JOBS FOR THE FUTURE

Building Regional Capacity to Stimulate Economic Growth and Workforce Productivity

Denver Case Study

Summary

In response to the collapse of two major industries in the Metro Denver region since the late 1980s, the business community has led region-wide efforts to make major infrastructure improvements, collaboratively increase business attraction, diversify the economy, promote regional identity, financially support regional initiatives and regional public transportation, and develop the region's workforce. Their efforts have been supported by the public, and complemented by formal and informal regional partnerships of elected and other public officials. The Metro Denver WIRED initiative has been a catalyst for a more regional approach to workforce development that is more aligned with the region's economic growth strategy, and there are efforts under way to continue that approach after the federal funds run out. While not all institutions and residents are engaged in its economic growth strategies, the region offers several models and lessons for collaborative regional growth.

Background

Economy. Colorado's high per capita personal income (11th highest in the US), the Metro Denver region's periods of strong job growth, and its unique physical assets have attracted highly educated people in search of high-paying jobs, as well as less educated immigrants since the late 1980s.[1] At the same time, it has gone through wrenching downturns over the past two decades when some of its booming industries faltered globally, as did energy in the 1980s, and technology in 2001.

During the energy crisis of the 1970s and early 1980s, Denver's economy benefited from the rising price of oil as well as an influx of technology companies, growing considerably in both infrastructure and population. When the price of oil dropped from $34 a barrel in 1981 to $9 a barrel in 1986, however, Denver's energy economy dropped with it, leaving almost 15,000 oil industry workers unemployed, including current mayor and former geologist John Hickenlooper. This helped trigger a shrinking of the population by 5 percent before the end of the decade and unified many of the region's leaders to look for shared solutions.

The region rebounded in the 1990s with a diversification of its economy, particularly in high-tech sectors, and achieved 19 percent population growth, led by the near-tripling of its foreign born population, primarily immigrants from Mexico. Job growth in the 1990s continued in a diverse set of industries, moving Denver from 34th up to 4th among the 50 largest Metros in terms

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[1] Toward a More Competitive Colorado IV.

of diversification of its economy. Major infrastructure projects further stimulated the economy with a convention center and three major stadiums all completed by 2001.

When the dot-com bubble hit Denver in 2001, the Metro-Denver region again suffered from the effects of national and global markets on one of its major industry concentrations, this time losing 40,300 jobs in 2002 and another 28,700 jobs in 2003. Since that time, Metro Denver has aimed to further diversify its economy through expansion of aerospace, aviation, computer technology and software, bioscience, financial services and energy industries. Meanwhile, as in many regions, the five largest industries in the 9-county region remain Government, Retail Trade, Healthcare and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, and Professional and business services.[2] Denver's relatively larger than average portion of government jobs is attributed to Denver's position as a hub for federal offices for the mountain region, as well as defense related activities.

Denver, and the state as a whole, have a thriving small business community, and many report that small business owners have a stronger regional leadership role in Denver than in other metropolitan areas, where large corporations still dominate. The Corporation for Enterprise Development ranked the Colorado 'Number Three' for creating new companies nationwide in 2007, and the state has continued to outpace the nation in job growth.[3]

Education Levels. Colorado ranks third highest in the US in terms of percentage of adults with a bachelor's degree. At the same time, it has one of the lowest high school graduation rates and lowest records for sending low-income and disadvantaged students to post-secondary education. This situation has remained problematic in the past decade, as the state ranked 32nd in high school graduation rates in 2006, falling from 28th in 2000.[4] This seemingly paradoxical phenomenon of high college attainment coupled with low high school graduation rates is so widely recognized that it is known locally as the "Colorado Paradox." It is largely explained by the degree to which the state imports educated workers and invests less than most other states in education, ranking 48th of the 50 states in education spending per person.

