



February 29, 2008

You may read KidsFlash in its entirety by scrolling through the text below.

CCC in the News:

School Freedom Bill Gains Support

http://www.denverpost.com/news/ci_8329881

Local Students Lobby at the Capitol

http://www.durangoherald.com/asp-bin/article_generation.asp?article_type=news&article_path=/news/08/news080219_4.htm

Growth Spurt for Kids Health Plan

http://www.denverpost.com/search/ci_8219277

Upcoming Events:

Please check back for information regarding future Children's Campaign events.

Publications:

Childhood Obesity in Colorado: A Growing Problem

Though Colorado remains one of the fittest states in the country, we aren't immune to the growing obesity trends that threaten the health of people across the nation, including our children. Childhood obesity has now become an epidemic that affects thousands of Colorado's kids, impacting their physical and mental health, and putting them at risk for continued health problems as they grow.

In Colorado today, 14 percent of children ages 2-14, or approximately 116,000 kids, are overweight. If current trends continue, it is estimated that by the year 2020, over three-quarters of all adults in our state will be overweight or obese. This generation of children could be the first to live shorter lives than their parents.

In the latest report released by the Children’s Campaign, “Childhood Obesity in Colorado: A Growing Problem,” we examine the most current data regarding the health of our children. Based on promising practices across the state and the nation, we make policy recommendations to help Colorado reverse the trend of childhood obesity.

We encourage you to take action, as advocates, leaders, teachers and parents. This is a challenge we cannot fail. You can access the report on our website at:

<http://www.coloradokids.org/includes/downloads/obesityworkingpaperfinal.pdf>

Looking Forward: Colorado's fiscal prospects after Ref C

Colorado Children's Campaign and its partners, the Bell Policy Center and the Colorado Fiscal Policy Institute released the new report, Looking Forward. Our goal is to compile one reliable set of projections about future fiscal conditions as a common baseline from which to define challenges, inform public debate and guide decisions - especially those impacting Colorado's children. You can access the report on our website at:

<http://www.thebell.org/PUBS/annual/2007/LookingForward.php>

2008 Legislative Summary:

(Note: Unless otherwise indicated, the CCC supports all of the following pieces of legislation. In some cases the CCC is the initiator of the legislation and is allocating resources to ensure passage and signing.)

Health:

SB 08-022	Senator Sandoval Representative Ferrandino	Will be heard in House Finance on 3.12.08
Concerning Over expenditures in the Children's Basic Health Plan.		
With the governor's approval, allows expenditures of the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing to exceed their appropriation for the Children's Basic Health Plan.		
SB 08-123	Senator Sandoval Representative Madden	Passed out of Senate Education. Will be scheduled in Appropriations.
Concerning a Program to Provide Additional Funding for School Lunch Programs, and Making an Appropriation Therefore.		
Would eliminate the reduced price paid by children who are eligible for reduced-cost lunches, the students would then receive free lunch.		
SB 08-129	Senator Gibbs Representative Riesberg	Passed out of the Senate and was introduced in the House. Will be scheduled in House Education.
Concerning Nutrition in Schools.		
Creates a minimum nutritional requirements for beverages sold in schools. With the amendments, directs the State Board of Education to set the minimum standards.		
SB 08-160	Senator Hagedorn	Passed out of Senate Health

	Representative McGihon	and Human Services on a 4-2 vote. Will be scheduled in Appropriations.
Concerning Improvements to Health Care for Children.		
Eliminates the stair step eligibility between Medicaid and CHP. Provides for twelve month continuous enrollment for kids on Medicaid. Increases CHP+ eligibility from 205 percent of the federal poverty level to 225 percent.		
SB 08-161	Senators Boyd and Spence Representative Merrifield	Passed out of Senate Health and Human Services on a 5-1 vote. Will be scheduled in Appropriations.
Concerning Eligibility for Public Medical Benefits, and Making an Appropriation Therefor.		
Allows the department to verify income eligibility for Medicaid and CHP+ through Department of Labor and Employment records. Automatically re-enrolls kids on Medicaid and CHP+ if they are still eligible based on administrative verification of income. Charges the SB 07-211 advisory committee to look at the feasibility of combining Medicaid and CHP+.		
SB HB-1224	Representative Benefield Senator Tupa	Passed out of the House and was introduced in the Senate. Will be scheduled in Senate Education.
Concerning Wellness Education in Public Schools.		
Expands the Colorado Comprehensive Health Education Act to include local student wellness programs. Allows school districts to apply for grant monies for areas addressing student wellness.		

