



COLORADO
Department of Education
Commissioner of Education

201 East Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203-1799

June 11, 2021

Dear Superintendents and BOCES Executive Directors,

I hope your summer is off to a good start. It certainly is sizzling in Denver this week. I feel like we transitioned from a cool rainy spring to a broiling summer overnight!

I didn't want to let too much of the summer slip by before expressing my deep gratitude to you for your extraordinary efforts to support your students, staff and families this year. I think I share a common sentiment when I say that this has been one of the hardest years of my career. We have all been working night and day to respond to evolving health guidance and make schools safe places for students and educators in the midst of the global pandemic. There is still much work ahead of us as we develop strategies to support students who missed or had disrupted in-person learning opportunities this past year, but it's important to take a moment to reflect on all the incredible efforts over the past year.

I know you put your heart and soul into making this year the best it could be for your students and educators. I'm so grateful to each and every one of you for your creative problem solving and never-ending commitment to your students, educators and families. I'm excited to see how the creativity from this year evolves our education system and practices.

I also wanted to send you a very quick update on CDE operations. As you know, most of us at CDE have been working remotely since the pandemic started. While some employees who need to visit schools and districts in order to provide direct support and service have been doing so since earlier this year, most of us who have "office jobs" have been working remotely quite successfully. It's amazing how much more productive you can be when you aren't spending hours in Denver traffic each week! We are thinking about how we evolve our workplace as a result of what we have experienced and learned this year.

After surveying our staff and supervisors, we found that many of them are both more productive and happier in their jobs when they have the flexibility to work from home. As a result, I see a continued hybrid approach to working in the office and working remotely as an opportunity to attract and retain high quality staff, including being able to hire staff based outside of the metro area. In addition, over the long term, we may be able to reduce our operating costs by cutting back on our physical overhead because right now we have leases in five buildings.

As we begin our transition back into the office this summer, I have encouraged my staff to think creatively about ways to provide outstanding customer service to you while maximizing efficiency and work-life balance through continuing to work remotely at times.


This past year has been incredibly challenging, but it's also provided extraordinary opportunities to learn! And working remotely has been one of those areas in which we have really grown. Please know that I am absolutely committed to ensuring that our service to you does not waiver as we continue to work



remotely from time to time. Please reach out to me or to any member of my [Executive Team](#) if you have any feedback or concerns for us.

My sincere wish for all of you is that you have many opportunities to rest and rejuvenate this summer. Your jobs are some of the most demanding even during the best of times, and during this crisis the stress has been overwhelming. You must be exhausted. Please take very good care of yourselves this summer!

My best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katy Anthes". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending from the end of the name.

Katy Anthes, Ph.D.
Commissioner

