

**2022-2023**  
**Columbine Elementary**  
**New Innovation School Application**



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## Cover Page for Colorado Department of Education and Checklist

Complete the following cover page for the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

When submitting an Innovation Plan to the Colorado State Board of Education, the following document must be completed. For additional information about the submission process, please see CDE's Fact Sheet, [Innovation Act Waiver Requests](#). Please do not submit your requests via DropBox or as a Zip file.

**School Name:** Columbine Elementary

**School District:** Denver Public Schools

**Contact for Innovation Plan (Name, Title, and Email):** Corey Jenks, Principal, corey\_jenks@dpsk12.net

Please answer the following questions to help CDE review the Innovation Plan as efficiently as possible.

Is this plan for a new school or an existing school? **Existing**

Has the school applied for status as an Alternative Education Campus (AEC)? **No**

(If yes, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

Has the school been assigned to a Priority Improvement or Turnaround plan? **No**

Is the school a recipient of the federal School Improvement Grant (1003(g))? **No**

An Innovation Plan **must be submitted along with the following documents:**

- A signed resolution from the local school board, signaling approval of the plan and intent to submit the plan to the State Board for its approval;
- A separate document listing the state laws and State Board rules that the school is seeking to waive, as well as "replacement plans" for each of those waivers (i.e., a description of the manner in which the school will comply with the intent of the waived statutes or rules and will be accountable to the state for such compliance); and
- A separate document showing the school's prior year budget (if an already existing school) and a proposed budget, including funding required for all innovations to be implemented. This budget should include all costs associated with innovations, including staffing costs, and information about any local, state, federal or private funds the school anticipates receiving.

An Innovation Plan **must include the following components:**

- A statement of the school's mission and why designation as an innovation school would enhance the school's ability to achieve its mission;
- A description of the innovations the school would implement;
- A description of the improvements in academic achievement that the school expects to achieve as a result of the innovations. For example, a school may expect to see a narrowing in achievement gaps, or a decreased dropout rate, or increased scores on state or local assessments;
- A list of the programs, policies, and/or operational documents at the school that would be affected by the innovations, and how these would be affected. For example, if a school proposes to extend the school year, that would affect the school's calendar. Other examples of programs/policies/documents that may be affected include the following:
  - o the research-based educational program the school would implement;
  - o the length of the school day and year at the school;
  - o student promotion and graduation policies;
  - o assessment plans; or
  - o staffing and/or compensation plans;
- The school's prior year budget (if an already-existing school) and a proposed budget, including funding required for all innovations to be implemented. This budget should include all costs associated with innovations, including staffing costs, and information about any local, state, federal or private funds the school anticipates receiving;

- ❑ An estimate of the cost savings and increased efficiencies that the school expects to see as a result of the innovations, if any;
- ❑ Evidence that a majority of the administrators employed at the school consent to designation as an innovation school;
- ❑ Evidence that a majority of the teachers employed at the school consent to designation as an innovation school. (Note: for a school that is seeking to waive one or more of the provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, the school plan must include evidence of approval of at least 60% of the members of the collective bargaining unit who are employed at the innovation school. The approval must be gathered by means of a secret ballot vote.)
- ❑ Evidence that a majority of the school accountability committee for the school consent to designation as an innovation school
- ❑ A statement describing the level of support for designation as an innovation school demonstrated by other persons employed at the school, students and parents of students enrolled in the school, and the community surrounding the school.
- ❑ A description of any statutes or any regulatory or district policy requirements that would need to be waived for the public school to implement its identified innovations; and
- ❑ A description of any provision of the collective bargaining agreement at the school that would need to be waived for the school to implement its identified innovations.
- ❑ Any additional information required by the local school board of the school district in which the innovation plan would be implemented.

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## Letter to your School Community

Dear Columbine School Community,

Columbine is a member of a network of [EL Education](#) schools and a tenet of EL is the belief that "We Are Crew, Not Passengers." We are all responsible for growing and developing our students to become citizens that contribute to a better world. Staff and community share in the collective ownership of each student's growth, achievement, character, work, and well-being.

We write to you today to tell you about two upcoming changes that will allow us to fully live into the EL Education model.

First, in the 23-24 school year, Columbine will set out on an ambitious journey of achieving the [EL School Credential](#). This credentialing process is unique to EL schools. The EL Education Credential is a marker of excellence and equity in implementation of the EL Education Core Practices and in impact in the Three Dimensions of Student Achievement. The Credential represents a 'north star' for all partners in our strategic work and is directly tied to our commitment to equity.

Second, in our efforts towards the EL Education Credential, we believe there are opportunities for us to use flexible decisions and unique innovations in order to accomplish this goal. Fortunately, state law and DPS allow schools to apply for "innovation status," which gives schools flexibility in structure and operational systems. To that end, we are thrilled to be submitting, for the very first time, an innovation application to DPS that, if accepted, would go into effect in the '23-'24 school year.

