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News Release

***Commissioner of Education Names Nina Lopez
Director of ARRA for Colorado Department of
Education***

Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones today announced the appointment of Nina Lopez as director of AARA for the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

Lopez will oversee CDE's management of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) signed into law by President Obama in February.

Her role starting Wednesday, May 6 includes keeping CDE up to date on U.S. Department of Education ARRA regulations; coordinating Colorado's collaboration with other states; assisting with the state's bid for an estimated \$500 million in Race to the Top federal education grant funds; and organizing 2009 federal stimulus grant opportunities, grant applications, monitoring, and reporting and compliance requirements.

"We are extremely fortunate to have Nina join the department in this capacity," said Commissioner Jones. "Her knowledge of policy and expertise will prove tremendously helpful in our effort to maximize ARRA opportunities."

For the past two years, Lopez has served as vice president of strategy and operations for the Colorado Children's Campaign, providing overall organizational oversight as well as direct supervision of the policy team.

She has worked in K-12 education policy since 2003, first as director of external affairs for the Colorado League of Charter Schools and more recently as policy director for the Donnell-Kay Foundation.

Lopez also co-chaired the education committee for Gov. Ritter's transition team.

Prior to 2003, she practiced corporate law for nine years. She has a Bachelor of Arts degree from Harvard-Radcliffe and a Juris Doctorate from Columbia Law School.

Lopez volunteers as vice president of the board of directors for KIPP Sunshine Peak Academy – a Denver charter school. She also has served as the school's board president. She is member of the board of directors for Blue Sky Bridge, a children's advocacy center serving child victims of sexual abuse in Boulder County. She also is a scholarship committee member for the Reisher Scholars Program through the Denver Foundation.

The recovery act presents a vital opportunity for Colorado to save and create jobs, but also to make strategic investments in the educational system – investments that will pay dividends in years to come, helping to deliver on the promise that all students achieve postsecondary and workforce readiness.

For more information on the 2009 federal stimulus, visit:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/scripts/federalstimulus/index.asp>

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