluation - CIO Mid-Year Check-in BOD Evaluation• Governance - Approve remaining Committee One Pagers• Academic - Fall Survey Data			
IX. Closing Items			8:47 PM
A. Adjourn Meeting	Vote	Carla Gustafson	
Adjournment			

Never Stop Innovating! We envision a world of exponential possibilities where every child develops the innate knowledge, skills, creativity and character to thrive, lead and succeed in an ever-changing future.

Coversheet

Board Meeting October 7th

Section:	II. Approve Meeting Minutes
Item:	A. Board Meeting October 7th
Purpose:	Approve Minutes
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Minutes for Board of Directors Meeting on October 7, 2025

APPROVED

STEM SCHOOL

HIGHLANDS RANCH

STEM School Highlands Ranch

Minutes

Board of Directors Meeting

Monthly Meeting

Date and Time

Tuesday October 7, 2025 at 5:30 PM

Location

8920 Barrons Blvd

P-TECH Mechatronics Room

Highlands Ranch, CO 80129

Join from PC, Mac, iPad, or Android: <https://zoom.us/j/95825391000?pwd=msnclVBra97QrHttP6dmqMTMcpbaV9.1>

Passcode:771384

Directors Present

A. Campbell, C. Gustafson, C. Wroblewski, D. Lomelino (remote), E. Quigley, G. Wing, I. Kalra, K. Leung, R. Lukez

Directors Absent

None

Guests Present

A. Cardinal, Chris Damour, L. Kovalesky, Laurie Veldhuizen, M. Cartier, M. Pritchard, Michelle Gasser (remote), S. Milner

I. Opening Items

A.

Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

C. Gustafson called a meeting of the board of directors of STEM School Highlands Ranch to order on Tuesday Oct 7, 2025 at 5:33 PM.

C. Pledge of Allegiance

D. Reciting of the Mission Statement

II. Approve Meeting Minutes

A. Board Meeting September 2nd

R. Lukez made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Directors Meeting on 09-02-25.

E. Quigley seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

III. STEM School Highlands Ranch Updates

A. STEM School HR Update

LynAnn Kovalesky School updates:

Blast Off raised ~\$10k to go directly to top tier clubs

Parent Teacher Conferences this week

Booster-Thon Event Goal to raise money for athletic vans, playground equipment, accelerator fund; fun prizes and incentives built in
STEM Trunk or Treat on 10/24

Enrollment update 1464, potential 1470. Open enrollment window starting and outreach beginning; will be using FinalSite enrollment tool.

Michelle Gasser: UIP Data

Discuss CMAS data

Next steps: trend analysis and allocate resources to meet goals; discuss during PD
IEP/504 populations are increasing

Discuss PSAT/SAT scores

Next steps: targeted instruction for students who are not meeting the benchmarks; discuss during PD; look into male/female disparities at junior/senior years.

IV. KOSON Schools

A. CIO Update

Sean Milner: Budget Updates

Working on first internal audit and will provide revised budget

Final audit is 10/31

Matt: Master Improvement Plan

Discuss survey results and next steps

B. Policy Update

I. Kalra made a motion to Approve the enrollment policy update.

R. Lukez seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

C. CIO Annual Goals

R. Lukez made a motion to Approve CIO Performance Goals as presented.

A. Campbell seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Financial Audit Update

E. Quigley made a motion to Authorize Board Treasurer to accept the audit report on the Board's behalf prior to submission to DCSD.

G. Wing seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

V. Consent Agenda

A. Vote for Consent Agenda Items

E. Quigley made a motion to Approve consent agenda.

C. Wroblewski seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Board Committee Updates

A. Academic Excellence Committee Updates

Discussion around KPIs, workflow, and policy recommendations

B. CIO Support & Evaluation Committee Updates

No Updates

C. Finance Committee Update

Reiterate that deep dive into budget to provide revisions and working on monthly flags

D.

Governance Committee Update

Fundraising Policy in draft, discussions in finance and fundraising committee for feedback

E. Growth Task Force Update

Still in progress

VII. Board of Director's Updates

A. Preview of Next Meeting

Board Training needs to be completed

October Count Day Update

Finance - Audit presentation, Budget Updates

Governance - Approve remaining committee one pagers, BOT survey results

VIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

R. Lukez made a motion to Adjourn.

C. Wroblewski seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

I. Kalra

Documents used during the meeting

- October Board Presentation 25_26.pdf
- _CIO Board Presentation 20251007.pdf
- Policy_Enrollment_2025 Update.pdf
- Koson_CIO_Goals_2025-2026.pdf
- Governance Committee One Pager 2025-26.pdf
- Finance Committee One Pager 2025-26.pdf
- CIO Support and Evaluation Committee One Pager FY25-26.pdf

Never Stop Innovating! We envision a world of exponential possibilities where every child develops the innate knowledge, skills, creativity and character to thrive, lead and succeed in an ever-changing future.

Coversheet

STEM School HR Update

Section:	III. STEM School Highlands Ranch Updates
Item:	A. STEM School HR Update
Purpose:	FYI
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	November Board Presentation 25_26.pdf

ED Presentation

November 4, 2025

LynAnn Kovalsky, Executive Director

STEM School Update

SCHOOL UPDATES

- **Colorado Parent Magazine Winners!**
 - **Best Charter Elementary School**
 - **Best Charter Middle School**
 - **Best Charter High School**
 - **Best Charter HS Principal**
 - **Best Charter MS Principal**
- **Boosterthon Fun Run Updates**
 - ?????
 - Spartan Spring and Chromatic Chaos Color Run Tomorrow
- **Prospective Spartan Night**
- **Open Enrollment Window is Open**
- **Welcome Event and Communications Coordinator- Allie Everson**
- **Events, events, and more events!**

2025 - 26 Enrollment

Elementary	Middle	High	Total*	Potential**
534 530	498 496	440 432	1470 1458	1465

Elementary School		Middle School		High School	
Kinder	88 84	Sixth	168 169	Ninth	131 127
First	81 81	Seventh	168 165	Tenth	112 113
Second	69 69	Eighth	162 162	Eleventh	100 98
Third	82 82	Pending Enrollments		Twelfth	95 92
Fourth	109 108			13/14	2 2
Fifth	105 106				
		Choice	0		
		Admin Transfers	2		

*10/31 Enrolled

**Projecting adding new student prior to count through Admin Transfers/Choice Enrollment.



Coversheet

CIO Update

Section:	IV. KOSON Schools
Item:	A. CIO Update
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	CIO Board Presentation 20251104.pptx.pdf

CIO UPDATE



Board Meeting | November 4, 2025

CONTENTS

1. Budget Update
2. Strategic Plan Update
3. CIO Annual

BUDGET UPDATE

CFO Presentation



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Growth Task Force

Growth Task Force Suggested Priorities

What questions or discussion points does the board have about these priorities?

