

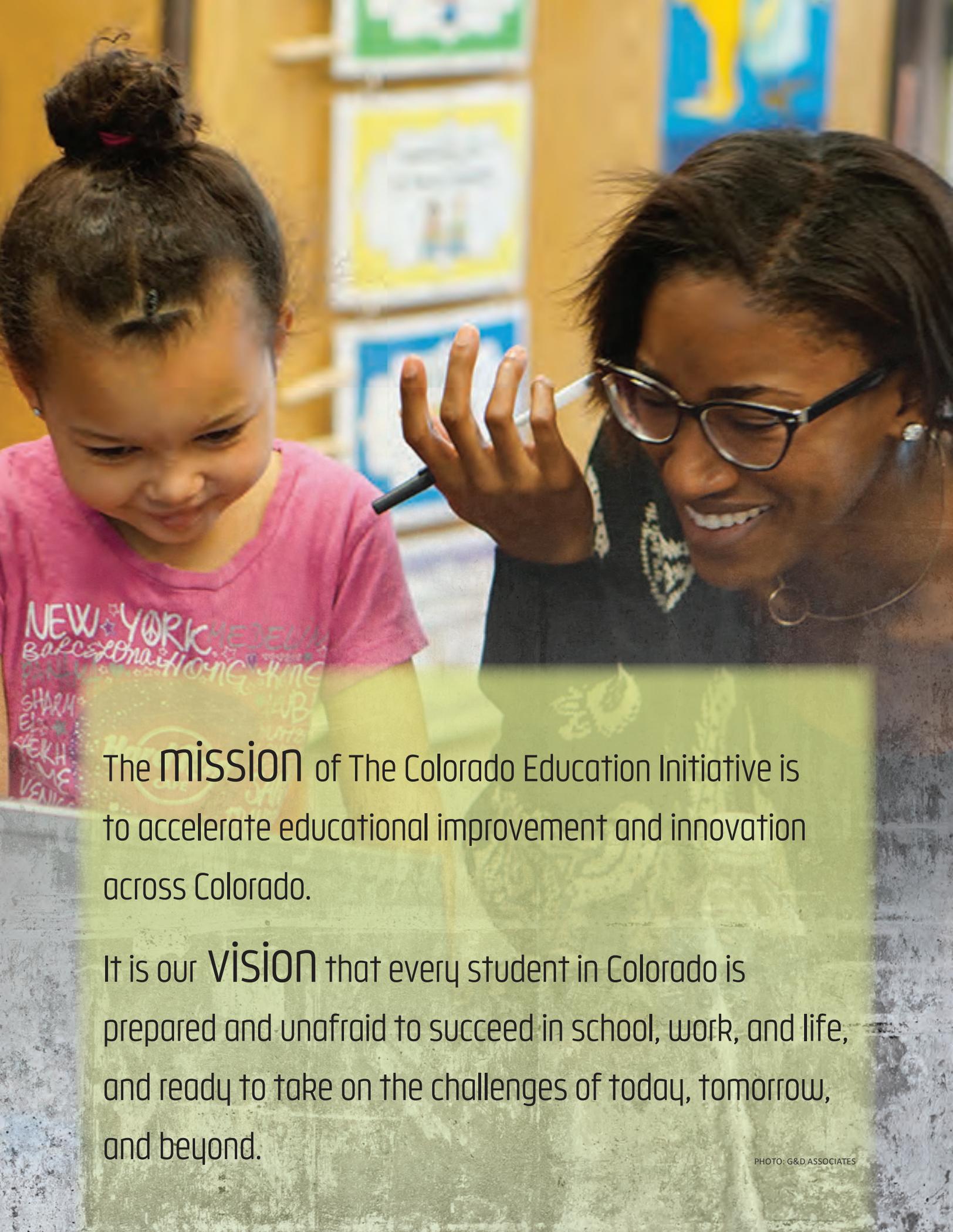


THE  
COLORADO  
EDUCATION  
INITIATIVE

2015-2016  
ANNUAL  
REPORT



POWERING INNOVATION



The **mission** of The Colorado Education Initiative is to accelerate educational improvement and innovation across Colorado.

It is our **vision** that every student in Colorado is prepared and unafraid to succeed in school, work, and life, and ready to take on the challenges of today, tomorrow, and beyond.

# FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



It has been an honor to serve as Chair of the Board of Trustees for The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI) since 2014. I, along with my colleagues on the Board, believe strongly that Colorado students, regardless of individual circumstances, deserve a high quality, personalized, engaging education to prepare them for success in school, work, and life.

Since 2007, CEI has worked with teachers, school principals, and district leaders to provide the professional learning, technical assistance, tools, and resources that they need to help Colorado’s students experience greater success. We are excited and encouraged by what has been accomplished in classrooms, schools, and districts across Colorado, and are eager to continue the good work into the future.

Sincerely,

Monica Skok  
CEI Board Chair, 2014-2016



As a native of Colorado and a product of our state’s public school system, I am thrilled to begin my tenure as Chair of CEI’s Board of Trustees. This organization is dedicated to ensuring that every Colorado student has the access and opportunity to benefit from high quality educational programs. Furthermore, CEI is committed to supporting innovative practices and programs designed

to transform our educational system into one better suited to meet the needs of our students, our communities, and our economy. Please join us in support of this important work.

Sincerely,

Leroy Williams  
CEI Board Chair, 2016 - present

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THE  
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INITIATIVE

1660 Lincoln Street | Suite 2000  
Denver, CO 80264  
303.736.6477

[coloradoedinitiative.org](http://coloradoedinitiative.org)

# THEORY OF CHANGE

CEI is an independent non-profit that collaborates with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), schools, districts, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), and partner organizations across the state to advance innovation, collaboration, and student achievement. Our partnerships help us implement innovative strategies to support educators in reaching every learner, every day. At the foundation of CEI's work is the long-term vision that all Colorado students have the opportunity to develop the academic, professional, personal, entrepreneurial, and civic outcomes that are necessary to succeed after high school.

To achieve that vision, CEI organizes our work into three inter-related strands that together drive meaningful and sustained improvements in public education:

1. Empowering educators with individualized professional learning;
2. Personalizing learning environments to provide every student with the educational supports and resources they need to succeed;
3. Driving systems change in ways that respond to the dynamic needs of communities, educators, and students.

We believe that collectively, these areas of work will accelerate innovation in Colorado's education system.

See



In 2015-16, CEI partnerships with teachers, principals, and district staff occurred in

114

Colorado school districts, which serve

91%

of Colorado's minority students and

90%

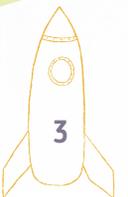
of students who qualify for free or reduced price lunch.

Additionally, CEI hosted 66 events with nearly

3,200 attendees.



the success Colorado educators have already achieved



## EMPOWERING EDUCATORS

**Empowering Educators** to bring instruction to life is at the heart of CEI's vision. To improve what they do and how they do it, educators need opportunities to collaborate and engage in meaningful and relevant professional development.



Educators are at the forefront when it comes to creating



## Instructional Supports

Through the 2015-16 school year, CEI continued to provide educators access to high-quality instructional resources—including the Literacy Design Collaborative (LDC) and Math Design Collaborative (MDC)—to help them design challenging and highly engaging learning environments that support students in meeting the expectations of the Colorado Academic Standards. More than 600 new LDC teachers and 180 new MDC teachers were trained over the course of the 2015-16 school year, bringing the total number trained in Colorado to 2,000 in LDC and 500 in MDC. Educators who have participated in LDC and MDC consistently report that they feel more equipped to teach the standards. In fact, more than 83 percent of trained teachers say that LDC and MDC improve the way that they teach and over 80 percent agree that using LDC and MDC tools in their classes leads to improved student outcomes and increased rigor.

“The most encouraging result I saw [through LDC] was the quality of my students’ writing. Even my most challenged writers were able to write multi-paragraph essays rich in content. **Eighty-nine percent** of my fourth-grade students made a year or more growth in writing and **82 percent** in reading. Other team members I collaborated with experienced similar growth.”

---

Colorado LDC Teacher and Instructional Coach

## Showcase

In addition to topic-specific training events and resources, CEI hosts an annual summer Showcase, designed to create the time and space for educators to imagine what is possible for learning while making meaningful connections with one another. Participants from across Colorado engage in peer-to-peer learning, build networks of support, and hear from local experts in the field.

