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THE WHITE HOUSE

February 21, 1996

The Honorable Roy Romer
Governor
State of Colorado
136 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-2471

Dear Roy:

Thank you for sending me your eloquent and heartfelt
State of the State address.

You asked for feedback on the end of the speech. I
thought your image of a strong Masai warrior embracing the
notion that life is good when the children are well was a
powerful one. It conveys perfectly the message that our
responsibilities lie with those who can defend themselves the
least. I enjoyed the speech in its entirety and, as always, am
grateful for your leadership and commitment to children.

With warm regards to you and Bea, I remain

Sincerely yours,


Hillary Rodham Clinton

*Thanks too for our conversation.
I hope to continue talking with
you at the next available chance.*

STATE OF COLORADO

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

136 State Capitol
Denver, Colorado 80203-1792
Phone (303) 866-2471



Roy Romer
Governor

January 31, 1996

First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mrs. Clinton:

You will find enclosed a copy of my State of the State address as it was delivered on January 11.

I have set as a goal to make Colorado the best state in the nation to raise a child. You will find text of the speech outlining early childhood issues, concerns and programs on pages 2-8. We are especially excited about the new Bright Beginnings program which you will be hearing more about in the very near future. A portion of the speech, pages 9-13, also addresses public and higher education. I also would like to get your feedback on the images and symbols I used toward the close of my speech.

I am pleased to share this with you and to continue working toward a state and nation that place children as its highest priority. Best wishes to you.

Sincerely,

Roy Romer
Governor

Enclosure

STATE OF THE STATE
COLORADO GOVERNOR ROY ROMER
JANUARY 11, 1996

I'm really looking forward to this conversation.

And I want to bring greetings to all of you. Senator Norton, Speaker Berry, Senator Feeley, Representative Kerns, Mayor Webb, all of you.

I'd like to acknowledge the presence of my wife Bea a portion of my family. A lot of what I say today, comes from that experience.

I'd also like to remember Jeanne Faatz, this morning. I understand she's still in Chicago and has some serious injuries, and I think our hearts are with her.

Let me say, we have a lot to talk about.

Colorado is doing well.

Our economy is strong.

We live in one of the most beautiful places on earth.

And we are just blessed to live in Colorado, and we've worked hard to get where we are. We ought to be proud of what we've done together.

But I think we can do better. We cannot rest in our efforts to keep our economy strong.

We can't forget there are cracks in the foundation of this society that we need to try to heal. Not everyone has a seat at the table.

Now here's the central question, for me as Governor, for you as legislators, and for the citizens of Colorado: how can we take the good we have and reach for something higher?

Not all societies have that privilege; we do. And I think we can exercise that responsibility. How do we do it?

We've got to return to the basics.

Let me tell you a story. I called an old friend, John Murphy of Durango, a couple of months ago. We've been friends for 40 years; John was dying. I wanted to relate to him in a meaningful way, because I knew that this might be the last time we'd talked. And I wanted him to know that I was thinking of him and I wanted him to know how I was feeling. He interrupted me, because he knew what I was trying to do, and he said, "Roy, I feel good. I feel good about the life I've lived because I feel good about the way I raised my children. Not much else matters when you look back at life from that perspective."

Now, there are all kinds of ways that we could judge a society.

But I like John's way.

If we raise our children right, everything else will probably fit.

And so, as we look forward to our work together as we reach higher, I think we should commit ourselves – as a people in this community called Colorado – to make Colorado the very best place to raise a child.

Now, it's kind of a simple vision. It really is. But it will be the focus of my final term as Governor.

How can we make this the best place to raise a child?

Let's start by trying to look inside the mind of a typical Colorado family.

Parents – who are trying to do the best job they can, trying to raise their children, working one job, sometimes. Two, are going to ask these questions:

- is this job going to be here next year?
- can I afford housing and health insurance for my family?
- can I keep my family safe?
- will the values I try to instill in my children be overwhelmed by the peer relationships which they have, or by what they see on TV?
- can I find child care that I need, and can I afford it, and can I trust it, when I leave my child there?
- will my kids learn what they need to learn at school?

- can I take care of my parents when they're old and what about when I'm old?

How we – not just government, but as a people – address these anxieties, these needs, how we do it will define what kind of a place Colorado will become.

Now, I believe that we've got to focus ourselves – both as a community and as elected officials – on four challenges:

First, let's make the lives of young children our highest priority.

Second, let's make Colorado schools second to none.

Third let's be sure that we keep our economy the strongest in the nation.

And fourth let's keep our environment and natural beauty the envy of the world.

Now, if we do those four things, I think that we will keep faith with that vision of becoming the best place to raise a child.

I'd like to talk about each of these challenges.

Let me start with Early Childhood. I think our first challenge is to make the lives of our young children our highest priority.

Parents have always wanted the best for their children. But think about how much harder it is for parents today. Most of us grew up with a family nearby, where neighbors watched out for not just their children but our children. For many, that's no longer a reality.

There's a challenge of parenting, sometimes it's overwhelming. Those who need child care worry about the quality of that care. Every parent worries about being able to afford decent health care.

But let's start what are we doing.

Colorado has undertaken one of the most exciting and innovative strategies

to make this the best place for a child to be born and to grow up.

It's called Bright Beginnings.

It's a non-governmental program, it's volunteer, it's community-based. It's an effort to:

- support new parents;
- have universal access to health care for young children;
- to create "family-friendly" workplaces;
- have more effective support systems for teen parents; and
- to try to improve the quality of child care throughout Colorado.

Now, 55,000 babies are born each year in this state. They don't come with instruction books and they don't come with 1-800 numbers. Bright Beginnings therefore, is organized to provide what we call a "Warm Welcome." We want to get to the place where we can have a trained volunteer, non-government person, from the community visit everyone of those parents within 2 to 3 weeks of birth and show up and say 3 things:

- First, here's kind of a check list of what you may confront in the first year in the life of a child.
- Second, here is what's available in your community in your region to help you meet that check list; and
- Third, here's a mentorship, totally voluntary, that's available to you if you want it. So, that you can have somebody to consult with as you go through the first year of that baby's life.

Now Princess Di, in England, when she had her babies, she had such a visitor. That was **very** accepted in that culture. I think that is one of the steps that we can **and we should** make in beginning to help Colorado respond to the life of **the** early child.

Think about it: **thousands** of volunteers from churches, from service clubs, from the at-home **mo**ms, retirees, and others giving of themselves to care and nurture the **youngest** children among us.

We've already raised **\$1** million in this effort. Brad Butler, the former chairman of the **board** of Procter & Gamble is Co-chairing it with us and Senator Tom Norton **is** also very supportive and is part of the leadership of this.

Business community
on child
care.

So this is a bipartisan government/non-government effort and it's one that I think has great promise.

Next, Child care.

In Colorado, most parents work. As a result, over 100,000 children spend 8-10 hours, five days a week, in child care.

And yet, they say most child care centers in Colorado are, at best average, sometimes mediocre, when you rate them in terms of safety, in terms of teacher training, in terms of equipment.

But the child care is too costly for many. Many parents take up to 23 percent of their incomes for child care. To help solve this problem I reached out to the business community and got some very, very good leadership and help here.

That business community has committed to work with us over a period of time, and they've made some suggestions already. They've suggested to me that we establish a voluntary child care check off on the state income tax returns to help improve child care facilities.

They have also recommended changing property tax assessments to allow child care facilities to be taxed at the residential rather than the commercial rates.

They suggested expanding opportunities for pre-school teachers to get training, and to apply quality standards to all child care programs that receive government support.

I'm also interested in their proposal to establish a refundable child care tax credit to provide financial support to working parents who need help in paying for child care.

These are good ideas and I would like to work with you on them and give them strong consideration.

Because it is critical to have more businesses involved in solving the child care crisis, this spring I'm going to ask business leaders to join me in a series of summits across the state to explore how the private sector can

better respond to the child care needs across the board.

*Responsible
Fatherhood*

Preschool.

In my first term, with your help, we established the Colorado Preschool Program. You know that we now are up to 8,500 children. And I would urge you to continue to support that program. And I also support opening it to three-year-olds as local need dictates.

The issue of fatherhood is a controversial subject; we've got to face it head on. An alarming number of children are growing up without fathers – 40 percent in Denver. Now being a parent is tough, but being a single parent is even tougher. Many do an outstanding job at that, but it's still tough.

Records show that kids without fathers are more likely to live in poverty, to commit violent crimes, to become teen parents at too early of an age and to leave their own children.

I convened a Task Force on Responsible Fatherhood that will make some recommendations that I hope you will consider along with me. Already, they've suggested that we revamp the cumbersome public assistance programs which has fathers paying the state to support their kids.

And they've proposed we re-think our approach to public programs, to the court system and to community resources to make sure that we are holding fathers responsible for their children, and not chasing them away.

Another thing that worries parents is the cost of health insurance for their own children.

Right now in Colorado 150,000 of our children don't have access to health care because their parents can't afford it through health insurance. Almost all of those children -- 87 percent -- have at least one parent who is employed.

Now think about that.

These are people who are employed and they do not have adequate coverage.

In a state that enjoys our level of prosperity, that's not right. That's just not right.

I understand that there is a lot of disagreement in this country about how to solve the health care problem. I'm not here to argue about that.

But can't we at least agree that in Colorado we have a collective moral obligation to hold our children harmless, and to provide each and every one of them with basic health care in the early years?

Can't we at least agree on that?

In the budget that I submitted to you, I have set aside \$14 million to begin to deal with this issue – an amount that we certainly can afford this year. It's not going to be enough but it's a start. I think we can be creative in how we use this money to reach the maximum number of children. We can build upon existing programs – like the Colorado Child Health Plan – or we can encourage innovative ideas to spring up in communities.

Representative Ben Clark is sponsoring legislation, I'm sure with others in the room, that supports a tax credit that builds on the insurance infrastructure already in place and gives incentives to businesses to be a part of the solution. I'm open to ideas and I'm sure that together we can solve this problem.

So, let's commit to one another today that, by the time this legislature adjourns 119 days from now, we will have put ourselves clearly on a path to provide health care to every child in Colorado.

Let me speak about it personally. I had some of our grandchildren in our home. You've been there, it's got marble floors. One of them the day before Christmas, running, 18 months old, bang, right on his head. Had a lump the size of my fist. I and the two parents rushed over to the emergency room of Children's Hospital, and the child was fine. We cared for the child, he got great medical care. His name is John Rockefeller Romer: No, no, not Rockefeller, (now that will make the news), John Firestone Romer. Once you get out of the country all those names sound the same to me.

But let me tell how I felt that morning.

I knew where that hospital was. I knew how to get there. I had a car. And I was trying to think of everybody else in the country the day before Christmas. who might not have the same knowledge.

You know, I have trouble eating, when I'm sitting next to a hungry person. I honestly do. And I think all of us need to think hard about this issue, of how can we, in a society as prosperous as ours, find a way to get some of the minimal elements of how you live the good life. And part of that is healthcare, that is available to all children. 150,000 in this state, do not have coverage. I think we can get that job done together.

If we are going to make Colorado the best place to raise a child, our first challenge is to make young children our highest priority.

Our next challenge is to make the schools that these kids attend second to none. Second to none in the world.

Every school day more than 650,000 kids go off to school. Many spend more time in school than they do with their parents.

But the parents are asking:

- Are my kids going to be safe when they get there?
- Are the values I am trying to teach them going to be reinforced, or undermined?
- Are they learning what they need to know to get a good job and be good citizens? Are they being challenged to be all that they can be?
- They are going to ask, what aren't they doing that we should be doing?
- Why aren't they bringing home more homework?

We've been on this issue a long time and we know there is no quick fix. All of you know that.

We're making progress, but we're not there yet.

Fundamentally, what matters most is improving student performance. We were right three years ago when we directed public schools to set high standards for student learning and to make sure students meet those standards. Your leadership was crucial on that struggle and it still is.

We now have model standards in place at the state level. Communities are setting their own standards, and we'll have the first measurement of our progress next year.

Now, Colorado's standards quite frankly are a model for the nation.

This morning, I was on a conference call with 5 other governors, Lou Gerstner and six other executives. (Lou Gerstner is the head of IBM), meeting in Chicago. Let me tell you what it's about. We are going to have a summit on Educational Standards and Assessments in March sponsored by executives and by governors. And we are trying to take the next step because this is crucial. If we are truly going to have good schools, we've got to set clearly what it is we expect a youngster to know and be able to do.

Then we've got to have clear measurement. That's just the start.

The next thing is we've got to tell parents: This is what your youngsters should know and be able to do in math in the fourth grade, and this is where he is. And if that youngster is on a failing course, we've got to blow the whistle for that youngster, for those parents and for that school. But then we've got to take further steps. We've got to give that youngster more time on task. We should not pass them from the fourth grade to the fifth grade if they haven't accomplished what they should do in the fourth grade. You know, let me tell you, I've said this before, it's kind of like an educational cat scan. You say this is where that youngster is. If he is failing, we've got to stop right there and do something because otherwise it accumulates throughout life.

Now, what do we do? We need to improve the amount of time the kids spend in school and on task. That's why in the budget I gave you on school finance I recommend that you put one percent for inflation - 22 million dollars.

I recommend you put another 22 million dollars out there, but make it available only if the school pledges to expand the amount of time kids spend learning.

You see it's only fair. It doesn't make sense to set high standards and do accurate assessment and then don't give the kid a chance to learn.

It's just not fair. So you've got to do this: the schools have got to do this.

Beyond that, we've got to have teachers that are better trained to do the job. I'm therefore suggesting that \$10 million of that increased money for public schools be absolutely set aside for improved instruction. I think teachers and schools will welcome that. But I think that we have a leg up on most people in the nation, and it's our responsibility to keep going down that course.

Now let me also speak about Charter Schools.

I think we need more innovation and more choices in schools; different students learn in different ways. One of the most promising efforts in this area has been charter schools – schools that teachers and parents can organize and run. And we should continue to support and expand charter schools, and a commission has been studying this and has examined some ideas and will share them for improvement and I think we ought to follow those recommendations.

We also need to do a better job of using technology as a tool of learning. I think it's amazing how many of us, particularly over Christmas, have our grandchildren coming to us showing us how to run the computer. It is absolutely unbelievable how fast this world is going to change in terms of the way we handle information. We need to get all our youngsters familiar with that information revolution. Familiar with the hardware and the software. But what a wonderful tool to learn.

Well folks we can't do it unless we think a lot more clearly than we have to date on how we do it.

I'm going to come back on technology when I speak about the economy.

But simply put, we need to get the right pipes going to the right place, you know the conduits for high data transmission. Then we need to find a way to share that cost. There's no sense of going in alone; a higher educational institution doing it this way, a public school this way, a hospital this way, the police and sheriff doing it this way and the private sector doing it another way. We ought to get together and get a plan. We ought to get a very firm plan in Colorado as to how we are going to put in the hardware and the piping. Then we ought to get standards so that each

system can talk to the other. Then we ought to make some collective purchasing. Collective purchasing, dealing with the private sector so that we can get this job done.

Many of you are dealing with this subject.

I've asked Andre Pettigrew, the head of Dept. Of Administration, to put this as one of his highest priorities.

And I'll tell you as governor, I am not going to approve one item going singular. I'm just going to put a stop to all the kinds of investments we make in this business until we can do it in a coordinated, efficient, cost effective fashion.

But the same way I'm going to say let's get with it, there is a possibility that we can use technology to improve learning.

But also just remember it's not a miracle cure. It's only a tool, it only follows what we ought to previously define is about what they should learn and how the learning takes effect.

Kids can't learn in a disruptive environment. Together, we've taken steps to bring discipline back to our classrooms.

Before that, we all know that no matter how well we educate our kids, their future will never be what it should be unless they are safe in their neighborhoods.