Poverty and Concentrations. Although Colorado's median household income has typically been higher than the national average, the state's poverty rate has risen since the late 1990s, when the state's economy was at its hottest. The State's poverty rate rose from an average of eight and a half percent in 1998-2000, to nearly ten and a half percent for 2003-2005, though it was still below the US average of twelve and half percent in the latter period. [5]

In Denver proper, the situation is less positive. Nearly eighteen percent of the population, or just over one hundred thousand people live below the federal poverty level. The overall poverty rate for individuals living in the nine-county Metro area is just under twelve percent. Though poverty is less geographically concentrated in the Denver region, race and ethnicity play an important role, particularly for the region's young people. Sixteen percent of children in the Metro region

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[2] 2007 Denver Regional Workforce Gap Analysis. Denver Office of Economic Development.
[3] http://www.metrodenver.org/metro-denver-economy
[4] Toward a More Competitive Colorado IV
[5] DenverPost.com. 08/30/06. "Poor numbers on poverty"

live in poverty, though the rate is 33% for Latinos and 32% for black residents.[6] The black and Hispanic poverty rates remained steady in the mid 2000s, at about 25 percent and 22 percent, respectively, while the white poverty saw slight decreases, at just above eight percent.[7] This is particularly significant because of the major demographic shifts affecting the region.

Metro Denver Population Composition by Race/Ethnicity

	1980	1990	2000
Non-Hispanic White	80.9%	78.4%	70.4%
Hispanic	11.4%	13.0%	18.8%
Non-Hispanic Black	5.2%	5.7%	5.9%
Asian/Pacific Islander	1.3%	2.3%	3.8%

Is There a Regional Strategy to Promote Economic Growth?

Private sector led regionalism. During a recession in the agriculture, semiconductor and energy industries in 1987, the Denver Chamber of Commerce founded the Greater Denver Corporation to take on several economic recovery initiatives, including a new convention center, a new international airport, and the creation of a metropolitan economic development program called the Metro Denver Network, all with the aim of creating 200,000 new jobs in the region. The $8 million, four-year campaign met its goals and additionally secured a major league baseball franchise, a new baseball stadium (Coors Field), and a request from its investors to continue the program for another five years, with the goal to create another 200,000 jobs in Metro Denver.

The 'Metro Denver Network,' which succeeded the Greater Denver Corporation in 1995, focused on advocating among voters for building INVESCO Field at Mile High, the Denver Broncos' stadium that replaced Mile High Stadium. The stadium, the airport and other regional initiatives required a popular vote for passage. The Metro Denver Network's process of regional advocacy helped to mobilize organizations, political leaders and the populous around these regional initiatives, and a regional identity.

After the region's information technology bubble began to burst in 2001, Chamber leaders renewed their commitment to restoring the economy, and created the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (Metro Denver EDC) in 2003. This group committed to raising $12.5 million for a new five-year, economic development program, with goals of creating 100,000 new jobs and branding Metro Denver nationally as a sustainable new economy hub, including businesses, entrepreneurs, and workers. It ultimately raised $13.3 million for the projects.[8]

The Metro Denver EDC developed its first industry cluster study for the region in 2003, entitled "Toward a More Competitive Colorado," in which it identified nine clusters as critical to the region's economy, and focused on its four fastest growing clusters: Aerospace, Bioscience, Energy and Software IT. The Metro Denver EDC reports that the regional cluster approach

[6] Income and Poverty in Metro Denver: A Brief Analysis Based on the US Census Bureau American Community Survey, October 2008
[7] Denverpost.com
[8] http://www.metrodenver.org

drives most of their strategies, including the development of the region's successful application for, and implementation of the region's federal WIRED grant from the US Department of Labor. The Metro Denver WIRED Initiative also focused its worker skills building efforts on the four fastest growing industry clusters identified in Toward a More Competitive Colorado. That initiative is discussed further in the section below on regional workforce development strategies.

Public sector led collaboration. While these private-sector-led regional strategies were evolving from the late 1980s until the present, public sector players were also engaged in separate -- though often complementary -- regional collaborations. In 1988, soon after the birth of the Greater Denver Corporation, voters in the Denver-Aurora Metropolitan Area approved the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD) Tax, creating a shared 7-county tax district to make the region more attractive to outside talent and investors. This is a one tenth of 1% sales tax that contributes approximately $40 Million annually to various cultural and scientific facilities and organizations throughout the Metro area. Voters renewed the tax in 1994 and 2004, funding the SCFD until 2018.

