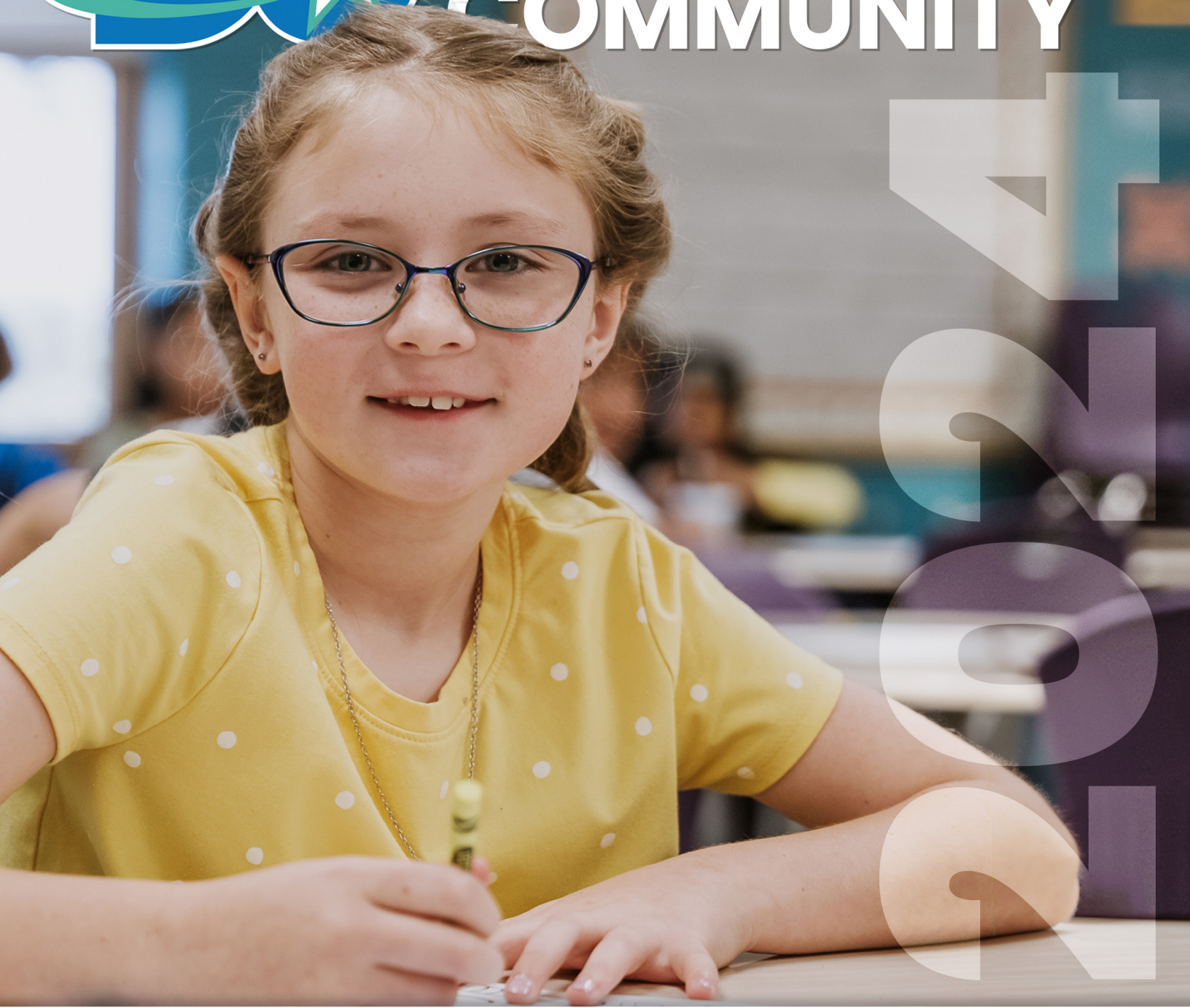




Greeley-Evans School District 6

# REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



2021







# A MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT **DR. DEIRDRE PILCH**



## ***All means all.***

We say that a lot in education, so much so that it might sound a little cliché. Yet, ensuring that all students receive an excellent education, have adults who truly care about them, have resources to meet their goals, and leave our system college and career ready is paramount to all we do in Greeley-Evans School District 6. It is what we mean when we talk about equity. No matter where they come from or what individual goals they have, we need to make sure all students have what they need to be successful.

Innovation2030, the District 6 strategic plan, is dedicated to all means all. Personalized learning plans, tiered instructional strategies for all students, ensuring every student has a trusted adult in school, providing social and emotional support - these are just some of the objectives in our strategic plan aimed at helping ALL students access the best education possible.

Some of our students still are not where they need to be academically. We are still catching students up from the learning they lost during the pandemic. We have students who are new to the country and need additional support. More than 70 percent of our students are living in poverty and might need additional time and resources to reach learning milestones.

The good news is that we have excellent leaders, educators, mental health professionals and support staff who are dedicated to ensuring that every child meets their potential and reaches their goals. We also have a community that has come around us to support our students, families and staff. We couldn't do this work without them.

In this annual Report to the Community, you will see some examples of how District 6 is living the values and beliefs stated in Innovation2030. You will get updates on our bond issue as we begin the last year of projects. You will read about incredible students who are resilient, hard working, talented and brilliant. You will learn about the latest developments in our Career Pathways program and get updates on what is happening to ensure all students and staff are safe in our schools.

We want every child to learn, be loved and live their best life. All means all is what we work for every day. We are determined to serve every child in District 6, making sure they have all they need to be successful. Thank you for taking the time to learn about Innovation2030 in this Report to the Community.

**Deirdre Pilch, EdD**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

# WHO WE ARE

## MISSION

District 6 engages every student in a personalized, well-rounded and excellent education, preparing students to be college and career ready.

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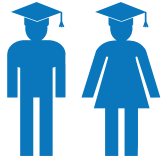
## VISION

District 6 engages, empowers and inspires today's students in partnership with families and communities to succeed in tomorrow's world.

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## VALUES AND BELIEFS

- Our students come first.
- We know every child can achieve.
- We believe diversity is a strength.
- We ensure safe, secure and healthy schools.
- We build positive relationships with students, families and communities.
- We promote access, opportunity and choice.
- We commit to hiring and retaining quality staff.
- We commit to excellence, innovation and continuous improvement.



