



Back
arn!

What are you
back for?

the way

ADAMS COUNTY
YOUTH INITIATIVE
cradleto**career**


VOLUME 3 / 2015

Cradle to Career Partnership Report



ACYI'S MISSION STATEMENT

Connecting community partners to ensure our youth excel from cradle through career.

CRADLE TO CAREER OUTCOMES

ACYI, in its role as a national StriveTogether partner, helps community organizations work to improve the lives of Adams County children and youth, from **cradle to career**. This visual roadmap plants signposts at key indicators to point to areas that, with thoughtful and collaborative action, can support the improved outcomes that will make a significant and measurable difference in our students' lives, throughout their entire lives.



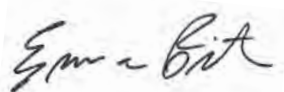
Dear Community Leaders:

Thank you for making 2015 a pivotal year! On behalf of the Adams County Youth Initiative, a **cradletocareer** partnership, we are pleased to present the third annual partnership report. We are proud of our collective work to date, and we're excited to share it with you.

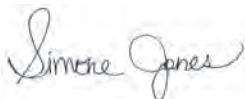
This partnership report is a chronicle of *your success* as members of this collective impact partnership. It interprets a comprehensive collection of student outcome data, highlights the key focus areas from our partnership's efforts, and presents snapshots of influence and impact that are the hallmarks of progress and the power of our collective efforts.

We have learned a lot. And there is more to do. Yet, we are more optimistic than ever that we are poised to scale the success we witness every day. **We are humbled and thankful to work with you and your students.**

Sincerely,



Emma Pinter
Board Chair / City Councilor,
City of Westminster



Simone Jones
Treasurer / 17th Judicial District



Matt Gray
Vice Chair / Attorney,
Butler Snow LLP



Russ Van Houten
Secretary / Former Chief of Police,
City of Northglenn

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Adams County Annual Student Survey

ACYI provides partner school districts with an annual survey administered to students in grades 6-12, and, new this year, to 3rd – 5th graders in five Adams County school districts: Adams 12 Five Star Schools, Adams County School District 14, Westminster Public Schools, Mapleton Public Schools, and School District 27J.

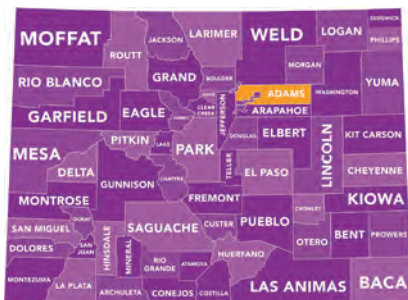
This unique, census-level survey is one of the most comprehensive in the country – with **nearly 27,000 students responding annually and an average 75 percent response rate**. ACYI and its partners use the results to measure population level impact, monitor trends, and identify opportunities for investments that support student success.

“ACYI’s annual Student Survey informs and supports our decision-making around goals that focus on climate and culture in our schools.”

Leslie Vickers
Positive Behavioral Support Coach
School District 27J

Strength in Partnership

Connected. Empowered.



No single organization or program can work in isolation and impact every child **cradletocareer**. The Adams County Youth Initiative provides the leadership and the infrastructure needed to connect and empower leaders and partners from over 75 organizations, including six school districts; eight law enforcement agencies; seven

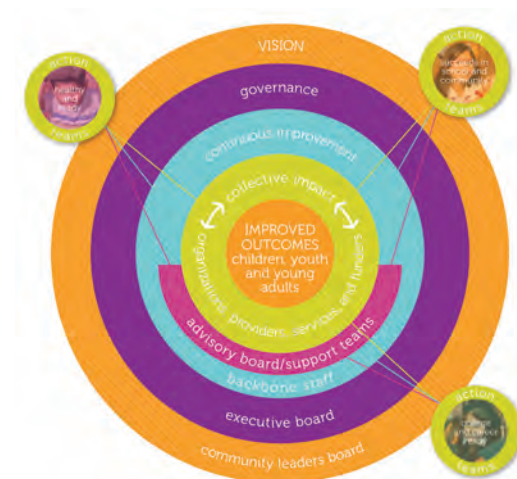
cities; two unincorporated communities; and a broad range of nonprofits, faith-based organizations, businesses, and philanthropists. This strategic alignment significantly increases coordination, reduces duplication, and supports better student outcomes.

ACYI supports partners in order to focus on academic outcomes and utilize data to identify leverage points, so the partnership can share and scale its efforts effectively. Since the organization's founding in 2005, ACYI has helped promote positive progress in overall indicators of child and youth success, and has been highly successful in building a system of deep collaboration and coordination among partners. ACYI is proud that its work is demonstrating positive changes in long-term indicators of youth success, including increased overall high school graduation rates for the last five years.

Infrastructure and Roles

The partnership's efforts are supported by a dedicated backbone staff, a CEO-level community leaders board, a non-profit board of directors, an advisory board, and community partners and members serving on various action teams and committees to guide the work along the **cradletocareer** continuum.

ACYI Accountability Structure



Who and Where are the Children We Serve?



Children and Youth Data

EDUCATION³

High School Graduation Rate:

Adams County: 72.4%
Colorado: 77.3%

ECONOMICS

Children Under 5 Receiving WIC Program vouchers²:

Adams County: 44.3%
Colorado: 34.3%

Children under 18 in Poverty²:

Adams County: 17.5%
Colorado: 16.8%

School Age Children in Poverty²:

Adams County: 16.7%
Colorado: 15.7%

Free/Reduced Meal Rate³:

Adams County: 50.2%
Colorado: 42.2%

OVERALL POPULATION

Adams County population: 480,718
(8.8% increase since 2010 vs 6.3% increase for Colorado)

AGE¹

Under age 5:

Adams County: 36,585 (7.6%)
Colorado: (6.3%)

School Age:

Adams County: 101,431 (21.1%)
Colorado: (17.0%)

Under age 18:

Adams County: 133,159 (27.7%)
Colorado: (23.3%)

HEALTH²

Uninsured Children (0-18):

Adams County: 9.6%
Colorado: 7.0%

RACE/ETHNICITY¹

White (Non-Hispanic/Latino):

Adams County: 51.9%
Colorado: 69.0%

Hispanic/Latino:

Adams County: 38.8%
Colorado: 21.2%

Black or African American:

Adams County: 3.7%
Colorado: 4.5%

American Indian or Alaska Native:

Adams County: 2.1%
Colorado: 1.6%

Asian:

Adams County: 4.1%
Colorado: 3.1%

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander:

Adams County: 0.2%
Colorado: 0.2%

Two or More Races:

Adams County: 2.9%
Colorado: 2.9%



(1) U.S. Census Bureau, 2014; (2) 2015 Kids Count Colorado Report; (3) Colorado Department of Education, 2014-15

National Cradle to Career Movement



ACYI is a member of the **StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network**, a national network of communities working to improve education success for every child through a data-driven, quality collective

impact approach. Connected by their work on the ground, StriveTogether Cradle to Career Network members are committed to sharing knowledge, building upon what works and driving action to improve key outcomes along every child's path to education success. ACYI is the first partnership in Colorado to become a member of the StriveTogether Network.

