



PEAK TO PEAK CHARTER SCHOOL

ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2008-2009



Peak to Peak Core Values/Pillars

Peak to Peak is guided by a core set of values and commitments to our students, staff and the community at large. This newsletter

highlights the tremendous progress we've made toward each of these pillars during the 2008-09 school year.

1. We Value Learning: Educational Philosophy
Learning is the core value of Peak to Peak. Our school emphasizes excellence in a college preparatory education by focusing its efforts on

the capability of students of all backgrounds and cultures to grow academically and personally.

2. We Value Character Development

Respect, responsibility, and other universally valued character traits are embedded in the curriculum and school culture to help equip students for long-term success in life.

3. We Value Our Faculty and Staff

Peak to Peak fosters an environment that is fair, challenging, and innovative and that supports extensive professional development. We take pride in the excellence of our faculty and staff.

4. We Welcome Our Community

Peak to Peak actively includes students, staff, parents and community partners. Our partners have the opportunity to engage in productive dialogue and to make a difference.



ACADEMIC RECOGNITIONS

Top National Ranking

Peak to Peak High School was again named a 2009 Gold Medal School by *U.S. News & World Report*, ranking 69th in the country. For the second year in a row, Peak to Peak High School was also named a Top 100 School by *Newsweek* magazine. In 2009, the school ranked 61st out of approximately 27,000 public high schools in the nation and was the only Top 100 school in Colorado.

Among Top Schools in the Denver Region

Peak to Peak High School was named the number one school in the Denver metropolitan area by *5280* magazine in 2007. In 2008, *5280* magazine discontinued their school rankings but instead evaluated elementary, middle and high schools based on 14 criteria. The entire Peak to Peak school, K-12, was recognized for academic excellence, community service, community engagement, multi-grade engagement, diverse academic programs, and character and cultural literacy of students.

John Irwin School of Excellence

Peak to Peak's elementary and middle schools have each been recipients of five "John Irwin School of Excellence" Awards, and the high school has received a John Irwin Award each of the six years it has been eligible. The awards are presented to the top eight percent of Colorado schools.

"Excellent" State Ratings

Peak to Peak elementary, middle and high schools were once again all ranked "Excellent," the top rating based on statewide CSAP testing by the State of Colorado.

ACT Scores Highest in District, Second in State

Peak to Peak's junior class of 2008 achieved a new school record, receiving an average composite score of 25.4 on the ACT test. This was the highest score in the Boulder Valley School District and second highest in the state.

National Merit Finalists

Five Peak to Peak seniors were named National Merit Scholarship Finalists, and nine additional students were recognized as commended. While

our seniors made up 4.5% of the school district's graduating class, 13% of the district's National Merit Finalists were from Peak to Peak. Nationwide, just 15,000 finalists and 34,000 commended students are named among the 1.5 million juniors who take the PSAT.

College Preparatory Accreditation

Peak to Peak is the only public school in Boulder County and one of only two schools in Colorado to achieve College Preparatory Accreditation from the North Central Association (NCA). The NCA has awarded college prep accreditation to 232 private schools in its region, while only 31 public schools have received this designation.

Graduates Granted Scholarship Money

The 2009 class of graduating seniors was awarded \$7.8 million in scholarship money. With 95 graduates, this averages \$82,420 in scholarship offers per student.

College Choices

Peak to Peak seniors had their choice of colleges, with an average of more than four college acceptances per student.

Selective College Acceptances

Of the 416 college acceptances achieved by the 2009 seniors, eight percent were into the nation's 'Most Competitive' schools and 65 percent of acceptances were into 'Highly Competitive' or 'Most Competitive' colleges or universities.

High Number of Advanced Placement Tests

In 2009, a record 242 Peak to Peak students took 542 Advanced Placement (AP) tests in 19 different content areas. These college-level courses are accepted for credit by thousands of universities nationwide.

