



**COLORADO**  
Department of Education

## **CDE Learning Cohort Information**

**Overview:** CDE is offering three learning cohorts for school and district leaders to start in the fall of the 2022-23 school year to support learning and collaboration for school improvement. Learning cohorts will convene for three to six sessions to learn together, share and observe practices of other schools, and discuss strategies for implementation. The cohorts will meet via Zoom and/or in-person sessions. Learning cohorts are free to participants. Districts may be required to cover costs of travel if applicable.

**Specific Information:** Each cohort has a one page overview to provide more information for interested leaders. For more information and to learn how to apply for each specific cohort, click on the links below or scroll down to the corresponding cohort.

[Alternative Education Campus \(AEC\)](#)

[Best Practices in 6-12 Grading](#)

[Online School & Program Leaders Learning Cohort](#)

**Contact:** For general questions on learning cohorts, please contact Adrienne Cruz ([cruz\\_a@cde.state.co.us](mailto:cruz_a@cde.state.co.us)) For cohort specific questions, see contact information in the information pages below.



## Alternative Education Campus (AEC) Learning Cohort

AECs serve a unique student population

Most AECs are one of the only AECs in their district

About 1 in 12 of all high school students in CO attend an AEC

**Overview:** For the second year, CDE will be facilitating a learning cohort to connect leaders of AECs from across the state. The cohorts will enable AEC leaders to connect with other leaders, observe practices in action, and learn about AEC specific tools, practices, and strategies.

Participants will join a cohort of 10-15 participants from across the state to learn about new practices, observe and share with each other, and refine current systems. This will include:

- 3-5 half day convenings (with in person and remote options) starting in September or October.
- Each convening will focus on a different topic, have a short reading, and will include highlighting practices of one of the participating schools.
- Using a planning tool to help capture reflections and plans.
- Topics will include AEC learning and intervention models and others.

During the 2021-22 school year, 22 AECs participated in 6 convenings hosted at AECs around the state.

### **Extension opportunity:** *Project Based Learning (PBL) and Trauma Informed practices*

As a new structure for the 2022-23 school year, we are exploring additional convenings around specific topics. These convenings will go in depth on a topic and provide opportunities for observation of the practices.

**Commitment:** The cohort will rely on strong collaboration among participants.

- All participants should plan to attend each of the convenings in person or remote.
- All participants should be ready to share with colleagues, willing to reflect on current approaches, try new strategies, and share what they have learned with colleagues.

There is no cost for this opportunity. Districts will be responsible for covering their own travel.

**Interested leaders can fill out [this interest form](#).** Only one entry is needed per school site. If you have any questions, please contact Johann Liljengren ([Liljengren\\_L@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Liljengren_L@cde.state.co.us)) of the School and District Transformation Office



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## Best Practices in 6-12 Grading Learning Cohort

A learning cohort supporting middle and high school leaders to rethink their grading practices, in collaboration with colleagues across the state, and to formulate an action plan to support systemic, accurate, motivational grading practices across their schools

**Overview:** Gradebooks have often been referred to as the “third rail” of secondary school improvement, too difficult to change and too muddled to drive systemic change and reform. Meanwhile, students, teachers, and families continue to struggle with confusing and problematic grading systems that lack purpose, definition, motivation, or meaning. Rising failure rates and a struggle to shift the work of teaching and learning in response to growing academic needs due to pandemic-driven instructional gaps have only exacerbated these issues. CDE is offering a learning cohort designed to support middle and high school leaders in rethinking their current grading practices in order to bring order, transparency, accuracy, and motivation to grading practices across their schools. The cohort will be focused on the book *Grading for Equity*, by Joe Feldman, and offer opportunities for leaders to grapple collaboratively with how the principles presented in the book can be best established within their own contexts.

**Commitment:** CDE will provide the books for all participants. We ask that one to three school members who can directly work to drive change in grading practices commit to completing session pre-work, participating in sessions, and implementing lessons learned at their schools. The cohort will consist of an asynchronous kick-off session, followed by four sessions built primarily around discussion, shared learning, and action planning over the course of the spring semester. **Convenings will begin with a kickoff in September, with 4-5 convenings over the course of the 2022-23 school year.** At the end of the cohort, school leaders will have developed an action plan to reform grading practices for the following school year.

There is no cost to participating schools and districts. All participants will be provided copies of the book *Grading for Equity* at no charge.

**Interested leaders can fill out [this interest form](#).** Only one entry is needed per school site. If you have any questions, please contact Andy Swanson ([Swanson\\_A@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Swanson_A@cde.state.co.us)) of the School and District Transformation Office or Lauren Hesse ([Hesse\\_L@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Hesse_L@cde.state.co.us)) of the School Improvement and Planning Office.



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## Online School & Program Leaders Learning Cohort

"The best part of this cohort was hearing the different perspectives and what others are trying. It was also nice to know that we aren't in this alone, that we have colleagues we can reach out to for support."-2021-22 Participant

**Overview:** The Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) Office of Blended and Online Learning facilitated a learning cohort for leaders in online schools and programs during the 2021-2022 school year. Participants included school principals and other leadership staff of newly established online schools or programs that have been in existence for three years or less. For the 2022-2023 school year, there will be a continuation of the learning cohort for online school & program leaders. Participants from the 2021-22 school year are invited to continue and new participants are invited to join as well.

Some of the highlights for the 2022-23 learning cohort include:

- 3-5 half-day convenings
- Site visits of existing online schools and programs
- Sharing of promising practices
- Sharing of problems of practice with the opportunity for peer feedback
- Building network of support consisting of leaders in an online school/program settings
- Potential mentorship opportunities between veteran leaders and newly established leaders

The cohort will consist of 8-10 leadership teams from across the state.

**Commitments:** The cohort will rely on strong collaboration among participants.

- All participants should plan to attend each of the convenings and at least two school visits.
- All participants should be ready to improve their practice, be willing to reflect, try out new strategies, and share what they have learned with colleagues.

There is no cost for this opportunity. Districts/schools will be responsible for covering their own travel, if applicable. **Interested leaders can fill out [this interest form](#).** Only one entry is needed per school or district team. If you have any questions, please contact Renee Martinez ([martinez\\_r@cde.state.co.us](mailto:martinez_r@cde.state.co.us)) of the Office of Blended and Online Learning.