

# CHARTER CONTRACT RENEWAL APPLICATION

March  
2025

North Routt Community Charter School

Pursuant to C.R.S §22-30.5-110 the North Routt Community Charter School is submitting a renewal application to the SSSD Board containing all necessary and requisite information.

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# Charter Contract Renewal Application

## North Routt Community Charter School

### BACKGROUND

The North Routt Community Charter School is submitting this renewal application for its Charter Contract as a result of responsible governance and financial management and NRCCS's pattern of achieving the goals, objectives, and performance standards for its students.

The original need for a school in North Routt was driven by:

- ✓ The distance and drive time to Steamboat Springs if residents were to attend elementary or middle schools in town;
- ✓ The continued growth of families in the North Routt area; and
- ✓ An education vision and philosophy that would enhance the sense of community.

Since the founding of the school, these conditions have not changed. The North Routt Community has united around the established charter school and it continues to grow. Additionally, NRCCS has become a "school of choice" by families who live within the Steamboat Springs city boundaries—families who prefer the size of the school and/or its educational approach.

### MISSION AND VISION

The NRCCS Mission was refined and updated in the Spring of 2023 by NRCCS Teaching Staff:

***To challenge students to thrive beyond 4 walls through personalized academic learning, stewardship, the arts, and outdoor discovery.***

We've also created new goals for the period of 2025-2030:

- ✓ Continue to achieve academic excellence in Math and ELA.
- ✓ Personalize academic instruction to meet the needs of all students.
- ✓ Build an Outdoor Education and Wellness program that is both fun and educational for students.

## STAFF AND FACILITIES

### Staff

Starting in the school year 2025-2026, the school staff will be comprised of:

- ✓ 1 full-time State-certified Head of School and Principal
- ✓ 1 full-time Operations Manager
- ✓ 1 full-time Academic Dean and Math Teacher
- ✓ 1 full-time art teacher
- ✓ 1 full-time physical education teacher
- ✓ 5 full-time classroom teachers
- ✓ 1 full-time Special Education teacher
- ✓ 2 paraprofessionals
- ✓ 1 part-time school nurse
- ✓ 1 full-time bus driver
- ✓ 1 full-time grant-funded social worker
- ✓ 1 ECC Director
- ✓ 2 ECC Lead Instructors

### Facilities

Our state-of-the-art campus was completed in January 2012 and is comprised of:

- ✓ 6 classrooms (Math Room, Kindergarten & 1 , grades 2&3, 4&5, 6&7, 8)
- ✓ 1 resource room
- ✓ 1 teacher work room
- ✓ 1 nurse's room
- ✓ 1 community/lunch room
- ✓ Administrative area and offices
- ✓ Enclosed trash area
- ✓ Mechanical area
- ✓ Computer and janitor closets
- ✓ Outdoor Basketball/activity court
- ✓ OEW storage shed
- ✓ Adjacent, privately owned, groomed skiing area expressly for NRCCS

During the 21-22 school year; we finalized the addition to the main building:

- ✓ Community gymnasium
- ✓ Art room
- ✓ Full-size soccer field



## Educational program

### Goals and Objectives

NRCCS sets yearly goals and objectives, created after review of state assessments and collaboration with the SAC (School Accountability Committee) team. This year the work plan goals are:

- ✓ Hold school leadership accountable to the Unified Improvement Plan
- ✓ Teacher retention

NRCCS also annually reviews data and the State's framework to determine the proper avenue for academic improvements. The Head of School creates the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) with support of classroom teachers and the Academic Dean. Once this document is shared with the NRCCS School Board and School Support Team (SAC), the school's UIP is submitted to CDE.

The [North Routt Community Charter School current UIP](#) is linked here and also always available on the CDE website.

