

A New Vision for Colorado Military Academy –
A Transformation Plan:
Following Our Charter
And
Growing Our Own

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“Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a more clever devil. ”

- C. S. Lewis

“If education doesn't solve a problem, then it is a problem; if the educated do not solve problems, then they are the problems.”

— Ernest Agyemang Yeboah

Foreword by Robert A. Stannard, Jr

This document is a blueprint that brings together the shared hopes and goals of two broad constituencies. The first is the Colorado charter school movement. The second is the serving military (mainly US Air Force and US Army) with school age children in the greater Colorado Springs area.

The charter movement, an active national force, has a branch in Colorado with its own flavor and traditions. Colorado Springs was an early and active area for new charter schools; it is also home to some of the most successful charter schools in the state. The movement consists of educators who prefer the mission and structure of a charter school, and families who either currently have or have had students in a Colorado charter school. The coordination and mutual support of these folks are essential to both operation of a charter school and for local, statewide, and legislative communications and relations.

Our non-military families are drawn mainly from Colorado Springs School District 11 (D11), with a smattering of other metro districts. D11 is the most urban of the large Colorado Springs districts. We see demographic indicators from our D11 student more similar our friends in Denver or Aurora Public Schools to the north. Having gotten to know many of these great folks, we understand that they are looking for more structure, a military theme, academic rigor and a second (or third) chance for their student to succeed.

Charters represent a quest for quality, a form of local control, and the option of picking a theme for a child's education. There are successful charters that emphasize music, the arts, classical, as well as technology and expeditionary learning. A first for Colorado, now there is a charter that emphasized the benefits of a military education.

For soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen in today's American military families, the pace and repetitive nature of deployments, especially since 9/11, has perhaps never been more intense. Even with the choicest assignments, military families relocate many times; children generally attend several schools during their K-12 career. Certain disabilities, like autism, are funneled into

Colorado Springs within the military assignment system, further adding to the shared challenges faced by family and school. The number of parents and family members who self-report post-traumatic stress disorder is sobering.

A civilian, but the son of a Marine Corps officer, I feel an emotional attachment and personal resonance with the military families. To this day, if I observe video of a US Navy ship returning, docks crowded with the families of sailors and marines, I get a lump in my throat. As CMA staff, we feel we are doing a small part in repaying our military the debt of a grateful nation.

My mother, my siblings, and I missed my father when he was “Overseas.” What I have observed in families here in Colorado Springs greatly exceeds that stress.

Things that both of our constituencies have in common are: An interest in STEM, character education¹, a respect for the American Military, and the personal attention most charter schools are known for.

In both our groups, we observe broken families, most of the trials of modern life, a need for academic and social recovery as well as guidance. However, all of that is tempered by an optimism and passionate desire to do the best for their children. We have a mission here; our families need us and we are honored to serve them.

¹ More than a public school and even some charters, CMA talks about Right and Wrong without apology...

Abstract

The Transformation plans brings Colorado Military Academy back to its beginning document – the Charter. In the Colorado Military Academy Charter document, the school was to be built upon four pillars – STEM, Military, Project-based Learning, and Gifted/Talented programs. Six programs will be created from these four pillars. They are: an Academic program, a Military program, an Expeditionary program, a Career program, a CTE program, and a Media/Fundraising program that has the ultimate goal of being a resource, intervention, and cultural center for CMA core constituencies.

Problem Statement

Families, some with members actively serving in the US Military, others with one or more retired military family members, and a respectable number of civilian metro families all seek a public school with a military-inspired theme, a significant amount of character education and an over-the-top emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). These families are also equally concerned with their student's preparation for adulthood as for their academic preparation.

Until CMA, such a school did not exist in Colorado.

