

# Thomas Cleary

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## QUALIFICATION SUMMARY

- Four years directing and managing all operational and educational aspects of a rural charter school
- Nineteen years teaching in American public schools and international schools
- Seventeen years leading outdoor experiential education programs
- Conscientious leader, facilitator, consensus builder, budgeter, communicator, and educator

## EDUCATION

Masters in Instructional Leadership, Colorado State University, July 2002

Bachelor of Science, Environmental Geology, Colorado State University, May 1999, Cum Laude

## CREDENTIALS

Colorado State Principals License, Colorado State University – Global, 2025-2028; pending July, 2025

Colorado State Professional Teacher's License, endorsement areas: Secondary Science (7-12),

Secondary Mathematics (7-12), General Elementary Education (K-6), 2002-Present

## CERTIFICATION

Master Environmental Educator, Colorado Association of Environmental Education (CAEE), 2006

Facilitator (certified trainer): Projects Wet, Wild, and Learning Tree, Certified 120+ teachers, 2004–2013

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Director, Crestone Charter School (CCS)

Crestone, Colorado 7/2021 – present

- Head of school educating 100 K-12 students in multi-age, proficiency-based, experiential program
- Hire, manage, train, and evaluate teachers, administrators, support staff and facilities staff to maximize retention, development, and efficacy
- Determine and implement \$2.9 million annual budget to meet and expand academic goals
- Collaborate with Governing Council, district superintendent, and school board to improve outcomes
- Publish weekly parent updates, monthly community newspaper articles, accountability reports to boards and grantors, and internal policies and procedures. Maintain website and social media presence.
- Initiated an expanded experiential education program, changes in calendar, and improved payscale

Math Dep't Lead Teacher, American School of Bombay (ASB)

Mumbai, India, 8/2020 - 7/2021

- Taught virtually and in person G7/8 students in AERO-based Great Minds / Engage NY integrated math
- Led weekly MS Math department meetings to coordinate curriculum development, standards-based assessments, EAL and Gifted instruction, and daily Social, Emotional, Ethical (SEE) Learning lessons

Grade Four Team Lead Teacher, ASB

Mumbai, India, 8/ 2013 - 7/2016, 8/2017 - 7/2020

- Guided students in Math, Reading/Writing Workshop, and IB/PYP Units of Inquiry [goo.gl/FimjL9](https://goo.gl/FimjL9)
- Created and documented over 20 standards-based units of study with accompanying resources
- Leadership of 5 teachers coordinating with 10+ specialists, learning support, and administrators
- Specialized in 1:1 BYOD technology integration, Adaptive Schools collaboration, Responsive Classroom management, and International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme

High School Math Curriculum Developer and ICAP teacher, CCS Crestone, CO, 8/2016 - 7/2017

- Created standards based, 4-year, HS scope and sequence for mathematics, including digitizing, organizing, vetting, and tracking student progress using digital program platforms [goo.gl/0E92YW](http://goo.gl/0E92YW)
- Provided guidance, creating Individual Career / Academic Plans (ICAP) with 40 MS/HS students

Grade Five Teacher, MS Science/Math, American International School Bamako, Mali, 8/2011-7/2013

- Instructed all core subjects in self-contained fifth grade classroom 2011/12
- Taught grade 6 Transitions Math, grade 7 Pre-algebra, HS Liberal Arts/ consumer math, grade 6/7 life science, and provided student support services in science and math 2012/13
- Created and administered web-based, remote, virtual school program for 11 weeks of grade 5
- Teacher sponsor and coordinator for Elementary and Secondary Student Councils

K-12 Science, Math, Outdoor Education, and MS Lead Teacher, CCS Crestone, CO, 8/2003 - 7/2011

- Instructed all subjects in self-contained 7/8 grade MS classroom (3 years)
- Mathematics: HS Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II; MS Connected Mathematics Program (I and II) seventh and eighth grade, Everyday Mathematics third grade (8 years)
- Science: HS Integrated subjects (physics, chemistry, biology, earth/ space), MS integrated subjects (physical, biology, environmental science), K-8 elementary education science specialist (7 years)
- Taught science students with strong applied, experiential, inquiry, PBL, and discovery modalities
- Managed and implemented K-12 science scope and sequence, and equipment/chemical storeroom
- Team leader of RiverWatch student volunteers: Monthly water quality state assessment (5 years)
- Challenged students, grades K through 12, with team-building activities, outdoor skills, physical education, while leading service-learning, field based instruction, and multi-night field trips
- Co-organized weekly ski /snowboard trips, managed student group and peer mentoring instruction
- Led student groups on national and international travel to Europe, Japan, India, Costa Rica, and Post Katrina Louisiana, on cultural, service, and outdoor and experiential education trips