Over the past few years, we have worked together on the fight against crime. We've banned guns in the hands of kids.

We've strengthened our criminal laws.

In this session, we should maintain our funding for the youth crime prevention initiative. We also are revising the children's code. I support many of the proposed changes.

But I want to be very clear right up front: I will not support ending compulsory education. I'll veto it.

And, I challenge you – as I have before – to create alternative schools for expelled students. We can't throw away kids. I think we've got to be very disciplined. You've got to say, "if your not going to contribute to the learning atmosphere in this room - you're out of here." But we are smart enough to know just to say "you're out of here" is going to cost us thousands if not millions of dollars for that child unless we give them another way. We've got an obligation, both for the child and to the community to get another way.

We need to focus upon the critical transition between school and getting a job. And I want to compliment the Lt. Governor, Gail Schoettler, for the leadership that she's been giving to us in this area.

School-to-work is a community partnership of businesses, schools and community organizations coming together to fundamentally change the way we educate our children. It links a strong curriculum, based on rigorous standards, with career knowledge and experience.

Representative Foster, I remember visiting a plant in your community. It had three initials I can't remember the name of it, but it was a wonderful illustration of a youngster, a high school youngster, operating a very complicated lathe. And this youngster had not just learned to operate the lathe, he'd learned how to set the computer program for it. As I talked with him he said "Governor I want to, after I get this job under my belt, go for engineering". Absolutely a wonderful example in your community of what School-to-Work can do. We need to do more of that.

All right, I've been speaking about early childhood, about public education, let me turn to higher education.

If this is to be the best place to raise a child, then, in addition to reforming our public schools, we also must improve higher education in the state.

Post-secondary education has become a necessity for many. Our system must continue to be of high quality and focused upon the needs of the workplace. But it's also got to be affordable and assessable.

Now, I support legislation, and I believe it will be authored by Senator Meiklejohn and others, that will hold our higher educational institutions accountable for quality in both teaching and research. This legislation

insures that our investment in higher education is as effective as possible and it provides students and parents information they need to make better decisions about selecting an institution that fits for them.

I'd also like to speak about technology and higher education.

We need to take advantage of the opportunities that are presented by new technological forms. I'm excited about what can be done here. For students to get training and credentials now they have to attend a place called college or university. And they need to be accredited by that. I believe we are going to come to a way in which we can offer education beyond high school and we would call it a virtual university.

I am working with Mike Leavitt of Utah and some other Governors on this point. Let me describe it. Many companies now have within their corporate structure extensive training and they will give a certificate of mastery to their employees. You can see in the future where people will be learning -- from distant learning, CD-ROM and many other ways. But if they are reading, to get acknowledgment of what they know, they need some kind of examination and accreditation. We can develop that. So that whether or not you're out there studying with distant learning, CD-ROM, or what ever, you can come to a place and say, "I want to have you verify my knowledge and I want you to accredit my knowledge." That will be a way in which we can not only make education more assessable but at lower costs.

Now, let me tell you one other kicker that comes from that. When we began to be able to verify what is the value added -- what you've began with and what you've got now and get certified -- then we go to the college and university community and say "Can you apply this to your group?" It will be a very interesting way for us to measure quality and we need that.

There is some exciting things out there for us and the use of technology.

I'd like to turn to the economy.

If this is going to be the best place to raise a child in Colorado, we need to nurture an economy to provide best jobs and the best wages we can find.

It's simple. You can't raise a child without a job.

Now, let's talk now about this challenge -- How can we keep our economy strong?

Right now it's probably one of the healthiest ones in the nation.

We have 3.8 percent unemployment. More Coloradans have jobs -- 2 million of us -- than at any time in our history.

But in the new world economy in which we compete, we can't be complacent. We've got to change as times change. We've got to maintain that economic advantage.

That's why we're restructuring our economic development programs to make them more efficient. We've got a wonderful new person heading it: John Dill.

That's why we are targeting businesses to provide high quality jobs, such as telecommunications, environmental restoration -- jobs that pay good wages.

That's why we are reforming the way government deals with businesses. I want to really compliment the Health Department for the way in which they have reached out to businesses and said "We are going to have a user friendly Health Department, but we are still going to do our jobs."

And that is why we need to re-examine the enterprise zone program this year. It's helped us in the past; it's clearly gotten out of bounds. It needs substantial reform. And if you can't reform it, you probably ought to get rid of it. And I challenge you to do that this session.

Now, these measures will provide a climate for continued success. But we need to do more. We need to make sure that our infrastructure improves and improves people's lives and keeps pace with our economy.

People are stuck in traffic. Too many of our roads are in bad shape -- and there are not enough transportation alternatives for people who want them.

Now, at a minimum, we need to allocate an additional \$100 million from our general fund reserves in each of the next five years, to help fund highways and other transportation projects.

But even this is not going to be enough. Local communities around the state have identified needs that far outpace our current funding capacity.

And for that reason, I've appointed a Blue Ribbon Transportation Panel of community leaders statewide group to assess transportation and funding alternatives. Now, the specific recommendations will be available to us in February.

And we need to find a way to meet these needs together. But whatever we do in this process should not take away from our other priorities. That's why I will oppose any effort to reinstate the Noble bill. I'll veto it.

Now, let me tell you why. It's very important you know where I am on this as you begin this session. We have good times right now for this general fund. I can't tell what our times are going to be four years from now and I can't tell you fully what the federal government is going to do.

But I don't want to take money away from educating kids to fill potholes.

I'm quite willing to work with you. Annually, you may want to look at your budget and say "OK we will move some money over to highways." But I'm not going to erode that tax base permanently. It's the wrong thing to do. We have had historically a division here and I think you ought to keep it. I think our highest priority is to maintain our capacity to make this place the best place to raise a child and that means to sustain that general fund's ability to support education.

We also need to focus on air and rail transport systems.

And infrastructure obviously, is not just highways and rail and air. I said it's telecommunications, and I spoke about that earlier. I think that as we work that out together we will find a truly creative way to make the new infrastructure of telecommunications a useful tool.

The fourth challenge: growth and the environment.

The growth we have experienced in recent years has us nearly busting at the seams in many areas, and Coloradans are genuinely concerned about whether we are going to be able to preserve our open spaces, keep our air clean, protect

our wildlife, and preserve the uniqueness of our different communities and our different regions.

From our farms to our mountains, to our rivers, to our valleys, this is truly one of the most beautiful places on earth. We have, in my judgment, a sacred obligation – to ourselves, to our children and to future generations not to lose that beauty.

Last year at this time, we started the Smart Growth and Development initiative to go to Colorado's communities to identify specific and effective ways to make growth work for us, not against us. We have focused on an agenda that has been driven by citizens from the bottom up, not the top down – from the community level and not the state level.

Thousands of Coloradans have participated in this process to better their communities. We need to keep faith with those citizens, and we need to take their recommendations seriously, and we need to act on them this session.

The recommendations cover dozens of important issues from economic development to education to transportation to agriculture to the environment and provide a road map of how we maintain our high quality of life in Colorado.

I've already discussed many of these issues but I'd like to highlight two recommendations.

First, we need to give counties better tools to address land use issues. Now I've listened very carefully to your comments and when you say this is a matter we should leave to local government and local communities. I agree with you. I just want to give local governments and local communities the tools they have to have to deal with it on a local level. So if we are serious about giving them great ability to grow smart we need to challenge the so called 35- acre rule, which restricts a local community's ability to manage its own growth effectively. Now I believe, through this Smart Growth process, citizens have developed a balanced set of suggestions, and I urge you to act on them. We've worked very hard to try to get all perspectives in on this solution.

Second, we need to reform the structure and mission of the Land Board so that it responds to a broader set of community values. The Land Board manages 3 million acres of state land. Because of the narrow constitutional mandate to

manage these lands for maximum revenue, the Land Board's actions too often conflict with local plans and local priorities. Now, allowing the Land Board more flexibility will require a change to the state Constitution, and I ask you to act to refer that measure to voters.

Now there are some other challenges in the environment. We have made great progress in cleaning up the air. Twenty years ago, for instance, the metro area violated the federal standard for carbon monoxide over a 100 times a year. Now, it's only one or two times a year, and the trend continues downward. This year, for the first time since federal air quality standards were set, we will be in compliance with the standard for ozone.

What we have done has worked, and we cannot afford to reverse course. We must demand that the programs work effectively and efficiently. But it is not too much to ask metro area drivers to have their cars inspected once every two years to make sure they don't pollute our air.

And we need to continue to broadly support locally driven efforts to clean up the Brown Cloud in Denver – not because the federal government tells us to do it, but because it's the right thing to do.

Now, I'm very excited about the partnerships – with the help of Great Outdoors Colorado – that are being creative to preserve open space. I particularly would mention the Yampa Valley, we have some wonderful possibilities of working together to preserve those values.

Now, I said we should make Colorado the best place to raise a child. And I was talking about our four key challenges. Let me review them.

First, make the lives of our young children our highest priority.

Second, build the very best education system in the nation.

Third, keep our economy the strongest in the nation.

And fourth, keep our environment and natural beauty the envy of the world.

Now, I think we know how to do this. We have worked on this agenda before, we've worked on it together and we need to continue that work.

But there is another challenge that I've got to mention; and that's the challenge of our relationship to the federal government.

The budget debate is critical to Colorado and our nation's future. I believe in a balanced budget. I believe in a balanced budget in seven years. But what changes the federal government make are crucial for Colorado.

We don't yet know the final result of this budget debate, particularly in the areas of Medicaid and welfare reform.

But it is likely we will be handed more responsibilities and fewer resources.

We will have to decide what, as a state government, we can pay for, and what will have to be taken care of by individuals and by communities.

We shouldn't kid ourselves. It won't be easy. And, it isn't going to be done quickly.

Now, I can't predict what is going to happen in Washington or when it will happen. But we should continue the welfare reforms that we began two years ago; they are working. We should expand them state wide. We are on the right course here and we did it together in a bipartisan way. I just want to say we should continue to do that.

Secondly, we should continue to work toward efficiencies in Medicaid, to an extension of manage care. And I will be working with you also on that.

Let me put this on the table. Any decisions on reappropriations of federal funds for Medicaid and welfare ought to be done jointly by the executive and legislative branches. I think you've all had that question on your minds. I as a governor, believe that the issue of how you allocate welfare and Medicaid funds is one that a legislative body and a governor ought to both have responsibilities for. And I think that may have been a doubt in your minds let me clear that up.

But let me say we, I can give you some I think some information that will be helpful. We started this with the federal government talking about a cut of \$182 billion; in Medicaid. As of three days ago the proposal put on the table by the majority in Congress on Medicaid was a cut of \$85 billion. Now think a moment about that. We initially were faced with a bill that passed Congress that cut Medicaid \$182 billion; now we have a proposal on the table that says \$85 billion. That is real progress. I was looking for a letter, I don't have with me that I wrote in August of this year to my fellow governors. And the essence of that letter was the first thing we've got to do on Medicaid is reduce that cut.

It's paralysis, it's wrong. They have not done that, so whatever your projection was for what you've got to is reduced by half.

Now secondly, there's still a lot more decisions to be made. I will predict to you that you will have a great deal of more flexibility.

I want to begin to conclude.

And as you know, that's an honest statement, when I say begin to conclude.

I want to tell you a story. I've been working the last few weeks with three Republican governors and two Democratic governors on one of the toughest issues -- Medicaid.

We met last Friday and made substantial progress. Not total; don't know if it will hold together; but we made substantial progress.

The governors in the room were Engler from Michigan, Thompson from Wisconsin, Leavitt from Utah, Wilson from California was on the phone, myself, Chiles from Florida and Miller from Nevada. Now the key to our progress that we made last Friday was that we trusted each other. We had very honest differences, but we were trying to stand in the other persons' shoes, in the other states' shoes, trying to find common ground.

Let me just say from Colorado's point of view, we're a state that's going to grow. We have a whole different cut on how you put that formula together in a state like New York or Michigan whose population may not grow.

I was there trying to represent Colorado's interest and the nation's interest and the interest of people who are served by that program.

But back to this: we were trying to stand in each others' shoes trying to find common ground. And by common ground I don't mean just coming half way between two opposite positions. I mean continuing to push our minds so that we can discover a true common purpose, a win for both sides.

And more important, a win for those that depended upon us to solve the problem.

Now there is a lesson in this, as we do our work in Colorado, whether as executives side or as legislators, whether as Republican, or as Democrats, whether it's rural or urban, we need to understand that there is a community of interest, a common good that we all need to reach for, to try to find.

We have to decide what is most important to us – our ideology, or the community of which we are a part.

If our *ideology* is the most important to each of us, then chances are we won't trust one another enough to solve our problems and we'll end up destroying our community.

But if our *community* is most important to each of us, then we will find a way to work together and to trust each other enough to solve our problems.

Our ideology will guide us, *guide us*, but it will not control us. In the end, it's our community – our finding a way to live together – that must come first.

This is what our job is in this assembly. This is what we mean when we talk about restoring trust in our institutions, civility to our public discussion.

Part of this is to honor the diversity of people – the diversity of their lives, their heritage, their cultures.

We need to get away from the narrow public debate about who “real Americans” are, and focus instead on a debate about what America's real problems are.

We ought not focus on what separates us, but on what unites us.

And what ought to unite us is making this the best place to raise a child. Now we have a role to play as legislators, as governor, as citizens. But in this, business of raising children we all have another role to play. And that's the personal role model that children use us for.

All of us have gone through this where that child is looking at us and is learning about what it is to be adult. I want to close with a couple of comments on this area. Let me read you a song - it's a 60's and early 70's song by Harry Chapin, “Cats and the Cradle”. Bear with me.

A child arrived just the other day,
He came to the world in the usual way,

But there were planes to catch and bills to pay,
He learned to walk while I was away,

And he was talking before I knew it, and as he grew, he'd say,
"I'm gonna be like you dad, you know I'm gonna be like you,

My son turned 10 just the other day,
He said, "Thanks for the ball dad, come on let's play."
"Can you teach me to throw?"

I said, "I not today, I got a lot to do."
He said, "That's okay."

He walked but his smile never dimmed and said,
"You know I'm gonna grow up just like him."

Well he came from college just the other day,
So much like a man I just had to say,
"Son, I'm proud of you, can you sit for awhile?"

He shook his head and he said with a smile,
"What I'd really like dad is to borrow the car keys,
see ya later, can I have them please?" I've long since retired, my sons
moved away,
I called him up just the other day and I said,
"I'd like to see you if you don't mind."

He said, "I'd love to dad if I could find the time."
"You see the new job's a hassle and the kids with the flu,
and it's sure nice talkin' to you dad, it's been sure nice talkin' to you."

And as I hung up the phone it occurred to me,
He's grown up just like me, my boy was just like me.

Why do I share that? I think all of us have this experience of role models. I
want to share a little bit with you. I had a role model. It was my own father.
He paid a lot of attention to me, but it was in a interesting way. I was born in

1928. When I was 6 years of age, he began to keep a journal with me about what I earned and what I spent. I want to give you four short items from that journal, so that you can get the role model that I had and what was the message.

Now let me read it to you:

January 17th. There's a column, plus and minus, in and out. For 38 A's in your reading book, five cents. OK. Let's look at the next entry. This is January 4, 1935. "Singing well at the Church program, 25 cents." Now, there was a judgment there.

But then there's this entry: December 5, 1935, you see my father was my banker, and he kept a count, and what I had I got interest on. And he religiously for a year, added up what the interest was at the end of the year. Entry, December 5, 1935. "Interest paid to date, 26 cents; less amount spent for Christmas shopping, 40 cents, deficit in Christmas shopping over interest, 14 cents," subtracted from the column.

That was my first confrontation with a Republican philosophy of life.

One last note. This is October 1, 1938, for things I did not do minus 25 cents.

Now, I only share this with you because it was another illustration of what mentoring is and the importance of a role model.