"With each passing month I am encouraged to see new faces, to see new organizations represented, and to hear new voices contributing to the conversations. This diversity can only help ACYI be more impactful and effective."

Kevin West

ACYI Board of Directors / Director of Intervention Services,
School District 27J

Collective Impact Drives Real Change

ACYI is Guided by the Four Principles for Successful Collective Impact

1. Shared Community Vision

All participants have a shared vision for change, as well as a common understanding of the problem and how we will work collectively to solve it.

2. Evidence-Based Decision Making

Partnerships make decisions based on local data that show areas of need and promising practices that are already working for kids.

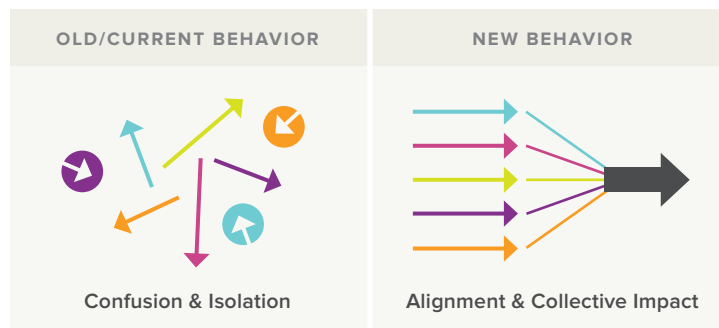
3. Collaborative Action

Community partners come together to collectively move outcomes using continuous improvement practices.

4. Investment and Sustainability

Partnerships initiate or redirect resources (time, talent, and treasure) toward data-based practices on an ongoing basis, and engage the community to ensure long-term sustainability.

Collective Impact Diagram



From Proving to Improving: Fundamentals of Continuous Improvement

ACYI supports the partnership in tackling tough community problems using a continuous improvement framework. Put simply, this means we support flexible and responsive ways to try new strategies, and measure them against the [cradletocareer](#) indicators that define success for students.

Aligning Efforts and Investing in What Works

ACYI provides the infrastructure, coaching, and analytical expertise that is beyond many partner organizations' resources.

ACYI's support empowers partners to remain focused on what works for student outcomes by:

- Focusing on local data, helping to highlight the impact of small tests of change
- Creating short- and long-term goals, framing and prioritizing strategies within a defined scope
- Using real-time data monitoring, abbreviating the time required to finetune efforts
- Shifting focus from programs to processes, and taking action based on results; optimizing partners' success

Continuous Improvement in Action

Action Teams are the “guts” of the Adams County Youth Initiative. Using the **cradletocareer** outcomes to guide their work, Action Teams focus on a specific indicator as a collective force, applying their efforts in a collaborative and constructive way.

Data and Process: Cornerstones of Action Teams

Using data to identify problems and gaps and set baselines, partners then define the scope of a problem and the team’s operating principles. Next, we train key stakeholders in the **Continuous Improvement Model** (“Plan. Do. Study. Act.”), which provides structure to the work. Partners develop a custom data dashboard including process and outcome indicators, to ensure alignment with shared strategies and goals.

Continuous Improvement Model



PLAN

Kickoff Action Team Meeting:

- Create data dashboard
- Define roles
- Brainstorm and prioritize strategies



DO

- Develop Action Plan
- Pass / Fail Action Plan Checklist



STUDY

- Implement Action Plan
- Monitor experiments



ACT

- Review monthly data at action team meetings
- Make improvements to experiments
- Repeat cycle

Ensuring Measurable Outcomes: The Discipline of Action Teams

We know we can’t work on everything all at once, so Action Teams only work on experiments for one indicator at a time, measuring effectiveness in real time. The process allows partners to see WHY outcomes are changing. Opportunities and barriers are clearly illuminated and shared, so partners can act to advance progress toward positive outcomes in short cycles of time.

Reporting: Action Teams Share Results

Results are shared so that the successful strategies and interventions the teams develop can be shared and scaled across the partnership.



Kindergarten Readiness

Kindergarten readiness is a strong predictor of future academic achievement and life success.

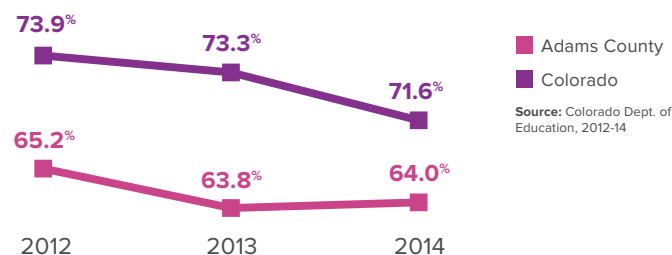
Too Many Children Start Behind

Children's essential early learning of language and how letters form words helps them develop the foundational knowledge that sets the stage for reading, counting, and social interactions. Letter and number recognition, verbal skills and language complexity, empathy, and cooperation are critical readiness skills needed to prepare children for success in kindergarten and beyond. Adams County children are consistently below the state average in reading by the time they get to 3rd grade. (FIGURE 1)

Preparedness for school relies on a wide range of factors including quality early learning, health, and well-being.^[1]

When children start school already behind, they have a lower likelihood of school success, and are at higher risk for dropping out, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and juvenile delinquent behaviors.^[2]

FIGURE 1
Third-Grade Reading Proficiency by Year



High Quality Care and Child Care Assistance

In 2015, Colorado's Governor Hickenlooper put forth a "Wildly Important Goal" for the Colorado Department of Human Services: to ensure that at least 40% of the children participating in the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) for low-income families are attending high-quality preschool/childcare.