# 22,648

TOTAL PK-12 STUDENT MEMBERSHIP AS OF OCTOBER 2023




# 15<sup>TH</sup>

LARGEST SCHOOL DISTRICT IN THE STATE OF COLORADO

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# 3,080




EMPLOYEES WORK IN DISTRICT 6  
*One of the largest employers in Weld County*




# 50+

DIFFERENT LANGUAGES ARE SPOKEN BY STUDENTS IN DISTRICT 6



# 83.7%

OF OUR STUDENTS GRADUATE ON TIME  
*Above the state average of 83.1 percent*




# 130

STUDENTS EARNED THE PRESTIGIOUS AP SCHOLARS AWARD  
*for their outstanding performance on the 2023 Advanced Placement Exams*

# MORE THAN 1,000




District 6 students enrolled in courses at AIMS Community College, the University of Northern Colorado and other colleges, with tuition paid through the District 6 Mill Levy Override



# 29

CAREER PATHWAYS ACROSS DISTRICT 6



Michael Mathews  
President



Natalie Mash  
Vice President

# Greeley-Evans School District 6 BOARD OF EDUCATION



Doran Azari  
Director



Kyle Bentley  
Director



Dr. Brenda Campos-Spitze  
Director



Rob Norwood  
Director



Taylor Sullivan  
Director



# INNOVATION

I'm District 6. 2030



## STUDENT LEARNING & ACHIEVEMENT

District 6 engages all students in a challenging and personalized education, preparing each student to be career and college ready.



## OPERATIONAL & ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

District 6 ensures innovation, transparency and accountability to our community through measurable outcomes and continuous improvement.



## CLIMATE & CULTURE

District 6 cultivates a safe, healthy and inclusive learning environment for all, embracing our diversity and engaging all stakeholders.



## STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS

District 6 enhances student success by communicating, engaging and collaborating with our communities and school partners.



Innovation2030 is the strategic plan that drives the work in Greeley-Evans School District 6. It was approved by the Board of Education in May 2020 and has been revised several times to meet the changing needs of our school community. Innovation2030 was developed with the help of District 6 staff, students, parents and community members.

The work is concentrated in four focus areas: Student Learning and Achievement, Climate and Culture, Operational and Organizational Effectiveness and Strengthening Partnerships. Under each of these focus areas are goals, objectives, outcomes and action plans that work to enhance and improve student achievement and learning opportunities. Action plans are aimed at improving graduation rates and student achievement, broadening positive relationships with parents and the community, enhancing the culture in schools by providing social and emotional support for students and staff, enhancing safety and security, and aligning district resources to plan for the future.



To monitor the progress and implementation of the strategic plan visit:  
[www.greeleyschools.org/innovation2030](http://www.greeleyschools.org/innovation2030)





## Every student is special.

Each child who comes to District 6 has their own ideas, their own interests and their own hopes for the future. They may have unique cultural norms, family traditions and abilities that influence how they learn.

An important objective in Innovation2030 is creating a meaningful, personalized learning plan for each student, starting while they are in elementary school. The plans will be reviewed and updated as students move from elementary to middle and to high school.

The goal is to implement these plans for students by the 2025-2026 school year.

### Personalized learning plans will include:

- Student interest surveys
- Career and/or college pathways, including the academic course of study for students to be best prepared
- Support needed for special education students on an Individualized Education Plan
- Support for students who may need more academic assistance
- Support for students with attendance and behavior as needed
- Enrichment opportunities for students, including sports, clubs, field trips and other activities
- Additional resources for students identified as gifted and talented

The goal is to have students and families invested in the learning plan. Students will have constant input on the creation and maintenance of the plan, and will be given opportunities to present their plan and their progress to different audiences throughout their educational journey.

Giving students a plan to follow that will help them reach their goals is essential to keeping them engaged and invested in their own education path, which in turn will have a positive influence on academic achievement and graduation rates.

## Every student matters.

That is the motto of the Graduate Initiative at Greeley-Evans School District 6 high schools.

Research shows that identifying students who have failing grades as freshmen and intervening quickly to help them recover credits is key for students to reach graduation. While it isn't the only indicator of success, students who accumulate failing grades are more likely to drop out of school.

District 6 has a process in place to help identify and track the progress of students who may be on a downward trajectory. The Graduate Initiative includes monthly meetings where school principals, counselors and district leaders collaborate and plan for student success.

The group analyzes course credit data and individual student grades to devise a plan to support those students who are struggling. The support will look different for every student. Maybe the student needs mental health counseling. It could be the student needs to be in a credit recovery class after school or on a Saturday. Some students need to be in an alternative learning setting, such as Jefferson High School or the Greeley-Evans Alternative Program, which focus on accelerating students' ability to earn credits.

In addition, District 6 high schools offer other support to freshmen students to help ease their transition to high school and make them feel welcome in the new setting.

Supporting students to achieve high school graduation and have a plan for their future is the goal of the Graduate Initiative.

Because in District 6, every student matters.



Greeley-Evans School District 6

**I'm District 6.**



**We know every  
child can achieve.**

**BLIND STUDENT**

**COMPETES FOR**

**MCAULIFFE CROSS COUNTRY**



Romina Tarazon Cabada was all smiles as she crossed the finish line at the cross country meet at Winograd K-8 School in September 2023.

"You did it!" said her guide and running mate, fifth grade teacher Kyla Beck.

After a drink of water and a few minutes to catch her breath, Romina says, "I wasn't even last! There was someone behind me!"

A seventh grader at S. Christa McAuliffe STEM Academy, Romina has an infectious smile and a positive attitude. Blind since birth, this 12-year-old has taken on many challenges in life, from learning to speak English to playing the flute to maneuvering the halls of her school. But this year she decided to take on a new challenge: competing on McAuliffe's cross country team.

"I came here from Mexico in the third grade," Romina said. "I like running a lot in P.E. I thought cross country was a special sport. I wanted to try it."

Romina would need some assistance to reach her cross country goals. So, 5th grade teacher Kyla Beck stepped up to volunteer to be Romina's guide during her practices and competitions.

Beck worked with an adaptive physical education teacher to learn how to guide Romina in running cross country. The two hold onto a strap that is knotted. Beck tells Romina when there are approaching obstacles and changes in terrain. She encourages her but lets Romina set the pace.

"It's been a lot of fun and really interesting," Kyla said. "Watching Romina improve has been awesome."

Cross country Coach Dan Goding said Romina was an asset to the team this year.

"It has been awesome that Romina wanted to come out and do this," Goding said. "We weren't sure how it was going to go and honestly, she loves it."

"I get emotional when she is coming to the end and everyone is rallying around her."





# District 6 gives ECA student opportunities to grow

Nathaly Loaiza Valenzuela's experiences in high school have shown her that when one door closes, another - sometimes a better and bigger one - opens.

The senior at Early College Academy ran a campaign to be on the Student Council at ECA. She wasn't successful and was disappointed.

"It hurt me," she said.

However, ECA Principal Kim Silva had already intended to ask Nathaly to take another leadership role at the school. Silva wanted Nathaly to serve on the Council of Student Representatives, a District 6 organization composed of students from every high school in the district. The group works to create cooperation between schools and has the opportunity to ensure students have a voice at different events and initiatives in District 6.

