



Annual Report 2007

Great Education Colorado is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, statewide, grassroots organization of parents and other public school supporters that advocates for adequate funding for public education in Colorado.



Who We Are

Great Education Colorado is a statewide, nonprofit, nonpartisan organization of parents and other public school supporters.

What We Do

Great Education Colorado:

- Advocates for improved funding of Colorado schools
- Brings people together to create a vision for 21st century education
- Promotes the principle that all public education reforms must be accompanied by adequate resources

Did You Know?

Colorado public school funding lags behind the national average by \$1,034 per student.

And all our neighboring states invest much more than Colorado:

- WY spends \$3,187 more
- NE spends \$1,991 more
- KS spends \$923 more

“Great Education Colorado has changed the political landscape in this state, and that’s great news for Colorado’s schools and kids.”

**- Cary Kennedy
State Treasurer**

Great Education Colorado’s 2007 Accomplishments

Great Ed is proud of our many 2007 accomplishments to create and fund the kind of education our children need to compete in the 21st century!

Revealed the Harsh Reality of Under-funded Schools

Organized six school tours for legislators to see for themselves how dire school conditions are in places like Sterling, Craig and the San Luis Valley.

Produced videos for the Colorado School Stories Project about school funding featuring first-hand accounts from teachers, principals, superintendents, parents and students.

Helped Build a Vision for 21st Century Colorado Schools

Gathered priorities and policy recommendations from hundreds of business leaders, legislators, educators, parents and citizens at eight public forums, from Alamosa to Adams County.

Informed the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) policy proposal & legislation put forth by Speaker of the Colorado House of Representatives Andrew Romanoff, Senate President Peter Groff and State Treasurer Cary Kennedy to make as much as \$1 billion dollars available to renovate, repair, and replace many dilapidated K-12 schools, without raising taxes.

Educated Public School Supporters

Reached over 5,000 public school supporters about crucial public education policy issues through our website, newsletters, email alerts, phone calls and public events across the state.

Launched the Great Education Colorado Blog (<http://blog.greateducation.org>) to serve as an ongoing forum for discussion of public school issues.

Advocated for Adequate Resources and Funding

Helped to elevate school funding as a pressing issue in Colorado as a source and an inspiration for print and broadcast stories in a range of media, including the *Rocky Mountain News*, the *Denver Post*, the *Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph*, the *Pueblo Chieftain*, KCNC TV4, KMGH TV7, KUSA TV9, and several statewide blogs.

Staff Members

Liane Morrison
Executive Director

Lisa Weil
Policy Director

Allen Byrne
Outreach/Admin Coordinator

Patty Bortz
Outreach/Volunteer Coordinator

Kady Everard
Fundraising Administrator

Eric Mills
Technical Director



Great Education
COLORADO

Board Members

City Councilwoman Carol Boigon

Patty Bortz

Kathy Callum

Tyler Chaffee

Rachel Chaparro

Herb Fenster

Fred Franko

Melinda Gladitsch

Elizabeth Groginsky

Tish Maes

Scott Reisch

State Senator Chris Romer

Frank Tijerina, Jr.



“If Great Education Colorado didn’t exist, we’d have to create it.”

- State Rep. Andrew Romanoff
Speaker of the House



Great Education COLORADO Leadership Message

Dear Great Education Colorado Friends,

There is a renewed commitment to create and fund the kind of education that will prepare our children to compete in the 21st century, thanks to Great Ed’s grassroots activism!

In 2007, policymakers saw for themselves that public education funding in Colorado is grossly inadequate. On tours that Great Ed helped arrange they saw firsthand public schools with collapsing classroom floors and geography textbooks so old, they still feature the U.S.S.R.

Governor Bill Ritter appointed the P-20 Council of various stakeholders to study these issues and make specific recommendations for change in 2008.

Speaker of the Colorado House of Representatives Andrew Romanoff pledged that public education will be a top priority for lawmakers in 2008, saying “I think it’s important that we make sure. . . every kid in Colorado has a smart start with top-flight teachers.”

Parents, business leaders, educators and community members attended forums and meetings to learn more about education reform and funding. Timely “action alerts” fueled the e-mails, phone calls and rallies to show elected officials that voters care about funding quality public education.

Finally, Great Ed’s involvement with the media inspired more coverage of public funding issues in statewide newspapers, TV news, and radio. As a result, the general public is waking up to the reality that Colorado must increase its commitment to public education and our kids.