This directive recognizes research indicating that **children living in poverty who attend high-quality early learning programs have better academic and social outcomes.** Adams County is reporting increases in children (with CCCAP) enrolled in high-quality preschool/childcare, as well as the number of childcare programs accepting childcare assistance. (FIGURE 2)

FIGURE 2
High-Quality Care and Childcare Assistance

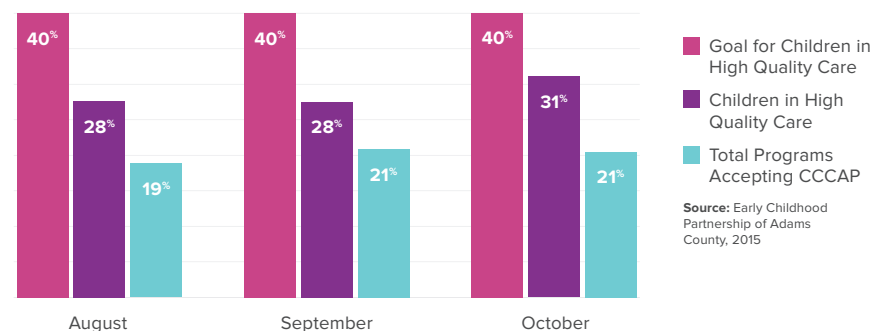
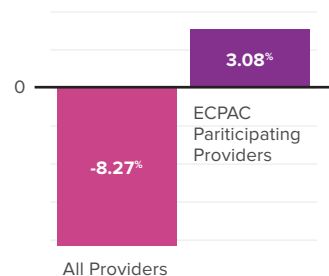


FIGURE 3

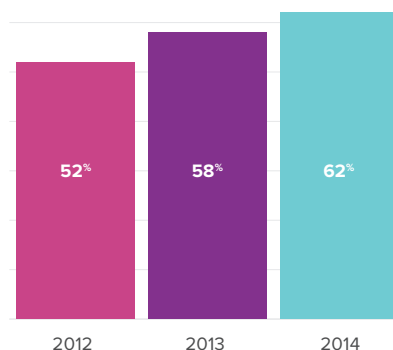
Change in Developmental Referral Follow-through



Source: Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County, 2012-14

FIGURE 4

Developmental Referral Follow-through by Year



Source: Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County, 2015



THE WORK IN ACTION



ECPAC
EARLY CHILDHOOD
PARTNERSHIP
OF ADAMS COUNTY

The Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC) is committed to ensuring that “every child enters school healthy and ready to succeed,” and is currently convening seven Action Teams who are working to address kindergarten readiness by:

- **Raising awareness** and increased knowledge about young child wellness;
- **Analyzing Kindergarten through second-grade literacy data**, preschool assessments (TS GOLD), and parent survey results to inform strategies and efforts based on disparities;
- **Improving coordination and collaboration** across the systems that serve young children and their families, and providing resources for parents/families and community partners;
- **Improving the referral and follow-through to evaluation process** for early intervention (developmental service for children 0-3). Though the follow-through goal is to reach 70% by 2017, ECPAC is making impressive progress: from 52% to 62% in two years (Colorado’s average in 2012 was 69%); (FIGURES 3 & 4)
- **Providing greater access to high-quality childcare and evidence-based programs** for young children and their families (Adams County saw increases in high-quality preschool/childcare enrollment, as well as the number of childcare programs accepting childcare assistance).

The Work Ahead

ECPAC is committed to making evidence-based decisions informed by data whenever possible, and are taking bold steps to monitor progress through all available measures. However, without standardized measurement of kindergarten readiness and literacy for students, it’s difficult to gain a foothold on improvements.

“We appreciate the support ACYI provides our team. Training us in the Continuous Improvement model has helped us be certain, through data, that our community-based strategies are improving children’s readiness for school.”

Lisa Jansen Thompson

ACYI Community Leaders Board / Executive Director
of the Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County (ECPAC)





Third-Grade Reading

Reading at grade level is one of the strongest predictors of later success in school. Literacy, across the **cradletocareer** continuum, is critical to a child's academic success.

From Learning to Read to Reading to Learn

According to researchers, one longitudinal study found that students who do not read at grade level by third grade are four times less likely to graduate from high school on time compared to proficient readers.^[3] In Adams County only **29.7% of 3rd grade students met or exceeded literacy standards** on the 2015 PARCC assessment (8.5% lower than the state average).

(FIGURE 5)

A New Yardstick to Measure Progress

Last Spring, the Colorado Department of Education released the first year of testing results from the new state assessments in English language arts and math. Going forward, ACYI will use these findings (PARCC tests) as our baseline. ACYI will provide the tools, resources and professional learning opportunities needed so that our students' performance will continually improve.

Attendance is Critical to Success

In addition, chronic absence is a critical factor in grade level reading. We compared reading proficiency scores in the 2014 TCAP assessment against chronic absences in 0-3 quarters preceding the assessment and **found that students are drastically less likely to be proficient when they miss too much time in the classroom.** (FIGURE 6)

Partners are working to recognize and celebrate good or improved attendance, inform and engage students and parents, monitor data, provide personalized early outreach and develop programmatic response to barriers. ACYI is supporting school and district level teams and community partners to identify proven interventions and strategies to increase school attendance, including mentoring and afterschool / summer efforts.

**ONLY 29.7% OF 3RD
GRADE STUDENTS
MET OR EXCEEDED
LITERACY STANDARDS**



FIGURE 5
3rd Grade Reading Performance

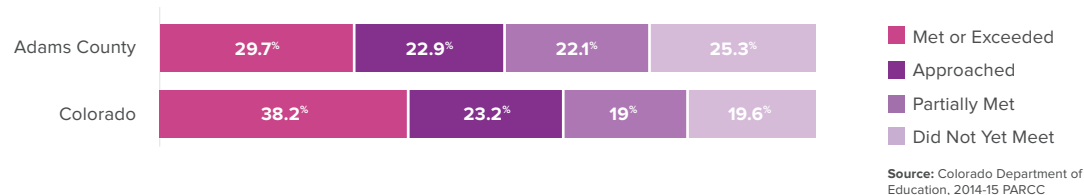
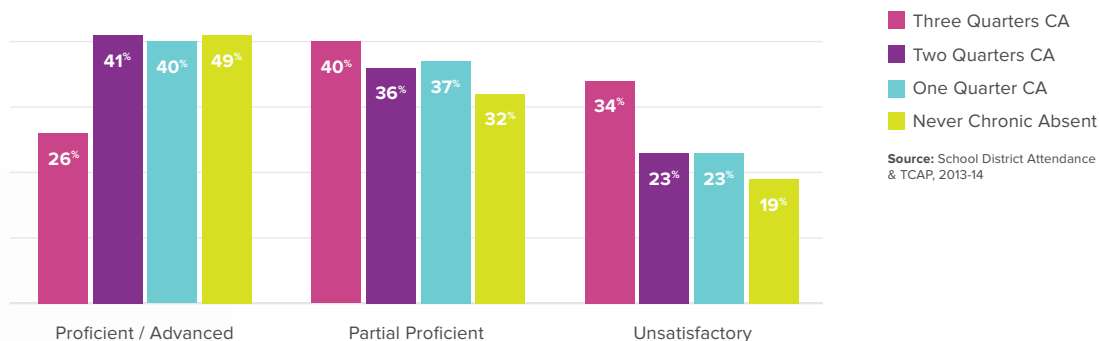


FIGURE 6
Reading Proficiency by Chronic Absence



The Work Ahead

Our local Partnership is a member of the **Grade Level Reading Campaign**, which contends that schools cannot succeed alone and provides support and best practices to help remove barriers, expand opportunities, and assist parents in the success of their children. Along with supporting school attendance, the Partnership is committed to achieving 3rd grade reading proficiency for all students by aligning efforts from early childhood, addressing summer learning loss, and identifying parent engagement efforts that support reading success.