Nathaly accepted and took a leadership position in the Council of Student Representatives as treasurer and communications specialist. She also agreed to attend all the Board of Education meetings, where she sits with School Board members and is often called on to provide input or to comment on agenda items.

"It's important to make sure that we as students are heard," she said.

The daughter of parents who migrated from Mexico as teenagers, Nathaly said she wants to be sure she excels, in part to honor the sacrifices her parents have made to ensure she and her sisters receive a good education and have what they need to succeed.

When she told her parents she would be representing students at Board of Education meetings, she saw their pride and their joy.

"When I started working with the district, it was like my 'made it' moment," she said. "You could see in their eyes how excited they were for me."

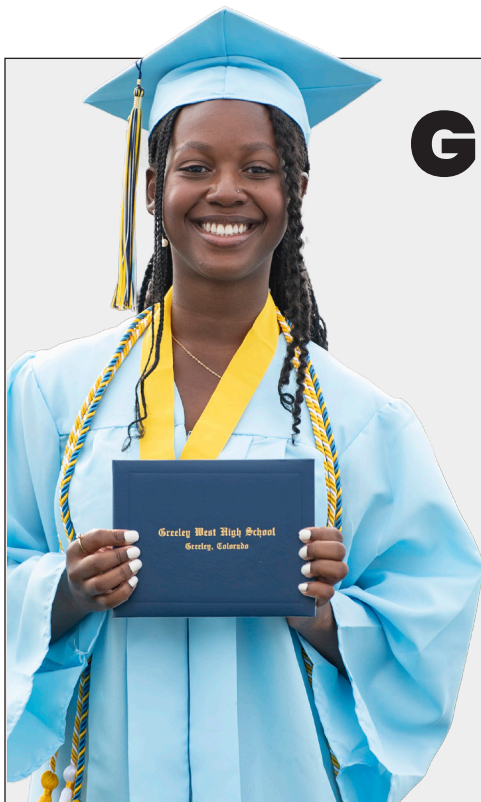
The position with the Council of Student Representatives has given Nathaly and other students some unique opportunities. A trip to the Colorado Capitol in Denver was particularly impactful, Nathaly said.



"I was like a kid in a candy store," Nathaly said. "It was an amazing experience. I had never been there before. It made me want to do something to make a difference in my community."

Nathaly will attend Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction next year, entering a course of study to eventually become a physical therapist. She knows that no matter what her profession, she will also be involved in her community and maybe even politics.

"My mom," Nathaly said with tears in her eyes. "She is the reason why I want to do so many good things in the world. She inspires me to work hard and be determined."



## GRADUATION

## Rates

Seeing students cross the graduation stage in cap and gown is the culmination of all we do in Greeley-Evans School District 6.

Increasing the on-time graduation rate is an important outcome under the Student Learning and Achievement focus area of Innovation2030. The goal is to reach a 90 percent on-time graduation rate by 2030.

Behind this goal is some significant work to ensure every student has a plan for college, career and their future.

The 2023 on-time graduation rate for District 6 is 83.7 percent, down slightly from the 2022 graduation rate of 84.6 percent. The state graduation rate was 83.1 percent for 2023. The slight decrease represents 14 students who did not graduate on time.

While any decrease in on-time graduation rates is disappointing, there is some good news. District 6 greatly exceeds the state average on-time graduation rate for students in these groups:

- Students identifying as minority: District 6 82.2 percent; state average 78 percent
- Students living in poverty: 80.7 percent; state average 73.3 percent
- Students with limited English proficiency: 76 percent; state average 69.4 percent
- Students with disabilities: 75 percent; state average 69.3 percent

Much of the work in Student Learning and Achievement is to improve student achievement and engagement, and in turn improve the number of students who graduate in four years. District 6 still has work to do, but we are committed to meeting our goals.



**We believe diversity is a strength.**

## D6 Family Center extends help to families

The Greeley-Evans School District 6 Family Center is a safe, welcoming place for students and families to learn how to navigate the education system, get services and resources, register for school and speak to someone in their native language.

"Initially, it was intended for our newcomer families to have a one-stop-shop. It has just evolved into a place for any family in our district to get services, whether its community referral services, clothing, food supplies with the help of the Weld Food Bank," said Family Center Coordinator David Reyes. "We are here to ensure there are not any barriers and to meet the basic needs of families and students".

The Family Center relocated last year to a building across the street from the District 6 Administration Building on 11th Street in downtown Greeley. The District 6 Admissions Office is also located in this building. This partnership has helped more families navigate the registration process and helped the Family Center identify students who qualify for additional services, such as those experiencing homelessness or living in transitional housing.

Through the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, public school districts provide additional resources to families who lack permanent housing, including school uniforms and other clothing, backpacks and school supplies, hygiene products, food and additional transportation services.

"We are serving about 900 students this year who qualify for McKinney-Vento," Reyes said. "The Family Center helps provide a warm handoff to the Parent Family Advocates at the schools so families can feel comfortable and build those relationships."

The Family Center also helps align services for migrant and immigrant students, refugees and asylum seekers, those who do not speak English and students in the foster care system. The Center works to make sure all students and families have access to resources that help them be successful in school.

"I feel that the Family Center is starting to be more recognized now, in our school community and our Greeley-Evans community," Reyes said. "Our community has been very supportive, providing clothing, donations, blankets and other items families need. It makes a huge impact."

## Dual Language Program introduced at Meeker Elementary School

Meeker Elementary School is offering a Dual Language Immersion Program beginning in 2024-2025. Enrollment is for kindergarten only and instruction will be in both Spanish and English.

The dual language program housed at Meeker Elementary School is open to District 6 students and will eventually include one classroom per grade level. Meeker families will also have the option of choosing this program for their kindergarten students, but students do not have to be in the dual language program to attend Meeker.

Dual Language Immersion provides instruction and support for students to become fully proficient in English and Spanish. Students will study literacy, math, social studies and science, as well as engage in special classes like physical education and music.

The goal of the program is for students to have high academic achievement in both English and Spanish, giving them the skills to be bilingual and biliterate. This will provide college and career opportunities for students in the future.





**We ensure safe, secure and healthy schools.**

# Keeping Our Students **SAFE**



Keeping students and staff safe at schools is always the first priority in Greeley-Evans School District 6.

The Department of Safety and Security has three full time staff - all former police officers - who work with schools to ensure safety protocols are in place and enforced every day. The City of Greeley and Evans, as well as the Weld County Sheriff's Office, have assigned School Resource Officers to respond to schools, an essential partnership to help keep schools safe.

This year, the District 6 Department of Safety and Security has worked to implement Standard Safety Protocols at every non-charter school in District 6. These protocols were developed by the "I Love You Guys" Foundation, named in honor of the final text sent by a student killed during a 2006 hostage situation at Platte Canyon High School in Bailey, Colorado.

