STATE OF COLORADO

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Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor

B 2010-001

EXECUTIVE ORDER

Creating the Governor's Council for Educator Effectiveness

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Office of the Governor of the State of Colorado, I, Bill Ritter, Jr., Governor of the State of Colorado, hereby issue this Executive Order creating the Governor's Council for Educator Effectiveness.

I. Background, Need, and Purpose

Dramatic improvement in overall student performance is needed in Colorado. The academic achievement of Colorado's K-12 students remains squarely in the middle as compared to other states. Perhaps more urgent is the collision course that our demographic trends and startling achievement gap has set us on. Gaps in achievement between our poor children and their more affluent peers are among the highest in the nation, and the number of Colorado children in poverty is increasing at an alarming rate.

Without dramatic and immediate change directed at eliminating these gaps in achievement and improving achievement overall, Colorado's economic health and quality of life will decline. Colorado, given its strong history of local innovation, its positive momentum in the area of education reform, and its tradition of collaboration, is well positioned to implement this needed change.

Improvements in student achievement ultimately rely upon the expertise and abilities of our educators, the individuals who have devoted their professional careers to ensure that our students are well prepared for adulthood. Every aspect of our public educational system must be focused on ensuring that these valuable professionals who serve our students daily have the knowledge, skills, and support necessary to meet this challenge. It is our collective responsibility to help kids learn despite the deficits and obstacles that may exist in their environment.

High expectations for the personal responsibility and performance of all students are essential, as are the complementary expectations for adult performance. The adults – parents, teachers, principals, and other support staff – are the most important resources of our education system, and their individual and collective effectiveness is the most important factor in improving student results. Colorado needs to attract, develop, and retain the highest quality staff possible

by creating school environments that maintain high standards of both professionalism and performance. Judgments about the effectiveness of our educators need to be made in ways that are objective, transparent, timely, fair, and informed by multiple perspectives and sound information.

The shared mission and ongoing professional collaboration within a school are the key factors in the success of the school. Those adults closest to the children are best positioned to know their students and to work together to define ways to help them succeed. The best outcomes will come through the ongoing collaboration of the adults in and around the school system including parents, teachers, administrators, and community leaders along with the students themselves. State resources are essential to support these people in their critical work.

To achieve the dramatic improvements we seek, there must be a significant change in behavior and practices in our schools. Although all schools must continue to improve, special attention should be directed to the lowest performing schools. All students deserve to be taught by effective adults. All of our educators deserve to have the support necessary to meet the unique needs of their students. It is our collective responsibility to work with our educators statewide to ensure that all have the capacity and the resources to achieve excellence for their students. For this reason, I am creating the Governor's Council for Educator Effectiveness (the "Council").

II. Mission

A. The purpose of the Council is to provide a forum for considering options and providing recommendations to ensure that every educator is:

1. Evaluated using multiple fair, transparent, timely, rigorous, and valid methods, at least 50% of which is determined by the academic growth of their students;

2. Afforded a meaningful opportunity to improve their effectiveness; and

3. Provided the means to share effective practices with other educators statewide.

B. The Council shall have the following charges:

1. The Council shall meet on or before March 1, 2010 to organize its work.

2. No later than December 31, 2010, the Council shall recommend statewide definitions of principal effectiveness and teacher effectiveness, each of which is centered on an educator's demonstrated ability to achieve and sustain adequate student growth that includes a set of professional skills and competencies related to improved student outcomes.

3. The Council's recommendations shall consist, at a minimum, of recommendations that are applicable to school principals and recommendations that are applicable to classroom teachers.

