THORNTON, Colo.–June 29, 2012–Thanks to generous support from community members and local organizations, Anythink’s first Nature Explore Classroom will be built at Anythink Wright Farms in July. Nature Explore Classrooms are dynamic learning spaces that help children connect with the natural world, giving them a creative outdoor space to build, crawl, climb and dig.

Nature Explore is a joint program run by the Arbor Day Foundation and the Dimensions Educational Research Foundation. According to the Dimensions Foundation, research from many sources shows that children need engagement with the natural world as a regular part of their healthy growth and development. Without it, they can have issues with obesity, dislike of the outdoors, and increased reliance on behavior-regulating medications. Through direct observation of children in the spaces, the Dimensions Foundation has documented enhanced skill development in many areas, including math, art, science, language and socialization.

Lynda Freas, family services director at Anythink, says that Nature Explore is a natural extension to the No Child Left Inside movement, which promotes environmental education.

“Thereas a playground is just a metal swing that a child gets tired of after a while, Nature Explore can really spark imagination,” she says. “We can’t wait to see families using the children’s garden to play music, create art and make mud pies in our beautiful organic space.”

Anythink Wright Farms’ Nature Explore Classroom was made possible with the help of a $66,000 grant from Adams County Open Space, a $30,000 grant from the Wright Farms...
Metropolitan District, as well as additional funds through private gifts and Sparkopolis – the Anythink Foundation’s annual fundraising event.

“The Wright Farms Metropolitan District is pleased to provide support for this project and looks forward to its continued success providing high-quality library services to the public,” said the Wright Farms Metropolitan District’s Board of Directors in a written statement.

The contract for the project at Anythink Wright Farms was awarded to Fransen Pittman, which has built four new Anythink libraries in the past few years. Construction will begin on July 1, and is expected to finish before the end of the month.

In the future, Anythink plans to add more Nature Explore Classrooms at its libraries. To date, more than 130 certified Nature Explore Classrooms have been built in North America, with hundreds more sites around the nation seeking certification.

**About Anythink™**

Anythink is a new style of library – a place of unlimited imagination, where play inspires creativity and lifelong learning. Rangeview Library District serves the residents of Adams County with seven Anythink libraries and Anythink in Motion – the district’s mobile library – and is one of the recipients of the 2010 National Medal of Museum and Library Service from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. For more information, go to anythinklibraries.org.