The Standard Safety Protocols give schools a consistent means to respond to different situations, from disruptive behavior occurring in a classroom to an intruder in the building. Adults and students are trained using the protocol language to respond by holding students in a classroom, securing the perimeter of the building, locking the building down, having students and staff shelter in place or evacuating the building. School and district staff have also undergone reunification training in the unlikely event that students must be evacuated to a safe site and reunified with family members.

Ongoing training and running drills for students and staff is essential to ensure a safe response if a real emergency occurs. Prevention measures such as education, encouraging kids to report an unsafe situation or communication to trusted adults, and monitoring computer use and social media are also part of the overall security plan.



## School Safety Command Center

Greeley-Evans School District 6 was awarded a \$509,000 grant in March 2024 to build an incident response command center to enhance district-wide security and crisis response.

The district applied for the grant through the School Security Disbursement Grant Program, which was created by the Colorado State Legislature and funded with \$16 million for the first year. More than 120 grant applications were received and 68 were selected to receive funding, including District 6.

The grants can be used for capital construction to improve safety and security, training in student threat assessment, training for school resource officers, training in emergency response, and other areas of school safety and incident response.

District 6 will use the funding to build an incident response command center at the Administration Building in downtown Greeley. The grant will help pay for technology equipment and software, infrastructure, furniture, crisis response equipment and training. The center will be used as a command center for crisis response and will eventually be built out to include a dispatch center to assist schools and district buildings, coordinate emergency response and provide continuous monitoring of security cameras.



**We ensure safe, secure and healthy schools.**

## Food Pantries provide a boost to District 6 families

The Success Foundation serving Greeley-Evans Schools and District 6 have teamed up to ensure that every school has a food pantry that students and families can access to supplement food supplies in their homes.

So far, 21 schools have received the school pantries, with plans in place to install 12 more next school year. The pantries include dry, canned, fresh and frozen foods. The Success Foundation has been instrumental in raising money to replenish and sustain food supplies at the existing pantries, and has found several businesses and organizations willing to “adopt” and support pantries for multiple years.

Liz Stockham, the School Food Pantry Specialist for District 6, said the pantries are well utilized by students and their families, showing a need for supplemental food in our community.

“I have had students who stop by their school pantry to pick up dinner for younger siblings they need to feed while their parents are at work,” Stockham said. “We are filling a need to help families stay nourished and helping to keep students on track with their education.”

**If you are interested in sponsoring a food pantry or would like more information, visit:**

 [www.d6successfoundation.org/food4success](http://www.d6successfoundation.org/food4success)



## Bond issue enters final phase with seven school renovations this summer

In 2019, voters in Greeley and Evans overwhelmingly approved a \$385 million Bond Issue for District 6, which included two new schools, two replacement schools, large additions at two schools, and renovations and improvements at every school. New roofs, upgrades to heating and ventilation systems, construction of secure entrances, new carpet and paint, and new career and technical education spaces at high schools are just some of the improvements that were made to address \$1 billion in facility needs identified in 2018.

Now, District 6 is entering the final phase of bond projects. The final seven schools will undergo renovations this summer, including Fred Tjardes School of Innovation, Bella Romero Academy K-3, Brentwood Middle School, Centennial Elementary School, Early College Academy, Prairie Heights Middle School and the Greeley-Evans Alternative Program. Renovations will include secure entrances, new paint and flooring where needed, and other upgrades.

Because of favorable bond sales, District 6 in total will spend \$495 million on all the new construction and school improvement projects. That means 12 projects were added to the original bond projects, including the new Jefferson High School and Career and Technical Education Center.

Staying within budget for projects during an unprecedented rise in the cost of construction and materials has been challenging. With the advice and review of the Citizens Bond Oversight Committee, funds have been managed within budget for most projects, and contingencies have been added as needed for rising and unforeseen costs.

After the bond projects are completed in 2025, a new Facility Needs Assessment will be commissioned to identify the renovations and improvements still needed to ensure District 6 schools and buildings meet safety and health standards, and provide the best learning spaces possible for students. This will likely include the replacement of Brentwood Middle School and Bella Romero Academy K-3, which were both identified for demolition in the 2017 Facility Needs Assessment but were not included in the 2019 Bond Issue.





# FEEDING ALL KIDS




It might be difficult to grasp, but there were a few positive things that came out of the COVID-19 pandemic. One positive outcome was that public schools in the United States were provided federal funding to feed every student at no cost.

When the pandemic ended, so did the funding. Seeing the benefits of feeding all students, the District 6 Board of Education committed to spend money from reserves to continue feeding all students for free for at least one additional year.

Then, in November 2022, Colorado voters said yes to Proposition FF: Healthy School Meals for All. The measure aims to ensure that all Colorado students in public schools have access to nutritious meals during the school day, regardless of their family's income. As a participating district, the State of Colorado reimburses District 6 to fully cover the cost of school meals for all students.

"If we can ensure that no student is sitting in class hungry, wondering when they will eat next, then we remove one of the greatest barriers to the limitless success of our young people," said Danielle Bock, the District 6 Director of Nutrition Services.

With the cost factor removed, the number of students eating District 6 meals has steadily increased. This year alone, the district has experienced approximately a 10 percent increase in daily lunch participation. While this presents some challenges in staffing and finding food supplies, the results are positive for students and families.









## Nourishing Students, Creating Success!

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<p><b>1.3 MILLION</b> breakfasts served by school year end 23-24</p>	<p><b>2.0 MILLION</b> lunches served by school year end 23-24</p>
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<p> <b>7,700</b> breakfasts served on average each day</p>	<p> <b>70,000+</b> meals served to students outside regular school hours, after school enrichment, after school athletics practices, extended learning days</p>
<p> <b>11,800</b> lunches served on average each day</p>	<p> <b>60,000</b> tacos were served throughout the school year</p>
<p> <b>125,000+</b> slices of cheese pizza and more than 250,000 slices of pepperoni pizza were served, all hand tossed, prepared and delivered by local Domino's Pizza Franchises</p>	<p> <b>42,000+</b> hand rolled, scratch made burritos were served throughout the school year</p>

Bock is also proud that District 6 meals support the local economy and farmers. For example, the hand-rolled breakfast burritos are made with local tortillas, potatoes and green chiles. The District also works with local Domino's Pizza franchises, which have created a pizza just for District 6 that meets USDA standards for student meals. Supporting local businesses and suppliers whenever possible is important, Bock said.

"We are thrilled to be positively impacting the academic achievement of so many children in our schools," Bock said. "When we commit to providing healthy school meals for every student, we commit to their potential to achieve greatness."



