



**SKYVIEW  
ACADEMY**

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**A Preschool-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Douglas County Charter School**

**High School Expansion Proposal Revision  
Proposed Opening: Fall 2011**

**Submitted July 26, 2010**

**For questions or additional information, please contact:**

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# Introduction

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The founding team of SkyView Academy (SVA) is proposing the addition of a high school program to its current K-8 charter with the intent of opening ninth grade in fall 2011.

Members of the SVA founding team have recently been collaborating with a group of local parents regarding the need for a small charter high school program in our community. This committee represents charter school parents from a variety of Core Knowledge charter schools in the area including American Academy, Cherry Creek Academy, Littleton Academy, North Star Academy and Platte River Academy among others. Members of this committee have spent the last 18 months actively researching the best practices of small charter high school programs throughout the state of Colorado. The team has surveyed parents in their respective communities regarding their needs, held preliminary informational meetings in Douglas County with enthusiastic parents, and developed a sizable database of students interested in applying for enrollment into the program.

Our team believes the following key principles are the foundation to a successful charter high school program in our community:

1. To develop a classical, liberal arts program that equally emphasizes core subject areas (math, science, literature and history), and builds upon the existing Core Knowledge foundation offered at many of the local K-8 charter schools in the area. Some of the best examples of the successful implementation of a classical curriculum at the high school level include Ridgeview Classical School in Fort Collins, and The Classical Academy in Colorado Springs.
2. To offer an intensive character education program that is aligned with service in the local community.
3. To build a culture of expectation and support so that each student has the relationships and resources they need to successfully graduate from high school and attain the skills needed to achieve at their desired level of higher education. The start-up team has great insights into a highly successful college-preparatory program through its relationship with Peak to Peak K-12 Charter School in Lafayette.
4. To provide an alternative solution to families in and around the south Denver metro area seeking a smaller public high school environment.

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In the pages following, you will find descriptions of the key components of this new program. As requested by district staff, SVA has provided an overview of the proposed high school program by addressing a small subset of the components found in the Douglas County School District Charter RFP.

# Component 1: Vision, Mission and Age Level Philosophies

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## Vision

SkyView Academy is committed to preparing students to be life-long learners and honorable leaders of tomorrow.

## Mission

SkyView Academy offers a research-based, content-rich liberal arts program with a commitment to foreign language studies and community service. Staff, parents and students are actively involved in a culture of expectation and support where individuals are respected, valued and known by the content of their character.

## Age Level Philosophies

### I. Primary School (Early Childhood Education & Kindergarten)

SkyView Academy's Primary School provides a developmentally appropriate, content-rich Core Knowledge academic program preparing young children in preschool and kindergarten to enter grade school with a strong foundation of cognitive skills, curiosity, social confidence and interest in foreign language.

Upon completion of Kindergarten, primary students will be able to:

- ◆ Understand age-appropriate content
- ◆ Explore creatively
- ◆ Know and care about their school
- ◆ Celebrate the uniqueness of individuals

### II. Elementary School (Grades 1-5)

SkyView Academy's Elementary School delivers Core Knowledge content that is aligned with supporting curriculum across disciplines. Combined with an integrated Spanish Language program as well as character education and service learning components, students attain the knowledge, facts and discipline needed to successfully enter middle school grades.

Upon completion of 5th Grade, elementary students will be able to:

- ◆ Begin to think critically
- ◆ Act responsibly by striving to do their best and be their best
- ◆ Explore and hypothesize with creative discipline

- ◆ Respect their peers, teachers, parents and other individuals, both younger and older
- ◆ Care for the physical world: locally, regionally, and globally

### **III. Middle School (Grades 6-9)**

SkyView Academy's Middle School provides an engaging environment of social acceptance where students learn to use their foundation of Core Knowledge, character education and Spanish to understand relationships, establish connections, value citizenship, and build intellectual confidence in preparation for the high school years.

Upon completion of 8th Grade, middle school students will be able to:

- ◆ Think critically and logically
- ◆ Write and speak persuasively
- ◆ Perform and behave their best
- ◆ Value perseverance and the joy of learning

### **IV. High School (Grades 9-12)**

SkyView Academy's High School prepares graduates for success in college and beyond through use of a classical, liberal arts curriculum that emphasizes core subject areas (math, science, literature and history) as well as foreign language and fine arts. Staff, parents and students will experience a culture of high expectations and support, with an emphasis on the importance of strong character and meaningful service to society.

Upon graduation, high school students will be able to:

- ◆ Communicate clearly in a variety of forms
- ◆ Think critically and solve problems creatively
- ◆ Apply their skills and knowledge to form opinions based on facts, take positions and share perspectives
- ◆ Value and promote citizenship and global awareness
- ◆ Begin the journey to higher education with a solid foundation to explore the career path of their choice

# Component 2: Goals, Objectives and Measures

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## I. Goal: Provide an exemplary Liberal Arts college preparatory education using a classical curriculum.

- a. Objective: Meet or exceed Colorado Academic Standards.
  - i. Measure: At least 80% of SVA high school students will meet or exceed Colorado Academic Standards in each subject area when state academic assessment tests are administered.
  - ii. Measure: SVA high school will show Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) as defined by NCLB and CDE according to district established processes.
  - iii. As measured by the School Performance Framework, students will perform above state norms for student academic growth, student achievement, achievement and growth gaps, and postsecondary/workforce readiness.
  
- b. Objective: All students will make at least one year's progress in one year's time.
  - i. Measure: Individual students' longitudinal achievement will be measured using yearly CSAP scores and beginning and ending year MAP testing will be performed on 9th and 10th graders.
  - ii. Measure: EXPLORE, PLAN, SAT and ACT tests will be administered as well as PSAT tests to track students' progress toward college readiness.
  
- c. Objective: Provide appropriate placement for students needing additional support or challenge by conducting qualitative and quantitative assessments as needed.
  - i. Measure: After enrollment, all students will undergo assessments using MAP testing.
  - ii. Measure: Gifted students and students with special needs will be identified and assessment measures and placement actions will be quantified and reviewed annually.
  