Introduction

Colorado Military Academy (CMA) is a non-profit, public charter school that opened in August 2017 in an 86,000 sq. ft. facility next to Peterson Air Force Base (AFB) in Colorado Springs serving over 500 students in grades K-8 with the slow growth plan to expand to K-12 one year at a time. CMA's vision is to prepare students for today's colleges and tomorrow's careers, using project based learning engaging students in a rigorous and high tech curriculum in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) while building strong moral character through an environment of military leadership development. Four key elements of the CMA's design are:

- 1) the military leadership model provides a culture that promotes trust, respect and responsibility; 2) Project Based Learning (PBL) is at the heart of our instructional approach and will be used across all academic disciplines and grade levels;
- 3) high-tech, blended instructional design with a 1:1 student to computer ratio facilitates a high-interest and individualized approach to instruction via the use of technology;
- 4) A research-based STEM curriculum model demonstrates high levels of student engagement and continued growth along several measures of academic progress.

Four Pillars

These key elements defined in the charter will build four pillars that the school will strengthen its foundation. The military science program has a strong Civil Air Patrol (CAP) emphasis, which will transform into a unique program for CMA. The STEM program incorporates technology and hands on learning that promotes critical thinking. The PBL program promotes collaboration among cadet

learning. The Gifted and Talented program allows students to accelerate their learning at their own pace.

Discipline

The discipline policy/process outlined in the Parent/Cadet handbook is quite lengthy and specific.

Please see Appendix A for the current discipline policy. Discipline incidents during the 2018-19 are above normal due to consistent enforcement of the discipline policy by administration. Many cadets who have enrolled at the school by their parents/guardians are enrolled as a last chance, because they have not been successful at other local educational institutions. Most of the suspensions have been related to classroom disruption. About a dozen students are on track for expulsion by enforcing the habitual disrupter law (*CRS 22-33-106*).

As CMA moves forward, the school must be more specific when recruiting new cadets – to share what the school is and is not. CMA is a public charter school is to prepare students for today's colleges and tomorrow's careers, using project based learning engaging students in a rigorous and high tech curriculum in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) while building strong moral character through an environment of military leadership development. CMA is not a reform school and parents/guardians who enroll their cadet(s) as a last chance must understand that they may be setting up their cadet(s) for failure. The school serves military families as well as those who live in the general area of the school. The cadet will be accepted, but must comply with all policies and rules. If they choose not to comply, the cadet will be processed through the discipline policy and will be removed from the school so that cadets may learn in a safe and rigorous environment. CMA focuses on educating the whole child and does not tolerate cadets who interfere with that focus.

MTSS

Cadet Discipline is handled as a subset of Colorado Military Academy's MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports). A good general explanation of how MTSS helps Colorado students is available at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/mtss>. An excerpt: "In Colorado, a Multi-Tiered System of Supports is defined as: a prevention-based framework of team-driven data-based problem solving for improving the outcomes of every student through family, school, and community partnering and a layered continuum of evidence-based practices applied at the classroom, school, district, region, and state level." The discipline system at CMA also contains a positive-reinforcement aspect, known as PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports), also operated within the umbrella of MTSS. Further details on both MTSS and PBIS are available on the CMA website. Discipline of students with disabilities will be in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504, and the Exceptional Children's Educational Act.

MTSS also covers the process to help students who struggle academically. It starts with teachers identifying students and begin with Tier 1 level interventions. The teachers track data for approximately six weeks to see if they are working. If they are working, they continue to use the interventions. If not, the teachers then move to Tier 2 level interventions, which are more intensive. The teachers then track data again for approximately six weeks to see if they are helping the student be successful. If they are, they continue to use the interventions. If not, the teachers then move to Tier 3 level interventions, which are similar to special education interventions. The student is also referred to special education for testing to determine if the student qualifies for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). If the student does not qualify, other measures are looked at such as a 504 plan.

The school has begun to implement the MTSS process for academics and behavior issues. This process helps staff serve the student population more effectively, which is in the students' best interest and help them be more successful at school and home.

