



JOBS FOR THE FUTURE



# GRADUATING EVERY STUDENT POSTSECONDARY AND WORKFORCE READY

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## PLENARY SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

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**Katy Anthes**  
**Commissioner, Colorado Department of Education**

Named commissioner of education in December 2016, Dr. Katy Anthes is widely respected for her commitment to listen to diverse perspectives and develop solutions that are founded on productive middle ground. Keeping students' best interests as her top priority, she focuses on providing high quality expertise and support to districts and educators working to enhance student achievement.

Dr. Anthes has been with CDE since 2011, serving as interim Commissioner, Chief of Staff, interim Commissioner for Achievement and Strategy and Executive Director of Educator Effectiveness. In that role, she led CDE's efforts to evaluate, support and retain highly effective educators in Colorado. In addition, Dr. Anthes was responsible for rolling out the state's educator evaluation and development system, pursuant to Senate Bill 10-191. In her past position as a partner with the Third Mile Group, Anthes led and researched major education initiatives for state, district and national organizations on a variety of education issues and projects including; the Colorado School Leadership Academy Board, the Expanded Learning Opportunities Commission and as an evaluator for several district education programs across the state.

Anthes worked with numerous national education organizations at The Third Mile Group, such as the Council for Chief State School Officers, the National Governor's Association, The National Commission for Teaching and America's Future, American Institutes for Research, and many more. Prior to founding the Third Mile Group, she had seven years of research, policy work and leadership experience at the Education Commission of the States focusing on school and district leader effectiveness. Anthes holds a Ph.D. in public policy and a master's degree in public affairs from the University of Colorado Denver. She did her undergraduate work at the University of Oregon.

Anthes lives in Denver and is an avid runner and soccer enthusiast.

Upon being appointed Commissioner of Education, Dr. Katy Anthes became Colorado's first female commissioner in 65 years, preceded only by the state's inaugural commissioner Nettie S. Freed in 1950-51.



**Elliott Asp**  
**Senior Partner, Colorado Education Initiative**

Elliott Asp will play a lead role in CEI’s delivery of relevant, strategic programming to educators and system leaders in Colorado. His expertise in instruction and assessment will inform CEI’s work to increase the organization’s impact in accelerating improvement and innovation in Colorado’s schools and districts.

Most recently, Elliott served as Senior Fellow, Policy and Practice at Achieve Inc. and was responsible for overseeing Achieve’s strategy for helping states develop, enact and sustain college- and career-ready policies and initiatives. Before joining Achieve, Elliott served as both Interim Commissioner and Special Assistant to the Commissioner at the Colorado Department of Education.

Elliott brings a wealth of education experience to CEI, stemming from a 40-year career of serving students, that began in the classroom, as teacher in traditional and alternative settings. He went on to serve as a curriculum developer, university professor, and administrator at school and district levels, and as assistant superintendent in Douglas County and Cherry Creek school districts, where he focused on curriculum, instruction, assessment and accountability.



**Rebecca Holmes**  
**President and Chief Executive Officer, Colorado Education Initiative**

Rebecca Holmes began her education career as a teacher in Denver’s Cole neighborhood, and is a proud alumna of Colorado’s public schools, a graduate of Yale University, and holds an MBA from Harvard Business School.

Prior to joining CEI, Rebecca was the Senior Program Officer for the Gates Family Foundation. She has also served as the Associate Commissioner for Innovation, Choice, and Engagement at the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), and as the CEO of a public charter school network that serves over 90 percent low-income students.

Rebecca also has worked in the private-sector, and brings experience in change management, talent strategies, and organizational design.