As I try to understand the world of children, when I enter a room, I often get down on the floor and try to see the world as they see it.

Recently, I've tried to imagine what I do with an eight year old by my side, observing not only what are the decisions that I make in public life, but also the way in which I conduct my private life.

Let us, let me throw out a challenge to you, as we go through this legislative session: every once in a while let's image that eight year old standing at our side asking us these questions.

- What kind of world are you creating for me?
- Is it a world in which I'm going to be able to learn all that I should learn?
- Is it a world in which I'm going to be healthy?

- Is it a world in which I don't have to eat next to somebody who is hungry?
- Is it a world in which I'm going to have safe streets?
- But particularly is it a world in which the values, the way in which you treat other people, are things that I respect?

You know I never told John Murphy this story, but I think he would have liked it.

Among the most accomplished and fabled tribes of Africa are the Masai. They are considered to have warriors more fearsome and more intelligent than all others. And it's still the tradition, among the Masai, even those with no children of their own, that when they greet each other, they say "and how are the children?"

The traditional answer is "all the children are well."

It means that life is good. That our daily struggles do not preclude us from placing our highest value on children.

Now that is our standard.

This is how our work will be judged.

If our children are not well, then what could possibly be right?

If the children are well, then what possibly could be wrong?

Fifty years from now, if the answer in Colorado "all the children are well," then we will have done our work.

Thank you very much.

Colorado: A Place for Children

by Governor Roy Romer, Colorado

I believe that the early childhood years are the most crucially formative time of life. This is when children learn how people should treat one another. It's when they develop a sense of who they are and what they can contribute to the world. It's when children internalize the social and moral values that guide their behavior through adulthood. And, it is the time when the brain develops. We know that stress and adverse environments damage the developing brain and that those effects are long-lasting. Any of us who have had close contact with young children know that if we don't get at the nurturing of their minds, hearts, and souls in the first few years of life, we may lose them forever.

Early childhood is not a new issue for me. One of the first things I did when I became Governor was to establish First Impressions, my early childhood initiative, to focus attention on the needs of the youngest children in our state. My wife, Bea, has chaired this initiative. Over the past eight years, First Impressions has been a catalyst for change. With input from thousands of child advocates across the state, we have been able to put in place a solid infrastructure of support and assistance for parents and children.

- We are close to the point of being able to serve all at-risk four-year-olds in early education programs through Head Start and our state-funded Colorado Preschool Program.
- We now have twenty family centers that serve as one-stop service centers for families in at-risk neighborhoods.
- We have created a Children's Cabinet that is working to develop an early childhood program budget and a performance-based accountability system.
- We have increased access to family literacy programs and created the "Read to Me, Colorado" campaign that encourages parents to read to their children each day.

- We have established a \$5 million Youth Crime Prevention and Intervention Fund that provides support to community-based programs for children, youth, and families.
- We have completely restructured the way we deliver health and human services by combining our departments of social services and institutions into a department of human services and creating a new department of health care policy and financing. Part of this restructuring effort included establishing the Colorado Office of Children, Youth, and Families that will consolidate child-serving programs under one umbrella.
- We have established a statewide child care resource and referral system that helps parents find child care, and we are working on a career development system for professionals in the early childhood field.
- This year, we developed a step-by-step guide for communities to use in developing comprehensive plans to improve results for children and families.

I am committed to making sure these efforts continue and to focus even more heavily in this area over my next three years as Governor. In my state-of-the-state address this year, I announced the creation of a public awareness/public action campaign called "Bright Beginnings" with the goal of making Colorado the best state in the nation for a child to be born and grow up. Bright Beginnings is based on the belief that government alone cannot solve the problems that families face—everyone must take responsibility for helping parents raise healthy children—and that communities are the best avenue of help for families.

In January, I asked Brad Butler, former chairman of the board of Proctor & Gamble and noted early childhood advocate, to co-chair the Bright Beginnings campaign with me. I also asked the owners and publishers of our

largest newspapers, the president of the Gray Panthers, the director of the Colorado Council of Churches, the head of our largest child advocacy group, key legislators, and other business leaders to join us—to help us decide what we wanted Bright Beginnings to be—to develop a shared agenda—and to help raise the money we need to do it. Over the past few months, Bright Beginnings has come to life. Although it's premature to give too much detail, we are committed to making sure that every child born in Colorado will be recognized as important and will be welcomed, not only by parents, but also by the neighborhood, the community, and the state.

Looking back over the past eight years, I think that there are several reasons why we've been successful in moving our agenda for children forward.

- We've worked very closely with the child advocacy community to build public awareness of issues that impact young children and what can be done to address these issues.

- We've tried to be as bipartisan as possible.
- We've built a system that is based on local visions and subsequent planning for achieving the vision.
- We've raised children's issues as a high policy priority through First Impressions.

I am pleased by what we have been able to accomplish for children and families in this state. But we have more to do. Still, in Colorado we have more adults in prison than we have children in Head Start. We have more square footage dedicated to prisons than to higher education. That is not good enough. The questions we must answer are these. Can we fill a child's mind and a child's soul as well as we can fill a pothole or a prison cell? Can we educate a promising young person as effectively as we can incarcerate a threatening one? How we answer these questions is the true measure of our reach as a people. I am convinced that how we answer them will set the course for our future.

COLORADO
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PLAN

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FACT SHEET

May 7, 1996

PROGRAM GOAL: The goal of the Colorado Child Health Plan (CCHP) is to improve the health status of uninsured Colorado children living in low-income families by making primary care affordable and accessible in their local communities. The plan seeks to support and strengthen existing community relationships designed to improve health care delivery to children. It is not the philosophy of the plan to supplant existing community resources.

CURRENT STATUS

Population: The Colorado Child Health Plan (CCHP) currently provides basic outpatient health care to 2,800 children under the age of thirteen from 23 rural Colorado counties. New state General Fund will allow the CCHP to expand its availability to enroll up to 7,000 children in 28 additional Colorado counties.

Eligible children are from families whose incomes are under 185% of the federal poverty guidelines. For a family of four, that would be an annual income less than \$28,032 per year. Children eligible for the CCHP cannot be eligible for Medicaid. When Medicaid-eligible children are identified, they are referred to their county's social services department.

Eligible Population: A recently published report¹, released by the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, estimates that 150,000 Colorado children under the age of eighteen were uninsured in 1993. The report suggests that over two-thirds of those children are from families whose annual incomes place them at or below 200 percent of the federal poverty guidelines, or \$30,300 for a family of four. These statistics coupled with an analysis of 1990 census data suggest that there are approximately 50,000 Colorado children eligible for CCHP by virtue of age and income in 1996.

Sources of Financial Support: The Colorado Child Health Plan's enabling legislation, sponsored by Senator Sally Hopper and Representative Jim Dyer, provided initial spending authority for the CCHP budget of \$1,511,300, 50 percent of which is funded with federal dollars that have been matched with state Medically Indigent funds and flow through University Hospital in the form of a Medicaid teaching adjustment. The remaining 50 percent of the plan's initial spending authority is to be raised through private donations. Contributors to the plan to date include the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Colorado Foundation, the Colorado Group Insurance Association, Public Service Corporation, Kaiser Permanente, and the Hill Foundation.

This year the state legislature appropriated the plan's first state General Fund of \$1 million and granted total spending authority of \$2.6 million.

Families pay \$25 per child per year as an enrollment fee. For each office visit, providers charge a \$2 copayment. While the plan has no deductibles, it does impose a \$7,500 annual benefit limit per child.

Administration: The CCHP is administered through the Chancellor's office at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center. The plan's medical director and founder is Steve Berman, M.D., Professor of Pediatrics and Director of Health Policy.

¹ The report details the findings of a 1993 survey, commissioned by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, of 2,000 employers and 2,000 households in Colorado.

The plan has an administrative partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Colorado. Through its subsidiary, HMO Colorado, the Blues donate claims processing services, referral and authorization services, and health card production services to the children in the Colorado Child Health Plan.

CCHP HEALTH CARE DELIVERY SYSTEMS

Primary Care: The Colorado Child Health Plan delivers outpatient care through a managed care model which depends heavily upon case management by each child's primary care provider in the child's home community. Over 200 participating primary care providers receive monthly capitation payments for routine care.

The plan's policies and procedures have been developed with significant input from the Mesa County Independent Practice Association, a physician organization headquartered in Grand Junction.

Specialty Care: The plan allows primary care providers to refer CCHP members to any one of 250 participating specialists for medically necessary specialty care. An underlying philosophy of the CCHP is to work with existing programs that support children with special needs within the target population. A good example of this collaborative effort is the relationship between the CCHP and the Health Care Program for Children With Special Needs (HCP), headquartered in the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment.

Immunizations: CCHP aggressively encourages appropriate immunizations for its members. The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment supplies CCHP providers with free vaccine and the CCHP pays its providers \$10 per dose as an administration fee. In communities where county health nurses have traditionally given all immunizations and provided all well-child care to children, the CCHP pays those county departments the same fee.

Uncovered Benefits: Benefits not provided by the Colorado Child Health Plan include mental health services, dentistry, inpatient care, and pharmaceutical benefits. The CCHP, founded as a sister program to the Colorado Indigent Care Program (CICP) now housed in the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing, coordinates with the CICP to deliver inpatient hospital care to CCHP enrollees at participating hospitals.

Pharmaceuticals: Many independent pharmacies in rural communities have joined forces with Wal-Mart Pharmacies, Albertson's, Inc., and City Market Pharmacies to donate the dispensing fee for the five most-commonly distributed antibiotics in suspension. The CCHP pays wholesale cost for these five antibiotics. The program is considering plans to expand available medications to include all pediatric antibiotics and medications for two chronic conditions - Attention Deficit Disorder and asthma. CCHP does work with indigent care programs operated by many national pharmaceutical companies.

Program Costs per Child: During the plan's initial three years of operation, the full cost for covered services has approximated \$26 per child per month, or \$314 per child per year, for health care delivery. Given the increasing sophistication of providers filing for reimbursement and an allowance for a rise in health care costs, an annual cost of approximately \$330 per child is anticipated for fiscal year ending July 1, 1997. Should it occur, an increased pharmaceutical benefit would also add to the plan's total program costs.

EXPANSION ESTIMATES

Enrollment Estimates: Historical growth of both the Colorado Child Health Plan and of the Medicaid expansion program, BabyCare KidsCare, indicates that a reasonable expectation of initial enrollment in a state-wide CCHP would approach seven percent market penetration the first year, increasing to about 25 percent for the second year and 40 percent the third year.

When selecting initial operating sites for the Colorado Child Health Plan (CCHP), plan administration roughly divided the state into two target areas. The primary selection criterion was the lack of availability of health care access for indigent children. The varying availability of community health centers, rural health clinics, and public health programs allowed plan administration to assign counties either Phase One status (counties with the fewest resources for low-income children), thereby earmarking those counties to receive CCHP coverage under existing legislation; or Phase Two status, meaning that, prior to expansion into those counties, plan administration will ask for additional legislation and carefully explore coordination and cooperation with health care providers already offering services in those counties. There are approximately 39,000 eligible children living in Phase One counties in 1996.

SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS (SBHCs)

A Community Approach

for Improving The Health And Academic Readiness of Colorado Children

THE HEALTH CONCERNS OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

A crisis is facing Colorado's children, affecting their health and future. Current concerns include:

- low immunization rates
- child abuse, domestic, gang and other interpersonal violence
- pregnancy and childbearing, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS
- alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse
- depression and teen suicide
- poor school attendance, low academic achievement and dropping out of school

And yet many Colorado children experience problems accessing important preventive services:

- children 6 to 16 have the fewest number of physician visits of any age group
- 16% to 20% have no health insurance, and many are underinsured for preventive health services
- parents have difficulty transporting their children for care
- adolescents lack the experience and personal resources to access care, and may need confidential services for their most serious problems

SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTERS - A UNIQUE COMMUNITY SOLUTION

Many communities in Colorado are actively working to tackle these problems, and increasing numbers have established school-based health centers (SBHCs) as a solution.

There are now 17 SBHC sites located in 5 different Colorado communities: the San Luis Valley, Commerce City, Denver, Summit County and Fort Collins. Several other communities are planning new SBHCs.

Active community involvement in planning SBHCs and the services to be provided lends broad-based support among educators, parents, business leaders, health care providers and students.

SBHCs work hand-in-hand with other prevention efforts, such as Family Resource Centers, drug-free schools and other community- and school-based programs. Often these programs share a common governance structure.

THESE SERVICES ARE PROVIDED

In established SBHCs, 70% of parents enroll their sons and daughters to use these popular services, which may include:

- preventive well child or adolescent exams, health screenings and immunizations
- individual health education and guidance for students and parents
- acute care, including diagnosis and treatment of minor acute illness and injury
- laboratory tests, and prescriptions and dispensing of commonly-used medications
- acute management of chronic conditions, such as asthma, diabetes and seizure disorder
- preventive dental care
- treatment of acne, weight management and other common adolescent concerns
- basic reproductive health care (based upon the outcome of community planning, for middle and high school students)

Basic mental health services:

- mental health assessment and consultation with parents and educators
- individual, group and family counseling
- violence prevention/intervention services, including assessment and counseling
- substance abuse assessment, prevention, intervention and treatment services

BENEFITS FOR FAMILIES

- students spend less time out of class, and learn to be good health consumers
- parents miss less work taking their children for health care
- prevention of serious health problems becomes an affordable family priority
- one-stop shopping improves coordination, decreases duplication and eliminates the stigma associated with certain services, such as mental health and substance abuse counseling

IMPROVED HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN CAN BE ACHIEVED

Gains have been made in the health and education concerns for Colorado children with access to SBHCs:

- school suspensions have been reduced by up to 80%
- pupil attendance rates have increased
- mental health-related issues have comprised 60% of problems treated, verifying public concern about violence, child abuse, substance abuse, suicide and depression
- 95% of pregnant girls have entered prenatal care during the first trimester
- SBHC services have proven popular with hard-to-reach groups, such as teens: 99% would use the service again; and 98% would recommend the services to a friend

Nationally, these results have been documented:

- Recent studies conducted in Denver, Colorado and Dover, Delaware indicate that students who use the centers most often demonstrate greater health care needs than less frequent users. Frequent users are at greater risk for alcohol and substance use, sexual activity, eating disorders, suicide, sexual abuse, and negative family and peer relationships.
- In New York City, students who used SBHCs missed fewer school days than their classmates who did not use the centers.
- A study of students in a North Carolina alternative school found that health center users were significantly more likely to stay in school, to graduate or to be promoted than were students not registered at the SBHC.
- In a Kansas City health center, the number of students using alcohol, cigarettes or drugs decreased among SBHC users. Cigarette smoking among adolescent patients declined from 13% to 5%.
- A survey of more than 5,000 Oregon high school students found less binge drinking and sexual activity among students in districts with SBHCs.
- In Baltimore, girls enrolled in a SBHC counseling program postponed first sexual intercourse 7 months longer than girls who were not enrolled. Pregnancy rates among enrolled students declined 30% in a 3 year period, while rates among girls not involved increased by 58%.

FINANCING AND HEALTH CARE REFORM

Colorado is well positioned to benefit from increased focus by the Federal government on SBHCs. Under President Clinton's Health Security Act, managed care organizations would be required to contract with SBHCs for services.

Federal funding in FY 1995 of \$5.75 million would increase to \$100 million in 1996, and \$400 million in FY 1999. The number of SBHCs nationally would grow from 500 to over 3,000.

In 1978 and 1987, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) funded SBHC initiatives in Colorado. These have been recognized nationally for their success. In 1994, Colorado became one of 12 states to receive a "Making The Grade" award from RWJF. It is designed to assist communities in planning new SBHCs, and to support the state in developing Medicaid and private managed care financing strategies.

