



**Colorado Department of Education
Optional School Redesign Advisory List Provider Updates: 2020-21**

Provider Name	Colorado Education Initiative
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Link to Program Information on Provider Website	www.coloradoedinitiative.org
Link to Provider's 2019 Submission	https://www.cde.state.co.us/accountability/cei2019submission
<u>Approved Categories (2019)</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Charter Network or CMO <input type="checkbox"/> Turnaround Leadership Development Provider <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Instructional Transformation X Talent Development X Culture Shift X Leadership Training <input type="checkbox"/> Management Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder Engagement Specialist

2020-21 Program or Services Updates	<p><u>General Update to CEI's Work</u></p> <p>CEI Design Commitments</p> <p>CEI believes that schools and districts can equitably, reliably, and predictably develop academic, professional, personal, entrepreneurial, and civic outcomes for all students at scale, and by design. This requires system transformation, not just new programs. CEI believes there are six fundamental components of all breakthrough district system designs. We incorporate these Design Commitments into everything we do. Often, we are brought in to help districts build something new – a graduate profile, diploma requirements, a new approach to SEL programming. We do those things with these commitments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI): Isolate race, class, gender, and language to interrupt systemic bias; support educators to redesign systems; and develop mindsets, practices, and conditions that disrupt inequity. • Family and Community Partnership: Help schools and districts evolve into open systems that organize around equitable outcomes rooted in the values of the community.
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- Youth Activation: Partner with and empower young people to take agency in their learning – and study what must shift in adults to do this well.
- Social Emotional Development (SED): Support schools and districts with an ecosystem approach to SED, including: environments that are psychologically and identity safe, relationship rich, and build SED skills; multi-tiered systems of supports for struggling students and staff; common, visible, and diverse student voice and student-adult partnerships; and engagement of diverse families in the SED vision.
- Continuous Improvement: Support user-centered design and continuous improvement methods to develop practices with positive impacts on learning.
- Leadership: Support education leaders to lead complex change through shared expectations, intentional learning, and responsive support in ways that scale and sustain practices.

Examples of Program Updates

School Improvement Team Retreat

In 2020, CEI worked with Cañon City School District to co-create a customized 3-day summer leadership retreat for McKinley Elementary funded by EASI grant dollars. The retreat was aligned to McKinley’s priorities and engaged the School Improvement Team (SIT) – made up of nine dedicated school administrators, teachers, and classified staff - to identify, initiate, and implement high impact, high yield improvement strategies for the 2020-2021 school year.

Topics covered during the retreat included: setting a compelling vision and mission, strengthening school culture and climate, building staff mindsets building, identifying challenges, measurement and evaluation, and implementation planning.

Family and Community Partnerships

Schools should be a reflection of the families and communities that they serve. This means schools and systems should be co-created and designed with all members. Research is clear that this kind of partnership creates better outcomes, public trust, and stronger opportunity to innovate within the system – and that the lack thereof inhibits scalable, sustainable, and successful change. CEI is committed to helping schools and districts evolve into open systems that organize around equitable outcomes that are rooted in the values of the community; and that actively and continually partner with families and communities to create and affirm legitimacy and support and build capacity needed to deliver on public value.

Activities core to this work include Intentional family and community members as part of teams, promoting family and community engagement in outcome development (e.g., grad profile), stakeholder mapping and engagement plans,



knowledge and skill building in best practices for high-impact partnership. Examples of specific projects include:

- Homegrown Talent Initiative (HTI) – Rural communities across Colorado have been working on setting a new vision for their students and local economies. Community design teams made up of superintendents, business leaders, educators, students, and community members have spent countless hours working with Colorado Education Initiative and Colorado Succeeds through HTI to build a unique plan to better prepare students for post-secondary opportunities, based on the strengths and needs of their community.
- Student Led Equity Councils – (Described in detail below)

Social Emotional Ecosystem Work

Social Emotional Development (SED) is one of the six Design Commitments that guide all the work we do. Embracing an expanded definition of student success requires schools to name SED outcomes as integral to academic outcomes and to implement practices to develop them for all students. We are committed to an ecosystem approach, including: 1) learning environments that are psychologically and identity safe, relationship rich, and build SED skills; 2) multi-tiered systems of supports for struggling students and staff; 3) visible and diverse student voice and student-adult partnerships; and 4) engagement of diverse families in the SED vision.