AP Scholar Achievements

Eighty-two Peak to Peak High School students qualified for AP Scholar distinctions based on the Spring 2008 AP (Advanced Placement) exams taken. Ten students qualified for the **National AP Scholar Award** by earning an average grade of 4 or higher on a 5 point scale on all AP exams taken and a grade of 4 or high on eight or more of these exams. Thirty students earned the **AP Scholar with Distinction** award (average grades of at least 3.5 on all AP exams and grades of 3 or higher on five or more exams). Twelve students qualified for the **AP Scholar with Honor** award, (grades of at least 3.25 on all AP exams and grades of 4 or higher on four or more exams). Thirty students qualified for the **AP Scholar Award** (Three or more AP exams with grades of 3 or higher). Only 18% of the 1.6 million students

worldwide who took AP exams performed at sufficiently high levels to earn an AP Scholar award or higher.

National Hispanic Scholars

Two Peak to Peak seniors were recognized as National Hispanic Program Scholars, based on outstanding PSAT scores and GPAs. Only 5,000 of 200,000 eligible students received this award.

Peak Scholar Diplomas

Thirty-five Peak to Peak seniors received Peak Scholar diplomas. The Peak Scholar program indicates to selective colleges that students who achieve this honor have excelled in AP exams, GPA, leadership and community service. Twenty-five 2009 graduates received the school's highest award, being recognized as **Peak Scholars with Distinction** (an average of 3.5 or higher on at least five AP exams, at least a 3.9 weighted GPA, and 150 hours of community service); six students received **Peak Scholar with Honors** (an average score of 3.25 or higher on at least four AP exams, at least a 3.7 weighted GPA, and 125 hours of community service); and four students received **Peak Scholar** (an average score of 3 or higher on at least three AP exams, at least a 3.3 weighted GPA, and 100 hours of community service).

Science Olympiad Winners

Peak to Peak's Science Olympiad team placed fourth out of 24 teams at the Northern Regional Science Olympiad Tournament. The team advanced to the state-level competition at the School of Mines and placed 4th in the state.

Speech & Debate Championships

The Peak to Peak Forensics program has again proven to be a competitive success. For the second year in a row, the team took home a state championship title. Out of 22 schools from around the state and hundreds of competitors, Peak to Peak claimed 27 awards. A sophomore earned 1st place in the category of Original Oratory and will go on to compete at the National Forensics Tournament. A team of seniors took 2nd in the state in the Duet Drama category. A junior took 2nd place in Value Debate. Overall, ten students made the finals and placed in the top six spots of their events at state. Nine students also made it to the semi-finals. Eight students were recognized with excellence awards for an outstanding performance. In all, 32 Peak to Peak students competed at the state level.

National Ocean Sciences Bowl Competition

The high school Ocean Sciences Bowl team earned a 3rd place trophy at the National Ocean Sciences Bowl (NOSB) Competition for the Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and South Dakota region, which was held at CU-Boulder in February 2009.

Mock Trial

The 2008/09 High School Mock Trial team competed in the Regional Mock Trial Competition on February 20-21 and placed 3rd in the region.

Essay Contest Winner

A senior won the Colorado League of Charter Schools/CollegelInvest Essay Contest. The essay topic was: "How is your charter school preparing you for college and/or making your dreams come true?" More than 900 essays were submitted. As the 1st place winner in the state's high school competition, she received a scholarship award presented by the Lt. Governor and read her essay at the State Capitol.

Regional Science Fair Achievements

Fifteen Peak to Peak students competed in the regional science fair competition. Numerous awards were presented to students in individual science categories. At the elementary school level, one student placed 1st, one placed 2nd and four achieved 3rd place honors.

Lincoln Scholastic Contest Winners

Seventeen Peak to Peak students were named state-wide finalists in the 2009 Colorado Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Contest. The object of the contest was to encourage youth to discover the importance of great leaders like Abraham Lincoln. The high school students wrote essays on "Acting like Lincoln" in which they described how their local community or the State of Colorado does or could reflect the ideal of a community "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." The gold, silver and bronze medal winners will be announced at an awards ceremony on June 20, 2009.

Banned Book Essay Contest Winners

Three Peak to Peak students from Kristie Letter's British Literature class won awards in the Tattered Cover Eighth Annual Banned Book Week Essay contest. In the 9th/10th grade category, Peak to Peak students took the first, second and third place titles. The first place winner received a grant for the school's Library Media Center.

Academic State Champions

The 2008/2009 Peak to Peak Speech and Debate Team won the Academic State Championship title with a cumulative GPA of 3.76.

The Peak to Peak High School Cheer team won the CHSAA Academic State Championship with a cumulative GPA of 3.8.