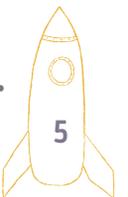
In June 2016, more than 400 people gathered at CEI’s Showcase in Snowmass, engaging in breakout sessions, Seeing is Believing expeditions, and discovery-based learning activities. Colorado educators shared their personal experiences through CEI’s inspiring Ed Talks, and keynote speaker Tony Wagner challenged everyone to consider how we think about education in an evolving society. Nearly 98 percent of attendees reported that their experience at Showcase made them feel valued as a professional and provided them with meaningful professional development. The energy at Showcase was contagious and helped attendees to feel both renewed and inspired.

“People come back from other conferences asking for money to purchase tools. People come back from CEI’s Showcase asking for support to improve and innovate their instruction.”

---

Scott Fuller, Next Generation Learning Coordinator  
Colorado Springs School District 11

environments designed to meet the needs of individual students.



## PERSONALIZING LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

CEI believes that student needs should drive the way we think about and design learning environments in Colorado schools, and our projects work to create **Personalized Learning Environments** that support the whole child, including social, emotional, mental, nutritional, and physical wellness.

The environment in which a student learns



## Colorado Legacy Schools

The Colorado Legacy Schools (CLS) initiative works with high schools and districts to dramatically increase the number and diversity of Colorado high school students who are succeeding in Advanced Placement (AP) math, science, and English courses. As of May 2016, CLS has supported 38 schools across 20 districts. CLS supported 10 additional schools across six new districts during the 2015-16 school year. The work is focused on students who are typically underrepresented in AP courses, including females, minorities, and students living in poverty. Students participating in CLS report that their AP courses have exposed them to more rigorous content and, as a result, they have gained confidence in their academic abilities. In fact, 97 percent of CLS students report that because of their participation in CLS AP courses, they more deeply believe they can be successful in college and career after graduating high school.

“Sometimes we honestly need to struggle more. Most of the time [in AP], it’s like one of those [problems] where you just get really stuck. And so then you just kind of learn to work through it. I think that’s really important because there are going to be problems, even times in your life, where you’re just stuck and you’ve just got to figure out how to push it through.”

---

CLS Student

## Next Generation Learning Challenges

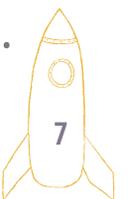
Thompson is one of three Colorado school districts to receive support from CEI’s Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) project to transform classrooms. Colorado Springs School District 11 and Westminster Public Schools are also putting school redesigns into motion, developing whole-school personalized learning models that strive to increase student engagement and ownership of their learning. Out of the six national NGLC grantees, Colorado is the only one that has engaged our state department of education—a partnership that has been instrumental in elevating the importance of the NGLC design work in the state.

“This innovative partnership supports our competency-based system, which embraces the idea that students should take ownership of their learning in an environment that requires them to be fully engaged and show mastery of their learning material.”

---

Dr. Pamela Swanson, Superintendent  
Westminster Public Schools (Adams 50 School District)

is directly connected to how much and how well a student learns.



# Health and Wellness

Health and wellness work at CEI takes a systemic, strategic, and coordinated approach to supporting the whole child, which includes social, emotional, mental, nutritional, and physical wellness. The Healthy Schools Initiative is one of the ways that CEI supports schools and districts in implementing health and wellness best practices, and all of the Healthy Schools grantees reported that their partnership with CEI has accelerated implementation of these efforts and has increased buy-in from school and district leaders.

For example, through a partnership with CEI, Lake County School District used existing time and resources to align health and wellness goals with academic achievement goals. The district has improved its nutritional program, promoted social and emotional well-being of students and staff, and committed to provide opportunities for every child to engage in physical activity and education every day. As a result, Lake County Intermediate School received the 2016 Platinum Governor's Award for School Health and Wellness, which recognizes the top Colorado school that is implementing best practices to support health and wellness for students and staff.

*"Times are changing within school culture and within communities. We are moving more in the classroom; the kids are getting more recess time – and guess what? Our test scores have gone up!"*

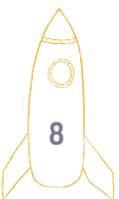
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Megan Leirfallom, Physical Education Teacher and Wellness Committee Team Leader  
Lake County School District

CEI also provides technical assistance and professional development to schools and districts that are working to create a positive school culture and climate. Through designing and implementing plans that address the social and emotional needs of students, schools and districts have made explicit the connection between positive school climate and academic achievement. Nearly 90 percent of the schools that received climate and culture supports reported that the work with CEI increased the likelihood that their district would implement needed supports for students, and 100 percent agree that with CEI's support, they are more equipped to use data to understand culture and climate.

