

## EDITORIALS

# School innovation

**T**HE PUEBLO City Schools (D60) looks with great anticipation starting the new Innovation Zone program at Irving, Ben Franklin and Minnequa elementary schools, as well as Roncalli STEM Academy, Risley International School of Innovation and Pueblo Academy of Arts.

Initiated by former D60 Superintendent Constance Jones, the program now will be implemented by Charlotte Macaluso, acting superintendent and former principal of an innovation school.

A kickoff and training session Wednesday drew 150 educators and support staff who will be responsible for implementing the curriculum that defines an innovation school.

“You chose to be here, to do the hard work,” Macaluso told them. “And hard work it will be: it’s a journey, but I will say it’s worth it.”

Cary Palumbo, principal of Ben Franklin Elementary, described the innovation components.

“Among our innovations are AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), a way for students to organize their thinking that will prepare them for the next level,” Palumbo said. “We’re also

doing Blended Learning, giving students more access to technology, as well as extended learning opportunities — where they can explore some of their interests through classes not normally offered in elementary schools.”

The program is centered on teaching and learning that, if successful, will improve student achievement. The hope is that such success will spread district-wide.

Irving Elementary Principal Ted Johnson believes the district’s Innovation Zone plan will be approved by the state. The projected early-August start-up date also is optimistic of state approval.

“Part of our work is looking at that transformation process and how we can make our schools more effective. And we fully intend to share that with our colleagues in other buildings that aren’t part of the Innovation Zone,” Johnson said.

Started by the previous Jones administration and carried forward by D60’s current leadership, the Innovation Zone holds bright and exciting prospects for the district.