



The Buzz

A consolidated federal programs newsletter

Issue 46

December 2007

Analysis to Achievement: The Title I School Improvement Grant and Colorado's System of School Support

Fall 2007 begins the fifth year of the work of the Colorado School Support Team (SST) process, developed in 2002 as a way to deliver focused technical assistance to Title I schools. The Department is seeing exciting results coming from the schools that have been a part of the process.

Consolidated Federal Programs uses the Title I School Improvement Grant to support the SST process. Participating schools receive a \$150,000 grant over a two-year period to pay for the cost of the review and to implement the recommendations of the School Support Team.

Currently, any school on improvement is eligible for an SST review and grant. However, the process is voluntary. The following indicates the number of schools that received a review and grant since this program's inception in Colorado.

School Year	Number of Schools that Received an SST Review and \$150,000 Grant
2004-2005	22
2005-2006	20
2006-2007	20

Las Animas and Westpark Elementary Schools Win Top Title I Award

The Colorado Department of Education announced today the selection of Las Animas Elementary School and Westpark Elementary School as Title I "Distinguished Schools" of the year.

The award recognizes two Title I schools—one that has achieved academic success, and one that made progress in closing achievement gaps associated with race and poverty.

Las Animas Elementary School is located in Las Animas RE-1 School District in southeastern Colorado; Westpark Elementary School is located in Lake County R-1 School District in Leadville.

Each school will receive \$10,000 and both will be invited to send representatives to the National Title I conference from January 31 – February 3, 2008 in Nashville, Tennessee. Colorado's distinguished schools will be honored at the event along with distinguished schools from around the country. "The principals and teachers in these two schools have blended high expectations with an unwavering focus on improving student achievement," said Commissioner of Education Dwight Jones. "Congratulations to these two schools for this well-deserved recognition."

Las Animas Elementary School was nominated for this award based on outstanding academic achievement for Title I students.

"The staff and students at Las Animas Elementary School are excited to receive this award," said Principal Libby Hiza. "Every year we have set a goal to become a '90-90-90' school and have worked hard to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure that every child succeeds."

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In an ongoing effort to evaluate and refine our support models, Consolidated Federal Programs has continued the work started by the publication *From Analysis to Achievement: The Title I School Improvement Grant and Colorado's School Support System*. Fifteen of the 63 schools (24 percent) that received an SST review and Title I School Improvement Grant have made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two consecutive years and are no longer on improvement. The following charts track the progress of these schools in comparison to all schools in the state as well as schools that are eligible but have not received a grant.

It is rewarding to reach this pinnacle of achievement, and this recognition gives us the energy we need to continue to grow!"

A "90-90-90" school is one where 90 percent of the students are minorities, 90 percent are eligible for free or reduced lunch under federal poverty guidelines, and 90 percent are achieving at or above grade level.

At Las Animas Elementary School, 97 percent of the students performed at the partially proficient and higher levels in both reading and math on the 2007 CSAP. Additionally, 92 percent of students were proficient or advanced in reading and 87 percent were proficient or advanced in math.

Westpark Elementary School won the award based on success closing the achievement gap between students eligible for free or reduced lunch and those not eligible.

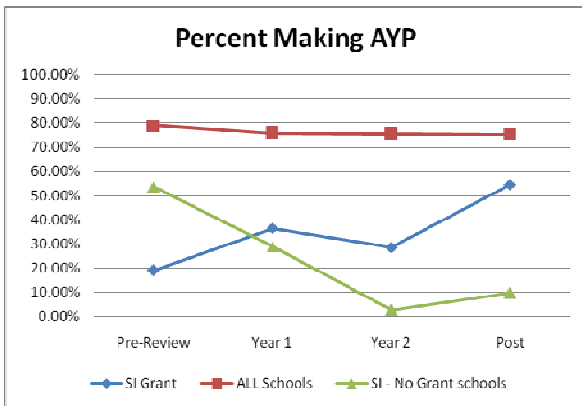
In 2005-2006 school year, only 75 percent of the students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch scored at a proficient level on CSAP. In 2006-2007 the percentage soared to 95 percent—an improvement of 20 percentage points.

"In January 2006, while looking at student data, the staff was in tears trying to find success," said Westpark Principal Linda Adams. "Now we are again in tears receiving this award. We followed our motto and did 'Whatever it takes.'"

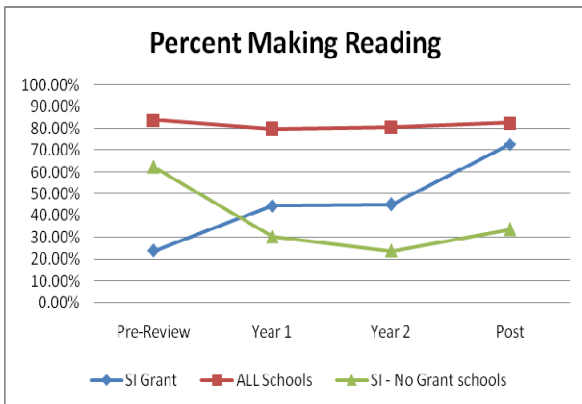
In addition to high performance on CSAP, both schools were required to have made Adequate Yearly Progress targets and have at least 35 percent of the student body in both schools eligible for free or reduced lunch.