# Strengthening Partnerships in the community

Under the Strengthening Partnerships focus area in Innovation2030 is a plan to help District 6 build two-way partnerships with community organizations, businesses, churches and other groups.

Over the past decade, District 6 has expanded its partnerships in multiple ways between schools, businesses, industries, governmental entities, churches and non-profit organizations, all of which help support students, families and staff in a variety of important ways.

The objective of this plan is twofold:

- To ensure that ALL schools in District 6 have active community partnerships to support student learning
- To create two-way partnerships, where schools and staff give back to their community partners in a variety of ways

District 6 is developing a district-wide partnership plan that will include a toolkit and training for building leaders and other school staff, helping to facilitate mutually-beneficial partnerships in every school using proven best practices. The plan is being finalized this summer and the district intends to begin piloting it in a few schools next year.

Another part of the objective is to encourage District 6 staff to volunteer in our community, possibly even a few hours a month while on contract time. In addition, the district is looking into encouraging students to complete volunteer hours in the community as part of their personalized learning plans. Since some clubs and scholarships have a community service requirement, this effort will expand what many students are already doing.

We are grateful in District 6 to have so many robust partnerships in the community. Now, the district wants to give back to the community organizations and businesses that have done so much for our schools, staff, families and students.



## District 6 student creates mural for local Sam's Club in Evans

Avalon Parlin's eyes lit up as a Sam's Club employee complimented the colorful mural she painted just outside the employee break room.

"Everyone loves the mural. What makes it special is that a teen in our community produced it," said Sam's Club Manager Mickey Hendren.

Hendren wanted to create a "local feel" in the Evans Sam's Club while supporting budding artists in District 6. With the help of Evans Police School Resource Officer Teresa McClatchey, Hendren reached out to Chappelow Arts Magnet K-8 School just down the road.

Middle school art teacher Alison Myers enlisted eighth grade student Avalon Parlin to tackle the project for Sam's Club. Specializing in portraits, Avalon felt confident that she could work with Mickey to create a design and execute it.

"This was my first mural," she said while standing in front of the roughly 7-foot-by-10-foot piece.

Despite this being her first mural, Avalon carried herself like a professional artist. She created sketches, delivered those sketches to Hendren for approval, made adjustments based on feedback, created a grid consisting of 1-foot-by-1-foot squares, then got to painting.



For two weeks, the young artist spent nearly every morning and afternoon painting. Blocking in one grid at a time, Sam Walton's portrait, a red and white pickup truck, and the mountainous Colorado landscape came to life on the hallway wall. She finished the mural right before starting her freshman year in August 2023 at Greeley Central High School.

Now, Avalon is being contacted by others to paint murals in the community.

"Some of the employees asked me to paint something in their yards," said a smiling Avalon. "I'll definitely make more murals."



# Capturing the Moment



Jesus Ayala has spent most of his life traveling around the country as the child of a migrant farm worker. It was hard to make friends when his family didn't stay anywhere very long.

But while living in Texas, Jesus found a friend - a camera. The Northridge High School senior discovered he loved taking photos, and had a talent for it. He began taking athletic photos for his school. Of course, using school-owned equipment, he was never allowed to take the camera home, which limited his ability to practice and learn.

This year at Northridge, Jesus was encouraged to apply to The Success Foundation's Opportunity Fund and request his own photo equipment. Jesus' application was successful, and he was able to purchase a camera, lenses and a laptop computer for photo editing. The Opportunity Fund, started by former District 6 teachers John and Delia Haefeli, provides small grants to students to expand their learning opportunities.

"This camera supports my emotional health by helping me connect with my community," Jesus said. "The Success Foundation Opportunity Fund changed my life."

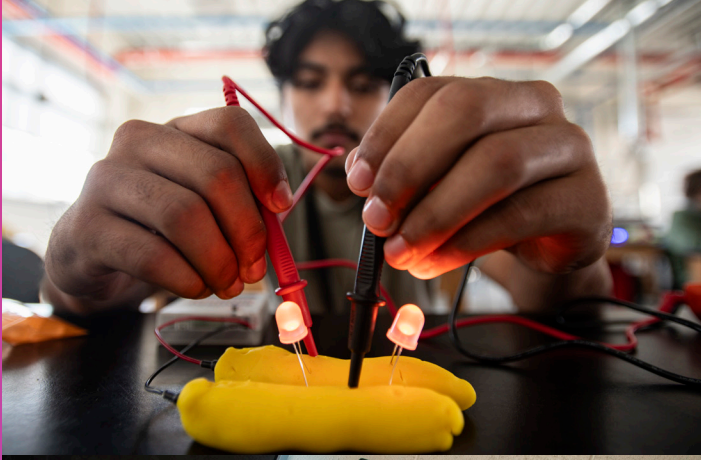
Jesus plans to attend Colorado State University and study communications. He hopes to take photos for the athletic department and dreams of one day becoming a professional photographer for the National Football League.

"Then, I can travel all over the country taking pictures," Jesus said, smiling.





**We promote access, opportunity and choice.**



## Career Pathways Open Up Opportunities for Future Jobs

Giving students opportunities and choices is essential to their personal and educational success. District 6 has continued to expand its Career and Technical Education pathways and courses to meet student and industry needs.

There are 14 Career Academies in District 6 that house 29 Career Pathways, helping to prepare students for directly entering the workforce or going on to higher education or trade school after graduation.

Through partnerships with several community colleges and universities in Colorado - including Aims Community College and the University of Northern Colorado right here in Greeley - most of the Career Pathways offer concurrent enrollment. That means students enrolled in Career Pathways can earn college credits and industry certificates in many of the programs at no cost while still enrolled in high school. The District 6 Mill Levy Override, renewed by Greeley and Evans voters in 2022, pays for the college credits and certificates, a cost that District 6 must pay by law.

The five new programs at the Career and Technical Education Center, constructed with money from the 2019 Bond Issue, have proven to be particularly popular. The center opened in August of 2023, alongside the new Jefferson High School, at the corner of 14th Avenue and 2nd Street. It houses five Career and Technical education programs: Construction Trades with an emphasis on electrical, Welding, Cosmetology, Information Technology with an emphasis on cyber security and the Teacher Cadet program.

Since the CTE Center opened, the Cosmetology and Welding Career Pathways have been full and have student waiting lists. Another instructor is being added to the Cosmetology Pathway, which will double the amount of spots available to students. Center leaders

and instructors are also looking into the possibility of opening more slots in the Welding Pathway.

Career Pathways are just one way District 6 is working to meet the employment needs of businesses and industry in our area while also making sure our students are prepared to be successful after they graduate.

### CTE Discovery Mobile Lab

As part of its commitment that all students leave District 6 with a plan for their future, the Career and Technical Education Department is developing a new mobile tool to help students explore future careers.

