STATE OF COLORADO

Bill Ritter, Jr. – Governor

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
DWIGHT D. JONES – COMMISSIONER

DEPARTMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION
D. RICO MUNN – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

March 2010

Dear Community Leader:

Colorado faces a great opportunity and challenge: 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 Greeley, CO on Wednesday, March 31, 2010 to help us meet this challenge.

Earlier this year, in accordance with SB08-212 (the Preschool to Postsecondary Alignment Act), the Colorado Departments of Education (CDE) and Higher Education (DHE) co-sponsored 13 regional town hall meetings around the state that focused on "postsecondary and workforce readiness," and the skills and competencies Colorado students need to succeed after high school. This legislation, sometimes called the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids, or CAP4K, was enacted in 2008. In addition to creating a description of what it means to be postsecondary and workforce ready (PWR), it requires Colorado to revise and align 13 Model Content Standards. The PWR description was adopted in June 2009, and the standards were adopted on December 10, 2009. This year, the focus shifts to the next phase of the legislation: a redesigning of our state assessment system.

Under CAP4K, Colorado is required to adopt a revised system of assessments that aligns with the updated state content standards. The revised system must include both school readiness and postsecondary and workforce readiness assessments; formative assessment; summative assessment; and the assessments for special populations (English Language Learners and students on an Individualized Education Plan).

To accommodate in-depth conversation on each end of the system, the 2009 – 2010 town hall meetings will be split into two parts: one devoted to school readiness and assessments for elementary grades, and one devoted to postsecondary and workforce readiness and assessments for secondary grades. A schedule of these meetings can be found on either department's website: http://highered.colorado.gov/Academics/cap4k/cap4k.html; http://www.cde.state.co.us/ASMTRev/publictour.htm.

The meeting on March 31 will convene educators, students, parents, business people, community leaders, and interested citizens. The focus of this meeting will be the PWR and secondary grade assessments; its purpose is to gather your views on what this redesigned assessment system would look like.

To assist us in this endeavor, we invite you to attend the meeting on **Wednesday, March 31, 2010**, at **University of Northern Colorado – University Center, Columbine A, 2045 10th Avenue, Greeley, CO**, from **5:00-7:00 pm** with staff from CDE and DHE.

Please R.S.V.P. to Maia Blom (303-866-2723 or maia.blom@dhe.state.co.us) by close of business on **Tuesday, March 23, 2010**. Link for directions and parking information: http://www.unco.edu/uncmap/ . Light refreshments will be provided before the meeting.

We encourage you to forward this invitation to others you think might be interested.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

D. Rico Munn

Executive Director
Department of Higher Education

Dwight D. Jones

Commissioner
Colorado Department of Education