- d. Objective: AP level coursework in various subject areas and the opportunity to take AP exams will be available for students and encouraged.
  - i. Measure: Each year, beginning the first year the school has juniors enrolled, course content for selected AP subjects will be integrated,

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evaluated and improved in various subject areas until the SVA community is satisfied with the selection of AP course offerings.

- ii. Measure: Continuous improvements will be made until 80% of eligible students who choose to take AP exams achieve a score of 3 or above.
- iii. Measure: All seniors will be encouraged to take at least one AP exam.

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e. Objective: Ensure that graduating seniors meet the course requirements of public and private colleges and universities.

- i. Measure: At least 90% of all SVA's graduates who choose to apply will be admitted to one or more four-year college or university.
- ii. Measure: Annual reviews of college requirements for various categories of colleges and universities performed by the SVA College Counseling office will assure alignment with SVA's curriculum offerings.
- iii. Measure—SVA will implement ICAP requirements for 9<sup>th</sup> graders.
- iv. Measure—SVA graduation requirements will exceed those of the Higher Education Admission Requirements.

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f. Objective: SVA will engage highly qualified and knowledgeable teachers in all subject areas.

- i. Measure: 100% of our instructional staff will meet the requirements of a "Highly Qualified" teacher as defined by the state.
- ii. Measure: All teachers will be experts in their field oriented to the "Classical Philosophy."
- iii. Measure: All teachers will be expected to participate in the annual school-wide professional development plan.

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## II. Goal: Promote and support a program of meaningful character education, to assist students in becoming exemplary citizens.

a. Objective: Our school's core virtues will be modeled, discussed, and practiced in a caring environment.

- i. Measure: Literature and history classes will study great works within the classical curriculum which will provide opportunities for meaningful discussions on these virtues.
- ii. Measure: One virtue will be highlighted each quarter through special lessons, assemblies, discussions of current events, etc.
- iii. Measure: Students will be placed in small teams meeting on a regular basis to discuss the current virtue and to participate in a minimum of one annual service project in the community.
- iv. Measure: SVA Classical High School expects all staff to model the core virtues to students on a daily basis. This expectation will be strongly communicated during the hiring process and supported by the

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administrative team.

- b. Objective - SVA Classical High School will implement a Code of Character.
  - i. Measure: The founding committee will create a Code of Character for the startup of the school that aligns with the District's Code of Conduct.
  - ii. Measure: Upon opening, a committee of staff and student leaders will be formed to modify the Code of Character, reflecting our mission and the high expectations for conduct and character within our school.
  - iii. Measure: Students will be expected to sign the Code of Character at the beginning of each school year. The Code will include a strong statement communicating the expectation for academic honesty, as well as conduct in accordance with the Core Virtues. Rewards and consequences will be aligned with the school-wide discipline policy.
  - iv. Measure: A committee of staff and students will meet on an annual basis to evaluate and adjust the Code of Character, always ensuring its alignment with our mission and the District.

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- c. Objective: The character education program will be evaluated on an annual basis.

- i. Measure: A Character Advisory Team of six to eight members will be developed to include staff, parents, and students. The team will be tasked with an ongoing evaluation and adjustment of the character education program, in cooperation with administration, ensuring the program is always in alignment with the overall mission of SVA.
- ii. Measure: The Character Advisory Team will complete the Quality Standards Assessment from the Character Education Partnership. In future years, the team will adjust this tool to fit the goals and mission of SVA Classical High School.
- iii. Measure: An annual parent satisfaction survey will be administered, part of which will measure parent satisfaction with the quality and success of the character education program.
- iv. Measure: An annual student satisfaction survey will be administered, part of which will measure student satisfaction with the quality and success of the character education program.

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### III. Goal: Create and maintain a school culture that fosters success.

- a. Objective: All students will be encouraged to attend a four-year college and supported in their efforts.
  - i. Measure: Create a college counseling office separate from social emotional counseling that offers extensive resources and individual student support.

ii. Measure: The verbal, written, and non-verbal message that all students are capable of and expected to attend college will exist within our school culture.

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b. Objective: Parent involvement will be encouraged at SVA's High School.

i. Measure: At least 50% of all families will fulfill a 20 hour per year volunteer commitment.

ii. Measure: Four of the seven members of the SVA Board of Directors will be parents, one of which will be a high school parent.

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iii. Measure: Parents will be requested for, oriented to, and appropriately screened to help head up small team service projects.

iv. Measure: Parents and family members with various talents and interests will be appropriately screened to help facilitate 8th hour clubs or character teams.

v. Measure: Parents will be oriented to and asked to sign a "support agreement" which outlines the expectations for supporting their students through our rigorous curriculum, establishment of a culture of success, and character development.

c. Objective: High attendance will be achieved.

i. Measure: All parents and students will be oriented to the importance of being present in the classroom for teaching time.

ii. Measure: SVA will maintain an attendance rate of 95% or above.

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iii. Measure: SVA will maintain a re-enrollment rate of 90% or above.

#### **IV. Goal: Provide a comprehensive College Counseling Program that supports students and families in their efforts to apply to and be accepted into a variety of four-year colleges and universities.**

a. Objective: Provide knowledgeable and dedicated college counseling staff.

i. Measure: A College Counseling Program will be established separately from social/emotional counseling with at least three FTE counselors in place by the school's 4th year of operation.

ii. Measure: College counseling staff will participate in Professional Development and networking opportunities yearly.

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iii. Measure: Students will have access to and meetings with counselors annually with more regular meetings and assistance being provided in junior and senior year.

iv. SVA high school graduation requirements will meet or exceed HEAR.

b. Objective: Extensive information on college choices, financial aid, and scholarship opportunities will be available to students and parents.