On November 29th the Commissioner of Education congratulated the staff, students, school board and community members of Las Animas Elementary during an amazing celebration. The Commissioner will be headed to Westpark Elementary in December for a similar celebration.

Thank you for all of your hard work!



As illustrated above, schools that received a Title I School Improvement grant are steadily improving, and catching up with the rest of the schools in the state.



The trend continues when the percent making AYP for reading only (above) as well as math only (The Buzz - page 4) is analyzed.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December

Register for E-Rate Trainings at

www.cde.state.co.us/scripts/ERateTraining07/registration.asp. E-Rate Day 1 trainings are from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. and Day 2 trainings are from 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. Remaining dates are as follows:

December 4 Online Training
9 a.m. – Noon (Beginner Session)
1 – 4 p.m. (Advanced Session)

December 6 & 7 Brush High School

December 13 & 14 Aurora Public Schools

For more information contact DeLilah Collins at (303) 866-6850, collins_d@cde.state.co.us.

December 17th

HR and Special Education HR Data Collection Training in Denver

Registration is available for all trainings at www.cde.state.co.us/scripts/EdHRDataCollectReg07/registration.asp.

January 31 – February 3, 2008

National Title I Meeting, Nashville, TN

For more information visit

www.nationaltitleconference.com.

March 14, 2008

3rd Annual Colorado Statewide Pre-Collegiate Conf. Auraria Higher Education Center, 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. For more information contact Gully Stanford at gully.stanford@cic.state.co.us, (720) 264-8563.

March – April 2008

Tentative dates for next year's Consolidated Application workshops. Additional information will be sent as soon as it is available.

March 25 - Pueblo Area

March 27 - North Metro Area

April 1 - Grand Junction Area

April 3 - South Metro Area



- Amendments to districts' Corrective Action plan were due November 15th. Districts developing new plans must have them to CDE by January 7, 2008. Contact Brad Bylsma at bylsma_b@cde.state.co.us with any questions.
- NCLB School Improvement Plans are due to CDE by January 7, 2008. Contact Brad Bylsma at bylsma_b@cde.state.co.us with any questions.
- Thanks to the districts that sent in a signed copy of the written principal attestation. For districts that have not already done so, please forward a signed copy of the written annual attestation to Tina Tamayo at 1560 Broadway, Suite 1450, Denver 80202 or fax to (303) 866-6637. For a sample principal attestation visit www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/NCLB/tiia_genres.asp.

Colorado Quiz

November's Question:

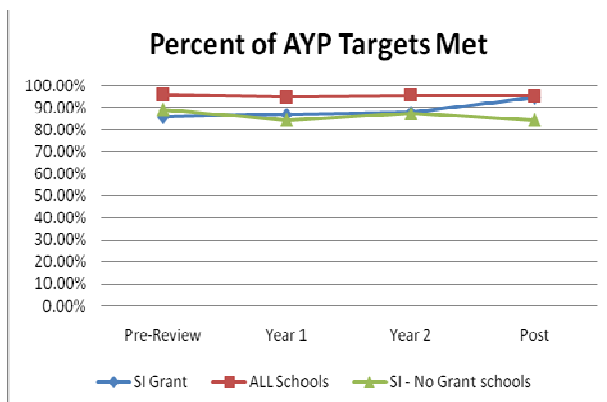
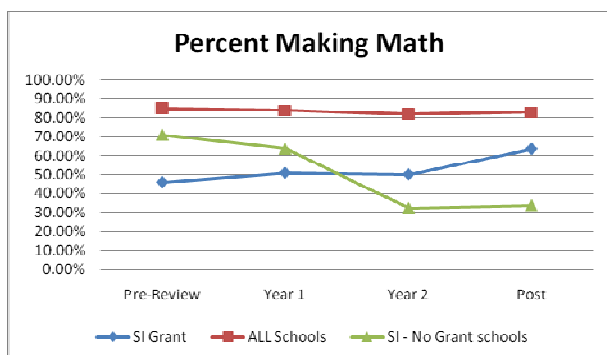
Name the song and the person who wrote the lyrics about Colorado's "for purple mountain majesties...". Katharine Lee Bates wrote the poem "America the Beautiful" during an 1893 summer trip to Colorado Springs, inspired by the view from Pikes Peak. The lyrics were matched with music by Samuel A. Ward (the hymn "Materna")

December's Question:

Name the top three patriotic songs Americans have taken to heart since Sept. 11th.

For the answer to December's question read next month's Buzz and/or visit the Professional Development and School Support (PDSSP) website at

www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/pdssp/ss.asp.



Finally, when the percent of AYP targets met is examined, the schools that have been involved with the Title I School Improvement Grant are performing at the same level as all schools in the state in their post grant year. CFP will continue to track these schools results.