We are gaining momentum and support from community partners by continually gathering data, supporting community efforts around these goals, and scaling the ideas that work.



THE WORK IN ACTION

Thornton Elementary School

In September, the team at **Thornton Elementary** hosted the community leaders and family school attendance awareness month breakfast where elected officials, community leaders, and parents gathered to commit to focusing on attendance. ACYI met with the school team to identify current strategies and interventions, monitor progress, and adjust efforts as needed.

The school administered a survey to parents in which they rated several causes of absence based on how much of a problem it was for their family. Illness and doctor appointments arose as the top causes of absence, followed by family emergencies and vacations, and transportation problems.



Eighth-Grade Math

Eighth-grade math proficiency is an important milestone leading up to high school persistence, academic achievement, college attainment, and general preparedness for the workforce.

Strong Predictor for College Enrollment

Middle grade mathematics provide both a sense of mathematical and intellectual achievement, as there is a strong link between mathematics curriculum and college enrollment.^[4] In Adams County, **only 23.8% of eighth graders met or exceeded expectations on the 2015 PARCC math assessment** (Colorado Department of Education). (FIGURE 7)

A New Yardstick to Measure Progress

Last spring, the Colorado Department of Education released the first year of testing results from the new state assessments in English language arts and math. As with third grade literacy, going forward ACYI will also use these findings (PARCC tests) as our new baseline for eighth grade math. ACYI will provide the tools, resources, and professional learning opportunities needed by our partners to continually improve our students' performance.

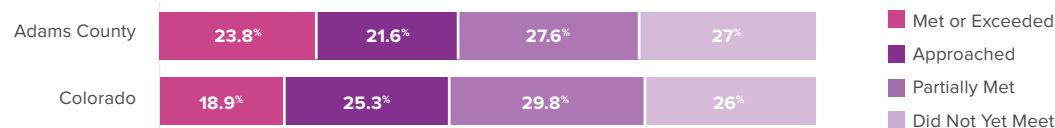
Relationships Matter

When young people are encouraged and supported by positive adult role models, it has a huge impact on their self-esteem, motivation, and academic success. ACYI leads the Caring Adult Network Mentoring Action Team, which helps mentoring agencies increase their capacity to provide crucial adult support, knowing what a game-changer it can be for future academic persistence and career success. Additionally, significant efforts are being made to help partners collect and evaluate student-level data to measure the impact of this work as it relates to student outcomes including attendance and grades. Based on results from the Adams County Student Survey (FIGURE 8), students who report that they do not have a caring adult outside of home or school are much **more likely** to engage in risky/problem behavior, while also **less likely** to report positive goals and social/emotional well-being.

(FIGURES 8 & 9)

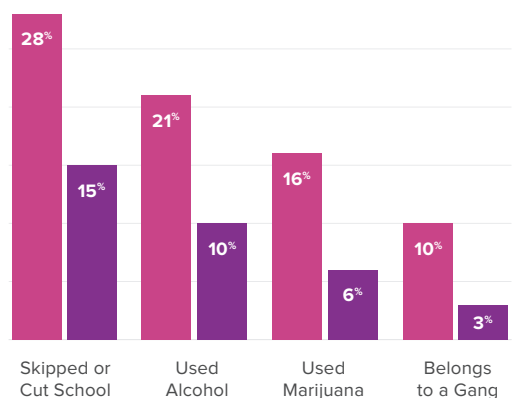


FIGURE 7
Eighth-Grade Math Performance



Source: Colorado Department of Education, 2014-15

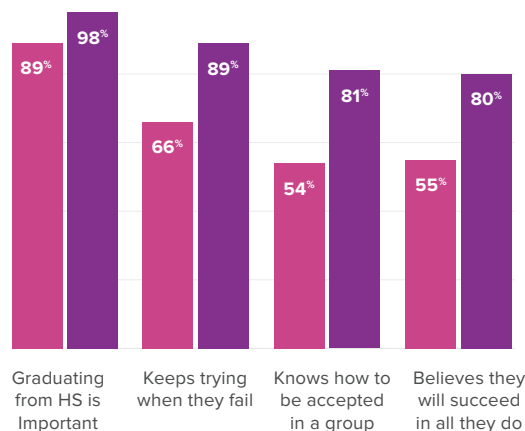
FIGURE 8
Risk Behavior
With / Without Caring Adults



■ Does NOT have caring adult ■ Does have caring adult

Source: 2014-15 Adams County Student Survey

FIGURE 9
Positive Goals and Well-being
With / Without Caring Adults



■ Does NOT have caring adult ■ Does have caring adult

Source: 2014-15 Adams County Student Survey

The Work Ahead

First, we need more mentors! To learn how to become a mentor within our partnership (serving the 17th Judicial District – Adams and Broomfield Counties) visit www.acyi.org/mentoring to complete an online application and one of our quality mentoring programs will connect with you. Second, ACYI will be working with a new “Change Agent Team” of math teachers and leaders from School District 27J who are willing to take a deeper dive into Continuous Improvement to identify the practices and interventions that will have a positive impact on eighth-grade math proficiency.



THE WORK IN ACTION



Save Our Youth Mentors Make a Difference

Michele and Amber were matched two years ago through Save Our Youth. They enjoy spending time together working with horses, going to the park, and grabbing a snack.

“A struggle I have faced was with making friends, because I’m extremely shy. My mentor, Michele, is very nice. She’s a lot of fun to be around, and she’s extremely funny sometimes. My favorite part of Save Our Youth is being able to get out and do fun stuff with my mentor each week.”

Amber, Mentee, age 14

Common Vision Scorecard

ACYI is committed to monitoring and reporting annual **cradletocareer** indicators at the population level: broken down by gender, race/ethnicity, and economic disadvantage.

It's our long-term goal to continually advocate for improved access to this critical information. This scorecard contains all currently available data breakdowns. Because the CMAS/PARCC assessment was new to Colorado in 2015, the Colorado Department of Education can only provide overall numbers for third-grade reading and eighth-grade math.

