



## **COLORADO SKIES ACADEMY PARENTS PREPARE FOR JAN. 9 APPEAL TO STATE BOARD**

*Families continuing push to make dream of aerospace exploration  
and STEAM-focused middle school a reality, call for civility*

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**AURORA, Colo.** – Hundreds of parents and Colorado Skies Academy governing board members are finalizing their appeal to the Colorado Department of Education as they continue efforts to open the STEAM and aviation-based middle school. CSA governing board members are also issuing a call for civility, responding to concerns from state officials who have received heated e-mails and calls from people sharing their thoughts about the school.

“We’re opening Colorado Skies Academy because our children deserve a unique and focused educational experience, and we’re putting our whole hearts into this effort,” CSA board member April Lanotte said. “While we appreciate the passion throughout the community, we’re asking our supporters and detractors to please tone down the rhetoric and allow the state Board of Education to do its job and thoughtfully consider our appeal.”

Colorado Skies Academy will provide a hands-on project-based curriculum to all students in grades 6-8 from a new and fully equipped tuition-free public charter school based next to The Exploration Of Flight at the Centennial Airport. CSA was formed by community members in partnership with iLEAD Schools, a network of schools throughout California and the Midwest. The iLEAD learning model promotes individualized instruction, active learning methods and opportunities for self-directed learning. The organization celebrates and fosters each child’s individuality, and supports them in discovering their highest potential in the environment which best suits their learning needs.

In October, hundreds of parents, educators and supporters across Cherry Creek and its neighboring communities got the incredible news that CSA was approved by the school district's governing board with conditions. But last month, the CSA team and Maj. Gen. John Barry, Wings Over the Rockies CEO, received a disturbing letter from Cherry Creek School District Supt. Scott Siegfried. In the letter, CCSD says that the first condition of 10 – interest



forms from families -- as the reason to suddenly jeopardize its otherwise outstanding partnership with Colorado Skies Academy.

However, CSA has nearly 200 interest forms from local parents, and more are being submitted every single day. C.R.S & 22-30.5-106(3) explicitly states that: "A charter applicant is not required to provide personal identifying information concerning any parent, teacher, or prospective pupil prior to the time that the charter contract is approved by both parties and either the charter school actually employs the teacher or the pupil actually enrolls in the charter school, whichever is applicable. A charter school applicant shall provide, upon request of the chartering school district, aggregate information concerning the grade levels and schools in which prospective pupils are enrolled." Aggregate data of grade levels and schools of prospective students and copies of the actual online interest forms were provided to CCSD.

In addition, after the "Approval with Conditions of the Colorado Skies Academy Charter Application" was signed by CCSD on Oct. 26, Colorado Skies Academy opened its lottery on Nov. 8 and has already received more than 50 completed applications, not just interest forms, Lanotte said.

"We steadfastly believe our school will be a stellar addition to the Cherry Creek family and will inspire, enhance, and nurture young people's interest in aerospace and aviation for years to come," Lanotte added. "We appreciate the continued support of this dedicated community as we chart a path forward."

Colorado Skies Academy board members, parent supporters and iLEAD team members will appear before the state Board of Education on Jan. 9 to appeal the district's decision.

**To complete a CSA enrollment application and to learn more about the school, please visit <https://coloradoskiesacademy.org/apply/>**

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