The sky is not the limit when our imaginations are unlimited!
Who is Colorado SKIES Academy?

Colorado SKIES Academy is committed to preparing learners for futures in the aerospace industry with authentic and rigorous project-based learning in all areas of the sciences. Located at the Centennial Airport, CSA has a partnership with Wings Over the Rockies Air and Space Museum and the Boeing Blue Sky Exploration of Flight Center to create dynamic, hands-on experiences for learners. Personalized, deeper learning projects are geared to the development of knowledge and skills acquisition in all areas of aerospace while meeting or exceeding STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design, and Mathematics) education standards.
Curriculum & Instruction

Colorado SKIES Academy is in its first year of operation, and already the facilitators have totally embraced the project-based learning (PBL) approach, especially with an aerospace focus. Each facilitator gave up their Fall Break, normally a time of refreshment and renewal across many districts in Colorado, to establish the cornerstones of the projects their learners would experience throughout the rest of the school year. Here is a sampling of the topics they fully developed for first semester:

- High Altitude Balloons, the Weather, and the Atmosphere (gr. 6)
- Birds, Flight, and Ecosystems (gr. 7)
- Soar Up! Glider Project (gr. 8)
- Geology of the Earth, Moon, and Mars (gr. 6)
- Life in Space: Moon and Mars Colonization (gr. 7)
- Advanced Rocketry (gr. 8)
Elective Classes
For our first year of operation, Colorado SKIES Academy embraced the passions and talents of our facilitators and challenged them to extend themselves into their “other self.” They were asked, “If there was anything you would LOVE to teach, just for fun, that would fill your soul, what would it be?” Having such an eclectic mix of personalities, our facilitators offered our learners the following elective offerings for first and second semester:

- Physical Education
- Arts & Crafts
- Theatre Arts
- Computer Science
- Astronomy
- Interstellar Art
- Photography and Poetry
- Music and Mindfulness

As our facilitators share their passion, our learners are finding their passion. It is amazing to see the multifaceted talents of our learners come to life when they can have an academic focus on aerospace and, given the options, express that “other part” of the whole child through these elective offerings.
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to Get into Our Modulars
When school started on National Aviation Day, August 17, the school modulars had just arrived and were not even assembled yet. They were in halves and strewn about, somewhere near where they were to be installed. Fast-forward to Tuesday, September 10, when Colorado SKIES Academy had its ribbon-cutting ceremony. Colorado SKIES Academy learners and families were present along with all of the greater Centennial Airport community and Wings Over the Rockies supporters.

Ground Breaking Ceremony
This led to our Ground-Breaking Ceremony on December 13, where CSA’s board members, Christa Coryell, Ralph Forsythe, and Chris Swathwood, were joined by the President of the Board of Education for Cherry Creek Schools, the CEO of Wings Over the Rockies Maj. Gen. (ret.) John Barry, iLEAD Cofounders Amber Raskin and Dawn Evenson, iLEAD Executive Board Amer Kuric, our first employee, Bri Jones, our first hired facilitator, Holly Pierce, and our illustrious 6th, 7th, and 8th grade learners. Construction is in full swing, with plans for us to be in our new building at the start of the 2020-21 school year.
Learner Experiences Abound!

Being located on an airport has many advantages. Learners have heard from Erica Armstrong, a pilot and a professor at Metropolitan State University’s Aviation Program. They’ve had demonstrations of helicopter maneuvers while listening to the pilots live. They’ve visited Boom Supersonic, taking a tour of a B-17 on the tarmac at Centennial Airport. We all are distracted (in a good way) when a huge Chinook helicopter lands or a team of Air Force Hornets scream in to refuel at the airport.

The 6th grade High-Altitude Balloon project launch sent two weather balloons 170,000 feet above the Earth, with a 360-degree camera capturing the entire event. Colorado SKIES Academy was the first school to capture 360-degree video from the stratosphere!
The greater Denver Metro community, especially the aerospace sector, is hugely supportive of the school. Because of the growing shortage of people going into the aerospace industry, Colorado SKIES Academy is filling a niche in the industry, creating an interest that hopefully will translate into learners choosing an aerospace career. As a direct result, Colorado SKIES Academy received a $552,000 grant that paid for the temporary modulars currently housing the school.

The Ray Foundation, an aerospace-focused foundation, understands the challenges facing every startup school and generously provided a $325,000 general-operations grant.