Priority #1 - Homeschool - Launch Fall 2026

Priority #2 - 10 Year Master Plan - Launch Fall 2027

Priority #3 - Preschool Launch Fall 2027

Priority #4 - Other Brick & Mortar Start Ups

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Growth Task Force

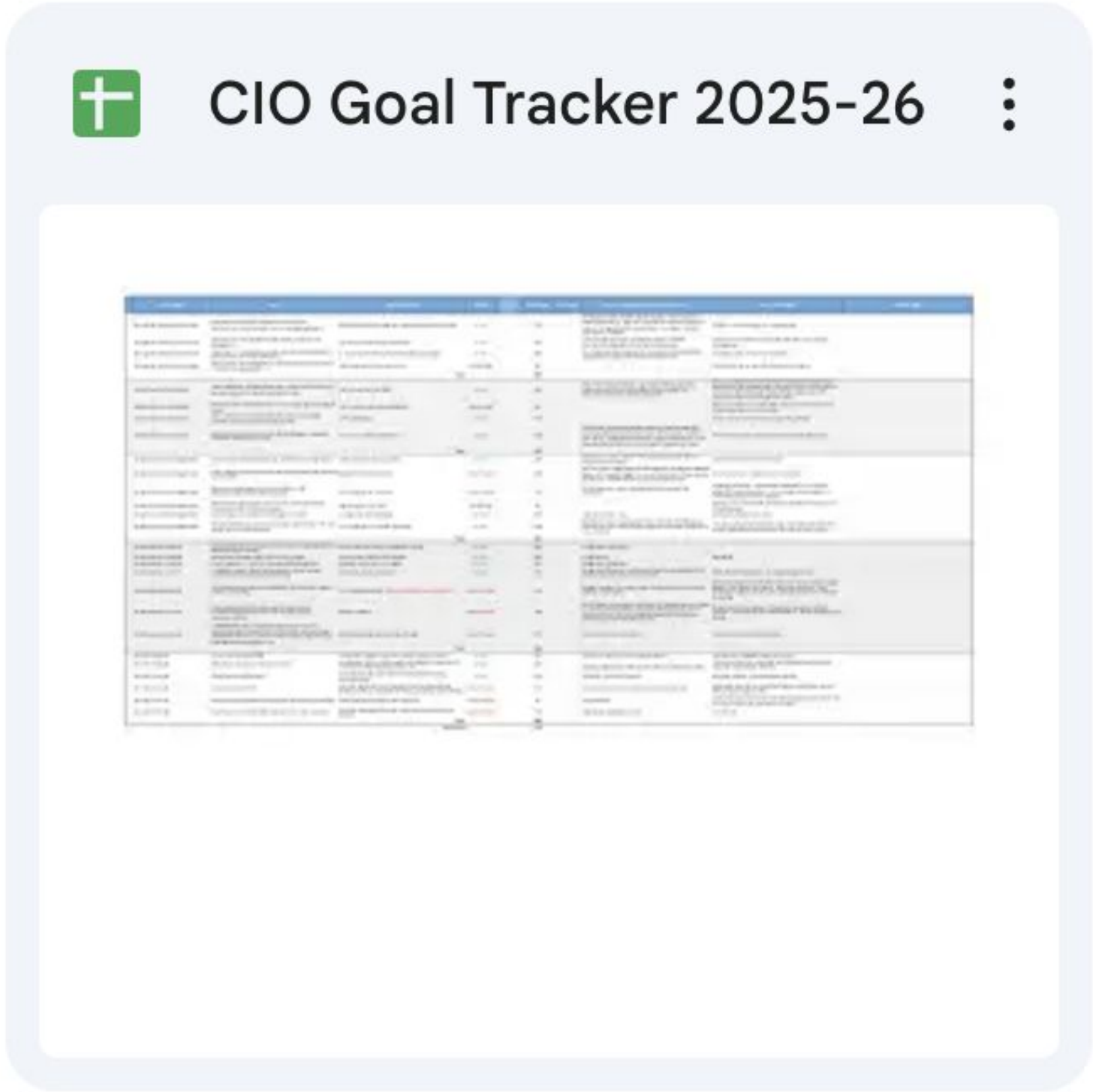
Ongoing Focus Areas:

- Building Assets (Showcase, Curriculum, Professional Development, and Business Processes)
- Research Problem Based STEM Schools and Charter Networks

CIO Annual Goals

CIO Goal Tracker

Developed a tracking system to update the Support and Evaluation Committee on goal progress.



CIO Annual Goals Update

1. Strengthen Systems and Processes
2. Elevate Leadership Capacity
3. Deepen Community Engagement
4. Develop Network Assets

Thank you!