Destination Imagination

A Peak to Peak Middle School team took 2nd place at the Regional tournament and went to state for the 4th year in a row.

Storytelling Award

A 4th grade student took first place in the Colorado Language Arts Society's annual storytelling contest in the 3rd and 4th grade category.

Optimist Brain Bowl

Five Peak to Peak middle school teams competed in the 2009 N. Region Optimist Brain Bowl tournament. All five teams were finalists in the elimination rounds. They competed against schools from the entire northern Colorado and southern Wyoming region.

National Junior Academic Championships

Two Peak to Peak Middle School teams competed at the National Junior Academic Championships based on their performances in the regional Optimist Brain Bowl. The teams traveled to Marymount University in Arlington, VA, June 4-7, 2009 to compete.

Rocky Mountain Talent Search

Four eighth grade students finished among the top 10% of participants in the Rocky Mountain Academic Talent Search and were awarded "Highest Honors" certificates. Two 8th graders, a 5th grader, and a 4th grader finished among the top 25% of participants and were awarded "Highest Honors" certificates.

MathCounts

In March 2009, an eighth grade student who placed 10th in the region went on to represent Peak to Peak at the state MathCounts finals. He was awarded an honorable mention for being in the top 15 middle school math students in Colorado. This is the fifth year in a row Peak to Peak has had a team or individual advance to the state level of competition. The Peak to Peak middle school team of four students took 3rd in the regional championship.

ESPN X Games Student Reporter

A Peak to Peak sophomore won a trip to Aspen to cover the ESPN Winter X Games as a reporter. After writing about high school sports for *ESPN Rise* Magazine for a year, she submitted an essay about her desire to report at the Winter X Games and won 1st place in the contest. At the X Games, she interviewed athletes, wrote articles, took photos and posted a blog on the *ESPN Rise* website.

IBM High School Hero

A Peak to Peak senior was selected as the IBM High School Hero of the week for her outstanding leadership contributions to her school and community. This program recognizes those who excel in both activities (athletics, music, speech and leadership) and in the classroom.

Peer Tutoring

A student-run Think Tank was established in 2008/2009, offering tutoring services for both middle and high school students.

ARTS RECOGNITIONS

Scholastic Art Award Winners

Three Peak to Peak high school students won Gold Key awards and five won Silver Key awards in the 2009 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards competition. One of the Gold Key winners, a Peak to Peak 10th grade student, went on to win a national-level silver medal for his photography. He will be recognized with the other national winners at Carnegie Hall in June 2009. In the competition, 140,000 works were submitted and only 1,000 students received national medals.

All-State Music Selections

Nine Peak to Peak High School music students were selected to the 2009 Colorado All-State Choir, All-State Band, and All-State Orchestra. They were selected from thousands of students from across Colorado who auditioned for these high-profile honor ensembles.

Young Artists Festival

Several Peak to Peak students performed at the TASHCO Young Artist's Festival in April 2009. A 6th grader placed 1st in the Intermediate Strings competition and a 7th grade girl placed 2nd in the Junior Ballet competition.

Film Festival Winner

A Peak to Peak junior was one of four winners in the second annual Spirit of the Outdoors Film Festival sponsored by REI and Boulder Digital

Arts. His film, "The making of an Adventure," was about a ski trip to Keystone with friends. The contest showcases novice filmmakers' love for the outdoors and determination to make a difference in the world.

Colorado Shakespeare Festival Actor

A Peak to Peak 6th grader performed in a leading role in *Macbeth* with the Colorado Shakespeare Festival and auditioned in New York for the Broadway Show *Mary Poppins*.

Doodle 4 Google Art Winners

Six middle school artists designed a creative doodle logo that won an award in a national contest sponsored by Google. The contest to reinvent Google's homepage logo asked participants to creatively doodle around the theme "What I would wish for the world."

Local Art Show Showcases Peak to Peak Artists

Several high school artists had their work displayed at the second annual Peak to Peak Art Show at Cannon Mine Coffee.

Performing Arts Award

A sophomore received a full merit-based scholarship for the highly competitive, internationally recognized Perry Mansfield School of Performing Arts summer arts program. Alumni of the program include Jessica Biel, Julie Harris and Dustin Hoffman.