Love and Logic

As CMA moves forward, it needs to enhance its PBIS program by helping teachers with classroom management. Love and Logic gives educators “positive techniques for maintaining calm and effective classroom. Today’s educators are faced with a dizzying array of competing demands related to implementing new curricula, student testing and other mandates. At the same time, most are seeing ever-increasing numbers of students with significant emotional and behavioral problems, a challenge to manage and maintain a peaceful, positive and effective classroom. Teachers need simple and effective tools that don’t require them to implement still another new and complex program.” (<https://www.loveandlogic.com/educators/what-is-love-and-logic-for-teachers>)

This program has been successfully implemented in many public and private schools for over four decades. It is complementary to our PBIS program. The teachers at CMA are being trained on a monthly basis on how to implement these techniques to improve classroom management, which will help decrease discipline referrals and create a peaceful and calm environment for cadets to learn. A CMA parent, who is trained as a facilitator, is also offering Love and Logic parenting classes starting in January 2019 for six weeks and will do so throughout the spring semester. This will help establish a consistency for cadets at home and school.

Best Practices

Best practices have been identified for charter schools. CMA will need to pass a comprehensive number of policies in finances, academics, school environment, etc. to be up to date and in

compliance with the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) and the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

Implementing Project Based Learning

In January, the upper school (grades 6-9) will be implementing Project Based Learning in most academic disciplines to improve the current academic program and to follow our charter. This will allow collaborative learning opportunities as well as individual ones. Project Based Learning helps students to think critically and prove they understand the concept being taught by presenting a project on the concept to the whole class.

Eight Tenants of Project-Based Learning

✓ Key Knowledge, Understanding, & Success Skills.	✓ Student Voice & Choice
✓ Challenging Problems or Questions	✓ Reflection
✓ Sustained Inquiry	✓ Critique & Revision
✓ Authenticity	✓ Public Product

CMA leadership will gradually ramp up discussion of PBL. Implementation for some subjects/department is relatively easy, science and history being standout example. Implementation for other Small versions of Eight Tenants will be posted throughout the academic spaces. Allow collaborative learning opportunities as well as individual ones. Project Based Learning helps students to think critically and prove they understand the concept being taught by presenting a project on the concept to the The first semester, spring of 2019, will be mainly to promote awareness, with some well-publicized exceptions. As the

class.

Teacher Churn

In the spring, the administration will begin recruiting new teachers. The process for hiring teachers will be more rigorous which will include an application, phone interview, mock teach (when possible with current students or hiring panel including teachers from same discipline or grade level) and final interview. While this process is longer than current protocol, it will help increase the quality of teachers that are hired. Strengths and weakness will be better known so that professional development and grade or subject level teacher teams can be more complete and complement one another.

Professional Development

The current staff need more training on classroom management, differentiation, and project based learning. These needs are being addressed during bi-weekly staff meetings and the two professional development days in the 2019 spring semester. New teachers are also participating in an induction program, which is required by CSI.

As the school grows, professional development will be critical for staff success. This should also increase the professionalism and confidence of the faculty. Continued training in STEM and new curriculum will be the focus of next year's professional development. There will also be continued training on how to implement IEP and 504 plans so that students' needs are being met.

Teacher Uniform/Dress Code

To model consistency for the cadets, teachers and administration should wear uniforms as well. In the upper school where the military program is a pillar, all staff should wear a CMA military uniform of BDUs or ABUs with the CMA name tape and patch. If they are not comfortable wearing the military uniform, the alternative is the CMA navy blue polo with tan or navy blue Chinos dress pants, which will be the uniform for staff in the elementary. This will remove gray areas from the current dress code, which are open to interpretation.

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Academic Plan

Cadet Admission, Placement and Retention²

CMA academic philosophy, among other goals and values, stresses correct placement, both in students below grade level as well as students above their grade level, especially in reading, writing and mathematics.

Admission. Students will be admitted based on two criteria, previous discipline record and the results of a standardized family meeting.

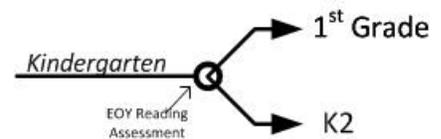
Placement. Students will be placed on a combination of CMA-administered testing and the student’s academic record. For example, a student who has completed the 6th grade at another school, but still tests at lower 6th or the upper 5th, depending on the subject. This student will be offered admission to CMA, but as a 6th grader not a 7th grader.

EOY Kinder READING
1 Minute 25 Words (Passing is 10 Words)

Retention. Students who fail to maintain grade level, even after robust intervention (*see* CMA MTSS), will be retained to repeat the previous grade, or be counseled to enter a less challenging academic program.

