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### **SCHOOLS EARN BIG REWARDS FOR HELPING STUDENTS SUCCEED**

There are big smiles on the faces of the principals and staff at Deane Elementary and Stein Elementary schools – and it's not because of the approaching holiday break.

Both schools have accepted a *2010 Centers of Excellence* award from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). Only 32 schools in the state received the prestigious honor – and it's Stein's second year to snag the honor.

Plus, both principals opened congratulation letters from *The Partnership for Great Schools*, which includes *The Anschutz Foundation, Fox Family Foundation, Gates Family Foundation* and *Piton Foundation*. The congratulations were for a \$25,000 grant to Deane and \$30,000 grant to Stein.

CDE recognizes public schools that have a student population with 75 percent of students who are at-risk and show the highest rates of student growth in reading, writing and math as measured by the Colorado Growth Model.

"Schools are now being judged on their academic growth," said Stein Principal Socorro Alarcon. "Many of our kindergartners have never held a pencil in their hand, but despite the challenges, we are able to help kids achieve and reach grade-level proficiency at the end of the year."

The two Title 1 schools have high transient student populations on free and reduced lunch.

"It was evident that these school teams own and share the students," said Tom Gougeon, president of the Gates Family Foundation. "When we visited Deane and Stein there were no excuses and they firmly believed that every child can learn regardless of their background."