



Rural Centered
July 2024

A Monthly Newsletter from the
Colorado Center for Rural Education

Northeast Colorado BOCES Raises Rural Teachers Up with Professional Development

Educators and support staff in northeast Colorado can look forward to another round of [Consortium Professional Development](#) Days this fall and winter, sponsored by the [Northeast Colorado Board of Cooperative Educational Services](#) (BOCES). The Northeast Colorado BOCES is a cooperative that serves educators, administrators, support staff, counselors, and bus drivers in 12 small, rural school districts. We spoke with Anthonya Kahrs, Director of Instruction, Accountability, and Learning, about what's on the agenda for this year's Professional Development (PD) Days.

Personalized Learning Journey

The structure of the PD Days allows participants to choose which training sessions they want to attend based on what helps them meet their professional learning goals. There are several cohorts that plan their own agenda and develop their own training: career and technical, business, agriculture, preschool, and counselor.



Dr. Robert Fulton, Director of the Colorado Center for Rural Education, talking with attendees at the 2023 PD Days

"We get such positive feedback from attendees," said Kahrs. "They love being able to personalize their professional learning journey." Kahrs conducts post-session surveys to understand what attendees are interested in learning so that she can incorporate those ideas into the following year's training.

In addition to the programming developed by the cohorts, this year's offerings include a specialized classroom management workshop, a three-day workshop related to teaching diverse learners, and a comprehensive three-part series to teach multidisciplinary teams how to prevent school violence and foster a culture of safety. The Northeast Colorado BOCES has added three new topics as well.

New Topics This Year

The organization was awarded a grant by the Colorado Department of Education and is using those funds for literacy instruction. Participants will learn how to incorporate research-based strategies into their daily instruction.

Another change is a focus on the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom. Participants will explore how to use AI to increase productivity, support differentiated instruction, streamline lesson planning, and curate high-quality resources. "We want attendees to understand how to harness the power of AI by discussing the many potential use cases," said Kahrs.

The organization has also added days four and five of the Kagan Cooperative Learning training to the agenda, which means the 200 or so teachers who have taken the first three days of that training can become fully certified. Kagan Structures are simple but powerful cooperative learning strategies supported by a large body of scientific research.

Supporting Teachers with Strategies and Tools

"When a teacher has a horrible year and no tools, it causes burnout," said Kahrs. She noted that the training educators receive at PD Days gives them the tools they need to manage the classroom and make a positive impact and calls it "the ultimate retention tool." Kahrs observed that the training helps teachers feel like they have purpose and feel less frustrated and more motivated. Kahrs added, "When educators can effect change in the classroom and in their students, they're much more likely to stay."



Upcoming Application Timelines

Rural Inservice Educator Stipend applications for fall 2024 accepted:
May 1, 2024, through August 31, 2024

Colorado Rural Student Teaching Stipend applications for spring 2025 accepted:
July 1, 2024, through October 31, 2024

Colorado Substitute Stipend applications accepted:
Through August 2024

Visit TEACH Colorado's **[Financial Aid and Scholarship Information](#)** page for information about additional scholarships.

For financial aid available to in-service and aspiring educators, download the _____