CFP has also analyzed the specific results from the SST reports. Based on data from the School Support Team reports from Cohort 3, the area in which schools consistently showed strength was Standard 5: Student, Family and Community Support. Conversely, the schools have struggled with Standards 2 and 3: Assessment and Curriculum.

Current Priorities for the School Support Team Process in Colorado

One of the strengths of the SST process is the Title I School Improvement grant, which enables schools to implement the teams' recommendations. Consolidated Federal Programs is committed to designing a comprehensive SST review process that provides schools with meaningful recommendations, professional development and technical assistance. The Colorado System of Support has evolved as we have grown in our understanding of the needs in the field. The

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following highlights the areas that will be our focus during the 2007-2008 school year:

- 1) Six schools will participate in the revisit process. A revisit is when an SST returns to a school approximately two years after the initial review to evaluate the school's progress in relation to the nine standards.
- 2) Consolidated Federal Programs has contracted with an external consultant who will work with each school that received a SST review and grant during the 2006-2007 school year on how to strengthen their self-evaluation.
- 3) A Request for Proposal is being created that will allow CFP to develop an extensive model for evaluating the effectiveness of the SST process and grant funding.

There is still availability for schools interested in participating in the Title I School Improvement Grant. Apply by completing an *Intent Form* available at the www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/improvement/schimp_tia.asp or contact Laura Hensinger at (303) 866-6675. hensinger_l@cde.state.co.us.

POST AWARD REVISION SYSTEM NOW AVAILABLE!

LEAs/BOCES that need to make changes to their Consolidated Application must complete the Post Award Revision. The following indicates how to enter the system:

- 1) Click on the "Online Consolidated Federal Programs Application" link at www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/consapp/index.asp.
- 2) Select your district and use the same entry code that was provided when submitting the 2007-2008 Consolidated Application.
- 3) Click on "Click here to submit a Consolidated Application Post-Award Revision Request."

Applicants should submit all revisions at the same time. Multiple revision submissions will delay the review and approval process. Upon completion and submission of the online revision submission, applicants will need to fax a new signed Authorized Signature page to Tina Tamayo at (303) 866-6637. A new Authorization Signature page will be available immediately after submitting the online revision. Revisions will not be reviewed until a signature page has been received.

Nominations Sought for 2008 "Colorado Distinguished Title I Principal" Award

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For the first time, the Colorado Department of Education will recognize a principal from a Title I school who demonstrates outstanding commitment and excellence in school leadership. In addition to statewide recognition as a distinguished principal, the award recipient receives \$5,000 in honor of the achievement.

Nominations are due to the Colorado Department of Education by close of business on Friday, Dec. 14. Applications are available at www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/awards/index.asp.

Colorado standards for identifying Distinguished Title I Principals incorporate what research reveals about excellent leaders and performance-based standards for Colorado principals. These sources recognize the importance of documenting a high level of academic growth for all students, as well as leadership in the school and community. Therefore, the standards focus on evidence of the individual's ability to:

- Provide leadership that exemplifies respect, accountability and vision with regard to the right of every student to achieve maximum academic growth.
- Support effective, appropriate and innovative instruction, assessment and curriculum.
- Encourage student, staff, parents and community involvement during school hours and beyond.
- Establish an educational environment where students and teachers can focus on learning.
- Demonstrate quality management skill with regard to facility, budget and environment.

For further information, contact Kathryn Smukler at 303-866-6842 or smukler_k@cde.state.co.us.

NASA Engineering Design Challenge – Bring Space Into Your Classroom!

As NASA plans to return to the moon, plant growth will be an important part of space exploration. NASA scientists anticipate that astronauts may be able to grow plants on the moon in specialized plant growth chambers. Come participate and build your own lunar growth chamber in the NASA Engineering Design Challenge!

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Through the NASA Engineering Design Challenge, elementary, middle and high school students will:

- Design, build, and evaluate lunar plant growth chambers;
- Receive cinnamon basil seeds flown on STS-118;
- Test lunar growth chambers by growing and comparing both space-flown and earth-based control seeds.

To register and to receive more information about the NASA Engineering Design Challenge visit www.nasa.gov/education/plantchallenge.

You can also sign up for the NASA Express listserv to receive e-mail updates about the challenge and other NASA education activities.

Join the NASA Engineering Design Challenge and be part of space exploration by growing seeds flown in space!

FAMILY LITERACY GRANT

The Consolidated Federal Programs unit is now accepting proposals for its *Title I Reallocated Funds Family Literacy Grant*. A revised version of the RFP has been posted on the CFP website. The original included incorrect eligibility information under the definitions section.

Proposals must be received by Monday, December 17, 2007. Mailed proposals must be postmarked no later than Friday, December 14th.

Applicants may propose to (1) expand their capacity in the provision of the four components of a family literacy program, or (2) develop one or more of the four components in order to become, or increase the capacity of, a four-component program.

Awards will be made by January 18, 2008. Funds must be expended by August 31, 2008. Review the RFP for specific eligibility and proposal submission criteria at www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/NCLB/index.asp. For questions contact Patrick Chapman at (303) 866-6780, chapman_p@cde.state.co.us.

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