Activities core to this work include: naming SED skills/mindsets in vision development; building knowledge in SED research and best practices; embracing the ecosystem approach; and measurement of SED skills and mindsets. Examples of specific projects include:

- The Hub – Statewide platform that connects health and education stakeholders with a broad array of resources
- Social Emotional Redesign Network – Supports schools to improve practices, cultures, and systems to foster developmental relationships and SED skills
- Thriving Schools – Teams create trauma responsive schools and promote educator resilience; improve policies and practices to create trauma-sensitive and culturally responsive classrooms; increase participation in SED programs; increase belonging among students, families, teachers, and staff; and improve staff SED competencies
- Youth Connections – Strengthens capacity of districts and schools to respond to and promote SED for students
- Suicide Prevention Design Network – Convenes diverse school teams – with emphasis on youth leadership – alongside mental health and suicide prevention specialists to break the silence about suicide and build teams' capacity to address it



- Charter School Institute (CSI) Climate Collaborative – Design and launch an inaugural SEL network to meet the needs of CSI schools. The network will support schools to implement sustainable systems changes in a tiered support model consistent with CO-MTSS. Teams are receiving support on behavioral health, school climate, SED, youth engagement, data inquiry, and family and community engagement.
- Summit School District SEL Framework Design – Design and implementation of a district-wide social and emotional learning framework through three phases of learning, testing, and implementation with strategic planning, goal setting, continuous improvement strategies, coaching, leadership and community engagement, and implementation support.

Student Led Equity Councils

CEI has supported the New Mexico Public Education Department to establish Equity Councils across districts and charter schools in the state. We've learned a significant amount through the process of building skill, mindsets and capacity of diverse stakeholders to support districts in tackling major equity questions in their communities. In particular, we believe there is a power in creating true and meaningful governance and partnership relationships to take on these questions to build legitimacy, credibility, and meaningful community-driven solutions to the complex problems of systemic inequities.

Starting in the summer of 2020, CEI will begin working with Boulder Valley School District to create a path to establish an Equity Council to advise the Superintendent on the question of staffing SROs and addressing student discipline disparities in schools.

Innovative Learning Opportunities Pilots

CEI is working with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to support the development of high-quality Innovative Learning Plans (ILPs) with six Colorado districts and schools from February - June 2020 with continued technical assistance support into the 2020-21 school year during implementation of these plans. The ILP will guide implementation and facilitation of innovative learning opportunities for students, including learning opportunities outside of the classroom. These opportunities include but are not limited to apprenticeships, internships, job shadowing, concurrent enrollment in postsecondary courses, and capstone projects.

This project is helping schools identify innovative ways to increase relevancy and engagement for students. It is focused on recapturing students who have disengaged or gone part time.

COVID Response Work

At the request of Colorado's Governor and Commissioner, CEI partnered with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) in March to lend leadership and



capacity in identifying and supporting the emerging needs of districts and communities in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Lending such capacity to CDE and other leaders is a prime example of why CEI was founded.

CEI also pivoted a number of existing projects and shifted all activities to be completed virtually and has learned a lot about best practices in a virtual setting. Since March 2020, CEI has hosted more than 120 virtual learning sessions for the Colorado Career Conversation project after hosting some trainings in person. Survey data show that virtual training participants were slightly more likely to recommend this training to their colleagues, than in person participants (97% of online participants strongly agreed or agreed they would recommend this training, compared to 94% of in-person participants).

Some examples of our role in navigating the disruption brought about by COVID include:

- Creating, launching, and analyzing a district-facing needs assessment (see supplementary materials) to identify statewide and regional data surrounding educational support, technology/broadband, student subgroup, and community needs
- Sharing findings with local funders, informing and helping to match the direct resourcing and technical support efforts of multiple local funders resulting in support for over 112 districts and BOCES statewide
- Connecting personally with 95% of Colorado districts, surfacing stories of innovation, inspiration, and relationship amid disruption
- Convening weekly COVID Community Conversations with over 50 education partner organizations, making sense of and coordinating response to regional needs, including collaboratively identifying specific, high-leverage actions for organizations to advance in partnership
- Marshaling the development and launch of the “Read With Me At Home” initiative, providing families of kindergarten through third-grade students with targeted literacy lessons throughout the summer hosted by Colorado teachers and Rocky Mountain PBS
- Launching Strategic Reopening Collaborative sprint for 10 Colorado districts to develop detailed, high-quality, and focused 30-60-90 day action plans for how they will prioritize, assess, and meet the SED needs of students and staff