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December 3, 2009

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

Dear Secretary Duncan,

I write to express my strong support for an application submitted by the Colorado Department of Education (DUNS# 187406538) for funding made available through the U.S. Department of Education's Statewide Longitudinal Data System grant program.

I know how critical good data systems are in meeting the needs of students. Colorado's education system currently lacks the data system it needs to fully implement its policy priorities and meet the needs of all students. I witnessed this first-hand at Denver Public Schools: Too many students slip through the cracks and fail to graduate, and too many students graduate unprepared for postsecondary education and the workforce. A quality Statewide Longitudinal Data System will allow us to put data in the hands of parents and guardians, educators, researchers, policymakers and other stakeholders that will equip them with the necessary tools to make positive change.

I know the U.S. Department of Education has made Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems a priority and set funding aside for competitive grants. Colorado had the foresight to adopt policies and garner the necessary support to hit the ground running with an infusion of funds. The proposal submitted for this SLDS grant, called the SchoolView Project, will build a system that ultimately will enable all stakeholders to have the necessary information and skills to better support all of Colorado's students and educators.

I encourage you to recognize Colorado's strengths and consider us a worthy investment. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator