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**COLORADO CHILDREN'S CAMPAIGN RECOGNIZES
EDUCATION BILLS SIGNED TODAY AS MEANINGFUL FOR KIDS**

Today, Governor Bill Ritter signed a package of education-related bills that will provide transparent and meaningful data to improve teacher effectiveness and student achievement, while addressing Colorado's dropout rate. These bills provide a road map to engage students in school and support their pursuit of higher education opportunities, promoting long-term economic stability for the state of Colorado.

"These are policies that will help kids right away," says Chris Watney, Interim President of the Colorado Children's Campaign. "Struggling students don't have time to lose, and these new laws will give them the support they need to succeed in school and beyond."

Among the legislation enacted today is a measure that provides state leaders with better information about who is teaching our kids and effective ways to improve their academic outcomes. Attaching an identifying number to a particular educator will allow the state to improve teacher preparation programs, professional development and classroom instruction.

"Nothing is more important to the educational success of a child than access to a high-quality teacher," said Watney. "This new law is the first step to ensuring that all Colorado children have that opportunity."

Another bill enacted today that will improve student success is HB 1243, which was promoted by the Children's Campaign and its community partners. Reducing Colorado's dropout rate has been a cornerstone of the Campaign's work and is one of Governor Ritter's top priorities. This measure requires school districts to examine current practices and policies that unintentionally contribute to school dropouts and develop plans that support kids graduating.

"The good news is we now know when and how we can prevent students from dropping out and how to successfully get kids back in school," said Watney. Annually, more than 10,000 students drop out of high school in Colorado, costing the state more than \$3.4 billion in lost earnings. "Beyond the economic statistics and outcome data are people's lives and their lost opportunities - for education, for jobs, for self-sufficiency."

The Colorado Children's Campaign is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization focusing on expanding access to quality health care, K-12 education and early childhood experiences. For more information, please visit www.coloradokids.org.