



Trust for
Learning



EARLY **MILESTONES**
COLORADO

MAKING THE CASE FOR IDEAL LEARNING IN COLORADO: QUALITY MATTERS

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND SCHOOL READINESS LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION

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GET TO KNOW YOUR PRESENTERS

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GET TO KNOW YOUR PRESENTERS

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WHAT IS IDEAL LEARNING?

- A term developed by ECE researchers and experts across different learning approaches to create a common language to describe equity-centered learning that focuses on all aspects of a young child's development
- Also referred to as *whole child* or *student-centered learning*



Decision-making reflects a commitment to **equity**

Instruction is **personalized** to acknowledge each child's unique development

Play is an essential element of young children's learning

The **teacher is a guide**, nurturing presence, and co-constructor of knowledge

Children construct knowledge from diverse experiences to make meaning of the world.



Young children and adults learn through **relationships**

The **environment** is intentionally designed to facilitate children's independence, exploration, and interaction

Continuous learning environments support **adult development**

The time of **childhood is valued**

THE SCIENCE OF EARLY LEARNING IS CLEAR AND COMPELLING

- Children learn and grow naturally from birth - they can't help it!
- Strong, stable relationships with families and caregivers are the foundation of brain development
- Racism, poverty, and trauma are harmful to children
- Nurturing environments are protective



A photograph of several young children, likely of diverse ethnicities, holding small green seedlings with soil in their hands. They are smiling and looking at the plants. The image is partially covered by a semi-transparent blue rectangle containing text.

EDUCATORS AGREE EARLY CHILDHOOD IS A UNIQUE DEVELOPMENTAL
PERIOD THAT REQUIRES EXPERT, SENSITIVE TEACHING

- Children learn best through exploration and interaction
 - Play is how children learn, not an add-on
- Children's identities develop early - and we can support every child

MAKING THE CASE FOR IDEAL LEARNING IN COLORADO

- Pressure to increase test scores has led to more teacher-directed, rote instruction with children as young as four years old
- Opportunity to increase impact of universal preschool if more children are enrolled in high-quality programs



IDEAL LEARNING MODELS IN COLORADO

- EL Education (formerly Expeditionary Learning)
- HighScope
- Montessori
- Reggio Emilia-inspired
- Tools of the Mind



WE KNOW THAT FAMILIES OF ALL BACKGROUNDS WANT EARLY LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS THAT SUPPORT
WHOLE-CHILD DEVELOPMENT



YES, PARENTS CARE ABOUT READING AND MATH, BUT THEY ALSO WANT THEIR CHILDREN TO BE **WELL-
ROUNDED, JOYFUL, AND CAPABLE**



PARENTS SEEK **PARTNERS** WHO WILL WORK
WITH THEM TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN
DEVELOP INTO CAPABLE INDIVIDUALS

HIGHLY **DEVELOPMENTAL** AND
PERSONALIZED EARLY LEARNING IS THE
PREFERRED EARLY EDUCATION APPROACH



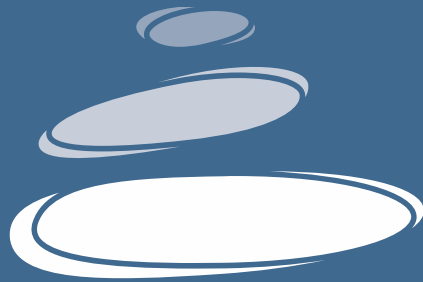
GREATER EMPHASIS MUST BE PLACED ON **ACCESS TO QUALITY** FOR ALL CHILDREN

THE DEFINITION OF *SCHOOL READINESS* IS MUCH LARGER THAN *ACADEMIC PREPAREDNESS*



QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!



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