Core Indicators

INDICATOR	MEASURE / DATA SOURCE	BASELINE YEAR*	YEAR ONE	CURRENT REPORTING YEAR	CHANGE FROM BASELINE	MINORITY STUDENTS (NON-WHITE)	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
Kindergarten Readiness	<i>The state of Colorado does not currently have a standardized measure for kindergarten readiness. Baseline will be established when data become available</i>						
Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectation				2014-15*	CHANGE FROM BASELINE	MINORITY STUDENTS (NON-WHITE)	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
3rd Grade Reading	CMAS/PARCC (CDE2014-15)	N/A	N/A	29.7%	N/A	TBA	N/A
8th Grade Math	CMAS/PARCC (CDE, 2014-15)	N/A	N/A	23.9%	N/A	TBA	N/A
Graduation Rate		2013	2014	2015	CHANGE FROM BASELINE	MINORITY STUDENTS (NON-WHITE)	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
High School Graduation	CDE, Class of 2015	69.6%	70.0%	71.7%	+6.0%	59.8%	+1.7% ↑
Post-secondary Indicators		2011	2012	2013	CHANGE FROM BASELINE	MINORITY STUDENTS (NON-WHITE)	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
Post-secondary Enrollment	One-year Enrollment: (CDHE, Class of 2013)	45.6%	44.5%	43.4%	-2.2%	37.3%	-1.1% ↓
Post-secondary Completion	Six-year Completion: (CDHE, Class of 2009)	N/A	N/A	21.1%	N/A	16.0%	N/A

DATA SOURCE KEY

CDE	Colorado Dept. of Education	ACSS	Adams County Student Survey	TBA	Indicator data not available for 2014-15 Reporting year
CDHE	Colorado Dept. of Higher Education	CBI	Colorado Bureau of Investigation	N/A	Breakdown not available, or change from Baseline Not Applicable

*Denotes Baseline year for indicators that were set in Year One or Current Year

Monitored Indicators

INDICATOR	MEASURE / DATA SOURCE	BASELINE YEAR*	YEAR ONE	CURRENT REPORTING YEAR	CHANGE FROM BASELINE	MINORITY STUDENTS (NON-WHITE)	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
Percent of Students Absent 10% or More School Days			2014*	2015	CHANGE FROM BASELINE	MINORITY STUDENTS (NON-WHITE)	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
Chronic Absentee Rates (School District Data, 2014-15)	Kindergarten	N/A	19.9%	17.9%	-2.0%	N/A	-2.0% ↓
	Elementary School	N/A	12.6%	13.4%	+0.8%	N/A	+0.8% ↑
	Middle School	N/A	20.1%	19.2%	-0.9%	N/A	-0.9% ↓
	High School	N/A	33.3%	31.5%	-1.8%	N/A	-1.8% ↓
Risk Factors and Protective Factors		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	CHANGE FROM BASELINE	MINORITY STUDENTS (NON-WHITE)	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
Adult Support (ACSS, 2014-15)	9th Grade: % With Caring Adult Outside of Home/School	75.1%	80.7%	79.2%	+4.1%	77.3%	-1.5% ↓
Substance Use (ACSS, 2014-15)	11th Grade % Reporting Alcohol Use	44.2%	35.7%	34.9%	-9.3%	36.0%	-0.8% ↓
	11th Grade % Reporting Marijuana Use	29.8%	27.1%	25.6%	-4.0%	28.4%	-1.5% ↓
Juvenile Crime	Juvenile Arrests (CBI, 2014)	4848	3979	3947	-901	N/A	-32 ↓
	District Filings (17th Judicial District, 2014-15)	589	528	569	-20	N/A	+41 ↑
Post-secondary Readiness		2012	2013	2014	CHANGE FROM BASELINE	MINORITY STUDENTS (NON-WHITE)	CHANGE FROM PREVIOUS YEAR
Post-secondary Readiness	11th Grade Colorado ACT Composite (CDHE 2014)	18.4	18.3	18.6	+0.2	N/A	+0.3 ↑
	FAFSA Completion (CDHE, 2014-15)	43.4%	42.3%	43.8%	+0.4%	N/A	+0.4% ↑
	Postsecondary Remediation (CDHE, Class of 2013)	43.7%	44.3%	40.8%	-2.9%	N/A	-2.9% ↓



School Safety

We continue to work together throughout all of our partnerships to ensure that students feel safe at school - as we know, students cannot learn if they are not safe.



Safety is a Priority

ACYI continues to convene with and support school districts, law enforcement, and community partners to maintain the Adams County School Emergency Plan, developed by key stakeholders in 2010. This comprehensive, countywide plan is the go-to resource for a unified emergency response model that is made up of preventing, preparing, planning, responding, and recovering.

“The support of ACYI in the development of a system-wide emergency response plan was critical in bringing together a disjointed process which had created a severe gap in response protocols.”

Jon VanZandt

Commander, Adams County Sheriff's Office

Community Engagement Starts with Families

A crucial element embedded in the work of each partnership is to authentically engage the community - especially parents and family members.

A Collaborative Approach to Family Engagement

ACYI and ECPAC, with community partners, developed a collaborative approach to increase parent and family engagement across the partnership. Starting with identifying current efforts, ACYI conducted a partner scan of family classes and leadership opportunities so as to measure increased participation and engagement in the future. The partnership will continue to identify and address barriers to engagement and empowerment.

The Work in Action

ACYI supports The Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI), a family civics program where graduates **spend more than 120 hours to develop skills needed to become effective leaders** in their communities. Skills include personal and child development, leadership training, civic literacy, and civic participation skills. The curriculum focuses on the change process, developing relevant skills, understanding the tools of civic engagement, and creating a community project. A monolingual Spanish class was hosted by Adams County School District 14 in the 2015-2016 school year.



High School Graduation

High school graduation is associated with higher earnings, college attendance and graduation, and other measures of personal and social welfare.

The Critical Path to a Living Wage

As college education increasingly becomes a necessity for upward mobility, graduating more students from high school is critical. Over a lifetime, high school graduates earn over half a million dollars more than their counterparts without a diploma. High school dropout rates also correlate strongly with poverty; **high school dropouts are almost twice as likely to live in poverty as high school graduates.**^[5]

Risk Factors Influence Graduation Rates

There are many academic and social-emotional factors that contribute to students' likelihood of successfully completing high school. Positive outcomes are more likely when students feel supported by adults at home, at school, and outside of home/school; when their social/emotional well-being is supported and they feel connected and safe at school; and when they feel that obtaining a high school degree is important. On the other hand, a series of risk factors can stand in the way of graduation – including substance use, crime and juvenile delinquency, truancy/poor attendance, and lack of adult support.

Protective Factors Have Positive Impact

Adams County high school students who report that it is **NOT** important to them to graduate from high school are much more likely to also report substance use and truancy, and less likely to report protective factors such as support of adults, belief in their ability to succeed, and engagement in after-school activities.

