



Colorado Charter Schools Annual Conference

February 25-27, 2026
Denver Marriott Tech Center



PRESENTED BY



Preschool-Voices from the Field

Wilynn Webb, Early Learning & Induction Coordinator
Colorado Charter School Institute

Lora Bonney, Special Education Coordinator & Preschool Expert
Colorado Charter School Institute

Wendy Renee, Christina Hank, Amy Jackson, Briana Myers, Emely De Jesus-Murillo

Primrose
February 27, 2026 | 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Hot Topics



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conference
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Colorado League of
Charter Schools



We make it our priority to **advocate** for high-quality public charter schools across Colorado.



Be a part of the action.



Preschool-Voices from the Field

Colorado League of Charter Schools Conference
February 27, 2026



On this sheep-scale, how do you feel today?



Charter School Institute (CSI)

Willyn Webb

*Early Learning and Induction
Coordinator*

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Lora Bonney

*Special Education Coordinator-
Preschool Specialist*

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WHO WE ARE

The Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) is a statewide charter public school authorizer.

CSI oversees schools across Colorado, from Fruita to Aurora, Durango to Steamboat Springs.

We believe that **every child** should have access to high-performing school choices.

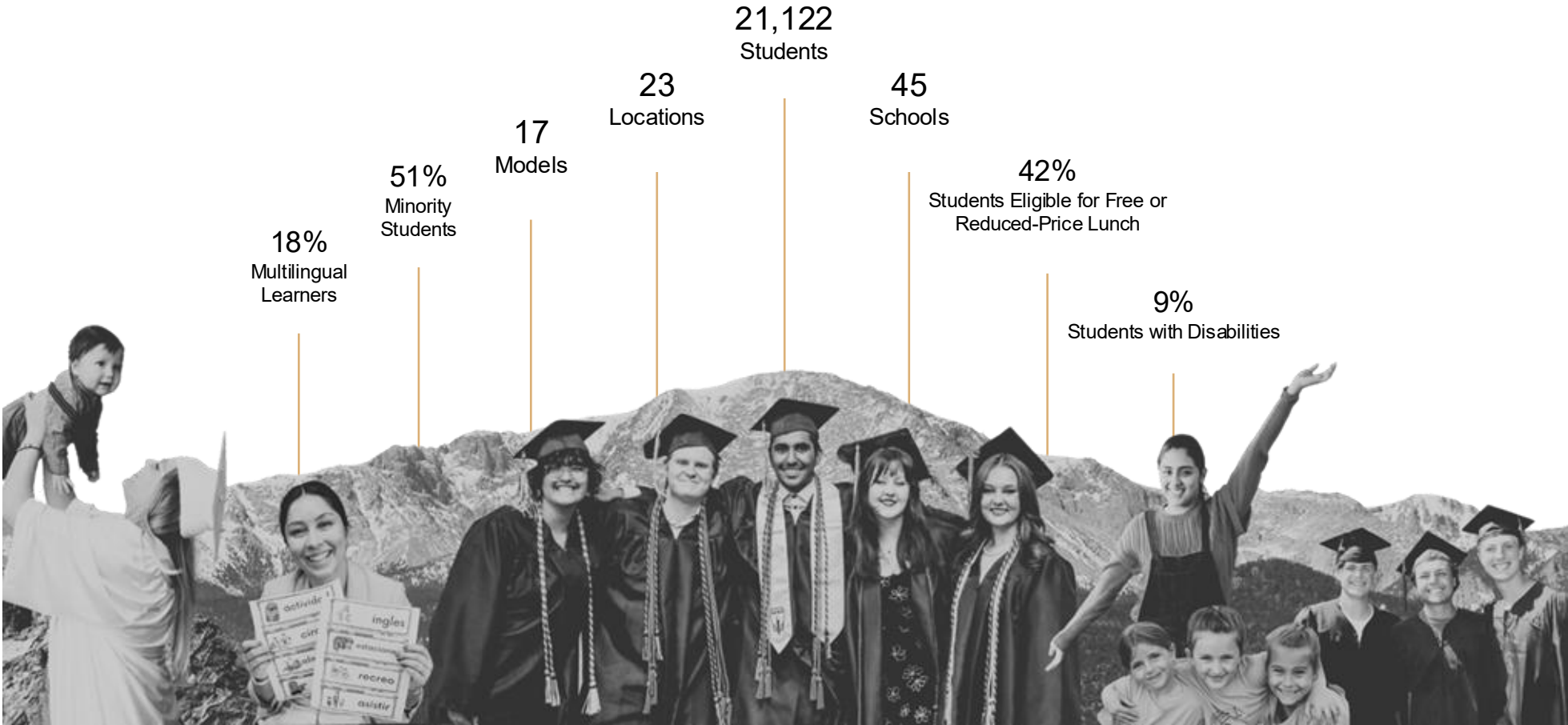
CSI holds its schools accountable for academic, financial, and operational performance.

Nearly **3 out of 4 CSI schools** earned the state's highest academic rating.

Established 25 years ago.



