



## Michael Bennet's Education Record

### DENVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The Denver Board of Education selected Bennet as superintendent of Denver Public Schools (DPS) on June 27, 2005, taking office on July 1. He had no prior experience as a school administrator.

Under Bennet's leadership, DPS increased student learning, grew student enrollment, decreased dropout rates, and improved graduation rates and college enrollment. Those trends have continued since Bennet left the office. Bennet collaborated with educators and community members to develop the Denver Plan, a commitment to increase student success by focusing on higher expectations, better professional learning opportunities for educators, and deeper engagement with the community and stakeholders. Bennet and the City of Denver also partnered with private philanthropists to increase college enrollment and affordability for DPS graduates.

The *Denver Post* [wrote](#) of his tenure, "Bennet has been a force—pushing reforms and steering the state's second-largest district to a culture of success."

Read more about Bennet's approach in a 2007 *New Yorker* piece, "[Expectations.](#)"

### UNITED STATES SENATE

As a member of the Senate committee that oversees education, Bennet was instrumental in the 2015 passage of the sweeping, bipartisan overhaul of No Child Left Behind. Bennet led the effort in focusing the Every Student Succeeds Act on supporting teachers and school leaders to better help schools succeed and students learn. Because of his direct experience as a superintendent, he successfully pushed for the law to focus more holistically on how students and schools are making progress. He also spearheaded the inclusion of improved support for educators, particularly by empowering states to invest more in school leaders and encouraging districts to do the same throughout teachers' careers.

The law also included dedicated funding for educators to leverage innovative and evidence-based practices to improve student learning, inspired by the innovative approaches to education Bennet had seen across Colorado. In addition, Bennet successfully included support for states to create Family Engagement Centers to help schools and districts strengthen parent and family engagement, helping all kids to succeed.

As the *Denver Post* [wrote](#), "The legislation ... has the former superintendent's fingerprints all over it, and many of the reforms started in Denver could soon be part of a new federal law. For Michael Bennet, the spark that ignited a decade ago over how to improve public education is still burning, and now it is a fire that could finally change the country's poorly crafted education law."