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# El Señor THE W

Digital Edition

Overwhelmed  
*Abrumados*

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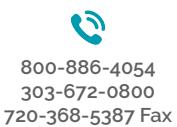
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# El Semanario

## THE WEEKLY ISSUE

# We Speak Your Language

Our podcast features a series of conversations with local and national influencers who engage with our communities and reflect on our responsibilities.

- Democracy
- Reproductive Justice
- Environment
- Immigration
- Education
- LGBTQ+



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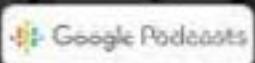
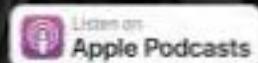
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**PODCAST**

## Commentary/Commentario

## The Fight Against Racism Unites People of Color

**Maribel Hastings and David Torres**

**A**s we commemorate Black History Month and recognize the achievements, contributions, and challenges this community faces—the community that faithfully lead the struggle for civil rights in this nation—we inevitably reflect upon what we, as other minority groups, have in common at a time when non-Anglo Saxon sectors of society are in a constant state of attack on diverse fronts. It seemed as if the constant insults, full of hate and discrimination, would start to diminish following the unseating of former President Donald Trump, whose policies against minorities set the United States back to humanely unacceptable times in history; but the resurgence of this sickening rhetoric of hate, which is being used electorally once again, makes one think about the long road that remains ahead when it comes to human rights here. Although our histories as minorities are diverse and different, and African Americans have the unique and sad fact that their ancestors were brought to this country as



Photo: America's Voice



Photo: America's Voice

slaves, it's also true that we are united in the fight against racism, xenophobia, inequality, and today's very real Republican attempts to repress minorities' right to vote. This extremely negative situation that affects us, as minority groups, is becoming the common thread of this new chapter: defending the right to exist and interact in an environment where liberties do not have to be haggled for, much less the ability to exercise them given up. Moreover, we also cannot forget that some minorities, like Latinos, also have African heritage: that "third race" that was rendered invisible for a long time, but now has to be reclaimed as profoundly ours, to strengthen our indestructible cul-

tural and historic ties even more. But among the community of undocumented immigrants with African roots, Haitians are perhaps the most forgotten and ignored, despite the rich history of Haiti and its fingerprints on this country from centuries ago, long before the 1960s and 1970s, when thousands of Haitians established their lives here, particularly in south Florida and northeastern cities of the United States. And, when talking about regional independences are discussed, it is almost always forgotten that Haiti was the first nation to abolish slavery and declare its independence, during the epic revolt (1791-1804) that fills the history of

this Caribbean nation with glory. But as often occurs throughout history with the development of nations and their imbalances due to corruption, violence, poverty, and lack of structural support, waves of migrants have created and continue to create a vicious cycle that, to this day, has no end. In recent years, as in previous times, Haitians—immersed in crisis after crisis, whether due to politics or natural disasters, from earthquakes to hurricanes—have been forced to leave their nation in search of a better future. On the other hand, U.S. immigration policy toward Haitians has been chaotic and prejudiced. Who can forget the heartbreaking images of Haitians crowded along the border between the U.S. and Mexico, in sub-human conditions, being chased by border agents, even on horseback, as if they were hunting prey. In December 2021 the group Haitian Bridge Alliance had already identified and brought to light a series of problems the Haitian immigrant community was facing in the U.S.-Mexico border region, especially in Texas. They mention, among other things, the "denial of access to available attorneys and interpreters; inadequate medical care;

We must all commemorate Black history because, in some form or another, we are interconnected. We cannot forget what we have in common: a past and present struggle against racism and prejudice, which continue to show their ugly faces today, in the 21st century.

absence of required fear-based screening; blocking media access; inadequate food and water; physical intimidation by CBP agents; and misleading statements by DHS." Today, thousands of Haitian refugees are stranded in Mexico because the United States, during the presidency of Democrat Joe Biden, continues to apply the Trump administration's Title 42 policy, arguing that restrictions due to the COVID pandemic require asylum seekers to make their applications from Mexico, where they become victims of crime, violence, and racism. Since March 2020, for example, thousands of migrants with solid

See **Hastings/Torres** on page 5

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## La Lucha Contra el Racismo Nos Une

**Maribel Hastings and David Torres**

**A**l conmemorarse el Mes de la Historia Afroamericana para resaltar los logros, las contribuciones y los retos que enfrenta esta comunidad —que encabezó fehacientemente la lucha por los derechos civiles en esta nación— es inevitable pensar en lo que otros grupos minoritarios compartimos con ellos en momentos en que los sectores no anglosajones están en permanente ataque por diversos flancos.

