



State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education

2025 Annual Report State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education

Submitted to:

**Colorado State Board of Education
Colorado Commission on Higher Education
Colorado House Education Committee
Colorado Senate Education Committee**

By:

**The State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education
Jess Welch, Chair
Dr. Michelle Zeles-Hahn, Vice Chair**

Prepared by:

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The State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education is staffed by the
Colorado Department of Education.

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COLORADO
Department of Education

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The State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE) is a legislated body of diverse stakeholders charged to advise state organizations and school districts on issues related to increasing parent involvement¹ in education. The premise is that by promoting family-school partnerships, the quality of public education will improve and the level of students' academic performance throughout the state will increase (C.R.S. § 22-7-301 and C.R.S. § 22-7-304). This responsibility specifically includes involving families in programs to increase high school and college graduation rates, decrease drop-out rates, and close the achievement and growth gaps between learner groups in the state. A list of the current SACPIE membership and the groups they represent can be viewed in Appendix A.

Pursuant to Senate Bill 13-193, the purpose of this report is to outline SACPIE's progress in promoting family-school partnerships in the state and in fulfilling its legislated duties. This report includes a description of SACPIE's structure and membership, a list of advisory duties,² SACPIE's progress in fulfilling those duties, and next steps.

SACPIE Structure and Membership

The 26-member council, along with Colorado Department of Education (CDE) support staff, meet quarterly. In 2025, the February, May, August, and November meetings were held in person for five hours each, with a hybrid option. Each meeting has time dedicated to organization presentations and member resource sharing, which support the council's primary legislated responsibility to learn and share about best practices of family partnerships.

The Council has an Executive Committee, comprised of the SACPIE Chair, Vice-Chair, and the CDE Director of Family, School, and Community Partnerships. The purposes of the Executive Committee are to:

- Plan SACPIE meetings;
- Lead SACPIE meetings;
- Recruit and interview new members; and
- Check-in with current members who may have questions or have missed a meeting.

In 2025, the SACPIE Executive Committee filled 13 vacancies. A copy of the SACPIE parent member application can be viewed in Appendix B. This basic application is adapted for other representatives when vacancies for other membership roles arise on the council.

The Council was fortunate to work with two State Board of Education (SBE) liaisons in 2025, Board Member Kathy Plomer and Board Member Sherri Wright. Board Members Plomer and Wright attended council meetings, shared SBE updates, and answered questions from Council members. They regularly included information about family, school, and community partnerships during her report at state board meetings.

¹ In an effort to align state and national language, based on current research, this report uses the word "family" as opposed to "parent" and "engagement" or "partnering" instead of "involvement." This is done purposefully to be more inclusive and suggest a higher level of collaboration beyond involvement.

² C.R.S. § 22-7-304 outlines 16 recommendations for advisory duties and technical assistance for SACPIE to conduct in Colorado. This report includes the recommendations that SACPIE is currently implementing.

The Council updated its [operating procedures](#) in 2025. SACPIE's operating procedures state that each year, the council will select a Chair and Vice Chair. Jess Welch, a member of a statewide organization that represents charter schools, remains the Chair and Michelle Zeles-Hahn, a parent representative from Congressional District 8, was elected to be the Vice Chair.

The council continues to align its work with the Vision and Mission:

- **Vision:** All students' life goals are met through family, school, and community partnerships.
- **Mission:** To inform and advise educational systems on best and promising practices that support family, school, and community partnerships.

At the August 2025 meeting, SACPIE decided to focus its advisory duties on an over-arching theme for the 2025-26 school year. After a full-day planning meeting, members came to consensus that this year the group will focus on helping the field improve relational trust between home and school. The Council is using the relational trust scale from the [Six Global Lessons on How Family, School, and Community Engagement can Transform Education](#) as the research base (Morris & Nora, 2024, p. 107-122).

SACPIE Advisory Duties

Advisory Duty: Creating and implementing programs to effectively involve parents in improving their children's education and levels of academic achievement. To identify these best practices and strategies, the council shall review the programs implemented in other states and the results of state and national research conducted in this area (C.R.S. § 22-7-304(1)(a)).

