

# STRATEGIC PLAN

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2024-2028

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# REDEFINE LIMITS. UNLEASH POTENTIAL.

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STEM School Highlands Ranch is the premier K-12 school in the Mountain West dedicated to solving meaningful problems that give students the opportunity to do good in the world while they are growing their identity and sense of purpose.



# Purpose and audience for these materials

**Purpose:** The intention of this document is to document is to highlight strategic priority of GROWTH in the proposed strategic plan so that the Board can further discuss this strategic priority in conjunction with preparing for a board vote on the Strategic Plan for Revitalization and Growth.

**Audience:** The primary audience for this work is the Koson / STEM school board

# Executive Summary

- Demand for STEM education has grown and is expected to continue to grow across Colorado, but there is a **shortage of STEM programming being offered to students**.
- This document outlines STEM Highland Ranch's bold plan to expand STEM programming to more Denver-area students over the next five years.
- STEM Highlands Ranch is a K-12 public charter school with a history of success delivering high-quality, innovative STEM education in Douglas County, drawing students from across the Denver metropolitan area.
- In addition to offering a wide array of support services to students and families, **STEM outperforms district and state peers on academic assessments and provides a distinct problem-based learning approach to education** that fosters engagement, inquiry, and interest.
- Amidst proven success, there is an opportunity to codify STEM's program model and define STEM 2.0; we will do this first in order to bring a quality experience to more students and families through replication.



# Executive Summary

- To expand its impact over the next 5 years, STEM will invest in:
  - **Deepening the impact of existing offerings** by adding 100 preschool seats, establishing a homeschool program for 100 students, growing summer school classes and camps to serve 500 students at our current campus, and creating a student showcase that highlights STEM students to the internal and external community.
  - **Growing with quality across the region**
    - STEM will **add 2 “green-rated<sup>1</sup>” PK-5 campuses**, each serving over 500 students within 15 minutes of the Highlands Ranch campus, in order to create a strong secondary pipeline and...
    - STEM will **increase Highlands Ranch enrollment by 18%**
- In order to achieve these goals, STEM will invest time and energy in three primary focus areas:
  - Defining and communicating its **brand identity**
  - Optimizing the **STEM experience**
  - Strategically **preparing for growth**
- This plan will be fully realized in 2030 with STEM School delivering high-quality STEM education to over 3,000 Denver-area students.

# Where we're going



# STEM has an ambitious plan to deepen and scale its impact across Denver



STEM will **deepen** the impact of its existing offerings over the next 3 years by serving an additional 700 students and enhancing program quality.



STEM will **scale** its impact across the region with quality by launching 2 new K-5 locations.

Our impact will be evident through increased access, student outcomes, school quality, and organizational health

## Increased Access

- More students have access to high-quality STEM programming as students served grows from **1,400 to over 3,000** across the Denver metro area.

## Student Outcomes

- Students will show active engagement in and ownership of their learning as demonstrated by student-led learning showcases for parents, community members, and STEM staff.

## School Quality

- Current and future campuses are the **premier schools of choice** for families seeking rigorous academics and robust student supports, with STEM schools consistently outperforming district and state peers.
- Achieve a Net Promoter Score above 65 from parents and staff.

## Organizational Health

- A long-term facility that meets the needs of the model is secured and financially viable.
- Financial practices reflect fiscal responsibility, prudent budgeting, and and transparent reporting.
- STEM will have a network model and governance structure that is able to support the long-term goals of the organization.
- STEM is a top-choice for teachers and leaders based on growth opportunities, compensation, and overall personal satisfaction.



# POTENTIAL RISKS

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# How we'll get there



# To achieve our goals, we will focus on three areas, starting from the inside out

## 3 Prepare for Sustainable Growth

Our long-term vision is to broaden the reach of and expand access to STEM education to more Denver-area students and families. In doing so, we will strengthen communities, drive innovation, and contribute to a more prosperous society.

### Prepare for Growth

Plan to expand STEM's impact to more students and families

## 2 Optimize the STEM Experience

Our goal is to create a world-class experience for every member of the STEM community, including students, staff, and parents, empowering them to reach their full potential and make a lasting impact on the world.

### STEM Experience

Optimize the student, staff, and parent experience

## 1 Clarify and Communicate our Identity

Our identity is at the core of who we are. Our first priority is to clearly define and codify STEM Highlands Ranch so that we can communicate this vision effectively to current and prospective students, staff, and parents.