**Paul Leather**  
**Director for State and Local Partnerships, Center for Innovation in Education**

Paul Leather is Director for State and Local Partnerships at the Center for Innovation in Education. Mr. Leather’s background and experience in Education, Counseling, and Administration in New Hampshire spans four decades. He served as the Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Education in New Hampshire for eight years, and has also served for 18 years as the Director of the Division of Career Technology and Adult Learning for the Department, overseeing statewide initiatives such as High School Redesign, Extended Learning Opportunities, and Drop Out Prevention, as well as the administration of Vocational Rehabilitation, Adult Education, Career and Technical Education, Tech-Prep, and School Guidance and Counseling. In 1997, as part of the NH School to Career efforts, Mr. Leather began the journey to create a state model for a “competency-based student transcript.” This effort resulted

in the development and implementation of the NH Competency based Assessment System and ultimately to the student mastery model now in place as part of NH's school approval standards. More recently, he has led the development of a first-in-the-nation next generation educational accountability model, called "Performance Assessment of Competency Education," or PACE, approved as a pilot program with four NH districts in March 2015.



**Misti Ruthven**  
**Executive Director of Postsecondary Readiness, Colorado Department of Education**

As executive director of the Student Pathways Division for the Colorado Department of Education, Misti Ruthven currently leads the initiatives connecting K-12 programs with the next steps beyond high school, such as career and higher education for the State of Colorado. Prior to joining CDE in 2012, she held the position of College Access Director for the Colorado Department of Higher Education. Misti is considered a national subject matter expert on college and career readiness, paying for college and successfully transitioning underserved students to college. Her work has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the White House and highlighted in the Denver Post, Chicago Tribune and Inside Higher Education. She is also often asked to provide national recommendations in these areas by request of the U.S. Department of Education.



**Bill Summers**  
**Principal, Cañon City High School**

Mr. Bill Summers is in his second year as the principal of Cañon City High School. A 23-year veteran of the United States Air Force, Mr. Summers retired in 2012 to fulfill his life-long dream of teaching English at his alma mater. After four years of teaching and coaching, he applied to fill a vacant principal position and has since been challenged to improve the school's culture and academic success.

In the 2016-17 school year, CASB recognized Mr. Summers as the Rookie Principal of the year for his remarkable progress in making culture changes at CCHS and his vision in moving the school to a career pathways, capstone, and work-based learning curriculum.



**George Welsh**  
**Superintendent, Cañon City Schools**

An education leader with 31 years of experience, George Welsh served as superintendent of schools in the Center Consolidated School District in Colorado's San Luis Valley from 1997 to 2015. In July 2015 he took the reins of the 3,800 student Cañon City School District in Fremont County, immediately engaging in a process to transform Cañon City High School into a career pathways institution.

In December 2010 Welsh earned the Demont Award, recognizing him as Colorado's rural administrator of the year. He has since served as the president of the Colorado Association of School Executives, was honored as Colorado's Superintendent of the Year in 2013, and was named one of

eSchoolNews' national tech-savvy superintendents of the year in 2014. Welsh has also served on and chaired the advisory board of the Colorado Safe Schools Resource Center since its inception in 2010.



**Rebecca E. Wolfe**  
**Associate Vice President, Jobs for the Future**

Rebecca E. Wolfe oversees Students at the Center, a Jobs for the Future initiative. Students at the Center is a leading national voice in the effort to support practitioners and policymakers with the research, tools, and inspiration they need to set ambitious goals for student readiness outcomes and catalyze and support sustained efforts toward transformative teaching and learning. Together with our partners we aim to ensure all students – with a special focus on low income youth and students of color – can acquire the skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed for success in college, the workforce, and civic life. Major Students at the Center projects include: an interactive framework for student-centered approaches that lead to deeper learning; over 800 curated tools and resources on [StudentsattheCenterHub.org](http://StudentsattheCenterHub.org); the Student-Centered Learning Research Collaborative; and direct supports for state and district efforts informed by and aligned to JFF frameworks and research. Dr. Wolfe has authored or co-authored numerous publications on student-centered learning, recent selections including *Rethinking Readiness: Deeper Learning for College, Work and Life* (Ed., Harvard Education Press 2017), *Leadership and Educator Competencies for Personalized, Learner-centered Teaching* (JFF & CCSSO 2017, 2015) and *Anytime, Anywhere: Student-centered learning for schools and teachers* (Ed., Harvard Education Press 2013). Before JFF, Dr. Wolfe was a researcher, organizer, educator, and funder.

Dr. Wolfe holds a B.A. in sociology with a focus in urban education from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. in education policy and administration from Stanford University, advised by Milbrey McLaughlin.