SACPIE is driven by research and data. To that end, the council aligns its work with the [National Standards for Family-School Partnerships](#) (PTA, 2022) and references those standards in its resources and presentations. SACPIE also aligns its work with the [Dual Capacity-Building Framework](#).

SACPIE has identified resources for practitioners from nationally recognized organizations, including:

- [The Center on School, Family, and Community Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University](#);
- [The Center for Universal Education at Brookings Institute](#);
- [The National Association of Family, School, and Community Engagement](#); and
- [The Flamboyant Foundation](#).

In 2025, SACPIE worked with CDE to expand the collection of [Promising Partnership Practices](#) from schools, districts, early childhood programs, and Institutes of Higher Education across Colorado. About 70 sites submitted a practice for the 2025 collection. Each practice is aligned with the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships and [Colorado's Four Essential Elements](#).

“Resource Sharing” is a regular agenda item at every SACPIE meeting. This is an opportunity for members to share family, school and community partnership (FSCP) programs from their organizations and to form and deepen partnerships with their fellow SACPIE colleagues.

Advisory Duty: Involving parents in programs to raise academic achievement, increase high school graduation rates, decrease student dropout rates, and close the achievement and growth gap (C.R.S. § 22-7-304(1)(b)).

SACPIE satisfies this advisory duty by regularly sharing high impact family, school, and community partnership (FSCP) practices with the constituents they represent. Council members regularly include information from meetings in their organizations’ newsletters and through social media posts.

SACPIE is committed to building capacity in school personnel and families to partner for student achievement. To this end, SACPIE regularly encourages family participation in programs that promote student success. For the 13th year, stakeholders across Colorado celebrate *Family and School Partnership in Education Month* in November. Council members worked with CDE’s Communications Division to highlight family engagement resources and Promising Partnership Practices on social media throughout the month.

Finally, in 2025, staff in the Office of FSCP had the opportunity to share SACPIE’s work at conferences and on panels, including:

- The Rocky Mountain Family Engagement Collective [state leadership webinar](#).
- The National Association for Family, School, and Community Engagement Assembly breakout session.
- The Colorado Association of School Boards annual convention.

Advisory Duty: Increasing parent involvement in education-related committees at the local and state levels (C.R.S. § 22-7-304(1)(e)).

Per legislative requirements, four of SACPIE’s eight parent representatives must serve on a school or district accountability committee. In 2025, five of SACPIE’s parent representatives served on a School or District Accountability Committee (SAC or DAC), many of which served on multiple committees. These council members take information from SACPIE back to their local accountability committees to strengthen implementation.

At the February 2025 full council meeting, SACPIE members provided feedback to CDE staff on how to improve the SAC/DAC website and create more family-facing documents. This project has been delayed due to various internal CDE circumstances but will resume in early 2026.

The Director of FSCP is working with CDE’s policy team to create parent-facing resources about education governance. Council members provided feedback at the November 2025 meeting and will form an ad hoc committee in early 2026 to ensure appropriate levels of information and accessibility.

Advisory Duty: Advising educator preparation programs about best practices for including research-based family engagement strategies in coursework and program requirements (C.R.S. § 22-7-304(1)(h)).

In recent years, SACPIE has focused its higher education work on providing feedback to educator preparation programs about skills preservice should learn to partner with families. In 2025, six educator preparation programs participated in a Collaborative Cohort. Participants receive monthly coaching calls and participated in bi-monthly networking meetings. Collaborative participants include staff from:

- Colorado College;
- Colorado State University, Pueblo;
- Metropolitan State University of Denver;
- Northeast Colorado BOCES;
- PEBC Teacher Residency; and
- University of Northern Colorado.

Many of the programs are using the education preparation [surveys](#) that CDE staff developed last year to elevate family and teacher voice in preservice educator coursework. In addition to English, the parent-facing surveys are available in [Arabic](#), [Russian](#), [Somalian](#), [Spanish](#), and [Vietnamese](#).

Advisory Duty: Providing feedback to state agencies and other organizations about publicly available tools and resources that assist families with navigating the education system (C.R.S. § 22-7-304(1)(i)).

In 2022 and 2023, in partnership with CDE, the U.S. Department of Education awarded two Colorado nonprofit organizations with the Statewide Family Engagement Center grant. Colorado is the only state in the country to have two grants. These five-year, multi-million dollar grants provide added support to CDE, districts, schools, and households for implementing high-impact FSCP strategies. Each grant is required to have an advisory council that consists of mostly parents. In 2025, SACPIE served as an over-arching advisory body for both grants.