CSI OVERVIEW



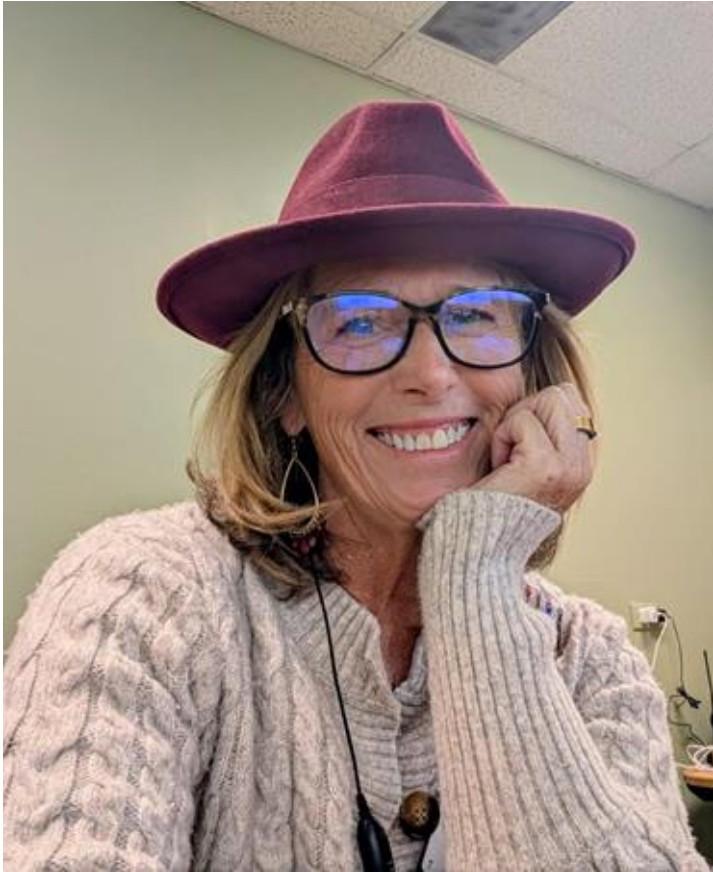
Learning Objectives

- Meet and Connect with panelists.
- Experience various preschool sizes, models, and programs.
- Explore effective and innovative practices.
- Become familiar with requirements and ways to balance it all.
- Get your questions answered.



Wendy Renee, Montessori del Mundo

wendy@montessoridelmundo.org



Wendy Reneé has served as MdM's Executive Director since July 2016. In this role, Wendy serves as

Head of School and operational director for the entire school, spanning grades PK3 to 8th. With 10 years in this role, she has extensive experience not only in preschool but in the transition for students from PK to elementary and beyond.

Before joining the school's staff, she was on the Board of Directors for two years. Wendy has deep experience in charter school management and leadership. She worked as the Charter School Coordinator for Aurora Public Schools from January 2014 through June 2016. Before that, she was a Founder and CO-Principal of Two Roads Charter School in Jefferson County from July 2001 through December 2013. Wendy has a Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction and a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education. She also holds a Large Center Director License, a Colorado Principal's License, and a Montessori Administrator certification.



Montessori del Mundo



Opened 2014 in Aurora

- Full- & Half-Day Options
- 3- & 4-year-olds
- PreK-8 School
- 100 preschool students
- Bilingual immersion
(Spanish/English) & Montessori



Chrissy Hank, High Point Academy

chank@hpastaff.net



I began my career in Early Childhood Education at just **14 years old**, and over the past **28 years**, I have built a career rooted in passion, growth, and leadership. I started as a classroom assistant and went on to serve as a **Pre-K Teacher, Assistant Director**, and now **Director**, a role I have proudly held for the past **10 years**.

Pre-K has always been my greatest passion. I truly love watching children learn, grow, and gain confidence as they develop academically, socially, and emotionally. Being able to support their progress and celebrate their milestones is what motivates me every day.

I am deeply committed to innovation in early childhood education and continuously look for creative ways to strengthen classroom structure, curriculum, and learning environments. Above all, I strive to do what is best for children, because I believe a strong foundation in early learning sets the stage for lifelong success.





High Point Academy



Opened 2008 in Aurora

- Full-Day
- 4-year-olds
- PreK-8 school
- 60 preschool students





Bri Myers, Salida Montessori

brianna_myers@salidamcs.org



Brianna Myers grew up in Salida and has always had a love for young children and helping others. She has worked in early childhood for the last 18 years.

Brianna spent the beginning of her career teaching in a toddler classroom and working towards becoming a Preschool Director. She is currently serving as the Preschool Director at Salida Montessori Charter School.

Outside of the early childhood world, Brianna has three daughters and helps run her family cattle ranch.





Salida Montessori Charter School



Opened 2015 in Salida

Moved into a new building 2026

- Full-Day and Half-Day
- 10 Toddlers (12 months and walking through 3rd birthday)
 - Adding 10 more Toddlers next year
- 48 Children's House Students (3- and 4-year-olds and Kinder)
- 153 1st through 8th Graders



Emely De Jesus-Murillo, Sunflower

emely@thesunflowerschoolco.org



Emely De Jesus-Murillo earned a bachelor's degree from Regis University. She also holds an AMS Montessori certification for Primary (3-6) that she completed at Oklahoma City University.

