**Support HB 19-1194: Addressing Early Childhood School Removal**
*(Lontine & Larson/Priola & Fields)*

A high quality, nurturing environment in the early school years unlocks the potential of all of our children to learn about themselves and the world. School success by the end of third grade is a powerful predictor of later academic and life outcomes, including graduation. Unfortunately, it is becoming increasingly clear both in Colorado and across the country that young children are being removed from preschool and early elementary schools at concerning rates. Boys, children of color, and students with disabilities are disproportionately affected and in many cases exclusionary actions may reflect a failure to support a child’s underlying challenges or needs.

**The Costs of School Removal Are Substantial**

- Suspensions and expulsions result in the loss of valuable learning and enrichment time. When students return to school, not only are they often behind the rest of the class, they are actually more likely to be disruptive and have additional disciplinary issues.

- Precisely when the focus should be on meeting children’s many developmental needs, removing a child from school results in missed opportunities and make it less likely those needs will be met.

- Suspensions and expulsions increase the likelihood that students will experience academic failure and grade retention, drop out of school, and ultimately enter the criminal justice system.

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**What would the bill do?**

**Reduce Preschool & Early Elementary Out-of-School Suspensions & Expulsions**

For children in public preschool, kindergarten, first, and second grade, the bill would focus the use of school removal on issues of health and safety and limit the use of exclusionary discipline for other infractions.

**Focus on Protecting Health & Safety**

The bill allows the removal of young children in the event they use a controlled substance, possess a dangerous weapon, or engage in actions that endanger the health or safety of others.

**Emphasize Alternatives**

Alternatives to school removal include restorative practices, parent engagement, conferences, restitution, and referrals to services. The bill preserves existing policies on classroom removals, in-school and afterschool disciplinary actions, and eligibility for support services and emphasizes a quick return to school.

**Address Disproportionality**

Boys, children with disabilities, and children of color are disproportionately impacted by exclusionary discipline and addressing these gaps can improve educational outcomes.

**Align with National Best Practices**

This policy is aligned with national recommendations that seek to limit school removal for very young children while endorsing thoughtful exceptions that ensure school safety.

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**Colorado's K-2 Out-of-School Suspensions**

- 2014-15: 5,407
- 2015-16: 5,444
- 2016-17: 6,080
- 2017-18: 5,849

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[Graph showing out-of-school suspensions from 2014-15 to 2017-18.]
Supporters of HB 19-1194

Advocacy Denver
American Academy of Pediatrics, Colorado Chapter
American Federation of Teachers—Colorado
Clayton Early Learning
Colorado Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Society
Colorado Children’s Campaign
Colorado Children’s Health Access Program
Colorado Education Association
Children’s Hospital Colorado
Colorado Latino Leadership, Advocacy, and Research Organization (CLLARO)
Colorado Psychiatric Society
Colorado PTA
Council for a Strong America—Colorado

Early Childhood Summit
Education Reform Now
Hope Center
Institute for Racial Equity and Excellence (IREE)
The Kempe Foundation for the Prevention and Treatment of Child Abuse and Neglect
National Black Child Development Institute, Denver Affiliate
Office of the Child’s Representative
The Arc of Colorado
Together Colorado
Padres & Jóvenes Unidos
Parent Possible
Rocky Mountain Children’s Law Center
Stand for Children Colorado