Coversheet

25/26 Budget Update

Section:	IV. KOSON Schools
Item:	B. 25/26 Budget Update
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Revised Budget FY 25-26.pdf

FY 2025 - 2026

Revised Budget

Overview of Budgeting Process

Fiscal Year: July 1 – June 30

State Budgeting Process

- November: Governor's budget request
- December: Economic Forecast
- February-March: Joint Budget Committee makes recommendations
- March: Updated Revenue Forecast
- May-June: Legislature approves budget

Revenue forecasts combined with current budget recommendations help predict per pupil revenue

KOSON Budgeting Process

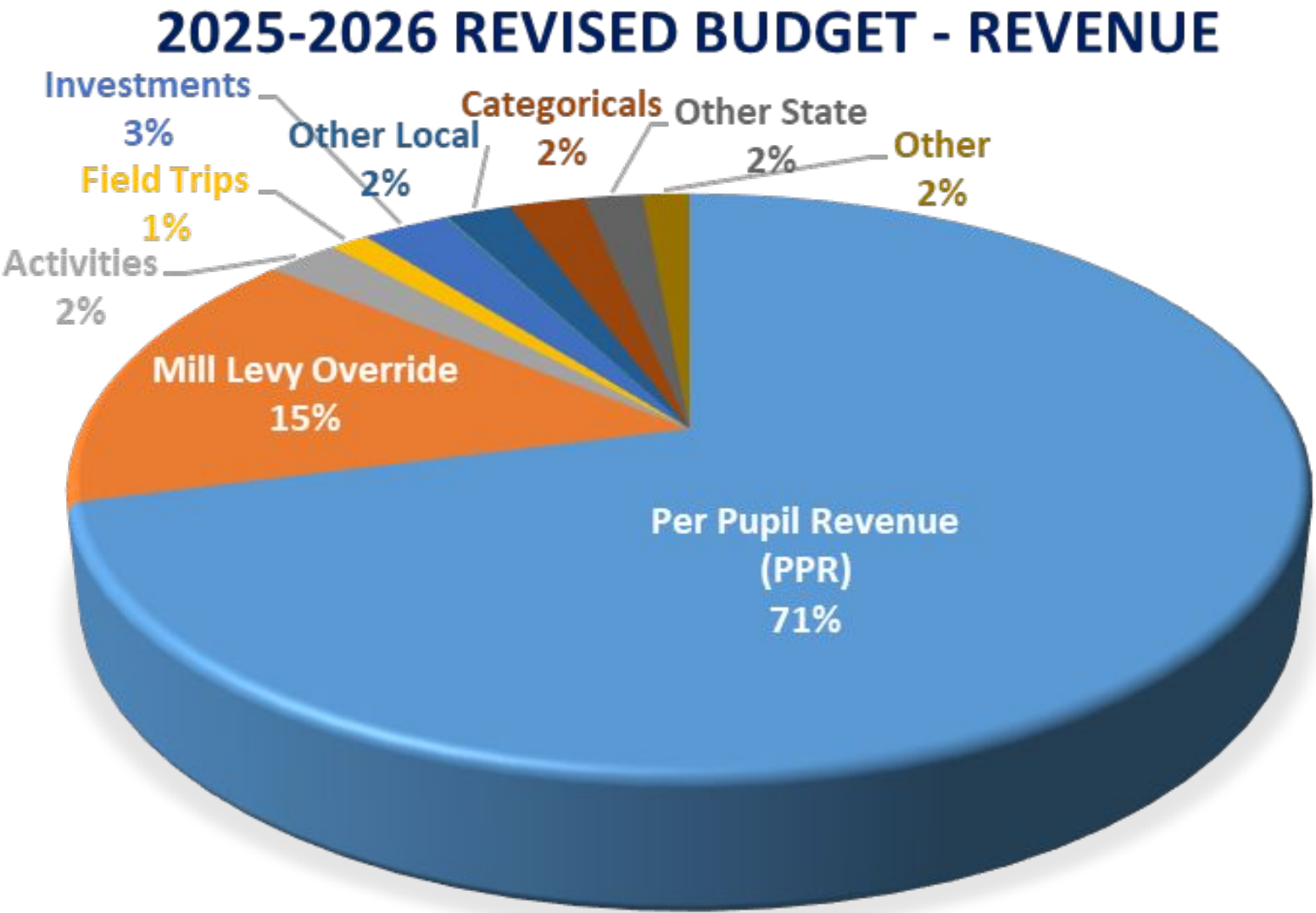
- Proposed: Draft starting in January; due to DCSD in April
- Adopted: due to DCSD in May (Often same as proposed)
- Revised: due to DCSD in December **(2025-2026 budget up for approval at the Dec BOD Meeting)**
- Supplemental: optional; due to DCSD in June



**Financial
Transparency**

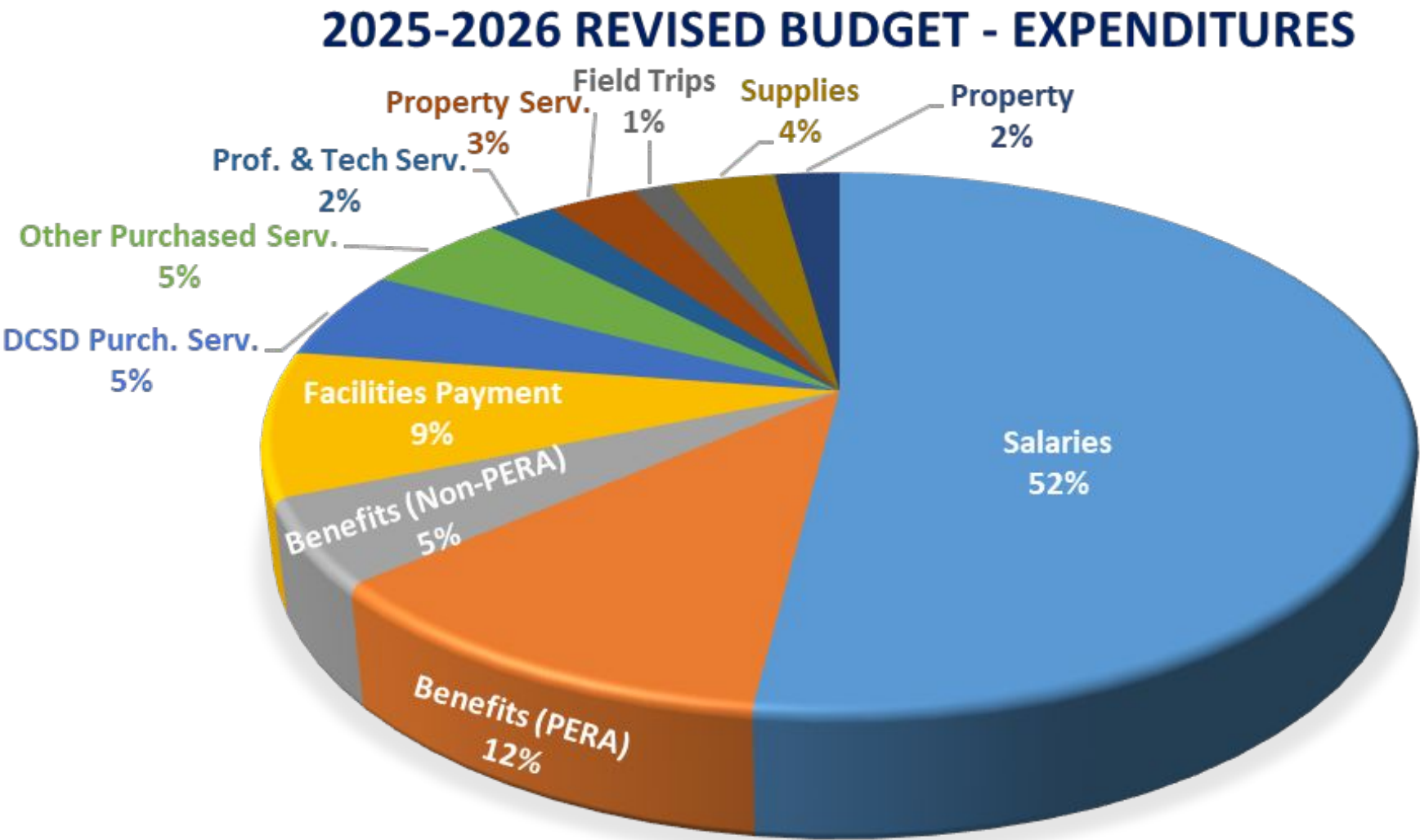
2025-26 Revised Budget: Revenue \$23.0 Million

