



COLORADO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

201 East Colfax Avenue • Denver, Colorado 80203-1704
303.866.6817 • Fax: 303.866.6761 • www.cde.state.co.us

September 12, 2012

House and Senate Education Committees
Colorado State Capitol
200 E. Colfax Ave
Denver, CO 80203

Honorable Members of the House and Senate Education Committees:

This letter and the attached summary are submitted pursuant to 22-2-106(1) (b.5) Colorado Revised Statutes, which states:

“(1) It is the duty of the state board: To review and evaluate annually the job performance of the commissioner of education using procedures and criteria determined by the state board. The Procedures and criteria shall include, at a minimum, consideration of the comments and opinions of school district superintendents and school board members regarding the commissioner’s job performance. The state board shall report the results of its evaluation to the education committees of the house of representatives and senate, or any successor committees.”

22-2-110(5) Colorado Revised Statutes further states:

“(5) The state board shall annually review and evaluate the job performance of the commissioner, as provided in section 22-2-106(b.5), and report the results of its evaluation to the public and the education committees of the house of representatives and senate, or any successor committees.”

In June 2012, Commissioner Hammond completed his first year of service to Colorado as Commissioner of the Colorado Department of Education. At the August 8, 2012 State Board of Education meeting, the State Board conducted an evaluation of Commissioner Hammond as Commissioner of Education. In doing so, it utilized questions it prepared based on the criteria and qualifications included in the initial job posting it used in selecting the commissioner. The list of those criteria is attached as Appendix A.

The State Board is unanimous in its conclusions regarding Commissioner Hammond’s performance over the past year. The commissioner has accomplished a remarkable amount of work in a very short time. Most notably, he has realigned the Colorado Department of Education to be a results-oriented agency and under his leadership the department is working effectively and efficiently on targeted initiatives such as educator effectiveness, outreach to rural districts through the Rural Education Council, and meeting the needs of Turnaround and Priority Improvement Districts. Additionally, the commissioner has worked collaboratively with legislators, state and community leaders,

Bob Schaffer
Chairman
4th Congressional District

Marcia Neal
Vice-Chairman
3rd Congressional District

Elaine Gantz Berman
1st Congressional District

Jane Goff
7th Congressional District

Paul Lundeen
5th Congressional District

Debora Scheffel
6th Congressional District

Angelika Schroeder
2nd Congressional District

educational organizations and non-profit entities towards implementing education reforms in Colorado so as to improve every child's access to quality educational opportunities.

Additionally, pursuant to statute, the State Board sought confidential input from Colorado's superintendents and local school-board members on the commissioner's performance over the past year. Respondents were asked to choose between "strongly agree, agree, neither disagree or agree, disagree, strongly disagree" and were provided an opportunity for additional comments regarding each question or any other comment the recipient wished to submit. The 87 responses received were overwhelmingly favorable. Below is a list of all questions and the percentages of the responses, as well as some notable comments.

1. Commissioner Hammond understands the unique needs of rural, urban and suburban school systems and has supported rural, urban and suburban school systems in their efforts to graduate students and prepare them for success locally, nationally, and globally. Eighty-five percent strongly agree and agree.

"He is definitely making efforts to reach out to various areas, including rural to make sure he has their perspective."

"He represents all interests very well in different communities. He is the best at 'stepping into another's shoes' to understand before recommending action."

"Commissioner Hammond is able to know and understand the challenges of all districts whether large or small. He is well respected among superintendents."

"A great friend of rural Colorado and has earned widespread support from all rural schools. He does not just promise, he delivers."

"In my first year as a rural superintendent, I have seen Commissioner Hammond on multiple occasions. He has certainly made himself available as a resource for rural districts."

"Robert has begun to put into place an effort for the department to improve their understanding of rural and small districts."

2. Commissioner Hammond effectively communicates, listens, builds and strengthens the working relationships among all education stakeholders in Colorado including parents, teachers, local school districts, the early childhood education community and the higher education system and he is an effective spokesperson for strategic education initiatives in the State. Eighty-seven percent strongly agree and agree

“Robert is present and engaged in more informative and educational functions than any commissioner we have had in the past 16 years.”

“Robert is genuine.”

“This is a strength. He listens to those of us in the field and takes our suggestions and comments seriously.”

3. Commissioner Hammond has successfully established a 21st Century vision for public education in Colorado and has demonstrated a capacity to develop new strategies for educating all students in the state, with a focus on measurable outcomes. Seventy-one percent strongly agree and agree

“Robert sees the future, one of hope and promise, and with strategies to make it happen, especially with groups who may have divergent views.”

“Commissioner Hammond has constantly stressed the need to focus on standards & assessment, accountability, and educator effectiveness.”

“Robert and department have worked hard to put into place a system related to accountability which is largely achievement oriented. Efforts are being made to expand the other components of a 21st Century learner.”