(FIGURE 10)

Graduation Rates Continue to Improve

In 2015, Adams County saw a 1.7% increase in high school graduation (71.7% vs. 70.0% in 2014). **While still below Colorado's average, Adams County is closing the gap – improving in each of the past five years for a total change of 9.3% since 2010 (almost double the 4.9% statewide increase during the same timespan).**

(FIGURE 11)



FIGURE 10

Risk and Protective Factors / Graduation Goals

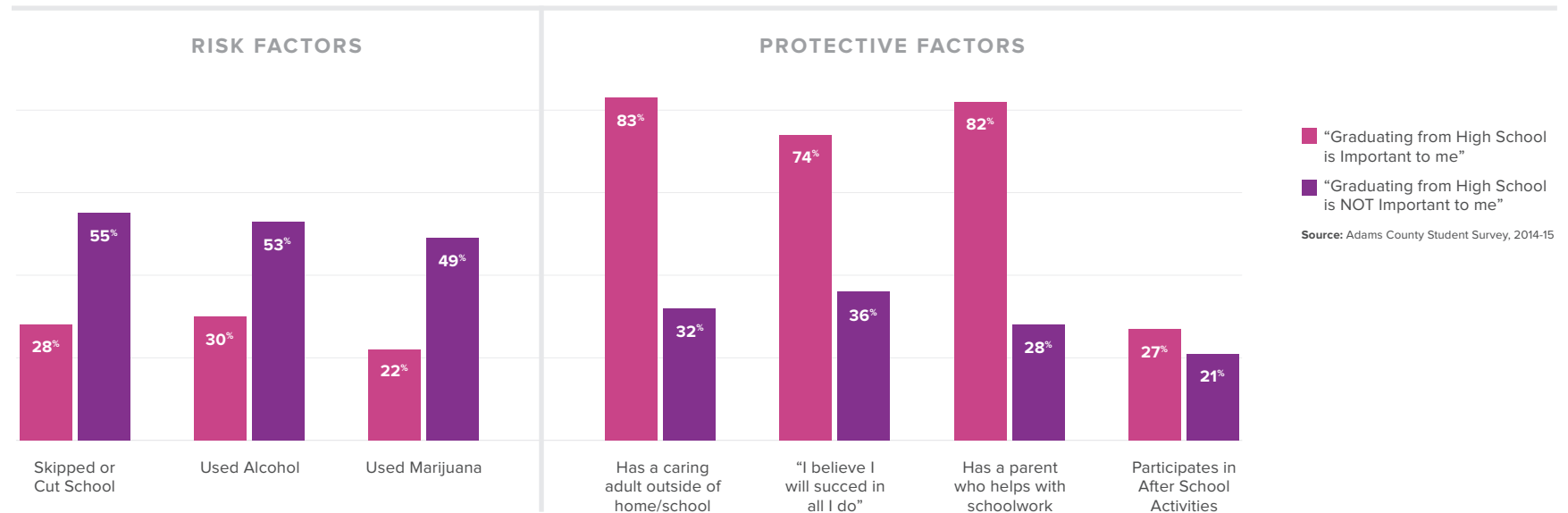
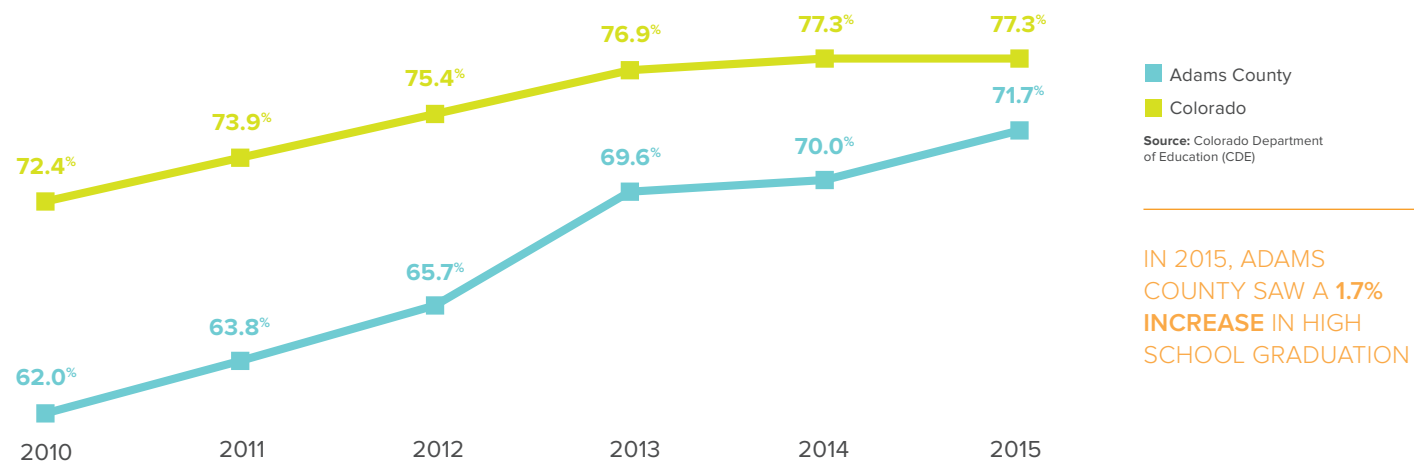


FIGURE 11

Graduation Rates by Year







High School Graduation

CONTINUED



Supporting Students

In 2015, ACYI partnered with **Community Reach Center (CRC)** to launch a program providing prevention and early intervention services for middle and high school students who are exposed to, or beginning to engage in, risky behaviors that could cause serious disruptive consequences. The program supports student resiliency, substance use refusal skills, healthy decision-making skills, and academic achievement. School partners select from a variety of evidenced-based wellness classes that are tailored to fit adolescent needs. Individual coaching focuses on brief goal setting interventions that support youth success. One staff member shared, “I can see many of our students feeling more in control of their experiences and in their abilities to impact their own futures.”

The Work Ahead

As the culmination of the early childhood through secondary education pipeline, high school graduation is a marker of the success of our partnership’s efforts. ACYI will continue to support the partnership’s capacity to identify, share, and scale the strategies and interventions that improve outcomes across this spectrum. Specifically, ACYI will be working with two new Change Agent Teams at Horizon and Thornton High Schools who are willing to take a deeper dive into Continuous Improvement to positively impact high school graduation rates.



THE WORK IN ACTION

Since ACYI’s beginning in 2005, **we consider high school graduation rates the key outcome of measuring student and partnership success.** Building on this history and focus, the work of the partnership continues to increase the support and connection students must feel to overcome risk factors and successfully graduate.

Focusing on and monitoring ninth-grade attendance, risk and protective factors, juvenile crime, connectedness to adults/mentoring (home, school, and community), and social and emotional well-being, our partnership continues to take a “whole student” approach to improving the likelihood of successfully completing high school.



Post-secondary Enrollment

Post-secondary enrollment marks one of the critical transitions in the **cradletocareer** pipeline; however, too few students reach this milestone.