Physical Sciences Teacher, Del Norte Middle School Del Norte, CO, 8/2002 - 7/2003

- Instructed and mentored 60 eighth grade students in chemistry, physics, and earth science
- Taught additional courses in outdoor skills, history, bully-proofing, and webpage design

Course Director and Instructor, Colorado Outward Bound School CO, UT, AK, AZ, CA, 1991 - 2002

- Instructed and evaluated students, ages 14 to 65, on 3- to 83- day trips with focus on technical skills, group dynamics, safety, leadership, natural/cultural history, and environmental education
- Course directed/instructed mountain, river, desert, winter, rock, & community/corporate programs
- Coordinated all course activities including pre-course planning, logistics, curriculum development, service components, evacuations and early departures, and post-course evaluation and budgeting
- Supervised up to 6 staff and coordinated with other course directors and land agencies
- Trained staff in rock rescue, climbing instruction, river skills, and desert travel

## Community Service

Team Leader, Saguache County Search and Rescue  
Baca Water and Sanitation District Election Official

Crestone, CO, Summers 2006 to 2011  
Crestone, CO, 2022 and 2025

## Vision Statement:

I am currently the Director of the Crestone Charter School in the rural San Luis Valley of Southern Colorado. I am seeking my principal licensure, even though it is not required by my school's authorizer, but because I strive to be a great school leader.

With my staff of 15 lead, paraprofessional, and specialist teachers, serving 90+ students in a K-12 setting, we do data reviews of CMAS and NWEA scores three times a year to guide our instructional practice and to support the MTSS team to identify struggling students; we then collect data on tier one intervention efficacy. I survey my parent stakeholders to develop and guide my strategic planning. Still, I have parents, teachers, and students who are not feeling served; I am hungry to learn how to do this better.

I model my leadership after those who have led me well. I am of service to my staff and work to create a collaborative atmosphere. I focus on the WHY before trying to determine the what or how. I regularly refer to my school's mission and values, developing a common language and vision. I urge my staff to prioritize our SEL curricula and proactive restorative practices to foster a regulated classroom and school. I have them put less emphasis on refining our discipline matrix and put more on restorative justice training. I communicate weekly with parents, inviting greater involvement. Meanwhile, I am caught up in budgeting, staffing, logistics, facilities, enrollment, and a torrent of emails that make me a chief executive at the expense of being an educational leader. I hope to learn efficiency and productivity skills to dispatch the former and expand the latter.

The San Luis Valley has a strong Hispanic heritage, and Crestone is known for its 27 distinct and varied world-religion spiritual centers. I focused on creating equal space for people of all races, religions, and cultures. In my experience, I must still include this, but also all personal beliefs. We must provide a learning setting where all students and staff feel welcomed, while hearing the viewpoints of parents concerned that the school's curriculum, lesson or approach somehow favors one group at the expense of another. Lifting up everyone is more nuanced and politicized than ever. Therefore, fairness must happen on a practical level, and the school community must be a place where the needs of every student is met, to the best of our ability, and without impacting the needs of others. The Ends Policies handed to me by my Governing Council urge this to happen on a social justice level; I focus on individual students' needs, and drawing attention to biases, hopefully initiating ripples out into the world.

In a small town where the school is a community gathering place and focal point for many beyond school-aged families, 'stakeholder' takes on a broader definition. I think this is captured well in the CoMTSS model with its five core components, many of which enlist formal educators, but also parents, community members and resources, and even the students themselves (as contributors not just receivers). Education does take a village. At my school, we have a community-based mentorship program, many teachers include place-based instruction, and all grades venture out on parent-supported, multi-day, learning adventures, from regional (kinder) up to international (HS). All of this takes relationship between the school, parents, and community stakeholders.

A recent change I initiated is a great segue from the last topic. We were the last school in the region still on a five-day school week. Statewide, over 60% of schools are on a four-day week. My teachers were in favor of a shift, but parents voiced a variety of concerns on surveys, with about 50% in favor. I leaned into supporters and detractors alike, questioning what, why, and how we could keep the positives of the old schedule and build them into the new four-day model. The result was a hybrid four-day learning week with ten Fridays for experiential learning. I then needed to construct a calendar that conformed with regional school calendars and CDE contact hours and days. This was approved by my Governing Council, the district Board of Education, and importantly, earned an 86% parent approval rating. In my three years of being director, I have also re-written the salary scale, updated staffing contracts, written, received, and managed multiple grants, followed standard accounting and CDE budgetary procedures for \$2.9M annually, participated in an EEOC investigation with follow-up Title IX compliance training, and overseen permitting of capital construction projects and facilities inspection protocols.

While I have experience in many of the CSU Global Principal Program outcomes, on the job training is an inadequate substitute for formal training, supervised experience, and mentored support. I look forward to deepening my school leadership practice.