Columbine's Innovation plan will seek to create the flexibilities needed to reach the rigorous goals set forth by the credentialing process and allow us to better serve our community. Here are the waivers we are requesting and what it means for students, families, teachers, and our school processes:

<b>Waiver requested</b>	<b>What it means</b>
Curriculum Flexibility	We would like to exclusively use the curriculum that EL offers for English Language Arts (ELA). EL has done incredible work to design a Literacy curriculum that emphasizes social and emotional learning and has aligned the 3 Pillars with the Engage NY Math curriculum, which the district already allows – however, we need to formally request the waiver to use a curriculum different than what the district currently provides.
Supplemental and Enrichment Programming	This waiver will allow the school to employ either licensed or non-licensed personnel for supplemental and enrichment instruction or supervision consistent with the innovation plan. All personnel will still be required to go through background checks and be supervised by a licensed staff member.
Professional Learning (i.e., Professional Development)	We are requesting the option to opt-out of district-provided professional development so that we can maximize EL-aligned professional development.

	When district-provided options align with our school's schools, we may still participate.
Budgeting on Actual Teacher Salaries	We currently receive a budget based on average DPS-wide teacher salaries. We've analyzed that if we receive funding based on Columbine teachers' actual salaries, we will save approximately \$130,000 which we plan to reinvest in whole-child initiatives, field work, and expeditions.
Sponsorships	This allows the school to have the ability to request and secure school-based sponsorships to support student and community engagement independent of the district funding. Waivers for sponsorships allow you to engage with potential sponsors at various levels and these funds go towards continuing the mission and vision of the school.
Calendar flexibility	We are requesting calendar flexibility to <i>add up to 3 additional calendar days of professional development for teachers</i> . Our students and your children will still meet the state requirement for the number of educational days, but by providing our teachers with additional professional development days, we will better be able to serve our students. These days would occur during the student contact calendar. Each of these 3 days would be dedicated to planning for the upcoming module or unit. This could be curriculum planning, planning for field experts or expeditions, or connecting with the EL committee for experiential opportunities.

The creation and development of this innovation application was a collaborative effort of our School Leadership Team, our Collaborative School Committee, our Instructional Leadership Team, and our Innovation Writing Team composed of staff, DCTA representatives, community members, administration, and our EL School Designer.

Our crew is motivated and eager to set out on this journey of EL Credentialing through the attainment of Innovation Status. We are committed to continuous improvement and to fostering equitable practices that support every single student. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,  
Columbine Innovation Writing Team

# Innovation Plan Narrative

## A. School Mission, Vision, and Values

### Mission

Columbine's diverse community creates an equitable, fun, personalized-learning environment that cultivates the well-being of the whole child by developing their critical thinking, social-emotional skills and confidence in order to prepare children to take on and conquer the challenges of the 21st century.

### Vision

Our vision is to provide our students with a safe, encouraging environment that develops responsibility, personal integrity, respect and a desire to become a lifelong learner while fostering a sense of community that appreciates diversity and is built on the foundation of academic and personal excellence.

### Three Dimensions of Student Achievement

As an EL school, we ground all of our improvement strategies, professional development, and student learning outcomes in the three dimensions.

#### MASTERY OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

Students

- Demonstrate proficiency and deeper understanding: show mastery in a body of knowledge and skills within each discipline
- Apply their learning: transfer knowledge and skills to novel, meaningful tasks
- Think critically: analyze, evaluate, and synthesize complex ideas and consider multiple perspectives
- Communicate clearly: write, speak, and present ideas effectively in a variety of media within and across disciplines

#### CHARACTER

Students

- Work to become effective learners: develop the mindsets and skills for success in college, career, and life (e.g., initiative, responsibility, perseverance, collaboration)
- Work to become ethical people: treat others well and stand up for what is right (e.g., empathy, integrity, respect, compassion)
- Contribute to a better world: put their learning to use to improve communities (e.g., citizenship, service)

#### HIGH-QUALITY WORK

Students

- Create complex work: demonstrate higher-order thinking, multiple perspectives and transfer of understanding
- Demonstrate craftsmanship: create work that is accurate and beautiful in conception and execution
- Create authentic work: demonstrate original thinking and voice, connect to real-world issues and formats, and when possible, create work that is meaningful to the community beyond the school

## Academic Mindsets

*At Columbine, we believe in the power of mindsets for students and adults alike. We ground our vision, our work, and our goals in the following academic mindsets:*

1. I belong in this academic community.
2. My ability and competence grow with effort.
3. I can succeed at this.
4. This work has value for me

## LEAP Components

Core Values: LEAP to the Stars!

Columbine's students, teachers, staff, leaders, families, and community partners are grounded in common understanding and application of the following core values.

As we LEAP, we will be **Leaders** of our own learning, show **Empathy** toward others, keep **Ambitious** goals for ourselves, and approach challenges with a **Positive mindset**.

Above All Else: All Columbine students and teachers demonstrate the academic mindset needed to produce high quality work and positively contribute to our community.

