



For immediate release

November 13, 2012

Education groups release second-year research findings on Denver innovation schools

DENVER - Denver Public Schools, the Colorado Education Association and A+ Denver are teaming up to present a second-annual report to the public, the media and legislators on the state of the city's innovation schools.

The briefing takes place Wednesday, Nov. 14 at 5:00 p.m. in the CEA headquarters building at 1500 Grant St. in Denver.

The Evaluation Center in the School of Education & Human Development, University of Colorado Denver, was contracted by the three education groups to provide data on Denver's innovation schools through a three-year evaluation process. The second-year report, presented by Dr. Susan Connors of the Evaluation Center, will examine how the schools have built upon the findings from year one, and how changes in the schools relate to school employees and student outcomes.

"This report provides us with valuable insight into the success of our innovation schools as well as the challenges that they face," said Alyssa Whitehead-Bust, Chief of Innovation and Reform at DPS. "I'm encouraged to see that academic growth at our innovation schools is outpacing the state, meaning our students are improving academically and catching up with their peers at a faster pace than state averages.

"We are committed to strengthening teacher supports at all of our schools across DPS, including at our innovation schools. We want to make sure that our innovation teachers—who according to this report feel a strong sense of culture and empowerment—are supported and retained so we can ensure that student academic status in our innovation schools catches up to the strong growth they are showing," Whitehead-Bust added.

Henry Roman, president of the Denver Classroom Teachers Association, said the study shows some interesting preliminary trends at the innovation schools that need further examination.

"The high turnover in staff from year to year is a concern. We know that in order for schools to build on systemic practices and to create a culture of professional learning and trust, there needs to be consistency and momentum. Rebuilding a school culture from the ground-up with a brand new staff every year doesn't support these goals," said Roman.

"The Denver community should be encouraged that our education groups continue to develop innovation schools together," said Van Schoales, chief executive officer of A+ Denver. "We are putting the needs of students first in this collaborative process to gain the best outcomes in student growth and achievement."

Space at the innovation schools briefing is limited. RSVP with Elizabeth Platz, A+ Denver, at liz@aplusdenver.org or [920-698-0848](tel:920-698-0848). Parking is available in the CEA lot – sign in with the front desk.

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Thanks!

Mike Wetzel

CEA Public Relations Dir.

Office: [303-837-1500](tel:303-837-1500), ext. 137