The reading plan at CMA will include a robust and well-communicated “Read To Your Kids” parent program, along with tutoring, mentors and volunteer readers.

It is CMA’s goal that all 1st grade student read at or above grade level. Kindergarten students who fail to acquire grade level reading skills will be placed in a second year of kindergarten. This allows 1st Grade students greater flexibility to learn as class year starts ability-grouped.



² **CAVEAT:** This section’s guidelines for CMA are for students without an IEP, i.e. not in the special education system.

Evaluation of Existing CMA Curriculum

When CMA wrote their charter, Pearson curriculum seemed like a viable candidate to implement a rigorous STEM curriculum. Unfortunately, that premise was proven to be incorrect. It is not rigorous nor is it easy for staff and students to access at school or at home. After assessing the Pearson curriculum and its value to the school, the administration believes that the school needs to adopt scientifically proven curriculum. Over the next few years, the curriculum will become more rigorous in the area of Humanities (English Language Arts, Social Studies, and World Languages) as well as STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

Humanities

The English Language Arts curriculum will be vertically aligned K-12 so there will be no gaps in the students' foundation. A phonics program is critical to the success of a student learning to read. <https://www.lewrockwell.com/2018/12/linda-schrock-taylor/not-yet-been-taught-to-read/> There are several successful phonics programs for schools to use as they transition from whole language to phonics based reading. CMA started implementing a light version of Riggs Phonics (<http://www.riggsinst.org>) this year to begin the transition. Many Core Knowledge Schools in Colorado use Riggs Phonics. Phonics help children learn to read by decoding words and to spell by sounding out the phonemes in the words. Riggs Phonics will be completely implemented in grades K-5 with an intensive program in grades K-2 and a reinforcement program in grades 3-5 in the 2019-20 school year.

The Junior Great Books reading program (<https://www.greatbooks.org/great-books-k-12-programs>) will be implemented in grades K-12. CSSP grant money has been allocated to purchase the K-5

program this year, will be purchased in the upcoming school year for grades 6-10 and in 2020-21 for grades 11 and 12. There is an eight day program where students listen to the story read to them, read it aloud in pairs or as a group, learn vocabulary, write in a journal, use Bloom's taxonomy to write questions, have a Socratic discussion on the story and then end with an assessment.

The writing program begins with simple sentences and paragraphs in grades K-2 that are within the Riggs phonics program. It then continues with Hake Grammar and Writing in grades 3-8, which emphasizes learning grammar and writing different kinds of essays. "The comprehensive program of Hake Grammar and Writing covers English grammar, writing, spelling, punctuation and vocabulary development." <http://www.hakepublishing.com/grammar-and-writing.html> Hake Grammar and Writing was implemented in grades 3-5 this year with an expansion to grades 6-8 in the 2019-20 school year.

The writing program also includes writing essays and a thesis paper for each grade. This helps build their writing skills and become ready for college writing at a gradual pace. The scope and sequence for writing in grades 4-12 is as follows:

- 4th – 5 page research paper on historical figure – learning to cite sources MLA style
- 5th – 5 to 7 page research paper – learning to cite sources MLA style
- 6th – 5 to 7 page research paper – learning to cite sources MLA style
- 7th – 8 to 10 page research paper – learning to cite sources MLA style
- 8th – 8 to 10 page research paper – learning to cite sources MLA style
- 9th – What is a Hero? Thesis paper - 10 pages
- 10th - Why does Man create? Thesis paper – 12-15 pages
- 11th - What is the American Experience? Thesis paper - 18 – 20 pages
- 12th – What is the Good Life? Thesis paper – 20 -25 pages

The K-8 History and Geography curriculum from the Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence is free to download and is quite rigorous as well as has many projects for student engagement. (<https://www.coreknowledge.org/curriculum/download-curriculum/page/2>) This cost effective curriculum will provide a sequential and solid foundation for students as they move on to the high school sequence. The high school sequence of required social studies helps students to prepare for the ACT or SAT assessment that currently determines where students may be accepted for college or university as well as scholarships. The high school sequence is as follows:

- 9th – Western Civilization I – study of western world (Greek and Roman)
- 10th – Western Civilization II – study of western world (Constantin to Enlightenment)
- 11th – American History – study from Founding Fathers to World Wars
- 12th – American Government – one semester and Eastern Civilization (survey of Eastern and Asian civilizations)

The last part of the Humanities curriculum is World Languages. Currently the scope and sequence in the elementary includes an Introduction to Spanish for grades 3-5 and the school would like to extend the Spanish program to include an exposure level for grades K-2 as well.