En efecto, parecía que la andanada de insultos llenos de odio y de discriminación tenderían a disminuir tras la derrota del ex-presidente Donald Trump, cuyas políticas contra las minorías hicieron retroceder la historia de Estados Unidos hasta niveles humanamente inaceptables; pero el resurgimiento de esa vomitiva retórica de odio que se perfila para ser utilizada electoralmente otra vez hace pensar en el largo camino que queda por recorrer en el ámbito de los derechos humanos aquí.

Aunque nuestras historias como minorías son diversas y diferentes,

y de que los afroamericanos tienen la triste particularidad de que sus antepasados fueron traídos como esclavos a este país, también es cierto que nos unen las luchas contra el racismo, la xenofobia, la inequidad y los actuales intentos republicanos de reprimir el voto de minorías.

Esa situación tan negativa que nos afecta como grupos minoritarios se está convirtiendo en el hilo conductor de esta nueva etapa en la defensa del derecho a existir e interactuar en un ambiente donde las libertades no tengan que regatearse, ni mucho menos claudicar a ejercerlas.

Además, tampoco hay que olvidar que algunas minorías, como el caso de los latinos, también tienen herencia africana, esa tercera raíz que durante mucho tiempo fue invisibilizada, pero que ahora mismo hay que reivindicar como profundamente nuestra para fortalecer aún más nuestros indestructibles lazos culturales e históricos.

Pero entre la comunidad de inmigrantes indocumentados con herencia africana, son los haitianos el grupo quizás más olvidado e ignorado, a pesar de la rica histo-



Por eso todos debemos conmemorar la historia afroamericana porque de una forma u otra estamos interconectados.

No debemos olvidar lo que tenemos en común: un pasado y un presente de lucha contra el racismo y el prejuicio que siguen asomando sus horribles rostros en pleno Siglo 21.

ria de Haití y de su huella en esta nación desde hace siglos, mucho antes de que en las décadas de los 60 y los 70 miles de haitianos se establecieran aquí, particularmente en el Sur de Florida y en ciudades del Noreste de Estados Unidos.

Y casi siempre que se habla de las independencias regionales se tiende a olvidar que Haití fue la primera nación en abolir la esclavi-

Vea **Hastings/Torres/Esp**, página 16

## Fossil Fuels Don't Support Our Communities, or Yours

Renee Millard Chacón and Jamie Valdez

**C**ommunities across Colorado have been subjected to decades of fossil fuel greenwashing. Meanwhile, disproportionately impacted communities with cumulative impacts of pollution have suffered in silence.

Millions of dollars worth of propaganda in radio, television and newspaper advertisements have attempted for years to portray oil and gas as an economic champion of development benefitting Colorado's land, water and people; these companies will donate a new scoreboard to a local high school, buy a table at the local charity event, and claim to support local economies. All the while they deliberately ignore their responsibility to the health and safety of our people.

The latest effort, Coloradans for Energy Access, also fails to authentically include meaningful representation of disproportionately impacted communities and any community-based organization actually focused on improving lives in historically marginalized and targeted communities in environmental sacrifice zones.

Instead, they're employing scare tactics about alleged loss of economic stability of diverse



Photo: Renee Millard Chacón



Photo: Mothers Out Front

communities. For years, oil and gas companies have participated in an unrelenting campaign to frighten the public into believing that life as we know it would end if oil and gas companies were overly regulated and monitored; companies would simply pull up their rigs and disappear. No cars, no heat, etc. Well, that's a little extreme, but it is another way they try to pull the wool over our eyes.

We are in a transition away from fossil fuels and that's a good thing for our health, equity, our climate and, yes, our economy. That transition will not happen overnight, but we are well on our way and now is the time to figure out how to make that transition just, equitable and fair for everyone across the state.

In reality, global energy markets are more directly responsible for current price increases.

