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**News Release**

*\*Note: Updated statement*

***Statement From Commissioner Dwight D. Jones On Colorado Being Named As “Race To The Top” Finalist***

Commissioner of Education Dwight D. Jones today issued the following statement after Colorado was named as a finalist in the federal Race to the Top grant competition. In all, only 15 states and the District of Columbia were named as finalists; 41 applications had been received. Colorado was the only western state among the finalists.

“We are thrilled to be invited to Washington to share our vision in person,” said Commissioner Jones. “We are equally confident about the next step in this process. No matter what happens, however, we will not give up our work. Our mission will not waver. Our mission was the same before Race to the Top and it won’t change going forward. We are working to turnaround chronically under-performing schools. We are working to improve our data systems so they produce the most accurate and relevant detail about all aspects of school performance. We are working to implement our recently-adopted, internationally benchmarked standards and we are working to install the right tools to identify and improve teacher effectiveness.

Commissioner Jones noted that Colorado’s application, through local school district participation, represents more than 94 percent of the students in the state. “We are pleased that our proposal has drawn widespread support from school districts as well as bipartisan support from members of the Colorado State Legislature and the Colorado State Board of Education. The application also represents teamwork and participation from the Colorado Education Association, Colorado

Association of School Boards, Colorado Association of School Executives and the business community.

"We are a united front and that's another reason why we fully expect to be successful in the next step in this process as we continue to bear down on this urgent work," he added.

More information on Colorado's Race to the Top proposal, including a link to the entire application, is available on the CDE Web site at:

<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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