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REALTOR DONATING 50% OF COMMISSION TO SCHOOLS *Local Agent Hoping to Raise \$200,000 for Education*

Denver, Colo. - April 3, 2013 - Today Metro-Denver based Realtor, Kirsten Gurmendi announces her plan to raise \$200,000 for schools or education based charities. Gurmendi, who lives in Superior, is the mother of three children and says, "For me, it was a real eye opener to learn Colorado ranks so poorly when it comes to education funding. It's shameful how far below the national average¹ we have fallen when it comes to *per pupil* spending. In fact, our state devotes less than half the amount per child than leading states and several thousand dollars less than the national average."

Starting today, through the end of August, Gurmendi will donate 50% of her commissions from all new real estate transactions. Using the average Colorado home sale price,² it will take approximately 50 transactions for her to achieve the \$200,000 goal.

A partnership between real estate and education is a natural fit. Gurmendi says, "It's no secret that exceptional neighborhoods are built around good schools so helping bolster local programs benefits not just the kids but the entire community at large." Buyers and sellers can make a significant impact, with no additional effort, other than contracting with Gurmendi and her team to handle their real estate transactions. She goes on to say, "I am hopeful we will hear from at least 50 buyers and sellers in the next 5 months, especially since it is *absolutely* no additional cost to them"

The depth of Colorado's funding problem is highlighted in the 2013 "Quality Counts" report published in *Education Week*. According to the data, the state spends \$2518 less *per pupil* than the U.S. Average, relegating Colorado to 42nd place. Gurmendi says, "80% of the county does better than we do and leading states, Vermont and Wyoming, are outspending us by roughly \$10,000 dollars *per pupil*. Clearly, education in Colorado needs help." In addition, and unlike many other states, Colorado devotes no money to programs that would limit class sizes nor does it fund professional development for teachers. Gurmendi goes on

¹ http://www.cosfp.org/HomeFiles/QualityCounts/QC2013/QC2013_State_Per_Pupil_Funding_Chart_2010%20data.pdf

² http://www.trulia.com/home_prices/Colorado/

to says, “While I am encouraged state leaders are working to bridge the gap, I feel the business community should step up.”

Prospective home buyers and sellers will dictate how donations from their transactions are allocated. For example, money could go to a local parent teacher organization, to benefit a specific school or a nonprofit educational organization. Only a few transactions in one community could pay for a paraprofessional to offset a growing class size, a literacy coach for struggling readers or a professional development program for a teacher. Gurmendi adds, “We all want better for our children. It is disappointing to know they are getting short changed in Colorado.” To learn more, log-on to www.homesforschools.com.