Desired Student Outcomes for <i>Mastery of Knowledge and Skills:</i>	Desired Student Outcomes for <i>Character:</i>	Desired Student Outcomes for <i>High Quality Work:</i>
<p data-bbox="89 1102 544 1375"><b>Students, specifically students of color, multilingual learners and students with disabilities, have a relationship with their data that empowers them to succeed</b></p> <p data-bbox="73 1386 544 1858"><b>Theory of Action:</b> If we...           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● build relationships with families</li> <li>● Use equity based school wide systems for data analysis AND</li> <li>● regularly name and confront our adult biases</li> </ul> <b>then students will...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make significant progress towards mastery of grade level texts and tasks.</li> </ul> </p>	<p data-bbox="592 1102 1015 1249"><b>Students feel a strong sense of belonging and can be their authentic selves.</b></p> <p data-bbox="568 1260 1031 1795"><b>Theory of Action:</b> If we...           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● build relationships with families,</li> <li>● use crew time to support students to become ethical people AND</li> <li>● foster an equitable, positive climate for learning</li> </ul> <b>then students will...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Contribute to their crew and build a sense of belonging through being their authentic selves.</li> </ul> </p>	<p data-bbox="1079 1102 1534 1312"><b>Students, specifically students of color, multilingual learners and students with disabilities, will consistently create high quality daily work.</b></p> <p data-bbox="1055 1323 1542 1869"><b>Theory of Action:</b> If we...           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● build equitable relationships with families</li> <li>● Hold all students to high expectations using <b>success criteria</b> to name and reflect on what <b>daily quality</b> looks like AND</li> <li>● craft lessons that set clear purpose and ensure challenge</li> </ul> <b>then ALL students will...</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● regularly show pride in their daily work.</li> </ul> </p>
<p><b>Core Practice</b> Focus Areas: 10.A.3, 11.A, 12.A, 21.B, 22.B, 24.B, 27.B.3, 33.C</p>		



## *How will the waivers support Columbine's mission and vision?*

Columbine seeks to pursue innovation status to better achieve our mission, vision, and values. Columbine has followed the EL Education whole school model since 2017. EL Education is a transformational learning model that nurtures the strengths, unique talents, and curiosity of each student. At Columbine, our definition of student success is rooted in the beliefs of EL Education--that academic success combines academic achievement, character, and high quality work. Another key component of EL is Service Learning. EL connects students to the world through meaningful fieldwork, fieldwork in which students are active investigators, applying research tools, techniques of inquiry and standards. Columbine's next steps are planning and designing sustainable fieldwork beyond charity acts such as cleaning up a city park. All teachers will plan Service Learning projects to teach students to take action centered on social justice and to address challenges and celebrate the assets of living in a community outside of school.

Over the past five years, our teachers have built and developed extensions of the literacy modules to include celebrations of learning, community partnerships, visits from field experts, authentic application of projects, and additional texts to explore topics. In addition, our community has invested time and resources to support the EL model at Columbine. Our EL committee supports our teachers' access to people, organizations, and experiences in our community in order to support student learning. They support teachers in the planning and development of learning celebrations in addition to the creation of performance tasks to share with families. Finally, our PTA has allocated funds for each teacher to use to enhance student learning within the literacy modules.

It is becoming more and more evident each year that our staff is seeking to stay at Columbine or join the crew at Columbine because of the EL Education model, vision, mission, and values. EL is part of our onboarding process both for staff and for the community to ensure a common understanding of student success.

Columbine is requesting autonomy for calendar, curriculum, budget, and PD. Each of these areas is critical in order to fulfill our vision and mission.

The waivers we are seeking are:

- **Professional Learning** autonomy will allow us to: focus on EL core practices and domains; plan for literacy modules, assessments, and differentiation; develop our celebrations of learning; and connect with field experts, organizations, and expeditions.
- **Budgeting on Actual Teacher Salaries** savings will allow us to develop community partnerships; provide buses for fieldwork; and contribute towards payments for speakers and experts.
- **Curriculum:** In the EL Education ELA curriculum, students are set up for mastering grade level standards because the curriculum has rigorous common core assessments throughout each unit and ends with an authentic final task. Through weekly DDI structures, we analyze these assessments and final tasks to ensure teachers are responsive to student needs and that students are meeting standards. Our staff also participates in deep dives of high quality work with our EL school designer to vertically calibrate the effectiveness of the assessments and learning trajectories school wide. This curriculum is baked into the fabric of our school vision, mission, and

philosophy. The modules embody all that EL Education believes is the foundation of a student learning experience. EL Education's [ELA Curriculum](#) is a research-based, comprehensive design that has a proven impact on student achievement. Two third party studies (Choi, Rochman, and Dolfin)<sup>1</sup> concluded that pairing EL's curriculum with teacher support results in improved student achievement for all. Schools in EL Education's national network that implement the model with fidelity exceed their peers on standardized assessments and these results become even more pronounced the longer the school implements the model. The autonomies offered through innovation status would allow Columbine to continue to implement our vision, mission, and instructional program with fidelity.