### Academic Achievement and Growth

NRCCS continues to meet and exceed averages and expectations set forth by the State. Under the Colorado Department of Education [Performance Framework Report](#), NRCCS has obtained the following credentials:

- ✓ 2009-2010 - Performance
- ✓ 2010-2011 - Performance
- ✓ 2011-2012 - Performance
- ✓ 2012-2013 - Performance
- ✓ 2013-2014 - Performance
- ✓ 2014-2015 - Performance
- ✓ 2015-2016 - Performance
- ✓ 2016-2017 - Performance
- ✓ 2017-2018 - Performance
- ✓ 2018-2019 - Performance
- ✓ 2020-2022 - No data due to COVID
- ✓ 2022-2023 - Performance
- ✓ 2023-2024 - Performance

NRCCS also received *The Distinguished Governor's Award* for the school years of 2022-2023 and 2023-2024.

More specifically, with regard to academic achievement and growth in 2024:

- ✓ Elementary students met CDE's requirements for achievement on CMAS in ELA and exceeded requirements in Math.

- ✓ Middle school students met the requirements for achievement on CMAS in Math and exceeded requirements in ELA.
- ✓ Elementary students approached CDE's growth requirements in ELA and exceeded growth requirements in Math.
- ✓ Middle school students met requirements for growth in ELA and Math.

NRCCS will continue to strive for academic excellence and it is the goal that each and every student achieves adequate yearly progress. Data drives our instruction and the results we see change the way in which we deliver our content. "Data and Assessments" is a daily discussion at NRCCS. All staff review data, brainstorm possible solutions to areas of concern, and give each other classroom support and sample pedagogy practices. We continue to monitor each student as an individual year over year with a student tracker that we have developed and utilize closely with all teachers. The data is passed on to new staff throughout the year and for the following academic year.

NRCCS has created the leadership role of the Academic Dean, who acts as a Mathematics Lead, a teacher who manages and assesses all our students.

### Stakeholder Engagement

The stakeholders outside of the staff and students at our school include:

- ✓ Local board of education
- ✓ Local businesses and Community members
- ✓ Parents of our student body

Their contribution is outlined later under "Leadership and Governance."

### Unique Educational Outcomes

As an OEW (Outdoor Education and Wellness) school, unique educational outcomes are a driving force to our belief system. In addition to holding a high academic standard across all grade levels, we believe our focus should be on all aspects of the child: academic, character development and the development of habits of scholarship.

**Character Development:** *Respect, Integrity, Courage, Compassion, Curiosity, and Creativity.* These traits are posted in the hallways, discussed each morning with every student, and lived each and every day at NRCCS. You will commonly hear teachers using these traits as a means to support students in need or to model proper character traits.

**Habits of a Learner:** *Grit, Craftsmanship, Responsibility, and Collaboration.* Along with our character traits, it is believed that, from the NRCCS governing body out to the community level, it's the role and responsibility to teach our students about proper habits of scholarship. While different students learn at different paces, we believe that if we can educate and model the skills to become a successful life-long learner, that student will have the capacity to be successful in the future.



**Outdoor Education and Wellness:** NRCCS firmly believes in the importance of daily activity for all students. With a placed-based curriculum, we educate all students about the importance of daily physical activity and the environment around them. Students attend OEW daily, with a strong push in outdoor education.

**CREW:** Within our school and individual classrooms, you will hear a common theme: *"We are CREW...not passengers."* This teaches our students about the power of collaboration and the importance of caring for and looking out for one another is the foundation to our school and school culture. Teachers explicitly teach 30 minutes of Social and Emotional Learning Objectives every academic day during this time.

### LEGAL AND OTHER OBLIGATIONS

The school is in compliance with all legal obligations, from federal and state laws to safety practices.

### Services for Students with Special Educational Needs

NRCCS personnel take part as active participants in:

- ✓ Developing Individualized Education Plans (IEPs),
- ✓ Identifying and referring students for assessment of special education needs,
- ✓ Maintaining required records, and
- ✓ Cooperating in the delivery of special education instruction and services, as appropriate.

NRCCS complies with all District procedures, policies and regulations, and the requirements of federal and state law concerning the education of children with disabilities.