Education:

SB 08-130	Senators Groff and Spence Representatives Witwer and T. Carroll	Passed out of Senate Education with a unanimous vote! Was amended. Will be heard in Appropriations on 3.7.08.
Concerning Authorization of School District Boards of Education to Implement Policy Innovations in Public Schools, and, in Connection therewith, Enacting the "Innovation Schools Act of 2008."		
Allows a school or group of schools within a school district to apply to the district board of education for approval of an innovative plan that would give schools the flexibility within the decision making process to implement changes in delivery of educational services, personnel administration and budgeting.		
SB 08-173	Senator Williams Representative Todd	Passed out of Senate Education with significant amendments. Will be scheduled in Appropriations.
Concerning Promoting the Physical Health of Students in Schools, and, in Connection therewith, Creating the Healthy Schools Grant Program and making an Appropriation therefor.		

Creates the healthy schools grant program. Schools may apply for grants from the Department of Education if they meet a series of minimum standards related to school nutrition and physical education. With the amendments, all standards regarding nutrition and physical education and activity will be set by the State Board of Education.

HB 08-1335	Speaker Romanoff, President Groff and Senator Schwartz	Passed unanimously out of House Education! Technical amendments were made. Will heard in Appropriations on 3.7.08.
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Concerning State Financial Assistance to Finance Public School Facility Capital Construction.

Requires a state wide assessment of all public school facilities and creates a mechanism for schools to then apply for financial assistance to repair or replace schools that have the most dire health and safety needs across the state.

HB 08-1336	Representative T. Carroll Senator Spence	Passed out of House Education with a unanimous vote. Will go to the floor for 2nd Reading.
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Concerning Truant Students in the Kindergarten through the Twelfth Grade Public Education System, and, in Connection therewith, Standardizing Truancy Reporting and Expanding the Resources Available for Support Students to Truant Students.

Requires the State Board of Education to standardize the calculation of unexcused absences. Requires that school districts annually report the number of habitually truant students and that the information be posted. Also allows certain groups to apply for grants from the expelled and at-risk student services grant program.

Early Childhood:

HB 08-1049	Representative Benefield Senator Groff	Was not heard on 2.29.08. Will be rescheduled for House Appropriations.
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Concerning the Extension of the Years for which a Taxpayer May Claim the Income Tax Credit for Child Care Facilities.

Reauthorizes the current child care contribution tax credit through January 2020, allowing a taxpayer to claim a credit for monetary contributions to promote child care.

HB 08-1265	Representative Todd Senator Shaffer	Was introduced in the Senate and will be heard in Health and Human Services.
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Concerning Alignment of the Maximum Eligibility Guidelines for the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program County Option with the Federal Maximum Eligibility Guideline.

Aligns the eligibility guidelines for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to align the state eligibility income requirements with the federal economic guidelines. Families whose income does not exceed 85% of the state median income will be eligible for CCAP.

HB 08-1229	Representative Weissmann	Passed 3rd Reading in the
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		House. Will be introduced in the Senate.
Concerning Persons Who Provide Temporary Care in a Licensed Family Child Care Home.		
Defines the term "substitute child care provider" to include people who provide temporary care in a family child care home during the absence of the licensed provider and establishes rules for appropriate certifications and background checks. Allows substitute providers to substitute for more than one licensed child care home.		

Youth:

HB 08-1122	Representative Benefield Senator Bacon	Passed 3rd Reading in the House. Was introduced in the Senate and will be scheduled in State, Veterans and Military Affairs.
Concerning the Repeal of Certain Requirements Pertaining to Funding Programs through the Tony Grampsas Youth Services Program.		
Eliminates the issue based earmarks for the TGYS grants, giving the board greater flexibility to fund quality programs that have proven outcomes for kids.		
HB 08-1157	Representative Roberts Senator Windels	Passed out of House Education with a unanimous vote! Technical amendments were made. Will be scheduled in Appropriations.
Concerning the Creation of a Youth Advisory Council.		
Establishes a youth advisory council to advise and make recommendations to elected officials regarding issues facing youth in Colorado.		

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