Colorado Rural Education Collaborative Compact

The basic Compact was outlined at a two-day design meeting held in Pueblo, Colorado on June 11-12, 2015. The event included nearly 100 participants from 30 rural districts, six BOCES, five professional associations, the Rural Educational Council, higher education, philanthropy, and business and civic leadership. The basic design question was: Together, how can we identify, scale and sustain high impact innovations that advance rural education and prosperity? All parties that sign this Compact commit to one common purpose: expanding student opportunity, enhancing educational quality, and enriching economic prosperity for rural Colorado. All parties recognize that the value of sharing resources and relationships requires a certain kind of leadership—trust, ingenuity, openness, innovation, creativity, transparency, respect, responsiveness and a mission-first mindset. We recognize that we have a better chance of realizing our common purpose if we connect around high impact innovations, share everything we can, secure additional resources through aligned action, and actively participate in a community of learning. We also know that we need to connect and not duplicate any of the numerous vital and relevant initiatives, organizations, people and networks that are committed to a more positive future for rural Colorado students, schools and communities.

This Collaborative is designed to strengthen the value and impact of all these efforts through the power of networking. We all want to make tangible progress on some tough problems facing rural Colorado. We also recognize that we live in a time of great opportunity where a strategy of sharing can make a real difference for our children, families and home towns.

We agree to the following guiding principles to engage the right people at the right times in the right ways around the right innovations to advance rural student opportunity, educational quality and economic prosperity.

1) Act as a network of networks that include the voices of rural students, parents, communities, schools, educational service providers, higher education, philanthropy, and workforce and economic development.

2) Promote widespread engagement between places and people that hold a shared mission—rural districts, communities and champions committed to expanding student opportunity, enhancing educational quality, and enriching prosperity.

3) Focus on relevant high impact and cost effective innovations that make a real difference.

4) Be open and share everything we can.

5) Celebrate early victories.

6) Remove barriers.

7) Connect through a simple collaborative infrastructure and online platform that makes it easy to engage around common interests, strengths, needs, resources, impact measures and mutually reinforcing action.

8) Leverage investments for greatest impact.

9) Scale and sustain change through trust, transparency and reciprocity.

To realize our shared aspirations we need to locate, link, lift, and leverage our shared assets. From the early days of community barn raising and grain/electrical co-ops to today, we know that rural Colorado is better off when we work and learn together for mutual benefit and growth.
Colorado Rural Education Collaborative

*Advancing Opportunity, Quality, and Prosperity*

**Focus:** Raise educational attainment and increase the value of educational credentials for rural students, families and communities.

- Rural students secure credentials that advance aspirations and economic self-sufficiency.
- Rural families reduce postsecondary education cost burdens.
- Rural communities grow and keep talent for local economic vitality.

**High Impact Innovation Priorities (°denotes Awesome Idea identified by Pueblo participants):**

1) **Opportunity:** Expand rural student access to educational resources that fit their personal aspirations, skills and learning dynamics.
   - Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP) Implementation°
   - Blended Learning°
   - Concurrent Enrollment
   - Student engagement, wellness, and social emotional learning

2) **Quality:** Enhance rural teacher and principal access to systems of support that advance their capability, leadership and impact.
   - Teacher Preparation, Recruitment and Retention°
   - Teacher Practice Networks°
   - BOCES Professional Learning Systems

3) **Prosperity:** Enrich rural community access to assets that advance education and economic development for local benefit.
   - Mutual school and community enhancement projects°
   - Advanced CTE and technical certifications°
   - Education to industry pipelines (e.g. entrepreneurship pathway)

**Commitments and Created Value**

Every organization identified below commits to the compact by signature. It is fully recognized that the core value proposition for this Collaborative rests on every participant getting greater value than they give.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Created Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battelle for Kids: Co-invest with public/private partners to establish the collaborative.</td>
<td>Battelle for Kids: Work with Collaborative participants to secure resources to support, scale and sustain high impact innovations within and across participating districts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Affiliated Organizations: Made up of state associations, professional associations, economic development, higher education, philanthropic entities and other rural school improvement groups that work together to advance Collaborative work and remove barriers to success.</td>
<td>Affiliated Organizations: Each organization can engage the power of the collaborative to grow their own impact as well as that of their members.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Districts: Ensure top leadership support, share capacity, coordinate data, information and communication requests, and align resource</td>
<td>Districts: Access to more resources and relationships to:</td>
</tr>
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</table>
### Colorado Rural Education Collaborative

