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Lt. Governor Barbara O'Brien's Initiatives

Early Childhood

Upon taking office in January 2007, Governor Ritter asked Lieutenant Governor O'Brien to assume leadership for early childhood issues. A stronger, better, higher quality system of early childhood services and programs is one of the legacies they want their administration to leave. Colorado has a long history of partnerships that support early childhood work in this state. Over the past two decades, momentum has grown for Colorado to increase access to, and improve the quality of, programs and services that serve young children and their families. Under the leadership of the Lieutenant Governor, there are explicit efforts to build and link *systems* that will guarantee our early childhood work has long lasting impacts at the state and local levels.

Health and Wellness

Lieutenant Governor Barbara O'Brien brings over 16 years of experience advocating for health care for at-risk children, working to reduce smoking, passing Amendment 35, bringing the State Child Health Plan to Colorado and promoting integrated services from mental health to support for children with special needs. Within "the Colorado Promise" there are commitments to create universal access to health insurance, promote prevention and early intervention, and place an emphasis on wellness. In addition to working with the 208 Commission, Governor Ritter has specifically charged the Lieutenant Governor with promoting health and wellness across the state, being the spokesperson for the Child Health Plan +, increasing the rate of immunizations and informing the public about health policy leading to meaningful change. Lieutenant Governor O'Brien is working to align public resources and government agencies with common goals and promote collaboration between them to increase the health and wellness of all of Colorado's citizens. As Chair of the Governor's P-20 Education Council (preschool - graduate school) the Lieutenant Governor is positioned to emphasize the importance of a wellness agenda within the education system because of the link between physical activity and improved student achievement.