



Rural Centered

A Quarterly Newsletter from the Colorado Center for Rural Education

May 2022

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Survey Results Are In!

CCRE aims to strengthen the rural educator pipeline and thereby improve student outcomes. We award stipends to teacher candidates that they use to complete their credentials and remain employed in rural schools. In the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022, for example, CCRE awarded \$902,750 in stipends to 193 recipients.

In February of this year, we partnered with Marzano Research to analyze teacher-assignment data. We sent surveys to 583 stipend recipients. The purpose was to collect information about recipients' current teaching assignments, their perceptions of the stipend program, and what impact the stipends had on their careers and the schools where they're working.

Important findings from the analysis of the data are:

- 85% of 2017–2018 retention stipend recipients were still in the same rural school three years later.
- Retention stipend recipients in 2019–2020 had 100% one-year retention (compared to 80% for all rural Colorado teachers).
- Recipients reported that stipends resulted in reduced teacher stress, increased opportunities for student learning, improved instruction, and improved student resources.

Thanks to all who responded to the survey. These survey results will help us improve and continue the stipend program for future rural educators across the state of Colorado.



Thinking of Hiring J-1 Workers? Do It Now

Steven Johnston, the director at [Colorado Learning](#), urges rural districts to consider [hiring J-1 visa holders](#) to fill open positions—and to do it sooner rather than later. The [J-1 nonimmigrant visa category](#) is for individuals approved to participate in exchange visitor programs. Those who are teachers are allowed to work in a U.S. school for up to three years, with the possibility of extending that term by one or two years.

"The window of opportunity is already closing due to wait times at U.S. embassies and processing times to get the visa," said Johnston. Any school considering hiring a J-1 worker for fall of 2022 should move quickly.

At this time, Colorado Learning is working with their visa provider to secure emergency appointments at U.S. embassies to ensure teachers are arriving in the U.S. as quickly as possible. "The outcomes of the appointments have been positive, and teachers will be on time for school start dates," said Johnston.

"In many cases, rural districts consider hiring J-1 workers a last resort," said Johnston, which means they wait far too long to start looking at their options. "This is a trend that we have tried to correct over many years, but it is still entrenched."

Hiring J-1 visa holders brings a very high quality of teacher into the district, and that dramatically improves outcomes for students. —Steve Johnston, Director, Colorado Learning

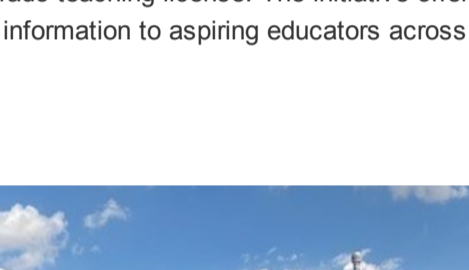
Johnston noted that the J-1 teachers are extremely well qualified, with Master's degrees in subject areas like math. "It's almost impossible to find the same qualifications in U.S.-based candidates. Hiring J-1 visa holders brings a very high quality of teacher into the district," said Johnston, "and that dramatically improves outcomes for students."

Colorado Learning's sole focus is to help education professionals find excellent jobs in the education sector. For more information, visit www.coloradolearning.com, or contact Director Steven Johnston by email at coloradolearning@outlook.com or by phone at 720-329-2983.

More Ideas for Filling Open Positions

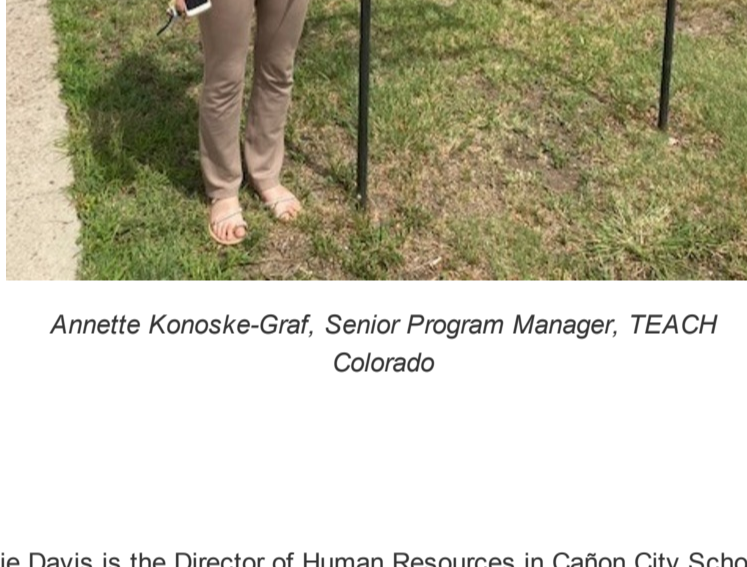
The [Colorado Center for Rural Education](#) reminds you of four additional options for filling open positions:

1. Pay Colorado student teachers to teach in your classroom before they complete their teaching degrees.
2. Turn to online options like [Colorado Digital Learning Solutions](#) to fill immediate or out-of-the-ordinary needs.
3. Hire substitute teachers to fill short-term needs.
4. Hire an [AmeriCorp volunteer](#) to serve as a reading or math tutor.



Partner Spotlight: TEACH Colorado

[TEACH Colorado](#) is a multisector initiative that provides free resources and support to anyone considering pursuing a Colorado teaching license. The initiative offers one-on-one coaching, financial aid, and extensive information to aspiring educators across the state.