The Career and Technical Education Discovery Lab is a 24-foot box truck containing tools and equipment to allow students to explore manufacturing, agriculture, construction, welding, hospitalities, health sciences and STEM pathways through hands-on activities. The truck will be taken to K-8 and middle schools to give students the opportunity to explore and discover what career they might be interested in.

Students will be provided supplies and materials to build small projects within the pathways. The hope is students will begin to see where their interests lie and what pathway might help them reach their goals. By increasing exposure to career options at the middle school level, District 6 hopes to increase enrollment in its Career Pathways programs.



# Greeley Central Students Qualify for National KidWind Challenge in Minneapolis

William Alexander teaches an Energy Technology course in the Advanced Manufacturing program at Greeley Central High School where students learn about all different types of energy.

He learned about a competition this spring called the KidWind Challenge that was being held in Denver at the Colorado State University SPUR building.

“With just a few weeks to prepare, I threw the challenge at my class and they got super excited about it,” Alexander said.

The team included junior Ethan Krommendyk, sophomore Yael Leon Cid, sophomore Everett Mash, junior Coen McCall, senior Ruben Rueda-Castaneda, junior Ryan Schneberger, sophomore Odin Schultz and senior Matthew Ward.

The team completely designed and constructed a small-scale wind turbine in that short time. They designed and printed all the gears on a 3-D printer and constructed the turbine blade from scratch. Even though the competition was tough, the team was victorious.

“The boys blew the judges away,” Alexander said. “It was their engineering and their presentation that got them first place.”

The win qualified the team to compete at the national KidWind Challenge, held in May in Minneapolis. With the help of District 6 and a grant from the Success Foundation Serving Greeley-Evans Schools, the team was able to attend the competition.

“The boys did a fantastic job,” Alexander said.

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## Colorado Music Milestone



Music is Natalie Highfield’s passion.

“I have loved music ever since I was a baby,” Highfield said. “My mom was always playing me music. I danced and skipped around all the time.”

But Highfield said her true passion for music developed in school. First, it was her music teachers at Ann K. Heiman Elementary School. Next, it was taking both band and choir at Chappelow Arts Magnet K-8 and learning to play the flute. And finally, it was the Arts Magnet Program at Greeley Central High School, where she said she learned there was a “whole world of music theory” that she discovered and loved. Highfield also said joining the Greeley Children’s Chorale helped her blossom as a musician.

“Music was just always something I knew I would do,” Highfield said.

This year as a senior at Greeley Central, Highfield reached a milestone few students realize. She was selected for the high school music trifecta: All-State Choir, All-State Orchestra and All-State Band.

“I was in shock, I guess,” Highfield said upon learning she had been selected for all three prestigious state honors. “The music was really challenging. It was good for me. I loved performing with everyone.”

Highfield plans to continue studying music at college and is still trying to decide between music education and music performance. Maybe it will be both, she said.

“All of my experiences have just reaffirmed my passion for music,” she said.





# Teacher Cadet Program: Growing Our Own

Being an educator is a noble profession, one of the most important in our society.

In recent years, the number of people going into the teaching profession has dwindled. Nationally, there is a shortage of teachers, and filling positions has become more difficult.

We know in District 6 that education is one of the most rewarding and fulfilling professions, and we want to encourage our talented students to become teachers. So District 6 has a Career Pathway just for those interested in education as a career: The Teacher Cadet Program, housed at the Career and Technical Education Center.

Students in the Teacher Cadet Program learn the essentials of instruction, classroom management, use of curriculum, lesson planning and more. They learn directly from the best teachers in District 6. They get hands-on experience working with students in District 6 schools. And, they can earn college credit toward their degree while in the program.

The Teacher Cadet program is seeing success. This school year, there were eight students in the Teacher Cadet Program. Next year, 14 students have already registered to be in the program.

Many of the students who graduate from the program are attending Aims Community College and the University of Northern Colorado, with the intention of seeking teaching jobs in District 6 once they get their degree.

“We are really encouraging our students interested in education to come back to us to do their student teaching and then hopefully for permanent employment,” said Superintendent Dr. Deirdre Pilch. “And we are seeing more of our former students coming back to us as educators. Having wonderful partnerships with Aims and UNC has been very helpful as well.”



The staff serving students in District 6 is among the best in the country. That’s why we are always grateful when others recognize their hard work and dedication.

Here are just a few of our staff who were honored locally, and in the state and nation this school year:

- » **Christy O’Connell Black**, dance instructor and Arts Magnet Coordinator at Greeley Central High School, was named the 2023 Colorado Community Contributor of the Year by the Colorado State Thespian Organization
- » **Aaron Shipp**, Area Supervisor for Nutrition Services, was named a 2024-2025 Healthy School Food Pathway Fellow by the Chef Ann Foundation
- » **Carli Engel**, Northridge High School Family and Consumer Science teacher, was named the Outstanding New Professional of the Year by the Colorado Association of Family and Consumer Sciences
- » **Jaime Valdez**, Greeley Central High School Family and Consumer Science teacher, was named the Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher of the Year by the Colorado Association of Family and Consumer Sciences
- » **Manny Zamora**, Campus Monitor at Jefferson High School, was named the Classified Employee of the Year by the District 6 Classified Council

## Filipino educators bring new cultural experiences for students

In the Spring of 2022, District 6 began the process to meet the requirements to hire international educators who are externally sponsored on the J-1 Visa. To qualify for this visa, the educators must be qualified to teach in their home country with at least two years of experience. They must also meet Colorado teaching and licensing requirements, and must be fluent in English.

In 2022-2023, Billie Martinez Elementary School hosted two teachers from the Philippines. This year, four schools hosted 12 Filipino educators. The ability to hire international teachers has helped fill some positions that have had few applicants in recent years.

“The purpose of this program is to provide opportunities for cultural exchange,” said Annette Overton, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources. “These teachers share their experiences of teaching and learning in another country.”

The experience has been enlightening for students, staff and the teachers themselves.

“As a Filipino teacher we carry with us not only a wealth of knowledge, but a respect for education and a rich cultural heritage,” said Ronely Joy Aguirre, a fourth-grade teacher at Billie Martinez Elementary School. “It is the bond that forms with our students that has truly enriched our experiences.”



# Greeley West teacher wins prestigious Milken award



In December, Caleb Flores and his colleagues at Greeley West High School entered the gymnasium for another all-school assembly. The staff and students didn't really know the purpose of the assembly but were told it was important.

Thirty minutes later, Flores was \$25,000 richer and the recipient of one of the most prestigious awards given to educators - the Milken Educator Award. Flores was presented the award on December 15, 2023 by Dr. Jane Foley, Milken Educator Awards Senior Vice President, and Susana Cordova, the Colorado Commissioner of Education. He was the only educator in Colorado to receive the award this year.