Ballet Nouveau Colorado

Several students were awarded roles in Ballet Nouveau Colorado's annual production of *The Nutcracker*, the only full-length professional *Nutcracker* performed in the Denver metro area. A seventh grader performed the lead role of Clara.

Vocal Competition Winner

A 6th grade boy won 1st place in the 19th annual 2009 Vocal Competition for Jesters in the Middle School Non-Classical division.

Youth Symphony Members

Six Peak to Peak students performed with the Boulder Youth Symphony and four students performed with the High Plains Youth Symphony.

Fine Arts Festival Winner

A Peak to Peak 6th grade choir student won first place at the Broomfield Fine Arts Festival.

Honors Orchestra Participant

A 10th grade student participated in the Western States Honor Orchestra Festival in November 2008 at UNC in Greeley.

Advanced Placement Art Portfolios

Five Peak to Peak seniors successfully completed the AP Art portfolio in fine and digital arts in 2009.

ATHLETIC RECOGNITIONS

All-State Athletes

Five Peak to Peak athletes (two in girls soccer, one in boys soccer, one in girls basketball and one in girls softball) were selected for 3A All-State honors by the Denver Post.

All-Conference Athletes

48 Peak to Peak athletes were named to All-Conference athletic teams in 2008/2009. This is a more than 3-fold increase from the previous year. Sports with All-Conference winners include golf, soccer, softball, volleyball, cross country, basketball, ice hockey, track, and baseball.

Metro League Athlete of the Year

A Peak to Peak senior was selected as the female, senior track athlete of the year for the Denver Metro League. She placed 1st in both the league and the region in the 1600 and 3200 meter events.

Metro League Coaches of the Year

Three Peak to Peak coaches were named Metro League coaches of the year (two in basketball and one in cross country, for the 2nd year in a row).

Cross Country Team 1st in League, 3rd in State

Peak to Peak girls again took first out of seven teams at the Metro League XC Championships. Three girls were 1st team all conference winners and two girls were 2nd team all conference winners. The girls went on to finish 2nd at the regional cross country finals and finished 3rd at the state championship in Fort Collins. The boys team finished 6th at the Regional Championship and one senior went on to compete at the State Championships.

Middle School Cross Country

Peak to Peak's middle school runners scored medals at every meet this year, winning four first, three second, and two third place team trophies. They also saw many individual successes.

Varsity Golf Team at State

The boys varsity golf team tied for third place among the Metro League teams and tied for 6th place in the state. Individual students placed 13th and 25th in the state.

Girls Golf Team Wins City Cup

In its first year, Peak to Peak's girls golf team tied for first place in the Denver Public Schools League City Cup Tournament.

Varsity Swimming

A sophomore qualified for Junior Nationals and Senior Nationals in both the 100 and 200 freestyle events. At the state 5A swim championships, she placed 2nd in the 100 freestyle and 3rd in the 200 freestyle, earning All American times. Her medley relay team also earned All American status. In June 2009, she will compete in the Speedo Grand Prix event.

A senior participated in the N. Zone Syncro Championships and her trio took 1st. This is the first time a Colorado team has ever won. They swam at the US National meet at Stanford against the top seven teams in the nation and two US National teams.

Track & Field State Championships

16 athletes competed at the 3A State Track and Field Championships in 2009. Peak to Peak took 4th in the 4x100 boys relay, 4th in the boys 100 meter, 5th in the girls 100 meter, 5th and 7th in the boys 110 meter hurdles, 7th in the girls 4x800 relay, and 8th in the girls 3200.

Varsity Soccer

The girls varsity soccer team finished 4th in the Metro League and advanced to the quarter finals in the state championship tournament. Two players were awarded All-State honorable mention.

Cheer Team International Recognition

A team of one 10th, one 8th and two 7th grade girls from Peak to Peak competed at a national cheer competition and won first place in the All Levels competition. An international panel scored their video against other national champions and crowned them International All-Levels Grand Champions.

Colorado Cycling Championship

A junior won the boys 16-17 year-old Colorado State Cycling Hill Climb Championship held at Mt. Evans. He placed second in the Colorado State Road Race Championship.

Golf Hole in One

A freshman girl shot a hole in one at Indian Peaks Golf Course in Lafayette, CO.

