



**COLORADO**  
**Department of Education**  
Commissioner of Education

201 East Colfax Avenue  
Denver, CO 80203-1799

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Dear Superintendents and BOCES Directors,

Thanks to all of you who were able to join me, Gov. Polis and the state epidemiologist, Dr. Rachel Herlihy, for the webinar this afternoon. I know some of you were unable to join us, so I wanted to send out [Dr. Herlihy's presentation](#).

Also, we unfortunately ran out of time and were unable to talk about the Governor's announcement yesterday about his plans for the Governor's Emergency Education Relief Fund. If you missed it in the [CDE Update](#) yesterday, the [Governor announced](#) he will allocate \$33 million for grants to help K-12 public schools and higher education institutions prevent and address the "COVID slide" and support innovation and equity.

The new P-20 innovation fund will help schools address the learning challenges related to the economic, social, and health impacts of COVID-19 in a manner that creates lasting innovations and improved student learning across both pre-K-12 and higher education. These grants will focus on student-centered learning, rethinking the student experience, strengthening and formalizing linkages between higher education, PK-12, and industry, and catalyzing innovations that can drive long-term impact and be sustainable after the life of the grant.

In addition, the governor plans to increase funding by \$5 million or \$6 million to help Colorado Empowered Learning – the existing state-supported supplemental online and blended learning program operated by Colorado River BOCES – quickly expand capacity to help more school districts provide blended-instruction during the pandemic at low or no cost. As the statutorily defined "administering BOCES" for supplemental online and blended learning, the Colorado River BOCES has a foundation of expertise in supporting schools and districts with educating students in a way that incorporates both in-person and digital learning strategies. By expanding capacity for this work, schools and districts will have greater access to resources that will help them deliver on education for students that is adaptive both to in-person and remote digital learning.

He is also investing \$3 million for educator recruitment and retention to provide stability for school districts. The Quality Teacher Recruitment program provides support to organizations to recruit, select, train, and retain highly qualified teachers in areas that have had historic difficulty in attracting and keeping quality teachers.

CDE will provide more information soon on how districts can tap into these resources.

I hope you all have a good weekend and find some time for rest and reflection after these very challenging days and weeks,

Katy





Katy Anthes, Ph.D.  
Commissioner