As the students move into grades 6-8, they will take Introduction to Latin to give them a firm foundation to continue their studies in Math, Science and Humanities at the high school level. In grades 9-12, students will have the choice to study Spanish or Russian. They will need at least one year of a foreign language to meet the Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) requirements (Appendix B).

Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

Science

The STEM curriculum is a very important emphasis in the original charter. The school has been implementing STEM in all areas. Currently the elementary has been using Pearson curriculum for Science, which has been difficult to implement due to the limited access to Pearson Online. Starting next year, grades K-8 will use the Core Knowledge Science scope and sequence <https://www.coreknowledge.org/curriculum/download-curriculum/page/2>). The curriculum is rigorous and has labs built into the free downloads. Some equipment and supplies will need to be purchased to complete the labs in class. This year the elementary (K-5) attends STEM Discovery Lab every week to supplement their STEM learning in the classroom. Grades K-2 visit once a week and grades 3-5 visit twice a week. It will continue in the future as a way to facilitate kinesthetic and project based learning. In addition to the Core Knowledge sequence, starting in grade 7 students will take physics classes every year through high school.

Technology/Engineering

Students will continue to have a 1:1 ratio with Chromebooks to use in the classroom. In addition, a group of students in grades 6-9 will have a coding class in the 2018-19 spring semester and a full implementation for grades 2-10 in the 2019-20 school year. At the older grade levels (6 and up), the coding class will have introductory lessons and then be self-paced through the rest of the school year.

Mathematics

Currently CMA is using Zearn (https://www.zearn.org/about_us) as their main curriculum for Math in grades K-5 and supplementing with Pearson math workbooks as needed. Zearn is an award winning program that the students are eagerly embracing, but there are concerns it is not complete enough especially in the primary grades (K-2) where repetition is needed to learn number sense.

In the spring semester of 2018-19 school year, there will be an additional resource available for grades 4 and up to use a software based program, ALEKS, that will help students assess their math skills and remediate them in a self-paced program. (https://www.aleks.com/about_aleks)

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Military Plan

Curriculum. CMA is using CAP curriculum for military science classes. However, a broad review of other military-flavored schools across the country has led us to the conclusion that the development our own curriculum is inevitable. A tremendous amount of high-quality raw material is available, work at CMA is well underway to choose the best pieces for reuse at Colorado Military, along with a growing list of curriculum topics that should be written to reflect local character and requirements. The challenges in building this curriculum are it must be (1) organized (a “helix” rising through the grades), (2) it must support both CAP and non-CAP students, and (3) it must accommodate transfer students.

Uniforms for 7-12th. Everyone goes to the same uniform. This will require some flexibility being granted from the Civil Air Patrol, we are confident of obtaining this waiver. Most likely, our cadet uniform will be a hybrid based on AF components, differentiated by patches, pins and lanyards. Shoes will likely favor (shine-able) boots. 7-10th grades have the option of being a CAP member, but all cadets wear a uniform.

6th Grade will no longer be in military science, and no longer may participate in CAP. Starting in SY 2019-20, CMA’s sixth grade is part of the elementary school (*see Academic Plan*).

Overall, the CMA elementary is going a different direction. We will back off a bit on the military aspect for a year or two, while strongly pushing character education during our exploration of what a military elementary might look like here in Colorado Springs. One of our inspirations for this has been St. Catherine's Academy³.

