



9.3.26 CEC SAC Meeting Agenda

4:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Mission Statement

Colorado Early Colleges' mission is to prepare a diverse population of students for life by developing their mind, body and character through rigorous academic studies, and character development activities in cooperation with the community we serve.

All students, regardless of background or skill level, will have the opportunity to pursue a growth mindset that will allow them to achieve mastery and will demonstrate that they can succeed in school, in college, and in their chosen career.

No exceptions. No excuses.

Future Dates: November 12, February 4, April 1

Welcome and Introductions

Elections

Chairperson – Ade Lau

Co-Chair - Leonora Orejuela

Secretary - Brandy Simmers

School Performance Framework

- The school generally scores well overall, but middle school academic achievement was identified as an area needing focused growth.
- Subgroup performance was discussed, including students with IEPs, multilingual learners, free/reduced lunch students, and minority students. Some subgroups do not have enough students to receive a separate score, though their results are included in the overall student score.
- Families opting students out of state testing can affect overall school performance results when higher-achieving students do not test.
- The group discussed the difference between a "Performance" rating and "Distinction," noting that the distinction is primarily reputational and does not bring additional funding or direct student benefit.
- MAP testing, CMAS, PSAT, and SAT were discussed, including how students and families perceive their usefulness and stress level.

Budget

- Leadership reviewed the prior-year budget, explaining revenue changes tied to enrollment and per-pupil funding.
- The school had projected a lower enrollment number but is currently above projection, partly due to students joining through the Windsor merger.
- The group discussed why staffing reductions and programming cuts occurred previously: the school needed to maintain a balanced budget and prepare for declining enrollment.
- The school currently has a stronger reserve position, with approximately 159 days of operating funds available, but reserves are being protected to manage future enrollment declines and unexpected facility needs.
- Leadership has received permission to request additional support staff based on current enrollment and budget information, though approval is not guaranteed.
- Declining enrollment is expected to continue through approximately 2032, so reserves may be used strategically to reduce year-to-year disruption.
- SAC members discussed how to better communicate the school's value proposition, including associate-degree pathways, certifications, college savings, and career-related opportunities.
- Word of mouth was identified as the school's strongest recruiting strategy, but declining enrollment reduces the number of families sharing positive experiences.
- Student feedback emphasized that academics, college course opportunities, and future readiness are key strengths, while lack of traditional high school experiences such as sports and large social events can make recruitment more challenging.
- The group discussed outreach possibilities such as connecting with realtors, financial planners, and community organizations, as well as increasing student visibility through volunteering and community service.

Best Grant

- The middle school elevator is scheduled to be replaced next summer through a BEST grant.
- The school also received grant support for an AC unit replacement, expected during October or Thanksgiving break.
- Leadership explained that facility-related funding is handled separately from the operational budget, though student revenue flows through the school before being allocated to facilities and other services.
- The school received full funding for the current BEST grant request, reducing the amount that would otherwise need to come from reserves or facility funds.

Fundraising

- The CEC gala is scheduled for October 24 at Wings Over the Rockies.
- The event will celebrate the past 20 years and the next 20 years of CEC.
- The event is black-tie optional and will include refreshments, desserts, adult beverages for eligible attendees, and a silent auction.

- If the gala is fully sponsored, ticket revenue can return to CEC; otherwise, some ticket revenue may be used to offset event costs.

Other Topics

CSI Charter Renewal

- The Charter School Institute renewal process was reviewed. CSI authorizes the school's charter and determines the renewal term.
- A site visit is scheduled for September 17 and will include visits to the middle school and high school, classroom observations, and panels with students, staff, parents, and administration.
- Possible outcomes include a five-year renewal, a three-plus-two-year renewal, a one-year renewal, or non-renewal.
- Based on current performance, leadership does not anticipate closure and believes a five-year renewal is likely, while noting that no outcome is guaranteed.

Student Government and Student Experience

- Student government raised several policy and student-experience topics, including parking ticket concerns, lunch timing and lines, and dress code questions.
- The dress code discussion focused especially on hats. Leadership noted that staff are discussing whether hats may be allowed more broadly, with a decision expected in the next couple of weeks.
- Safety concerns around hats were discussed, along with the counterpoint that hats are already allowed on Fridays.
- Lunch concerns focused on long lines, limited time to eat, and students choosing not to eat when the line is too long.
- Leadership plans to bring lunch-service feedback back to the food service team and consider whether line flow can be improved without necessarily lengthening the school day.

Bell Schedule and Supervision

- Leadership plans to review the bell schedule for next year, including how current class scheduling affects off-campus opportunities.
- Any extension of lunch would likely require extending the school day to meet instructional-minute requirements.
- The group discussed possible student spaces for off-block periods, but supervision is the primary barrier.
- Parents asked whether they could help supervise a student activity or lounge space; leadership indicated that parent monitoring could make such a space more feasible, but the school currently lacks staffing to supervise an additional area.