In 1996, a task force of elected officials, business and environmental group representatives also prepared a long-range physical growth plan for the region, entitled Metro Vision 2020. The plan, which the Denver Regional Council of Governments (DRCOG) adopted in 1997, identifies where transportation investments will be made, where growth is expected to occur and how the region will attain water and air quality standards over the next 20 years.[9] After Metro Vision's adoption, several ad hoc committees prepared programs to help with implementation. In 1998, the DRCOG adopted "Flexibility Provisions" that set the standards for administering the urban growth boundary. In January 2005, the DRCOG updated Metro Vision and its associated plans (the Regional Transportation Plan, the Regional Open Space Plan, and the Clean Water Plan) and extended it to the year 2030. It also created regular measures for implementation progress.

The region also created the $6.1 Billion FasTracks transit system connecting six new parts of the Metro region by building high speed rail lines and expanding bus service and 'park-n-rides' throughout the region. Its 119 miles of high speed rail is the largest build-out of a US transit system since the Washington DC Metro system, and is funded by a 0.4 cent increase in the regional RTD sales tax as well as USDOT grants. The supporting tax went into effect in 2005, with construction scheduled to complete in 2016.

Toward the end of his two terms as Denver Mayor, Frederico Peña began an informal "Saturday Morning Group" of ten Metro area mayors who met monthly to discuss issues of common concern. After its success in developing both relationships and influence to address regional challenges, the group experimented with a more formal role when Peña left office in 1991. In 1993, several local mayors, led by the Mayors of Denver, Thornton, Northglenn, Littleton, and Lakewood, established the Metro Mayors Caucus to formalize this collaboration. In 1995 and 1996, the Caucus received a grant from the State's Department of Local Affairs to encourage cooperation between local governments, but it has since depended on voluntary membership contributions. As of 2009, the Caucus includes 32 mayors who participate in six full caucus meetings per year, including an annual retreat. The cities' suggested membership dues are $.07

9 http://www.drcog.org/indexpf.cfm?page=HistoryofMetroVision

per municipal resident, but the Caucus takes care to give equal weight to the issues and positions of small and large member jurisdictions.

Among the issues the Caucus has tackled are growth management, multi-modal transportation, affordable housing, regional responses to emergencies, and intergovernmental cooperation. The Caucus operates with strong business support, and business accountability to new mayors or others who violate the region's two page "Code of Ethics." As of early 2008, 44 communities representing more than 88.5 percent of the region's population had signed the agreement.

The Mile High Compact is an associated voluntary agreement among Denver area cities and counties to manage growth by adhering to the principles outlined in Metro Vision. The Compact was a joint effort of the Metro Mayors Caucus and the DRCOG in 2000.

Remaining Question: What is the State and Governor's role in supporting regional collaboration? Other federal roles beyond WIRED?

What structures are in place to promote/support the necessary collaboration for this effort to be successful?

The Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation (Metro Denver EDC) is now the region's central coordinator of economic growth and, through WIRED, it has become a major player in workforce development strategies. It is an affiliate of the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce, which represents seventy cities, counties, and economic development organizations in the seven-county Metro Denver and the two-county Northern Colorado region. It focuses on creating a competitive environment for business attraction, and is funded primarily by private-sector investors, as well as participating cities and counties.

The Metro Denver EDC represents the evolution of several structures focused on regional economic growth, and was preceded by the Greater Denver Corporation and the Metro Denver Network, as discussed earlier. These structures emerged from an original alliance of seven county-based economic development professionals who previously had competed with one another for business attraction. The group, which has since expanded, began with the recognition that their individual counties would continue to face a competitive disadvantage against larger metro regions, such as Dallas and Phoenix, unless they collaborated on their marketing and attraction efforts.

Making a concerted effort to adopt a networked approach among professionals who previously prided in their reputations as individual "gunslingers," the group cultivated a culture of collaboration. To develop this culture, they emphasized rapid and widely shared communication and, ultimately, the written "Code of Ethics" which the group enforces among its members. The code requires members to share information on business attraction leads and market Metro Denver first, and their own community second, and rewards participation with the benefits of a $1 million per year national business attraction and marketing campaign.

