

## Where Youth-At-Risk Become Youth-Of-Promise

### Background

The mission of Boulder Preparatory High School is to help youth-at-risk transform into college bound youth-of-promise. The school was founded by five juvenile justice professionals when they discovered that 75% of the 800 youth entering the Juvenile Justice System did not have viable educational plans. The school started in 1997 with 12 students in a jury room at the Boulder County Courthouse and now serves over 180 students annually between the ages of 14-20; 57% are youth of color and 52% come from low-income homes.

### About The Students

Imagine...an 18 year old young man who was sexually abused by his step-father, a 17 year old girl addicted to cocaine, three sisters whose father is in prison for murder, a junior in high school with 4<sup>th</sup> grade skills, and a 15 year old transgendered male...

These are only a few of the stories that students have at Boulder Preparatory High School. Most schools would turn these students away or give up on them. At Boulder Prep we see the potential in each student and foster a transformation that most think is impossible.



### How do we do it:

We are a SMALL public school serving any student looking for a college preparatory education in a safe environment with people who care. Our classes average 15 students NOT 40. Staff know each and every student by name. Classes are fun yet challenging, and **students must earn a C- or better to pass the class**. Rigorous academics focus on skill building for college. A “Life Skills” program prepares students for their social responsibilities in the world community. As schools become more segregated, we continue to have a balance of ethnicities with no group in a majority. Most importantly, 98% of the students feel that at least one staff member cares about him or her.



### The Results:

- All graduates are accepted to college before receiving their diplomas.
- 60% of graduates are enrolled in post-secondary programs.
- ACT (American College Test) Scores are at or above the national average.
- Students earn college credit while in high school.
- Service learning requirement gets students to give back to the community.
- Other communities want to **replicate** the Boulder Prep model.