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Grand Junction Educators Partner with CoTESOL to Host Upcoming Spring Conference

Grand Junction, CO: Mesa County Valley School District 51 and Colorado Mesa University's student chapter of the Council for Exceptional Children are partnering with CoTESOL to co-host its 2018 spring conference at Grand Junction High School this coming Saturday March 24. The conference theme will be "How to Best Serve English Language Learners: What is working on the Western Slope!"

Dr. Margarita Calderón, professor emerita of the John Hopkins University School of Education, will be the keynote speaker. Calderón will keynote on the topic, "Selecting and Teaching Vocabulary Before Reading," and she will also lead a breakout session on "Teaching ELLs Reading in Secondary Content Areas."

Over twenty additional breakout sessions will be offered, with topics including dual language literacy, ESL skill development, teaching content area to ELLs, community and family partnerships, and adult ESL.

Irene Almond, District 51's ELL coordinator, commented that "Spring CoTESOL in Grand Junction will provide educators in the second-language acquisition field an opportunity to learn and network with colleagues in a geographically and culturally similar environment. Awareness will increase in the community and diverse learners will benefit."

Daniel Schweissing, CoTESOL's spring conference liaison added, "Partnerships like this are a win-win, enabling CoTESOL to expand its reach beyond the Front Range corridor and providing a great training and networking opportunity for our Western Slope partners."

The Grand Junction conference will be CoTESOL's fourth consecutive spring conference on the Western Slope. CoTESOL's 2017 spring conference was held at Montrose High School. Its 2015 and 2016 spring conferences were held at Colorado Mountain College's Spring Valley Campus near Glenwood Springs.

In addition to Almond and her staff, members of the local organizing committee include Patty Voorhis, retired ELL/migrant coordinator for Montrose County School District, Dr. Ann Gillies, assistant professor of teacher education at Colorado Mesa University, and Beth Skelton, CoTESOL's Secondary SIG co-chair.

CoTESOL (Colorado Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), an affiliate of TESOL International, is a non-profit organization whose primary purpose is to provide

professional development opportunities to its members, primarily through its Annual Fall Convention and Spring Conference. Founded in 1976, CoTESOL is one of the top five TESOL affiliates in the United States with over 700 active members.

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