



### **You're invited!**

Did you know that when it comes to finding the right school for your child, you do have a choice? How do you find information about the choices that are available to you? How do you evaluate the quality of a school? How will you know if a certain school will meet the needs of your child? What are your rights as a parent? How do you apply to schools of choice? Come get the answers to these questions and more!

On January 20, 9News and Get Smart Schools will co-host a parent information evening from **6:00 to 8:00pm at Manual High School, 1700 East 28th Avenue**. Speakers will answer all of your questions about public school choice in Colorado.

**Food and child care will be provided** and we will have representatives from many schools available before and after the event to tell you about the programs they offer. The event is free to attend and open to the first 200 respondents. **RSVP today by emailing [smartpeople@getsmartschools.org](mailto:smartpeople@getsmartschools.org) or calling us at 303-825-6246 x337 (Sari)**

### **About the event**



Nelson Garcia, 9News' Education Reporter, will be moderating a lively panel discussion. Nelson came to 9News for WCCO-TV in Minneapolis where he spent five years. He worked the last three as their Education Reporter. Prior to his time in the "Great White North," Nelson worked at WIS-TV in Columbia, South Carolina. Nelson also worked in Terre Haute, Indiana and at KOMU-TV in another Columbia -- this time in Missouri. Originally from the suburbs of Chicago, Nelson attended CU for two years before getting his degree in journalism at the University of Missouri.

### *Panelists will include:*



#### **Colorado State Senator Mike Johnston**

After graduating from college, Johnston taught at a rural high school in Greenville, Mississippi for two years as part of the Teach for America program; he wrote the book *In the Deep Heart's Core* about his experiences. He then earned a master's degree in education policy from Harvard University. While at Harvard, Johnston worked with Al Gore

education advisor John Schnur; with Schnur and others, he helped found New Leaders for New Schools, an organization dedicated to training and recruiting leaders for urban schools. After graduating from Harvard, Johnston went on to earn a law degree from Yale, and began advising political candidates on education policy. After founding and leading the Mapleton Expeditionary School of the Arts, Johnston joined the campaign of U.S. Senator Barack Obama as an advisory on education issues. In 2009, Johnston won a seat in the Colorado State Legislature. Johnston, his wife, Courtney, and their two children live in the Stapleton neighborhood of Denver.

#### **Denver School Board President Nate Easley**



Easley, Ph.D., is a 1983 graduate of Montbello High School. After graduating from Montbello, Dr. Easley obtained his undergraduate and graduate degrees from Colorado State University in history and student affairs, respectively, and his doctorate from American University in education. His graduate research focuses on issues related to college access and retention of disadvantaged, ethnically diverse students. Dr. Easley began his professional career working directly with at-risk high school students—including a group at Montbello—and has gone on to work at state, national and international levels to strengthen educational opportunities for low-income and first-generation students.

#### **Manual High School Principal Rob Stein**

graduate of Middlebury College, Stanford University, and Harvard University, Stein has taught in the US and in Columbia, and has served as an adjunct professor at the University of Denver and the University of Colorado. Stein is the former Head of School at Graland Country Day School, and was Executive Director of the Rocky Mountain School for Expeditionary Learning from 1996 to 2001. Stein founded the Boettcher Teachers Program and is actively involved in the community. A Denver native, Stein now lives here with his wife Mariah Dickson and two children.



#### **Piton Foundation Program Officer Van Schoales**

Van Schoales is the education program officer at the Piton Foundation where he oversees a portfolio of investments on state policy, district reform and new school development. He has previously been a high school science teacher, principal and school non-profit leader working as an education reform advocate. Van has launched or help start a number of non-profits including the Odyssey Charter School, Bay Area Coalition of Equitable (formerly Essential) Schools, Denver School of Science and Technology, A + Denver, EdNewsColorado and Get Smart Schools.

Address: Piton Foundation 1370 17th St. 1 Suite 5300 | Denver, CO 80202  
smartpeople@getsmartschools.org | 303.825.6246 x 312  
[www.getsmartschools.org](http://www.getsmartschools.org)