

ABSTRACT

Project Take Five: Unfolding Gifted Programming is a three year effort designed to advance programming and to better prepare educators for working with gifted students. A strong foundation created through a statewide vision of gifted education, consistent guidelines for identification and programming, and a network of regional gifted education experts who provide technical assistance and support serves as the base for developing and implementing the policies, procedures, programs and activities in this proposal.

Colorado has identified a strong need for ongoing learning and reform in gifted education. Capacity to serve gifted students needs to be augmented between pre-service education and aspirations towards a Gifted Education Specialist endorsement. Promoting quality programming, student identification and value-added curriculum are high professional development needs. Therefore, the overall goals are: I. *Project Take Five* will increase the ability of schools to meet the special educational needs of gifted and talented students; and II. *Project Take Five* will increase the number of identified gifted students in low-income and/or high minority schools. The project will contribute to meeting these needs by establishing the following objectives:

- Provide resources to educators to impact the ability of educators to understand giftedness, instructional strategies and/or curriculum to meet the educational needs of gifted students implement a series of professional development modules addressing Colorado's standards for highly qualified gifted educators and promoting leadership for supporting gifted programming
- Facilitate change of teacher practice in supporting the educational needs of gifted students.
- Increase gifted achievement as a result of implementing innovations of practice or curriculum
- Increase identification of gifted students in low-income and high minority schools.

The goals will be accomplished through the strong leadership of *Take Five* personnel and consultants, including a Project Director, Project Coordinator, a 15-member Steering Committee

and the overwhelming support of gifted education directors, university faculty and regional assistant councils throughout the state. The partnerships created during *Take Five* will set a standard for future collaboration in meeting needs of gifted students and teacher training.

A Design Team of specialists in the relevant content area(s) will be in place for developing each of eight professional development modules. Each Team will collaborate with a widely renowned expert in gifted education who will provide assistance in their work and feedback on the completed module. A Workshop Kit produced in conjunction with each module will provide staff developers, teacher preparation faculty, school district personnel, and others with all materials necessary for conducting the learning activities. As modules are implemented in eleven regional pilot sites, they will be refined and revised based on participant feedback and evaluation. Each module includes follow-up classroom applications, student impact, readings, and online reflective journaling with module participants. Over the course of the Project, approximately 300 educators per module will have the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills that the materials are designed to prepare and enhance. Ultimately, all current and prospective educators in Colorado will be able to utilize and benefit from the modules as they are infused into teacher preparation program courses, district-wide staff development or induction programs, and building-based inservices.

Through *Take Five's* cooperative efforts with U-STARS, a project currently funded through a Javits continuation grant, Colorado will pilot in 10 sites a support system that can be modeled and sustained both regionally and locally in high-poverty and/or low-performing schools. A coach supported by *Take Five* and the CDE ESS Unit, will visit sites, facilitate reflective study groups, take leadership for planning and executing a mid-year workshop, and facilitate U-STARS curriculum implementation.

Take Five is a promising partnership among educators, districts, university faculty, regional professional development councils and the Colorado Department of Education.