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COLORADO EVALUATION AND ACTION LAB

Colorado Lab Newsletter

May 2022

Featured in this newsletter:

- 2022 Legislative Session: Informing Key Legislation
- 2021 Legislative Session: Building Evidence to Effectively Implement Policy Wins
- Renny Fagan Partners with Colorado Lab on ARPA Evaluation Project

Evidence-building and Policymaking

As Colorado's policy lab, we work together with a broad range of government and community partners throughout the full legislative cycle. Together, we unlock data-informed solutions to our most pressing social problems, working to understand root causes, identifying opportunities to foster meaningful change, and activating stakeholders to advocate for policy solutions. When these changes become law, we support partners in translating the policy into effective programs and practices, and strengthen their ability to continue collecting data to guide ongoing work. This month, we lift up—and celebrate—legislation that these efforts helped to inform in this year's legislative session, and feature projects underway to effectively implement policy wins from the 2021 legislative session.



Governor Jared Polis, joined by preschoolers, speaks about plans for Colorado's Department of Early Childhood and the universal preschool program. Photo by [Rocky Mountain PBS](#).

2022 Legislative Session: Informing Key Legislation

Colorado Lab studies informed an array of legislation in this year's session, including bills that were passed to strengthen care and learning for preschoolers and increase pathways to high school graduation. Our efforts included working with partners to conduct research studies, providing expert testimony, and evaluating the effectiveness of models.

HB22-1295 - Department of Early Childhood and Universal Preschool Program

Positions Colorado as a national model for early childhood education and care. The Colorado Lab partnered with state leaders to leverage data and inform the creation and rollout of these groundbreaking resources to improve the accessibility, affordability, and quality of Colorado's early childhood education and care system. Learn more about the Colorado Lab's support for the early childhood [workforce](#) and [knowledge building](#).

"Congratulations to Lisa Roy on being named Executive Director of Colorado's new Department of Early Childhood! We're excited to work together with Dr. Roy and everyone at the department to ensure the continuing use of data to inform and advance early childhood education and make a meaningful difference for Colorado's young children and their families."

- Colorado Evaluation and Action Lab

Partner: Early childhood partners from across state and local agencies, including the Office of Early Childhood and the Early Childhood Leadership Commission

HB22-1002 - Fifth Year High School Concurrent Enrollment

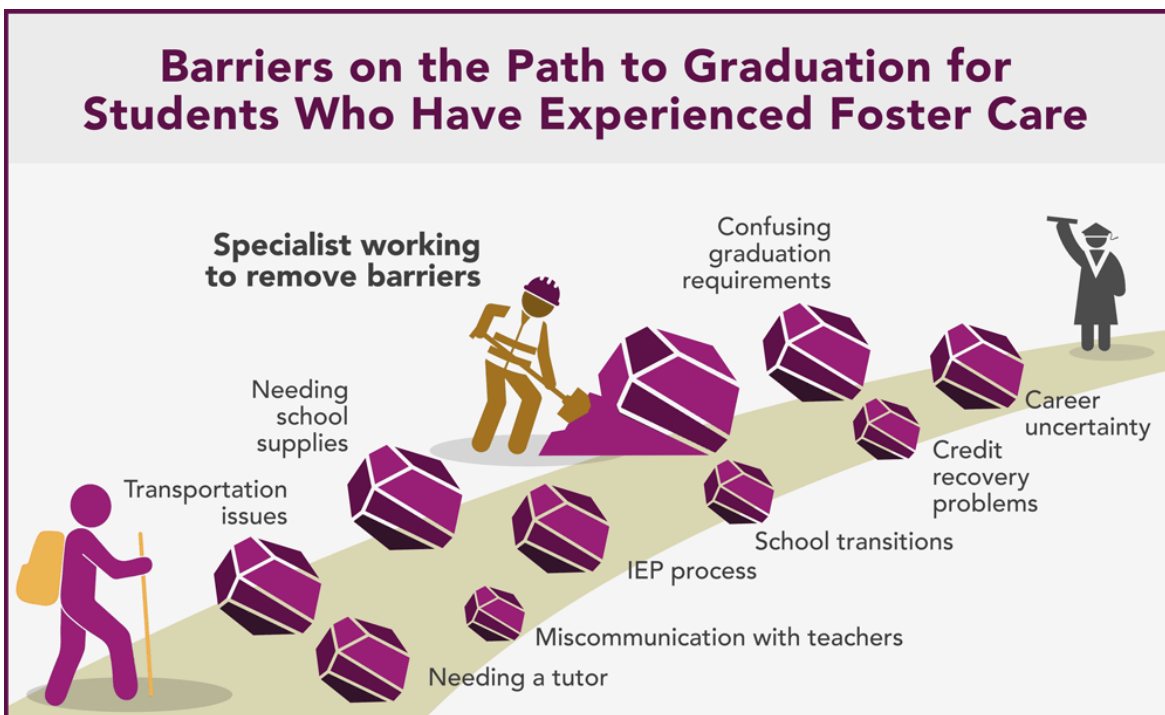
Removes barriers to increasing the number of students taking college courses while in high school. A [Colorado Lab study](#) showed Concurrent Enrollment to be highly effective in increasing college graduation for high school students in Colorado.