- **Calendar** flexibility will allow our staff to have designated days to collaborate with our EL committee, PTA, families, and community partners all in alignment to enhancing the student learning experience.
- **Sponsorship** will allow the school to pursue creative funding opportunities which will directly go towards the funding of our EL Model through: curriculum enhancements, field work, buses, field experts, expeditions, projects, and community events.
- **Supplemental and Enrichment Programming** will allow the school to employ either licensed or non-licensed personnel for supplemental and enrichment instruction or supervision consistent with the innovation plan. All personnel will still be required to go through background checks and be supervised by a licensed staff member.

These flexibilities will allow Columbine to live out the EL Education model with authenticity, fidelity, and the necessary investment in order to reach high levels of student achievement. With the support and collaboration of all our stakeholder groups, it has been determined year after year that EL is the core identity of Columbine and it is the work that has brought Columbine to the high growth and engagement we see today.

## **B. Innovation Plan Goals**

- During the renewal process for innovation status, all schools will be considered based on their progress towards district goals, as set in Board policy. Presently, DPS utilizes the State SPF to determine school performance, and so this framework should be used for setting school goals and evaluating progress. Please detail in the table below the specific measurable goals you will use to measure the academic performance of the school as a result of implementing this innovation plan, including current performance in those areas.
- How will innovation status (including the specific flexibilities identified in the plan) support the school with accomplishing goals set by the district, goals set in the innovation plan, and improving outcomes for students?

Columbine will continue to progress monitor all students through the use of ongoing school-level assessments that include: iStation, iReady, Stars, Interims, Blevins, and curriculum unit assessments to respond to the needs of our school. We have a specific focus to close our achievement gap between white and students of color. The flexibilities detailed in this innovation plan allows us the time and support to identify needs, provide ongoing coaching and support for our teachers, and the time to plan and respond to data from this progress monitoring data through ongoing DDI protocols.

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<sup>1</sup> Choi, J., Richman, S., & Dolfin, S. (2018). Sustaining Effective Teacher Practice: The Impact of the EL Education Language Arts Curriculum and Professional Development on Teachers' Instruction.

This innovation plan allows Columbine Elementary the flexibilities necessary to support staff with the time to engage in professional development through our PD days, the freedom to select and revise curriculum to support the individual needs of all our students in response to our individual school data, and the time to provide 1:1 coaching, team leads to lead grade level meetings through our distributive leadership model, DDI protocols run by Senior Team Leads and administration.

Columbine's [UIP](#)

Table 1. Innovation plan goals.

Performance Indicator/Other Assessment or Measure	Current/Baseline Performance	2023-2024 Goal	2024-2025	2025-2026*
Literacy Istation opportunity gap decrease	Current Opportunity Gap on iStation: 50%	We will decrease our opportunity gaps by 5%	We will decrease our opportunity gaps by 5%	We will decrease our opportunity gaps by 5%
Attendance/engagement	Current Overall Student Attendance: <b>89.1%</b>  SOC Overall Student Attendance: <b>85.4%</b>	Our overall student attendance will be 90% for the school year. Our SOC overall attendance will be 87%	Our overall student attendance will be 92% for the school year. Our SOC overall attendance will be 89%	Our overall student attendance will be 94% for the school year. Our SOC overall attendance will be 92%
<a href="#">Colorado State SPF</a>	Columbine Elementary School (1846) <b>2019*</b>  Rating (Yellow) Improvement Plan  Points Earned: <b>43.2%</b>  *No rating available for 2022 based on insufficient state data	Improvement (Yellow)  Points Earned: 48% (+5%)	Performance (Green)  Points Earned: 53% (+5%)	Performance (Green)  Points Earned: 58% (+5%)

### C. Innovation Plan Onboarding

#### Columbine Onboarding Plan-New Teachers and Other Staff Hires

- Leadership will provide all interviewed candidates access to the innovation plan and refer to it during the interview process.
- The New Teacher Ambassador, in partnership with a member of administration will provide new hires with an outline of our Innovation Plan during their onboarding at the beginning of the school year, as well as periodic meetings throughout the year to support new hires with the plan.
- Leaders will highlight how innovation status will affect new hires throughout the school year.
- Leaders will field questions about the Innovation Plan and highlight the every three year vote to renew the plan.
- Leaders will highlight the benefits of our innovation plan and rationale behind it.
- Leaders will use this opportunity to tie in our EL Education philosophies.

#### Columbine Onboarding Plan-New School Leaders

- The administration will provide new leaders with access to the Innovation Plan during the interview process and during their onboarding at the beginning of the school year.
- Leaders will highlight how the Innovation Plan will affect their management of their team throughout the school year.
- Leaders will field questions about the Innovation Plan and highlight the every three year vote to renew the plan.
- Leaders will highlight the benefits of our innovation plan and rationale behind it.
- Leaders will use this opportunity to tie in our EL Education philosophies.
- Interview questions will be carefully crafted to ensure that new leader hires have a working knowledge of the EL Education model, and have a desire to continue to implement this model in support of our innovation plan.

