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News Release

Commissioner Dwight D. Jones Will Hold 11 "Race to the Top" Conversations Across Colorado State Oct. 19, 20 & 21

Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones will meet with school superintendents and community members in 11 cities across the state next week to provide information and answer questions about the effort to win a share of the "Race to the Top" grants from the federal government.

Nina Lopez, Director of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) at the Colorado Department of Education, will join Commissioner Jones on the tour that begins Monday, Oct. 19 in Durango and ends Wednesday, Oct. 21 in Walsenburg and includes 11 stops in all.

School district officials and community members from across the state are welcome to attend any of the 11 meetings. In addition to the stops next week—Durango, Montrose, Grand Junction, Glenwood Springs, Steamboat Springs, Dillon, Sterling, Limon, Lamar, La Junta and Walsenburg—additional meetings are being planned for Salida, Greeley and Colorado Springs.

"Race to the Top" is a U.S. Department of Education discretionary grant program to states that make significant progress in achieving equity in teacher distribution, improve collection and use of data, enhance the quality of academic standards and assessments and support struggling schools.

The grant program is expected to yield \$4.35 billion in competitive grants to states. States must give at least 50 percent of the dollars to local school districts and educational agencies through subgrants. Those local school districts that wish to participate in the Race to the Top opportunity will sign a memorandum of understanding with the Colorado Department of Education.

“Local school districts and local education agencies are eager to participate, based on the reaction we have had to our invitations,” said Commissioner Jones. “At the same time, we know there are many questions about the process and what participation might mean for districts and schools so we will meet with school district representatives and community members to answer as many questions as possible. This is a tremendous opportunity for Colorado and strong, local support will be an important part of our application.”

Monday, Oct. 19

8 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., Durango

Durango School District boardroom, 201 E. 12th St., Durango

12:00 noon – 1:30 p.m., Montrose

Montrose County School District boardroom, 930 Colorado Ave., Montrose

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m., Grand Junction

Basil T. Knight Center, 2543 Patterson Rd., Grand Junction

6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Glenwood Springs

Roaring Fork School District boardroom, 1405 Grand Ave., Glenwood Springs

Tuesday, Oct. 20

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., Steamboat Springs

Steamboat Springs School District large meeting room, 325 7th St., Steamboat Springs

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Frisco

Summit School District boardroom, 150 School Rd., Frisco

6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., Sterling

Valley School District boardroom, 301 Hagen St., Sterling

Wednesday, Oct. 21

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m., Limon

East Central BOCES, 820 2nd St., Limon

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Lamar

Cow Palace Inn, 1301 N. Main St., Lamar

2:00 – 3:00 p.m., La Junta

East Otero R-1 School District, McDonald Hall, 1802 Colorado Ave.,
Suite 200, La Junta

4:30 – 6:00 p.m., Walsenburg

Huerfano School District, 201 E. 5th St., Walsenburg

School district officials and community members interested in attending are asked to e-mail Margo Allen at allen_m@cde.state.co.us to ensure space requirements are being met.

The process of developing Colorado's application for a Race to the Top grant from the U.S. Department of Education is being led by Lt. Gov. Barbara O'Brien. Four work groups, one for each of the four assurance areas, are currently developing ideas to include in the application.

More information about the Race to the Top work groups may be found through the Lieutenant Governor's Web site here:

<http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/OIT-2/OIT2/1240228834570>

More about Race to the Top can also be found through the CDE Web site:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/scripts/federalstimulus/detail.asp?itemid=806271>

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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