



THIRD  
MILE  
GROUP

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Spring 2007

## The Third Mile Group Spring 2007 Update

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The Third Mile Group has been in business for one year now and we're happy to report on the excellent year it has been. The three of us - Katy Anthes, Charles Coble and Cathy Walker - founded this company with the goal of providing high-quality and personable service and products to our clients to help them achieve results in education and social policy. We have enjoyed working not only with each other as partners in this new endeavor, but also with every one of our clients. The work we have undertaken this past year has been rewarding, challenging and great!

We are pleased and proud to recognize our partner, Katy Anthes, who successfully defended her doctoral dissertation at the Graduate School of Public Affairs, University of Colorado at Denver, in April. As the culmination of six years of dedicated work, Katy was awarded a doctorate degree in public policy on May 12. Katy is preparing for an international meeting in Beijing, China this summer where, with her SAELP project colleagues, she will present a paper on education leadership.

Over the past year the Third Mile Group (TMG) has worked with 11 different clients on a variety of projects: education leadership, teacher education programs, science and math teacher preparation, teacher academies, community schools, scholarship programs, and at-risk students. We have conducted research, facilitated meetings, developed workplans and funding strategies, crafted proposals, and recommended solutions. Below we offer brief progress reports on seven ongoing TMG projects and highlight some of the notable work of our clients.

We invite you to visit our website -- [www.thirdmilegroup.com](http://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 (see e-mail addresses below). We'd love to hear from you so please keep in touch!

Our thanks to all our clients, friends and colleagues for your support and confidence in our new company. We are looking forward to new challenges, new projects and new relationships in the months and years ahead.

Fountain-Fort Carson School District Eight, Lorraine Secondary School and Community School. What started as a grassroots effort to address the problems of at-risk students in a high-poverty and highly mobile school district has turned out to be a unique enterprise in the Fountain Valley south of Colorado Springs. The Lorraine Secondary School and Community Center is an alternative school for middle and high school students that also offers social services to students and to the entire community - health, mental health, drug and alcohol abuse intervention, workforce development, and community engagement. Now the district wants to build a new state-of-the art facility to accommodate the school and an expanded suite of services, as well as postsecondary education opportunities for the high school students and citizens of the community. The district hired TMG to develop a comprehensive workplan and funding strategy to move this initiative forward. Superintendent Dwight Jones is leading the charge, meeting with local funders about potential partnerships on specific program elements of the initiative as well as capital funding for the new facility. The postsecondary component of the workplan is being launched through a partnership with Pikes Peak Community College. TMG is assisting the district in all these efforts, as well as helping to strengthen the integration of services among the social service providers. The commitment among the teachers, school leaders and service providers is remarkable and is the driving force in making the new Lorraine Center a reality.

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Learning Point Associates (LPA). TMG is now part of a very exciting collaborative effort with Learning Point Associates focused on educational leadership and is working with LPA to design and deliver specific products and services. The first step was to complete an environmental scan to identify the work currently being conducted across the country by other organizations and researchers to determine where additional attention and resources are needed.

In early May, the REL Midwest at Learning Point Associates hosted a conference on the "next wave" of education leadership that included papers and presentations by experts in education leadership and teacher preparation: Arthur Levine, Michael Fullan, Mary McCarthy, Ellen Goldring and Lee Teitel. TMG and Public Impact helped to design, facilitate and document the day-long meeting that had as its primary goal the identification of a leadership research initiative for REL Midwest to undertake.

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The Third Mile Group serves as staff to the ongoing Leadership Issue Groups (LIG) sponsored by The Wallace Foundation and managed by the Council of Chief State School Officers. The LIG project is a three-year initiative that brings together groups of education leaders from across the system to grapple with difficult education leadership issues. Over the past year TMG organized and facilitated the work and meetings of three groups on the topics of governance, resource allocation and incentives, and data informed decisionmaking. All three groups are making significant progress in identifying the challenges schools and districts face on these issues, and participants are devising new and better ways to manage resources, collect and use data and build and sustain solid relationships. Our groups joined the other LIGs at the Wallace Foundation's May 3-4 meeting to share their work and accelerate the dissemination of learning. This project continues through June 2008.

With assistance and consultation from TMG, the South Dakota Board of Regents is conducting a system-wide review of teacher education programs at all five state universities. TMG identified data sets and information for the review process and assisted with interpretation. TMG partner Charles Coble ventured north last December - with all the warm clothes he owns - to visit each campus, meet with teacher education program leaders and assess the strengths and weaknesses of each program. Coble is working closely with Samuel Gingerich, senior administrator and academic officer with the Board, and the state-wide committee charged with evaluating and making recommendations. The final report is in the works and will include a set of recommendations for Board consideration.

National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges (NASULGC). With NASULGC Vice President of Science and Research, Howard Gobstein, TMG partner Charles Coble is co-directing NASULGC's STEM teacher education initiative - the Science and Mathematics Teacher Imperative. TMG is helping to craft the project workplan and development strategy for funding and sustaining the initiative over the long term. NASULGC has created a commission, chaired by Richard Herman, Chancellor of the University of Illinois-Champaign, to oversee the project. The commission will convene its inaugural meeting on June 10, 2007 in Washington, DC. TMG is also assisting in outreach efforts to connect the STEM initiative to education and science leaders throughout the country.

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National Center for Student Engagement. Over a decade of educational research conducted by the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children led to the creation of the National Center for School Engagement (NCSE) in 2005. NCSE strives to build a network of key stakeholders who share the belief that improving school attendance and school attachment promotes achievement and school success. The Center promotes collaboration among courts, schools and law enforcement to solve problems at the community level. It has generated many resources about school attendance, attachment, and achievement, and provides training and technical assistance, research and evaluation to school districts, law enforcement agencies, courts, as well as state and federal agencies. TMG has been retained to assist the Center in developing its strategic plan for expanding work with the education sector nationally. TMG will help position the Center as a valuable resource and tool to address the problems of at-risk youth faced by states and school districts.

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National Center for Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF). The Third Mile Group is working with NCTAF on the development of a teacher academy initiative. TMG has conducted research and analysis on the core principles and elements of programs across the country and identified state and district policies that support the development of teacher academies. TMG is assisting NCTAF in further developing the knowledge base on this new model for preparing teachers for our nation's schools.

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