

***The O'Rourke Prize
2013-2014 Honoree
Mary Jo Bode***



Learning Forward Colorado is honored to present the 13th annual O'Rourke Prize to a distinguished Colorado educator, **Mary Jo Bode**. Mary Jo serves in Educator Support Services in the Boulder Valley School District.

The O'Rourke Prize, sponsored by Learning Forward Colorado and Mrs. Anne O'Rourke, honors an exemplary leader of professional learning and collaborative practices who has significantly impacted the learning of educators. This annual award is named for the late Dr. Bill O'Rourke, a distinguished Colorado educator. The nomination process addresses the attributes of vision, commitment, leadership, and effectiveness as well as the Learning Forward Standards for Professional Learning.

Mary Jo was nominated by Sandy Ripplinger, Assistant Superintendent, Boulder Valley School District. Sandy stated that "Mary Jo's work in our District has centered on the concept of continual improvement of teachers as professional educators so that they become increasingly skilled to meet the challenges of our 21st century learners." Further, Sandy commented on Mary Jo's "remarkable talent to build a trusting partnership as a consulting colleague while ensuring a focus that is data-driven, standards-based, reflective, and grounded in evidence about best practice. Her skill in helping teachers access and seek their own resources supports teachers to feel confident and a part of a professional network."

One of the principals with whom Mary Jo has worked shared the following comments: "I've had the privilege of directly experiencing the positive impact Ms. Bode's presence has had not only on teachers new to the district, but also on our veterans who are in need of some additional support and coaching. She is cognizant of current instructional research and has the gift of making this information relevant for teachers so that they, in turn, are willing to 'step outside their comfort zones' and take risks in order to grow and develop. Ms. Bode shares a wonderful sense of humor and a style that makes teachers (and administrators!) instantly comfortable. Whenever I have had an encounter with Mary Jo, I personally walk away feeling better about myself and also feeling that I've learned something new."

Mary Jo is an advocate for teachers, but more importantly, for CHILDREN! Learning Forward Colorado and Anne O'Rourke are privileged to honor Mary Jo Bode with the O'Rourke Prize for Distinguished Achievement in Staff Development.

Learning Forward Colorado believes the success of all students is dependent upon highly effective educators who engage in ongoing professional learning.