The Council also provided feedback to other organizations and state agencies throughout 2025, including:

- School and District Accountability Committee Resource Revisions (CDE, Feb 2025 meeting)
- SACPIE member [recruitment](#) (also available in [Spanish](#)) and onboarding materials, which resulted in an online course for new members (CDE, Feb 2025 meeting)
- Colorado's 1241 Accountability, Accreditation, Student Performance, and Resource Inequity Task Force (CDE, May 2025 meeting)
- Website Revisions (CDE, May 2025)
- Increasing Student Engagement, Chronic Absenteeism Root Causes (CDE, Aug 2025 meeting)
- Stakeholder Engagement and Education Governance (CDE, Nov 2025 meeting)

- Stakeholder Engagement and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (CDE, Nov 2025 meeting)
- Attendance Campaign Materials (CDE, Nov 2025 meeting)

Council members worked in partnership with the Office of FSCP and the Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Re-engagement to discuss ways to decrease chronic absenteeism and increase student engagement. SACPIE is written into CDE's strategic priority of *Increasing Student Engagement*. In 2025 SACPIE participated in a focus group about the root causes of chronic absenteeism. Members also provided feedback on communication tools that have been distributed to district communication staff. This partnership will continue in 2026.

Advisory Duty: Initiatives to increase admissions to institutes of higher education and the degree-completion rate and to reduce the need for remediation (C.R.S. § 22-7-304(2)(b)).

The Council's representative from the Colorado Department of Higher Education regularly shares updates with SACPIE about the Free Application for Federal Student Aid and the Colorado Application for State Financial Aid. SACPIE members then share this information with their constituents.

Advisory Duty: The council shall work with the department to provide regional training programs for school district accountability committees and school accountability committees. At a minimum, the training programs must address parent leadership and increasing parent engagement with school district accountability committees and school accountability committees, including best practices for parent engagement with school district accountability committees and school accountability committees (C.R.S. § 22-7-304(3)(b)).

SACPIE members continue to share the course entitled: [Understanding the Role of School Accountability Committees](#). This course is now available in [Spanish](#). Council members share this free course broadly. To date, 369 people have enrolled in the course (up from 232 people in 2024) and 96 people have received certificates of completion (up from 47 in 2024).

Advisory Duty: The council shall work with the department to provide regional training programs for school districts and charter schools concerning best practices and skills for district and school personnel in working with parents (C.R.S. § 22-7-304(3)(c)).

SACPIE and CDE collaborated to plan and implement regional trainings for Family Partnership Liaisons, SACs and DACs, and other interested school and district stakeholders about promising practices and skills in working with families. The overall purpose of the trainings was to help schools and districts implement comprehensive, sustainable structures for student success. The four components of this structure are:

- Forming a Team;
- Following a Framework;
- Writing a Plan; and
- Evaluating outcomes.

Historically, these sessions were held regionally for any interested stakeholder group. Over time, as need and readiness in the field evolved, training sessions now occur by invitation from districts and organizations.

Last year, CDE staff published a [Trail Map for Schools](#) to implement systemic family, school, and community partnerships. This how-to coincides with the trainings outlined above. In May 2025, CDE staff published a [district-level version of the trail map](#). SACPIE members provided feedback on the website and have shared it through their channels of communication.

Advisory Duty: The council, in consultation with the department of education and the department of higher education, shall identify key indicators of successful parent engagement in education and use the indicators to develop recommendations for methods by which the department of education and the department of higher education may measure and monitor the level of parent engagement with elementary and secondary public schools and with institutions of higher education in Colorado (C.R.S. § 22-7-304(4)).

Colorado's Preschool-12th Grade [FSCP Framework](#) and corresponding [User's Guide and Rubrics](#) continue to guide and strengthen partnerships across the state, with SACPIE's assistance. The purpose of the framework is to develop systemic and sustainable state- and district-level structures that integrate and elevate FSCP, leading to positive student outcomes and an inviting school culture.