## Section I: Educational Program Flexibilities

Educational Program Flexibilities		
Flexibility Area	Detailed Flexibility and Rationale	Associated Waivers
Calendar	<p>Columbine may design their yearly calendar with the following in mind:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To provide additional professional learning that compliments our school model, Columbine will modify our yearly calendar. These changes will provide additional time for both leader and teacher designed professional learning. The focus of these days will be in the continuous improvement, design, and execution of our EL Model through staff onboarding/training days, collaboration with the EL committee for planning field work and celebrations of learning, and the instructional planning of our modules, math, science, and social studies in alignment to the three dimensions of student achievement.</li> </ul>	<p>DCTA CBA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Article 1-8: Definition of "School Year"</li> <li>● Article 8-1-1: Professional Standards</li> <li>● Article 8-1-2: Professional Standards</li> <li>● Article 8-1-3: Professional Standards</li> </ul> <p>State Statute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 22-32-109(1)(n)(I): Schedule and Calendar</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ No more than 3 additional professional learning days will be scheduled per year (in addition to the number of professional learning days scheduled by the district). Teachers will be compensated for this additional professional learning at their regular scheduled rate if the contract year is extended to provide it;</li> <li>○ Any professional development days that may not align with those scheduled by the district will be scheduled with input from the CSC to best serve the school community;</li> <li>● Non-student contact days may be scheduled on holidays observed by the community. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The CSC will gather and receive feedback from community stakeholders each year to best identify if a non-student contact day would benefit the community.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Columbine's yearly calendar may have fewer student contact days than the district calendar but will meet or exceed district and state minimum requirements for student contact.</p> <p>The yearly calendar will be developed no later than 60 days before the end of the school year by the principal in consultation of the CSC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 22-32-109 (1)(n)(II)(A): Actual Hours of Teacher-Pupil Instruction and Contact</li> <li>● 22-32-109 (1)(n)(II)(B): School Calendar</li> <li>● 22-33-102(1) Definition of "Academic Year"</li> </ul>
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<p>Curriculum and Assessment</p>	<p>Columbine will participate in the universal flexibilities process when selecting a new curriculum, and will follow the district approval process if seeking to implement a new curriculum outside of this process. If curriculum flexibility is not provided by DPS, Columbine will retain flexibility to make changes to their curriculum in accordance with state and legal requirements.</p> <p>Columbine's current selections for curricula:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="342 1325 1219 1654"> <thead> <tr> <th>Curriculum Subject</th> <th>Commercial Program Name</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ELA</td> <td>Expeditionary Learning (EL)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Foundational Skills</td> <td>CKLA</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Math</td> <td>Engage NY</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Science</td> <td>Amplify</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Columbine currently has flexibility to use EL literacy curriculum in grades K-5. Over the past 5 years, Columbine has put financial and time resources into ensuring that EL is the best possible experience and curriculum for our students and families. The EL Literacy Curriculum is essential for us to truly live into the EL model as an EL school because it incorporates the three</p>	Curriculum Subject	Commercial Program Name	ELA	Expeditionary Learning (EL)	Foundational Skills	CKLA	Math	Engage NY	Science	Amplify	<p>State Statute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 22-32-109(1)(t): Determine Educational Program and Prescribe Textbooks;</li> <li>● 22-32-109(1): Adopt Content Standards and Plan for Implementation of Content Standards</li> </ul>
Curriculum Subject	Commercial Program Name											
ELA	Expeditionary Learning (EL)											
Foundational Skills	CKLA											
Math	Engage NY											
Science	Amplify											

dimensions of student achievement, it integrates social emotional learning, and it drives our improvement strategy of student-engaged assessment. The EL curriculum is structured and strategically includes character work, MLL supports, and Common Core connections within every single literacy lesson. The MLL supports include: language dives, conversation cues, discussion protocols and routines, building background knowledge, module specific word walls, co-created anchor charts, close read alouds, oral rehearsal for writing, and learning parts of speech and sentence structure. These strong curriculum supports are effectively serving Columbine's population as evidenced by our ACCESS data and our Early Literacy data and it has contributed to our low staff turnover in the early grades. Additionally, students and teachers benefit from EL's masterful inclusion of high quality texts and authentic opportunities for differentiation.

Students are set up for mastering grade level standards because the curriculum has rigorous common core assessments throughout each unit and ends with an authentic final task. Through weekly DDI structures, we analyze these assessments and final tasks to ensure teachers are responsive to student needs and that students are meeting standards. Staff also participates in deep dives of high quality work with our EL school designer to vertically calibrate the effectiveness of the assessments and learning trajectories school wide. Additionally, the culminating task includes a learning celebration for families which ensures that everyone is engaging with student work and data. These learning celebrations create a safe and welcoming school as families and the community celebrate student work regularly throughout the year. Columbine also has an extremely active EL family committee that schedules field experts, field work experiences, gathers module enhancing materials and helps with anything else to make the modules come alive for all students.

The EL Education curriculum recognizes that students learn from one another--and learn to respect one another--when they learn together in the same classroom. Each module or unit of study allows for continued evolution and contextualization as teachers adapt products and projects to be relevant, culturally sustaining, and engaging for all learners. Through collaborative conversations, authentic connections to community and experts, students deepen their learning and come to appreciate the value of one another as individuals with diverse perspectives.