NRCCS provides a portion of its special education services by having hired a teacher who is properly licensed, endorsed, and deemed qualified by the Head of School to provide special education services in a manner which will meet applicable legal requirements.

The District has been responsible for ensuring the provision of necessary special education programs and services as recommended by the SSSD Special Education Director, including oversight of IEPs, scheduling service providers, and handling administrative proceedings when needed.

### Legal Compliance

NRCCS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit registered on August 10, 2001 under the law of Colorado and is in good standing with the Colorado Secretary of State.

We have adequate liability insurance through SSSD's participation in the Colorado School Districts Self Insurance Pool.

NRCCS complies with educational acts, statutes, rules, and policies including, but not limited to:

- ✓ The Read Act
- ✓ State assessment testing (CMAS, PARCC, MAPS, DIBELS)
- ✓ All Colorado state statutes other than those approved waivers
- ✓ All NRCCS policies approved by the NRCCS Board of Education
- ✓ All SSSD administrative procedures regarding on-boarding of new employees, payroll processing, accounts payable and other financial transactions, use of licensed technology, and state assessment testing
- ✓ Colorado Sunshine and Open Records laws

### **Safe and Secure Facility**

The NRCCS school facility was designed with safety in mind; and we have maintained it in good working order. In order to enter the building a programmed badge is required. Visitors are required to sign in at the front desk and wear a guest badge while in the building.

On an annual basis, we have the following inspections conducted:

- ✓ County health inspection
- ✓ State fire marshal inspection
- ✓ Water system sampling and testing per State schedule
- ✓ Fire extinguishers, fire alarms, sprinkler system testing
- ✓ Local fire department safety check of fire pumps
- ✓ Over the course of a year, all mechanical systems, preventative maintenance is scheduled as appropriate, are examined and appropriate actions taken

Emergency drills (fire, lock-down, and lock-out) are performed monthly. Each staff member has a badge that contains emergency numbers and complete school rosters; a two-way radio, roster, and flashlight. Routt County sheriffs and deputies who have observed our lock-down procedures have commended our school preparedness during drill execution.

All staff members are also trained in first aid and are versed in the school's policies regarding school safety, student safety, accident reporting, prevention of disease and infection, security access, and visitors to the school.

### **SCHOOL OPERATIONS**

NRCCS has effective and efficient operational processes, resulting in sustained financial performance and preparing us for increasing enrollment.

### **Financial Performance**



NRCCS has, over the period of the current Charter Contract, continually improved its financial position due to the following:

- ✓ Budgets are still conservatively developed based and base on actual enrollment
- ✓ Budget priorities are aligned with the school's mission
- ✓ We continue to proactively and effectively adjust our budget to reflect changes in current enrollment and PPR funding
- ✓ Success at securing grants from multiple sources
- ✓ Fundraising by NRCCS parents and board members
- ✓ We have planned for growth in enrollment and program offerings
- ✓ The school has no debt.
- ✓ NRCCS has achieved maintaining 25% of the operating budget in unassigned reserves
- ✓ NRCCS follows all statute around financial transparency and Quarterly budget reports are posted on the NRCCS website

Projected financial performance is expected to match or exceed this year's financial performance. For the 2025-2026 school year, we are enrolling more kindergarteners than we will have graduate from 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

As required by the Colorado Revised Statutes, up-to-date budgets and quarterly financial reports are always available on the [NRCCS Financial Transparency webpage](#).

## School Demand

Population analysis has indicated that there is not enough growth in the North Routt community to help us meet our goal of 90-100 students—this is partially due to the many North Routt families who work in Steamboat Springs and the percentage of them who choose to enroll their students in a school near their place of employment. We, by necessity, will need to draw students outside the traditional reach of NRCCS (defined as the North Routt Fire Protection District).

NRCCS is grateful for the constant interest in enrollment, because of this we can face over-enrollment in some of our classrooms. We have created our guiding principles in the form of an [enrollment policy](#).