Source	Amount
Per Pupil Revenue (PPR)	\$ 16,351,516
Mill Levy Override	\$ 3,479,225
Activities	\$ 525,000
Field Trips	\$ 275,000
Investments	\$ 630,000
Rental	\$ 10,000
Other Local	\$ 471,512
Categoricals	\$ 541,680
Other State	\$ 424,791
Other	\$ 338,573
Total	\$ 23,047,297



2025-26 Revised Budget: Expenditure \$23.0 Million

Source	Amount
Salaries	\$ 11,963,131
Benefits (PERA)	\$ 2,672,394
Benefits (Non-PERA)	\$ 1,167,505
Facilities Payment	\$ 2,010,000
DCSD Purch. Serv.	\$ 1,233,094
Other Purchased Serv.	\$ 1,129,200
Prof. & Tech Serv.	\$ 541,150
Property Serv.	\$ 674,000
Field Trips	\$ 300,000
Supplies	\$ 813,400
Property	\$ 503,000
Other	\$ 35,000
Total	\$ 23,041,874



2025-26 Budget Changes From Adopted to Revised

Material Revenue Changes

- Local Revenue: **change - \$163,658**
- State Categorical Revenue: **change -\$75,029**
- PPR Revenue: **change -\$776,399**

Material Expense Changes

- Salaries: **Savings -\$402,133**
 - Positions not filled, Savings on new hires, Summer school/PD/retention bonus savings due to lower than expected costs.
- Benefits: **Savings -\$78,646**
 - Positions not filled, Savings on new hires, Summer school/PD/retention bonus savings due to lower than expected costs.
- Purchased Services: **Savings -\$180,185**
 - Reduced in areas of professional development, legal and outsourced professional services.
- Supplies: **Savings - \$53,500**
 - Reduced discretionary accounts across the board, general supplies, wellness and holiday funds.
- Property: **Savings -\$285,500**
 - Halted any additional major renovations (except for playground) and FF&E needs.

*All Material changes are due to reduced enrollment numbers



2025-26 1st Quarter Audit Update

STEM SCHOOL HIGHLANDS RANCH

Quarterly Internal Audit Checklist

An informal audit committee comprised of the Treasurer, or his or her designee, and the school's finance staff, including the CFO, will be charged with conducting the review within a reasonable timeframe after the quarter end. Findings of the audit will be reported at the next board of directors meeting. On a quarterly basis, the following steps will be taken to perform an internal audit:

Initials: _____

1) Cash Reconciliation

a. Select, at random, one bank account - verify that there is a reconciliation statement for that account for each month of the quarter,

		Month 1 July	Month 2 August	Month 3 September
Bank Statements	Main	\$ <u>1,293,843.04</u>	\$ <u>1,482,511.65</u>	\$ <u>1,363,747.80</u>
Reconciliation Reports	Main	\$ <u>1,293,843.04</u>	\$ <u>1,482,511.65</u>	\$ <u>1,363,747.80</u>

b. Receipts - Select, at random, a minimum of 3 deposits - review to ensure proper documentation and deposit slip. Verify that revenue recorded was received in that time period per bank statement.

Deposit 1 \$ - Deposit 2 \$ - Deposit 3 \$ -
Back-up

2) Disbursements

Initials: _____

a. Select, at random, a minimum of 5 checks - review for procedural requirements, including appropriate approvals and signatures.

Check #	Check #	Check #
Vendor:	Vendor:	Vendor:
Incoive: \$0	Incoive: \$0	Incoive: \$0
Addtl Info _____	Addtl Info _____	Addtl Info _____

Implementing our first internal audit for the 1st quarter (review of July 1st thru September 30th)

- Will take place with the finance committee and updated to the board to make sure that best practices and financial transparency are in place while meeting all compliance requirements.

Thank You!

Questions?

Coversheet

Policy Update

Section:	IV. KOSON Schools
Item:	C. Policy Update
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Draft - Policy_Board Reserve_20251016.pdf Draft - Policy_Fundraising_20251031.pdf Draft-Policy_template_update_Redline 20251016.pdf

Board Reserve Policy

STEM SCHOOL HIGHLANDS RANCH POLICY Board Reserve

I. PURPOSE

The Board of STEM School Highlands Ranch recognizes the importance of maintaining a prudent level of financial resources to protect against unforeseen revenue shortfalls, unexpected expenditures, and economic uncertainties. This policy establishes guidelines for maintaining a minimum fund balance, including a designated Board Reserve, to ensure the long-term fiscal stability of the school.