If the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, the lead agency for the initiative, is successful with a "Making The Grade" implementation grant, Colorado will receive \$2.2 million for establishing new SBHCs and continued planning.

SERVICES ARE PROVIDED AT LOW COST

SBHCs provide care inexpensively: comprehensive primary medical, mental health, substance abuse treatment and health education services can be provided for a year at a cost of \$125 per enrolled student.

SBHCs are staffed by nurse practitioners, physician assistants, physicians, clinical social workers and other mental health practitioners, licensed substance abuse providers, and health educators. These professionals work as a team to improve the health of students.

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Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment



C O L O R A D O
School-to-Career Partnership
CONNECTING COMMUNITIES, CLASSROOMS AND CAREERS

COLORADO SCHOOL-TO-CAREER PARTNERSHIP
Lieutenant Governor Gail Schoettler, Chair

FACT SHEET

The vision for the Colorado School-to-Career Partnership is an integrated, standards based educational system, tied to economic development, that ensures through partnerships that all of its young people are prepared to excel in the competitive and dynamic global market place.

- October, 1995, Colorado was awarded a five-year, \$24 million grant from the federal Departments of Labor and Education. Colorado's first year award is \$4 million.
- Funds are being sub-granted by the State of Colorado to local community partnerships of business, industry, and education that offer creative, innovative solutions for addressing the needs of students, K-16, and help prepare students for the future workforce.
- Seven local communities have been selected to receive School-to-Career Implementation funds. These partnerships are Denver, Mesa County, La Plata County, Jefferson County, Loveland, Pueblo, and Salida. Implementation awards ranged from \$100,000 to \$500,000. Many partnerships include more than one school district.
- In addition, 29 partnerships have received development funds for planning School-to-Career systems. These development grants ranged from \$10,000 to \$45,000.
- Approximately 33% of Colorado school districts are participating in local School-to-Career Partnerships.
- A state level partnership has been formed to implement School-to-Career statewide by infusing school-to-career strategies into the policies and activities of the respective agencies. These agencies are the Office of the Governor, Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Community College and Occupational Education System, Colorado Commission on Higher Education, Colorado Department of Labor and Employment, Governor's Job Training Office, and the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The state partnership is also working closely with the Colorado Association of Commerce and Industry (CACI), as well as local Chambers of Commerce statewide.

In 1996, the goals of School-to-Career include:

- funding additional School-to-Career partnerships
- establishing a network of expertise in the business, labor, and education community to promote the importance of community involvement in School-to-Career partnerships statewide through public outreach and awareness
- establishment of six Regional Councils and Resource Centers to provide technical assistance to partnerships

Other activities include working with:

- a Business and Industry Advisory Council to incorporate employability skills with academic standards
- CCHE to secure articulation agreements between high schools, community colleges, and universities
- CDE, CCCOES, and CCHE to train and provide professional development to educators and employers

The Colorado School-to-Career Partnership will use three major strategies to accomplish the School-to-Career mission: school-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities.

School-Based Learning

The School-to-Career philosophy is based on curriculum relevancy and strong academic standards. Teachers play the important role of ensuring students understand how each academic activity relates to a future job task. This integration of curriculum with career awareness will allow students to better understand their role in the workplace of tomorrow as they are learning today.

Work-Based Learning

This begins with exposing elementary school students to several career clusters. In middle school, students learn more about those clusters and the careers within each cluster through on-site workplace visits and guest speakers in the classroom. By high school, students have the opportunity to explore particular careers within their chosen cluster through shadowing, apprenticeships, internships, and part-time jobs. Once students graduate from high school, they are well-prepared to make their first career choice, whether they continue with higher education, or go directly into the workforce.

Connecting Activities

Established links between schools and businesses will connect students to work-based experience opportunities. Students will receive academic credit for work experience, and high schools will include career knowledge and exploration as a requirement for graduation. Students will also receive transition assistance from both school counselors and business mentors, whether they are going on to post-secondary education and training or enter the world of work.

This process allows students to learn core academics while also learning to apply them to a future job task. Teachers will be asked to integrate practical learning into their curriculum, and representatives of local businesses will present information to classes about their industry and skills. Businesses will also allow individual students and entire classrooms to visit on-site to observe day-to-day operations, and will hire interns and part-time workers so that students interested in a field will have a chance to explore it before making a career choice.

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ROMER RECORD ON STRENGTHENING FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

- * Romer created First Impressions to focus public attention on the critical first five years of life, stimulate activity at the federal, state and local level and help improve conditions for children and families.
- * Romer proposed and signed legislation to create the Colorado Preschool Program, which helps at-risk children throughout the state get the early education they need to succeed in school. Over three years, this program served 7,500 children and saved the state over \$5 million in reduced costs for remedial education and screening.
- * Romer created Colorado's Family Centers that provide family counseling, parenting classes, health care and child care to families in neighborhood-based settings.
- * Romer and his wife, Bea, have led the fight against illiteracy in Colorado with the "Read To Me, Colorado" program. This initiative increases the number of family literacy programs available and encourages adults to read to children at least 10 minutes a day.
- * Romer supported and signed some of the toughest domestic violence laws in America, creating the first comprehensive domestic violence plan in Colorado history.
- * Romer made it easier for parents to find the child care they need by creating the Colorado System of Resource and Referral, a network of 18 community-based, agencies that assist families, child care providers and businesses over the phone with child care issues.
- * Romer has streamlined the state's child care programs and made them more accessible to thousands of Coloradans. As a result, Working Mother magazine named Colorado one of the top ten states in child care for two years in a row and recognizes Romer as one of six "Governors That Get It."
- * Romer organized business leaders to increase private sector support for policies that help working parents. One result is the Downtown Denver Child Care Consortium, a joint project with 16 Denver-based businesses that serves over 100 children of working parents.
- * In 1994 Romer supported and signed a package of bills that put in place key supports for families and children, including the expansion of home visitation programs, community-based family centers and the Colorado Preschool Program.

Colorado: A Place for Children

by Governor Roy Romer, Colorado

I believe that the early childhood years are the most crucially formative time of life. This is when children learn how people should treat one another. It's when they develop a sense of who they are and what they can contribute to the world. It's when children internalize the social and moral values that guide their behavior through adulthood. And, it is the time when the brain develops. We know that stress and adverse environments damage the developing brain and that those effects are long-lasting. Any of us who have had close contact with young children know that if we don't get at the nurturing of their minds, hearts, and souls in the first few years of life, we may lose them forever.

Early childhood is not a new issue for me.

One of the first things I did when I became Governor was to establish First Impressions, my early childhood initiative, to focus attention on the needs of the youngest children in our state. My wife, Bea, has chaired this initiative. Over the past eight years, First Impressions has been a catalyst for change. With input from thousands of child advocates across the state, we have been able to put in place a solid infrastructure of support and assistance for parents and children.

- We are close to the point of being able to serve all at-risk four-year-olds in early education programs through Head Start and our state-funded Colorado Preschool Program.
- We now have twenty family centers that serve as one-stop service centers for families in at-risk neighborhoods.
- We have created a Children's Cabinet that is working to develop an early childhood program budget and a performance-based accountability system.
- We have increased access to family literacy programs and created the "Read to Me, Colorado" campaign that encourages parents to read to their children each day.

- We have established a \$5 million Youth Crime Prevention and Intervention Fund that provides support to community-based programs for children, youth, and families.
- We have completely restructured the way we deliver health and human services by combining our departments of social services and institutions into a department of human services and creating a new department of health care policy and financing. Part of this restructuring effort included establishing the Colorado Office of Children, Youth, and Families that will consolidate child-serving programs under one umbrella.
- We have established a statewide child care resource and referral system that helps parents find child care, and we are working on a career development system for professionals in the early childhood field.
- This year, we developed a step-by-step guide for communities to use in developing comprehensive plans to improve results for children and families.

I am committed to making sure these efforts continue and to focus even more heavily in this area over my next three years as Governor. In my state-of-the-state address this year, I announced the creation of a public awareness/public action campaign called "Bright Beginnings" with the goal of making Colorado the best state in the nation for a child to be born and grow up. Bright Beginnings is based on the belief that government alone cannot solve the problems that families face—everyone must take responsibility for helping parents raise healthy children—and that communities are the best avenue of help for families.

In January, I asked Brad Butler, former chairman of the board of Procter & Gamble and noted early childhood advocate, to co-chair the Bright Beginnings campaign with me. I also asked the owners and publishers of our

largest newspapers, the president of the Gray Panthers, the director of the Colorado Council of Churches, the head of our largest child advocacy group, key legislators, and other business leaders to join us—to help us decide what we wanted Bright Beginnings to be—to develop a shared agenda—and to help raise the money we need to do it. Over the past few months, Bright Beginnings has come to life. Although it's premature to give too much detail, we are committed to making sure that every child born in Colorado will be recognized as important and will be welcomed, not only by parents, but also by the neighborhood, the community, and the state.

Looking back over the past eight years, I think that there are several reasons why we've been successful in moving our agenda for children forward.

- We've worked very closely with the child advocacy community to build public awareness of issues that impact young children and what can be done to address these issues.

- We've tried to be as bipartisan as possible.
- We've built a system that is based on local visions and subsequent planning for achieving the vision.
- We've raised children's issues as a high policy priority through First Impressions.

I am pleased by what we have been able to accomplish for children and families in this state. But we have more to do. Still, in Colorado we have more adults in prison than we have children in Head Start. We have more square footage dedicated to prisons than to higher education. That is not good enough. The questions we must answer are these. Can we fill a child's mind and a child's soul as well as we can fill a pothole or a prison cell? Can we educate a promising young person as effectively as we can incarcerate a threatening one? How we answer these questions is the true measure of our reach as a people. I am convinced that how we answer them will set the course for our future.

STATE OF COLORADO

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Roy Romer
Governor

STATE OF THE STATE
COLORADO GOVERNOR ROY ROMER
JANUARY 11, 1996

Greetings.

Let me tell you, we're doing well in Colorado.

Our economy is strong.

We live in one of the most beautiful places on earth.

We are blessed to live in Colorado, and we've worked hard to get where we are. We can be proud of what we've done together.

But we can do better. We cannot rest in our efforts to keep our economy strong.

We can't forget there are cracks in the foundation of our society. Not everyone has a seat at the table.

Here's the central question, for me as Governor, for you as legislators, for the citizens of Colorado: how can we take the good we have and reach higher?

We must return to the basics.

(end)
Let me tell you a story. I called an old friend, John Murphy of Durango. We've been friends for 40 years, and John was dying. I wanted to relate to him in a meaningful way, because I knew it might be the last time we ever talked. I wanted him to know that I was thinking of him, wanted to know how he was feeling.

He said to me, "Hey, Roy, I feel good. I feel good about the life I've lived because I feel good about the way I raised my children. Not much else matters when you look back from my perspective."

Now, there are all kinds of ways to judge a society.

But I like John's way. If we raise our children right, everything else will probably fit.

To reach higher, we should commit ourselves -- as a people in this community called Colorado -- to make Colorado the best place to raise a child. *Agree*

It's a simple vision. But it's really the focus of my final term as Governor.

How can we make this the best place to raise a child?

Let's start by asking what worries the typical Colorado family.

Parents – trying to raise their children, working one or two or more jobs – ask this:

- is my job going to be there next year?
 - can I afford decent housing and health insurance for my family?
 - can I keep my family safe?
 - will the values I try to instill in my children be overwhelmed by their peers, or what they see on TV?
 - can I find child care I can afford, and that I can trust?
 - will my kids learn what they need to learn at school?
 - can I take care of my parents when they're old and what about when I'm old?
-

How we – not just government, but as a people – address these anxieties, these needs, will define the kind of Colorado we will become.

I believe that we must focus ourselves – both as a community called Colorado and as elected officials – on these four challenges:

Let's make the lives of young children our highest priority.

Let's make Colorado schools second to none.

Let's keep Colorado's economy the strongest in the country.

Let's keep Colorado's environment and natural beauty the envy of the world.

If we do these things, then we will realize our vision of becoming the best place to raise a child.

Let's talk about each of these challenges.

EARLY CHILDHOOD

Our first challenge is to make the lives of our young children our highest priority.

Parents have always wanted the best for their children. But think about how much harder it is for parents today. Most of us grew up with family nearby, where neighbors watched out for their own children and for those others. For many, that's no longer a reality.

The challenge of parenting can be overwhelming. Those who need child care worry about the quality of that care. Every parent worries about being able to afford decent health care.

Here's what we can do about these challenges:



Bright Beginnings

Colorado has undertaken one of the most exciting and innovative strategies to make this the best place for a child to be born and grow up.

It's called Bright Beginnings.

Bright Beginnings is a non-government, volunteer, community-based effort to provide:

- support for new parents;
- universal access to health care for young children;
- "family-friendly" workplaces;
- more effective support systems for teen parents; and
- quality child care throughout Colorado.

The 55,000 babies born each year in Colorado don't come with instruction books or 1-800 numbers. So Bright Beginnings has launched "Warm Welcome," an effort to have a trained volunteer from the community visit any new parents who want it within 2 to 3 weeks of the birth of their child. These volunteers will do three things:

- First, provide a check list of what parents are likely to confront during the first year of the baby's life;
- Second, to provide a directory of all the help that is available to them in their community or in their region; and
- Third, offer to mentor the parents, on a totally volunteer basis, if the parents want it.

Think of it: thousands of volunteers from churches and service clubs, as well as at-home moms, retirees, and others giving of themselves to care and nurture the youngest children in their communities.

Already, we have raised almost \$1 million in private funds for this project. I especially want to thank my partners in this effort: Brad Butler, the former chairman of the board of Procter & Gamble; and Senator Tom Norton.

Along with all the other business, community and religious leaders involved in this effort, we believe we *can* make this vision of renewed community support for families and kids a reality.

2. Child Care

In Colorado, most parents work. As a result, over 100,000 children spend 8-10 hours, five days a week, in child care.

And yet, they say most child care centers in Colorado are, at best, mediocre, when rated in terms of programs for kids, safety, teacher training and equipment.

Child care is too costly for too many. Some parents pay up to 23 percent of their incomes for child care, but we still aren't paying our child care workers a living wage.

To help solve this problem, I reached out to business to get some fresh and innovative approaches to the child care challenges.

They've suggested to me that we establish a voluntary child care check-off on the state income tax returns to help improve child care facilities.

They have also recommended changing property tax assessments to allow child care facilities to be taxed at the residential rather than the commercial rate.

They suggested expanding opportunities for pre-school teachers to get training, and to apply quality standards to all child care programs that receive government support.

I'm also interested in their proposal to establish a refundable child care tax credit to provide financial support to working parents who need help paying for child care.

These are all good ideas and they deserve our strong consideration.

Because it is critical to have more businesses involved in solving the child care crisis, this spring I will ask business leaders to join me in a series of summits across the state to explore how the private sector can better respond to the child care needs of their employees.

3. **Preschool**

In my first term, we established the Colorado Preschool Program, which has grown to serve 6,500 children statewide. We all worked together on this, and we can be proud of what this program has accomplished.

I support expanding this program to a statewide total of 8,500 children. I also support opening the program to three-year-olds as local need dictates.

4. Fatherhood

An alarming number of children are growing up without fathers -- 40 percent in Denver. Being a parent is tough, but being a single mom is even tougher. Many do an outstanding job.

But records show that kids without fathers are more likely to live in poverty, to commit violent crimes, become teen parents and leave their own children.

I convened a Task Force on Responsible Fatherhood that will make recommendations I hope you will consider with me. Already, they've suggested that we revamp the cumbersome public assistance program which has fathers paying the state to support their kids.

And they've proposed we re-think our approach to public programs, to the court system and to community resources to make sure we are holding fathers responsible for their children, and not chasing them away.

5. Health Insurance for kids

Another thing that worries parents is the cost of health insurance for their kids.