Launched in 2014, Colorado Healthy Schools Smart Source (Smart Source) is the Colorado tool for assessing school health efforts and the only one in the country that provides comprehensive data about the school-level policies and practices that have the greatest impact on student health. A total of 451 schools representing every region of the state participated in the Smart Source data collection effort during the 2015-16 school year, and nearly 95 percent of these schools indicate that the tool provided useful data and equipped them to make informed decisions that benefit students.

Health and wellness work at CEI takes a systemic,





strategic, and coordinated approach to supporting the whole child.





The work under **Driving Systems Change** challenges the limits of the current system and the possibilities of a system that is aligned with the needs of postsecondary education and the 21st century workplace – a system that both leverages today’s opportunities for innovation in policy, structure, practice, and partnerships, and has the capacity to evolve and adapt in response to the opportunities of tomorrow.



## Accelerator Project

Kicking off in the 2015-16 school year, the Accelerator Project cultivated learning networks among educators across the state that focused on providing access to high-quality instructional resources, equipping strategic data use, designing and delivering effective professional development (PD) systems, and providing educators with meaningful leadership development opportunities. The Accelerator Project emphasized the importance of fostering a responsive education system by identifying the specific needs of teachers and offering PD and supports tailored to those needs. In fact, 94 percent of principals in Accelerator districts reported using input from teachers to inform their PD decisions, compared to 84 percent of principals in non-Accelerator districts. As a result, a higher percentage of teachers in Accelerator districts reported seeing positive impacts from their PD activities, such as advancing their understanding of effective instructional strategies, compared to teachers in non-Accelerator districts.

“[The Accelerator Project] leveraged our opportunity to put a larger focus on professional learning in our system. It allowed us to then start real conversations with our board of education, our superintendent who is in the room, to really start talking about allocating resources differently in our system.”

---

District Administrator  
Greeley-Evans School District

## STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math

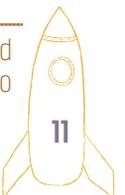
The STEM initiative at CEI is dedicated to preparing all Coloradans for success in a 21st century economy and community. STEM competencies prepare students to be critical thinkers, to persevere through failure to achieve success, to communicate and collaborate across real and perceived barriers, and to solve complex problems.

Delta High School and Poudre High School partnered with CEI and the Colorado Workforce Development Council (CWDC) to develop out STEM career pathways. Through the career pathways young adults are developing the skills needed to succeed in STEM careers in advanced manufacturing. The two high schools partner with industry to design and offer specialized, hands-on training for positions such as a machinist, welder, and engineering technician. Schools focus on recruiting under-represented populations, including females and students from low-income families. This ensures that students participating in the STEM pathway mirror the schools' demographics and all students are prepared to enter Colorado's innovation-based economy.

“We are pleased that Colorado schools [partnering with CEI] will prioritize recruitment and support for young women and low-income students in their STEM-career programs. Colorado is experiencing a shortage of middle-skilled workers for jobs that require more than a high school diploma, but less than a four-year degree, like manufacturing, healthcare, or construction. By creating a career track toward these jobs, we motivate and preparer women and girls to pursue careers that offer livable wages and opportunities for economic self-sufficiency.”