II. POLICY

A. Minimum Fund Balance Requirement

STEM School Highlands Ranch shall maintain a minimum unrestricted General Fund balance equal to no less than 5% of annual expenditures. This shall constitute the school's Board Reserve.

This reserve is in addition to the 3% emergency reserve required under Article X, Section 20 of the Colorado Constitution (TABOR).

B. Purpose of the Reserve

The 5% Board Reserve is intended to:

- Provide a financial cushion against economic downturns or revenue delays.
- Mitigate the impact of unforeseen emergencies or extraordinary expenditures.
- Support continued operations in the event of state, district, or local funding disruptions.
- Strengthen the financial position of the school in preparation for growth, replication, and long-term facility planning.

C. Use of the Reserve

- The Board Reserve shall not be appropriated for ongoing operations, staffing, or recurring expenditures.
- Use of the reserve requires explicit approval by a majority vote of the Board.
- When the fund balance is drawn below the 5% threshold, a written plan must be presented by the Chief Financial Officer to restore the balance to the required level within two fiscal years.

D. Monitoring and Reporting

- The Chief Financial Officer will monitor compliance with this policy and report the fund balance status to the Board during quarterly financial updates.

Board Reserve Policy

- Annual audited financial statements will disclose the status of both the TABOR Reserve and the Board Reserve.

E. Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed at least every three years, or more frequently if there are significant changes to state funding structures, district requirements, or best-practice guidelines.

Approved by the STEM School Board on _____.
(mm/dd/yyyy)

STEM School Highlands Ranch

By: _____
(Signature, Board secretary)

(Printed name, Board secretary)

Adopted: December 2025

Fundraising Policy

STEM SCHOOL HIGHLANDS RANCH POLICY Fundraising

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all fundraising and gift acceptance activities of Koson Schools advance our mission, comply with applicable laws, and uphold the highest standards of stewardship, equity, and integrity. This policy provides governance-level guidance while delegating implementation to school leadership through standard operating procedures (SOPs).

II. POLICY

A. Guiding Principles

- Mission Alignment – All fundraising must directly support the mission, vision, and core values of Koson Schools.
- Integrity & Stewardship – Fundraising shall be conducted ethically, transparently, and in compliance with Colorado nonprofit law and IRS 501(c)(3) regulations.
- Equity – Fundraising practices shall reduce family fatigue, promote fairness across programs, and ensure equitable access to opportunities.
- Community Trust – Donor intent will be respected, and donor recognition will be carried out in a manner consistent with Koson's values and brand.

B. Board Responsibilities

Approve the annual fundraising strategy, priorities, and major campaigns (e.g., Accelerator Fund, Annual Student Fundraiser, End of Year Giving, and Gala).

Finance Committee reviews and accepts annual fundraising and donor stewardship reports, including revenue sources, restricted/unrestricted balances, and compliance status.

Monitor compliance with nonprofit regulations and internal controls.

Provide leadership by participating in fundraising through giving, advocacy, and donor cultivation.

C. Board Giving

Each trustee is expected to make an annual personal gift to Koson Schools. 100% board participation is required to demonstrate leadership and strengthen fundraising credibility with external donors and grantmakers. There is no set minimum donation.

Fundraising Policy

D. Gift Acceptance

Koson Schools may accept gifts of cash, checks, credit cards, securities, donor-advised fund distributions, grants, corporate sponsorships, and other contributions consistent with our mission.

Restricted Gifts – Must be used solely for the purpose designated by the donor. If restrictions are unclear or impractical, Koson reserves the right to decline the gift. Additionally, all restricted gifts over \$150,000 require Koson Board approval.

Non-Cash Gifts – Gifts-in-kind, real estate, securities, or unusual assets require prior review and approval by the Executive Director and, for high-value or high-risk gifts, the Board.

Unacceptable Gifts – Koson may decline gifts that:

- Conflict with our mission or values,
- Create an undue financial, legal, or reputational burden,
- Create future unsustainable burden to the operational budget,
- Violate IRS or Colorado nonprofit laws.

E. Donor Rights and Privacy

Donor information shall be kept confidential and never sold, rented, or shared outside of Koson Schools.

Donors will receive timely and accurate acknowledgments of their gifts in compliance with IRS requirements.

Donors have the right to remain anonymous if they so choose.

F. Fundraising Authority

Only designated school staff, board members, or approved volunteers may solicit gifts on behalf of Koson Schools. No individual, club, committee or booster group may independently solicit or accept donations without authorization from school leadership.

G. Use of Fundraising Consultants

Any engagement of professional fundraisers or consultants must be approved by the Board and comply with Colorado charitable solicitation laws.

H. Donor Stewardship and Reporting

Koson commits to the fundraising rhythm of Ask, Thank, Report:

- Ask – Solicitations will be strategic, collaborative, and mission-aligned.
- Thank – Donors will receive prompt and meaningful acknowledgments.

Fundraising Policy

- Report – Donors will be informed of the impact of their gifts through annual reports and regular communications.

I. Conflict of Interest

Board members and staff must disclose any actual or perceived conflicts of interest in donor relationships. Conflicts will be managed in accordance with Koson's Conflict of Interest Policy.

J. Whistleblower and Donor Complaint Process

Koson Schools will maintain a process by which donors, staff, or volunteers may report suspected unethical or unlawful fundraising practices without fear of retaliation.

K. Prohibition on External Fundraising

Koson Schools does not raise funds on behalf of external charities or organizations. Students and families are encouraged to support community causes through service and civic engagement, but all fundraising conducted under the school's name must benefit Koson's students and programs.

Approved by the STEM School Board on _____.
(mm/dd/yyyy)

STEM School Highlands Ranch

By: _____
(Signature, Board secretary)

(Printed name, Board secretary)

Adopted: December 2025

'Name' Policy

STEM SCHOOL HIGHLANDS RANCH POLICY
Policy name

I. PURPOSE

State purpose of policy.