As NRCCS has stabilized its educational program and staffing, demonstrated its educational achievements, and made attractive programs and opportunities, families throughout the county have expressed interest in our school. However, transportation to-and-from school would have proved to be a drawback if we hadn't purchased two buses: a 28-passenger and 75-passenger. We now provide a daily scheduled bus route each morning and afternoon and conduct all our field trips without reaching out to the District.

## District Services



The School is proud of its relationship with all the staff of the District office, as well as its peer relationships with the principals at the elementary and middle schools. The District has been providing several services to the NRCCS over the course of the current contract.

NRCCS is particularly pleased with the provision of District services in the following areas:

- ✓ Administrative Support and Collaboration
- ✓ Curriculum consultation and Collaboration
- ✓ New staff on-boarding oversight and payroll/benefits processing
- ✓ Student data collection and reporting oversight
- ✓ Accounts payable processing and credit card oversight
- ✓ Audit oversight
- ✓ Technology Services
- ✓ Availability and willingness to support NRCCS in any way

#### LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

NRCCS is proud of its governing board and administrative leadership and guidance—and gratified to have superb leaders within its teaching staff, parent population, and community.

### Board of Education

Our current board, composed of 6 members, is highly experienced and tenured. The board can have up to 7 members. Our board members bring a wealth of knowledge and experience in operations and policy setting, marketing, technology and business/financial management. Four members are parents and the Board President is a community member.

### Administration

The school's Head of School and its current operations manager provide for administrative leadership at NRCCS. All have professional backgrounds in their fields and strong commitment to the success of the school.

As the school's Head of School, **Daniel Kohler** has a breadth of experience both as a teacher and an administrator. With an undergraduate degree in U.S History and an advanced degree in School Administration and Leadership, Dan has over 18 years of experience as both a classroom teacher and a principal. It is with that background across K-12 education that he has brought needed oversight and strategic planning to NRCCS.

**Carlie Pedrini** is the school's operations manager. Carlie holds a BA in Elementary Education and has 15 years of experience in logistics, operations and accounting. Her background melds perfectly to support operations at NRCCS.

Since joining NRCCS, she has focused her efforts on updating and improving the school's financial management processes; overseeing the execution of finance, compliance, facilities management and preventative maintenance scheduling; and assisting and supporting the Head of School, teaching staff, and board of directors in a manner that enhances their roles.

### Teachers

Each of NRCCS' teachers is highly qualified in his/her respective role. Classroom teachers design and execute two expeditions each year.

### Parents

We are fortunate to have an active group of parents and grandparents, who volunteer on many levels—all to benefit the school. These include volunteers who:

- ✓ Work within the classroom, helping teachers with reading/math small group learning
- ✓ Participating in OEW trips, overseeing student activities
- ✓ Serve on the School Accountability Committee
- ✓ Participate in fundraising activities

### Community

We couldn't be more proud of our community; they do so much for the school. Examples are: classroom assistance and creating biking/skiing trails. A special thanks goes to the Clark Store for their creation of an affordable school lunch program.

## CONTRACT RE-NEGOTIATION

### Requested Waivers

There are 15 automatic waivers; we are applying for all. There are 14 non-automatic waivers that we are requesting.

The complete list of requested waivers and the Rationale and Replacement Plan for each waiver is included as Attachment 1.

### Requested Contract Changes

A draft contract proposal is attached. Suggested language changes, additions, and deletions are called out by highlighted comments in the document.

## ATTACHMENT 1. WAIVER REQUESTS

See [Addendum 1](#) for:

- ✓ Waiver Request Form and Automatic Waivers
- ✓ Rationale and Replacement Plan for each Waiver

## ATTACHMENT 2. DRAFT CHARTER CONTRACT

See [Addendum 2](#) for:

- ✓ Revised Charter Contract

## ATTACHMENT 3. REQUESTED DOCUMENTATION

See [Addendum 3](#) for:

- ✓ School Calendar