4. Commissioner Hammond has demonstrated his support for school choice, his understanding of cutting edge innovations and reforms, and the use of data to inform best practices. Seventy-seven percent strongly agree and agree

“He is a strong supporter of alternative delivery systems to best serve children and families. He is also a good supporter of local control while understanding the requirements placed upon us by outside agencies and ‘think tanks’”.

“We are a turnaround District and he told us all how bad it is and that we need to make some tough decisions and we listened loud and clear.”

5. Commissioner Hammond has demonstrated an expertise in school finance and funding, including current realities and trends in school funding and a willingness to

engage in finding alternative models for funding public education. Seventy-four percent strongly agree and agree

"He is absolutely #1 in this area. He deserves an A+ with regards to school funding, alternatives and working within budgets. He is influential."

"Extremely strong and knowledgeable in this area."

"The Commissioner has done a great job of articulating the needs of public schools to the legislature and the governor."

6. Commissioner Hammond has provided transformative leadership regarding education reforms such as standards, assessments, accountability and support, and teacher and principal effectiveness. Eighty-six percent strongly agree and agree

"I appreciate his efforts in securing a waiver for NCLB."

"He has made the tough decisions to move forward and make teacher effectiveness and principal effectiveness the center piece for CDE. Student success matters to him greatly."

"I feel that Commissioner Hammond has led the way with the state education department in regards to becoming a useful resource for school districts in the areas of standards & assessment, accountability, and educator effectiveness."

"Commissioner Hammond is to be commended for continuing the high level of support the department offers districts while raising the bar on accountability for improvement."

7. Commissioner Hammond has worked collaboratively and effectively with other branches of government, including the Governor, the State Legislature, and the U.S. Department of Education. Seventy-nine percent strongly agree and agree

"Robert is well respected at all levels. People listen to him and access him for ideas. He is always willing to roll up his sleeves to help anyone. He is a true servant-leader with transformational influence."

"He has a strong voice in all of these areas."

"Mr. Hammond is a master at building relationships with people at all levels. He is genuine, diplomatic and always very respectful."

8. Commissioner Hammond has represented Colorado well in his participation on national boards, panels and other forums where he has appeared in his official capacity. Seventy percent strongly agree and agree

"Best there has ever been."

9. Commissioner Hammond is an effective administrator with the skill to hire and delegate competent staff and manage Department of Education resources for support, compliance, and results. Ninety-two percent strongly agree and agree

"CDE is now, finally, staffed with some of the top people in the field. They are superbly qualified, intelligent, committed to schools success with children and accessible."

"Robert has done an excellent job of effectively delegating responsibilities."

"The people who work in CDE are people of integrity and great intellect. This is the best group ever."

10. Over the past year, Commissioner Hammond has improved the relationship between CDE and school districts and service and support from CDE has improved. Seventy-eight percent strongly agree and agree

"I believe that last year's summer symposium set the tone for Commissioner Hammond's tenure. Not only was he present at the symposium; but, he also participated in the sessions and spoke individually with many of the participants. This has not been the case with past commissioners. This type of accessibility and personal touch seems to be a continuing theme with the work Commissioner Hammond has performed this year."

"The commissioner's attendance at the Symposia and his onsite visits to Turn Around districts has improved the relationship and feeling of partnership in the field."

"Customer service has been EXCELLENT this year, keep going and thank you!"

11. Commissioner Hammond has demonstrated personal and professional integrity in the administration of public education. Ninety-four percent strongly agree and agree

"Commissioner Hammond has done an outstanding job this past year. He is a man of personal and professional integrity and is committed to the educational success of Colorado's children."

"He is 'Mr. Integrity' to his core. He knows our culture and helps us 'shoot for the stars' on behalf of children, families and communities."

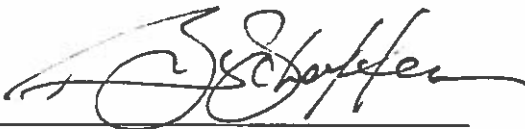
"Called me personally the day before I submitted an Innovative Schools Application to indicate that CDE could not support it. Wanted me to hear it from him first instead of waiting for the state board meeting the next day. First class gesture."

"Commissioner Hammond is a good person, a breath of fresh air. No one could do a better job of pulling our diverse state together around a common, shared vision."

Based on these responses as well as first-hand knowledge of the commissioner's work, the Board unanimously agreed the commissioner has done an outstanding job this past year. The State Board fully supports the commissioner's initiatives and strategies, and is confident in the coming year that he will further the ambitious goals he has set for the Department of Education and Colorado's educators and students.

The Board believes a compensation increase is a justifiable response to Mr. Hammond's success in exceeding the State Board's performance expectations. Given the state's present financial condition and in consideration of private-sector compensation trends, however, the Board concludes that consideration of a salary increase should be suspended until the end of the state's fiscal year.

Very truly yours,



Bob Schaffer
Chairman
On Behalf of the State Board of Education