The current Metro Denver EDC's strategic initiatives are developed among its partners, with final decision-making authority by an investor board of directors. Metro Denver EDC's periodic studies entitled "Toward a More Competitive Colorado" have provided some focus for priority industry sectors, regional economic strengths and challenges to address. Expanding the scope to the state level in 2005, the studies are periodically updated to track the progress of the clusters, compare regional indicators to those of competing states and the US, and drive initiatives to support the target clusters. The studies help to organize business, education and workforce and economic development leaders around key issues through the EDC's Colorado Competitiveness Council ("C3") which provides direct lobbying and business advocacy at the state legislative level. For instance, the C3 mobilized business, higher education and other leaders quickly to protect the region's National Renewable Energy Laboratory from proposed funding cuts, with the aim of helping Metro Denver to sustain its energy cluster.

In the area of workforce development, the City and County of Denver turned over administration of all WIRED programs to the Metro Denver EDC in 2006 as the entity representing the region on economic growth issues. This is described in further detail in the Workforce section below.

As mentioned earlier, the Metro Mayors Caucus emerged from an informal group gathered by the mayor of the region's largest municipality. However its success was built by sharing equal status and power with smaller cities in decision-making and by carefully selecting issues that had consensus among the mayors. It also developed with the assistance of a strong regional facilitating organization, now know as Civic Results, which was largely seen as an unbiased advocate for regional cooperation and had the support of key economic and community leaders.

The Caucus faced questions of structure at several points, particularly about whether is should be a part of the DRCOG or Colorado Municipal League, and whether it should allow other officials membership. Ultimately, the Metro Mayors Caucus remained strictly for mayors in the Metro region, though the DRCOG is a close partner and the organizations' membership often overlap. This is because the Caucus' consensus-based decision making did not work well with the competitive nature of funding decisions at DRCOG as well as the variety of elected officials serving on the board. And the Colorado Municipal League had additional priorities for rural municipalities that were outside the focus of the Caucus.

How does workforce development fit into those efforts?

The Denver region and Colorado as a whole have experienced both the advantages and potential pitfalls of attracting many educated workers from other regions. Having attracted these educated workers, Metro Denver historically experienced less pressure to highly educate its own local worker pipeline. The State's low spending per person on education, despite rising numbers of high school dropouts, may reflect this reliance on imported talent. And Colorado education budgets were strongly curtailed after the crashes of the energy and IT industries in the 1980s and 1990s, and Colorado's Taxpayer Bill of Rights law passed in the 1990s made it difficult to restore funding, leaving Colorado 48th out of 50 states in education spending per person.

In terms of regional collaboration, the Denver 'workforce system' had rarely acted regionally until recently, and was not as well connected to the economic growth strategies of the region. In the past, Colorado advocates for regionalism did encourage human capital agencies to collaborate across county borders in at least two efforts, but were not fully implemented. The

State's early initiative to coordinate WIBs across county lines did not see quick results and changed directions with a change in state leadership. A similar attempt was made with community colleges but the colleges' financial struggles and tight budgets stymied collaborative action in that case.

The connection between regional economic growth and workforce strategies improved somewhat in 2005 and 2006 when a group of the region's workforce directors created the Workforce Board of Metro Denver to connect the eight area Workforce Boards around responsiveness to the economy. The collaboration between workforce and economic development gained considerable momentum in 2006 from the USDOL's Workforce Innovation in Regional Economic Development (WIRED) initiative. In the WIRED initiative, the Board and its partners won $15 million over three years to encourage linkages of education, workforce and economic development on a regional basis.

The large WIRED grant, the collaborative culture of Denver's economic development community, and the way that Denver structured its WIRED organizations, also significantly diminished the gap between workforce and economic development in the region. As one Denver workforce developer put it, WIRED helped to "keep economic development in the room," by emphasizing industry clusters that economic developers prioritized (aerospace, IT, bioscience and energy), by increasing awareness of each other among education, workforce and economic development agencies, and by encouraging the entities to leverage each other's activities and resources.

Metro Denver's WIRED structure encouraged collaboration by making Denver's Office of Economic Development its fiscal agent while contracting program design and implementation to the Metro Denver EDC. Housing the initiative in this regional economic development organization ensured that it was well connected to economic development and the business community (the EDC is part of the regional chamber of commerce). And loaning a City Economic Development staff to work as the Executive Director helped educate both government and the chamber about each other's priorities and cultures. The Executive Director of the WIRED initiative reports to both the Executive Vice-President and the Vice President for Economic Development for the Metro Denver EDC.