Critical for Success in the Knowledge Economy

College attainment not only translates to higher income, but is also linked to improved health and longer lifespan, lower instances of child abuse, lower rates of criminal behavior, and fewer teen pregnancies among children of college-educated parents.^[6] Post-secondary credentials are not limited to four-year universities; two-year programs and technical certifications are also valuable. **By 2018, over 60% of jobs will require some level of post-secondary education.**^[7]

Leaks in the “Pipeline”

Beginning long before they step onto a college campus, helping students understand the hurdles they’ll face - and how to overcome them - requires guidance and support. In examining Adams County Districts’ 2009 graduates (from entering ninth grade, through six years post-high school), we find that 68.1% of students graduated from high school, 41.8% enrolled in post-secondary education, and only 14.4% of all students obtained a credential or degree (21.1% of those who did graduate from high school). Of the 5,349 students in the cohort, only 518 Bachelor’s degrees and 12 Master’s degrees were attained. (FIGURE 12)

Readiness, Access, and Persistence

In each year between 2012 and 2014, Adams County students have scored below the state average on the ACT assessment, (FIGURE 13) and have also remained below the state average rate of on-time high school graduation (70% vs. 77% in 2014). In addition, **only 43.8% of seniors completed a FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).** (FIGURE 14)

The Work Ahead

The partnership is committed to making evidence based decisions informed by data whenever possible, and is taking bold steps to identify these effective strategies. In order to address the leaking pipeline, we are exploring increased capacity for interventions such as mentoring, transition plans, family engagement efforts, and summer melt programs.

BY 2018, OVER 60% OF JOBS WILL REQUIRE SOME LEVEL OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION



FIGURE 12
The Post-secondary Pipeline

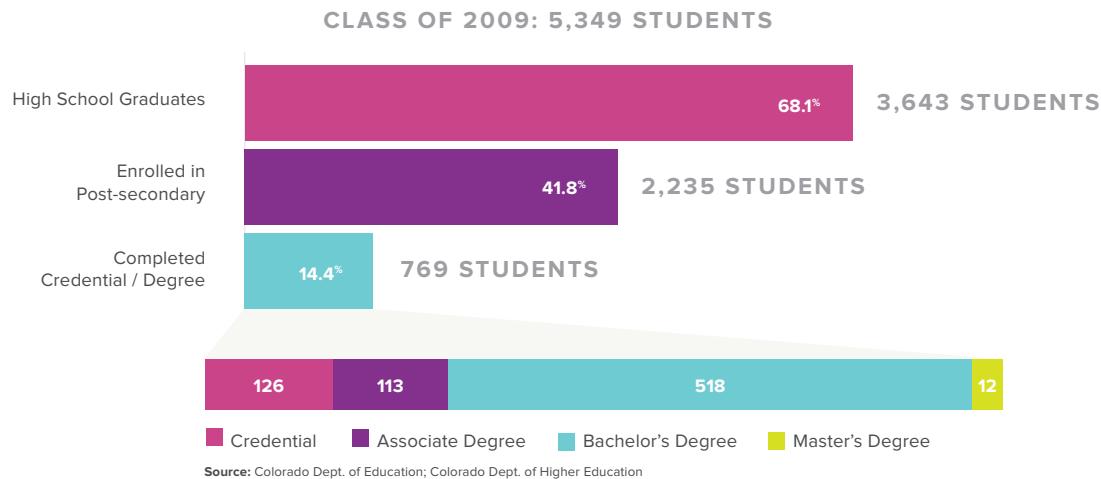


FIGURE 13
ACT Composite Scores by Year

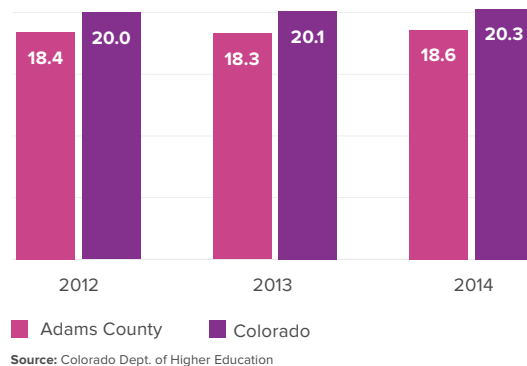
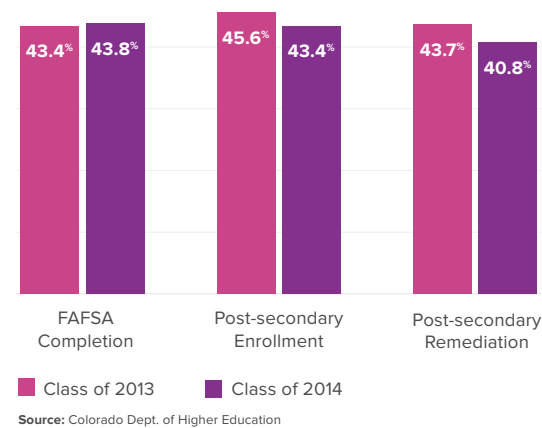


FIGURE 14
Financial Aid, Enrollment, and Remediation



THE WORK IN ACTION

Key partners like the **Adams County Education Consortium (ACEC)** agree that while there are a multitude of resources, programs, and options available to students in high schools related to post-secondary enrollment, many students fail to utilize them. The partnership is working to better align the network to help close this attainment gap.

Adams County Education Consortium's 8th Grade Career Expo

The ACEC Career Expo is a one-of-a-kind career fair designed to get eighth-grade youth thinking about their future education and career goals. This annual event provides more than 5,000 Adams County students access to more than 100 professionals in their industries of interest. The event not only opens students' minds to the possibilities of their future and the classes needed now to prepare for that future, but helps them learn critical, soft skills that will help them in their future job searches.

Many Hands Make Light Work

We all play important roles in improved outcomes for children and youth. We extend our warmest thanks to those who have so generously given their time and talent towards our common goal.

Board of Directors*

Role: Lead Governance and Finance

Don Cassata, Community Member
Ron Gallardo, Education Consultant
Matt Gray, Attorney, Butler Snow LLP, Vice Chair
Jan James, Adams County Human Services
Simone Jones, Courts, 17th Judicial District, Treasurer
Matthew La Crue, L&B Strategies, LLC
Tamara Player, Community Reach Center
Emma Pinter, City of Westminster, Chair
Randy Roberts, Triple Peak Ventures
Russ Van Houten, Community Member, Secretary
Kevin West, School District 27J

Community Leader's Board*

Role: Advance Vision and Policy

Frankie Angulo-Olaiz, Mile High United Way
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Gina Casias, CenturyLink
Kelly Corbett, School District 27J
Mike Crawford, Mapleton Public Schools
Gary Creager, City of Broomfield
John Douglas, Tri-County Health Department
James Duffy, Westminster Public Schools
Chris Gdowski, Adams 12 Five Star Schools
Jane Goff, Colorado State Board of Education
Chuck Gross, Adams County Education Consortium
Lisa Jansen-Thompson, Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County
Dafna Michaelson Jenet, Journey Institute
Valorie Ladwig, The Link
Janet Lopez, Rose Community Foundation
Jim May, City of Northglenn