Finally, the EL Literacy modules have a daily integration of habits of character built into each lesson. We believe this continuous focus on SEL beyond our crew circles is essential for our student's academic achievement. Students focus on

	<p>relationships, collaboration, communication, team work, growth mindsets, respect throughout their learning journey. This continuous focus and threading of SEL into our academic curriculum is a core value and belief of our school. We use academic mindsets and LEAP values not only to drive our social and emotional development, but also our academic risk taking, positive mindset, and growth orientation.</p> <p>The EL Curriculum has significantly benefited our student population by increasing mastery of knowledge and skills, high quality work and character. <a href="#">Click here</a> to see student work artifacts to prove the effectiveness of this curriculum for Columbine Elementary!</p>	
<p>Professional Learning</p>	<p>To support our professional development, Columbine may host our own professional learning days rather than attend district scheduled professional learning. These days are planned and differentiated based on teachers' needs in consultation with our school's SLT, ILT, and our EL Education School Designer. This time is spent backwards planning modules, planning for celebrations of learning, analyzing school data in order to ensure progress monitoring is closely utilized when planning for whole and small group instruction. This time is also used for our SSPs to collaborate with our teachers in order to ensure standard and student goal alignment.</p> <p>The personalization of these days is essential to allow leadership to differentiate the learning across our staff. We will use these days to sufficiently onboard new staff to the EL model, crew time, curriculum, and philosophy of EL. We will also continue to use these days anchored in the credentialing process to backwards plan our steps towards reaching the rigorous goals set forth in the plan.</p> <p>This professional learning also provides us with learning around unpacking standards, planning for differentiated instruction in literacy and math, and using science-based reading practices (assessment, instruction, data analysis) for K-5 literacy instruction. If district professional learning covers Enrichment curriculum and Special Education/SSP offerings, staff may be asked to attend those sessions.</p> <p>Additionally, we will implement up to 3 additional professional learning days throughout the school year. These days will be scheduled as a part of calendar development.</p> <p>School staff will still complete all training related to health, safety, and other legal compliance (including special education and Multilingual Education).</p>	<p>State Statute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 22-32-109(1)(t): Determine Educational Program and Prescribe Textbooks;</li> <li>● 22-32-109(1): Adopt Content Standards and Plan for Implementation of Content Standards</li> </ul>

<p>Supplemental and Enrichment Programming</p>	<p>The school may employ either licensed or non-licensed personnel for supplemental and enrichment instruction or supervision consistent with the innovation plan, and the DPS board may enter into employment contracts with non-licensed teachers and/or administrators at the school as necessary to implement the school's innovation plan. Non-licensed personnel will, at a minimum, possess a bachelor's degree or have relevant work experience, subject to approval by DPS HR. The school will employ licensed teachers for teaching of core content pursuant to state and federal law. Core content areas are considered as: Language Arts; Math; Science; Foreign language; Social Studies (Civics, Government, History, Geography, Economics); Art. All core content teachers shall meet the federal and state requirements, and shall possess a valid Colorado teacher license.</p> <p>School district monies will be used to pay both licensed and non-licensed teachers hired to perform services consistent with the innovation plan. Prior to hiring any person, in accordance with state law, the district shall conduct background checks. All applicable teachers will meet Multilingual Education requirements outlined in the Consent Decree, and teachers of core content will meet licensure requirements, including special education licensure requirements.</p> <p>To support our EL model, supplemental and enrichment programming would occur in support and extension of the modules and curriculum. This flexibility would allow us to partner with various individuals, programs, and organizations to bring authentic and connected learning to our students through various experiences such as: art workshops, writing seminars, guest speakers, new expedition opportunities, or field experts. Any non-licensed individual would be supervised by a licensed teacher in order to meet requirements with students.</p>	<p>State Statute:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 22-63-201: Employment - License;</li> <li>• 22-32-110(1)(ee): Local Board Powers-Employ teachers' aides and other non certificated personnel;</li> <li>• 22-32-109(1)(f): Local Board Duties Concerning Selection of Personnel and Pay</li> </ul>
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## Section II: Governance and Budget Flexibilities

Governance and Budget Flexibilities		
Flexibility Area	Detailed Flexibility and Rationale	Associated Waivers
<p>Budgeting on Actual Teacher Salaries</p>	<p>Columbine will use innovation status to budget on actual teacher salaries. This school year, if Columbine had budgeted on actual salaries, we would have saved roughly \$130,000. As a small school with minimal resources and a challenge of per pupil funding, budgeting on actuals will allow us some financial savings to put towards our EL model. Specifically this money would go towards the use of buses, planning expeditions, bringing in field experts, hosting</p>	<p>No Associated Waivers</p>



	community events, and bringing in physical resources that support the modules.	
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**Section III: Proposed Flexibilities (Optional)**