³ <https://www.stcatherinesacademy.org/>

CMA Military Science Program Highlights So Far:

- Monthly promotion ceremonies for CAP
- Glider, Robotics, Cyber Patriot and rocket will all be clubs branched off of CAP
- Set up a shooting and drill team as well as a fencing team.
- Student led encampments – weekend where cadets are taught one on one instruction to help getting promoted, test for rank, team building exercises
- Continuing to develop color guard (actually two or more color guards).
- Make everyone CAP for \$41pp and give uniforms with families buy t-shirt, socks, boots, belt, hat. Great planning, networking, and fundraising has gone into making student/family costs manageable.
- CAP membership gives a book and \$100 toward dress uniform
- Implement some form of physical exercise as character development – wall sits and push ups
- Secondary PE will be mainly coopted (and managed) by the Military Science department.
A version of “PT” used by one of the services will be pressed into service to blanket all exercise outside of organized sports and martial arts training.
- No morning formation – just for CAP during Homeroom

Student-Led Squadrons. CMA believes in student-led squadrons. Again, based on wide review existing programs at both the secondary and college levels, the concept and application of “Cadet Rank” is a proven one, in both application and school culture. Even a small amount of “command” responsibility, like having to make sure 6 of your classmates are

“I recently spent a day touring New Mexico Military Institute. During our visit, we were invited to have lunch with the NMMI Cadets. Interestingly, Cadets do not sit at random while dining, but have an assigned table AND they sit according to rank. On a long, rectangular table, the most senior cadets sit at the end, rank decreases toward the center of the table.”

lined up on time for lunch is a transformative experience for a young person. Cadets, even the most initially intransigent, tend to crave rank (I call it the “Tom Sawyer painting the fence” concept).

Cadet Rank takes training, of both cadets and staff, especially until school culture is well established. In this era when it seems everyone is worried about bullying, parents need to be well-informed in this area so there is no misunderstanding. Lots of rules and safeguards are needed, but it is well worth the trouble.

Late Summer Programs. Older CMA student will be invited to a camp set in the nearby national forest in the 10 days before school opens each year. Cadets will have the opportunity to leaning pioneering and military outdoor skills as well a team build. Returning cadets will act as cadre under the guidance of the CMA Military Science department along with guest instructors from several military branches and specialties.

Expeditionary Plan

Currently the Expeditionary plan is in its infancy. The students are participating in the Challenger Learning Center of Colorado courtesy of a \$4750 grant from the Griffiss foundation:

- K and 1 *One World, One Sky* (portable planetarium Sesame Street film at CMA)
- 2 and 3 *The Night Sky* (live portable planetarium show at CMA)
- 4 e-Mission *Moon Mars & Beyond* (distance-delivered at CMA)
- 5 e-Mission *Change the Current* (distance-delivered at CMA)
- 6 *We Choose Space* (portable planetarium film at CMA)
- 7 e-Mission *Operation Montserrat* (distance-delivered at CMA)
- 8 Space simulation mission *Voyage to Mars* (at Challenger Center, requires busing) <https://www.challengercolorado.org/simulator-missions.html>

CMA is also working with the Pikes Peak Children's Museum to bring in interactive STEM programs to the students at a cost of \$100 per classroom. The 3rd grade participated in one at the end of November and it was a great success. Colorado Springs Utilities brought to the school a Water Wonders presentation to the 3rd graders in mid-November. The media center and the collaborative spaces are a perfect place to host these learning opportunities. In December, the school was able to host a hot air balloon ride for students to emphasize the heating and cooling of molecules lesson in a live environment.

As the school continues to look for opportunities to enhance the learning of the students, it is held back by access to transportation at a reasonable cost and availability. The school was unable to provide a free opportunity for the 9th grade students to take a 12-minute helicopter ride over the Garden of the Gods in December because no transportation could be found. The school was unable to use the CAP van due to the restrictions CAP has in place to use their vehicle.

Career Planning

College Admission Planning.

An (Accelerating) Academics Plan for Student. Each year's goals, and the academic bar, are higher than the year before. Ideally, version one of a student's plan is initiated and approved during the 7th Grade year. For transfer students, the plan should be created and implemented as early as possible.

Mentors, Advisors, & assorted allies should be designated for each student. Moreover, each cadet student operates knowing who "Their Team" is.