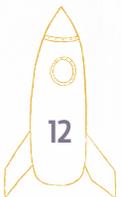
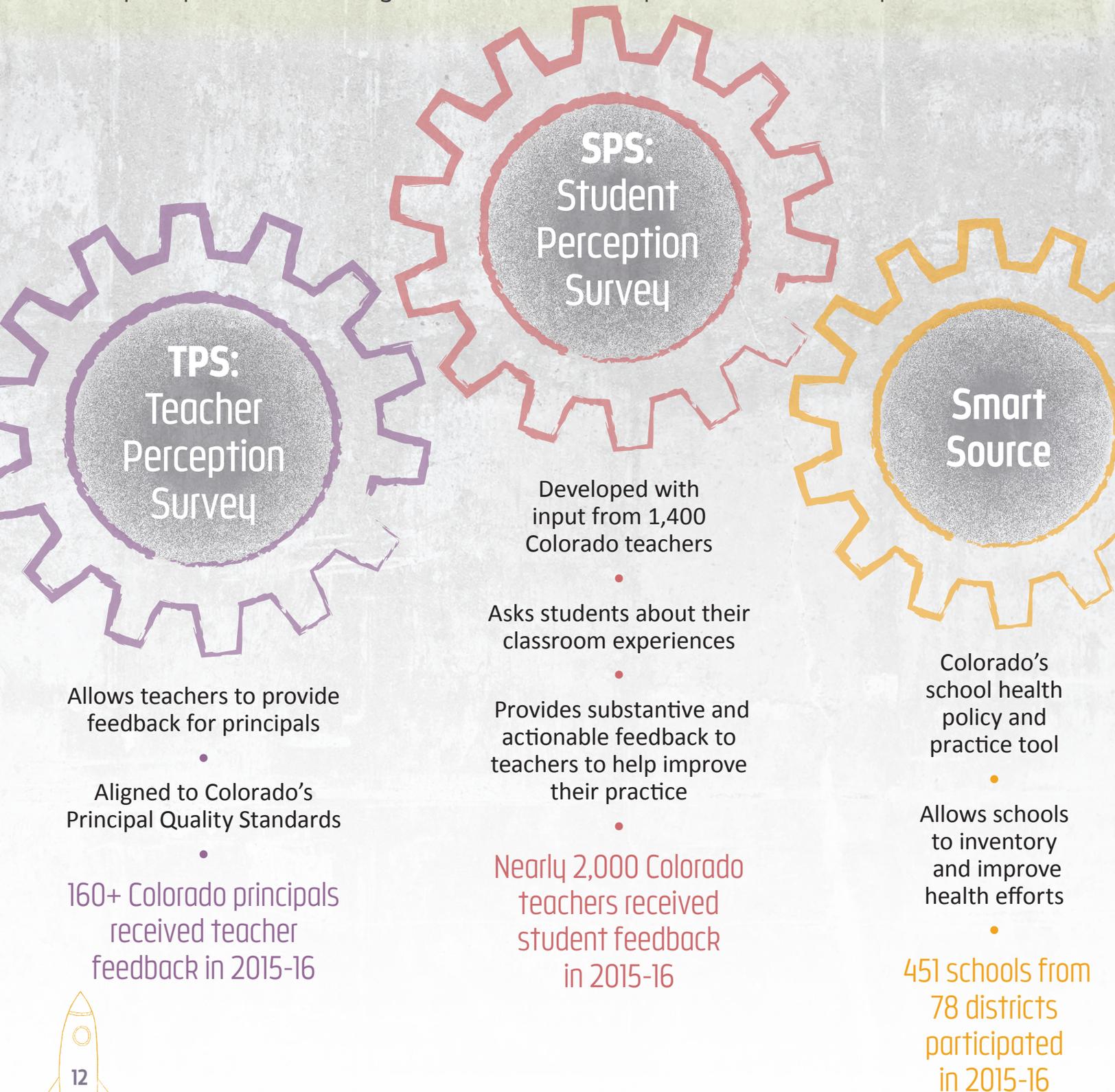
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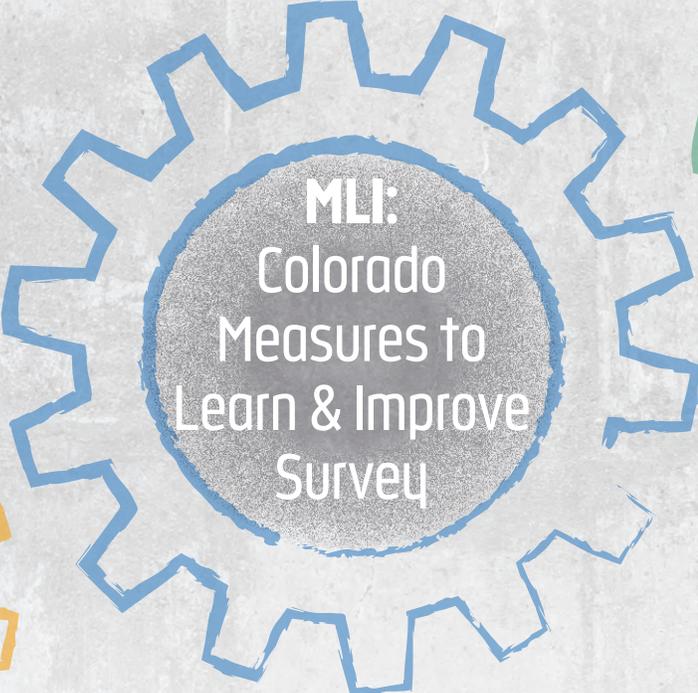
Louise Myrland  
The Women's Foundation of Colorado



# DATA-DRIVEN INNOVATION Equipping Educators to Use Data Strategically

CEI is increasingly working with educators, schools, and districts across the state to use data to drive decision making because we believe effective data use is a key component of creating an innovative and responsive education system.



