Great Teachers Wanted:
Are You Ready to Learn, Teach and Lead?

The Mathematics and Science Leadership Academy (MSLA) will be a school where everyone is a learner, teacher and leader. Students, parents, teachers and community members will have opportunities to learn, teach and lead each other in the relentless pursuit of excellence in academics and 21st century skills of collaboration, critical thinking, communication and technology. This school will be the only teacher-led school in Denver Public Schools and one of very few that are non-charter schools in the entire country. The concept and design of the school was developed by practicing teachers with the specific goals of meeting the needs of students and empowering teachers.

The Mathematics and Science Leadership Academy will empower teachers to assume responsibility for all aspects of school academics and operations. In a truly collaborative decision-making model, all members of the learning community will share responsibility for learning, teaching and leading. Teachers will be members of decision-making teams in the areas that will include the following: Professional Development, Curriculum and Instruction, School Climate and Culture and Data. Each of these teams will identify areas in which they want to make decisions and then be charged with setting school procedures in these areas. Elected representatives from each team will comprise the School Leadership Team along with the Lead Teacher and Association Representative. The School Leadership Team will oversee significant aspects of school operations such as budget as well as peer mentoring, support and evaluation. There will be a Lead Teacher, rather than a principal, and her responsibility will be to ensure that the procedures developed by the teacher teams are carried out.

While the number of student contact hours will remain the same as a traditional school, the way that the hours are distributed throughout the week will be different. Four days a week the school day will be 45 minutes longer in order to ensure time for instruction in all academic areas. On the fifth day of the week, the 3 hours will be “given back” to teachers in the form of a half-day of student contact time. The remainder of the fifth day will be spent working in teacher teams and in collaboration with colleagues. The 90-minutes a week of professional development time per week will also be included in this half-day. By restructuring the school day and week, teachers will have a significant amount of time to accomplish the things that they normally do in 45-minute chunks of time throughout the week. This will give teachers 4 – 5 hours of uninterrupted time to conduct their professional work.

Finally, on the half-day students and teachers will be engaged in service learning projects and passion areas where academic knowledge and skills will be used to address real-world issues. In other words, at MSLA we will utilize the core curriculum four days a week and on the fifth day all members of the learning community will engage in applied learning activities. This will give everyone the opportunity to understand the real-world applications of the knowledge and skills developed throughout the school day and week.

This is an exciting new opportunity for students, parents, teachers and the community. The school will open next year as a K-2 and build one grade each year to a K-5. We will be hiring the entire staff as part
of the regular staffing cycle and all positions will be posted on February 20. If you are interested in being part of this innovative venture, please contact Lori Nazareno, Lead Teacher.