

# **Leadership Council Chronicle**

March 2021

## What Do Top-Performing Teachers Do?

Two Denver-Area School Districts Weigh In

Has a friend or family member ever told you a story about a particular teacher who made a lasting impact on them? A teacher that radically changed their perspective about their identity as a "good student"? The common theme: That teacher cared.

Caring teachers help students feel seen, understood, important, and respected. They value students' differences. They collaborate with students' families and community members. In other words, they are master relationship builders. The Best Teachers Connect with Students

### Pat Sandos, Superintendent of Sheridan School District, agrees that the

teachers who perform well in his district are the ones who can build relationships. "We need teachers who can connect with students," said Sandos. "The best teachers are culturally competent and take the time to understand the stories of students and their families," he said.

Who Would Be a **Great Teacher?** 

The UNC Center for Urban

**Know Someone** 

Education (CUE) is enrolling new students for the fall 2021 semester through July.

Contact Dr. Rosanne Fulton, Director, at 303-637-4334 or <u>email</u> her for more information. Watch our short video to

learn more about the CUE teacher-preparation program.



"The best teachers are culturally competent and take the time to understand the

In the Sheridan School District, it's a huge plus when a teacher has expertise working with students who are learning English as a second language. Students sense the teacher's empathy, which makes them

feel safe. "So they are more confident taking risks in learning," Sandos said.

"The UNC Center for Urban Education has a long and strong tradition of producing teachers who can meet the needs of all children in urban classrooms."

Sandos has often turned to the Center when hiring new teachers. "The UNC Center for Urban Education

has a long and strong tradition of producing teachers who can meet the needs of all children in urban classrooms," said Sandos. "The graduates from the Center are changing the narrative about what's possible. They create inclusive classrooms, hold all students to high standards, and support them in achieving at a high level," Sandos said.

## skills in teachers. Swanson implemented a district-wide competency based learning system in 2009.

The Best Teachers Are Guides

stories of students and their families."

Rather than using traditional grades and grade levels, students must demonstrate mastery of a topic before moving on to the next level.

Pam Swanson, Superintendent of Westminster Public Schools, also highly values relationship-building



trust and positive relationships with the students.

demonstrating problem-solving abilities themselves."

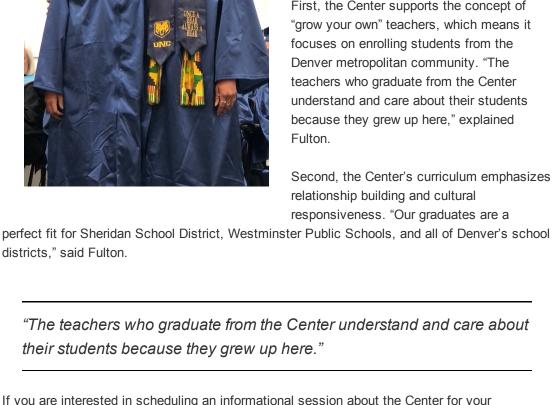
"We look for teachers who help students become problem solvers by demonstrating problem-solving abilities themselves," said Swanson. "The teachers that do well in our school system support students in figuring out their own path to success and making their own choices. They solicit input from students and

She and her team are doing something right. In 2018, Westminster Public Schools was taken off the state Accountability Clock and moved up into the "Improvement" category. In 2019, the district was the

"We look for teachers who help students become problem solvers by

capitalize on students' strengths to shape assignments and projects," Swanson added.

only one in the metro area to show an increase in SAT scores. And for 2020, the Colorado Association of School Executives named Swanson Superintendent of the Year. "Grow Your Own" Programs



Rosanne Fulton at 303-637-4334 or by email.

#### First, the Center supports the concept of "grow your own" teachers, which means it

"Our strategies and curriculum closely align with the local school districts' need for teachers with certain skills." said Dr.

Rosanne Fulton, Director of the UNC Center

Yield Caring Teachers

for Urban Education.

focuses on enrolling students from the Denver metropolitan community. "The teachers who graduate from the Center understand and care about their students because they grew up here," explained Fulton.

Second, the Center's curriculum emphasizes relationship building and cultural responsiveness. "Our graduates are a

If you are interested in scheduling an informational session about the Center for your paraprofessionals, or you'd like to learn more about hiring the Center's graduates, contact Dr.

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