SACPIE, along with many other stakeholders across Colorado, worked with CDE staff throughout the process to provide feedback and help draft a statewide FSCP definition and four essential elements for district-level staff to implement to improve partnering for student outcomes. Below is the definition and an overview of the essential elements.

FSCP Definition:

Families, early childhood programs, schools, and communities actively partnering to develop, implement, and evaluate effective and equitable practices to improve educational outcomes for children and youth.

Essential Elements:

Create an inclusive culture that honors the lived experience of families in early childhood programs and/or the school community.

Build trusting relationships that enable families and programs/schools to partner about the education outcomes for children and youth.

Design capacity building opportunities for staff and families that promote shared leadership about educational outcomes for children and youth.

Dedicate necessary resources that integrate and elevate partnering practices to scale.

The rubrics, developed in collaboration between CDE, SACPIE, and Johns Hopkins University, serve as a tool for schools and districts to identify FSCP starting points and measure progress. Districts across Colorado are implementing the Framework to guide their FSCP work.

Next Steps

SACPIE will continue to increase and broaden the implementation of its legislated responsibilities in 2026. These efforts include, but are not limited to:

- Providing feedback to Colorado’s two Statewide Family Engagement Center grantees;
- Gathering resources that support implementation of Colorado’s Family-School-Community Partnerships Framework in conjunction with CDE’s strategic plan;
- Working with CDE staff to revise the SAC/DAC website;
- Implementing trainings for SACs and DACs about family recruitment, retention, and participation on accountability committees in collaboration with CDE;
- Developing family-facing resources to increase understanding of education governance in Colorado;
- Collecting and publishing promising practices from schools, districts, and organizations across Colorado;
- Working with national and international FSCP leaders and researchers to continue to bring high-impact FSCP resources to Colorado; and
- Seeking additional opportunities to promote family-school partnership practices in Colorado, particularly as it relates to improving relational trust.

Appendix A
SACPIE Membership 2025

SACPIE Membership 2025			
Member Name	SACPIE Role	Organization	Congressional District of Parent Representatives
Roxanne Aviles	Parent Representative	--	Congressional District 4
Dr. Rashida Banerjee	Representative from higher education	University of Denver	
Christena Burnham	Statewide organization that represents parents and teachers.	Colorado Parent Teacher Association	
Kim Chatman	Parent Representative serving on a school or district accountability committee	--	Congressional District 1
Brooke Coté	Parent Representative	--	Congressional District 5
Ladorris Derritt	Parent Representative	--	Congressional District 6
Beth Donahue	Colorado Department of Education—Exceptional Student Services Unit	Colorado Department of Education	--
Twyla Esquibel	Representative from Higher Education	Colorado Department of Education	
Finessa Ferrell	Nonprofit organization that partners with funding providers, state agencies, and service providers to assist organizations in providing services to improve the health and well-being of families and children	--	--
Caitlin Fitzpatrick	Parent Representative	--	Congressional District 7
Kate Garvin	State-based nonprofit organization specializing in promoting the involvement of families of traditionally underserved populations	Keystone Policy Center	--
Heidi Haines	Nonprofit organization that specializes in	Rocky Mountain Down Syndrome Association	--

	promoting the involvement of families of students with disabilities		
Sarah Hanselin	Representative of the department of human services appointed by the executive director of said department	Colorado Department of Human Services	--
Sena Harjo	Representative of the department of early childhood appointed by the executive director of said department	Colorado Department of Early Childhood	--
Nathan Hickman	Colorado Department of Education—Federal Programs and Supports Unit	Colorado Department of Education	--
Dr. Jamita Horton	Statewide organization that represents teachers	Teach Plus Colorado	--
Sherrell Lang	Parent Representative serving on a school or district accountability committee	--	Congressional District 3
Jenny Lerner	Colorado Department of Education-Migrant Education Program	Colorado Department of Education	--
Mary McNeill	Expertise in early childhood care and education	Denver Great Kids Head Start	--
Dr. Carrie Olson	Statewide organization that represents members of school district boards of education	Colorado Association of School Boards	--
Rhonda Palic	Statewide organization that represents school executives	Colorado Association of School Executives	--
Stacey Vanhoy	State-based nonprofit organization specializing in promoting the involvement of families of traditionally underserved populations	Home Visit Partnerships	--
Jess Welch, Chair	Statewide organization that represents charter schools	Charter School Institute	--

