



THE
COLORADO
EDUCATION
INITIATIVE

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Prominent Colorado Education Organization Selects New CEO

Glenna Norvelle to Lead The Colorado Education Initiative

DENVER – The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) announced today its new president and chief executive officer (CEO). Glenna Norvelle will lead the statewide education nonprofit starting on January 5, 2015. She joins CEI after serving as the president and CEO of Denver Kids, Inc., a nonprofit focused on ending the dropout crisis in Denver Public Schools through one-on-one educational counseling for students at risk of academic failure.

A search committee, chaired by CEI board member and Denver Museum of Nature & Science President and CEO George Sparks, conducted an extensive nationwide search for CEI's next CEO. CEI Board of Trustees Chair Monica Skok served on the search committee.

"We're thrilled Glenna will lead The Colorado Education Initiative," Skok said. "Glenna is a visionary leader and a passionate advocate for children. Her breadth of experience, strategic partnership savvy, and fundraising acumen are critical components to advancing CEI's mission. At Glenna's core is a deep desire — and proven track record — of helping all students achieve success."

Norvelle offers a unique blend of leadership experience and has a long history of service to the community. She is the past executive director of Colorado Youth at Risk and served as a special assistant to Denver Public Schools Superintendent Michael Bennet. In this role, she was instrumental in developing school and community partnerships focused on youth mentoring and teen pregnancy prevention. She also worked as the director of marketing for Fox Sports Net Rocky Mountain, during which her experience as a volunteer mentor to a student motivated her to change her career path and redirect her focus to the nonprofit sector, working with at-risk youth.

"The Colorado Education Initiative is a highly respected, thriving organization that's successful thanks to strong leadership, a dedicated staff, and committed partners," Norvelle said. "I am proud to be part of this team. CEI is uniquely positioned to make a profound difference in the lives of children. We can lead the nation in how public-private partnerships contribute to this work."

For more than 20 years, Norvelle has committed her career to transforming education. She is a champion for providing access and opportunity to all students so they graduate and are well-prepared for the path they choose. Her passion for children is reflected in serving as a mentor to a 13-year-old Denver Public Schools student.

“CEI is viewed as an honest broker, sense-maker and convener — and that’s especially critical given Colorado’s shifting educational landscape,” Norvelle said. “I look forward to working with the CEI board, staff, and partners, and I am especially eager to visit educators who are implementing school improvement efforts in diverse communities across Colorado to listen and learn more about how CEI can best support their success.”

CEI’s vision, mission, and unique partnership with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) have garnered national recognition. Other states have explored replicating the model. The nonprofit collaborates with CDE, schools, and districts across the state to accelerate achievement for all Colorado students.

“Glenna is the type of leader who knows how to build trusted partnerships, offers a fresh perspective, and has a deep passion for providing every student with an excellent education,” said Colorado Commissioner of Education Robert Hammond and CEI board member. “She will be a huge asset to CEI. We’re excited to work with her and to continue our strong partnership with CEI. We have a lot of work to accomplish in the coming months on behalf of Colorado’s children.”

Upon Helayne Jones’ resignation, Senior Vice President of Initiatives Yee-Ann Cho stepped into the role of interim president and CEO on July 1 to ensure a smooth transition. “We want to express our deepest gratitude to Yee-Ann for her passion and commitment to leading CEI over the last five months,” Skok said. “Thanks to her outstanding leadership and a dynamic staff, CEI has continued to flourish with a sustained focus on innovative ways to reach every learner, every day.”

Norvelle holds a bachelor of arts in business administration from Regis University in Denver. She lives in Denver with her husband; they have two children, ages 18 and 19.

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About The Colorado Education Initiative

The Colorado Education Initiative is an independent nonprofit working in partnership with the Colorado Department of Education to unlock the unique potential of every student by incubating innovation, shining a spotlight on success, and investing in sustainable change that improves outcomes for all students. CEI envisions that every student in Colorado is prepared and unafraid to succeed in school, work, and life, and ready to take on the challenges of today, tomorrow, and beyond.