II. POLICY

Policy

Approved by the STEM School Board on _____.
(mm/dd/yyyydd/mm/yyyy)

STEM School Highlands Ranch

By: _____
(Signature, Board secretary)

(Printed name, Board secretary)

Adopted: date

Revised: date

Coversheet

Vote for Consent Agenda Items

Section:	VI. Consent Agenda
Item:	A. Vote for Consent Agenda Items
Purpose:	Vote
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Policy_SelectionControversialLearningResources_2023.pdf Policy_Viewpoint Neutrality_2022.pdf Policy_OptInOptOut_2023.pdf

Selection of Controversial Learning Resources Policy

STEM SCHOOL HIGHLANDS RANCH POLICY Selection of Controversial Learning Resources

I. PURPOSE

Controversial Learning Resources include any material or information which a reasonable person in the STEM community (including students, parents of students, and STEM staff) might find (a) controversial and (b) offensive or lacking educational purpose. The effective presentation of Controversial Learning Resources is primarily dependent on classroom teachers. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that such presentation is consistent with the Mission of STEM School.

II. POLICY

Prior to presenting or using any Controversial Learning Resource which has not been specifically approved by the Executive Director, their designee, or the STEM Board; a teacher must preview the resource in its entirety before seeking approval from the Executive Director or their designee. If the Executive Director determines that the material is a Controversial Learning Resource, the Executive Director may deny approval of use based on the, non-exclusive, list of factors set forth below (page 2). Alternatively, the Executive Director may approve use of the resource only if the teacher timely notifies students' parents/caregivers of the nature, the specific controversial content (including reference by page number where available), and educational purpose of the resource, so that parents/caregivers may exercise informed judgment in deciding whether their student will participate in classes or activities using the reference.

Any decision by the Executive Director approving or denying use of a Controversial Learning Resource may be appealed to the STEM Board by a staff member, student, or parent/caregiver of a student.

After a teacher has provided the required notice, a student shall not be allowed to participate in any class or activity using the resource unless the student's parent/caregiver provides prior written permission.

Teachers shall provide suitable alternative activities for students whose parents/caregivers have requested exclusion from the class or activity. Implementation of alternative activities shall be handled in a manner that does not draw attention to the student. Further, any student who does not opt in shall not be penalized for such a decision.

Selection of Controversial Learning Resources Policy

In selecting any Controversial Learning Resource, a teacher shall evaluate the proposed resource to consider the following, non-exclusive, factors:

- Whether the resource will enrich and support the attainment of educational objectives of curriculum and content standards and the STEM Mission, taking into consideration:
 - The varied interests, abilities, age, intellectual development, and maturity levels of the students
 - The standards of the STEM community
 - The availability of other, less controversial, resources adequate to attain the educational objective
 - Whether a reasonable teacher using sound professional judgment would anticipate that use of the resource might engender complaints from students, parents/caregivers, or staff within the STEM community
- Whether the resource is representative of the religious, ethnic, and cultural groups represented in the STEM community
- Whether the resource stimulates growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards
- Whether the resource provides a background of information which will enable students to make intelligent judgements in their daily lives
- Whether the resource contributes to the presentation of opposing sides of controversial issues within the overall curriculum so that young citizens may develop, under guidance, the practice of critical analysis
- Whether the resource promotes the goal of providing a comprehensive education appropriate for the interests and needs of the students, recognizing their right to access a wide range of materials and activities
- Whether the resource presents timely educational and community issues for the school, staff, and community
- Whether adequate time is available to properly prepare, present, and follow up the resource in a reasonably thorough manner

Teachers shall communicate in advance with guest speakers scheduled to appear at STEM. Teachers shall inform such speakers that they will be addressing a diverse, yet captive, audience, and therefore, guest speakers must respect alternative viewpoints, consider the emotional and intellectual level of the students, and design their presentations appropriately. If a teacher determines that any aspect of the presentation might include a Controversial Learning Resource, the teacher shall notify the Executive Director. If the Executive Director deems appropriate, they shall confer with the guest speaker, prior to such presentation, in an attempt to resolve any concerns as to the content of the presentation. If the guest speaker is unwilling to abide by the direction of the Executive Director, the invitation to speak may be withdrawn.

Selection of Controversial Learning Resources Policy

Approved by the STEM School Board on 01/08/2023.
(dd/mm/yyyy)

STEM School Highlands Ranch

By: Michelle Horne (*signature on file*)
(Signature, Board secretary)

Michelle Horne
(Printed name, Board secretary)

Adopted: 2019

Revised: August 2023

Viewpoint Neutrality Policy

STEM SCHOOL HIGHLANDS RANCH POLICY
Viewpoint Neutrality

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that STEM and its employees treat the voluntary expression of a religious or political viewpoint by a student, on an otherwise permissible subject, in the same manner the School treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on a subject, and to ensure, consistent with the Colorado and U.S. Constitution, that the School does not discriminate against any student based on a religious or political viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

II. POLICY

Any student, regardless of race, color, religion, national origin, or disability, may express the student's beliefs about religion or politics in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious or political content of the student's submission. Homework and classwork containing any such expression shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance, and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the School. Students may not be penalized or rewarded on account of religious or political content. In any such case of expression, a student's work should be judged on the basis of academic standards, including literary quality, and not penalized or rewarded on account of its religious or political content.

Approved by the STEM School Board on 11/10/2022.
(dd/mm/yyyy)

STEM School Highlands Ranch

By: *Michelle Horne* (signature on file)
(Signature, Board secretary)

Michelle Horne
(Printed name, Board secretary)

Adopted: March 2013

Revised: December 2021

Revised: October 2022

Opt-in Opt-out Policy

STEM SCHOOL HIGHLANDS RANCH POLICY 'Opt-In and Opt-Out' Procedures

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth a consistent standard for use of 'opt-in and opt-out' procedures for all STEM activities. Parents can expect the use of consistent standards at STEM School for opting-in and opting-out of programs, events, and activities. Under no circumstances will students opting-in/out be ostracized, nor will parents choosing to exercise their right to opt-in/out be criticized for their decision.

II. POLICY

Opt-out (parent request required for nonparticipation) applies to the Board-approved curriculum and related activities that occur regularly or as a matter of course. Opting-out always requires a showing of a bonafide reason, to avoid violating compulsory attendance rules. Replacement classes or activities may or may not be provided at the school's sole discretion. Opting-out procedures do not apply to matters of health and safety, or state/federal mandates.

