



WHO WE ARE

For 80 years, Gates Family Foundation has partnered with communities across Colorado to help build a more equitable, resilient, and sustainable future. Deeply rooted in the state, **the Foundation invests in people, places, natural resources, and civic institutions that strengthen communities and create opportunity for future generations.** Guided by **values of respect, creativity, engagement, place, and equity**, the Foundation works alongside communities to expand opportunity across Colorado.

Through listening, learning, convening, and investing alongside local leaders, the Foundation supports community-driven solutions that strengthen communities today and for the future. Guided by trust, learning, innovation, and a commitment to helping communities shape their own futures, the Foundation works as a collaborative partner in creating lasting impact across Colorado. This work includes a focus on **responsive capital and strategic grantmaking** across four core focus areas: **Community Development, Informed Communities, Natural Resources, and Public Education.** Together, these investments expand pathways to economic opportunity, strengthen access to trusted information, steward Colorado's lands and waters, and support great teaching and student success.



By investing in both the conditions and the systems that help communities thrive, the Foundation seeks to create lasting benefits for Colorado today and for generations to come.

WHY THIS WORK MATTERS

Colorado is home to dedicated educators, innovative schools, and communities deeply committed to helping young people succeed. Building on these strengths, the state has an opportunity to ensure that **every student, regardless of background or geography, has access to high-quality instruction** that prepares students for success in school, work, and life.

Achieving that vision requires systems that consistently support effective teaching and learning. Currently, persistent disparities in academic achievement suggest that access to high-quality learning environments remains uneven across the state.

Excellent teaching is one of the most important school-based factors influencing student success. Strengthening the systems that support and retain effective educators represents a significant opportunity for Colorado.

OUR APPROACH

Starting in 2026, our grantmaking will **focus on improving instructional quality in grades K-8 through three interconnected strategies: Instructional Coaching, Advancing the Teaching Profession, and State Leadership and Policy.**

Instructional coaching can significantly improve teacher practice and student outcomes. Paired with efforts to make the teaching profession more sustainable, we believe these investments can increase the likelihood that students across Colorado have access to great teaching.

These improvements to instruction are more likely to endure in an ecosystem where education policies, state and regional support organizations, and political leadership are aligned around a coherent vision for student success.

Across our portfolio, we hope to invest in piloting new approaches, expanding proven interventions, and institutionalizing effective practices with a strong bias toward systemic change that can improve outcomes for students and educators statewide.



INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING PRACTICES

Strengthening instructional coaching practices and the systems that support high-quality coaching.



ADVANCING THE TEACHING PROFESSION

Making teaching more sustainable through improved working conditions and innovative staffing models.



STATE LEADERSHIP AND POLICY

Strengthening the capacity, alignment, and effectiveness of education policy, governance, and support systems in Colorado.



WHAT WE LOOK FOR

- Projects and organizations that **strengthen the quality of daily instruction** for students in high-poverty schools at scale, particularly in literacy and math.
- Multi-year **partnerships among schools, districts, nonprofits, government agencies, and/or technical assistance** providers that lead to sustained instructional improvements.
- Opportunities in **urban and rural communities across Colorado**, with particular **attention to communities facing persistent barriers to opportunity**.
- Opportunities to **convene leaders across the state** to improve educational systems.

WHAT HAS CHANGED

- While outside-of-school time and summer programming are key components of overall student success, our grantmaking will prioritize improvements to core instruction during the school day.
- We are making fewer, deeper investments and increasing the use of flexible capital tools to support impact at scale.
- We are shifting from a focus on school model and governance innovation to one centered on improving instructional quality and educator effectiveness across all models and governance types.