- i. Measure: A comprehensive College Handbook will be created, distributed, and annually updated that provides students from 9th through 12th grade with important timelines, references, orienting information regarding application to various colleges, and student aid and loan information.
  - ii. Measure: Naviance software will be utilized by the school to connect students and parents with online resources, tracking information and assessment tools.
  - iii. Measure: College representative meetings will be established at the school, College Fairs opportunities will be identified and student attendance supported by the school.
  - iv. Measure: Annual informational meetings on College Planning and Financial Resources will be held by the school for students and parents.
  - v. Measure—SVA will implement an individual career and academic plan (ICAP) for all 9<sup>th</sup> graders.
- c. Objective: Progress toward College Readiness will be assessed yearly.
- i. Measure: EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT tests will be administered to assess and monitor progress.
  - ii. Measure: Opportunities for students to take advantage of test preparation will be identified.

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## Component 3 & 6: Pupil Performance and Pupil Evaluation Standards

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### Pupil Performance Standards

SkyView Academy’s Classical High School program will measure educational success and college readiness through the performance of each and every student. Student achievement is valued by the Founding Families, staff and the community at large. The education and achievement of each student are responsibilities shared by students, teachers, parents and community members. The three-year student achievement goals for SVA as outlined in section 2 include the following:

- ◆ Meet or exceed the district average on CSAP testing. After a baseline set of data is established in year one, it will be the goal of SVA high school to meet Adequate Yearly Progress goals as defined by the Colorado Department of Education.
- ◆ Meet the requirements to be a Performance School under the School Performance Framework.
- ◆ SVA will submit a Unified Improvement Plan in cooperation with DCSD processes.

- ◆ 90% of students will show at least one year's growth in one year's time as demonstrated by a value-added analysis of student achievement data (using results from North Western Evaluation Assessment -Measures of Academic Performance (NWEA-MAP) testing for 9th and 10th graders.
- ◆ Students will show yearly progress toward college readiness through annual testing using the EXPLORE, PLAN and ACT tests and using PSAT and SAT testing.
- ◆ Receive Accreditation through the Douglas County School District.

### **Evaluating Pupil Performance**

The SVA HS Student Performance Plan includes all required district and state assessments of student progress for grades 9-12. It also includes additional measures that inform instruction and/or provide broader comparisons of SVA student achievement and college readiness. SVA will track individual students longitudinally as they progress through each grade enabling the school to continually adapt its curriculum, instructional strategies and content delivery to ensure that students are learning and progressing. Student performance data will be collected from classroom formal and informal assessments, CSAP results, and nationally norm-referenced test results. The education and achievement of each student are responsibilities shared by students, teachers, parents and community members.

### **CSAP**

CSAP tests will be given to all students in available subject areas (currently reading, writing, science and math) and will serve as the foundation for determining Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) for SVA. The CSAP will also allow SVA to be compared to other district schools and schools throughout the state to ensure that academic achievement remains competitive.

### **NWEA MAP testing**

SVA plans to administer the North West Evaluation Assessment (NWEA) to all students in the 9th and 10th grade (only available through 10th grade). NWEA is a national, non-profit organization dedicated to helping children learn. NWEA provides research-based assessments, professional training, and consulting services to improve teaching and learning. MAP tests are available in these four subject areas:

- ◆ Mathematics
- ◆ Reading
- ◆ Language Usage
- ◆ Science

### **ACT s EPAS (Educational Planning and Assessment System)**

This comprehensive system brings together a sequence of assessment programs to measure educational progress and college readiness:

- ◆ EXPLORE® (8th or 9th grade): This program is designed to help 8th and 9th graders explore a broad range of options for their future. EXPLORE prepares students not only

for their high school coursework, but for their post–high school choices as well. It marks an important beginning for a student's future academic and career success.

- ◆ PLAN® (10th grade): This test helps 10th graders build a solid foundation for future academic and career success and provides information needed to address school districts' high-priority issues. It is a comprehensive guidance resource that helps students measure their current academic development, explore career/training options, and make plans for the remaining years of high school and post-graduation years.
- ◆ ACT® (11th & 12th grades): This test is mandated in 11th grade in the state of CO and assesses high school students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. The multiple-choice tests cover four skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. The Writing Test, which is optional, measures skill in planning and writing a short essay.

### PSAT/NMSQT

Understanding students' strengths and skills is essential to helping them succeed in high school and beyond. Grades and teacher feedback can provide important information, but having a national comparison is also invaluable. The Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) is a rigorous, national assessment that measures the critical reading, mathematics, and writing skills students will need for higher education and careers after high school

### Embedded Assessments

In addition to the more formal assessments, ongoing assessment and evaluation will occur as part of the regular instructional program. Programs being implemented have assessment provisions embedded as part of their programs. These on-going assessments will inform instruction so that teachers are able to discern whether their teaching is successful and whether students are learning the material being presented. Adding yet more information to this data regarding students will be teacher-made tests providing more frequent information on student performance.

### Assessment Timeline

	NWEA	CSAP	ACT's EPAS	PSAT/NMSQT & SAT	Ongoing school based assessments	Special education - referral/IEP testing
<b>9th</b>	X	x	EXPLORE		Ongoing	As Needed
<b>10th</b>	X	X	PLAN (Fall)	PSAT (Spring)	Ongoing	As Needed
<b>11th</b>			ACT	SAT, as desired	Ongoing	As Needed
<b>12th</b>			ACT if needed	SAT, as desired	Ongoing	As Needed

## Component 4 - Curriculum

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SkyView Academy's Classical High School program will provide a strong and meaningful program of academics, setting high standards for all students and staff. SVA will provide 9-12 grade students with an academic program focused on three key areas:

1. A rigorous, classical, liberal arts curriculum, with a strong sequential offering that continues to build on the foundation being provided to Core Knowledge K-8 students and a strong curriculum for students emerging from non-charter schools.
2. Comprehensive college counseling will assist students and parents with all aspects of preparing for post-secondary education. High expectations for college will be modeled for all students, with support along the way to ensure success.
3. A strong, intentional character education program will be instituted, with performance and ethical character being modeled and expected by staff. In addition students will participate in multiple community service opportunities through small character teams.

