



The Third Mile Group Spring 2008 Update

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The Third Mile Group has been in operation nearly two years now and we continue to enjoy our work and our clients immensely. We have begun projects with some new clients this year while many of our long-term projects continue. During the past six months we have worked on a variety of issues: leadership, science and math teacher preparation, strategic planning, state relations, community schools, and prevention programs for at-risk students.

See our new brochure! We just published this informational brochure about our company, the work we do and our partial client list. Copies are available upon request, or view it on our website at www.thirdmilegroup.com.

Project Updates

Our two-year project with **The Wallace Foundation** on developing effective leadership systems – managed by the **Council of Chief State School Officers** – will come to an end June 30. The culminating conference for the Leadership Issue Groups (LIG) on governance, resource allocation and incentives, and data-informed decisionmaking was held in early May in Atlanta. We had a wonderful time seeing all the LIG members and showcasing the work and products developed over the past three years of the project. We hope to be able to continue to work with some of the state departments and districts in the months ahead. The website for the Data-informed Decisionmaking LIG is being finalized and will be available shortly as a comprehensive resource for LIG members, and others as well.

On a project for **Learning Point Associates**, TMG completed development and analysis of a survey of school district superintendents and school board chairs to determine how districts use the media - whether print, broadcast, or internet - as a conduit for effective communication. The survey results will be presented in an article planned for this fall.

Our work with **Fountain-Fort Carson School District Eight** continues on the strategic plan for funding and staffing the Lorraine Education and Community Center. Lots of progress has been made this year. The Daniels Fund of Denver awarded a four-year grant of \$400,000 to the district to support the postsecondary education component; the district is obligated to match some of that funding each year. The district has hired Vicky Brown as the college transitions coordinator to help students – both current and graduates – enroll and prepare for the postsecondary coursework.

Also the district has partnered with the Community Partnership for Child Development (with support provided by the Woodford Foundation and the Pikes Peak Minority Opportunity Fund of Colorado Springs) to hire Cheryl Lewis, the first “family advocate” who will provide wraparound comprehensive health care and mental health support services to the students and their families that utilize the Lorraine Center. Cheryl will work with the school and all the service providers to make sure students’ needs are identified and addressed. Ultimately the Center may have as many as four family advocates working on behalf of the students and families at Lorraine.

In April TMG worked with district staff to apply for a federal full-service community school grant as well as some local grant opportunities. The Joseph Henry Edmondson Foundation of Colorado Springs continues to support TMG in its work with the district.

TMG has been working on several fronts for one of our new clients, the **Colorado Department of Education**. The Department launched its *Forward Thinking* strategic plan last fall, and TMG partners facilitated and summarized a series of meetings around the goals of the plan. We have also completed research and analysis for the Department on a number of issues; worked with staff to coordinate alignment of education initiatives and projects among the governing entities of the state; and facilitated strategic planning with the State Board of Education. We are delighted to be able to work with Commissioner Dwight Jones and his staff on the dynamic agenda set for the Department.

Over the past few months, TMG Partner Charles Coble facilitated the Accreditation Task Force convened by the **American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE)**. The charge of the task force was to outline a vision of accreditation in educator preparation that provides common ground to guide accreditation, identify building components that would serve this vision, and recommend next steps and implementation needed to achieve these accreditation goals for the education profession. Members of the task force represent AACTE, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). The Task Force’s final report is available on the AACTE website at:

http://www.aacte.org/Programs/Accreditation_Issues/task_force_to_final_report.aspx.

The Third Mile Group was successful in connecting the **National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University (CASA)** with several education policy organizations toward the goal of developing and sustaining partnerships in the education sector. Larry Murray and Rush Russell of CASA, with TMG partner Charles Coble, met with representatives of the Education Commission of the States (ECS), Council of Chief State Officers, Learning Point Associates, Public Education Network, American Association of School Administrators, and the National Association of State Boards of Education. TMG is working with CASA and ECS to further develop ideas around a joint project on solutions to the problems of at-risk youth for states and school districts. TMG staff also attended meetings in March with CASA staff and two Colorado school districts where the CASASTART program operates. We learned a great deal about the tremendous progress of the middle school students in the program, and the unique commitment of the districts and the community to these schools and to the program.

