



# The Buzz

A consolidated federal programs newsletter

Issue 47

January 2008

# Happy 2008 Happy 2008

*The Colorado Department of Education would like to thank each of you for the support you provide the students of Colorado. We wish you a happy, healthy and safe New Year.*



## **Bonnie Staack Named Title I Distinguished Teacher**

Ellis Elementary School first-grade teacher Bonnie Staack was awarded the Title I Distinguished Teacher of the Year by the Colorado Department of Education.

Staack was nominated for the award by Ellis principal, Khoa Nguyen. "Mrs. Staack's goal is to ensure academic rigor while helping students develop to become independent critical thinkers, leaders and life-long learners," wrote principal Nguyen in his nomination letter.

Ellis Elementary School serves a diverse population. Students come from 28 different countries and speak 30 different languages. Principal Nguyen added that Staack teaches so her students "internalize self-worth and feel successful as they contribute to their community."

Staack is in her 21<sup>st</sup> year of teaching and the vast majority of her career has been with Denver Public Schools. "I want my students to be the very best they can possibly be," she said. "Every child is important."

Staack was chosen for bringing all her students to grade level or above in reading, writing and mathematics.

"Ellis Elementary School is fortunate—and the whole state of Colorado is fortunate—to have teachers of the caliber and quality of Bonnie Staack," said Commissioner Dwight Jones. "Congratulations to her on being recognized. She is an

outstanding representative of the dedicated teachers across the state."



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## Attention E-rate Participants!

The 2008 – 2009 funding window is well underway. Here are some dates to remember:

Last date to complete form 470:  
**January 10, 2008**

Last date to certify form 470:  
**February 7, 2008**

Last date to complete and certify form 471:  
**February 7, 2008**

Be sure to wait 28 days before selecting a service provider or signing contracts. For questions regarding the E-rate program, contact DeLilah Collins at [collins\\_d@cde.state.co.us](mailto:collins_d@cde.state.co.us).

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### *Online Access to Trainings Coming Soon*

Attending trainings that are held throughout the state is sometimes a difficult task for educators. With the expanding technology found in most districts, it is now reasonable to assume districts have the capacity to access and view videos online. Given these two scenarios, Consolidated Federal Programs has begun conversations with several of the BOCES in the state about their ability to host videos for the unit.

The first set of videos to be launched will be the School Improvement Plan/Title I Schoolwide trainings (SIP/SW), Part I and Part II. These two trainings provided technical assistance to districts and schools that were interested in working from a single plan; one that met the requirements of school accreditations as well as Title I Schoolwide requirements.

The timeline for launching the training videos is the end of January, 2008. Look for an update on this project in the February, 2008, BUZZ.



## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR SUPPLEMENTAL EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROVIDERS IS NOW AVAILABLE

The Request for Proposals (RFP) to become a State Approved Supplemental Educational Service Provider for the 2008-2009 school year is now available at

[www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/improvement/SuppServices.asp](http://www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/improvement/SuppServices.asp).

There will be a training on how to complete the RFP at the Colorado Department of Education in the the State Board Room on Tuesday, January 29<sup>th</sup> from 2-4 p.m. Proposals are due to the CDE on or before March 10, 2008.

Supplemental Educational Services (SES) are free tutoring opportunities for low-income children attending schools in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of school improvement, corrective action or restructuring. The cost of tutoring is paid for by the school district using Title I, Part A funds. A list of schools in Colorado that are presently offering SES as well as schools that may be required to offer tutoring during the 2008-2009 school year is also available at the above link.

This is not a competitive grant in that as many providers can be included on the list of approved providers as meet the criteria of the RFP. Furthermore, approval allows a provider to be placed on a list of approved providers which districts will send to eligible parents. There is no guarantee that if selected to be on the list the organization will serve students. Eligible parents are provided the list at the start of school and choose the provider that best suits their child's needs.

Currently, there are 52 state approved providers. Eligible applicants are organizations with a demonstrated record of effectiveness in increasing the academic achievement of students in reading and/or math. Districts and schools on Improvement may not be SES providers. However, a school that is not on Improvement within a district identified for Improvement may apply to be a provider.

Although Colorado has numerous high quality providers approved in the state, there continues to be a need for greater options for families outside the metro areas. If you know of an organization that would be a strong provider of Supplemental Educational Services please encourage them to apply. For further information contact Laura Hensinger at [hensinger\\_l@cde.state.co.us](mailto:hensinger_l@cde.state.co.us).