As it stands, 150,000 of Colorado's children don't have access to health care because their parents can't afford it. Almost all of those children -- 87 percent -- have at least one parent who is employed. Just think about that.

In a state that enjoys our level of prosperity, that is shameful.

I understand that there is a lot of disagreement in this country about how to solve the health care problem. I'm not here to argue about that.

But can't we at least agree that in Colorado we have a collective moral obligation to hold our children harmless, and to provide each and every one of them with basic health care in the early years?

Can't we at least agree on that?

In my budget, I have set aside \$14 million to begin to deal with this issue -- an amount we certainly can afford this year. I think we can be creative in how we use this money to reach the maximum number of children. We could build upon existing programs -- like the Colorado Child Health Plan -- or we can encourage innovative ideas to spring up in communities.

Representative Ben Clark is sponsoring legislation that supports a tax credit that builds on the insurance infrastructure already in place and gives incentives to businesses to be a part of the solution. I'm open to new ideas and I'm sure that together we can solve this problem.

So, let's commit to one another today that, by the time this legislature adjourns 119 days from now, we will have put ourselves clearly on a path to provide health care to every child in Colorado.



If we are going to make Colorado the best place to raise a child, our first challenge is to make young children our highest priority.

Our next challenge is to make the schools those kids attend second to none.

Every school day more than 650,000 Colorado kids go off to our public schools. Many spend more time in school than they do with their parents.

And, parents ask:

- Are my kids going to be safe in school?
- Are the values I am trying to teach them going to reinforced, or undermined?
- Are they learning what they need to know to get a good job and be good citizens? Are they being challenged to be all that they can be?
- Why aren't they being asked to do more homework?

We've been on this issue a long time and we know there is no quick fix.

We're making progress, but we're not there yet.

Student Performance Standards

Fundamentally, what matters most is improving student performance. We were right three years ago, when we directed public schools to set clear high standards for student learning and to make sure students meet those standards. Your leadership on this issue has been important.

We now have model standards in place at the state level. Communities are setting their own standards, and we'll have the first measurement of our progress next year.

Colorado's standards are a model for the nation. They will ensure that our students have the skills and knowledge they need to be successful.

Standards are tools to hold schools accountable. It's kind of like an educational "check-up."

We should now make sure the standards are being met. That means:

- The right kind of assessments;
- Improving teacher training;
- More time spent in the classroom learning;
- More parental involvement.

Business as usual won't get the job done.

2. School Finance

We must be strategic with our K-12 investment.

Specifically, I propose we guarantee school districts an automatic 1 percent increase to help maintain basic quality. That amount -- \$22 million -- won't cover all the increased costs they face from inflation, but it's a start.

I am also proposing that we target *additional* money to encourage specific improvements in the K-12 system. I have proposed \$22 million for schools to lengthen the time a child spends in class.

We must also invest in the quality of teaching in the classroom by making \$10 million available, in a competitive grants process, for school districts that redesign their teacher training programs. That's a strategic investment in "more time, better teaching." Representative Kerns and Senator Matsunaka are sponsoring this legislation.



Charter Schools

We need more innovation and more choices in schools; different students learn in different ways. One of the most promising efforts in this area has been charter schools -- schools that teachers and parents organize and run. We should continue to support and expand charter schools, and a commission that examined these ideas over the summer has a series of recommendations we should adopt.

4. Technology

We need to do a better job of using technology as a tool to improve student learning. This is one of the most powerful tools we've seen in decades.

Our schools must be interconnected with a broader system to facilitate distant learning. They need the right hardware and the software.

But most of all, we need trained teachers who know how to use this system. And we need parents who also are knowledgeable about technology so that they can assist their students.

I will talk more about technology and telecommunications coordination in a few minutes. But our public schools must be part of any statewide coordination and planning.

5. Discipline

Kids can't learn in a disruptive environment. Together, we've taken steps to bring discipline back to our classrooms.

Before that, we all know that no matter how well we educate our kids, their future will never be what it should be unless they are safe in their neighborhoods.

Over the past few years, we have worked together on the fight against crime. We've banned guns in the hands of kids, and strengthened our criminal laws.

This session, we should maintain our funding for the youth crime prevention initiative. We also are revising the children's code. I support many of the proposed changes.

But I want to be very clear right up front; I will not support ending compulsory education.

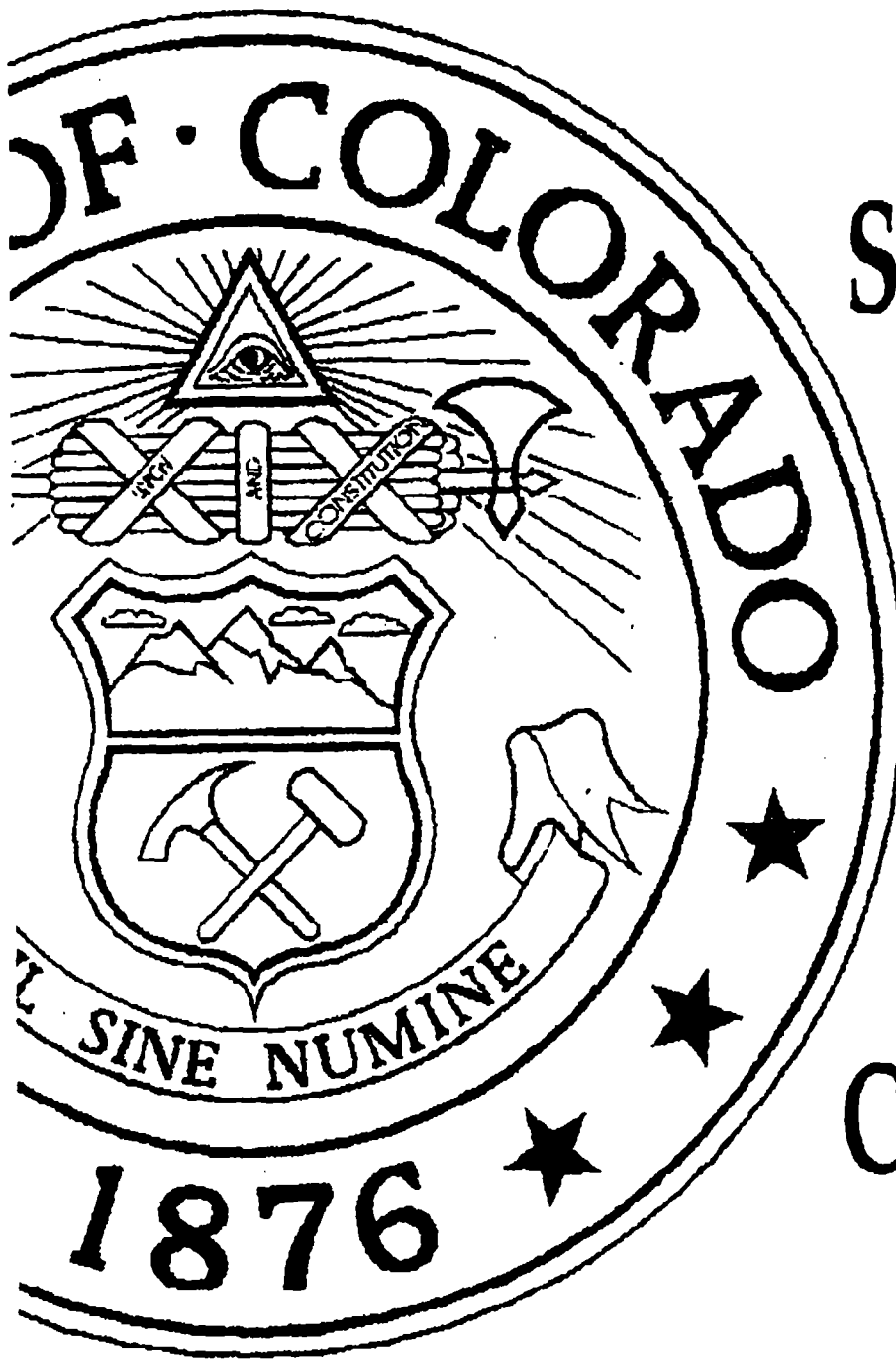
And, I challenge you – for the third time in as many years – to create alternative schools for expelled students. We can't throw away kids.

SCHOOL-TO-WORK

We also need to focus on the critical transition between school and getting a job. Last year, I launched the Colorado school-to-work initiative, and asked Lt. Gov. Schoertler to take the lead on this vital and innovative effort.

School-to-work is a community partnership of businesses, schools and community organizations coming together to fundamentally change the way we educate our children. It links a strong curriculum, based on rigorous standards, with career knowledge and experience. It will help kids learn what they need to know to get a good job after graduation.

* Education Agenda Excerpted



A STRATEGIC AGENDA FOR COLORADO

Roy Romer
Governor

January 1995

(Education Agenda) EXCERPTS

should redirect some of our expected budget savings in AFDC to communities who will concentrate energy on addressing teen pregnancy issues. The funds would be distributed through a "Request for Proposals" process and distributed using criteria from the Department of Human Services' "Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Action Plan."

* * * * *

To make sure Coloradans of every age gain the skills and knowledge they need, we must take steps to hold our education institutions more accountable for results, create more flexibility and innovation in the education system, and plan for future workforce needs:

Improving the Quality of our Schools

We all know what makes some schools better than others.

- * These schools have high expectations for all students and a rich, rigorous academic curriculum.
- * These schools are accountable to their community -- both for the results they produce and for involving parents and community members in meaningful decisions about what happens at that school.
- * Hallways and classrooms are safe, disciplined and orderly.
- * Teachers are well-qualified, know about the subject they are teaching, and have the classroom skills to help each student learn the material.
- * The "bureaucracy" of the state and district administration doesn't get in the way, funding and other resources are directed to the classroom, and the school is creative in finding the right ways to help its students learn.
- * Important decisions about the school are made at the school and by the community, not by a centralized bureaucracy.
- * Students are excited about learning and challenged by both the teacher and the subject matter to work hard.

The mystery is not about what changes need to happen in our school system. The challenge is about how to make those changes happen in every school. Each child in Colorado should have access to good schools, and we have made much progress in this area. Each year, we have taken careful, deliberate steps to change the way our schools operate and to influence the quality of teaching in the classroom. Colorado student achievement ranks high when compared to other states.

But we are nowhere close to finishing our work. For too many of our children, our schools aren't making a difference. Our graduates as a whole aren't skilled enough. Our drop-out rates are too high. Our test scores aren't increasing fast enough. Our graduation rates are too low -- especially for the most at-risk students in our system. Our schools are locked into an environment with too many rules, too many restrictions, and too little creativity.

We need to raise our expectations -- our standards -- for schools, and we need to hold them accountable for meeting these expectations. Over the long-term, the single most important influence on our schools will be clear standards for performance and a high-quality system of testing and assessment -- which we put into place with House Bill 1313 in 1993. In the coming years, standards will give schools clear targets for student achievement -- raising the skills and knowledge of our students and forcing fundamental changes in the way the school system is organized, held accountable, and managed.

We also need to take steps to ensure that a college education at Colorado's public institutions is affordable and valuable to students. Our institutions should provide the highest quality education at a fair price. Citizens should be able to accurately evaluate whether they are getting the educational quality that best fits their needs and provides the best value for their tuition dollar.

My agenda for improving the quality of colleges and universities in 1995 includes the following proposals:

1. **Design new ways to hold institutions of higher education responsible for fulfilling the specific mission of their institution.** Coloradans should not have to pay for activities that do not support the mission of the institution, and they deserve to know that institutions are providing the best education as efficiently as possible. As a state government, we should define the quality and results we expect from our higher education system, decide which pieces each institution will pursue, and then measure whether each institution is meeting these expectations. Legislators considering this issue over the summer proposed we develop "contracts" with each institution listing out our expectations and linking funding to performance under these contracts. This idea is a different way of doing business as a state, but we shouldn't reject it out of hand. Instead, we should thoughtfully consider how we can make this proposal work.

2. **Ensure students can graduate in four-years from a four-year institution.** Too many students in Colorado public institutions have difficulty graduating from state institutions within four years. I propose we take steps specifically to ensure that colleges and universities are not the cause of the problem. The University of Colorado at Denver has made this four-year "promise" to its students; we should ask our other institutions to do likewise. As enrollment increases, we cannot afford to subsidize the education of students simply because our institutions are not organized effectively to get students out on time with a quality degree.

Developing a High-Quality Workforce

If we want the best jobs we create through our economic development efforts to go to Coloradans, we must have good institutions of higher learning and good school-to-work transition programs. But we must also ensure that our current workers are given the opportunity to upgrade their skills, so that they are not permanently dislocated when changes alter the scope of their jobs.

Last year, I created the Workforce Coordinating Council in the Governor's Office and appointed representatives from business, labor, education, community-based organizations, and state and local government. The council is charged with developing a comprehensive employment and training plan by July 1, 1995. The plan will include the following components:

- * identify training and employment needs of the Colorado workforce;
- * recommend steps to meet the needs identified;
- * evaluate all state training programs;
- * make recommendations concerning the organizational structure which will best deliver employment and training services; and
- * make recommendations concerning training programs, including apprenticeship and youth apprenticeship programs.

In creating this council, we have taken the first step toward designing a workforce development system that is rational, addresses the needs of workers and employers alike,

We must continue our work. My agenda to improve the quality of our schools in 1995 includes the following proposals:

1. **Maintain our commitment to clear, rigorous standards for student performance.** We launched a powerful tool for raising student achievement when we passed House Bill 1313 in 1993. The premise behind the bill is simple: we will never achieve real change in our system unless we state clearly what our expectations are. "Model" standards for school districts to use will soon be completed in core subject areas: reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, and geography. I will oppose efforts to weaken or abandon this approach, as it would send a wrong message to Coloradans who want their schools to be accountable.

2. **Eliminate dis-incentives for teacher transfer.** People who choose teaching as a career choose one of the most insulated, inflexible careers possible. A high-quality education system should operate in a free market for high-quality teachers. We should eliminate dis-incentives that keep too many teachers in the same job in the same district for their entire careers. Specifically, I propose that we change policies so teachers don't take a salary cut when taking a job in a new district, so benefits from the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) and the Denver Public Schools retirement program are transferable, so districts can recruit teachers from other districts at a competitive wage, and so the new master teacher license (now included in the state's new educator licensing regulations) is a transferable license -- good for five years credit and tenure in any district.

3. **Invest in the professional expertise of our educators.** When we discuss education reform, the focus of our rhetoric and our policies are on raising student performance. But, by demanding more from students, we also are demanding more from educators. We can't have a high-quality education system without high-quality teachers and principals. Every educator needs to have the training, knowledge base, and skills to help all students achieve at higher levels.

I propose we create and fund a new challenge grant program that matches state resources with local districts or groups of districts to provide effective, efficient professional development strategies for their staff. To receive state support, district strategies must be designed to ensure that reform measures are applied in every classroom and that our education professionals have the support they need to be the very best in their profession. I also challenge professional education associations to support these efforts using their own resources and programs.

4. **Make necessary changes to improve the operation of charter schools.** When we allowed for the creation of charter schools in 1993, we opened a floodgate of local creativity, energy, and commitment to improving schools. Our charter school effort has been a success; with little state support and great local obstacles, Colorado has the highest "per-capita" number of charter schools of any state in the nation. We should monitor this effort carefully and continue to make changes and corrections to ensure its success. In the coming months, I want to work with legislators to review the number of charter schools we now allow, the process for receiving waivers, the use of building space for charter schools, and the financial issues this effort creates for both school districts and charter schools -- and then take any appropriate steps.

5. **Focus on results, not regulation.** With the implementation of clear standards for student performance in the coming years, we will -- for the first time -- begin holding

our education system accountable for what really matters: student achievement. As such, standards force the school system to operate in an entirely different mode. We therefore should remove the tangle of rules, regulations, and reports that have nothing to do with student achievement.