Proposed New Flexibilities		
Flexibility Area	Detailed Flexibility and Rationale	Associated Waivers
Sponsorships	<p>The School shall have the ability to request and secure school-based sponsorships to support student and community engagement independent of the district according to the following policies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The sponsorship must not compromise or show inconsistency with the beliefs, values of the district and school.</li> <li>2. The sponsorship will not alter any district owned resources unless permission is granted by the district.</li> <li>3. The sponsorship does not create a real or perceived conflict of interest with school administrators or staff.</li> <li>4. The sponsorship agreement will be reported to the district budget office at least 30 days before an agreement is to take effect. The budget office will have the ability to refuse the agreement only in situations where said agreement will adversely impact funding arrangements for other schools in the district more than it would benefit Columbine because it would be in conflict with existing fund regulations (such as federal grants)</li> </ol>	<p>District Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KHBA: Sponsorship Programs</li> </ul>

## Innovation Plan Waivers and Replacement Language

### Calendar

#### DCTA CBA:

- [Article 1-8: Definition of "School Year"](#)
- [Article 8-1-1: Professional Standards](#)
- [Article 8-1-2: Professional Standards](#)
- [Article 8-1-3: Professional Standards](#)

#### State Statute:

- [22-32-109\(1\)\(n\)\(I\): Schedule and Calendar](#)
- [22-32-109 \(1\)\(n\)\(II\)\(A\): Actual Hours of Teacher-Pupil Instruction and Contact](#)
- [22-32-109 \(1\)\(n\)\(II\)\(B\): School Calendar](#)
- [22-33-102\(1\): Definition of "Academic Year"](#)

The school shall **develop its own annual calendar that supports the mission, vision, and goals stated in the innovation plan**, provided it meets or exceeds the minimum standards of the district and state, including the actual hours of teacher-pupil instruction and teacher-pupil contact.

Schools will follow calendar creation and submission guidance in the District's innovation guidebook.

- The SLT or SLT-equivalent must vote to approve the final calendar, which must be approved no later than the date specified in the innovation guidebook. If no date is specified in the guidebook, the final calendar will be approved no later than April 15th.
- Input from parents and teachers will be sought prior to scheduling in-service programs and other non-student contact days. This calendar shall serve as the academic calendar for the school. All calendars shall include planned work dates for required staff in-service programs. Once a calendar is adopted, any further changes must be approved by the district. Such changes shall be preceded by adequate and timely notice of no less than 30 days, except for emergency closing or other unforeseen circumstances as determined by the district.
- A copy of the upcoming school-year calendar shall be provided to all parents/guardians of students who are currently enrolled. The approved upcoming school year calendar will be placed on the school's website prior to May 1 of the prior academic year and a copy shall be provided to the school's Instructional Superintendent. The school shall submit their calendar to the district in a timeframe as requested by the district in order to meet requirements for alignment with hiring/onboarding, transportation, facilities and other service provision.

The term "school year" as used in corresponding Articles and policies affecting the school shall mean the school calendar as it is established by the innovation school. This definition will include an identification of days. "Academic year" refers to the year as it is established by the innovation school's developed academic calendar for the School.

### Curriculum and Assessment

#### State Statute:

- [22-32-109\(1\)\(t\): Determine Educational Program and Prescribe Textbooks](#)
- [22-32-109\(1\)\(aa\): Adopt Content Standards and Plan for Implementation of Content Standards](#)

The DPS Board authorizes the school to **develop an educational program that aligns to the mission and vision** of the school and supports the mission, vision, and goals stated in the innovation plan. The school will continue to follow the district's policy on curriculum and assessment as long as the district continues to operate a process through which

schools are provided with curriculum flexibilities. The school may maintain this flexibility if the district changes its policy on curriculum and assessment.

The school's curriculum will provide a program of instruction that enables students to meet or exceed the CCSS and CAS. The school will regularly evaluate its education program and make changes to curriculum content, instruction, and assessments.

#### Professional Learning

- [22-32-109\(1\)\(t\): Determine Educational Program and Prescribe Textbooks](#)
- [22-32-109\(1\)\(aa\): Adopt Content Standards and Plan for Implementation of Content Standards](#)

The DPS Board authorizes the school to **develop professional development that aligns to the mission and vision of the school** and enables the school to implement the innovation plan. As described in the innovation plan, the School will participate in district-provided coaching and professional development except when such coaching or professional development contradicts the successful implementation of the innovation plan and/or the mission/vision of the school.

In determining the School's PD and coaching schedule, the Instructional Superintendent will collaborate with the Principal to ensure that district PD and coaching supports the School in implementing the goals of the innovation plan. The School must participate in all trainings required for health, safety, and other legal compliance.

#### Supplemental and Enrichment Programming

**State Statute:**

- [22-32-110\(1\)\(ee\): Local Board Powers-Employ teachers' aides and other non certificated personnel](#)
- [22-63-201: Employment - License](#)
- [22-63-402. Disbursements](#)

The school may **employ either licensed or non-licensed personnel for supplemental and enrichment instruction or supervision consistent with the innovation plan**, and the DPS board may enter into employment contracts with non-licensed teachers and/or administrators at the school as necessary to implement the school's innovation plan. Non-licensed personnel will, at a minimum, possess a bachelor's degree or have relevant work experience, subject to approval by DPS HR. The school will employ licensed teachers for teaching of core content pursuant to state and federal law. Core content areas are considered as: Language Arts; Math; Science; Foreign language; Social Studies (Civics, Government, History, Geography, Economics); Art. All core content teachers shall meet the federal and state requirements, and shall possess a valid Colorado teacher license.

