Denver School of Thought: Letter of Intent

Proposed School Name:	Denver School of Thought
Grade Configuration:	6-12
Model or Focus:	Blended (Project Based, Tradition, Self-Directed, Competency Based)
Primary Contact Person: **Phone:** **Email:**	Jacqueline Dawkins 303.905.9305 jacqueline_dawkins@dpsk12.org
Region and Neighborhood:	Green Valley Ranch/ Montbello/ Far Northeast
Proposed Leader (if known):	Laura Pretty
Replication:	☐Yes ■No
Contract with Third Party Service Provider	☐Yes ■No

Enrollment Projections: Provide additional rows and columns if necessary.

GRADE	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
6	50	40	40	30	40	50
7	N/A	50	40	40	50	50
8	N/A	N/A	50	40	50	50
9	50	40	30	50	50	50
10	N/A	50	40	30	40	50
11	N/A	N/A	50	40	50	50
12	N/A	N/A	N/A	50	50	50
Total # students	100	180	250	280	300	350
	FRL %		**SPED %**		**ELL %**	
Proposed Demographics	**72.08%**		**9.12%**		**43.48%**	
Mission of School:	➢ To create a school environment in which students can form and follow their interests through self-directed and guided time. ➢ To build and maintain creative and innovative minds.					

	➤ To allow students to become critical thinkers who can create complex and in-depth thoughts about the world around them. ➤ To have students discover their passions and strengths as individuals and as a community. ➤ To develop student's leadership and social skills through peer mentoring and deep involvement in school activities and governance. ➤ For students to learn how to build strong and lasting relationships and relationship skills that they carry with them to college, career, and beyond. ➤ To encourage a wide breadth of academic interest and skills through exposure to other subjects and topics that students want to learn more about. As well as finding and establishing connections that exist between areas of study. ➤ To push students to academic excellence and rigor. ➤ To provide academic backing for students and to ensure that they are prepared for college by fostering strong student-teacher relations as well as peer mentoring; these will help increase academic and social capabilities. ➤ To have students lead their own learning through guided choices about the pedagogical approach they desire for each class taken. ➤ To prepare students to make wise decisions and develop agency in their lives. ➤ To participate in and understand the democratic process and the students' role as people in order to become active citizens who advocate for themselves and communities their whole lives. ➤ To learn how to learn, because we are lifelong learners.
Brief Overview of the Education Program:	The Denver School of Thought (DSOT) is using a competency-based education program, with three instructional tracks (Traditional, Project-Based, and Self-Directed) that students can choice in to. Students are able to choose different tracks per subject (e.g. traditional for math, self-directed for English). The school also uses a unique form of administration to help teach students about the importance of citizenship and using their voice through three distinct governing committees (Executive, Congressional, and Judicial). Traditional: The traditional track is instructed by teachers, similar to traditional schools' basic classroom structure.

Project-Based: Students are instructed by teachers, but have more independence in how and what they learn. Teachers will be there to guide and give lessons to students but work with each student on a more personal basis. It is also meant to allow students to be able to perform more hands-on projects in their learning.

Self-Directed: Students that choose the self-directed track, also known as 'Journey', will have no explicit teacher instruction. However, teachers will be present at all times to help any student that needs it. Students are able to choose what standards they will be meeting, how they go about meeting standards, and presenting standards to their peer mentor groups[1]. These standards come from a competency-based rubric that every student has access to. Peer mentor groups will be giving the presenting student critical feedback and deciding if the student a)met the standards they wanted to achieve b)demonstrated their learning and reflection c)showed personal and academic growth d)was academically challenged e)enjoyed their learning f)used their time wisely. Students will be required to meet at least 12 standards per semester per subject.

Executive Committee: This committee is comprised of nine elected students and staff, as well as the school leader. This group is in charge of approving school laws (rules and policies), informing and advising the Governing Board, and some other small responsibilities.

Congressional Committee: This committee is made up by the majority of students who serve as elected officials to draft new laws and revise existing laws. These laws are then sent to the Executive Committee to be approved.

Judicial Committee: This group is made up of nine people including circulating students and staff and the school leader. It is modeled after the United States judiciary system and acts as a jury for discipline. Each student and staff member is required to serve on the jury on a rotating basis. It can be used for both students and staff infractions of the law or class rules. For special circumstances that involve expulsion and suspension, or FERPA, the Judicial Committee follows the DPS Discipline Matrix and will then build precedent from there.

[1]Peer Mentor groups: Made up of three students and one teacher. Each teacher will have multiple peer mentor groups that they preside over. Peer mentor groups give critical feedback to self-directed presentations, P.E.T. presentations[2], etc. These peer mentor groups are a form of support for all students and allow each student to gain feedback on their work. Peer

	mentor groups will meet two or three times a week to check in with each other.
	[2]PET (Personal Endeavor Time): Every student is required to do one PET per semester (teachers and staff members are encouraged to participate as well, but are not required to do so). P.E.T.'s are projects on topics that students are genuinely interested in. P.E.T. gives students the time to pursue their interests and create a project that informs their peers. It is also meant to help students grow and create more depth within themselves. Students will use their resources and creativity to learn about the topic they choose. If students meet a standard, they will be able to receive credit for that standard. At the end of each semester, students will be able to display and present their PET's to the school and the outside community.

Board: For Charter schools only

Name	Current Professional Title and Organization	Board Role	Focus/Expertise
Jacqueline Dawkins	Innovation Partner to Denver Public Schools Master's Elem. Education	President	Elementary education, student Management, innovative pedagogy, culturally responsive education
Alisha Milner	Project Specialist Denver Public Schools	Secretary	Project management, design thinking
Kristen Hawley	Research Partner for the Imaginarium Denver Public Schools	Treasurer	Research and data
Ian Kearns	Competency Based Learning Specialist	Board Member	High school education, competency based learning
Aileen Jones	Student at Denver Center for International Studies; Co-Founder	Board Member	Founding Member; student voice & choice
Rayne Veazey	Student at Denver Center for International Studies Co-Founder	Board Member	Founding Member; student voice & choice
Allison Hastings-Wottowa	Student at Denver Center for International Studies	Board Member	Founding Member; student voice & choice

	Co-Founder		
Anand Zupa	Student at University of Colorado Co-Founder	Board Member	Founding Member; student voice & choice
Peter Piccolo (Tentative)	Executive Director Bicycle Colorado (Formerly; Executive Director of the Imaginarium in Denver Public Schools)	Board Member	Leadership, strategic planning, implementing initiatives, and entrepreneurship