I support three changes to make our regulatory system results-oriented. First, my Administration has applied to U.S. Secretary of Education for a blanket waiver from a number of federal education regulations, including vocational education and Title I "Even Start" programs. Second, I support legislation which will streamline the process school districts must go through to receive a regulatory waiver from the State Board of Education.

Third, I am open to suggestions for rules and regulations we should abolish immediately for all school districts -- rules and regulations that do not support our goals of student achievement, implementation of standards, and student safety. My suggestions for regulations we could discuss abolishing include all testing requirements (except those specified in H.B. 93-1313); accountability reports to the State Board of Education; school district accreditation; education and licensing requirements to become a principal; size requirements for flags displayed in a classroom; vocational program paperwork; procurement requirements for purchasing school buses; quarterly reports on district budgets; some management responsibilities of principals; and district involvement when students switch districts.

6. Help school districts operate as efficiently as possible. In September, I challenged Colorado's 20 largest school districts -- which together represent over 75 percent of the money spent on K-12 education -- to pursue performance audits of their operations and management. Performance audits don't measure how much money a district is spending and in which categories; rather, they bring in the expertise of an outside firm to find management efficiencies, operational changes, and district duties that can be done at a lower cost. Over the past weeks, we have designed an application and review process, and we should make our first awards shortly. Despite some initial concerns, I have heard from most district and expect nearly all 20 will accept this challenge.

7. De-regulate "unlit" fiber. Telecommunications and state-of-the-art technology can improve the quality of classroom learning and help schools operate at a lower cost. We should make sure "unlit" fiber -- the technical term for fiber optic cables which districts are using to provide distance learning opportunities -- remains affordable and accessible. "Unlit" fiber should not be treated as a regulated service, and we should take whatever legislative action is necessary to ensure it can be offered to districts with preferential rates.

Linking Our Schools to the Work Place

Our schools need to do a better job of preparing students for the world of work. We know that 75 percent of graduates from Colorado's high schools do not go on to earn four-year college degrees -- yet high school curriculum is geared almost exclusively toward the college-bound.

For every available high-skill, high-wage job, Colorado students compete not only against other U.S. students, but against students from other countries. To make sure our students remain competitive, they must have the knowledge, skills, and appropriate work experiences to prepare them for a job after graduation or for additional higher education.

Getting this done will require a new, unprecedented partnership between schools, higher education, and -- most important -- the business community.

Last year, this Administration received a planning grant from the federal government to develop a "school-to-work transition" system in Colorado. I created a steering committee, made up of business people, labor representatives, educators, and government officials, and we took this concept to the people of Colorado through a series of eight regional public meetings this past summer.

We must continue our work. My agenda to link our schools to the work place in 1995 includes the following proposals:

1. Finalize our planning effort to design a comprehensive system that provides students a transition from the school to the work place. Based on what I heard at statewide public meetings and the work of several technical task forces, the School-to-Work Steering Committee is preparing a state plan for moving Colorado toward a school-to-work transition system. We will distribute this plan throughout the state for more public input, and then we will submit it to the federal government to receive additional funds for implementation.

Because of her past experience in business and education, I have asked Lt. Gov. Gail Schoettler to provide the necessary direction and oversight to this initiative. Regardless of whether we receive federal aid or not, we intend to make the necessary changes in our state government structures to support a school-to-work system.

2. Support local efforts to create "school-to-work" programs. Using money from our federal planning grant, the Governor's Office has provided seed money to three communities -- based on a competitive grant process -- to develop "career academies" aligned with one of Colorado's growth industries. A career academy is a special-focus program offering students academic and work experiences related to a specific career.

Three school districts were awarded career academy grants. The Sierra Grande School District in Blanca will work with Colorado Digital Labs to expand its student-operated computer manufacturing enterprise. Jefferson County School District will work with Lutheran Medical Center and Red Rocks Community College to develop health career academies at Jefferson and Wheat Ridge high schools. Denver Public Schools will expand its existing Academy of Travel and Tourism and Academy of Finance to serve more students.

Because of the interest shown in this grant program, we should find existing state funds we can redirect to support more career academies and youth apprenticeship programs.

Improving the Quality of Colleges and Universities

We have great challenges before us to continue ensuring that our system of public higher education remains of the same high quality we have grown accustomed to expect.

We need to take seriously the predictions about enrollment growth. Based on the current student population in our middle and high schools, Colorado may see as much as a 20 percent increase in higher education enrollment over the next 10 years. We need to take steps now to plan for this growth -- recognizing that some of our institutions are operating below capacity, while others are bursting at the seams.

RESPONSIBLE FATHERHOOD

By Gov. Roy Romer

Few roles in life are as important as being a parent. It is a great privilege and an enormous responsibility. But in far too many cases, parents, and especially fathers, aren't making good on this fundamental responsibility.

Responsible fatherhood is a difficult, emotionally charged subject that can mean different things to different people. Does responsible fatherhood apply only to a father who lives with his children? Does it imply that a father have custody of his children? Are responsible fathers only those who pay child support or only those who wait until they are ready to have children? What happens when a father's separation from the child's mother obstructs his relationship with his child? How should we regard the business that fails to make parenting by fathers a real priority for employees? These are not easy questions and they are not questions that government alone can answer.

Two points, however, are absolutely clear. First, every child needs routine male role models. Second, there is no excuse for a father's failure to follow through on his responsibilities to his children.

Last fall, I launched the Governor's Task Force on Responsible Fatherhood to take a hard look at the problems faced by families and the impact absent fathers have on young children. The 25 member task force has completed the first stage of their work, making a number of recommendations for action by government, the courts, schools, churches, communities and individuals.

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Hubert Farbes, chairman of the task force, reports that, "the statistics about the growing impact of absent fathers on our kids are not just frightening, they are immobilizing." Consider:

- Today, parents spend, on average, 40 percent less time with their children than they did a generation ago -- much of that due to the absence of a father in the home.
- In Colorado, one in four children are born to families without a father -- a 30 percent increase in just 15 years.
- In America's larger cities, nearly one in two children are growing up without fathers.
- Forty percent of children living with single mothers have not seen their father in the last year.
- The number of children growing up without fathers -- not the economic or ethnic background of a neighborhood -- is the best indicator of a community's likelihood to suffer from juvenile crime and violence. Sixty percent of rapists and 70 percent of long term prison inmates grew up without fathers.
- Kids are significantly more likely to grow up in poverty, to struggle in school, and to abandon their own children if they have grown up without a father.
- In Colorado, one-third of young men between the ages of 25 and 34 do not earn enough to keep a family of four out of poverty.
- The number of third generation fatherless families is growing.

How can we build caring, nurturing communities when so many of our households are fatherless?

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I am not convinced that there is a single best way to raise a child, and I know there are many cases where single mothers and others do an outstanding job raising their children. But it's tough work.

My Responsible Fatherhood initiative does not intend to minimize the critical role women play in children's lives. But, it does recognize that our chances of success are much worse when large numbers of fathers abandon their kids. As society strives to include women as an equal part of the workforce, demands on families change, and we cannot expect men to fill only the traditional role of breadwinner.

Recognizing the problem of father absence is just a first step. The real challenge is understanding the complexity of the problem and finding thoughtful solutions.

The father who abandons responsibility upon conception of his child and who does not have access to a steady job is far different from the father forced out of his child's life by a court system that defines him only as a breadwinner. And both are different from the father who wants to give time to his children but cannot because his work place does not reward, or penalizes, employees who make a commitment to be available for their children.

These distinctions however, matter little to the children who are deprived of a parent's attention, support and time.

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It is time to make parenting by fathers a priority equally important alongside child support. We do no one any favors by continuing to batter fathers in public without also making it clear that we value their responsible parenting.

In Colorado, we have already begun taking steps to restructure our child support process, identify absent fathers early, rethink our public assistance system, and temper the confrontational domestic court proceedings that can damage children for life. And we have taken steps to support young men who choose to be responsible fathers, by providing a trained male volunteer parenting mentor when their child is born and by working with young parents around the state to help them learn how to improve the chances of their child's success.

The Task Force made specific recommendations for additional action such as shortening the time that children spend in court and considering using the same judge throughout a complex domestic dispute case; implementing counseling programs for parents struggling with divorce to help them learn how to continue to parent responsibly even as a marriage breaks apart; reviewing state policies and programs and amending those that fail to recognize the importance of fathers.

Also, the private sector should take steps to provide family leave and support policies that value a father's role in his child's life. Churches and community organizations should provide mentoring and parenting programs for fathers and mothers.

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This summer, we will convene a series of public discussions throughout Colorado to begin working to make these and other necessary changes happen.

We need fathers responsibly active in children's lives -- as nurturing parents who can develop a child's self-esteem and provide the kind of role models for behavior, mentoring and guidance that children need.

New programs can help, but programs alone don't get to the heart of the matter. What will work is a commitment by each of us, as parents, grandparents, employers, members of a community or a church, to make children a priority, to provide them with the basic care and parenting they need and deserve.

When we look back on our lives, the measure of our success will have little to do with the value of our bank accounts, cars or trust funds. The real measure of our success will lie in how well we've lived up to our responsibility as mothers and fathers.



How Will Standards-Based Education Look in the Classroom?

Content standards and assessments will vary in each district. Locally elected school boards will determine instruction, technologies and curriculum linked to standards for that particular area. Therefore, predicting how classrooms will look is difficult. However, extensive work is being done throughout the state to provide models and examples to districts and educators in aligning standards and assessments with curriculum. The following example has actually been piloted in the classroom.

Sample of Content Standards and Assessments in the Classroom for Grades 1-5

Examples of Geography State Model Standards

- (2) Students know the physical and human characteristics of places and can use this knowledge to define and study regions and their patterns of change.
- (6) Students apply knowledge of people, places and environments to understand the past and present and to plan for the future.
- (3) Students understand how physical processes shape Earth's surface patterns and systems.

An Exemplary Classroom Use of the Model Standards

(adapted from the *Colorado Geography Curriculum Framework*)

Grasslands: A Natural Resource (by Janet Pommerhn, Denver Public Schools Elementary Teacher)

Overview: Grasslands are the world's best places to grow food. Getting food becomes a problem as our population increases and land is plowed under to make room for people. This unit teaches about two grasslands (Colorado and Kenya) and ends with the class analyzing the future of one of Earth's most precious natural resources.

Integration: science, language arts, art

Activities:

- ☐ Utilize a number of books/resources about the grasslands. . . to provide background knowledge. . .
- ☐ Begin dioramas that will be used in assessment. . . Plant grasses [from Colorado prairie and Kenya savanna] NOW so these will be growing at assessment time. . .

- ☐ Review concepts of region. Discuss if grasslands are a region and why. . . Use primary atlases to investigate if (and where) grasslands are found on various continents. . .
- ☐ Using a variety of resources, identify and analyze past and present use of both grasslands areas. Develop a chart or graphic organizer to display information gathered. . .
- ☐ Investigate what food products come from grasses. . .
- ☐ Investigate and analyze how weather and climate affect grasslands in these two areas. . .
- ☐ Discuss present use of both areas and theorize on the future. Discuss conservation/preservation practices.
- ☐ Do the treasure map activity that takes students through a grassland to practice map skills.

Assessments:

- ☐ The task is to make the previously planted container into a recognizable ecosystem by adding plants, animals, people, homes, etc. in some art form. Each diorama is to be divided in half, to show both past and present.
- ☐ Present diorama to class and justify contents orally using information gathered in this unit. Weather and climate are factors to be discussed. State why grasslands are a "region".

Possible Accommodations for Students with Special Needs

(ideas by Sandra Stokley, Denver Public Schools Elementary Teacher):

A teacher utilizing this unit, may have to make some changes to meet the special needs of her/his class. For example, several students may speak Spanish as a primary language. Without some accommodations, these students will not gain full understanding of the lessons, and the assessment may not truly test knowledge base. While these strategies can take more time and resources, they are necessary if all students are to achieve high standards.

- ☐ Include books and resources in Spanish.
- ☐ Translate class discussions in Spanish.
- ☐ Provide experiences, such as:
 - borrow plants/grasses to be displayed in the classroom.
 - visit the Botanical Gardens in Denver.
 - visit the Natural Museum of History in Denver.
 - visit a grassland in Colorado.
- ☐ Assessments would remain the same, except a student could present the diorama in his/her language of choice.

Why Content Standards?

Under the current education system, expectations vary from school to school and even from teacher to teacher. Standards will help clarify these expectations for student learning, build on the best classroom practices, and hold schools accountable for helping students learn important skills and knowledge.

A strong public education system is crucial to Colorado's future. The quality of our workforce, the vitality of our communities, the productivity and well-being of our citizens—all depends on a school system that adequately prepares students for living, learning and working in a changing, complex world. Standards embrace the traditional essentials of public school education—such as reading, writing and arithmetic—but also reflect the skill and knowledge requirements of a changing workplace. Standards are designed to produce students who can read, write, and speak effectively, analyze problems, take initiative, set priorities and learn quickly—all components of a "world class" education.

While implementing standards-based education in Colorado is a move toward improved student achievement, it will require an additional use of time, effort and resources. There are, however, efforts around the state to support districts in this time of transition. The Colorado Education Goals Panel, a broad-based group which represents constituencies throughout Colorado, is working to enhance standards-driven reform by coordinating these existing efforts. Led by Governor Romer and Commissioner Randall, the Goals Panel is developing a planning framework, *Partnerships in Educating Colorado Students*, which helps districts tailor standards-based education to their local needs. The Goals Panel has also awarded over sixty grants to communities for local planning and professional development in standards-based education. The Goals Panel envisions Colorado communities working together to set *higher expectations* in the schools to get *better results*.

Definitions

The following definitions were compiled by the Colorado General Assembly under House Bills 93-1313 and amended by HB 94-1359.

Standards-Based Education: a system of instruction focused on student learning of content standards. This system aligns programs of instruction and assessments with the content standards. The implementation of "standards-based education" shall not require districts to abandon the use of Carnegie units, to abandon a letter grade system, to adopt outcome-based methods of teaching, or to use student portfolios in place of assessments. In addition, implementation of "standards-based education" shall not require changes in current class schedules and does not encourage block scheduling or other experimental methods of class scheduling.

Content Standard: a compilation of specific statements of what a student should know or be able to do relative to a particular academic area.

Assessment: the methods used to collect evidence of what a student knows or is able to do.

Performance Level: the level of achievement by a student on an assessment relative to a content standard. The acceptable performance level...shall mean the student has the subject matter knowledge and analytical skills necessary to succeed at subsequent grade levels. (The Standards and Assessment Development and Implementation Council will recommend performance levels for each content standard to the State Board of Education).

In the last decade, Colorado's public education system has come under close public scrutiny. Concerned parents, educators, community members, businesses and policymakers began to question whether Colorado students were being adequately prepared for the challenging demands of tomorrow. The general agreement was that holding students to *higher expectations* would get *better results*. Currently, Colorado's public education system is undergoing changes aimed at raising achievement levels by expecting more of its students.

Overview of HB 93-1313 for Standards-Based Education

In 1993, the Colorado General Assembly and Governor Romer, put into place a comprehensive reform strategy to improve the academic performance of Colorado students. Under the direction of House Bill 93-1313, each school and community in the state is working together to reach a clear and common understanding about what students should be learning in core subject areas. State "model" content standards have been adopted by the State Board of Education in six subject areas: math, science, geography, history, reading and writing. School districts will adopt their own standards, which meet or exceed the state model content standards, by January of 1997.

House Bill 93-1313 also aims to provide educators, parents, students, and others with specific information about how well students are doing at meeting commonly held standards of student performance. To meet this goal, the legislation created two different levels of testing, both state and local. State assessment results will be used to monitor state trends, verify district test results, and give Coloradans an overall view of how well students are performing. District results will be used to measure individual student progress and the effectiveness of school programs and instructional strategies.

