



THE  
COLORADO  
EDUCATION  
INITIATIVE

**Contact Information:**

Sara Bracken

720-502-4730

[sbracken@coloradoedinitiative.org](mailto:sbracken@coloradoedinitiative.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

June 23, 2014

## Three Colorado School Districts to Participate in Next Generation Learning Initiative

DENVER, CO – Three Colorado school districts in partnership with the Colorado Department of Education and [The Colorado Education Initiative](#) have been selected to participate in a new initiative launched by Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) to support next generation learning in schools.

Adams County School District 50, Colorado Springs District 11 and Thompson School District make up the Colorado Coalition. These districts will each support two schools in designing next generation learning models that align with Colorado's new Graduation Guidelines. These models will emphasize educational equity, personalized learning, students progressing at their own pace, safe and healthy environments and better use of time and technology in learning and teaching.

Adopted in May 2013, Colorado's Graduation Guidelines signal a move away from seat time and toward enabling students to advance based on mastery of Colorado Academic Standards; provide students with a menu of options to demonstrate mastery rather than a single exit exam; emphasize multiple pathways for students to engage in learning; and elevate the importance of next generation student outcomes.

"This partnership comes at a critical time for Colorado as we identify and accelerate the best ways to improve student and teacher outcomes," said Robert Hammond, Colorado Commissioner of Education. "The Colorado Department of Education is eager to learn alongside these early adopter districts so that we can share what they learn with other schools and districts across the state that will be doing this work in the coming years."

The Colorado Education Initiative is helping to create the space for districts and educators to learn from one another in designing and implementing next generation learning systems. "We believe in the creativity and leadership of Colorado educators who are taking on this exciting work to find innovative solutions to some of education's most pressing challenges and opportunities," said Dr. Helayne Jones, President & CEO of The Colorado Education Initiative.

This work is part of a national effort known as *The Regional Funds for Breakthrough Schools*. A breakthrough school combines student-centered, personalized, blended, and competency-based learning approaches with high expectations for student achievement – all sustainable on public funding. The Colorado Coalition is one of six regional innovation hubs to be selected for this initiative.

"We view the more rigorous high school graduation requirements as a game changer for students and school districts across Colorado. Realigning K-12 education to ensure students are ready to meet the new requirements goes to the heart of our Competency Based System," said Dr. Pamela Swanson, Superintendent of Adams County School District 50. "We are eager to partner with the other districts to better support students and educators in making this shift."

Once school design plans are approved for implementation, the Coalition will be eligible for additional funding through NGLC and local matching funds.

For more about Colorado's vision of Next Generation Learning, please visit [www.coloradoedinitiative.org/our-work/next-generation-learning/vision/](http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/our-work/next-generation-learning/vision/).

###

*About The Colorado Education Initiative*

The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) is an independent nonprofit working in partnership with the Colorado Department of Education and public education stakeholders to accelerate bold improvement in student achievement through innovation, collaboration, and capacity building. CEI believes that increased student achievement for all Colorado students requires effective leaders in every school, effective educators in every classroom and healthy and engaging environments that ignite a passion for learning in every student.