The Third Mile Group is a subcontractor to **Augenblick, Palaich and Associates (APA)** on an evaluation of the Ritchie Program for School Leadership. The program represents a unique partnership between Denver University (DU) and Denver Public Schools (DPS) to train principals as instructional leaders for the urban school district. The Donnell-Kay Foundation of Denver is supporting this evaluation to determine the success and sustainability of the program. Bob Palaich and Jennifer Kramer-Wine of APA

and TMG partners Katy Anthes and Cathy Walker have interviewed current and former Ritchie students, mentor principals, faculty, and DU and DPS administrators. The final report will be delivered in September.

TMG partner Charles Coble continues to serve as the co-director of the Science and Mathematics Teacher Imperative (SMTI) of the National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC). The primary goal of the initiative is to increase the number and quality of middle grades and secondary science and mathematics teachers. In November the Carnegie Corporation of New York awarded NASULGC a \$200,000 grant to support the initiative. The Carnegie Corporation grant will enable the SMTI program to develop a broad framework to present the promising practices of existing and evolving science teacher programs, as well as support online opportunities for teacher education programs to learn from one another, tools to quantify the need for more science and math teachers on a state-by-state basis, and some means of assessing progress toward attaining program goals. The third meeting of the SMTI Commissioners will be held in Tempe, Arizona June 5-8. Updates of the SMTI work are posted on the NASULGC website under Major Initiatives, SMTI:
<http://www.nasulgc.org/NetCommunity/Page.aspx?pid=584&srcid=778>

The Third Mile Group has begun work with **The Education Commission of the States** to coordinate and facilitate a series of regional meetings in the fall of 2008. The meetings will serve as a forum for policymakers and education leaders to discuss and develop solutions to specific education challenges in their region. Participants will include all ECS Commissioners. More information on this project will be forthcoming at the ECS National Forum on Education Policy in Austin, Texas, June 30-July 2.

TMG will begin a new scope of work shortly with the **Texas High School Project**. As part of this project we will convene the Texas Educational Leadership Council to strengthen education leadership stakeholder collaboration across the state of Texas, and identify policy levers in the system that could substantively improve the education leadership system. TMG will organize and facilitate a series of meetings of the Council and coalesce recommendations from these meetings into a final report.

Partners News

In February the TMG partners visited DID resource facilitator Jeff Nelsen, and his partner and wife Amalia Cudeiro, of Targeted Leadership Consulting, in beautiful Maui, Hawaii. We combined business and pleasure as we discussed potential new projects while whale watching and enjoying the idyllic Maui beaches.

Katy Anthes will resume her teaching duties at the University of Colorado at Denver School of Public Affairs this spring, teaching a master's course in Policy and Program Evaluation.

At the request of the Academy for Educational Development, Charles Coble facilitated a K-16 conference at the University of Texas at El Paso in April. AED sponsored this conference of 80 participants. Information about the conference and the project is available at the UTEP website, <http://www.k16research.utep.edu>

We are pleased to announce that TMG partner Charles Coble, and good friend Henry Peel, Wachovia Distinguished Chair at East Carolina University, have co-authored a new book, *Real Bosses - Don't Boss*, based on their shared work as leaders. Many leaders, otherwise fine and successful people, have

tremendous difficulties when thrust into positions of leading other people and organizations. Charles and Henry have devoted considerable time discussing why this is so. Out of their observations and experiences, they have identified 12 principles that would be beneficial to people who are in leadership positions. The authors hope that new and experienced bosses will find this short book to be a useful guides in improving practices. The book is available from Outskirts Press, <http://outskirtspress.com/webpage.php?isbn=9781432722814>.

New e-mail addresses! Our company name is now part of our e-mail addresses, so please update your address book with the new addresses. (Our old email addresses will still work too.)

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We invite you to visit our website - www.thirdmilegroup.com - for more details on our clients and projects. We welcome your comments and questions about our work and about The Third Mile Group. We love hearing from you.