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

January 21<sup>st</sup>  
Martin Luther King Jr. Day  
Colorado Department of Education will be closed.

January 31 – February 3, 2008  
National Title I Meeting, Nashville, TN  
For more information visit  
[www.nationaltitleiconference.com](http://www.nationaltitleiconference.com).

February 18<sup>th</sup>  
President's Day  
Colorado Department of Education will be closed.

March 14<sup>th</sup>  
3rd Annual Colorado Statewide Pre-Collegiate  
Conference  
Auraria Higher Education Center  
8 a.m. – 4 p.m.  
For more information contact Gully Stanford at  
(720) 264-8563,  
[gully.stanford@cic.state.co.us](mailto:gully.stanford@cic.state.co.us).

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

April 13<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>  
National Association of Federal Education  
Program Administrators (NAFEPA)  
Washington, DC  
Register at [www.nafepa.org](http://www.nafepa.org).

April 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>  
2008 ELA Academy  
7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m., Denver  
For more information contact Joanna Bruno at  
(303) 866-6870, [bruno\\_j@cde.state.co.us](mailto:bruno_j@cde.state.co.us).



- Amendments to districts' Corrective Action plans were due November 15<sup>th</sup>. Districts developing new plans must have them to CDE by January 7, 2008. Contact Brad Bylsma at [bylsma\\_b@cde.state.co.us](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/NCLB/tiia_genres.asp).

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## Colorado Quiz

### December's Question:

**Name the top three patriotic songs Americans have taken to heart since Sept. 11<sup>th</sup>.**

Never mind the demographics, never mind the genre. Since September 11<sup>th</sup> the nation has pulled three songs to its heart

- 1) The Star-Spangled Banner
- 2) America the Beautiful
- 3) God Bless America

### January's Question:

**Who were the first people to inhabit Colorado?**

For the answer to January'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](http://www.cde.state.co.us/fedprograms/pdssp/ss.asp).

## Making Sense of the Census

Consolidated Federal Programs at CDE is working with the U.S. Census Bureau to put together a communication packet for districts. Since the data collected by the Census is used to configure allocations for many federal grants, including Title I, Part A, it behooves districts to find ways to educate their communities about the importance of responding to Census requests. This work with the Denver Census Bureau and subsequent communication packet will provide:

- Communication samples for parents, community, etc.
- Information on when the various census requests are made (one being the collection in March, which sets the poverty rate for districts)

The timeline for releasing this communication packet is mid-February. For more information regarding the census and suggestions for communicating with the public, contact Trish Boland at (303) 866-6998 or [boland\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:boland_t@cde.state.co.us). Additional information can also be found at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/faq.html>.

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## Nominate an *American Star of Teaching*

The U.S. Department of Education's Teacher-to-Teacher Initiative is accepting nominations for 2008 American Stars of Teaching until **March 31<sup>st</sup>**. Parents, students, colleagues, school administrators and others can nominate an exemplary teacher who they believe has the qualities to be an American Star of Teaching.

USDOE is seeking nominations of teachers across the United States who are improving student achievement, using innovative strategies in the classroom and making a difference in the lives of their students. Teachers across all grade levels and disciplines will be honored as 2008 American Stars of Teaching this fall. To nominate a teacher visit: [www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/index.html).

The U.S. Department of Education received more than 4,000 nominations for the 2007 school year. A list of previous honorees can be found at: <http://www.ed.gov/teachers/how/tools/initiative/american-stars-teachers.html>.

## Title I – D Training

This training is an introduction to the new Title I-D application for LEA coordinators for I-D, fiscal representatives and the I-D facility directors/coordinators in charge of writing the application. Following are the training dates and locations:

|             |                |
|-------------|----------------|
| February 5  | Grand Junction |
| February 13 | North metro    |
| February 21 | Pueblo         |

Online registration will be available January 14<sup>th</sup>. Specifics will be sent to district contacts. For more information contact Kathryn Smukler at [smukler\\_k@cde.state.co.us](mailto:smukler_k@cde.state.co.us).

