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### **Alternatives for Youth's Clearview Educational Center Expands**

LONGMONT, Colorado – January 21, 2009 – On January 5, 2009, Alternatives for Youth's Clearview Educational Center, an alternative transition program for expelled middle and high school students of the St. Vrain Valley School District, opened to new and returning students with an expanded program.

The St. Vrain Valley School District received an Expelled and At-risk Student Services (EARSS) grant from the Colorado Department of Education to fund programs that support students who are unable to avoid mandatory suspension or expulsion and/or to develop strategies to help students who are at risk of suspension or expulsion. Among the collaborating programs funded over the next four years is Clearview Educational Center to expand the school day and to offer additional counseling, transition to school and academic services to attending students. In addition, a three year grant from Tony Grampsas Youth Services awarded to Alternatives for Youth in 2008 supports Clearview's group counseling and transition to school services.

Alternatives for Youth's Executive Director said, "We are so excited about the opportunity to expand our services and to higher more highly qualified staff with these two grants, which directly provide additional services for each student at Clearview to become successful."

All students now attend Clearview for a full, six-hour school day (an increase of two hours for middle school students and one hour for high school students). During the additional time, students participate in group and individual counseling and participate in math, science, history, English and elective classes, and improve core academic skills through PLATO academic software. One of Clearview's counselors is also the students' transition advocate, assisting students in each phase of transitioning back to school, including initial meetings with the school and follow-up meetings up to six months after a student returns.

Clearview Educational Center serves approximately 95% of St. Vrain Valley School District's expelled students, providing academic curriculum, a social development component that focuses on decision making and goal-setting, group and individual counseling, experiential and service learning, transition to school services, and parental support. Clearview regularly serves 50-60 students each year and strives to assist each student in graduating from high school. In the spring 2008 semester, approximately 80% of students increased by at least one grade level in language arts, math and reading. 91% of students returned to school or Clearview in fall 2008.

Alternatives for Youth, Inc.'s mission is to promote academic persistence and success of youth by instilling values that lead to positive choices and positive community impact and by encouraging social, cultural, and self development. Since 1978, Alternatives for Youth has been providing services to youth and their families in the Longmont community. Last year, over 700 youth and their families received services through Alternatives for Youth, including after-school homework clubs, parenting education, an alternative school for expelled youth, positive recreational activities, youth leadership opportunities, academic enrichment activities, and service learning activities.

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