Extracurricular activities are documented and expanded, if possible.

A strategy, based on pre-testing and other inputs, is created for each student for the optimization of Standardized Admissions Tests.

Portfolio creation and maintenance, writing (journaling), and public speaking, including interview practice, self-advocacy are included in the plan.

Students who work more effectively with good time management skills helps reduce their stress during the college process. Selecting interests and strong extracurricular activities early in high school can help students present impressive resumes during the college application season.

Students who develop extracurriculars that demonstrate depth and continuity and show a strong character, as well as, communication and leadership skills may increase chances for admission.

Admissions to selective U.S. universities or graduate schools are extremely competitive, and a multi-year college planning program is essential to maximize opportunities. The college process is very demanding. When the work involved is consolidated into a few months, it can significantly increase the stress level for students.

Starting our cadets early is key.

Military Admission Planning.

CMA maintains links to local recruiters of all services. Yearly changes to requirements are tracked and coordinated by the upper school counselor and the commandant of cadets.

Military Academy Nomination/Appointment Planning

The nomination process for today military academies (USMA, USNA, USAFA, USCGA) has never been more complex. For every CMA student candidate, CMA, blessed with a wide field of

volunteers, will appoint a field grade retired officer, generally an alumnus of that academy, to act as mentor and project manager for the academy entrance

Online and Dual Enrollment (College or University)

Starting in SY 2020-21, CMA will pursue dual enrollment for its 11th and 12th grade students, with the following goals:

- Teaching cadets what full-time college coursework is like. By trying out a few classes while still in high school, cadets can get used to the academic environment before he or she leaves the comfort and support of home.
- Cadets will be able to take classes that are not offered directly at CMA.
- Taking a college class as a high school senior can help a cadet find his or her area of interest before the pressure is on to declare a major.
- Demonstrates a cadet's ability to handle more difficult coursework. This ability is something every college admissions officer wants to see.
- To start accumulating college credits, helping cadets graduate on time or even early.

Mentor Program, Internships and Volunteer Opportunities for juniors and seniors.

CMA, through its staff, parents and extended families, as well as friends and supporters of the school, offer a large reservoir of potential mentors for cadets who desire one.

CMA Leadership will cultivate local and regional internships for juniors and seniors.

CMA Leadership will cultivate local opportunities for volunteer hours. Public service is a part of graduation requirements at Colorado Military Academy.

CTE Plan

Career Technical Education (CTE) provides students of all across the country with the academic and technical skills, knowledge and training necessary to succeed in future careers and to become lifelong learners.

CTE at Colorado Military Academy is geared toward STEM careers that are not directly related to pursuing a college degree. In addition, CTE skills which might make a cadet a better prospect for military recruiting are examined for small class opportunities.

CMA believes rigorous program standards foundational to good CTE.

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Media and Fundraising

As CMA moves forward, the school must begin to use social media, the website, and meet/greet opportunities at the local military bases to recruit new students, inform families and the community, and raise money for the school. The first priority is to update the website and use social media for recruiting new students in the spring of 2019. While meet and greet opportunities are currently taking place for Newcomer meetings at Peterson AFB, the school needs to try to do this at the other military bases in the area.

The school needs to continue to cultivate media opportunities like the hot air balloon event with local media. Free media coverage is the most effective. Paying for advertisement on radio, newspaper, and billboards has limited return on investment. Word of mouth is the most effective recruiting tool through the CMA families who tell their friends and others how much they like CMA and what we are doing. Communicating with CMA families and potential families about what is happening through social media, the website and group emails will generate the word of mouth advertising we need to build our student count.

CMA also needs to be intentional about fundraising. Building an annual donor base through our families and other supporters is integral to the school's financial stability. Whether it be through an annual donation letter request, a gala, or cultivating donors through coffee chats or lunches, it must begin immediately. Once the school begins to live up to its mission and vision, there will be donors ready to support our school.

Grant writing is a key for the school and should be a sub-committee of the CMA board. There are many grants out there for STEM schools. With a little research and a lot of writing, funds for equipment, curriculum, activities, etc. (Downs,)

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