Annette Konoske-Graf, Senior Program Manager, TEACH Colorado

The program partners with the Colorado Center for Rural Education and school districts to support grow-your-own initiatives, especially among non-licensed staff members and high-school students. Cañon City is one district that partners closely with TEACH Colorado. Brad Leander, a Cañon City special education educator (and former paraprofessional) was happy to receive support from the organization. "TEACH Colorado helped me navigate my program's application checklist and search for scholarships!" said Leander.

Jamie Davis is the Director of Human Resources in [Cañon City Schools Re-1](#). About TEACH Colorado, Davis said, "Especially with so many candidates coming in on alternative routes, it's helpful to have a one-stop-shop for potential educators. It can be overwhelming learning how to enter the field, and TEACH Colorado makes that process easier." She added that just this year, the district and TEACH Colorado have co-hosted two events focused on alternative licensure that both had strong attendance numbers by community members and district employees.

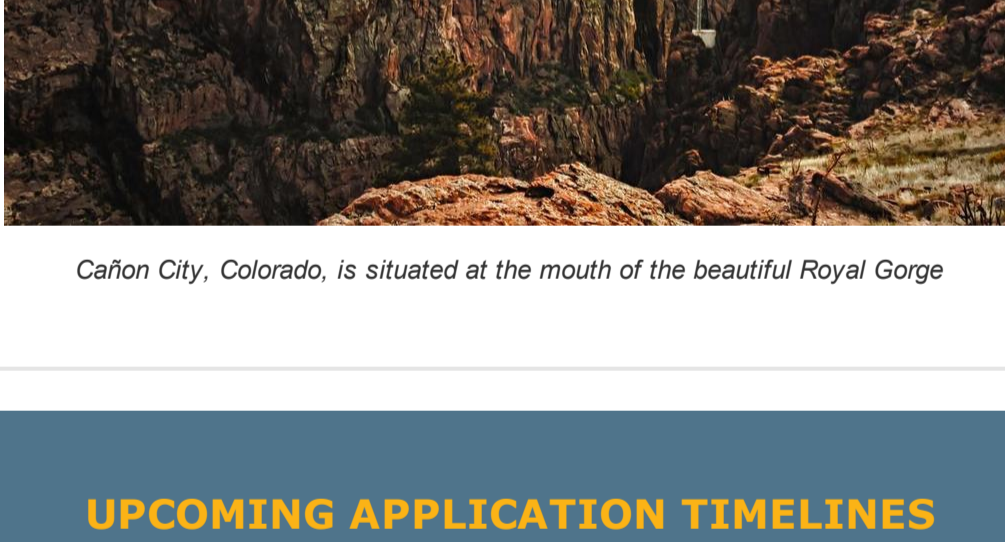
"It's helpful to have a one-stop shop for potential educators in TEACH Colorado." —Jamie Davis, Director of Human Resources, Cañon City Schools Re-1



Community meeting to discuss alternative licensure options; hosted by Cañon City Schools and TEACH Colorado

Davis invites teacher candidates to take a closer look at Cañon City as their future home. "The Cañon City school district has a reputation for being at the forefront of innovative practices and positive staff relations," said Davis. Located 100 miles southwest of Denver in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, the city features a mild and hospitable year-round climate. "It's simply a wonderful community in which to live, work, and raise a family," Davis added.

Learn more about [TEACH Colorado](#) or the [Cañon City community](#). If you have more questions about TEACH Colorado, reach out to [Annette Konoske-Graf](mailto:Annette.Konoske-Graf).



Cañon City, Colorado, is situated at the mouth of the beautiful Royal Gorge

UPCOMING APPLICATION TIMELINES

[Colorado Substitute Stipend](#) applications accepted:
Ongoing

[Rural Inservice Educator Stipend](#) applications accepted:
May 1 through August 31, 2022

[Special Services Provider Stipend](#) applications accepted:
May 1 through August 31, 2022

[Colorado Rural \(Student\) Teaching Stipend](#) applications for spring 2023 accepted:
July 1 through October 31, 2022

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, plus recruitment strategies and resources for school districts, BOCES, and charter schools, download the Colorado Department of Education's [Educator Recruitment and District Supports flyer](#).

Stipend Spotlight: Colorado Substitute Stipend

The [Colorado Department of Education](#), in partnership with the [Colorado Center for Rural Education](#), offers [stipends](#) of \$300 to new, first-time substitutes (licensed on or after January 1, 2020). Recipients can use the funds to reimburse a variety of costs associated with obtaining a substitute authorization.

To receive the stipend, you must apply, be accepted, and complete a [Substitute Boot Camp](#) online course. We are currently accepting applications! Please review the [FAQ](#) for eligibility and form questions.

Substitute Stipend Questions? Contact our Stipend Coordinator at substitutestipend@unco.edu. Bootcamp Questions? Contact Educator Recruitment at educator_recruitment@cde.state.co.us.

Apply for CSS

Our Featured Partners

The [Teacher Cadet Program of Colorado](#) is a "Grow Our Own" teacher-recruitment program for high-achieving high school juniors and seniors.

[TEACH Colorado](#) links potential teachers with jobs in their districts and provides licensure support to paraprofessionals and high-school students who are interested in teaching.

The [Public Educator Loan Forgiveness Program](#) offers up to \$5,000 of loan repayment assistance for educators.

The [Public Education & Business Coalition](#) helps to prepare outstanding new teachers, helps practicing educators become exceptional, and shapes policies that foster student success.

Contact Us

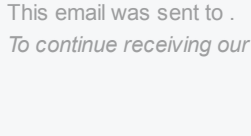
The [Colorado Center for Rural Education](#) supports educators by providing financial support to pre- and in-service teachers and special services providers. Visit our [website](#) for more information about our mission and available [stipends](#).

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Learn about CCRE

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