

# Coat Program

## Peoria Elementary School

### Aurora, CO



Peoria Elementary School is in Aurora Public Schools with a population of 480 students. About 90% of students receive free or reduced-price lunch. One goal at Peoria is to provide the best quality of education along with the tools for parents and community to support children outside of school. School staff ensure that every single one of our students feels comfortable and has what is necessary to have a successful education. In order to have a successful education and to have academic success, a student must have the essential food on their plate and proper clothes to wear.

During the 2018-19 school year, Peoria was chosen by Operation Warm and FedEx with to be provided a coat for each and every student. This program was a wonderful opportunity for students. Many of them wear coats that are too small or torn. Others do not have a coat at all. FedEx had an amazing team of volunteers to support this initiative.

Coats were delivered a few days before the coat distribution event. Volunteers came earlier that day to set everything up, organizing the coats by size and colors. When the time came for students to get their coats, volunteers welcomed them in to the gym with a big smile and even some hugs. Patiently, community volunteers made sure the coat was the right size and that the color was one chosen by the child.

There was even a Denver Bronco football player that volunteered his time for the school. Staff received such positive responses from students and their families. Having a warm and brand new coat meant so much to these students, putting some pretty big smiles on their faces. Peoria students are now better equipped to handle Colorado's roller coaster weather patterns!

Other than this event, Peoria provides resources all year that help families in need of food, clothes, shelter, and many other resources for any situation they might be having. Some families receive a bag of food to take home every Friday, and other families get bus passes to run errands and attend school-based events.

Peoria's Family Liaison states: "Evaluating the coat program, we came to determine it was such a successful event that all schools should have it at one point. Coming together as a community to help the school is the most rewarding feeling ever. This is only one of the many things our community and staff does to help our students have academic success and not having to worry about basic needs."