Partner: Colorado Department of Higher Education

HB22-1374 - Foster Care Success Act

Creates the Fostering Educational Opportunities program to help youth who have experienced foster care to be successful in school and earn a high school credential.

Partners: Governor's Office (Pay for Success); Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Welfare; and Jefferson County School District



The [Colorado Lab's study](#) of the Fostering Opportunity pilot program in Jefferson County informed HB22-1374.

2021 Legislative Session: Building Evidence to Effectively Implement Policy Wins

SB21-194 - Maternal Health Provider

A landmark bill that includes the requirement to assess use of research evidence in perinatal policymaking to reduce disparities in maternal care and reduce maternal mortality. The study seeks to understand what aids and what gets in the way of using research evidence in policy development and uptake related to the perinatal period. Because the bill uniquely, and importantly, requires building evidence and ensuring findings are effectively translated and put to use, the Colorado Lab will also develop data-informed guidance to strengthen evidence-based policymaking that impacts perinatal health.

Partner: Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

[Learn more](#) about the Colorado Lab's extensive work on maternal health or connect with [Dr. Courtney Everson](#).

SB21-118 - Alternative Response for Mistreatment of At-Risk Adult

Makes Colorado the first state to pilot an alternative response model for adult protective services with the goal of advancing client-centered and family-driven responses to allegations of adult mistreatment or self-neglect. The goal of the pilot is to identify tailored responses that are less punitive and offer the likelihood of long-term well-being outcomes for at-risk individuals in low-risk situations, such as unintentional self-neglect due to an elderly person with limited mobility not having the proper equipment in their home to take care of bathing and hygiene needs.

"We love working with the Colorado Lab. Their expertise, knowledge, and foresight have been an integral part of developing the Alternative Response Pilot and we are so pleased to be collaborating with them on this project."

- Stefanie Woodward, Program Manager, Adult Protective Services and CAPS Check Unit, Colorado Department of Human Services

Partner: Colorado Department of Human Services, Office of Adult, Aging, and Disability Services

You can [learn more here](#) or contact [Dr. Courtney Everson](#).

Renny Fagan Partners with Colorado Lab on ARPA Evaluation Project

Renny Fagan is partnering with the Colorado Lab to [support state agencies in learning from their American Rescue Plan Act \(ARPA\) investments](#). Fagan has extensive experience with government, policy, and nonprofit organizations, having served in the Colorado Legislature and in leadership roles for a Colorado Governor, Colorado Attorney General, U.S. Senator, and the Colorado Nonprofit Association.



"With this unique infusion of ARPA funds, government agencies have the opportunity to take a pause and intentionally articulate their theory of change, identifying the outcomes they want to achieve for the people they serve, and lay a foundation to collect data to inform and guide their efforts. My role draws both on my experience in forming policy and a continuum of history of how things got to be the way they are and what has or hasn't worked in the past. I see this project as foundational, helping departments to better achieve their goals with results that can be evaluated by policymakers in the years ahead."

- Renny Fagan

To learn more about the Colorado Lab's *Learning from ARPA Investments* project, please contact [Dr. Kristin Klopfenstein](#).

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