



# COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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**Dwight D. Jones**  
Commissioner of Education

**Robert K. Hammond**  
Deputy Commissioner

**Kenneth R. Turner**  
Deputy Commissioner

December 1, 2009

The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave.  
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Mr. Secretary:

I would like to express my support of the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) State Longitudinal Data System (SLDS) grant application. Establishing a flexible P-20 data system in Colorado is a critical component of our comprehensive reform strategy focused on readying all students for postsecondary and workforce success. This system will play an essential role in (1) enabling the instructional connection to standards and assessments, (2) ensuring that there is a clear and common understanding of which schools comprise our lowest 5 percent and which serve as exemplars for replication, and (3) facilitating a highly effective human capital management strategy that supports great teachers and leaders.

The effective implementation of a P-20 longitudinal data system will provide crucial decision support for the leadership of educational improvement. Our vision is that this decision support will be routinely accessed and enhanced by users that strengthen their capacity to effectively manage those aspects of personal, school, district or state performance over which they have the greatest collective leverage. This requires access to high-quality and timely information and digital content, unprecedented transparency of information about student, classroom, school, district and state performance for all stakeholders, and maximized use of social collaboration tools and open-source application programming interfaces.

Our overarching goal is to continuously build the performance and knowledge-management capacity of students, parents, educators, administrators, policymakers, researchers and the public at large so that conditions support innovation and are ripe for self-sustaining continuous improvement. This environment will allow educators to learn and improve their practice, encourage students to learn and to understand their progress, and cause the public to develop informed perspectives about school performance and to become knowledgeable choosers of schools and educational programs.

I enthusiastically support Colorado's plan for the development of our information and knowledge management system and thank you for your consideration of this application.

Most sincerely,

Dwight D. Jones, Commissioner

cc: Robert K. Hammond, Deputy Commissioner