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The aim of classical education is to produce the free or liberated person. The greatest thinkers throughout the ages—including Archimedes, Galileo, Sir Isaac Newton, Shakespeare, and Thomas Jefferson--all had one thing in common: a classical education. Classical curriculum represents a return to a time-tested educational philosophy that was standard in the United States and the western world until the early 20th century. It is the process of training the mind of the student to better confront the problems common to modern man, and to properly apprehend, examine, acknowledge, and accomplish those things that would make him or her truly free. Therefore, this educational philosophy has two interrelated dimensions: the refinement of the intellect and the perfection of character.

Our classical education program will work toward this aim through:

- ◆ A systematic, thoughtful, and integrated approach to learning
- ◆ Focus on core academic subjects (math, literature, history and science), teaching directly from original documents and the great works of the western world when possible
- ◆ Engaging in the “great conversation” through the works of western civilization, answering the questions common to all periods of history
- ◆ Follow a pattern of education known as The Trivium

The “Trivium” of grammar, logic, and rhetoric are the first three of the seven liberal arts. These “tools of learning” were known by the ancient Greeks from at least the 4th century B.C. They became the organizing principle for the liberal arts curriculum throughout ancient times, the

middle ages, and the Renaissance. Around the time of World War I, The Trivium and the classical liberal arts curriculum were supplanted by utilitarian, progressive education theories. Grammar involves learning (through memorization) the substance or facts of a subject matter, the rules they operate under, and how they are organized. Logic involves analyzing the relationships between these facts and rules. Rhetoric is the art of persuasion (either oral or written). It is considered the master discipline, relying on both the “facts” and logical analysis in order to make a persuasive argument before an audience. The goal of rhetoric is to affect a change in an audience’s attitudes, emotions, or behaviors, and to do so ethically. Grammar cannot be separated from content, but both logic and rhetoric are learning “tools” as well as academic disciplines that can be studied in their own right. By mastering these three universal learning tools, grammar (facts), logic (analysis), and rhetoric (persuasion) students become self-directed, life-long learners, capable of approaching and mastering any new subject.

**Academic Curriculum**

SkyView Academy’s Classical High School program will implement a curriculum that challenges all students. SVA will provide students with a content-rich, academically rigorous curriculum; provide a safe environment in which to learn; promote character education; provide the opportunity for students to acquire the mastery of study skills which makes learning possible and encourages self-motivation; set high expectations and support for post-secondary education; and uphold high academic standards for all students regardless of background, socio-economic status, ability or disability.

SVA will align each course in its Classical Curriculum with State Academic Standards for those particular courses. The rigor and sequence of offerings, particularly in the areas of Literature/Composition (Language Arts) and History (Social Studies) may be different than traditional high schools in the district, but are designed to bring about a greater depth of understanding of the history and impact of Western Civilization.

**SVA Proposed Graduation Requirements (District Comparison)**

High School Academic Area	DCSD 2012+ Graduates	SVA Graduates
English	4 credits	4 credits
Mathematics (Algebra I level and higher)	3 credits	4 credits
Natural/ Physical Sciences (two units must be lab-based)	3 credits	4 credits
History (including one semester each of Government and Economics)	3 credits	4 credits
Latin	0 credits	.5 credits
Logic	0 credits	.5 credits
Rhetoric	0 credits	1 credit
Practical Arts	1 credit	0 credits

Art & Music History (waived for two years of Fine Arts)	1 credit of Fine Arts	.5 credits
World Language	0 credits	2 credits
Electives	8 credits	4.5 credits
Physical Education (including Health)	1 credit	1credit
TOTAL	24.0 Units of Credit	26.0 Units of Credit

The graduation requirements for SVA meet and/or exceed HEAR for every subject.

## SVA Proposed Yearly Classes

SUBJECT	FRESHMAN	SOPHOMORE	JUNIOR	SENIOR
<b>Math</b>	Various	Various	Various	Various
<b>Science</b>	Biology/Lab	Chemistry/Lab	Physics/Lab	Science Electives
<b>English &amp; Literature</b>	Classical Literature & Composition	World Literature I & Composition	American Literature & Composition	World Literature II & Composition
<b>History &amp; Geography</b>	Western Civilization	World History & Geography	US History & Geography	US Government & Economics
<b>World Language</b>	World Language	World language	World language or electives	World Language or electives
<b>Other Required Courses</b>	Health & Physical Education	Logic & Latin	(Elective)	Rhetoric
<b>Electives</b>	Various	Various	Various	Various
<b>8<sup>th</sup> Hour (number of days a week TBD)</b>	Clubs, Activities, Character Ed.	Clubs, Activities, Character Ed.	Clubs, Activities, Character Ed.	Clubs, Activities, Character Ed.

### Math

Each student will complete four years of math. Planned courses include: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Advanced Math, Pre-Calculus, AP Statistics, AP Calculus AB, and AP Calculus BC. Students will be encouraged to repeat classes for which they receive lower than a C since understanding of one course naturally builds upon the next course.

### Science Curriculum

A four-year science curriculum is of great value to classical education. A thorough study of the hard sciences, based on conceptual understanding and experimentation assists students in developing logic and reasoning skills. In addition, in depth study of science topics allows a student to question with greater confidence and build a firm foundation from which meaningful questions arise.

Students will receive instruction in the core sciences, culminating in the senior year with elective courses that build on the knowledge gained during the prior three years. Subjects may include Geology, Astronomy, Genetics, Advanced Physics and Advanced Chemistry.

Biology will be taken the freshman year. Laboratory experiments will be conducted, including dissection, to further enhance the learning experience. The aim of the biology curriculum will

be to provide a rich and meaningful discussion of life from its most basic forms to the more complex. In the event a student is not prepared to take Biology in their freshman year, an alternative, preparatory course will be available.

Chemistry will be taken the sophomore year. The Chemistry curriculum at SVA will be designed to build on the knowledge gained in the Biology course. Chemistry students will explore the interactions and relationships between atoms and molecules that account for chemical changes. Laboratory experiments will be aligned with the subject matter to enhance the student's understanding of each topic area

Physics will be taken the junior year. Physics is a required course. Two levels of Physics will be offered, one more experiential and the other college prep. The Physics courses will provide a systematic understanding of the fundamental laws that govern physical, chemical, and biological processes. The teacher will instruct students in foundational physics concepts and develop the students' analytical, problem solving, and laboratory skills while integrating math, science and technology.

