

Denver Public Schools
School Board
900 Grant Street
Denver, Colorado 80203

November 8, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

I respectfully submit this letter of recommendation for the approval of the Amended Innovation School Application for the West Leadership Academy, A College Board School at West High School of the Denver Public Schools.

The key program structures for **West Leadership Academy** have been attentively developed to meet the needs of the diverse student population it is intended to serve. They include:

- A college readiness advisory course three-to-five times a week and regular exposure to local post-secondary options for 6th and 9th graders. "Foundational" classes such as literacy and math will be small, about 18 to 25 students.
- Emphasis on professional development for teachers, including intensive summer training in College Board curriculum; national learning opportunities with other AP teachers; and in-school coaching throughout the school year.
- Strong focus on preparation for ACT and SAT College entrance exams. College preparation will also include at least two college visits per grade level, per year, beginning with students in the sixth grade.
- The school calendar includes a 200-day school year and eight hours of instruction a day; this is the Generations Schools' Network model that has received national acclaim.
- The model staggers teacher schedules and uses time within each semester for career-centered projects coordinated with community partners, so teachers aren't working more than their union contracts allow.
- Students will have the opportunity to participate in sports and extracurricular activities along with the other schools at West High School. The school team will remain the Cowboys and will draw students from all three schools.

As a member of the steering committee for the West Leadership Academy, A College Board School, I believe the school's vision and mission of providing service-learning and college experiences will teach students to become leading citizens of the world. It is my honor to recommend to the Denver Public Schools' Board of Education the approval of the amended innovation school application for the West Leadership Academy, A College Board School at West High.

Sincerely,

Lupe Martinez Leece
Denver Public Schools
Teacher Effectiveness Coach