The new state testing system will not replace traditional college entrance exams such as the ACT or SAT, and it will not be used to determine graduation eligibility. Local districts will continue to determine graduation requirements.

What Are Content Standards?

Standards are statements of the academic content each student is expected to learn; they describe what students should know and be able to do. Content standards focus the education system on common, well-defined goals. They ensure rigorous academic content is being taught and they raise expectations for all students.

Standards are already a familiar part of everyday life. Before acquiring a driver's license, you must demonstrate the skills and knowledge necessary to drive a car. As an employee, you must live up to standards set by your employers to keep your job.

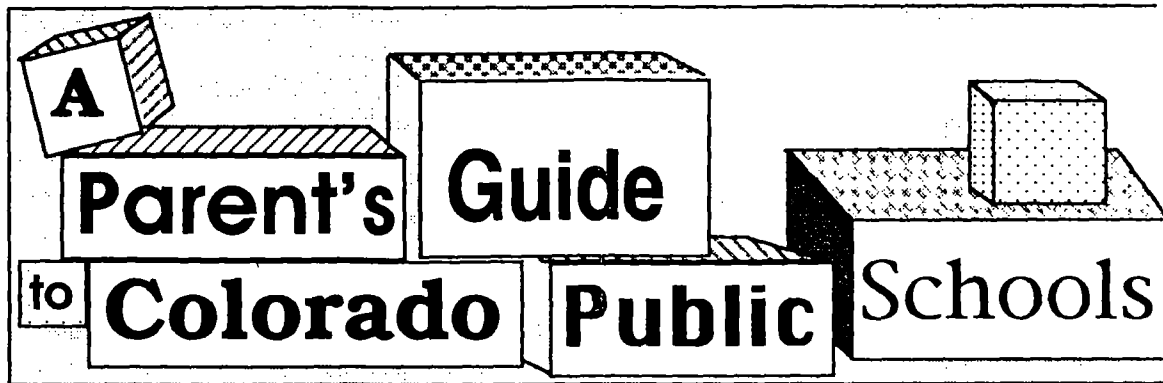
What Content Standards Are Not

Content standards are not curriculum. Decisions regarding local curriculum, teaching materials and instructional approaches will continue to be made by locally elected school boards.

Standards will not "dumb down" current expectations. Because all students will be held to higher expectations, all students should perform at higher levels. Standards are not geared to the lowest common denominator, but rather to quality, excellence and proficiency.

Standards are not broad, fuzzy "outcomes"; they are clear, specific benchmarks against which individual performance and progress can be judged.

Content standards do not represent the totality of what students should learn at school. Districts are encouraged to build other skills, knowledge and perspectives that are important to their communities, and students should have opportunities to explore subjects which interest them in more detail.



A Parent's Guide to Colorado Public Schools

Dear Parent:

Choice. Accountability. Innovation. Nowhere else in America do citizens have more tools to control and remake the public schools than here in Colorado:

- Parents now can choose to send their children to any public school anywhere in Colorado, on a space available basis, without having to pay extra money (for more information and phone numbers you can call, see pages 2-3).
- Parents can influence important decisions at their local school building by serving on local school governing committees (for more information and phone numbers you can call, see page 7).
- Parents can have a say in what is taught in schools by helping to establish standards -- clear statements of what students should know and be able to do in math, science, history and other important subjects. Standards focus schools on results -- giving parents, students, and taxpayers a concrete way to judge instructional programs and measure student progress (for more information and phone numbers you can call, see pages 3-4).
- Any group of parents, teachers or community members who have good ideas and an innovative approach to education can apply to their local district for funds and authority to start a "charter school" (for more information and phone numbers you can call, see pages 2-3).

These tools, and others described in this booklet, give you the power to ensure that your children get the very best education possible. Working together, we can create the kind of public education system that prepares every Colorado child for a future that is productive and filled with opportunity and promise.

The most important ingredient is a parent who cares. Your children need an advocate. Even if you feel you are over your head, no one is better equipped to be an advocate for your children than you. Be persistent and expect great things.

Sincerely,



Roy Romer
Governor

1. You have choices about which school your children attend.

Colorado Charter Schools:

Adams 12 Five Star Schools:

- Academy of Charter Schools
- Charter School for Gifted and Talented Students

Aurora Public Schools:

- The Discovery School

Denver Public Schools:

- Clayton Charter School
- Denver Youth Academy
- Thurgood Marshall Middle School

Douglas County School District:

- Academy Charter School
- Core Knowledge Charter School
- The Renaissance School

Durango 9-R School District:

- The EXCEL School
- Community of Learners

Eagle County School District:

- Eagle County Charter Academy

Jefferson County R-1:

- Community Involved Charter School
- Jefferson Academy
- Sci-Tech Academy

Montezuma-Cortez School District:

- Battle Rock Charter School

Pueblo 60 School District:

- Pueblo School for the Arts and Sciences

Pueblo 70 School District:

- The Connect School

We know that when it comes to education one size does not fit all.

Children learn in different ways and have different learning strengths and interests. Students are more excited about learning and learn more when they are in educational programs that suit their learning styles and special strengths, needs and interests.

To take the best advantage of public school opportunities now available, you need to know about the choices available to you:

Choice. Legislation enacted in 1994 creates open enrollment throughout Colorado. This means that you may enroll your children in any public school in the state, assuming there is space available, without paying extra money. (Because of the desegregation court order in the Denver Public Schools, you should contact the superintendent's office there to find out what choices and options are available.)

Charter Schools. Colorado has eighteen charter schools (see box) and more are under development. Charter schools are public schools created by groups of parents, teachers or community members to reflect different educational approaches or philosophies. These schools are self-governing, enjoy some independence from the local school district, and have a clear plan for how and what students should learn. They are open to all interested students on a space available basis.

Magnet Schools. Many districts offer magnet schools -- also called "focus" or "alternative" schools -- that have specific educational approaches or philosophies. Examples include special-emphasis schools in science or performing arts, as well as Montessori or Waldorf schools that reflect a particular education philosophy. They range from highly-structured schools to open schools. These schools are open to all interested students on a space-available basis. Admission is usually done by lottery.

College Classes. High school students have the opportunity to take college courses or to earn college credit for certain high school classes. These opportunities serve two important purposes: they provide challenging academic experiences for students and they can help reduce the length and expense of college.

Finally, it's important to note that you don't necessarily need to look outside your neighborhood school to have an impact on your children's educational program. You can discuss your child's learning style and special interests with his or her teacher. You can help set the direction for the educational approach in your child's school by getting involved in school committees that help make educational decisions. You also can have an impact on the educational philosophy of the district by voting in school board elections. You can attend and participate in school board meetings and share your ideas and concerns with teachers, principals and school board members. *There are many ways to make your neighborhood school your school of choice.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about these and other choices, first check with your local school district superintendent's office. There may be timelines and procedures for participation that you need to meet and you will want to ask about what arrangements are made for transportation.

Other sources:

Colorado Department of Education: Contact Bill Windler at (303) 866-6631. The department has a resource guide for those interested in starting a charter school. It also can answer questions about Colorado's charter school law and about existing charter schools.

League of Charter Schools: Contact Jim Griffin at (303) 985-7092. The league is a support and advocacy group for existing and proposed charter schools.

Colorado Options in Education: Contact Jim Hennes at (303) 866-6842. This organization can provide information about alternative schools across Colorado.

The Guide to Metro Denver Public Schools: Contact Margerie Hicks at (303) 322-2822. This book provides comprehensive information on 14 Denver metro school districts. Cost is \$11.95.

Your school principal or district superintendent's office can provide information about how students can enroll in college and university classes during high school.

2. You can help ensure your children are learning the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

In Colorado, many decisions, such as those about which textbooks to use and graduation requirements, are set at the local level. Parents can be involved in these decisions by:

- serving on district or school committees;
- voting in school board elections;
- participating on district curriculum-writing or textbook selection teams;
- communicating with principals, administrators or school board members.

In addition, recent reforms give parents and community members input into what is taught at school. Legislation now directs every school district to work with its local community to agree on clear standards for student performance in reading, writing, math, science, history, and geography by January 1997. Standards in art, civics, foreign language, music and physical education will be developed at a later date.

Standards state expectations for student work in core academic areas. Standards will help us judge how well schools are doing and provide information

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Colorado is now developing model standards that will support local district efforts to agree on local standards. Extensive public comment already has been received on two previous drafts of the model standards. A 3rd draft will be distributed in November 1994. If standards are truly to create changes in our schools, they need to represent what we collectively think all students should learn. To get involved in this effort:

- ✓ Contact your school or school district and ask what it is doing to review the draft model standards or to make changes to implement the standards.
- ✓ Get a copy of the third draft of the model standards, due in late November 1994, from your school, local library, or by writing the state Standards and Assessment Council at CS 6, Box 166, 1525 Sherman, Denver, CO 80203-9772.
- ✓ Participate in one of the statewide public hearings to review the proposed model standards in January and February 1995. For a schedule, write the Standards and Assessment Council.

to make improvements. Just as standards in the private sector define what it takes to know or do something well -- such as standards for flying an airplane -- standards for student performance should state clearly what students should be learning in important subject areas. A set of common standards also can ensure equity and accountability in a system, like Colorado's, that offers many different kinds of programs and approaches.

Most important, standards can help you make sure that your children are learning the skills and knowledge they will need to be successful.

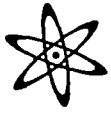
DRAFT

Model K-12 Science Standards



1

Students are able to design, conduct, communicate about, and evaluate a scientific investigation.



2

Students know about and understand common properties, forms, and interactions of matter and energy.



3

Students know the characteristics and structure of living things, the processes of life and how living things interact with their environment.



4

Students understand the processes and interactions of earth's systems, and the structure and dynamics of earth and other objects in space.



5

Students know ways that science, technology and human activity have impact on the world and its resources.



6

Students know about and understand connections among the science disciplines, and the relationship of science to other areas of human activity.

Students know the composition of the earth, its history and the natural processes that shape it.

Students know the general characteristics of the atmosphere and the fundamental processes of weather.

Students know the major sources of water, its uses and importance, and its cyclic patterns of movement through the environment.

Students know the structure of the solar system, the dynamics of the universe, and how space is explored.

By the **4th** grade, a student can:

- Recognize that the sun is a major source of earth's heat and light.
- Observe and describe local weather conditions, such as sunny, windy, and cloudy.
- Recognize how our activities are affected by weather, such as the types of clothing we wear, travel plans, and the kinds of recreation in which we engage.
- Collect and record weather data such as temperature and amount of cloud cover.

By the **8th** grade, a student can:

- Investigate the composition, characteristics, and structure of the atmosphere, such as humidity, temperature, and air pressure.
- Explain how atmospheric circulation is driven by solar heating, which involves radiation, convection, and conduction.
- Describe local and national weather patterns.

By the **12th** grade, a student can:

- Describe the structure of the atmosphere and its significance to life.
- Predict the weather by collecting and analyzing data.
- Explain and predict general weather patterns and storms by describing how energy is transferred to and from the atmosphere by processes and effects such as heat of condensation and evaporative cooling.
- Explain the relationships between natural processes, weather, and climate.

Model standards for school districts to use are being developed in six subject areas. The above example from the draft model science standards shows how standards combine broad goals with specific expectations for student knowledge at the elementary, middle and high school levels.

3. Things you can do that will make a difference in your children's education...

Parent involvement works. Students whose parents are involved in their education are more enthusiastic and confident learners and achieve at higher levels. Schools where parents are involved are more effective at meeting the needs of all children.

Schools can't do it alone. Schools and parents must be partners in education. Here is how you can help:

At Home

Read to your children.

Make sure your children get enough sleep and start the day with a good breakfast.

Monitor TV viewing.

Ask your children what they did in school and they learned.

Know what homework is expected and make sure your children complete it. Provide your children with a regular, quiet place where they can do homework. Be available to answer questions or use the "News4 Homework Hotline" (see phone number on page 7.)

Display school work in your home.

Find out about after-school and summer programs in your community. If they don't exist, help start them.

In the Community

Become a champion for children and for education improvement. Set an example. Then encourage neighbors, friends and family to get involved as well.

Evaluate every elected official's track record in supporting higher standards and better schools.

Monitor and vote in school board elections. Attend your local school board meetings. Find out for yourself what is going on.

Provide an example for your children of community leadership and volunteerism.

Don't accept rumors about the quality of a school system. Ask for real data and information about student performance and progress. Find out if advanced courses are offered and whether students have additional learning opportunities before and after school and during summers.

Don't stop supporting schools when your children are finished with their education. The future of your community and Colorado depends on people like you.

At School

Talk regularly with your children's teacher. Ask for tips about helping your children develop good study habits and about what you can do at home to support learning.

Get involved in the PTA.

Participate in school governing committees or the local school accountability committee. If you don't have time to serve, share your ideas and concerns with the principal or with committee members.

If you have the time, lend a hand. Let the teacher know how much time you have and what talents you can offer.

Attend special school events, back to school nights, and parent-teacher conferences. Make a special effort to attend activities in which your children participate, including plays, concerts, and sporting events.

Expect every child -- not just those considered bright -- to take tough academic courses.

Demonstrate your own commitment to high standards. Don't ask teachers to give your kids grades or promotions they haven't earned.

Support school efforts to maintain discipline. Children need an environment where they know what is expected of them.

For More Information

The **4Parents Hotline** is a free, confidential resource that provides nonmedical support, information and referrals to families on a broad range of issues including child care, community activities, and educational initiatives. It is sponsored by KCNC-TV Channel 4, Community College of Denver, and the Governor's Office. In metro Denver, call 620-4444. In other areas of the state, call 1-800-288-3444.

The **News 4 Homework Hotline** is available to assist students, parents, and teachers with homework. It is sponsored by Channel 4, US West, Colorado National Bank, McDonalds and Denver Public Schools. The hotline is staffed by volunteer teachers and is open from 5:00 - 9:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Call (303) 322-7277.

The **Colorado PTA** actively supports parent involvement in schools. For more advice and information, call (303) 758-3466.

"**Read to Me, Colorado**" is seeking to make sure every child in Colorado is read to every day. The effort is led by Colorado First Lady Bea Romer, Pizza Hut and Rotary Clubs. For information, call your local Pizza Hut or contact the Governor's Office at (303) 866-2155.

The **Colorado Office of Resource and Referral Agencies** is a nonprofit organization that can help you find quality, affordable child care. For information on the CORRA system call (303) 290-9088 or check your phone book for a CORRA number in your area.

Parenting Classes are offered by community groups, hospitals and schools in most communities, many free of charge. Check your local newspapers for a listing of programs or ask your child's teacher.

