



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Flagstaff Academy Recognized as 2025 Colorado Trailblazer “School to Watch”

Longmont, CO — August 28, 2025 — Flagstaff Academy Charter School has once again earned statewide and national acclaim, having been named one of the 2025 Colorado Trailblazer Schools to Watch by the Colorado Association of Middle Level Education (CAMLE). The school is one of only five in Colorado to receive this designation and was honored at the National Schools to Watch Conference held over the summer in Washington, D.C.

This marks the third consecutive Schools to Watch recognition for Flagstaff Academy, previously honored in 2019 and 2022. The designation is a significant achievement, spotlighting middle schools that serve as exemplary models in academic excellence, developmental responsiveness, social equity, and organizational structures and processes.

“Flagstaff Academy continues to show what’s possible when a school blends a strong sense of community with a clear vision for academic and personal growth,” said Matt Moulton, President of the Colorado Association for Middle Level Education. “Principal Gustafson and Flagstaff Academy’s stakeholders not only prepare students for high school, they empower students to thrive as innovators, problem-solvers, and leaders well beyond our state. ”

Flagstaff Academy is a tuition-free public charter school in Longmont, Colorado, serving students in kindergarten through 8th grade, with a private preschool offering for early learners ages three- to five-years-old. With a distinctive focus on science and technology, a core knowledge curriculum, and a commitment to character development, Flagstaff Academy graduates continue to shine in science, technology, athletics, and the arts at local, state, and national levels.

The Schools to Watch selection process includes a detailed written application, followed by site visits from evaluation teams organized by Colorado Schools to Watch. These teams conduct classroom observations, interviews with school stakeholders, and rigorous analysis

of student performance data and school culture. Schools that meet the high standards of the program are designated for a three-year period, after which they must reapply to maintain the distinction.

“We are so very honored to have received the Schools to Watch designation for the third consecutive time,” said Katie Gustafson, Executive Principal of Flagstaff Academy. “I credit our school’s success year over year to our exceptional teaching staff, supportive families, and, of course, our amazing student body.”

Launched in 1999, the national Schools to Watch program identifies middle-grade schools that meet or exceed 37 research-based criteria developed by The National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform—an alliance of educators, researchers, and national education leaders dedicated to improving outcomes in the middle grades.

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About Flagstaff Academy:

Flagstaff Academy is a kindergarten through eighth grade public charter school located in Longmont, CO. The school also offers tuition-based full- and part-time preschool for three to five year olds. This year, Flagstaff Academy is celebrating its twentieth year of operation, serving approximately 800 students and employing nearly 95 faculty and staff.

The school’s mission is to “develop students who are equipped to be well-rounded, ethical leaders in the world community with a foundation based on science and technology.” The school’s curriculum is rich with experiential arts, hands-on science exploration, character education, and innovative technology integration. Learn more at www.flagstaffacademy.org.

Photo Caption:

Representatives from Flagstaff Academy Charter School are presented with the 2025 Colorado Trailblazer Schools to Watch trophy at the National Schools to Watch Conference held in June 2025 in Washington, D.C. From left to right: Barb Curtis, Katie Gustafson, Kate Salgado, Joe Bellis, Leha Youtz.