Parents shall be notified by the school about upcoming programs, events, or activities in sufficient time and detail to allow time to opt-out if deemed reasonably necessary. Subject to district and state graduation requirements and the compulsory attendance laws, parents may exercise the right on behalf of their child (with bonafide reason) to opt out of:

- Physical Education (requires written request from child's physician)
- Parties or Holiday activities
- Board adopted or approved curriculum
- Student use of Internet for curriculum-related research

Curriculum adopted by the Board or otherwise pursuant to STEM policy is the official curriculum of STEM and comes under the opt-out category. STEM and its teachers will make their best efforts to identify and timely notify parents of the teaching of materials or methods of instruction in the curriculum that may reasonably offend the moral, ethical, religious, or political conscience of individuals, to allow adequate time for parents to review materials and request (in writing) an opt-out.

Student use of the Internet for purposes of research and retrieval of current information related to curricular content areas is a generally accepted practice and is considered an essential instructional tool, and thus comes under the opt-out category.

Opt-in Opt-out Policy

In any case where there is doubt as to whether a program, event, or activity should be treated as opt-in or opt-out, opt-in procedures should be used.

Opt-in (parents permission required for participation) pertains to school offerings and curricula that:

- (i) are not part of the Board-adopted or approved curriculum or involve presentation of Controversial Learning Resources (see STEM Policy on Controversial Learning Resources),
OR
- ii) are not required by law to meet compulsory attendance or credit standards
OR
- (iii) are not generally accepted regular matters of course within the school year.

For all opt-in offerings scheduled to take place during regular school hours, replacement classes or other alternatives will be provided for students who do not opt-in. STEM employees will provide timely notice to parents about opt-in programs, events, or activities so parents can make an informed decision about whether their children will participate.

Children will not be allowed to participate in the following programs, events, or activities without parent permission:

- Activities having a potential for increasing liability to the district (e.g., field trips, ropes course, jump rope for life, athletics, dispensing medication)
- Programs, activities, or materials that can be reasonably interpreted as containing religious messages, instruction in values, or controversial moral or ethical principles, involve Controversial Learning Resources, or that may result in invasion of the student's or family's privacy. Including, but not limited to the following:
 - Name in school directory
 - DARE
 - Programs on death, dying, and divorce
 - Educational movies with a PG-13 or more restrictive rating
 - Unrated visual materials, and/or other media that may be reasonably foreseen to cause offense to some individuals and are not part of the Board-approved curriculum
 - Programs where opting-in is a requirement of the law (e.g., special education, federal programs)
 - One-to-one or group counseling situations when counselors, social workers, or psychologists are involved with students (except as required for compliance with state and federal laws concerning the education of students with disabilities, compliance with child abuse and neglect reporting obligations, in emergency situations wherein there is a bona fide concern that the student's safety or health is in jeopardy, and when discussing academics or discipline problems).

Opt-in Opt-out Policy

Approved by the STEM School Board on 10/01/2023.
(dd/mm/yyyy)

STEM School Highlands Ranch

By: *Michelle Horne* (signature on file)
(Signature, Board secretary)

Michelle Horne
(Printed name, Board secretary)