*"It is a blessing to work at Greeley West, to come here to work with you every day,"* said Flores, after receiving the Milken Educator Award. *"I go home and feel so appreciative that you guys welcome me and accept me."*

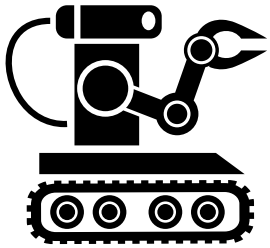
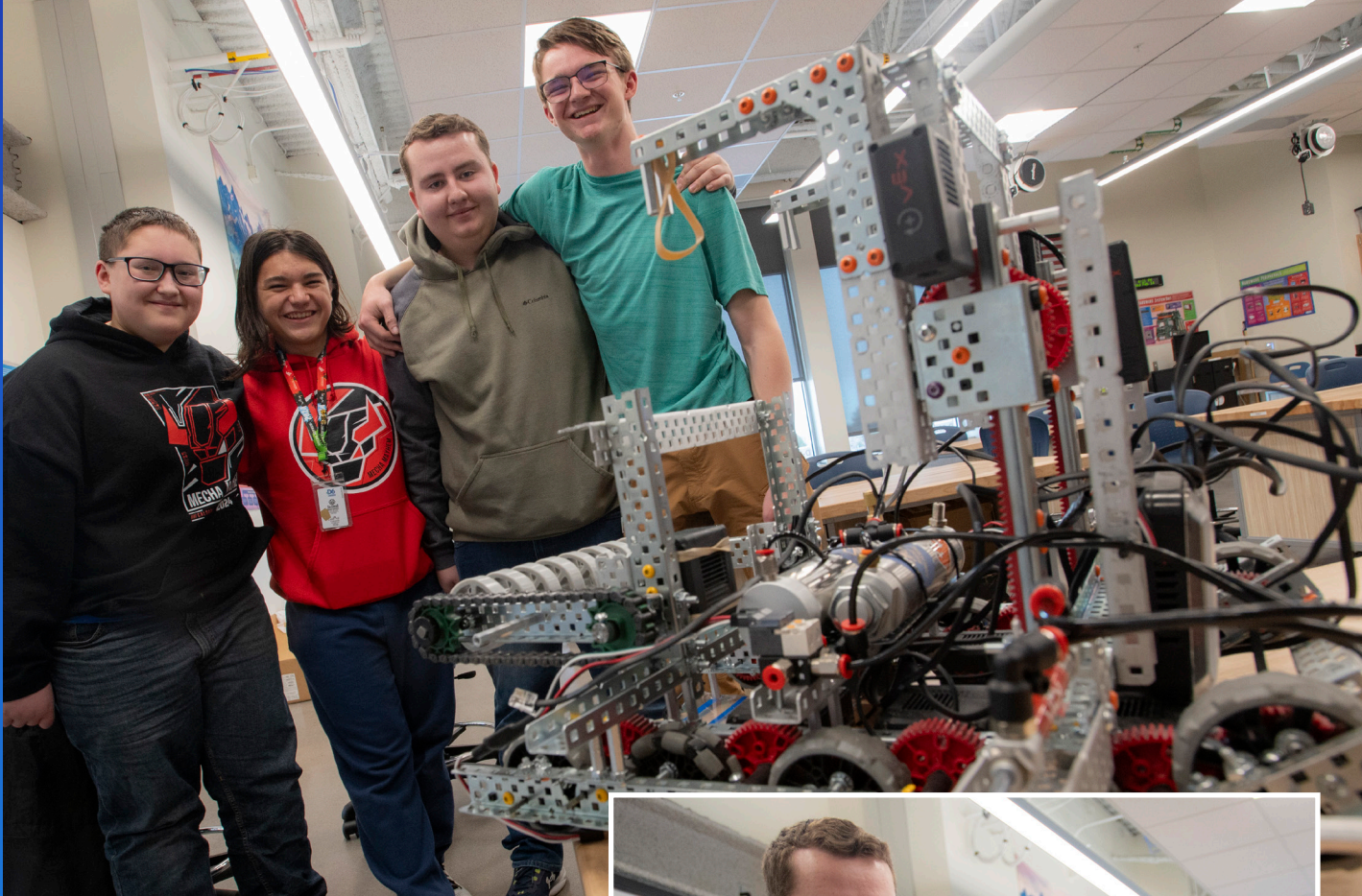
Flores, a Culturally Linguistically Diverse teacher, was recognized for supporting students from diverse backgrounds, advocating for equitable education, striving for instructional growth and for being a kind and welcoming instructor. The Milken award winner is a Greeley native and graduated from Northridge High School.

*"Caleb Flores serves as a leader, role model and advocate for students in the classroom, school and community,"* said Dr. Foley, who is a Milken Educator herself from Indiana's 1994 class. *"His welcoming nature and ability to pinpoint every learner's needs are vital to the growth of all students."*





**We commit to excellence, innovation and continuous improvement.**



## **Greeley West Robotics Team competes internationally**

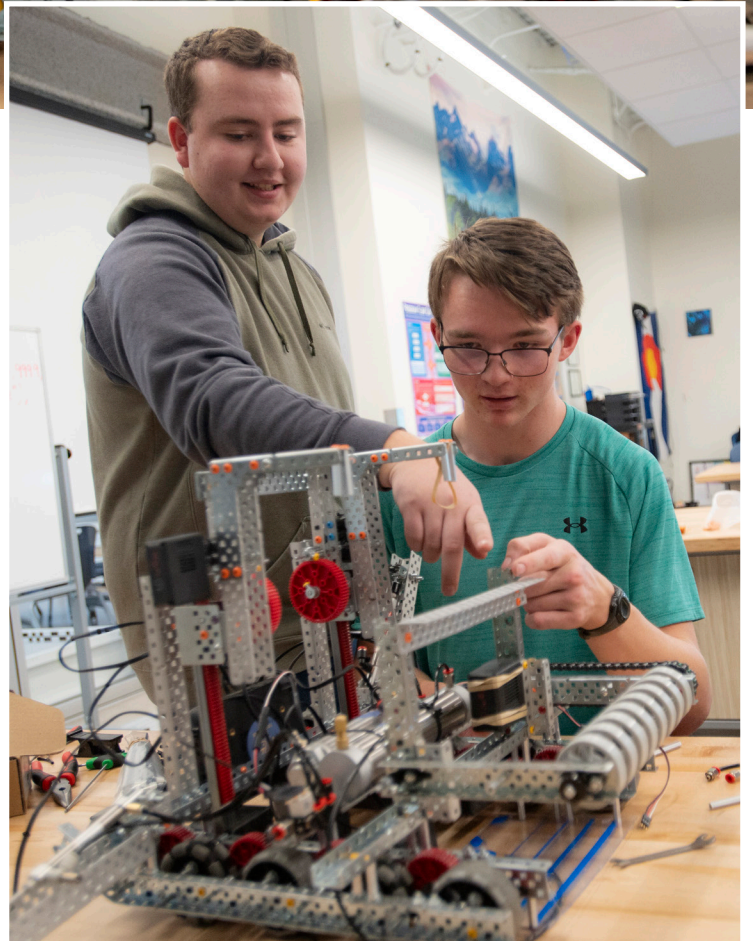
Building relationships, meeting new people, experiencing a new culture and eating new foods were all part of the journey to Canada for the Greeley West VEX Robotics Team, which competed in the Mecha Mayhem VRC Signature Event in February 2024.

