

Contact Information:

Sara Bracken
720-502-4730

sbracken@coloradoedinitiative.org

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Colorado Education Initiative Announces School Behavioral Health Grantees

Districts to Receive \$25,000 in Funding to Enhance School Behavioral Health Services

DENVER, CO - Today the [Colorado Education Initiative](http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org) (CEI) announced five Colorado districts that will receive funding to advance best practices in school behavioral health to improve student outcomes. Behavioral health includes the social, emotional and mental health needs and substance abuse behaviors of students.

Grantees were selected based on their ability to align strategies and outcomes to the recently released Colorado Framework for School Behavioral Health Services. The Framework was designed by CEI with funding from Rose Community Foundation to create a streamlined system for supporting students with behavioral health needs in order to improve their school and community outcomes.

The Framework serves as a guide for prevention as well as deeper intervention and it provides examples and models drawn directly from Colorado schools that have created effective partnerships with local mental health professionals.

“The Colorado Education Initiative recognizes the important link between academic achievement and students’ social, emotional and behavioral health,” said Dr. Helayne Jones, President and CEO of the Colorado Education Initiative. “With that in mind, we designed the Framework which is the first comprehensive guide specific to Colorado for K-12 student behavioral health support. It addresses student-level needs and will help put systems in place to ensure that students will better succeed both in and out of the classroom.”

The five districts selected to receive funding to create or enhance their school behavioral health systems include: Center Consolidated School District, Poudre School District, Thompson School District for Bill Reed Middle School, Montrose School District for Northside Elementary School and Aurora Public Schools for Altura Elementary, Sixth Avenue Elementary, Sable Elementary, Vaughn Elementary, Boston K-8 and Jamaica Child Development Center. These grantees will receive implementation assistance, professional development support and \$5,000 in funding to support their work during the 2014 year.

“We are very excited about this opportunity and will use this grant to continue our work as a district in creating a framework that advances best practices in social, emotional and behavioral health,” said Charlie Carter, Executive Director of Student Support Services at Bill Reed Middle School in Thompson School District. “We will focus our efforts to decrease the stigma associated with mental health issues as well as develop best practices in classroom management, which will increase the skills of our teachers and set the stage for behavioral and academic success in school.”

To learn more and to access tools and resources designed to support district and school professionals in the implementation of Framework strategies, please visit www.coloradoedinitiative.org/resources/social-emotional-supports/

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