

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 2, 2010

President of the United States
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

We write today to urge you to recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of the Denver School of Science and Technology (DSST) by delivering the commencement address at DSST this spring.

As we work toward the national goal of having the highest percentage of college graduates of any country in the world by 2020, DSST provides a compelling model of success. Like the two previous graduating classes, all of this year's seniors have been admitted to four-year colleges. This accomplishment is all the more significant because DSST is an open-enrollment school reflecting the diversity of the community it serves. Forty-five percent of the students come from economically disadvantaged families, 62 percent are Latino or African American, and 49 percent of this year's senior class will be the first in their family to attend college.

DSST prides itself on building a values-based community. Daily school-wide meetings instill a sense of purpose and responsibility in each student. DSST creates a community where, as one student put it, "academic success is cool." Added to the supportive community is a rigorous standard-based assessment structure utilizing individual student data trackers. This innovative tool holds both students and teachers accountable for academic progress.

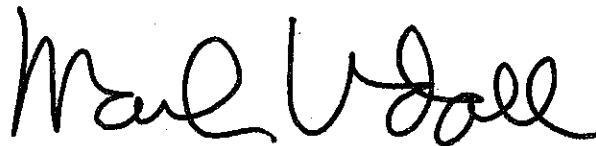
Not only does DSST prepare students to be accepted to college, but also it gives them the tools to succeed in college and beyond. Only 3.8 percent of 2008 DSST graduates required remedial instruction in college, compared to Colorado's statewide average of 29.3 percent. Forty-five percent of the class of 2009 is pursuing college degrees in the STEM fields. DSST students represent a bright future for the United States. They will make the scientific discoveries, drive the technological innovation and provide the leadership to keep our country globally competitive throughout the 21st century.

Finally, we urge you to accept DSST sophomore Ben Brasch's challenge to a game of basketball. Ben has already easily bested Colorado Governor Bill Ritter and is looking for an elected official who can give him a run for his money.

Sincerely,



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Mark Udall
U.S. Senator