

## Student Intern

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*Journalism*



## The Changing Face of Education: Student Perspectives

**By: Jacob Doyle, Journalism Intern - GOAL High School, Pueblo Colorado**

Has education changed forever? Where do we go from here? GOAL High School, a blended-online charter school founded in 2007, offers a great alternative! The blended-online model allows for an online curriculum with readily available in-person support. What may seem like a daunting mission of developing productive members of society, GOAL has proven effective with over fourteen years of innovation. GOAL provides a chance for some of the over 50,000 “disconnected” students in Colorado to re-engage. While providing that chance, GOAL works hard to do even more. This includes, but is certainly not limited to, articulation agreements with community colleges and universities across Colorado, which allows students to earn college credit while fulfilling their high school requirements. GOAL currently enrolls over 5,000 students making it Colorado’s largest high school. They also employ over 500 staff members and utilize 37 student drop-in centers to assist around 1,000 graduates per year. It is undeniable that GOAL’s model of success is working! To learn just how successful, let’s go to the source: the students!

Janie Silva of Canon City, felt out of place in a brick-and-mortar setting, but she found

her “second chance” at GOAL after moving from California. When asked how GOAL has helped her Janie said, “I think it’s helped me a lot because when I first started [at GOAL], I was only getting D’s and F’s... I wasn’t taking [advantage of] any of the resources they were giving me...” Eventually Janie embraced the support of GOAL staff, who later offered her an internship and asked her to tutor. The support didn’t stop there.

“They helped look [at colleges] and what I [wanted] to go to school for... gave me the tools to move forward for the career that I [chose].” Going from a failing student to a tutor is very impressive. This is due in large part to the unusual level of support systems set up at GOAL.

Janie went on to say, “[Her previous] teachers, they [were inadequate and didn’t] care about your education [but] more like, ‘I’m just here to get paid’. [At GOAL] they actually sat down with me. One teacher... Jeff Perkins, would sit with me for like an hour or so. He would go through... step by step and make sure that I understood it.”

Rodrigo Torres of Thornton (north Denver), is an aspiring musician working toward his dream through GOAL’s

partnership with Perfect World Music Academy where he receives instruction on a wide variety of musical principles ranging from theory to engineering. Rodrigo takes advantage of GOAL’s flexible time management, “If I can’t work [on my schoolwork] for a week, I can come in the next week and get it all done.” This allows him to balance school, music practice, and caring for his sisters. In a few short months, he will graduate and will further pursue his musical career and continue helping to care for his sisters.

GOAL is one of the premier charter schools in Colorado and offers an alternative to students who are completely disconnected from school along with the handful of students who are in school, but disengaged. Not every student wishes to go from class to class for an eight-hour block every day, nor are all students built to be beholden to a schedule. Every student has a right to education: high-risk, high-functioning, or anywhere in between. Where else better to achieve this education than, as Rodrigo put it, “...one of the best”?

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