### Hastings/Torres

asylum cases have been expelled to Mexico and even to their countries of origin. For example, since September 2021 the Biden administration has deported more than 14,000 Haitians to a broken nation that cannot absorb them nor attend to their most basic necessities. As the poorest economy in the Latin American and Caribbean region, it would be difficult for Haiti to recuperate in the short term, taking into account the most recent data from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, which indicates that this region "will see its pace of growth decelerate in 2022 to 2.1%, after reaching 6.2% on average last year." On top of that, the report cites "uncertainty regarding the pandemic's ongoing evolution, a sharp deceleration in growth, continued low investment and productivity and a slow recovery in employment, the persistence of the social effects prompted by the crisis, reduced fiscal space, increased inflationary pressures and financial imbalances." In the specific case of Haiti, the

World Bank adds for its part, that "60% of Haiti's population, or 6.3 million people, remain poor and 24%, or 2.5 million people, extremely poor." So although this disastrous public policy of deportations implemented by the U.S. government affects migrants from all over, the Haitian example—for its crudeness and because it plainly involves racial prejudices—is beyond offensive. Just think: if those migrants, Haitian or not, were white with blond hair and blue eyes, would they be treated the same way? We must all commemorate Black history because, in some form or another, we are interconnected. We cannot forget what we have in common: a past and present struggle against racism and prejudice, which continue to show their ugly faces today, in the 21st century.

Maribel Hastings is a Senior Advisor to América's Voice. David Torres is a Spanish-language Advisor at América's Voice.

Read More Commentary:  
[ELSEMANARIO.US](#)

keep us all hooked on gas? Have they forgotten we are all connected in our biosphere including our air, land, and water quality?

The fact is—which industry denies—renewable energy is more affordable, is healthier for future generations and the biosphere, especially those who live in "diesel death zones" and other polluted communities, and helps Colorado's economy thrive with an awareness of industries' predatory behaviors.

If industry truly cared about the health and safety of people and the environment, it would not be insisting that gas is safe to be used in our homes. Research continues to find that gas stoves emit dangerous levels of nitrogen dioxide and those indoor emissions are largely unregulated. It seems that there is no reprieve from the pollution—in doors or outdoors and that we all need to transition away from fossil fuels sooner rather than later.

We don't see the transition to clean, renewable energy as economic disruption. We see this as economic opportunity for everyone and a way to restore resources for future generations. We will continue to work toward a just and equitable transition.



It seems that there is no reprieve from the pollution—in doors or outdoors and that we all need to transition away from fossil fuels sooner rather than later.

If fossil fuel companies want to show us they care about this transition for everyone, they'll come meet us in our communities. We'll be the ones doing the work to heal and protect.

Renee Millard Chacón is an Indigenous Cultural Educator at Womxn from the Mountain and co-chair of the Environmental Justice Task Force Equity Analysis Subcommittee. Jamie Valdez is a Pueblo native, a community organizer for Mothers Out Front, and a member of Colorado's Environmental Justice Action Task Force. This article is republished from [Colorado Newsline](#) under a Creative Commons license.

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ONE COLORADO

## Commentary / Commentario

## Is Anyone Out There? We Need Help Figuring Out Our Futures

Carolyn Dorantes

**M**amá, ¿sabe en dónde puedo encontrar pasantías?" ("Mom, do you know where I can find internships?"), I ask.

"No sé... pregúntale a la consejera de escuela o a tu maestra. Ellas te van a poder ayudar más porque tienen más información." ("I don't know... ask your school counselor or your teacher. They will be able to help you more because they have more information"), she replies.

My mother didn't attend high school or college, so she has limited knowledge about college and

career readiness. Most parents in my community, Salinas, California, are in the same position.

Here, 79.3 percent of people are Hispanic or Latino, 37.3 percent of residents are foreign-born and just 13.3 percent of adults have earned a bachelor's degree or higher.

At school, students struggle to find college and career resources. It is common to hear students complain about slow responses from the guidance office. As a junior in high school, my lack of access to quality college and career information has been particularly stressful. Although I'm researching my options, I fear that it's not enough.

In my community, many students aspire to careers in nursing, agriculture and education. It's clear why: Agriculture provides 24.1 percent of all local jobs, while education, social assistance and health care provide 18.2 percent. Students have the most exposure to those jobs.

Although these are perfectly good professions, they are a narrow range of career opportunities, and many students don't know about other options. Recently, one of my teachers showed us a video about a day in the life of a software engineer. In our discussion, most students said they had never considered such a career a possibility.

A study done by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development found that many students in the 21st century have aspirations for careers that were created in the 19th or 20th centuries. This means that many students have minimal knowledge of new careers and the skills needed to pursue them. The students who do aim for these new careers tend to be more affluent.

In Salinas, where many students will be first-generation college students, better awareness of these careers is needed. Google is a big help for those of us looking for possible careers, but having an opportunity to see the jobs



As a junior in high school, my lack of access to quality college and career information has been particularly stressful. Although I'm researching my options, I fear that it's not enough.

in practice and getting support in navigating our career search journeys would be a bigger help.

