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## **News Release**

### ***Commissioner Dwight D. Jones Will Visit Salida and Colorado Springs Oct. 30 For More “Race to the Top” Conversations***

Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones will meet with school superintendents and community members in Salida and Colorado Springs on Friday, Oct. 30 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.

The meeting in Salida will be held at 8 a.m. at Salida School District, 310 E. 9th Street. The Colorado Springs meeting will begin at 11:30 a.m. at Pikes Peak Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), 725 Lorna Place.

School district officials and community members from across the state are welcome to attend the meetings. In addition to the stops next week, a new meeting is being planned for Greeley. Visits to Lamar, La Junta and Walsenburg—postponed this week due to poor weather—will also be rescheduled. Dates and times for all four meetings will be announced.

“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."

School district officials and community members interested in attending are asked to e-mail Margo Allen at [allen\\_m@cde.state.co.us](mailto: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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