In the senior year, students who have completed their Biology, Chemistry and Physics requirements will have the opportunity to choose from a series of elective courses. Offerings will depend on student interest and instructor's skills and availability.

### **Literature and Composition**

During students four years at SVA, foundational aspects of language and its application will be stressed with emphasis on its representation in great literature of the ages. Upon graduation each student will have studied vocabulary, grammar, composition, and various forms of literature as the foundation of linguistic knowledge. Poetry, the novel, drama, short stories, and essays among other writing styles will be explored and students will be asked to critically analyze meaning and technique, identify historical context, and compare and contrast themes and literary elements.

Students will be asked to write in various styles including compositional, creative, persuasive, and technical writing. Students will be instructed in and evaluated on use of organization, ideas, voice, support, sentence fluency, word choice, conventions, literary elements, creativity, research strategies, and appropriate citation methods specific to various writing styles. The organization of works studied at each grade level is structured to correspond to other elements being studied in our classical curriculum, our history sequence in particular.

### **History**

An understanding of history, government, geography, and economics is fundamental to becoming a responsible citizen and understanding our place in the world. Being able to take advantage of the lessons of the accumulated human experiences of the ages affords students with insights into the past, present and future. Our History courses will be taught in a carefully

planned sequence, allowing students to build upon previous knowledge and gain greater understanding of recurring historical themes. Students will be taught to understand the chronological progress of events and people and to explain historical relationships. They will explore how science, technology, economic activity, political theories, and religious and philosophical ideas have developed, changed and affected societies throughout history. They will be taught to use the process of historical inquiry. SVA will teach from original texts whenever possible. The organization of historical eras studied at each grade level is structured to correspond to other elements being studied in our classical curriculum, our Literature sequence in particular.

### **World Languages**

Two successive levels of a world language are required for graduation from SVA. SVA considers fluency in a world language an essential aspect of a college prep education. To this end, students will be encouraged to extend their study of a World Language past level II, into level III and AP. SVA intends to offer Spanish and introduce other desired foreign language options as the school grows.

### **Latin**

SVA will require at least one semester of Latin. Students will have the opportunity to study other languages; however, the study of Latin is critical to a great classical education.

### **Logic**

Logic is one of the three classical “tools of learning”. Studying logic forms the mind to think more clearly and helps the student make proper distinctions, organize thoughts, and come to proper conclusions. It is “the science of right thinking.” Logic is comprised of two main branches: formal and informal. Formal, or traditional symbolic logic, remains much as it was first formulated by Aristotle. It introduces the classical syllogism and deductive reasoning.

Informal, or material logic as it is sometimes called, is concerned with the evaluation of arguments and discovering fallacies. Students learn to make sound arguments and to evaluate the argument of others. It should introduce arguments from a wide variety of sources both historical and from current events, and from a diversity of subjects (philosophy, politics, history, science etc). Students should practice making arguments, both oral and written, learn the history of debate, and the role argument and free speech has played in democratic government.

### **Rhetoric**

SVA, in the best traditions of classical education, will require a year of rhetoric. Rhetoric involves more than just “public speaking” - it integrates and unites all liberal learning and in the past its mastery was considered the mark and the measure of a truly well-educated person. Rhetoric, either in oral or written form, is intentional persuasion. It draws on the rhetorician’s

cumulative knowledge. It has an ethical dimension of personal responsibility, and is aimed at moving or changing the attitudes, opinions or behaviors of an audience regarding the truth, beauty, or goodness of a proposition. The classic definition offered by Aristotle, “the art of discovering all of the available means of persuasion in any given case,” is a good place to start in understanding the methods of rhetoric.

### **Technology**

The SVA facility will have a variety of options for integrating technology into the high school program. Design ideas currently include an internet café, computer lab, and smart boards in every classroom. SVA will offer classes to help bring students up to basic competency with basic word processing, spreadsheets, presentation skills, as well as internet database searching for the purpose of enhancing the academic efforts of students. The use of the internet is especially useful in searching for primary source documents and other additional research necessary for students to demonstrate Rhetorical skills of presentation, debate, and persuasive writing needed in a Classical education. Specific elective courses will also be available to students in areas like programming and digital media. This is in addition to the technology skills necessary to create a student newspaper, video productions, and the annual yearbook.

### **College Counseling Center**

SVA intends to support its mission by providing a robust and active college counseling center to assist students and families on their road toward college. Research shows that active and consistently available college counselors can be highly effective in impacting students’ aspirations, achievements, and knowledge of financial aid, scholarship opportunities, and college linking strategies. SVA will separate the college counseling center from the social/emotional counseling office in order to allow college counselors to keep their focus on the important task of preparing and supporting students.

The College Counseling Center at SVA will be more than just an office or collection of counselors and support staff. In a meaningful way, it will encompass the entire community of SVA as a cooperative force working toward guiding our students to their best college or university option. Part of this process will be the development of an ICAP plan for each student during the 9<sup>th</sup> grade year. This plan will be reviewed and modified as necessary throughout the students’ years at SVA.

### **Character Education**

We believe character education begins and ends in the home. SVA expects to support and partner with parents by setting high standards for performance and conduct at school, but will always respect the parents’ sole right to teach their children the moral beliefs valued by the family.

SkyView Academy's Classical High School program aims to achieve character in performance (doing our best) and ethics (being our best), touching the three parts of the whole person - body, mind, spirit. We believe academic excellence is born of character. Performance character and ethical character are intertwined; you cannot have one without the other. This connection is not new and is deeply rooted in classical education. The high school character education program is based on the book, *Smart and Good High Schools: Integrating Excellence and Ethics for Success in School, Work, and Beyond* by Thomas Lickona, Ph.D. and Matthew Davidson, Ph.D. This book provides a road map by detailing the most successful character education programs in the nation.