The collaborative structure of the WIRED grant is reported to have a drawback common to many regional structures, in that consensus and reporting channels slowed its implementation.[10] Similar to other WIRED grants, funding is dispersed from the U.S. Department of Labor to the state, in this case the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment. The state then distributes the funds to the City and County of Denver, which in turn delegated implementation to the Metro Denver EDC. A second impact of this structure is that the City and County of Denver, which wrote the grant, competes with other service providers for funds.

The WIRED initiative in Denver highlights the differences between the common operation of many public workforce systems and the potential that exists for regional human capital collaboration. While some Denver stakeholders report that the WIBs are highly resistant to

[10] (WIRED Nation)

change ("the most change resistant organizations on the planet" in one account), they observed that WIRED provided the resources and encouragement to implement change, and some freedom to act outside of usual workforce funding constraints. In contrast, many WIB members face incentives to act locally rather than regionally, particularly for elected officials who face local pressure from both budgets and vocal constituents.

The Metro Denver EDC and other stakeholders' experience with WIRED also helped to stimulate new leadership models for addressing human capital development regionally. Though the WIBs participating in the Workforce Board of Metro Denver were working together regionally, their most urgent concerns, particularly those related to federal funding requirements, often differed from those of the economic development and business community. So, regional leaders at the Metro Denver EDC, the State and the City organized a separate "Leadership Council" staffed by the Metro Denver EDC's WIRED Executive Director and made up of leaders who could focus on more strategic workforce issues. The Leadership Council included members of the Governor's Jobs Cabinet, and CEO-level leaders of the region's major industry cluster initiatives -- including major energy companies, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, and the Colorado Software and Internet Association -- in addition to some WIB and community college representatives.

Foundation Collaborative. Until recently, the foundations focused very little on workforce development in the Metro Denver region. However, the Rose Community Foundation began to bring the region's foundations together around the issue and with the Mile High United Way and the City's Office of Economic Development, helped to establish the Front Range Workforce Funding Collaborative (the Collaborative/now Skill Build Colorado) in 2008 to develop new funding streams for workforce development in the region. The Collaborative won a three-year, \$150,000 seed grant from the National Fund for Workforce Solutions (NFWS) and raised a matching \$850,000 to develop the fund from other partners, primarily though membership fees of \$10,000 or more. The Collaborative includes business, education and government organizations such as the Constructors & Designers Alliance, Denver Health, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, the Colorado Workforce Development Council, the WIRED Initiative, and some community colleges. The Collaborative has set a leveraging target of \$2,250,000 for the fund by 2011.

The goals of the Collaborative are to provide career advancement opportunities for low-skilled workers to move into middle-skilled jobs and to help high-demand industries build capacity to identify and retain a qualified workforce. Its target industries are the healthcare, construction and energy industries. The collaboration is organized into a steering committee of large financial supporters, an executive committee of that group (co-chaired by the Rose Foundation and the City) and a committee for interested representatives who have not yet committed the \$10,000 membership fee. The United Way serves as the fiscal agent.

According to member foundations, the Collaborative has been successful at developing regional workforce collaboration for several reasons. First, a high level of trust has been developed in the convening of these groups, so that members realize the benefits of participation. Second, diverse members are recruited and the Collaborative offers varying levels of participation. Third, the national funder, NFWS, did not provide the Collaborative with a template on how to create or implement the work. Figuring it out from the ground up brought players together and helped them form trust and mutually beneficial relationships. Fourth, the local Collaborative committed most of the funds, which ensures that the project will be sustained past the grant period.

Community colleges. While the WIRED initiative and the Front Range Funders Collaborative/Skill Build Colorado helped to involve community colleges in regional growth initiatives, many colleges have faced challenges in engaging with these initiatives and their targeted industries. The colleges' tight funding situation over the past two decades has encouraged many of them to maintain focus on academic courses (which have lower costs per student than technical training), and a fostered a competitive view of one another. These factors have inhibited their collaboration for regional economic growth. Competitive pressures are increased because almost all Colorado community colleges are funded through the State, rather than local district taxes.