She has had a lifelong love of working with children and has worked as an educator in multiple aspects. She spent two years working as an educator for art museums in Colorado before moving to Oklahoma, where she worked in Resource and Referrals for child-care educators. During her time in Oklahoma, she found the OCU Montessori program and began her Montessori studies. It was there where she developed a deep connection between Maria Montessori's education philosophy and her own.

As an educator, Emely works to create inclusive environments that will nurture the child's innate desire to learn and express creativity. Emely is currently one of the Teacher Leaders at The Sunflower School and the Lead Teacher in the Children's House classroom.



The Sunflower School



Wildflower Montessori
Public Schools of Colorado



Opened 2025 in Aurora

- **Micro-school, Teacher Leader Model**
- **Full-Day**
- **PreK–3rd grade**
- **Mixed age Montessori classrooms**
- **30 preschool students, 15 Lower Elementary students**



Amy Jackson, The Academy

amy.jackson@theacademyk12.org



Amy Jackson is a veteran educator with over 30 years of experience in Early Childhood Education.

Her career has included roles as a paraprofessional, group leader, licensed teacher, and instructional guide.

She currently serves as the Director of the Pre-Kindergarten program at The Academy of Charter Schools.

Ms. Jackson holds a Bachelor's degree in Behavioral Science with a minor in Sociology from Metropolitan State University, as well as a Master's degree in Education from Regis University.

Outside of her professional work, she is a parent to three adult children, a grandparent to four grandchildren, and the proud owner of two Old English Sheepdogs.



The Academy of Charter Schools



Opened PreK in 2011 in
Westminster
(main campus opened in 1994)

- Full-Day
- Preschool through 12th
- 4-year-olds
- 40 preschool students



Jackie Bass, University Prep



jbass@uprepschool.org



My name is Jackie Bass and I am the Director of Early Childhood Education at U Prep - Commerce City. Before joining U Prep, I spent over a decade in child-care, working directly with 2 through 4-year-olds, implementing and overseeing the use of Creative Curriculum. I hold a Bachelor's and Master's Degree in Early Childhood Education, and I am a fierce advocate for the well-being of our youngest learners.

Five years ago, when my husband and I were getting ready to move to Denver, I came across University Prep's mission and vision and that was it. I was hooked. The commitment to educational opportunities for ALL scholars resonated with me so deeply, I knew I'd found the organization for me.

The early years of a child's brain development are the most critical to establishing a healthy foundation for their education and life journey, and as such, I am thrilled to be able to offer a high quality PreK program to our families. I believe children learn through play, and work hard to create alignment our curriculum and routines to those of our elementary program in service of ensuring kindergarten readiness.





University Prep



Opened 2024 in Commerce City

- **Full-Day/Full Week program**
- **3-4 year olds**
- **PreK-K, adding each year**
- **24 preschool students**



Poll the audience....

Do you currently have a preschool?
Starting a preschool?
Preschool Curious?

Are you rural? metro? other?

Is your program Montessori?
Traditional? other?



**RAISE
YOUR
HAND**



What Makes Your Preschool Unique?

curriculum, assessments, etc



- SMCS - Montessori, DIBELS, and STAR
- U Prep CC - Creative Curriculum
- The Sunflower School- Montessori, Microschool
- MdM – Dual language and Montessori
- HPA - Creative Curriculum, Bridges math, Heggerty and DIBELS
- The Academy of Charter Pre-K - an integrative curriculum including Everyday Math, Zoo Phonics, Young Athletes, Brigance



What do you do that works?

Innovative & Effective Practices

- Dibels-Literacy-Chrissy
- Use of data-Jackie
- Food Service-Emely
- Play-based Learning-Amy
- Family & Community Connections-Wendy



What helps your students thrive?

Navigating Behavior

- Second Step-Amy
- Conscious Discipline-Wendy
- PREP whole school program-Jackie
- Montessori Peace Rose and Conflict Resolution - Bri



Questions from the Audience



How do you balance the many requirements?

Licensing:

- Colorado SHINES
 - Current Quality Rating System
- UPK
 - 15 hours free for year before K
 - Up to 30 with qualifying factors
- CDE
 - Special Education
 - Results Matter, TS Gold
 - Verified list
 - Child Find



Questions from the Audience



Poll the audience....

For current PreK-How much did you learn?
(1-10 or flash or use your own indicator)

For future PreK-How are you feeling?
(1-scared to 5-excited)

Would you like a follow-up?



Resources

[Parking Lot Doc Q & A](#)

Colorado Department of Education (CDEC)

- [Universal Preschool Provider Information](#)
- [Licensing and Administration](#)
- [Colorado SHINES](#)

Colorado Department of Education (CDE)

- [Special Education and Universal Preschool](#)



**“
Your
feedback
helps us all
move forward
together**



**Colorado League of
Charter Schools**



Each time you take the survey you can enter to win prizes