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Charter to settle in old Crofton Elementary

The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 02/06/2008 02:36:13 AM MST

DENVER — A Denver charter high school that will teach students by letting them run businesses reached an agreement for a building site with Denver Public Schools, according to an announcement Tuesday.

Denver Venture School will operate out of the old Crofton Elementary School building at 2409 Arapahoe St. beginning in August.

The school is progressing with building its program, conducting a lottery Friday that selected 120 students for the founding ninth-grade class. The school eventually will grow to a complete high school through the 12th grade and will serve about 450 students.

The school has formed partnerships with both expeditionary learning and Junior Achievement and has raised about \$1.4 million, including money from the Colorado Small Schools Initiative, the Walton Family Foundation, the Piton Foundation, the Rose Community Foundation and the Colorado Department of Education.

DPS's Aquino tapped for training program

The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 02/06/2008 02:35:27 AM MST

DENVER — Denver Public Schools' chief academic officer and the superintendent of Pueblo City Schools were invited to participate in this year's Broad Superintendents Academy, according to an announcement Tuesday.

Jaime Aquino of Denver and John Covington of Pueblo were chosen for the 10-month professional training academy that recruits and trains nontraditional superintendents as well as career educators.

Aquino has been Denver's chief academic officer since 2005, and Covington has been superintendent in Pueblo since 2006.

Tuesday, February 5, 2008

DPS principals hear the law on reporting abuse

By Jeremy P. Meyer
The Denver Post

Article Last Updated: 02/05/2008 10:29:32 AM MST

Denver school principals Monday were read the letter of the law about when they should report a crime, coming a month after a principal was served with a summons for failing to make a timely report.

The session was during the quarterly principal institute, a workshop for the school leaders. Denver Public Schools legal team provided the principals with a procedural checklist on when authorities should be called and what should be done when sexual assault or child abuse is alleged.

Nicole Veltze, 37, principal of Skinner Middle School in northwest Denver, will appear in court Feb. 21 on charges she failed to report child abuse to authorities over an incident involving students.

Veltze has been temporarily removed from her position and is still working for the district in the administration building.

Veltze's attorney said his client conducted an independent investigation into the allegation that a student was sexually harassed by another student.

DPS attorneys on Monday told principals they should not question either the victim or the accused student and should immediately notify police.

"Regardless of the age of (the) student being accused, notify police. They will make a determination as to what needs to be done," according to a memo given to principals.

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Rocky Mountain News

Wednesday, February 6, 2008

DPS academic chief chosen for academy

By [Kevin Flynn](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/>> , Rocky Mountain News ([Contact](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/contact/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/contact/>>)

Wednesday, February 6, 2008

Jaime Aquino, Denver Public Schools' academic chief who was hired three years ago to improve student performance, have been picked to attend an exclusive training program that could lead to a high-level job elsewhere.

But DPS says the program run by the Broad Center for the Management of School Systems in Los Angeles will give Aquino more skills to tackle Denver's challenges - not necessarily a ticket to a post in another city.

Typically, the Broad Superintendents Academy accepts a limited number of applicants, many from nontraditional backgrounds such as the military or business. It trains them to deal with issues facing urban school districts.

Aquino was recruited from New York City's schools in 2005 by DPS Superintendent Michael Bennet to boost student achievement, which had been stagnant in Denver for years. After an improvement in 2006, test results were flat last year.

The training program holds sessions during seven long weekends in various cities around the country. Aquino is one of 12 selected for the upcoming session.

DPS charter to take over shuttered elementary

By [Kevin Flynn](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/>> , Rocky Mountain News ([Contact](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/contact/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/contact/>>)

Wednesday, February 6, 2008

A charter school focused on helping students start business ventures has agreed to lease a closed building near Five Points from Denver Public Schools.

Denver Venture School, whose charter was approved by the DPS board in

November, will operate in the former Crofton Elementary School, 2409 Arapahoe St.

"We will be providing a very high-quality program and are excited to open in a location that is accessible to a diverse group of students," said Amy Slothower, executive director of Denver Venture.

The school and DPS plan to have a two-year agreement finalized in the next few weeks, according to a news release issued by the school. DPS officials could not be reached.