Bolder Boulder Middle School Challenge

Peak to Peak's team placed 1st as the fastest middle school team to compete in Division II of the 2009 Bolder Boulder 10K Middle School Challenge.



CHARACTER & COMMUNITY SERVICE RECOGNITIONS

President's Volunteer Service Award

A Peak to Peak 11th grade student was presented the 2008 President's Volunteer Service Award. Presented by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, she was recognized for her commitment to strengthening our nation and for making a difference through her volunteer service. The Silver award recognized her dedication to volunteer service and signified that she has served in her community with distinction. Through her effort, she has demonstrated values that make our nation strong and is helping to build a culture of citizenship, service and responsibility.

Outstanding Youth Volunteer Award

A Peak to Peak junior was honored by the City of Boulder's Youth Opportunities Advisory Board (YOAB), which recognizes outstanding youth who are making a difference in the Boulder community through volunteer work. This student spent many hours working with the Share-a-Gift program and the Boulder Theater for Kids.

Sister Carmen Food Drive

Peak to Peak sophomores organized a canned food drive for Sister Carmen Community Center in Lafayette, generating 5,965 pounds of food and \$2,500 in cash.

Lafayette Oatmeal Festival

More than 50 National Honor Society students volunteered to host the annual Lafayette Quaker Oatmeal Festival in January 2009. They served more than 290 gallons of oatmeal, 140 toppings and hundreds of pancakes and muffins to more than 3,200 visitors.

Key Club Awards

At the Rocky Mountain Key Club District convention, a Peak to Peak senior won "Most Distinguished Board Member" and the Linda Canaday Memorial Scholarship. A freshman team won the talent show competition.

Key Club Builds Vietnamese School

As part of the Rocky Mountain District, Peak to Peak's Key Club raised \$56,000 to build a two-story school serving 1,200 students and community members in Doan Hung, Viet Nam. The club is now raising money to build a school for children of indigenous minorities in Sa Pa, Viet Nam. Peak to

Peak's Key Club donates hundreds of volunteer hours to organization such as the YMCA, Habitat for Humanity and Children of Peace International.

Volunteer Recognition

A Peak to Peak junior was recognized by the Boulder Daily Camera for her volunteer work with the Boulder Country Respite and Companion Volunteer Program. She worked with an elderly Vietnamese immigrant to help him learn English and study for his citizenship exam.

Coat Drive

Peak to Peak students again sponsored a successful coat drive. The coats were donated to the annual Rotary Club coat drive.

Share-A-Gift Donations

English teacher Jennifer Jouzdani's 6th grade Access class collected toys for Share-A-Gift and went over after school was dismissed on the last day before Winter Break to help sort toys for the families who were to begin shopping the next day. Ms. Jouzdani was impressed with the willingness of these students to give up their time outside of school hours to help those less fortunate.

Community Clean Up

A group of Peak to Peak National Honor Society students conducted a volunteer clean-up/yard work effort in Arbordale Acres, a neighborhood near Peak to Peak.

Pen Pals

Ms. Witkiewicz' 5th graders enjoyed a pen pal relationship with a Peace Corp volunteer in Uganda who teaches Science (and some computers and PE) to pre-service teachers. He and the students corresponded throughout the school year.



FACULTY & STAFF RECOGNITIONS

Jared Polis Teacher Recognition Award

Peak to Peak English teacher Kristie Letter was a winner in the Jared Polis Foundation Teacher Recognition Awards. More than 130 teachers were nominated for this award. On May 8, 2009, she and 14 other honorees in the Denver Metro Area were recognized for their commitment to students, innovative teaching styles and collaborative skills. In addition to a personal award, she won a \$1,000 teacher-directed operating grant for Peak to Peak.

University of Colorado Outstanding Graduate

The faculty members of the Administrative Leadership and Policy Studies program at the University of Colorado Denver selected high school principal Kyle Mathews as the 2009 outstanding graduate. Mr. Mathews graduated with an Educational Specialist (Ed.S.) degree in Administrative Leadership and Policy in May 2009.

Key Club Outstanding Advisor

Faculty advisor for the Peak to Peak Key Club Catherine Schyling won the Outstanding Faculty Advisor award for the Rocky Mountain Region.