### Identity

Define and communicate who we are

# Within each area of focus, we will invest time, energy, and resources into a number of strategic priorities

Focus Area	Strategic Priority*	Description	
<b>1 Identity</b> <i>Define and communicate who we are</i>	1A. <a href="#">Communications &amp; Marketing</a>	Define and communicate the identity and culture of STEM in order to effectively attract students, parents, and staff.	
	1B. <a href="#">Knowledge Management</a>	Document key operational systems and procedures for areas such as human resources, curriculum & instruction, and program model.	
<b>2 The STEM Experience</b> <i>Optimize the student, staff, and parent experience</i>	2. Optimize the STEM Experience	2A. <a href="#">For Students</a>	Codify STEM's program model to create a cohesive educational experience aligned to students' interests, abilities, and goals.
		2B. <a href="#">For Staff</a>	Foster a high quality staff culture that cares for one another (inclusive and equitable), shares decision-making, focuses on continual improvement, and prioritizes stability.
		2C. <a href="#">For Parents</a>	Strengthen communication, engagement, and support for parents in order to foster a positive and collaborative partnership between the school and families.
<b>3 Prepare for Growth</b> <i>Prepare to expand impact to more students and families</i>	3A. <a href="#">Long-Term Planning</a>	Develop annual and strategic plans aligned with STEM's long-term goals, including key performance indicators and systems for monitoring progress.	
	3B. <a href="#">Network Model &amp; Governance</a>	Establish a network model and governance structure to support growth, including roles, responsibilities, and decision-making processes.	

3A

# Prepare for Growth: Long-Term Planning

*Develop annual and strategic plans aligned with STEM's long-term goals, including key performance indicators and systems for monitoring progress.*

Initiatives	Estimated Completion Date	Owner
Develop annual planning cycle and refine budgeting process	Q3 2025	CIO
Establish key performance indicators and create reporting dashboard for monitoring progress to goals	Q4 2024	CIO
Collaborate with school leaders who have established networks so we can learn from their experience.	Q2 2025	CIO
Finalize updated 5 year strategic plan	Q3 2024	CIO
Create business plans for student center, homeschool program, preschool, summer school, student showcase, and elementary school(s)	Q3 2024	CIO
In partnership with board, create Greenlight Criteria for strategic growth.	Ongoing	CIO
Metrics / Measures of Success		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of long-term goals achieved</li> <li>• % greenlighting criteria met for expansion</li> <li>• Performance rating of launched schools</li> <li>• Gap between actual and budgeted financial projections</li> </ul>		



3B

# Prepare for Growth: Network Model & Governance

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

Initiatives	Estimated Completion Date	Owner
Assess current state of STEM's organizational structure and resources to determine strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement.	Q4 2024	Governance Chair
Conduct research, perform external benchmarking, and facilitate internal interviews to determine the best board structure for replication and network.	Q2 2025	Governance Chair
Clarify board roles and responsibilities, outlining expectations for governance, oversight, strategic planning, and fiduciary duties.	Q1 2025	Board Chair
Roadmap 3-5 year plan for board of directors in relation to growth and expansion	Q1 2025	Board Chair
Increase community, non-parent board members	Q2 2026	Governance Chair
<b>Metrics / Measures of Success</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 50% of board members are community, non-parent board members</li> </ul>		



3C

## Growth Initiatives (Deepening Impact):

*Create Programs that immediately add brand recognition, increase community engagement, and bring both educational and businesses value to the school.*

Initiatives	Estimated Completion Date	Owner
Develop Student Led Showcase that highlights student work to peers, parents, family, friends, industry partners, and the broader community.	Q3 2027	CIO
Start a PreK program	Q3 2025	CIO
Start a Homeschool program	Q3 2026	CIO
Increase quality and quantity of summer camps	Q3 2025	Enrichment Coordinator
Develop Summer School with for credit classes so that students can spread out their workload giving them more chance to participate in co-curriculars as well as complete quality work in their classes while maintaining their mental health.	Q2 2026	Executive Director
Metrics / Measures of Success		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More than 50% of board members are community, non-parent board members</li> </ul>		

