



STATE OF COLORADO

Bill Ritter, Jr. – Governor

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DWIGHT D. JONES – COMMISSIONER

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
DAVID E. SKAGGS – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

November 2008

Dear Community Leader:

Colorado faces a great challenge and opportunity to make its system of public education – from pre-school through college – more successful and productive. We hope you will be able to participate in an important meeting in Colorado Springs on December 3, 2008, to help us meet the challenge and seize the opportunity.

The “Preschool to Postsecondary Alignment Act” (sometimes called the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids, or CAP4K) was enacted this year with ambitious goals. It requires the leadership of Colorado’s P-12 schools and its postsecondary institutions to establish a workable pathway from preschool into college or the workplace. Essential to that pathway is an understanding of what it means to be postsecondary and workforce ready and, with that in mind, to ensure that students not only take certain courses but actually master the content. If Colorado successfully implements this legislation, we will lead the nation in preparing our children to be successful and competitive in the global economy.

Because the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and the Colorado Department of Higher Education (DHE) must work together for CAP4K to succeed, we are jointly holding the meeting on December 3 to get input and advice from community leaders such as you. Under CAP4K, CDE and DHE are required to jointly develop an agreed-upon description of “postsecondary and workforce readiness” by December 2009. The description in turn will be the basis for the standards for school districts to meet and for the tools to assess whether the standards have been met. In short, the description we come up with over the next 12 months will guide education in this state for the foreseeable future.

The meeting December 3 is one of a series of town hall style meetings we are convening around the state to hear the views of educators, students, parents, business people, community leaders and interested citizens on what goes into being postsecondary and workforce ready. What do students need to be successful once they leave high school? What are the 21st century

skills that an employer needs to see, or the competencies a college instructor expects? Are there special considerations for the workforce or higher education in your region of the state?

To help answer these questions, please attend the meeting on **December 3** at **El Pomar Foundation's Penrose House, 1661 Mesa Ave, Colorado Springs, CO, 80906 from 5:00 to 7:00 in the evening** with key senior staff from our two departments. Directions to the Penrose House are attached for your reference. Refreshments will be provided before the meeting.

If you would be so kind as to R.S.V.P. using one of the following three methods by close of business on November 26, we would greatly appreciate it:

- 1) if you received this invitation by email, please use the voting buttons provided on the email; or
- 2) call Maia Blom at the Department of Higher Education, 303-866-2723 and leave a voice mail message; or
- 3) send an email using CAP4K@dhe.state.co.us.

Please feel free to forward this invitation to others you think might be interested. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

David Skaggs



Executive Director
Department of Higher Education

Dwight Jones



Commissioner
Colorado Department of Education