Liz Wilson	Parent Representative serving on a school or district accountability committee	--	Congressional District 2
Dr. Michelle Zeles-Hahn, Vice Chair	Parent Representative	--	Congressional District 8
Michelle Zinser	Statewide organization representing school counselors	Colorado School Counselor Association	--

SACPIE Advisory Members and CDE Support 2025	
Name	Organization
Dr. Darcy Hutchins, SACPIE Staffer	Colorado Department of Education-Office of Family, School, and Community Partnerships
Kathy Plomer	Colorado State Board of Education
Sherri Wright	Colorado State Board of Education

Appendix B

SACPIE 2025 Parent Membership Application

2025 Application for State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education

Overview of SACPIE

On behalf of the Colorado Board of Education, the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education (SACPIE) invites applications from candidates to fill three (3) Parent Representative vacancies. Two of these vacancies are for parents who currently serve as the parent representatives on a District Accountability Committee (DAC) or School Accountability Committee (SAC).

In accordance with SB09-090, 22-7-301 C.R.S., the Council has been charged with the task of informing public education entities concerning best practices and strategies, aligned with National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, for increasing parent involvement in public education and promoting family and school partnerships in order to help improve the quality of public education and raise the level of students' academic achievement throughout the state.

As required by State law, parent membership appointments must be filled by parents of children who are:

- 1) Enrolled in a publicly funded preschool program; or
- 2) In any of grades kindergarten through twelve; or
- 3) In a state supported institution of higher education; and
- 4) Who represent student populations that are significantly represented in the state.

As required by State law, the State Board of Education, in appointing members to the Council, shall, to the greatest extent possible, select persons who will reflect the gender balance and ethnic and racial diversity of the state and will provide representation from throughout the state.

Membership appointments will begin in November 2025 and continue for three years, with an opportunity to continue for another term.

Application Summary

Applications are due September 30, 2025 to Darcy Hutchins (hutchins_d@cde.state.co.us).

Complete applications should include:

- ☐ *Contact and Background Information Form*
- ☐ *Statement of Interest*
- ☐ *Current CV, Resume, or Background Summary*
- ☐ *Contact for Two References*

SACPIE Responsibilities

Time Commitment. Members are expected to be active participants in the Council and attend at least 75% of monthly meetings in the metro Denver area, or by audio conference call-in. Meetings are currently held quarterly on the third Tuesday of February, May, August, and November from 9:00am-2:00pm.

Compensation. SACPIE members can be reimbursed for mileage and meals (related to SACPIE business) and some required activities (e.g., trainings for the field).

Application Process. Completed Applications must be submitted to Darcy Hutchins by September 30, 2025 (hutchins_d@cde.state.co.us; 303-562-8175).

Please see the SACPIE website (<http://www.cde.state.co.us/sacpie>) for more information about the Council.

Application Checklist

	Completed Contact Information/Background Form
	Completed Statement of Interest
	Current Curriculum Vitae, Resume, or Background Summary
	Contact Information for Two References

Contact and Background Information Form

SACPIE Application
(Please Type)

Contact Information

First Name:	
Last Name:	
Preferred Title (Mr., Ms., Mr., Dr.):	
Mailing Address:	
Email Address:	
Phone Number:	
Gender:	
Ethnicity:	
Congressional District of Residence:	
Child's Grade:	
Child's School:	
Congressional District (if known):	

Are you currently serving on a School Accountability Committee (SAC) or District Accountability Committee (DAC)? Yes _____ No _____

Do you plan to do so in the future? Yes _____ No _____

References

Please provide contact information for two references that would be able to speak to skills/tasks needed of SACPIE applicants.

First Name:	
Last Name:	
Current Title:	
Organization:	
Email Address:	
Phone Number:	
Relationship:	

First Name:	
Last Name:	
Current Title:	
Organization:	
Email Address:	
Phone Number:	
Relationship:	

Statement of Interest

Provide a brief description of why you are interested in serving on the State Advisory Council for Parent Involvement in Education. The response should not take more than one full typed page. Type your response below:

Return of Applications

Please email applications to Darcy Hutchins at hutchins_d@cde.state.co.us and note in the subject line: "SACPIE Application."