School district monies will be used to pay both licensed and non-licensed teachers hired to perform services consistent with the innovation plan. Prior to hiring any person, in accordance with state law, the district shall conduct background checks.

#### School Sponsorships

**District Policy:**

- [KHBA - Sponsorship Programs](#)

The school has the authority to collect revenue directly from sponsorships, so long as any revenue collected is processed through the appropriate district system (currently My School Bucks), which will then be directed to the school. This revenue is subject to district oversight.

The school shall have the ability to request and secure school-based sponsorships independent of the district according to the following policies:

1. The sponsorship must not compromise or show inconsistency with the beliefs, values of the district and school.
2. The sponsorship will not alter any district owned resources unless permission is granted by the district.
3. The sponsorship does not create a real or perceived conflict of interest with school administrators or staff.
4. The sponsorship agreement will be reported to the district Office of Finance at least 30 days before an agreement is to take effect. The Office of Finance will have the ability to refuse the agreement only in situations where said agreement will adversely impact funding arrangements for other schools in the district more than it would benefit the school or because it would be in conflict with existing fund regulations (such as federal grants).

## Appendix A: Evidence of Engagement and Support from Administrators, Teachers and CSC

Please attach any documentation of staff and community engagement conducted by the school in designing and writing the innovation plan. This could include a description and list of staff and/or community meetings held regarding innovation, materials used during these meetings or in the development of the plan, committees or teams utilized to write the innovation plan, trackers used to monitor engagement communication, or any other means by which the school engaged its community or gathered feedback on the innovation plan. When describing these engagement opportunities, please also include how many people attended and how participation was structured (i.e. open to everyone, committee with specific membership, etc.).

Engagement Opportunity	Participation Structure and Attendees
<b>February 2023</b> Communicated innovation application information with SLT, ILT, CSC	CSC Meeting (9 attendees) <a href="#">SLT Meeting (7 attendees)</a> <a href="#">ILT Meeting (6 attendees)</a>
<b>February 24, 2023</b> Staff Meeting to discuss Innovation application rational, information, and process	Staff Meeting (all staff) <a href="#">Shared Innovation Guidebook</a> <a href="#">Shared Innovation Two-pager</a> <a href="#">All Staff Newsletter</a>
<b>February 26, 2023</b> Emailed staff Innovation Application process information and recruited Innovation Writing Team	Email <a href="#">All Staff Newsletter</a>
<b>February and March 2023</b> Held series of planning meetings with CSC, ILT, SLT, DCTA representative and all other interested stakeholders to create Innovation Application	Weekly meetings  <a href="#">ILT</a> Administration DCTA Representative <a href="#">SLT</a> CSC
<b>March 2023</b> Met with Columbine Innovation Writing Team to begin drafting process	Innovation Writing Team Meeting (7 attendees)
<b>March/April</b> Innovation Application information shared with community through newsletters	<a href="#">Weekly Newsletters (whole community)</a>
<b>March</b> Held a coffee with the principal meeting to discuss Innovation Plan	In-person meeting with community and administration (15 attendees)
<b>April 18, 2023</b>	CSC Meeting (9 attendees)

CSC meeting held to share and review Innovation Application	Parents Teachers Administration Community
<b>May 3, 2023</b> Staff Meeting to review final draft of Innovation Plan	

## Appendix B: Letter to the DPS Board of Education

April 29th, 2023

Dear Board of Education:

We are writing as the Columbine Community School Committee in support of the School's application for Innovation Status. The innovation plan is foundational to the school being able to achieve its vision and close opportunity gaps for learners. The included waivers are particularly important for Columbine because of the school's identity as an Expeditionary Learning (EL) school, coupled with funding challenges associated with being a small school. The proposal before the DPS Board of Education enjoys broad support from the community.

Columbine became an EL school seven years ago and has since enjoyed broad, deep support from the community. EL is part of the fabric of Columbine. Over this time period, Columbine has continued to close opportunity gaps for students *and* grow its enrollment in a region of the city with declining school age populations. EL has played a critical role. EL has rigorous requirements for curriculum, professional development and project-based learning, some of which cannot be deployed because of certain district rules and regulations. Realizing the full potential of the EL model is at the heart of the school's request for several of the waivers, like curriculum.

As a CSC, one of our main duties is to advise the principal on budget matters at Columbine. The budget situation at Columbine has for the last six years been incredibly challenging. Despite growing enrollment, **Columbine has had to cut at least eight positions in the last five years**. The resourcing environment is inequitable and insofar as equity is being preserved at Columbine, it is only being done so by the heroic efforts of the amazing Columbine leadership and staff. While not a solution for overall budget failures at the district level, waivers in this innovation application, like budgeting on actuals, sponsorships, and flexibility for enrichment programming, are the only means in Columbine's control to restore fundamental programming cuts in the past years that Dr. Marrero has said should be included in every school.

We appreciate your consideration of the innovation proposal.

Thank you,  
Columbine CSC