We're pleased to be in your inbox with our monthly Communication Matters newsletter, in which we highlight district successes, provide updates on relevant news, and pass along pertinent information to bolster your CASE membership.

With that said, we love hearing about innovation in your districts! Is your school or district doing something worthy of a shout-out? Be it a district-wide project, a school-specific milestone or even a staff member who goes above and beyond, we want to know! Be sure to contact CASE Director of Communications Melissa Gibson with your story or shout-out for a chance to be featured in a future Communication Matters. Email her at mgibson@co-case.org.

Spotlight On: Cotton Creek Elementary School's New Full-Day Kindergarten Classes' First Day of School

After a hard push for funding full-day kindergarten, Governor Polis is (rightfully!) celebrating its first year of implementation. Earlier this month, he joined a previously half-day kindergarten class at
Cotton Creek Elementary School in the Adams 12 Five Star District, to help welcome kids to the school’s new full-day kindergarten classroom.

Thanks to the passing of HB 19-1262, which provided statewide funding for free, full-day kindergarten, Cotton Creek Elementary was able to add two more full-day kindergarten classes to their roster, creating four total full-day kindergarten programs in the school. 50 more kids, who otherwise would have stayed in a half-day program, were enrolled in full-day kindergarten.

“We’re thrilled,” said Cotton Creek Elementary School Principal, Theresa Gilbreath. “100% of our kindergarten students are now getting the full-day program.”

Since historically, the two half-day classes shared one classroom, Gilbreath said, they were able to build a new classroom to accommodate having all kindergarten students in the building at the same time. Furthermore, HB 19-1262 allowed them to hire a new technology teacher, so that kindergarten students can benefit from P.E., music and now, technology classes, too.

Governor Polis arrived in the morning, and took a tour of the building, Gilbreath added. She walked him through the many programs they’re able to offer, such as a significant needs program, or a program for children with autism.
“We also talked about the diversity of the school,” she said, adding that Cotton Creek’s student population is a pretty diverse one. “The theme here is that all are welcome. Everyone is welcome here, and we serve all students.”

To that end, Governor Polis read a book called All Are Welcome by Alexandra Penfold to the kindergarteners.

“It follows a group of children throughout their day at school—[the kids] come from every culture, every race, they’re dressed according to their cultures, and it talks about how all are welcome in that school,” Gilbreath said. “It ties back to our theme here.”

Gilbreath talked about the value of full-day kindergarten for young students, adding that those who would otherwise have been enrolled in a half-day program will now graduate to first grade with a stronger foundation.

“Kids in half-day [programs], they had a shorter curriculum before. The impact of being able to now get them the education they need before going into first grade, and to really have the time to build relationships with these kids—it’s a blessing,” she said.

**Nominate a Student or Colleague for RAPSA’s At-Promise Awards**

Nominations for the Fourth Annual RAPSA (Reaching At-Promise Students Association) At-Promise Awards are now open, and accepting nominees until September 30, 2019. The awards include the RAPSA Courage Award, the RAPSA Heart Award, and the RAPSA Vision Award. Click on the individual award links to learn more about each award and the respective nomination processes.

**CDE Census Resources**

The Colorado Department of Education has created a webpage dedicated to the 2020 Census, including any information relevant to school and district leaders, as well as resources for teachers. Click here to access the website.

**From AASA: PDK Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools**

Earlier this month, AASA issued a statement following the release of the 51st Annual PDK Poll of the Public’s Attitudes Toward the Public Schools. The report found that half of teachers surveyed have seriously considered leaving the profession, due to frustration related to low pay and underfunded schools.

We recommend reading through the poll findings, as they provide interesting and valuable context on the national conversations around public education. Click here to read the full PDK Poll report.

**Highlights from the 50th Annual CASE Convention**

If you joined us in Breckenridge last month at the 50th Annual CASE Convention, CASE would like to extend our sincerest gratitude for your participation and support of our association. This year’s
Convention was a particularly special one, as we honored our past and looked ahead to the future with our theme, “Standing on the Shoulders of Giants.”

CASE strongly appreciates you taking a few minutes to take this year’s Convention Attendee Survey. We use your feedback to ensure that future events continue to exceed expectations and meet your needs. Click here to access the survey.

If you were not able to attend this year, click here to read about some event highlights. We hope you’ll join us at the 2020 CASE Winter Leadership Conference in February.

Panasonic Student Eco Citizenship Project comes to Denver
The Foundation for Impact on Literacy and Learning, in partnership with the Panasonic Corporation of North America, announced the first year of the Panasonic Student Eco Citizenship Project in Denver. All subject area fifth to eighth graders are invited to participate for free. Registered teachers will be provided resources to guide their students to be eco-minded, and to engage with their communities to create environmental change. Click here to learn more about the program, and to register for free.

In The News

- Special education teachers are hard to find. They’re also some of the hardest to keep, new study shows. (Chalkbeat Colorado, 8/21/2019)
- These 30 people will help reimagine Denver’s controversial school rating system. (Chalkbeat Colorado, 8/21/2019)
- Raising the bar or moving the goalposts? Changes pending for Colorado school rating system (Chalkbeat Colorado, 8/20/2019)
- A Colorado private college pledges to slash price for lower-income, in-state students. (The Denver Post, 8/27/2019)
- These are Colorado’s most-improved schools on this year’s CMAS tests. (The Denver Post, 8/22/2019)
- How a State Plans to Turn Coal Country Into Coding Country (New York Times, 8/10/2019)