Metro Denver's community colleges have also found difficulty engaging because the aerospace, IT and bioscience industries targeted in Metro Denver's regional growth strategies tend to require higher level skills than the colleges' typical curriculum and student base. An exception has been in the energy industry, where they have been able to train process technicians in multiple industries, including alcohol, oil, natural gas and biofuels. Meanwhile the colleges have had difficulty partnering with the WIBs for the opposite reason – the WIBs are seen as investing primarily in lower skilled, short-term training, while the colleges are primarily geared to one or two year degrees.

Despite the colleges' financial and competitive pressures they have experienced some pockets of success for responding to regional industry growth. Arapahoe Community College has worked closely with large companies like Lockheed Martin and many auto dealerships to develop industry-responsive curriculum. And Red Rock Community College has had success in developing certificate programs that respond to regional industry needs.

The Colorado Community College System also reports success in collaboration with career and technical education (CTE) in the Metro region in recent years. CTE plans of study have been developed to create career ladders for 80 careers and are overseen by boards of at least 50% industry membership. These programs of study allow career training to begin in high schools and continue into the state's community colleges.

What is being done to promote equitable growth in the region?

While poverty, and especially child poverty, has grown rapidly in the Denver area since 2000, geographic concentrations of poverty are less stark in Metro Denver than in Northern and Eastern US. There has also been much relocation between low and high-income areas of the region as higher income residents move into downtown developments, low-income residents are displaced there, and large numbers of both high and low-income immigrants have moved to the region's suburbs. The overall poverty rate for individuals living in the nine-county Metro area, at almost twelve percent, is comparable to the rate for the State of Colorado.

The metro region's county comparisons do not show major income differences, but significant areas of poverty are concentrated in a swath that cuts through Denver, Aurora and Commerce City. Concentrations show up more clearly based on racial distinctions, with sixteen percent of all children in the Metro region living in poverty, while the rate is 33% for Latinos and 32% for black residents.[11] Recent geographic shifts in income distribution are mirrored by the shifts in ethnic concentrations, as the city of Denver has become increasingly white while the suburbs have gained in Latino populations.[12]

Though not targeted at poverty reduction, the Greater Denver Corporation in the late 1980s and 1990s, and the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation in 2003 aimed at improving employment in the region, with successive goals of creating 200,000, another 200,000 and 100,000 jobs respectively through various infrastructure projects. And the Piton Foundation, Rose Community Foundation, Mile High United Way of Metro Denver (MHUW) and numerous community groups have made poverty reduction in the region a primary part of their mission, though the efforts have been largely disconnected or focused more locally versus regionally.

The development of the Front Range Workforce Funding Collaborative represents the most regionally coordinated effort to address the situation of low-income workers, though it is on a much smaller scale than the recent job creation and infrastructure projects. Its goals, as summarized previously, are to provide career advancement opportunities for low-skilled workers to move into middle-skilled jobs and to improve the capacity of employers in high-demand industries to identify and retain a qualified workforce.

An effort that is aimed more directly at inclusive prosperity is the Economic Prosperity Task Force launched in early 2008, by a Denver City Councilman-at-Large, and the City's Director of the Office of Economic Development. The goal of the Economic Prosperity Task Force is to "strengthen the long-term economic well-being of Denver residents by extending opportunities for them to more fully benefit from Denver's economy." The 34-member task force representing government, nonprofits, business, labor and academia has developed plans to promote self-sufficiency, economic mobility and sustainability, entrepreneurship, special-needs populations and "community-rich outcomes." However, the plan is focused on the City rather than the region.

A final and important poverty and workforce issue for Metro Denver is that of the "Colorado Paradox," which centers on large numbers of local residents leaving school and entering the workforce without a high school diploma, and typically entering very low wage jobs. The WIRED strategy, entitled "Growing Our Own," addresses an element of the paradox by funding education improvements to support its target industries, primarily through STEM education support. Though it is a statewide effort, the Governor's Office is the primary entity taking ownership of this issue for the region more broadly. In 2008, the State's P-20 Education Coordinating Council provided 21 recommendations to be considered for the 2009 legislative session, in four general categories: Reducing high school dropout rates; Improving the

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[11] Income and Poverty in Metro Denver: A Brief Analysis Based on the US Census Bureau American Community Survey, October 2008

[12] Denver gets whiter; suburbs more diverse. Denverpost.com

preparation of classroom teachers; Strengthening post-high-school and workforce-readiness opportunities for students; and Improving the use of data.