The school eventually will have grades nine through 12, with 450 students. It is holding a lottery Friday to fill 120 spots in its initial ninth-grade class.

The school's focus on entrepreneurship includes partnerships with Junior Achievement and Expeditionary Learning.

The school has raised more than \$1.4 million. Funding has come from such organizations as Colorado Small Schools Initiative, Walton Family Foundation, Piton Foundation, Rose Community Foundation and the Colorado Department of Education.

Tuesday, February 5, 2008

DPS academic chief headed back to school

By [Kevin Flynn](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/>> , Rocky Mountain News ([Contact](http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/contact/) <<http://www.rockymountainnews.com/staff/kevin-flynn/contact/>>)

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Jaime Aquino, Denver Public Schools' academic chief who was hired three years ago to improve student performance, is headed to an exclusive training program that can lead to a high-level job elsewhere.

But DPS says the program run by the Broad Center for the Management of School Systems in Los Angeles will give Aquino more skills and training to tackle Denver's challenges – and not necessarily a ticket to a post in another city.

Typically, the center's Broad Superintendents Academy accepts a limited number

of applicants, many from non-traditional backgrounds such as the military or business. It trains them to deal with the range of issues in urban school districts.

As part of the deal, those attending are usually asked to sign an agreement that within 12 months they will seek a job as a city schools superintendent.

But DPS spokesman Alex Sanchez said the academy has trained many educators already employed in urban districts and doesn't expect them to move on right afterward.

"Actually, a lot of superintendents and chief academic officers participate in that training," Sanchez said. "But Dr. Aquino didn't have to agree to be a superintendent. He asked for a waiver and they accepted his waiver."

Aquino said the achievement gap for poor and minority students is "the most pressing educational challenge we face as a nation."

"There is nothing more important for us to do than turn around urban school systems to prepare all students to achieve to high standards," Aquino said.

"If anything, it helps us keep him," Sanchez said. "The point of it is to keep Dr. Aquino in Denver. But that's for him to decide."

Aquino was recruited from New York City's schools for the 2005-06 school year by Superintendent Michael Bennet to boost student achievement, which had been stagnant in Denver for many years. After an improvement that year, test results were flat last year.

The Broad Academy is a 10-month executive training program that holds sessions over seven long weekends in various cities around the country. The program pays all the expenses. Graduates so far have filled 42 superintendent positions and 65 senior school district executive positions nationwide.

Aquino is one of 12 people selected for the upcoming training session.

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9 News

Tuesday, February 5, 2008

Community leaders mourn the loss of African-

American pioneer

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[<mailto:nelson.garcia@9news.com?subject=RE:Community%20leaders%20mourn%20the%20loss%20of%20African-American%20pioneer>](mailto:nelson.garcia@9news.com?subject=RE:Community%20leaders%20mourn%20the%20loss%20of%20African-American%20pioneer) ,

Reporter

DENVER – Rachel B. Noel was the first black woman elected to public office in Colorado as a school board member. She was the first black woman to serve as a University of Colorado regent. Monday, she died at the age of 90.

"Denver, indeed the entire state, has lost a true warrior," said Michael Hancock, Denver City Council president in a written statement. "Ms. Rachel Noel earned her wings by demonstrating true courage and will as she stood for equality in education for ALL Denver children."

Noel presented the "Noel Resolution" to the Denver School Board in 1968. It called for the equal education of all children in Denver with a plan to integrate the school system. The resolution was later passed and the courts ruled to desegregate the schools changing Denver forever.

"Today, there are thousands of adults living throughout the world who call a person of different race, color, creed or religion a friend because of the act of courage by Ms. Noel in 1968," stated Hancock.

Noel was elected to the University of Colorado Board of Regents before working at the Metropolitan State of Denver as a professor. She also became the head of the African-American Studies Department. In 2002, Denver Public Schools named a middle school in her honor.

School Board President Theresa Pena, Superintendent Michael Bennet, and Board Member Kevin Patterson released a joint statement. "Mrs. Noel is an example to all of us of how one person's hard work, determination and passion can impact the world around her. Mrs. Noel's life will be engraved in the history books and in our hearts as a courageous leader who battled school segregation and created equal opportunity for all of Denver's children."