4. What you should know about your children's school...

Here are some questions that you might ask at parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, in guiding your participation in school governing committees and PTA activities, and in evaluating the performance of school board members:

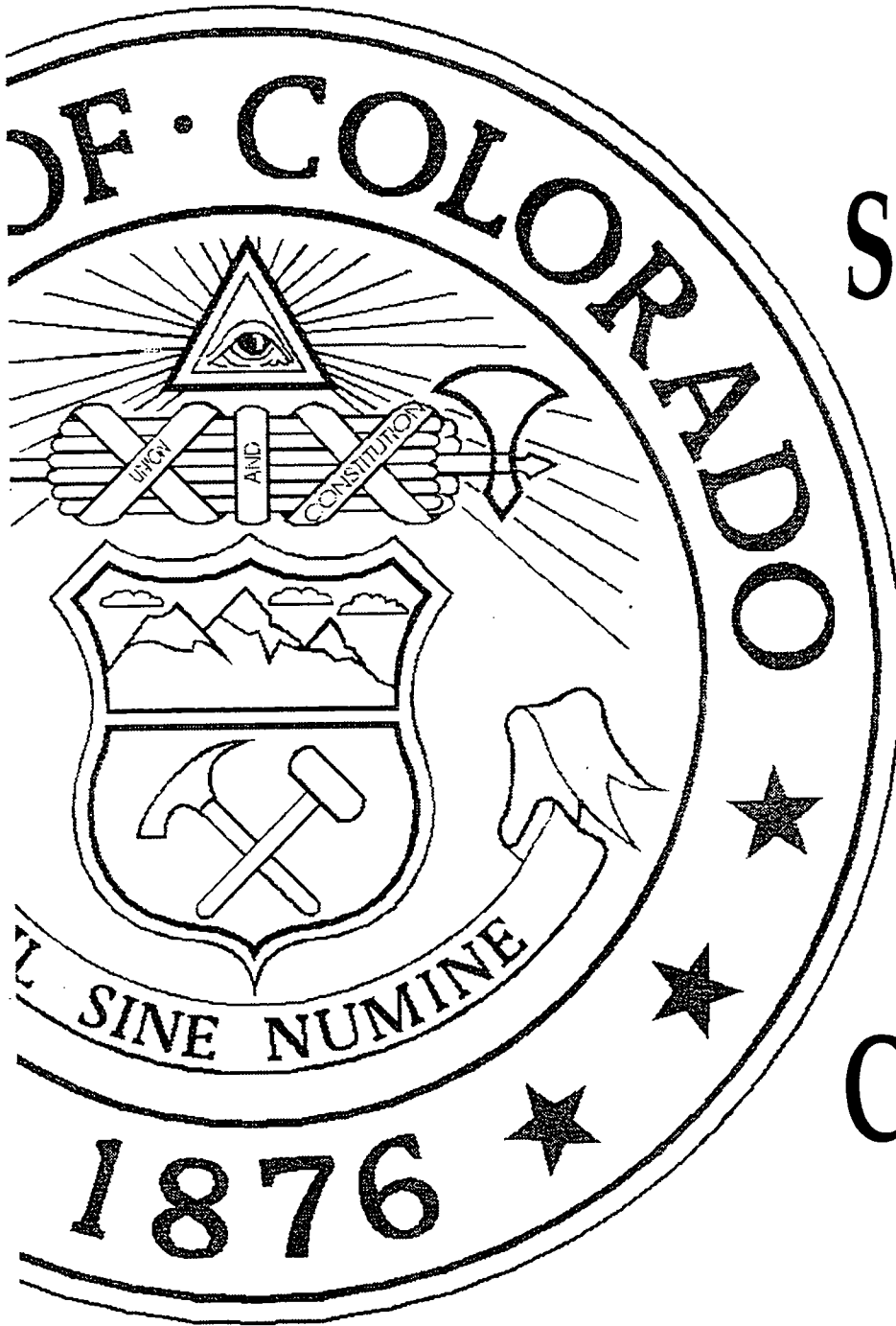
- ✓ *Does your school have standards or clear expectations for its students? Ask what children should know by the fourth grade in math. By the eighth grade. And by graduation. What about in history? English? Science?*
- ✓ *How does your school test to make sure students are attaining these skills and knowledge? What kind of tests are used and why? How do they relate to classroom work?*
- ✓ *What actions does the school take to help students who are falling short of the standards?*
- ✓ *Is your school sensitive to the needs of children from different cultures and backgrounds?*
- ✓ *Are students placed in different classes or groups for different subjects? How are the groups determined?*
- ✓ *What is the school's discipline policy?*
- ✓ *What is the school's homework policy?*
- ✓ *How does the school communicate with parents?*
- ✓ *What opportunities are there for parent involvement in decision making, planning and volunteer activities?*
- ✓ *What after-school and summer programs are available?*

Also ask questions about your individual children:

- ✓ *What are my children's strengths and weaknesses?*
- ✓ *Are my children working up to their potential?*
- ✓ *How do my children get along with classmates?*
- ✓ *Do my children participate in class activities and discussions?*
- ✓ *Have my children missed classes?*

Again, don't give up or give into discouragement. Your children need an advocate. Even if you feel you are over your head, no one is better equipped to be an advocate for your children than you. Be persistent and expect great things.

* Education Agenda Excerpted



A STRATEGIC AGENDA FOR COLORADO

Roy Romer
Governor

January 1995

should redirect some of our expected budget savings in AFDC to communities who will concentrate energy on addressing teen pregnancy issues. The funds would be distributed through a "Request for Proposals" process and distributed using criteria from the Department of Human Services' "Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Action Plan."

* * * * *

To make sure Coloradans of every age gain the skills and knowledge they need, we must take steps to hold our education institutions more accountable for results, create more flexibility and innovation in the education system, and plan for future workforce needs:

Improving the Quality of our Schools

We all know what makes some schools better than others.

- * These schools have high expectations for all students and a rich, rigorous academic curriculum.
- * These schools are accountable to their community -- both for the results they produce and for involving parents and community members in meaningful decisions about what happens at that school.
- * Hallways and classrooms are safe, disciplined and orderly.
- * Teachers are well-qualified, know about the subject they are teaching, and have the classroom skills to help each student learn the material.
- * The "bureaucracy" of the state and district administration doesn't get in the way, funding and other resources are directed to the classroom, and the school is creative in finding the right ways to help its students learn.
- * Important decisions about the school are made at the school and by the community, not by a centralized bureaucracy.
- * Students are excited about learning and challenged by both the teacher and the subject matter to work hard.

The mystery is not about what changes need to happen in our school system. The challenge is about how to make those changes happen in every school. Each child in Colorado should have access to good schools, and we have made much progress in this area. Each year, we have taken careful, deliberate steps to change the way our schools operate and to influence the quality of teaching in the classroom. Colorado student achievement ranks high when compared to other states.

But we are nowhere close to finishing our work. For too many of our children, our schools aren't making a difference. Our graduates as a whole aren't skilled enough. Our drop-out rates are too high. Our test scores aren't increasing fast enough. Our graduation rates are too low -- especially for the most at-risk students in our system. Our schools are locked into an environment with too many rules, too many restrictions, and too little creativity.

We need to raise our expectations -- our standards -- for schools, and we need to hold them accountable for meeting these expectations. Over the long-term, the single most important influence on our schools will be clear standards for performance and a high-quality system of testing and assessment -- which we put into place with House Bill 1313 in 1993. In the coming years, standards will give schools clear targets for student achievement -- raising the skills and knowledge of our students and forcing fundamental changes in the way the school system is organized, held accountable, and managed.

We must continue our work. My agenda to improve the quality of our schools in 1995 includes the following proposals:

1. Maintain our commitment to clear, rigorous standards for student performance. We launched a powerful tool for raising student achievement when we passed House Bill 1313 in 1993. The premise behind the bill is simple: we will never achieve real change in our system unless we state clearly what our expectations are. "Model" standards for school districts to use will soon be completed in core subject areas: reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, and geography. I will oppose efforts to weaken or abandon this approach, as it would send a wrong message to Coloradans who want their schools to be accountable.

2. Eliminate dis-incentives for teacher transfer. People who choose teaching as a career choose one of the most insulated, inflexible careers possible. A high-quality education system should operate in a free market for high-quality teachers. We should eliminate dis-incentives that keep too many teachers in the same job in the same district for their entire careers. Specifically, I propose that we change policies so teachers don't take a salary cut when taking a job in a new district, so benefits from the Public Employees Retirement Association (PERA) and the Denver Public Schools retirement program are transferable, so districts can recruit teachers from other districts at a competitive wage, and so the new master teacher license (now included in the state's new educator licensing regulations) is a transferable license -- good for five years credit and tenure in any district.

3. Invest in the professional expertise of our educators. When we discuss education reform, the focus of our rhetoric and our policies are on raising student performance. But, by demanding more from students, we also are demanding more from educators. We can't have a high-quality education system without high-quality teachers and principals. Every educator needs to have the training, knowledge base, and skills to help all students achieve at higher levels.

I propose we create and fund a new challenge grant program that matches state resources with local districts or groups of districts to provide effective, efficient professional development strategies for their staff. To receive state support, district strategies must be designed to ensure that reform measures are applied in every classroom and that our education professionals have the support they need to be the very best in their profession. I also challenge professional education associations to support these efforts using their own resources and programs.

4. Make necessary changes to improve the operation of charter schools. When we allowed for the creation of charter schools in 1993, we opened a floodgate of local creativity, energy, and commitment to improving schools. Our charter school effort has been a success; with little state support and great local obstacles, Colorado has the highest "per-capita" number of charter schools of any state in the nation. We should monitor this effort carefully and continue to make changes and corrections to ensure its success. In the coming months, I want to work with legislators to review the number of charter schools we now allow, the process for receiving waivers, the use of building space for charter schools, and the financial issues this effort creates for both school districts and charter schools -- and then take any appropriate steps.

5. Focus on results, not regulation. With the implementation of clear standards for student performance in the coming years, we will -- for the first time -- begin holding

our education system accountable for what really matters: student achievement. As such, standards force the school system to operate in an entirely different mode. We therefore should remove the tangle of rules, regulations, and reports that have nothing to do with student achievement.

I support three changes to make our regulatory system results-oriented. First, my Administration has applied to U.S. Secretary of Education for a blanket waiver from a number of federal education regulations, including vocational education and Title I "Even Start" programs. Second, I support legislation which will streamline the process school districts must go through to receive a regulatory waiver from the State Board of Education.

Third, I am open to suggestions for rules and regulations we should abolish immediately for all school districts -- rules and regulations that do not support our goals of student achievement, implementation of standards, and student safety. My suggestions for regulations we could discuss abolishing include all testing requirements (except those specified in H.B. 93-1313); accountability reports to the State Board of Education; school district accreditation; education and licensing requirements to become a principal; size requirements for flags displayed in a classroom; vocational program paperwork; procurement requirements for purchasing school buses; quarterly reports on district budgets; some management responsibilities of principals; and district involvement when students switch districts.

6. Help school districts operate as efficiently as possible. In September, I challenged Colorado's 20 largest school districts -- which together represent over 75 percent of the money spent on K-12 education -- to pursue performance audits of their operations and management. Performance audits don't measure how much money a district is spending and in which categories; rather, they bring in the expertise of an outside firm to find management efficiencies, operational changes, and district duties that can be done at a lower cost. Over the past weeks, we have designed an application and review process, and we should make our first awards shortly. Despite some initial concerns, I have heard from most district and expect nearly all 20 will accept this challenge.

7. De-regulate "unlit" fiber. Telecommunications and state-of-the-art technology can improve the quality of classroom learning and help schools operate at a lower cost. We should make sure "unlit" fiber -- the technical term for fiber optic cables which districts are using to provide distance learning opportunities -- remains affordable and accessible. "Unlit" fiber should not be treated as a regulated service, and we should take whatever legislative action is necessary to ensure it can be offered to districts with preferential rates.

Linking Our Schools to the Work Place

Our schools need to do a better job of preparing students for the world of work. We know that 75 percent of graduates from Colorado's high schools do not go on to earn four-year college degrees -- yet high school curriculum is geared almost exclusively toward the college-bound.

For every available high-skill, high-wage job, Colorado students compete not only against other U.S. students, but against students from other countries. To make sure our students remain competitive, they must have the knowledge, skills, and appropriate work experiences to prepare them for a job after graduation or for additional higher education.

Getting this done will require a new, unprecedented partnership between schools, higher education, and -- most important -- the business community.

Last year, this Administration received a planning grant from the federal government to develop a "school-to-work transition" system in Colorado. I created a steering committee made up of business people, labor representatives, educators, and government officials, and we took this concept to the people of Colorado through a series of eight regional public meetings this past summer.

We must continue our work. My agenda to link our schools to the work place in 1995 includes the following proposals:

1. Finalize our planning effort to design a comprehensive system that provides students a transition from the school to the work place. Based on what it heard at statewide public meetings and the work of several technical task forces, the School-to-Work Steering Committee is preparing a state plan for moving Colorado toward a school-to-work transition system. We will distribute this plan throughout the state for more public input, and then we will submit it to the federal government to receive additional funds for implementation.

Because of her past experience in business and education, I have asked Lt. Gov. Gail Schoettler to provide the necessary direction and oversight to this initiative. Regardless of whether we receive federal aid or not, we intend to make the necessary changes in our state government structures to support a school-to-work system.

2. Support local efforts to create "school-to-work" programs. Using money from our federal planning grant, the Governor's Office has provided seed money to three communities -- based on a competitive grant process -- to develop "career academies" aligned with one of Colorado's growth industries. A career academy is a special-focus program offering students academic and work experiences related to a specific career.

Three school districts were awarded career academy grants. The Sierra Grande School District in Blanca will work with Colorado Digital Labs to expand its student-operated computer manufacturing enterprise. Jefferson County School District will work with Lutheran Medical Center and Red Rocks Community College to develop health career academies at Jefferson and Wheat Ridge high schools. Denver Public Schools will expand its existing Academy of Travel and Tourism and Academy of Finance to serve more students.

Because of the interest shown in this grant program, we should find existing state funds we can redirect to support more career academies and youth apprenticeship programs.

Improving the Quality of Colleges and Universities

We have great challenges before us to continue ensuring that our system of public higher education remains of the same high quality we have grown accustomed to expect.

We need to take seriously the predictions about enrollment growth. Based on the current student population in our middle and high schools, Colorado may see as much as a 20 percent increase in higher education enrollment over the next 10 years. We need to take steps now to plan for this growth -- recognizing that some of our institutions are operating below capacity, while others are bursting at the seams.

We also need to take steps to ensure that a college education at Colorado's public institutions is affordable and valuable to students. Our institutions should provide the highest quality education at a fair price. Citizens should be able to accurately evaluate whether they are getting the educational quality that best fits their needs and provides the best value for their tuition dollar.

My agenda for improving the quality of colleges and universities in 1995 includes the following proposals:

1. Design new ways to hold institutions of higher education responsible for fulfilling the specific mission of their institution. Coloradans should not have to pay for activities that do not support the mission of the institution, and they deserve to know that institutions are providing the best education as efficiently as possible. As a state government, we should define the quality and results we expect from our higher education system, decide which pieces each institution will pursue, and then measure whether each institution is meeting these expectations. Legislators considering this issue over the summer proposed we develop "contracts" with each institution listing out our expectations and linking funding to performance under these contracts. This idea is a different way of doing business as a state, but we shouldn't reject it out of hand. Instead, we should thoughtfully consider how we can make this proposal work.

2. Ensure students can graduate in four-years from a four-year institution. Too many students in Colorado public institutions have difficulty graduating from state institutions within four years. I propose we take steps specifically to ensure that colleges and universities are not the cause of the problem. The University of Colorado at Denver has made this four-year "promise" to its students; we should ask our other institutions to do likewise. As enrollment increases, we cannot afford to subsidize the education of students simply because our institutions are not organized effectively to get students out on time with a quality degree.

Developing a High-Quality Workforce

If we want the best jobs we create through our economic development efforts to go to Coloradans, we must have good institutions of higher learning and good school-to-work transition programs. But we must also ensure that our current workers are given the opportunity to upgrade their skills, so that they are not permanently dislocated when changes alter the scope of their jobs.

Last year, I created the Workforce Coordinating Council in the Governor's Office and appointed representatives from business, labor, education, community-based organizations, and state and local government. The council is charged with developing a comprehensive employment and training plan by July 1, 1995. The plan will include the following components:

- * identify training and employment needs of the Colorado workforce;
- * recommend steps to meet the needs identified;
- * evaluate all state training programs;
- * make recommendations concerning the organizational structure which will best deliver employment and training services; and
- * make recommendations concerning training programs, including apprenticeship and youth apprenticeship programs.

In creating this council, we have taken the first step toward designing a workforce development system that is rational, addresses the needs of workers and employers alike,