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## *Paraprofessional Highly Qualified Data*

Currently 86% of Colorado Title I paraprofessionals (as of 2006-07) are highly qualified, thus CDE will be focusing on that data collection more closely over the next year. At this point in time, all Title I instructional paraprofessionals are required to meet the Highly Qualified (HQ) definition. The following provides a review of the requirements:

- All instructional Title I paraprofessionals must be HQ. In targeted assistance programs, this means paras that are attached to the Title I program (i.e., in the HR collection, job class code = 419). In schoolwide programs, this means all instructional paras (i.e., in the HR collection, job class code = 415, 416, 418 and 419).
- All paras must hold at least a high school diploma or its equivalent (i.e., in the HR collection, education level = 10 or higher).
- All paras must show basic skills competence by (1) holding an associates degree or at least 48 semester hours of college coursework (i.e., in HR collection, education level = 15 or higher) or (2) passing a paraprofessional test (i.e., district indicates this in the HR collection).

As with teachers, paras identified as non-HQ in the HR collection will be pulled into the online HQ plan system. LEAs will need to explain how the para is HQ or identify the plan to ensure they become HQ. The HR Collection will open in January and close in February. The online HQ system will open after the HR Collection closes.



## West Park Elementary Honored as the Title I Distinguished School

*On December 11, 2007, West Park Elementary staff and students were honored as a Title I Distinguished School and awarded \$10,000. The following highlights the work conducted by West Park that they feel has led to their success with students.*

West Park Elementary, an elementary school in Lake County School District, serves all students in grades 2-4 in Lake County and Leadville, Colorado. Lake County is a supportive, small community in the central mountains of Colorado, with strong community and parental support for schools. Partnerships, parent volunteers and family literacy all play an important part in our model.

West Park Elementary has increased student performance in reading, math, and writing significantly over the past three years. In addition, West Park Elementary has narrowed the achievement gap between students on free or reduced lunches and all other students, as well as English language learners. Two factors contributing to this success are Reading First and data-focused collaboration.

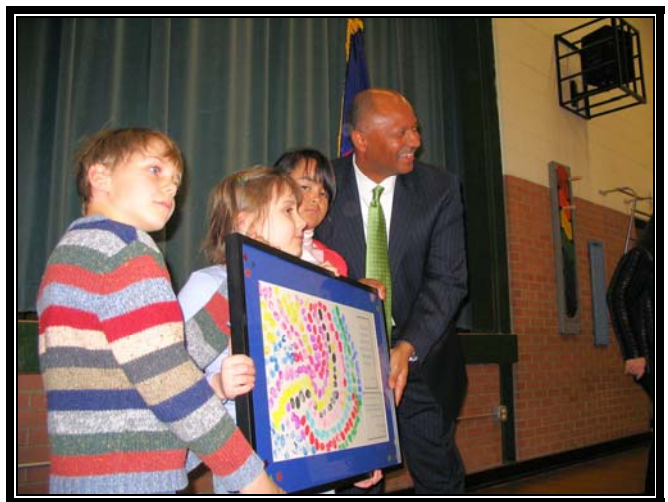
West Park is now in the third year of Reading First. Teachers use rigorous and systematic procedures to consistently increase their own knowledge about scientifically based reading research, including reading development, instruction, support and intervention. At West Park, reading instruction is explicit and systematic using scientific-based reading materials in the five components to reading. Ongoing, job-embedded professional development, both formal and informal, along with a literacy coach has provided opportunities for all teachers and staff to consistently integrate effective instructional strategies, effective analysis and use of data, and effective instructional planning on a daily basis, in every classroom, every hour, and every day of the week. The same effective instruction with 100% engagement is transferred into other content areas.

In addition to changes in instruction, West Park has increased daily student time and focus in reading and mathematics. Reading and mathematics instruction is divided between whole group, small group, and intervention, with a daily schedule allowing for 120 minutes of daily reading instruction and 120 minutes of daily math instruction

Collaboration among staff and a strong professional learning community has contributed to our success and academic improvement. Coordination of Title I and other programs allow Title I, Title III, and Special Education teachers, along with support staff to provide reading and math support for small group instruction and intervention groups.

As close teams who know that “**all** students are **our** students,” West Park staff work together in order to help all students achieve. Our motto, “*whatever it takes*,” allows us as a team to look at individual student data, determine what support or intervention is needed, and then continue to do “*whatever it takes*” to help all students master the essential learning targets from the state standards to proficiency. “Whatever it takes” also means that students reading at grade level work on higher level activities and strive for excellence and continued improvement.

West Park enrollment is approximately 270 in grades 2-4. Margaret J. Pitts Elementary (Pre-K through grade 1) provides the same components to student success. Approximately 71% of our students are on free or reduced lunch and approximately 72% are Hispanic and English language learners. We are proud of our school, its teachers and staff, administrators, students, and our community. We have been able to accomplish extraordinary things through our focus, dedication, and commitment to **all** students.



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