Competing in an international robotics event in Calgary, Canada was very cool. But for Greeley West High School Junior Holden Kleinman, the experience was so much more.

“This is the first time I have ever traveled outside the United States,” said Holden Kleinman. “No one in my family, except my dad, has ever traveled outside the United States. It was cool experiencing new things and seeing everything they have there that is different.”

The Greeley West team included Holden and seniors Caleb Lam, Logan Reynolds and Brennan Truitt. The team competed with 132 teams from around the world, and while they didn’t do as well in the competition as they hoped, they walked away with the Sportsmanship Award.

The award, Lam said, was for showing respect, working well with other teams and being outgoing. The Greeley West team gave out small cows, a symbol of their hometown of Greeley, and helped fellow competitors when they could.



During the competition, a robot constructed by the team competed in a game where the machine had to make goals in a small “arena.” Team members were paired with another team and had to work together to score the most points.

“It was a blast traveling with them and watching them grow as a team,” said science teacher and robotics coach Tristen Vangilder.



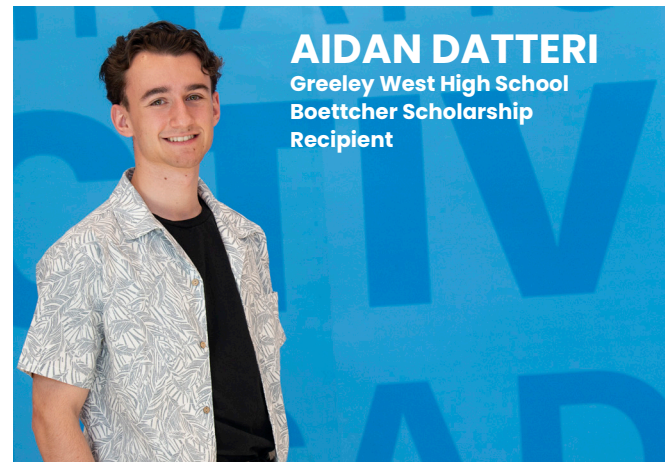
# District 6 students receive prestigious scholarships

Students in Greeley-Evans School District 6 have historically been competitive in obtaining some of the most prestigious scholarships in the state and nation, and 2024 was no exception.

This year, District 6 has two Boettcher Scholars and one Daniels Scholar:

- **Aidan Datteri**, a senior at Greeley West High School, was awarded the Boettcher Scholarship. Aidan plans to study agricultural business management at Colorado State University.
- **Luluya Tekle**, a senior at Greeley Central High School, was also awarded the Boettcher Scholarship and plans to study communications and journalism at a college or university, which she will select later.
- **Israel Vargas**, a senior at Early College Academy, received the Daniels Fund Scholarship. He plans to study exercise science with a pre-med concentration at either Regis University or Colorado State University.

Boettcher Scholars receive an annual fixed amount of \$20,000 per year for four years to use at a Colorado institution of higher education. Daniels Fund Scholars receive up to \$100,000 over four years toward their undergraduate degree at any accredited non-profit college or university anywhere in the United States.



**AIDAN DATTERI**  
Greeley West High School  
Boettcher Scholarship  
Recipient



**LULUYA TEKLE**  
Greeley Central High School  
Boettcher Scholarship  
Recipient

# District 6 implements AI Task Force to ensure best practices in learning

*“AI refers to the field of computer science that focuses on development of intelligent machines capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence.”*

If you have ever asked Siri to get you directions to a restaurant or asked Alexa to play Taylor Swift’s latest hit, then you have used Artificial Intelligence. Maybe you have even asked ChatGPT to write you a letter or email.

In education, the talk around AI is all over the place, from school districts trying to ban its use to districts that are embracing it with open arms.

District 6 has initiated an AI Task Force that includes district and school administrators, IT leadership including cyber security, legal counsel and an expert consultant. This group has been meeting since September 2023 to research the ethical use of AI in education to begin developing a plan to train students, staff and families on the effective and safe use of AI in public education.

Artificial Intelligence is here to stay. It is up to District 6 to ensure that best practices are in place to make this a tool that assists student learning, helps educators and staff work more efficiently, and is used in an ethical way that is safe for everyone.

## SmartLabs in District 6



Through its partnership with The Success Foundation Serving Greeley-Evans Schools, District 6 has 17 SmartLabs in use in elementary, K-8 and middle schools, providing students with project-based learning opportunities every day. The final four SmartLabs will be installed this summer and fall.

Students and staff use the labs to explore careers such as engineering, graphic design, computer programming, construction and more. From programming robots to designing a home, students are learning how to apply their learning in the real world. They also learn important life skills such as problem solving, collaboration and determination that will help them be successful in school and their future careers.

The Success Foundation has raised more than \$4 million for the SmartLabs. District 6 has contributed matching funds through the Mill Levy Override to complete this project.





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In compliance with Titles VI & VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008, and Colorado law, Weld County School District 6, Greeley, Colorado, does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, ancestry, gender identity, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, genetic information, disability or need for special education services in admissions, access to treatment, or employment in educational programs or activities which it operates. Greeley-Evans School District 6 will take appropriate steps to ensure that a lack of English language skills will not be a barrier to admission and participation in vocational education programs.

Complaint procedures have been established for students, parents, employees, and members of the public. The following person(s) have been identified as the compliance officer for the district employees and members of the public.

Title IX Coordinator and Compliance Officer, Jim Donahue  
1025 Ninth Avenue, Greeley, CO 80631  
Phone: 970-348-6070  
Email: jdonahue@greeleyschools.org

Complaints regarding violations of Title VI (race, national origin), Title IX (sex/gender), Section 504/ADA (handicap or disability), may be filed directly with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 1244 North Speer Boulevard, Suite 310, Denver, Colorado, 80204. Complaints regarding violations of Title VII (employment) and the ADEA (prohibiting age discrimination in employment) may be filed directly with the Federal Office of Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 303 E. 17th Avenue, Suite 510, Denver, Colorado, 80202, or the Colorado Civil Rights Commission, 1560 Broadway, Suite 1050, Denver, Colorado, 80202.