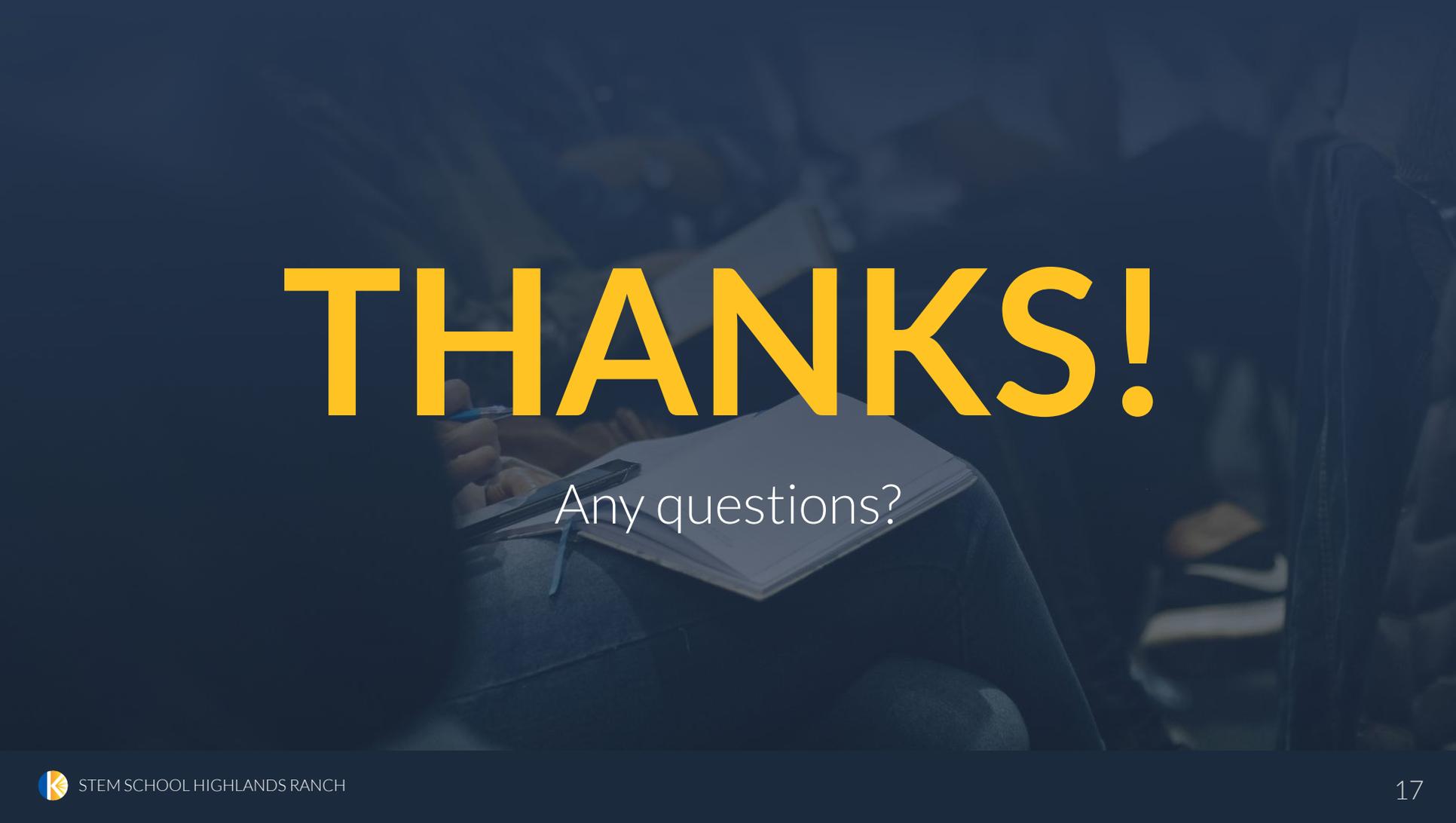
## Launches (Scaling Impact)

*As we refine our current processes and programs, we will keep our eye open for new business ventures.*

Initiatives	Estimated Completion Date	Owner
Launch Elementary School #1 within 15 minutes of the current flagship campus	Q3 2027	CIO
Launch Elementary School #2 with 15 minutes in the opposite direction of current flagship campus	Q3 2029	CIO
Replicate Prek-12 in a different city at least 45 minutes away from current flagship campus	Depends on opportunity	CIO
Subscription Based Services	Q3 2030	CIO
Hybrid Microschools in urban and suburban communities	Depends on opportunities	CIO
Metrics / Measures of Success		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Separate business plans and metrics will be create for each opportunity</li> </ul>		

# STEM plans to take the following steps to strengthen its board governance prior to growth

1. Finalize and share Board on Track findings
2. Discuss and prioritize focus areas for governance work:
  - Board-level goals and metrics tied to strategic plan
  - Greenlighting framework and oversight
  - Board membership and committee structure (bring on 3-5 non-parent members to balance perspective) — non-parents should likely be a majority of the governing board
3. Develop plan / timelines / ownership for implementing changes over next 12-18 months
4. Request support from Board on Track or CLCS as necessary



# THANKS!

Any questions?