Noel moved to Oakland, California last year to be close to her daughter. Her son says Noel died in her sleep.

Beef still off the menu at area schools

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[<mailto:TaRhonda.Thomas@9news.com?subject=RE:Beef%20still%20off%20the%20menu%20at%20area%20schools%20>](mailto:TaRhonda.Thomas@9news.com?subject=RE:Beef%20still%20off%20the%20menu%20at%20area%20schools%20) , **Reporter**

DENVER - Schools across the metro area still haven't placed beef back on the menu while they wait for clarification on whether their beef comes from the Westland Meat Company, which was the subject of a Humane Society investigation.

According to that investigation, the company was slaughtering so-called "downer cows," which experts say are at an increase risk of having diseased meat.

Schools across the country have temporarily removed beef from their menus.

"The goal for our food is to be safe ... cooked properly, nutritious and healthy," said Alex Sanchez of Denver Public Schools.

DPS does not have a slated time to place beef back on the menu.

"We haven't determined how long that will be," Sanchez said.

Aurora, Douglas County and Jefferson County public schools are also keeping beef off the menu for now. They have all placed what's called an "administrative hold" on beef.

A spokesperson for Jefferson County Schools says they won't serve any of their commodity beef, but pre-packages foods already containing beef, such as pre-made ravioli, will still be served.

For many schools, chicken and peanut butter are alternative choices for students' protein needs.

Meantime, students in Cherry Creek had beef back on their plates, Tuesday. A spokesperson says the school district was able to verify with its vendors that none of their beef came from the Westland Meat Company.

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Denver Business Journal

Tuesday, February 5, 2008

Business-themed Denver Venture school finds a home

Denver Business Journal - by Mark Harden

<<http://www.bizjournals.com/search/results.html?Ntt=%22Mark%20Harden%22&Ntk=All&Ntx=mode%20matchallpartial>> **Denver Business Journal**

Backers of **Denver Venture School**

<http://www.bizjournals.com/denver/related_content.html?topic=Denver%20Venture%20School> , a business-themed charter high school slated to open in the fall, said Tuesday they have found a home for the new school.

School leaders have signed a letter of intent with Denver Public Schools to operate for two years at the old Crofton School building at 2409 Arapahoe St., four blocks east of Coors Field. They expect to sign a formal two-year agreement in the next few weeks.

Venture School plans to use typical business and financial problems to teach science, math and other subjects. Juniors and seniors will spend a large part of their school day operating a business they planned and launched themselves, mentored by business leaders.

"We are thrilled to have reached this agreement with DPS," Amy Slothower, the school's executive director, said in a statement. "We will be providing a very high-quality program and are excited to open in a location that is accessible to a diverse group of students."

Crofton has been used as office space by the DPS Department of Extended Learning and Community Schools. Until 2004, it was the home of the Polaris Program for gifted and high-achieving students.

Slothower said Venture School will share the Crofton building with the Extended Learning offices for at least a year before making a decision as to whether the shared arrangement works for all concerned.

The Venture School (www.denverventureschool.org <<http://www.denverventureschool.org/>>) Feb. 1 conducted a lottery to select the 120 students who will make up its entering ninth-grade class out of nearly 170 applicants. School leaders are accepting names for a wait list.

Additional students will be admitted each year until the school reaches its capacity of about 450 students in its fourth year.

"We have a fantastic group of kids who will be part of creating this new school. They are bright and energetic and ready to get to work," said Ami Desai, the founding Head of School.

The Denver Public Schools board approved the Venture School charter proposal on Nov. 19.

Organizers have raised \$1.4 million in donations to support the school, with donors including the Colorado Small Schools Initiative, Walton Family Foundation, Piton Foundation, Rose Community Foundation and the Colorado Department of Education.

The Denver Business Journal reported on the Venture School proposal in its Sept. 14 edition. To read the report, go to

denver.bizjournals.com/denver/stories/2007/09/17/story2.html

<<http://denver.bizjournals.com/denver/stories/2007/09/17/story2.htm>

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