



**DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION**  
*Colorado Commission on Higher Education*

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Colorado Department of Education – Communications Office  
201 East Colfax Ave.  
Room 501  
Denver, CO 80203  
Phone: 303-866-3898  
Fax: 303-866-6938

**Nov. 3, 2008**

## **News Release**

### ***Town Hall Meeting in Gunnison Monday, Nov. 10 Launches Statewide Discussions on Postsecondary and Workforce Readiness***

What do students need to know and be able to do in order to be successful after they leave high school?

What 21st century skills do employers require? What are the competencies a college professor expects from a freshman?

Are special workforce skills needed in Colorado?

These are questions at the core of discussion that begins in earnest on Monday, Nov. 10 as the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Department of Higher Education jointly host a town hall meeting in Gunnison. The meeting will be held from 5 – 7 p.m. in the Aspinall-Wilson Center, 909 Escalante Dr., at Western State College.

Educators, students, parents, business and community members, and interested citizens are invited to the meeting, which will be facilitated by Julie Carnahan, Chief Academic Officer for the Department of Higher Education, and Ken Turner, Deputy Commissioner for the Colorado Department of Education.

The gathering in Gunnison is the first of 10 statewide meetings planned to solicit a broad spectrum of community thinking. The work was launched by Senate Bill 08-212, the "Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act" also known as the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K).

The legislation requires that the Colorado State Board of Education and the Colorado Commission on Higher Education adopt a description of "postsecondary and workforce readiness" by Dec. 15, 2009.

Further, S.B. 212 seeks to establish a seamless pathway from preschool into college or the workplace. Essential to that pathway is an understanding of what it means to be ready for education after high school or for the workforce and a plan to ensure that students take the necessary courses and master the content.

"If Colorado successfully implements this legislation, we will lead the nation in preparing our children to be successful and competitive in the global economy," said Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones and Department of Higher Education Executive Director David Skaggs in a joint letter asking community leaders to spread the word about the meetings and their significance.

The description of postsecondary and workforce readiness will provide a bookend to a description of "school readiness" due to be adopted by the Colorado State Board of Education in December, 2008. That description is the subject of a public comment session with the board later this month:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/download/PDF/20081030schoolreadiness.pdf>

The descriptions of school readiness and postsecondary and workforce readiness will guide final selection of new statewide model content standards, which are being revised for the first time since they were adopted 13 years ago.

The Gunnison meeting on Nov. 10 will be followed by similar community meetings Wednesday, Dec. 3 in Colorado Springs; Wednesday, Jan. 21 in the metro Denver; Thursday, Feb. 12 in Fort Collins; and later sessions are tentatively planned for Grand Junction, Pueblo, Sterling, Alamosa, Durango and Glenwood Springs. Precise locations and times are to be announced.

**For more information, contact** Mark Stevens, 303-866-3898, or Megan McDermott, 303-866-2334, in the CDE Office of Communications, or John

Karakoulakis, 303-866-4742, at the Department of Higher Education. To sign up for the CDE e-mail news service, please visit <http://www.cde.state.co.us/Communications/index.html>.

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