Poetry Published

English teacher Megan Freeman's poetry was published in IMPROV 2008, an anthology of Colorado poets. Additionally, her piece "Music's Music" was selected by renowned American composer Steven Sametz as the text for a commission for the Los Angeles Master Chorale and was performed in Disney Hall in Los Angeles in February 2009.

Art Show

Peak to Peak High School Counselor Sara Zessar opened a local art show exhibiting her photography in June 2009.



COMMUNITY RECOGNITIONS

State School of Character and National School of Character Finalist

The Foundation for Character Development named Peak to Peak the Colorado State School of Character and honored the school at the State Capitol on June 15, 2009. The State Schools of Character (SSOC) competition is a way for schools and districts in many states to receive recognition at the state level for exemplary character education programs. Through a highly competitive application process, Peak to Peak was also named one of 25 national finalists in the Character Education Partnership (CEP) National Schools of Character (NCOS) awards program. As the nation's leading advocate for quality character education, CEP chose the 25 National Finalists from a record 185 school applicants nationwide.

SCFD Alliance Project Award

Peak to Peak was the only school in Boulder County selected to participate in the 2009-2010 Alliance Project. This is an educational outreach program that partners the SCFD (Scientific and Cultural Facilities District) science and cultural organizations with teachers to create curriculum applications and learning opportunities for students. Utilizing tax dollars of the SCFD, the Alliance Project will provide workshops, classes, performances, field trips and other resources for the teachers and students of Peak to Peak. Twenty cultural organizations will partner with our school including: the Arvada Center, Butterfly Pavilion, Central City Opera, Colorado Ballet, Colorado Mountain Club, Colorado Symphony, Denver Center for Performing Arts, Museum of Contemporary Art, Opera Colorado, The Wildlife Experience and many more.

Climate and Policy Summit

On October 6, 2008, Peak to Peak's STEM department conducted a K-12 Climate and Policy Summit. The all-day, whole-school event included 30 guest speakers who engaged students in panel discussions on energy, policy, the science behind climate change, ecosystems, transportation, and action. Dr. Jim White, Director of the Institute for Arctic and Alpine Research in Boulder, delivered the keynote address. Elementary students also enjoyed field trips to the Denver Zoo and Downtown Aquarium.

Business Expo and Resource Fair

Peak to Peak partnered with the Lafayette Chamber of Commerce to host this 1st annual event on May 14, 2009. More than 60 businesses participated in the event which attracted hundreds of community members.

Charter School Teacher Job Fair

Peak to Peak hosted a Charter School Teacher Job Fair on March 14, 2009. This event—the first of its kind in Colorado—was designed to assist charter schools with their hiring efforts and give teaching candidates an opportunity to explore charter school opportunities and interview with several schools in one day. The event attracted more than 350 teacher candidates and 30 charter schools.

Key Club Grant

Peak to Peak's Key Club, an international student-led volunteer organization, won a \$2,000 Youth Opportunities Fund grant. The money was used to finance a trip to build homes in New Orleans.

Science Grant Awarded

Peak to Peak was awarded a Seagate Grant to support elementary science instruction. This grant will strengthen the Core Knowledge units of study in grade 4 and 5. Seagate engineers will teach students about the process of science and the importance of creativity and experimental design in everyday engineering.

Jared Polis Grant Award

Peak to Peak won a Jared Polis Community Computer Program award in 2009. The award will provide the school with 60 new computers, which will be donated in 2009/2010.

Math Grant Award

The math department was awarded a \$1,500 grant from CCTM (Colorado Council of Teachers of Mathematics) for professional development work during the 2009/2010 school year.

Enrollment Communities

In 2009, Peak to Peak welcomed students from 23 different Colorado communities.

Peak to Peak's Vision

The Peak to Peak community will inspire students to fulfill their academic dreams for college, to develop their creative passions and athletic talents, and to become responsible citizens.

Peak to Peak's Mission

1. Provide broad access to an exemplary K-12 liberal arts, college preparatory education that challenges students to achieve their academic potential.
2. Be a community that values and recognizes scholarship, academic achievement, and creativity.
3. Provide an environment in which each student is known, respected, and valued as an individual of great potential and promise.
4. Prepare students to become active and responsible citizens of an interdependent world.