

**Colorado Children's Campaign  
Colorado Succeeds  
Donnell-Kay Foundation  
Metro Organizations for People**

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**Handbook for Schools, Districts and Parents  
Explains Options for Autonomous Schools in Colorado**

Leaders in Colorado's education reform and business communities who support the development of autonomous schools in Colorado have been meeting since the passage of the 2008 Innovation Schools Act to explore ways to educate and encourage school, district, and parent leaders in moving their schools toward autonomy and innovation. Today, these community leaders released a handbook outlining options for schools, districts and parents as one contribution toward that end.

"Colorado has been a leader in innovative education reform over the past few years with an ever increasing number of reforms encouraging the development of autonomous schools. School districts and individual schools now have a number of options to choose from if they seek autonomy and innovation," said Alex Medler, Vice President for Research and Analysis, Colorado Children's Campaign. "This has undoubtedly led to some measure of confusion about the difference between an innovation school, a pilot school and a charter school. We hope the handbook we are releasing today will be a tool to help navigate these options."

The report released today, "Options for Autonomous Schools in Colorado: A Handbook for School and District Leaders," was researched and written by Kelly Hupfeld, research assistant professor at the School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado Denver. Participants in the creation of this report include the Colorado Children's Campaign, the Donnell-Kay Foundation, Metro Organizations for People and Colorado Succeeds. The report was funded by Communities for Public Education Reform.

The handbook provides a guide for educators and parents around questions including: "What is an Innovation School? What is a Pilot School? How are these schools different from each other and are they different from charter schools? If I want to open a new school or significantly reform an existing school, what are my options?"

For more information or to access the handbook, please visit: Colorado Children's Campaign - [www.coloradokids.org](http://www.coloradokids.org); Colorado Succeeds – [www.coloradosucceeds.org](http://www.coloradosucceeds.org); Donnell-Kay Foundation – [www.dkfoundation.org](http://www.dkfoundation.org); Metro Organizations for People – [www.mopdenver.org](http://www.mopdenver.org).

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