See **Dorantes** on page 16

## The Federal Bureau of Prisons is Still Delaying My Health Care

Cristina Nichole Iglesias

*Editor's Note: In December, the federal Bureau of Prisons was court ordered to provide American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) client Cristina Iglesias with gender-affirming surgery following a lawsuit filed in September 2020. The Bureau of Prisons failed to approve surgery by the court ordered deadline of January 26.*

I'm an outgoing person, which makes me want to meet new people and learn about them. I'm a caring person, too, which means I often want to find a way to make things better for others, if I can. I'm also a transgender woman. And as someone who is different, it's easy for me to be patient with other people who are having problems and to sym-

pathize with what they are going through.

For more than 27 years, I've lived in federal prisons across the country. The Bureau of Prisons has known that I am a woman since 1994, though they housed me in men's prisons for decades. I have also had to spend years fighting to get the health care I need for my gender dysphoria.

Being denied the gender-affirming care I need has had a huge impact on me, because I'm unable to complete myself. Not having a body that matches who I know myself to be affects me every moment of every day. It is very difficult and hard to keep hope.

Last month, a federal court ordered the Bureau of Prisons — for the first time ever — to finally eval-



Living with gender dysphoria — and being denied the treatment I need — has caused me torture every day.

uate me for gender-affirming surgery. When I heard about the ruling from my lawyers, I went back to my cell to process just how huge this is. After being denied for so long, I cried — but it was tears of relief. Last month, however, I found out that the Bureau of Prisons has decided to recommend me for surgery on paper but delay actually referring me to a surgeon until mid-April 2022.

Getting medical care is necessary to allow me to finally live my life fully as the woman I am. Living with gender dysphoria — and being denied the treatment I need — has caused me torture every day. Gender-affirming surgery would help end that torture and remove one of the biggest obstacles facing me for decades. Putting this barrier behind me would let me devote my time to living a productive life and advocating for others when I leave prison later this year.

Preparing for my lawsuit has been a long and difficult journey, but it has taught me how to advocate for myself. I am fighting not just for me, but for other people like me, too. I am fighting to make sure that transgender people in prison get the care we urgently need, just as other trans people have done before me.

See **Iglesias** on page 16

Please contact COLOR about upcoming community forums on the "Know Your Rights" training for immigrant families and the "What's At Stake?" information sessions regarding your health care coverage.

Contacta las oficinas de COLOR para obtener información de los próximos foros comunitarios sobre inmigración y el taller Conozca Sus Derechos. En los foros puedes saber más sobre como puede verse afectada tu cobertura médica mediante el taller ¿Qué está en juego?

**Mujeres de COLOR**

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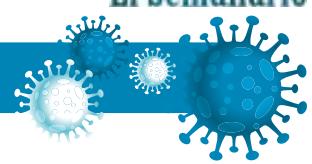
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**El Semanario**



## 5 Things You Should Know About 'Free' At-Home Covid Tests

By Damon Darlin

**A**mericans keep hearing that it is important to test frequently for covid-19 at home. But just try to find an "at-home" rapid covid test in a store and at a price that makes frequent tests affordable.

Testing, as well as mask-wearing, is an important measure if the country ever hopes to beat covid, restore normal routines and get the economy running efficiently. To get Americans cheaper tests, the federal government now plans to have insurance companies pay for them.

The Biden administration announced last month that every person with private insurance can get full coverage for eight rapid tests a month. You can either get one without any out-of-pocket expense from retail pharmacies that are part of an insurance company's network or buy it at any store and get reimbursed by the insurer.

Congress said private insurers must cover all covid testing and

any associated medical services when it passed the Families First Coronavirus Response Act and the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security, or CARES, Act.

The have-insurance-pay-for-it solution has been used frequently through the pandemic. Insurance companies have been told to pay for PCR tests, covid treatments and the administration of vaccines. (Taxpayers are paying for the cost of the vaccines themselves.) It appears to be an elegant solution for a politician because it looks free and isn't using taxpayer money.

### 1. Are the tests really free?

Well, no. As many an economist will tell you, there is no such thing as a free lunch. Someone has to pick up the tab. Initially, the insurance companies bear the cost. Cynthia Cox, a vice president at Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) who studies the Affordable Care Act and private insurers, said the total bill could amount to billions of dollars. Exactly how much depends on "how

easy it is to get them, and how many will be reimbursed," she said.

### 2. Will the insurance company just swallow those imposed costs?

If companies draw from the time-tested insurance giants' playbook, they'll pass along those costs to customers. "This will put upward pressure on premiums," said Emily Gee, vice president and coordinator for health policy at the Center for American Progress.

