



PLEASE SUPPORT

SB 09-123: Healthy Choices Dropout Prevention Program

Overview

Creates a pilot out-of-school program to **enhance academic achievement and physical and mental health of adolescent students to encourage healthy choices and reduce dropout rates**. Allows at-risk middle schools to apply for and receive funds from grants to use for out-of-school programs that incorporate physical exercise, academic assistance, nutrition counseling, mental health counseling and health education.

Bill Sponsors

Senator Williams

Co-sponsors: Senators Sandoval, Hudak, Boyd, Shaffer, Newell, Gibbs, Tapia, Foster, Bacon and Groff

Representative Todd

Co-Sponsor: Representative Solano

Why SB 09-123 is important to Colorado

The objective of this bill is to address disturbing statistics related to the health and dropout rates of Colorado's children, and to encourage our students to make healthy choices as adolescents to stay in school and lead healthy, productive and economically self sufficient lives.

- Colorado's dropout rate is startling. According 2004 data from the Colorado Department of Education and the Colorado Children's Campaign, **Colorado has a graduation rate of 70 percent**. That translates to approximately 16,333 students who do not finish high school.
- Colorado's dropout rate also affects the economy as **non-graduates cost the state economy an estimated \$3.4 billion annually**.
- Data from a 1994 study from the American Journal of Health Promotion shows that a **comprehensive health education and social skills program for high-risk students will improve school and test performance, attendance and school connectedness**. And this success was still apparent six years later.
- A 2007 study conducted by University of Pennsylvania shows a **clear link between obesity and school performance**. The study, published in *Obesity*, looked at the height, weight and absentee records of 1,069 students at nine public schools in Philadelphia. Obese children missed an average of 12.2 days, as compared to 10.1 days for a normal weight student.
- According to the Colorado Children's Campaign, rates of childhood obesity are rising. **In 2005, nearly 29 percent of Colorado children ages 2 to 14 were considered overweight or at-risk for being overweight**.
- **Middle school has repeatedly shown to be the tipping point for at-risk students for a variety of reasons**. By targeting middle school students, these students will be equipped to make healthy choices that will lead to their success – both academically and socially.
- For more research, please visit: <http://www.healthyschoolscolorado.com/>

For More Information Contact

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