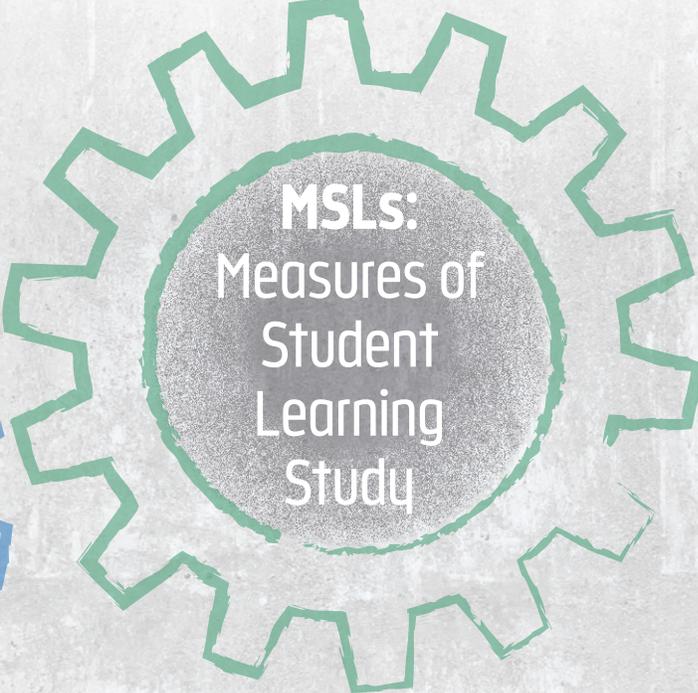


**MLI:**  
Colorado  
Measures to  
Learn & Improve  
Survey

Gauges educator perceptions of the impact, quality, and scale of Colorado's standards, evaluation system, assessments, and educator supports

Helps districts understand their educators' views and compare their results with the results of other Colorado districts

Piloted in spring 2016:  
4,000+ responses  
representing 35 districts



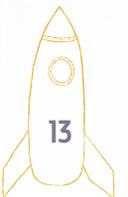
**MSLs:**  
Measures of  
Student  
Learning  
Study

Conducted in partnership with Slope Research

Gathers information about MSL system design and implementation

Provides tailored reports to each district with expert feedback and comparisons to other MSL systems in Colorado

56 districts,  
representing 46%  
of Colorado teachers  
and students,  
participated in 2015-16



# DONORS, SPONSORS, AND PARTNERS

CEI would like to thank the generous donors who make our work possible. These donors have made a commitment to help CEI achieve our mission to unlock the unique potential of every student in Colorado by incubating innovation, shining a spotlight on success, and investing in sustainable change that improves outcomes for students. The grants and donations CEI receives help to ensure that every student in Colorado is prepared and unafraid to succeed in school, work, and life, and ready to take on the challenges of today, tomorrow, and beyond.

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# FINANCIAL STATEMENT

## Revenues, Gains, and Other Support

	<b>2015</b>
Organizational grants	6,719,432
Registrations and sponsorships	261,262
Contributions	333,728
Program registration fees	369,923
In-kind	1,286
Investment income	4,901
Other revenue	4,593
<b>TOTAL REVENUES, GAINS, AND OTHER SUPPORT</b>	<b>7,695,125</b>

## Expenses

Program services and grants	10,712,396
Management and general	935,139
Fundraising	253,993
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>11,901,528</b>

## Asset Summary

Change in net assets	-4,206,403
Net assets, beginning of year	11,267,900
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>7,061,497</b>
<b>NET ASSET BREAKOUT, END OF YEAR</b>	
Invested in Property and Equipment	103,535
Board Designated Net Assets - Reserves	450,000
Board Designated Net Assets - Innovation Fund	250,000
Board Designated Net Assets - Future Programs	368,273
Undesignated Net Assets	178,220
Temporarily Restricted Net Assets*	5,711,469
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>7,061,497</b>

*\*Decrease in temporarily restricted net assets due to delivering programmatic requirements on multi-year funded grants.*



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