*Advancing Opportunity, Quality, and Prosperity*

| pursuit strategies tied to Collaborative priorities. Commit to high impact innovations that fit their agenda. | • Increase student achievement and employability;  
• Strengthen teacher and principal quality; and  
• Grow community vitality. |
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<tr>
<td><strong>BOCES</strong>: Align and support regional and local leadership and activities around high impact innovations.</td>
<td><strong>BOCES</strong>: Strengthen their own legitimacy and spread what they do well.</td>
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<td><strong>Higher Education</strong>: Ensure a stronger voice and equal participation of rural districts in high impact innovations such as concurrent enrollment, blended learning and connections to business and industry.</td>
<td><strong>Higher Education</strong>: Reduce educational attainment gaps particularly for first generation and/or minority rural students. Promote economic and workforce development with participating rural communities and their schools.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Economic/Workforce Development</strong>: Share information with and about local employers, connect schools with internships, apprenticeship and certificate programs. Build strong and relevant partnerships with employers and school programs, pathways and projects.</td>
<td><strong>Economic/Workforce Development</strong>: Promote pipelines of local talent trained and ready for local jobs, reverse brain drain, and grow local entrepreneurial capacity.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Community Leaders</strong>: Align and support community leadership around high impact innovations.</td>
<td><strong>Community Leaders</strong>: Grow and keep more local talent. Attract new talent.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Philanthropy</strong>: More coordinated, accountable, and impactful investment approach to rural student opportunity, educational quality and economic prosperity.</td>
<td><strong>Philanthropy</strong>: Grow their own impact as well as that of their grantees.</td>
</tr>
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### Simple Rules for Collaboration

The Collaborative and all of its members will operate using these simple rules as a guideline:

- Make it easier to make connections that matter
- Do not duplicate existing efforts and relationships, strengthen them
- Keep it simple for districts to participate
- Let student, educator and community needs guide action
- Make relationships mutually respectful and beneficial
- Leverage Collaborative power into more capacity and resources

### Participating District Expectations

To be part of the Compact districts must:

1. Commit to guiding principles, mission, strategy, high impact priorities and impact measures of the Compact.
2. Ensure strong board, superintendent, and community leadership engagement.
3. Be willing and able to share district resources to support high impact innovations.
4. Work in close cooperation with other districts in the Collaborative especially those in their own BOCES and geographically nearby.
5. Coordinate shared pursuit of external resources to support high impact innovations that fit their agenda.
Colorado Rural Education Collaborative

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6. Facilitate information sharing and data gathering as needed.
7. Participate in Stewardship Group meetings.

Battelle for Kids Expectations

Battelle for Kids will work with Colorado-based networks to:

1. Provide leadership, facilitation and expertise on setting up the Collaborative and supporting the implementation of high impact innovations with participating districts.
2. Connect expertise and assistance from: people, projects, networks and organizations that have demonstrated success in implementing designated high impact innovations in rural settings—e.g., Guiding Coalition members, BOCES, philanthropy, higher education institutions, researchers, policy makers, business leaders and others who can be valuable assets to participating districts.
3. Pursue funding for high impact innovations from a variety of sources.
4. Evaluate Collaborative progress and goal achievement, making necessary adjustments, and broaden engagement across rural Colorado as progress warrants and funding permits.
5. Help in strategic communications to gain recognition and support for the Collaborative at the state and federal level.

Defining Impact*:

- Educational attainment
- Economic growth and business/industry engagement
- Teacher and principal quality
- Student engagement
- High school diploma and industry-recognized credentials quality index (student, family and community value)
- New investments in rural students, families and communities

*Gathered and shared in a regular progress assessment, indicators established by Collaborative members. Various projects will have varying impact measures.

Collaborative Governance:

- Collaborative Stewardship: District leadership meets twice a year to set the direction and monitor progress of the Collaborative. Smaller steering committee meets at least four times a year (two of the meetings connected to larger Stewardship meetings).
- Top leadership representatives from all participating BOCES are an ongoing working group of the Collaborative.
- Priority innovation teams are ongoing working groups focused on the same high impact innovation priority (i.e., student opportunity, educational quality and/or economic prosperity).
- BFK and Colorado-based networks serve as the backbone support system for the Collaborative.
Signatures
Superintendent of Participating District (required)

Name: ___________________________________________
Signature: 

School Board President (suggested)

Name: ___________________________________________
Signature: 

Affiliated Organizations e.g. BOCES, Colorado-based networks, higher education, economic/workforce development entities, or philanthropy (suggested)

Name: ___________________________________________
Signature: 

Battelle for Kids (required)

Name: ___________________________________________
Signature: 

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