## Component 5: Students At-Risk

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SVA believes the instructional approaches used during the high school years are the key to promoting success of students who might be at risk for failure. This risk can be real for students with a variety of special needs, including those who struggle to understand, and those who need to be challenged. Compliance with IDEIA and ECEA laws will be maintained.

### Instructional Approaches

Conventional instructional methods will be used, such as direct instruction, cooperative learning, and self-directed learning. In addition to these conventional techniques, SVA's Classical High School program will employ the following:

#### The Socratic Method

*"It is a system, a spirit, a method, a type of philosophical inquiry and an intellectual technique, all rolled into one."* (excerpted from *Socrates Café* by Christopher Phillips). All good teachers employ the Socratic method with their students from time to time. Instead of telling students the answer to a question, the question is asked of them, and usually followed up with a "Why?" In the "Rhetorical stage" as defined by a classical curriculum, this style of instruction is encouraged. Students are asked to come up with answers/opinions and defend their ideas and statements. Instructors guide the "argument" with directed questions, never forcing answers upon the students, but allowing them to arrive at the answers through thought and constructive debate, basing arguments in fact whenever possible.

#### Alternative Instruction and Support

SVA believes all students can learn in an environment of high expectations. SVA will use techniques of Differentiated Instruction in order to provide students with alternative instructional support. Various methods of presentation, additional tutoring and support, and

extra skills classes will be offered to students. Teachers of students who are struggling will conference with students, staff, and parents and identify alternate teaching/learning styles for the student. Teachers will offer alternate instructional techniques within the classroom.

### Response to Intervention

Response to Intervention is a framework that promotes a well-integrated system connecting general, compensatory, gifted, and special education, while providing high quality, standards-based instruction and intervention that is matched to individual academic, social emotional and behavioral needs.

SVA will follow guidelines provided by The Colorado Department of Education (CDE), including the recognition of six areas significant to RTI implementation: Leadership, Curriculum and Instruction, School Climate and Culture, Problem-Solving Process, Assessment, and Family and Community Involvement.

Progress monitoring will be frequent to support formative evaluation of student learning and inform teacher instructional planning.

### Professional Development

SVA will incorporate the classroom management ideas promoted by Capturing Kids' Hearts. This program will give a consistent model for teachers to use in creating relationships with all students. It has been especially effective with various populations that might be considered "at-risk". Teachers are trained in the value of creating professional relationships with students and techniques to use in establishing those relationships. Student connections increase motivation, success, responsibility and success. This program has been used with hundreds of schools across the country, including high at-risk populations in Michigan, Texas, and New York. Each teacher will attend a 3-day training before their first day as an SVA teacher to ensure alignment with this model. One section of the teacher evaluation instrument will rate the implementation and effective use of the model.

### Special Needs

SVA is currently contracting with DCSD to provide special education services. We are confident that this decision will provide high quality service for these students as well as assure compliance with IDEIA.

### English Language Learners

SVA is purchasing these services from DCSD and believe this partnership will produce a high quality program with quality learning according to the needs of individual students.

### Gifted and Talented

SVA will identify and support high achieving students that qualify for the Gifted and Talented program. The engagement levels in a well taught classical classroom lends itself very well to these learners. The exchange of ideas and thoughts generally excite these talented students. In addition, SVA will have a G/T coordinator that supports the specific ICAP for these students

as well as other appropriate activities and maintain compliance with all aspects of the Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA).

## Component 7: Evidence of Support

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The SkyView Academy Classical High School founding committee (formerly known as the Apex Classical High School Founding Committee), received over 300 responses to an online survey sent to parents at K-8 charter schools in the area. Each K-8 charter school included information about the survey in their regular newsletters during March and April of 2009. Overall, the parents surveyed were supportive of a small charter high school environment with a focus on classical curriculum and fine arts.

Information meetings were held soon after in May of 2009, at three K-8 charter schools (Cherry Creek Academy, Littleton Academy, and Platte River Academy), where attendance averaged approximately 30-40 parents per meeting. The presentation was a high-level overview of the classical program designed by the founding committee, and Intent to Enroll Forms were collected.

During the SVA Groundbreaking event in February 2010, the high school information table was a popular stop for all of the newly enrolled SVA families. High school representatives answered questions, handed out pamphlets, and collected more Intent to Enroll forms at this event. This spring, SVA held two more parent information meetings in April and May 2010, where the founding committee presented the overall high school design, and the newly hired Executive Director, Merlin Holmes, spoke to parents about the vision for the entire ECE-12th grade program at SkyView.

Since March of 2009, the high school founding committee has collected a total of 244 Intent to Enroll Forms for the SVA Classical High School program. There are currently 41 students who are seeking enrollment in 9th grade in fall 2011.

## Component 8: Financials

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Please see attached 5-year budget (Addendum A).

# Component 10 & 12: Governing Board, Advisory Councils and Staff

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The SVA Board of Directors, in cooperation with the high school founding committee and the newly hired Executive Director, have outlined the following changes to be made to the school's governing structure to ensure the successful oversight and operation of an ECE-12th grade charter school. Beginning in 2011, the following actions will occur:

- ◆ Expand the Board of Directors (BOD) to include seven members – Revise bylaws to define a seven-member BOD to include four parent members and three appointed community members.
- ◆ Launch Parent Advisory Council (PAC) – The purpose of the PAC is to uphold the mission and vision of the school, as it relates to the parent population. The PAC will respond to parent feedback and concerns pertaining to school policy, operations, or programs and make recommendations to the Executive Director (ED) and the Board of Directors (BOD) on behalf of the parent population. The PAC is not an outlet for personal conflict resolution or complaints about a student, staff member, parent or any individual member of the community, but rather an advisory council. Decisions will still be made by the Board and Administration.
- ◆ Expand membership on the School Academic Advisory Committee (SAAC) – This group will focus on goals for academic improvement. Parents will serve on the SAAC and the committee will collaborate with both the Director of Academics and the Director of School Culture. The SAAC will report quarterly to the Board.

## Staff Descriptions

**Executive Director** – Responsible and accountable for the operation/management/long-term success of the PK-12 program. Hires and supervises Directors and Deans, and Coordinators.