Adopted: March 2013

Revised: December 2021

Revised: January 2023

Coversheet

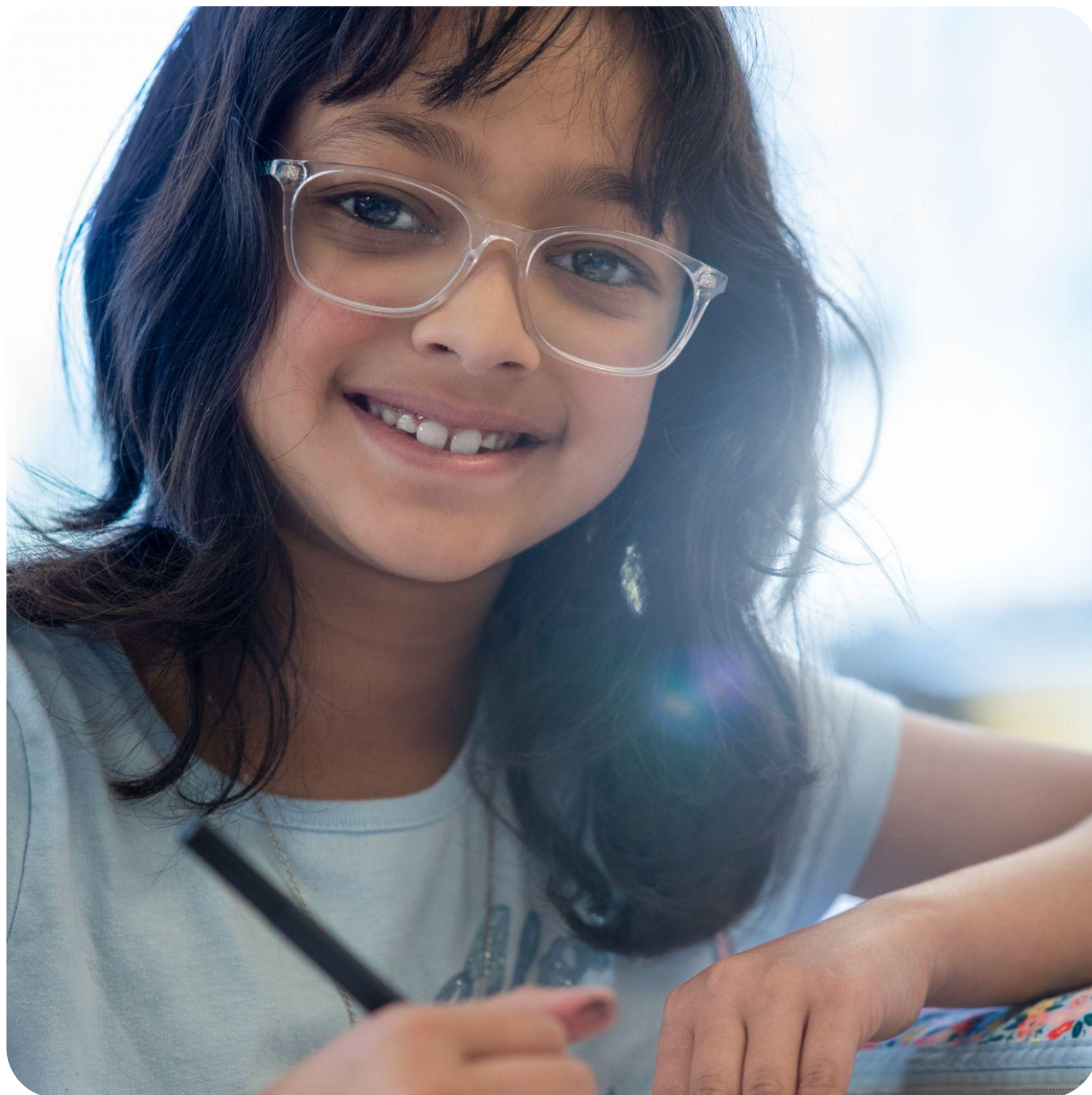
Governance Committee Update

Section:	VII. Board Committee Updates
Item:	D. Governance Committee Update
Purpose:	Discuss
Submitted by:	
Related Material:	Presentation_2025 Board Assessment Results.pdf

BOARD ON TRACK ASSESSMENT

2025 BOARD ASSESSMENT RESULTS

November 2025



STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

3B - PREPARING FOR GROWTH: NETWORK MODEL AND GOVERNANCE

Establish a network model and governance structure to support growth, including roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes.

Board on Track assessment provides feedback on Board structure, capability, and effectiveness.

2022

2023

2024 and 2025

1 - BASIC**2 - EMERGING****3 - INTERMEDIATE**

- Ad Hoc, reactive, heroics
- Desire to understand and improve

- Begin to develop repeatable processes
- Board work connects to results for kids

- Data-driven governance
- Board value-add becomes evident and essential

4 - ADVANCED. 5 - EXCELLENT

Full Assessment Report provided in Board Book

From Gina at Board on Track:

The overall scoring in the assessment report is an average (mean), and especially with new board members, I think it is outstanding that your board has maintained its rating of 3.

ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

BOARD ON TRACK METHODOLOGY

- Survey Responses are Yes, No, or I Don't Know
- Assessment Results are scale of 1 to 5
- BoT averages question responses
- Both No and I Don't Know responses result in low results

RESULTS ANALYSIS

- Important to focus on big picture and trends
- Diverse Board responses are averaged for all questions in each section
- Individual (anonymous) Board responses are shown in Assessment report in Board Book
- Apparent disconnects between Board and CEO/CIO are often a result of the assessment methodology

SUMMARY

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Board Meetings					BOARD CEO
Board Structure				BOARD	CEO
Board Composition	CEO	BOARD			
Board Recruitment	BOARD			CEO	
Board Goals & Accountability		BOARD CEO			
Finance			BOARD		CEO
Development	BOARD CEO				
Academic Oversight				BOARD CEO	
CEO Support & Evaluation				BOARD	CEO
BoardSavvy CEO			BOARD		CEO

2024 VS 2025

Summary

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Board Meetings				BOARD	CEO
Board Structure				BOARD CEO	
Board Composition	CEO	BOARD			
Board Recruitment	BOARD CEO				
Board Goals & Accountability	BOARD	CEO			
Finance		BOARD	CEO		
Development	BOARD CEO				
Academic Oversight		BOARD CEO			
CEO Support & Evaluation					BOARD CEO
BoardSavvy CEO		BOARD			CEO

Summary

	LEVEL 1	LEVEL 2	LEVEL 3	LEVEL 4	LEVEL 5
Board Meetings					BOARD CEO
Board Structure				BOARD	CEO
Board Composition	CEO	BOARD			
Board Recruitment	BOARD			CEO	
Board Goals & Accountability		BOARD CEO			
Finance			BOARD		CEO
Development	BOARD CEO				
Academic Oversight				BOARD CEO	
CEO Support & Evaluation				BOARD	CEO
BoardSavvy CEO			BOARD		CEO



STRENGTHS

MOST IMPROVEMENT

Finance

Academic Oversight

BOARD MEETINGS

5 - Excellent

Areas to work on:

Meeting content and evaluation

BOARD STRUCTURE

4 - Advanced

Areas to work on:

Job descriptions

CEO SUPPORT & EVALUATION

4 - Advanced

Areas to work on:

CEO Evaluation

IMPROVED - ACADEMIC OVERSIGHT

4 - Advanced

Major improvement in Clarity of Vision and Board Education

Areas to work on:

Roadmap and Comparative Data

INTERMEDIATE

IMPROVED - FINANCE

3 - Intermediate

Major improvement in Financial Oversight,
Policies & Procedures, Reports,

Areas to work on:

Financial Controls & Compliance, Developing
Realistic Budgets, Board Education, Annual
Audit, and Support of the CEO

BOARD SAVVY CEO

3 - Intermediate

Areas to work on:

Governance knowledge, Board Education,
and Succession planning



EMERGING

IMPROVED - BOARD GOALS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Emerging

Areas to work on:

Clear and consistent board member
accountability





BASIC

BOARD COMPOSITION

Basic/Emerging

Areas to work on:

Board size per BOT, previous experience, and diversity

BOARD RECRUITING

Basic/Advanced

Major improvement in Orientation

Areas to work on:

Recruitment plan/process/pipeline

DEVELOPMENT

Basic

Areas to work on:

Philosophical alignment and fundraising/development plan

LOOKING FORWARD

WORK IN PROGRESS FOR 25/26

Development:

- New Fundraising Initiatives kicked off
- Fundraising policy in process

Finance:

- Financial Policy updates in process

Academic:

- Academic Excellence One Pager Update

Board Composition/Accountability/Recruiting:

- Board Handbook development
- Bylaws Update

CEO Support & Evaluation:

- CEO Goals Progress Tracking in development



SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE GOALS/INITIATIVES:

- 26/27 - Fundraising Scale-up
- 26/27 - Succession Planning, both Board and CIO
- 26/27 - Board Recruiting Plan
- Others?