Randy McCall, Key Bank
Michael McIntosh, Adams County Sheriff's Office
Jenifer Morgen, 17th Judicial District
Kyle Mullica, City of Northglenn
Randy Nelson, City of Thornton
Tim O'Brien, North Suburban Medical Center
Don Quick, 17th Judicial District
Tawnya Russell, City of Brighton
Louis Salazar, ConocoPhillips
Pam Sandlian-Smith, Anythink Libraries
Kim Skattum, Crossroads Church
Troy Smith, City of Commerce City
Kandy Steel, Adams County School District 14
Paul Targoff, Senate Bill 94
Chaz Tedesco, Adams County Government
Kristin Todd, The Daniels Fund
Karl Wilmes, City of Federal Heights
Dave Young, 17th Judicial District

Action Team Chairs / Leads

Role: Execute Continuous Improvement

Kindergarten Readiness:
Rebecca Wilson, Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County

Family Engagement:
Rachel Hubbard & Rebeca Snowden, Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County

School Attendance:
Julie Small, School District 27J; **Tony Streno**, Westminster Public Schools; **Connie Salas and Desiree Quintanilla**, Adams 12 Five Star Schools; **Donna Clifford**, Mapleton Public Schools; and **Melba Velazquez**, Adams County District 14.

Programs

Caring Adult Network / Mentoring Partners

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Colorado
Boys and Girls Club of Metro Denver
CASA of Adams and Broomfield Counties
Juvenile Justice Ministry
Metro Partners
Save Our Youth Mentoring
Senior Hub - SWAT
Young Life of Broomfield and Adams County

Family Leadership Training Institute:
Chris Duran & Celia Reyes-Martinez, Adams County School District 14

I'm Going Places - Starting Line:
Beckah Terlouw, Stephanie John, and Aaron Cordova, Community Reach Center

Host Agency:
Adams 12 Five Star Schools

Communication and Marketing Support:
Jami Fassett, Brittany Hass, Chad Scroggins, Anne Tengler, Up & Up Creative

Strategic Planning:
Jennifer Schroeder and Lane Volpe, The Implementation Group

Grant Writing Support:
Lisa O'Dell Davis, LOD Consulting

Advisory Board*

Role: Alignment and Implementation

Darcy Brown, School District 27J
Ruben Chacon, Adams County School District 14
Ellen Duran, North Suburban Medical Center
Keith Evans, City of Thornton
Michele Gerbrandt, Crossroads Church
Fran Gomez, City of Commerce City
Dee Dee Green, Adams County Human Services
Joanne Holden, Tri-County Health Department
Rachel Hubbard, Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County
Levon Hupfer, 17th Judicial District
Stephanie John, Community Reach Center
Ashley Maloney, Front Range Community College
Lonnie Metz, The Link
Jenni Murphy, City of Northglenn
Andrea Nelson, The Daniels Fund
Julie Small, School District 27J
Johnny Terrell, Adams 12 Five Star Schools
Sue-Lin Toussaint, Mapleton Public Schools
Don Vallero, City of Federal Heights
Jon Van Zandt, Adams County Sheriff's Office
Rebecca Wilson, Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County

**Updated as of February 2016*

Community Investment, Shared Vision

We thank the 2015 investors who share and support our vision — every child **cradle**to**career**.

Foundations / Grants



Anschutz
Foundation

Adams County Community
& Neighborhood Resources
Human Services Agency



Partner Contributions

Adams 12 Five Star Schools
Adams County School District 14
Adams County Sheriff's Office
City of Brighton
City of Commerce City

City of Federal Heights
City of Northglenn
City of Thornton
City of Westminster
Crossroads Church

Front Range Community College
Mapleton Public Schools
School District 27J

Individuals/Family

Thomas Butts
David Canfield
Gina Casias
Don Cassata
Lisa O'Dell Davis
Vicki Esposito
Chris & Carolyn Gdowski
Jane Goff
Matt Gray
Roger & Shirley Gudenklau

Tina Jachett
Janis James
Simone Jones
Matt La Crue
Valorie Ladwig
Mary Litwiler
Harold Nylander
Timothy O'Brien
Emma Pinter
Todd & Tamara Player

Kathy Plomer
Mark Poshak
Kenneth Robinson
Kim Snetzinger
Kristin Todd
Russ Van Houten
Janet Lopez Vilsack
Susan Waldman
Kevin West

*"We love the collaborative
nature of your work and the
strong leadership from many
community partners."*

Kristin Todd

ACYI Community Leaders Board Member /
Vice President, Daniels Fund

The Work Ahead

Plan. Do. Study. Act.

Plan: Lay the Groundwork for Change

ACYI is proud to work with over 75 organizations who share the Community Vision of supporting “EVERY child **cradleto**to**career**.” ACYI is committed to eliminating disparities in achievement for all students, and we have deliberately included equity as a guiding principle in all we do. Disaggregating data for students living in poverty or students of color is a start - we are working to promote and model these courageous conversations to ensure that our partnership is moving outcomes.

Do: Build a Culture of Continuous Improvement

ACYI supports the partnership in its efforts to fully embrace the Continuous Improvement framework. We have learned that we need to be mindful of increasing the readiness and capacity of individual partners and organizations, whom we call Change Agents, who are willing, interested, and motivated to act within the Continuous Improvement framework.

Study: Understand Why Outcomes Change, in Real Time

Until all kids are obtaining **cradleto**to**career** success, we have a responsibility to remain curious about what works for student success, to continue to ask ourselves better questions, and to be a community of action. We heard you – SEEING the fruits of our labor, and SHARING the power of quality collective impact will help us all sustain momentum.

Act: It Takes Patience and Impatience

Systems-level change takes time. Measuring student-level outcomes in shorter spans of time is needed to build momentum. We have learned there is a healthy tension in remaining both patient and impatient in all that we do, yet keeping our eye on student success.

Continuous Improvement Model



PLAN

Kickoff Action Team Meeting:

- Create data dashboard
- Define roles
- Brainstorm and prioritize strategies



DO

- Develop Action Plan
- Pass / Fail Action Plan Checklist



STUDY

- Implement Action Plan
- Monitor experiments



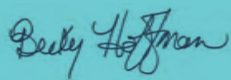
ACT

- Review monthly data at action team meetings
- Make improvements to experiments
- Repeat cycle



Thank You!!

Thank you for continuing to be at the table, for your curiosity, for asking the right questions, for your willingness to have crucial conversations, and for staying focused on **ALL** kids cradle**to**career.



Becky Hoffman

Executive Director, Adams County
Youth Initiative



Contact Us

We want to hear from you. Visit www.acyi.org or call 720-972-3876.

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- [7] Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce.

"I am very passionate about helping children/youth become their best selves. To me, ACYI is all about that!"

Tamara Player

ACYI Board Member / COO of Community Reach Center



ADAMS COUNTY YOUTH INITIATIVE

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