



May 2, 2008

The 2008 legislative session is quickly coming to an end. The legislature has to adjourn by midnight on Wednesday, May 7, though there is always a possibility the session will end early.

This session has been an extremely productive one for children in Colorado. To date, the legislature has passed bills that expand access to health care for low income and at-risk children, provide funding and support so that school districts can meet the most basic health and safety needs of their schools, and improve school nutrition and health support services for children. Lawmakers passed bills that provide incentives to taxpayers to support early childhood programs and services and are still considering bills that could mean significant education reform for the state. There are many bills still making their way through the process. We look forward to sharing our legislative victories and *2008 KidsCount in Colorado!* with you in the coming weeks.

The Children's Campaign has worked hard to improve the lives of Colorado's children this year. We are grateful for our many partners at the legislature and in communities around the state who understand the importance of advocating on behalf of Colorado's 1.2 million children.

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

CCC in the News:

Charter Schools Fare Well in School Finance Bill:

<http://tinyurl.com/5gkb8k>

Innovation Schools Act Gets Final OK:

<http://tinyurl.com/5ptnqe>

Upcoming Events and Opportunities:

Colorado Shops for Kids Books on Sale Now!

*You decide what's on sale! **Colorado Shops for Kids** is a book of savings vouchers for Denver's best retailers in its most renowned shopping districts, including *Cherry Creek North, Larimer Square, Washington Park, Lowry, Old South Pearl Street, the Village Shops**

at Landmark, and more. Save BIG at stores such as *Tattered Cover*, *Daisy Sports*, *Enstrom Candies*, *Flower Power*, *Lawrence Covell*, *Max*, and *HW Home*, to name just a few. Buy graduation gifts. Select something special for Mother's Day. Buy Father's Day Gifts. Get the latest spring fashions. Colorado Shops for Kids discount vouchers coincide with all your spring shopping needs! Books are on sale now for savings between May 1 and May 14, 2008. And best of all: each \$50 book benefits the Children's Campaign's work on behalf of kids! Visit our website at www.coloradokids.org for a complete list of stores and to buy your book.

IMMIGRANT INTEGRATION EDUCATOR RESOURCE GUIDE:

Over a year ago a group of educators and advocates participated in the Immigrant Integration in Schools Summit at the Colorado Trust. Contributions made that day led to the development of the "Immigrant Integration Educator Resource Guide," a document to help schools and school districts promote immigrant integration comprehensively. This guide is available by visiting the Colorado Trust website at <http://www.coloradotrust.org/>

Additionally, the Colorado Department of Education and The Colorado Trust will be piloting the guide's use in nine different locations throughout the state.

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	The Governor signed this bill on 4.14.08.
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 3rd Reading in the House and will go back to the Senate for concurrence with House amendments.
Concerning a Program to Provide Additional Funding for School Lunch Programs, and Making an Appropriation Therefore.		
Would eliminate the reduced price paid by children in kindergarten through second grade who are eligible for reduced-cost lunches, the students would then receive free lunch.		
SB 08-129	Senator Gibbs Representative Riesberg	Was signed by the Governor on 4.25.08.
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 Representative McGihon	Passed out of the House. Will be sent to the Governor.
Concerning Improvements to Health Care for Children.		
Increases CHP+ eligibility from 205 percent of the federal poverty level to 225 percent. Enhances the CHP mental health benefit to equal the Medicaid mental health benefit.		
SB 08-161	Senators Boyd and Spence Representative Merrifield	Passed out of the House with amendments. The Senate has concurred with the House amendments. Will be sent to the Governor
Concerning Eligibility for Public Medical Benefits, and Making an Appropriation Therefore.		
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	Was signed by the Governor on 4.25.08.
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 the House. Has gone back to the Senate for concurrence with House amendments.
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.		
HB 08-1019	Representative Casso Senator Sandoval	Was signed by the Governor on 4.17.08.
Concerning the Provision of Educational Services for Children in Out-of-Home Placements.		
Requires school districts to appoint an educational liaison for the district. Specifies the number of days that a school district or county program has to transfer the student's educational records. Requires that a school district make certain exceptions in order for a school district to enroll a student as quickly as possible, taking into consideration the safety of other students and staff. Requires certification of the student's coursework. Waives fees that would prohibit a student from participating in activities.		
HB 08-1335	Speaker Romanoff,	Has gone to the Governor for

	President Groff and Senator Schwartz	his signature.
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 direst health and safety needs across the state.		
HB 08-1336	Representative T. Carroll Senator Spence	Was signed by the Governor on 4.17.08.
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.		
HB 08-1370	Representative Middleton Senator Bacon	Passed out of the Senate. House concurred with Senate amendments. Will be sent to the Governor.
Concerning Increasing the Level of Services Provided by School Counselors to Students in Public Secondary Schools, and, in Connection therewith, Creating the Counselor Corps Grant Program and Making an Appropriation.		
Creates the Counselor Corps Grant Program which would provide grant money to school districts, BOCES programs and charter schools to increase the number of high school counselors and the level of services provided.		

Early Childhood:

SB08-210	Senator Shaffer Representative Scanlan	Passed out of the House with significant amendments. Will go to the Senate for concurrence with House amendments.
Concerning Colorado Child Care Assistance Program Provider Reimbursement Rates.		
This bill had a strike below amendment on second reading in the House. The bill now states that there will be a six month study to determine how the state and counties will work together to implement the 75th percentile as a floor for the Child Care Assistance Program provider reimbursement rates. Next session we will work on the legislation to implement the study recommendations.		
HB 08-1049	Representative Benefield President Groff	Passed out of the Senate with no amendments. Will be sent to the Governor.
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 signed by the governor on 4.14.08.
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 percent of the state median income will be eligible for CCAP.		
HB 08-1229	Representative Weissmann Senator Boyd	Was signed by the Governor on 4.10.08.
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 08-1157	Representative Roberts Senator Windels	Passed out of the Senate. The House concurred with Senate amendments. Will go to the Governor for his signature.
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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