1. **Dean, Primary School (Preschool-Kinder)** – Instructional Leader
2. **Dean, Elementary School (grades 1-5)** – Instructional Leader
3. **Dean, Middle School (grades 6-8)** – Instructional Leader
4. **Dean, High School (grades 9-12)** – Instructional Leader
5. **Coordinator, Curriculum and Assessment**
6. **Director of Operations** – Accountable for development and oversight of all revenue and expenses; including monitoring enrollment, and maintaining the facility. Hires and supervises six administrative staff:
  - a. **Office Manager** – Assists ED and 3 Directors and manages office procedures/processes.
  - b. **Registrar** – Manages attendance, scheduling, and records.
  - c. **Bookkeeper** – Manages tuition payments and staff expenditures.
  - d. **Receptionist** – Manages the security at the front door, answers phones, greets visitors.

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- e. Facility Engineer – Responsible for the overall maintenance of the facility’s interior and exterior.
  - f. Custodian – Responsible for the daily cleaning inside the building.
7. **Director of School Culture** - School-wide implementation of Character Education, Service Learning, Outdoor Leadership, Sports, and College Preparation – supervises two staff:
- a. College Preparation Coordinator – college planning (counseling/recruiting/application), CU Succeed (college credit), Scholars (awards/honors).
  - b. Office of Student Life Coordinator – assists with management of character education, service learning, outdoor leadership, sports and before/after school programs.
  - c. Volunteer Coordinator – manages all parent volunteer programs.

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## Component 13: Facility

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SkyView Academy Classical High School will be located at 6161 Business Center Drive in Highlands Ranch. The facility was formerly a large warehouse comprised of approximately 110,000 square feet and sits on approximately 14 acres. Currently, the SkyView Academy Early Childhood Education program and K-8 charter school utilizes approximately 50,000 square feet of the building. The remaining portion will be utilized for the high school program and will include:

- ♦ Approximately 60,000 – 70,000 square feet of interior space (two-story) for classrooms, office space, electives, resource rooms, library and cafeteria
- ♦ Approximately 15,000 square feet of shared interior space for the school gymnasium
- ♦ A portion of the current parking lot will be converted to additional outdoor recreational space.

A facility construction plan has been developed that will allow the school to renovate the facility in phases over multiple years based on enrollment projections, ultimately supporting 500-600 students in grades 9-12. High school facility design discussions have included the current SVA K-8 facility team: Slater Paul Architects, JHL Constructors and Inline Management. The founding team is currently reviewing several financing options to fund the renovation.

# Component 15: Enrollment and Lottery Process

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SVA plans to launch 9th grade in fall 2011 by filling at least 50 seats through a standard lottery process. The first year budget is based on this 50 student enrollment, but more students may be enrolled, depending on interest in the community. The size of the 9th grade class in each subsequent year will increase until full capacity is reached (approximately 150 students per grade). SVA will revise the school's enrollment policy to provide for the following process for 9th grade enrollment (see Addendum B for proposed policy):

- ◆ Beginning in 2010, SVA will conduct a lottery to fill open seats in all grades, including 9th.
- ◆ Priority for 9th grade seats will be given to SVA Founding Families (which includes the original Apex founders) in accordance with the CDE start up grant guidelines.
- ◆ SVA students that successfully complete 8<sup>th</sup> grade (applies to the 2014-15 school year and beyond) will be guaranteed a 9th grade seat.
- ◆ Enrollment in high school will be open to students in all surrounding areas with no district priority given.

# Component 17: Student Discipline and Attendance

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## Discipline Philosophy

The goal of the SVA Discipline Philosophy is to create a safe, respectful, and nurturing environment where learning can take place. The SVA faculty will use its discretion in its choice of disciplinary measures depending upon the child's age, his or her specific infraction, and general pattern of behavior. SkyView's philosophy is that children feel more secure and act more responsibly when expectations are clear and understood. Therefore, the school community will support this philosophy through the integration of character education in the curriculum and the daily life of the school. We also believe that good discipline requires the concerted effort of students, parents and teachers, the result of which will be a more positive and productive learning environment. Regular review of expectations in the classroom and at faculty meetings will encourage the ongoing implementation of the philosophy throughout the school. Key principles that allow teachers to teach, children to learn, and students to become self disciplined include:

- ◆ Rules are developed and established with student input to ensure that students are part of the process.
- ◆ Messages are provided of personal worth, dignity, and strength through choices and the development of problem-solving skills.
- ◆ Enforceable limits are set through enforceable statements.
- ◆ Consequences are provided with empathy rather than antipathy.
- ◆ Responsibility is fostered toward self and others.

Much of this philosophy aligns with that of Capturing Kids Hearts, a classroom management system that SVA will adopt. Each teacher will receive 3 days of initial training and ongoing support to assist in developing positive relationships with students. It will also assist in creating a step by step discipline system that encourages character development. This will also create a safe consistent environment in which students can thrive. All suspension and expulsion policies will comply with C.R.S. 22-33-105 & 22-33-106

## Attendance

Understanding that participation in the classroom is a vital aspect of a student's academic performance, it is the parents' responsibility to assure that their children attend school. Consistent attendance in all classes is essential to academic success. Excessive absences disrupt the flow of curriculum and make it difficult for the student to learn the required skills. All absences have a negative effect on instructional continuity, regardless of the cause of the absence or the attempts to make up missed work. The school cannot teach pupils who are not present and the classroom experience can never be duplicated with assignments outside of school. The SkyView Attendance Policy will be developed to both meet C.R.S. 22-33-107 and to maximize the student's ability to receive a quality education. Regular attendance is the responsibility of the student and parent. Parents are expected to help their students accept this responsibility by adhering to the attendance policy. Parents are encouraged to help the school by not excusing their students frivolously or for reasons not medically necessary.

## Conclusion

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On behalf of the SVA Board of Directors, the former Apex Founding Committee and the newly hired SVA Administration, we respectfully submit this proposal for high school expansion. It is our intent to request an amendment to the current SkyView Academy K-8 charter contract to include grades 9-12. Thank you.