4. No later than December 31, 2010, the Council shall develop and recommend guidelines for adequate implementation of a high-quality educator evaluation system. Adequate implementation will require, at a minimum, demonstrating that:

    a. Ongoing training on the use of the system is sufficient to ensure that all evaluators and educators have a full understanding of the evaluation system and its implementation by, for example, conducting joint trainings for evaluators and educators;

    b. Evaluation results are normed to assure consistency and fairness;

    c. Evaluation rubrics and tools are deemed fair, transparent, rigorous, and valid by the local Transformation Council using a process that assures they meet or exceed rubrics created by the Colorado Center for Educator Excellence;

    d. Evaluations are conducted consistently and thoroughly;

    e. Evaluations are conducted using sufficient time and frequency, at least annually, to gather sufficient data upon which to base the ratings contained in an evaluation;

    f. Adequate training and collaborative time is provided to ensure that educators fully understand and have resources to respond to student growth data; and

    g. Student data is monitored at least annually to ensure the correlation between student growth and outcomes with educator effectiveness ratings.

5. In making its recommendations, the Council shall include the impact and effect of district and school level conditions, as measured by the nine performance standards set forth in the Comprehensive Appraisal for District Improvement ("CADI") rubric and bi-annual Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning Initiative ("TELL") survey of school working conditions, as well as any additional methods of assessing such conditions identified by the Council as valid, transparent, and reliable.

6. On or before December 31, 2010, the Council shall adopt a rubric for identifying multiple additional measures of teacher effectiveness (in addition to student growth) that are rigorous, transparent, and fair.

7. On or before September 30, 2011, the Council shall make recommendations to the Governor, General Assembly, and State Board of Education for policy changes, as appropriate, that will (i) support districts' use of evaluation data for decisions in areas such as compensation, promotion, retention, and removal, as well as the criteria for earning and retaining non-probationary status and (ii) ensure that the standards and criteria applicable to teacher and principal licensure and the accreditation of preparation programs are directly aligned with and support the preparation and licensure of effective educators.

C. The Council's recommendations may include changes to existing statutes or rules, as well as recommendations for local implementation.

D. All recommendations from the Council shall reflect the consensus of its members.

E. The Council shall meet as needed to complete the tasks set forth in this Executive Order.

III. Membership

A. The Council shall consist of the following fifteen members, appointed as follows:

1. The Commissioner of Education, or his or her designee;

2. The Executive Director of the Department of Higher Education, or his or her designee;

3. Four teachers, selected with the advice of the Colorado Education Association;

4. Two public school administrators and one local school district superintendent, each selected with the advice of the Colorado Association of School Executives;

5. Two members of local school boards, selected with the advice of the Colorado Association of School Boards;

6. One charter school administrator or teacher, selected with the advice of the Colorado League of Charter Schools;

7. One parent of a public school student, selected with the advice of Colorado Parent Teachers Association;

8. A current student or recent graduate of a Colorado public school, selected with the advice of a statewide student coalition; and

9. One at-large member with expertise in education policy.

B. The Governor shall appoint a chair and vice-chair from among the members of the Council.

C. Other than the designees of the Commissioner of Education and the Executive Director of the Department of Higher Education, the members of the Council shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the Governor.

D. The Council may establish working groups, task forces, or other structures from within its membership or outside its membership as needed to address specific issues or to assist it in its work.

IV. Funding and Staffing

A. The Colorado Center for Educator Excellence ("CCEE"), an independent research and data analysis entity to be created using funds from a successful Race to the Top proposal, shall provide the Council with necessary support, information, data, analytical information, and administrative support. Prior to the creation of the CCEE, the Office of the Governor and the Department of Education shall provide the Council with support, information, data, analytical information, and administrative support necessary to do its work.

B. The Council shall have the power to accept money and in-kind contributions from private entities and persons only to the extent such donations are necessary to cover its expenses. Any money contributed to the Council shall be directed to the Office of the Governor and deposited with the Treasurer of the State of Colorado in an account within the Office of the Governor's budget. Members of the Council shall serve without compensation, but may, at the discretion of the chair and approval of the Office of the Governor, be reimbursed for any actual expenses incurred.

V. Directive

The Governor's Council for Educator Effectiveness is hereby created.

VI. Duration

This Executive Order shall remain in effect until modified or rescinded by the Governor.

GIVEN under my hand and the Executive Seal of the State of Colorado this thirteenth of January, 2010.

Bill Ritter, Jr.
Governor