Great Ed was there, every step of the way, to create the environment for educational change. We:

- Conducted tours of dilapidated schools
- Collected 200+ videotaped interviews
- Distributed research to policymakers and legislators
- Organized legislator-citizen forums statewide
- Educated and worked with reporters around the state

We are so grateful to the many donors, leaders and volunteers who helped us accomplish so much in 2007—we couldn’t have done it without all of you!

But we can’t rest on our laurels—there’s much more to do—so look for another outstanding year in 2008.

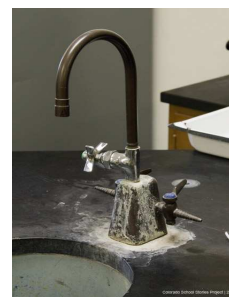
Liane Morrison
Executive Director

Lisa Weil
Policy Director

Colorado Public Schools By the Numbers:



U.S. rank in per pupil spending
36th



U.S. rank in state expenditures on K-12 schooling as a percent of state taxable income
43rd



U.S. rank in eligible children enrolled in kindergarten programs
36th



U.S. rank in overall technology in K-12 schools
41st



Producing Results Across Colorado...

School Tours Impact Legislators, Policymakers

Great Ed led a series of Colorado road trips so state legislators, state board of education members and other policymakers could see for themselves the shameful conditions many of our schoolchildren endure every day.



Bat infestation in Crowley County gym

As a partner in the Colorado School Stories Project with the Colorado School Finance Project and Children's Voices, we documented crumbling foundations, collapsing roofs and obsolete technology while visiting disparate districts, including:

Eastern Plains: Wiggins RE-50J, Edison 54JT and Miami-Yoder 60JT districts

San Luis Valley: Center 26-J, Moffat 2, Mountain Valley RE1, South Conejos and Centennial R-1 districts

Western Slope: Meeker RE1, Crowley RE1J and South Routt RE3 districts

Metro-Denver: Adams 14 district

After her tour, State Treasurer Cary Kennedy declared, "We have students throughout Colorado who are attending school in buildings that are old and run-down and unsafe. That is totally unacceptable."

Tours Inspire Legislative Action BEST: Building Excellent Schools Today

Motivated by the Colorado School Stories Project's tours, photos and videos, Speaker of the House Andrew Romanoff, Senate President Peter Groff and State Treasurer Cary Kennedy pledged to improve school capital funding.

Launched on November 18, their proposal—**BEST: Building Excellent Schools Today**—would tap growing school lands revenue to repair, renovate and replace crumbling, antiquated and overcrowded classrooms in districts that need funding help—without raising taxes.

"This is the most significant statewide investment in school construction in modern memory," Speaker Romanoff said.

Great Ed is proud to inspire BEST schools in Colorado!

November 18 press conference announcing the BEST school funding proposal



Great Ed Having an Impact Now! Event Attracts 300 to Discuss Education Goals

Great Ed convened Impact Now!, an event at Northglenn High School where 300 Adams County parents, local business leaders, North Metro Chamber of Commerce members, teachers, students, elected officials, faith leaders, senior citizens and other community members participated in an interactive conversation to create a vision for 21st century public education.

Governor Bill Ritter and Speaker of the House Andrew Romanoff were on hand to discuss how to deliver the kind of education that will allow our students to meet the global marketplace demands of tomorrow.

Building consensus on priorities for reform

Prior to the event, Great Ed conducted an online survey of attendees. The survey found that participants believed that the most important goal of public education should be to provide students with the knowledge and skills needed for the workplace and college—and that the greatest barrier to this goal is a lack of funding and resources.

During the event, every participant used wireless Audience Response System clickers to react in real-time to topics being discussed and to develop ideas for next steps to make reform happen. Four strategies emerged to realize the vision for school reform:

- **Adequate funding**, for new state-imposed mandates, early childhood education, smaller class sizes, up-to-date instructional materials and safe infrastructure
- **Quality teaching**, supported through increased compensation, support and professional development
- **Accountability system**, aligned with what the community values in education
- **Increased parental involvement**, to ensure students receive the support they need from their parents/guardians and the greater community

Great Ed Announces Rose Community Fund's Matching Grant at the Governor's Mansion

Rose Community Foundation offered Great Ed a two-year grant that includes a \$25,000 financial match for both 2007 and 2008. Announced on April 24 at a reception at the Governor's Mansion, the event featured Governor Bill Ritter and State Treasurer Cary Kennedy. Councilwoman Carol Boigon was master of ceremonies.

Rose will match every individual contribution dollar-for-dollar over \$1,000, so your gift to Great Ed will be doubled—\$1,000 becomes \$2,000 and \$5,000 will become \$10,000! So don't delay, donate today!

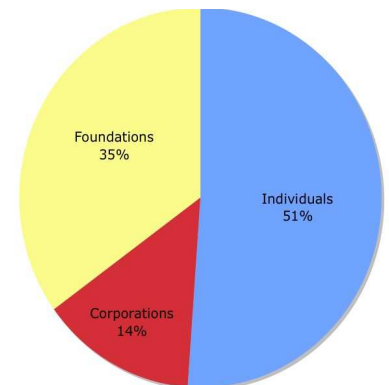
Abramson, Nancy & Craig	Hart Segal, Ruth	Russell, Tom
Adams, Liz	Hart, Martin	Rust, Jay
Adams, Margie	Haynes, Anna Jo	Sachnoff, Lee
Banks, Britt	Hedges, Carol	Salmen, Paul
Benefield, Debbie	Henbry, Carla	Salzman, Jason
Berman, Elaine	Herndon, Jonell	Schafer, Susan
Berry, Travis	Hilger, Jennifer	Schmitt, Paula
Bohrer, Stephen	Hogan & Hartson, LLP	Schneider, Susan
Bortz, Libby	Hoover, Suzanne	Schnicker, Heidi
Bortz, Patty	Howell, Renee	Schuster, Brad
Brady, Deb	Hoyt, Bruce	Schuster, Kathryn
Brady, Ron	Huitt, Gwen	Shapiro, Steven
Brasch, Beryl	Jarbawi, Diane	Shepherd, Elizabeth
Brennan, Joan	Johnson, Jennifer	Silveski, Amy
Brownstein, Hyatt, Farber, and Schreck	Kahn, Cyndi	Smith, Sarah
Buescher, Bernie	Kemp, Ana & Russell	Smith, Shelly
Button, Anne	Kern, Bernie	Sneed Family Foundation
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Callum, Kathy	Mackenzie, Amie	Spangler, Scott
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Coggeshall, Ann	Mattox, Vickie	Stoffel, John
Cohen, Harvey	McCann, Beth	Sullivan-Beall, Jean
Cook, Charles	McClatchey, Mary	Summerton, Allison
Court, Lois	McNeil Cheever, Mary	Tartaglia, Judy
Crane, Elizabeth	Medina, Jacqueline	Taussig, Heather
Curtis, Lu Ann	Melberg, Janine	Tijerina, Frank Jr.
Daggett, Susan	Minogue, Mary Jo	Tuta, Zane
Dally, Michelle	Mistler-Jackson, Megan	Unruh, Ingrid
Diamond, Fay & Greg	Molner Kelley, Linda	Valenti, Mary
Dolven, Lynn	Morris, Lisa	Van Sant, Dave
Don, Shelley & Beverly	Morrison, Marcy	Varney, Keith
Drake, Janet	Mulligan, Jim	Vidimos, Robin
Drake, Robert	Murphy, Scott	Voth, Allen
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Elfenbein, Sharon	Novins-Montague, Andrea	Watzman, Nancy
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Everard, Gail	Patrick, Kelly Ann	Weil, Miriam & David
Fallin, Deb	Pearce, Nicole	Weingarten, Judy
Feldman, Jane	Pena, Theresa	Wells, Heidi
Fisher, Lee	Perlman, Daniel	Whitehair, Greg
Fleischmann, Robin	Perlmutter, Jordan	Whitney, Terry
Gebhardt, Kathy	Pockross, Miriam	Wiener, Jennifer
Goldberg, William	Polsfut, Jim	Witt, Carla
Gonzales, Julie	Prina, Dean	Woodward, Les
Gould, Christine	Printz, Nancy	Wright, Betsy
Greenberg, Alan	Pryor, Wendell	Yale, Linda
Groginsky, Scott	Rainey, Tracie & Rory	Zansberg, Fay
Grynberg, Celeste	Reinisch, Katie	Zansberg, Steve
Gudder, Paula & Stan	Reinisch, Nancy	Zeller, Laurie
Guerra, Mariellen	Reusch, Jane	Zoeller, Lisa
Hall, Lee	Romer, Bea	

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\$10,000-\$25,000

Barton Family Foundation
 Pat Stryker
 Richard & Marianne Reinisch Foundation
 Rose Community Foundation



Great Education Colorado relies on the generous contributions of individuals, foundations and corporations to further its mission to advocate for fully funded public education reform.

Our revenue comes from three sources:

Individual givers: 51%

Foundations: 35%

Corporate donors: 14%