# Addendum A: Five Year Budget

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Please see attached spreadsheet.

# Addendum B: Proposed K-12 Enrollment Policy

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## Purpose

SkyView (SVA) Academy is a preschool-12th grade public charter school and is dependent on state and federal grant funds for the start-up of its academic program. As such, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has specific requirements regarding enrollment including a required lottery process for all grades that are oversubscribed. This policy outlines the approved enrollment process for SVA for grades Kindergarten through 12th.

## Enrollment Process

SVA is a school of choice, and parents must request enrollment into the school by completing an Intent to Enroll Form prior to or during SVA's open enrollment period (see below). Submittal of this form does not guarantee enrollment for the potential student, nor does it legally bind families to enroll in SVA. The completed Intent to Enroll form is to be submitted to SVA via personal delivery, U.S. postal mail service, email or fax. Intent to Enroll forms can be obtained from the school website at [www.skyviewacademy.org](http://www.skyviewacademy.org), or in person from the school's front office during normal school hours.

## Priority for Enrollment

Priority for enrollment will be given to the following groups of students, prior to the lottery:

1. Currently enrolled students
2. Children of Founding Families, defined as those individuals who contributed a significant amount of time and effort to the startup of SVA:

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Renee and Scott Anderson	Rosalee and Thomas Lopez
Deb Arseneau and Gary Cuthbertson	Andrea and Ryan Murri
Jackie and Chris Baker	Lisa and Tony Nolan
Janet and Shane Buer	Liz and Tony Palizzi
Teresa and Greg DeVille	Julie and James Reed
Darcy and David Eberly	Mary Renstrom
Kathryn Enders	Donnell Rosenberg
Kirsty and Tim Georgia	Elizabeth and John Schlichting
Lorrie and Rick Grove	Sheri Shea
Jennifer and Jonathan Harris	Kendra Sheffield
Janie and Ted Harvey	Jennifer and Jim Smith
Malia Havlicek and Karl Gierapic	Kim and Ray Uhrig

Kristin and Matthew Hill  
Neelam and Anuj Jain  
Tafetta and Paul Keefe  
Jennifer and Jim Larson

Amy Ungles  
Karen Whitney  
Janet Winkler  
Kim Wyatt

3. Children of families who are currently employed by SVA.
4. Siblings of currently enrolled SVA students.

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*The aggregate sum of priorities 2 and 3 will comprise no more than 20% of total student enrollment per CDE Grant Guidelines.*

### Invitation to Enroll

If the number of Intent to Enroll forms received is less than or equal to the number of student spaces available for any grade, the school will extend an invitation to enroll to every student for whom a completed Intent to Enroll form was received prior to the end of the Open Enrollment Period as stated above. Should the number of Open Enrollment Forms received by October 31st be higher than the number of available spaces, all students for the oversubscribed grade will be assigned a randomized identification number, one per family, to be used in a lottery.

### Lottery

If a lottery is determined to be necessary (see the Invitation to Enroll section above), the lottery process will be conducted no later than noon (MST) on November 5th, or the first school day following in the event the 5th falls on a weekend. Intent to Enroll forms received by the school prior to the close of business on October 31st and remaining names in the SVA database who have not been removed either by request of the parent/guardian or not responding to an enrollment offer will be assigned a computer-generated, randomized number, one number per family. This number will be assigned for the upcoming academic year only. Enrollment vacancies will be filled by grade, beginning with students in the highest grade served for which there is one or more vacancies, and will continue in descending order until all vacancies are filled. Invitations to enroll will first be extended to families assigned the lowest lottery number. The lottery process will be overseen by at least one member of the Board of Directors to ensure the integrity of this process.

This lottery-generated waitlist will be maintained until the next upcoming enrollment period beginning October 31st of the following year when a new lottery list is generated to fill vacancies for the current school year. Lottery numbers are valid for one (1) lottery cycle.

If a parent/guardian whose child is on the waitlist declines or does not respond to an enrollment offer a new Intent to Enroll form must be submitted to be included in future lotteries.

Once enrolled in SVA, students are automatically enrolled for the following academic year after completing the required Commitment to Return Form.

Once enrolled in SVA, students are automatically enrolled for the following academic year after completing the required Commitment to Return Form.

### **Enrollment Acceptance**

Families who have drawn a lottery number for an available placement for the upcoming school year will be informed via telephone or email beginning November 5th of each year, or the next school day should the 5th fall on a weekend. After the family is contacted and enrollment is offered, the school will require a verbal decision within 48 hours. Parents/guardians of the student(s) are responsible for providing a reasonable way for SVA to reach them regarding enrollment. Parents/guardians are also responsible for informing the school of any change to their contact information. While SVA will make every attempt to notify families, the school is not responsible for the inability to contact families should they be unreachable (i.e. traveling, inaccurate information on the Intent to Enroll form, etc.).

While siblings are not guaranteed placement, they will be given priority for enrollment as noted above. Every effort will be made to ensure enrollment for siblings in the future.

### **Vacancies**

Should a vacancy be created prior to or after the school year has begun, the vacancy will be filled as specified in the "Priority for Enrollment" and "Invitation to Enroll" sections as noted above. A student who fills a vacancy will be considered a currently enrolled student, and that student's enrollment will continue beyond the current academic year. Should a vacancy open up after October 1st, it will be the decision of the Executive Director to fill that vacancy or leave it open until the next lottery period.

### **Douglas County School District (DCSD) Open Enrollment Policy**

By providing written Enrollment Acceptance to SVA (as defined by completing the Registration Kit), the parent/guardian understands that SVA is their student's home school of record, and will forfeit enrollment in their neighborhood school, as defined by DCSD Open Enrollment Policies. Please refer to the DCSD website for details.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

It is the intention of SVA to be fair and equitable to all potential students. SVA will not discriminate against any student based on race, creed, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, disability, socioeconomic status, or need for special education. Students with disabilities, "at risk" students, and gifted and talented students will be enrolled in the same manner as other students.