Major insurance companies like Cigna, Anthem, UnitedHealthcare and Aetna did not respond to requests to discuss this issue.

### 3. If that's the case, why haven't I been hit with higher premiums already?

Insurance companies had the chance last year to raise premiums but, mostly, they did not.

Why? Perhaps because insurers have so far made so much money during the pandemic they didn't need to. For example, the indus-



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To get Americans cheaper tests, the federal government now plans to have insurance companies pay for them. / El nuevo plan del gobierno federal para que los estadounidenses consigan pruebas más baratas consiste en que las compañías de seguros las paguen.

try's profits in 2020 increased 41% to \$31 billion from \$22 billion, according to the National Association of Insurance Commissioners. The NAIC said the industry has continued its "tremendous growth trend" that started before covid emerged. Companies will be reporting 2021 results soon.

The reason behind these profits is clear. You were paying pre-

miums based on projections your insurance company made about how much health care consumers would use that year. Because people stayed home, had fewer accidents, postponed surgeries and, often, avoided going to visit the doctor or the hospital, insurers paid out less. They rebated some

See Tests on page 17

## Cinco Cosas que Deberías Saber Sobre las Pruebas Caseras 'Gratis' para Covid

Por Damon Darlin

**L**os estadounidenses siguen escuchando que es importante hacerse pruebas caseras para covid con frecuencia. El problema es encontrar tests que sean lo suficientemente asequibles para poder comprarlos a menudo.

Hacerse pruebas, así como el uso de máscaras, es una medida importante si el país quiere vencer a covid, recuperar las rutinas de la vida diaria y conseguir que la economía funcione eficazmente. Por eso, el nuevo plan del gobierno federal para que los estadounidenses consigan pruebas más baratas consiste en que las compañías de seguros las paguen.

El gobierno de Biden acaba de anunciar que toda persona con un seguro privado podrá obtener ocho pruebas rápidas al mes sin costo. Se pueden recoger en una tienda que forme parte de la red de una compañía de seguros o

comprarlas y que la aseguradora reembolse el gasto.

El Congreso estipuló que las aseguradoras privadas deben cubrir todas las pruebas de covid-19 y cualquier servicio médico asociado al aprobar el Families First Coronavirus Response Act y el Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act (CARES).

La solución de que el seguro pague se ha utilizado con frecuencia durante la pandemia. Se les ha pedido a aseguradoras que paguen las pruebas de PCR, los tratamientos de covid y la administración de vacunas. (Los contribuyentes están pagando el costo de las vacunas).

Parece ser una solución "elégante" para un político porque parece que es gratis y que no se utiliza el dinero de los contribuyentes.

### 1. Pero ¿las pruebas son realmente gratuitas?

Pues no. Como te dirían muchos economistas: no existe el almuer-

zo gratis. Alguien tiene que pagar la cuenta. Al principio son las aseguradoras reciben la factura.

Cynthia Cox, vicepresidenta de KFF, especializada en el estudio de la Ley de Cuidado de Salud a Bajo Precio (ACA) y de las aseguradoras privadas, dijo que podrían ser miles de millones de dólares.

La cantidad exacta depende de "lo fácil que sea conseguirlas y de cuántas serán reembolsadas", agregó.

### 2. ¿La aseguradora absorverá esos costos impuestos?

Si son listos, y pocos se atreven a decir que quienes dirigen las compañías de seguros no lo son, pasarán esos costos a sus clientes. "Esto presionará al alza de las primas", afirmó Emily Gee, vicepresidenta y coordinadora de política sanitaria del Center for American Progress.

Las principales compañías de seguros, como Cigna, Anthem, United Healthcare y Aetna, no re-

spondieron a las solicitudes para hablar sobre este tema.

### 3. Si es así, ¿por qué no han aumentado ya las primas?

Las aseguradoras tuvieron la oportunidad el año pasado de subir las primas, pero en general no lo hicieron.

¿Por qué? Principalmente porque hasta ahora han ganado tanto dinero durante la pandemia que no necesitaron hacerlo. Por ejemplo, sus ingresos netos en 2020 aumentaron un 41%, de \$22,000 millones hasta los \$31,000 millones, según la National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC). De hecho, la NAIC comunicó que el sector continuó con la "tremenda tendencia de crecimiento" que comenzó antes de la aparición de covid-19. Las compañías presentarán pronto los resultados de 2021.

La razón tras estas ganancias es clara. Las primas se pagaron en base a las estimaciones y proyec-

ciones que hicieron las aseguradoras sobre la cantidad de atención de salud que utilizarían los consumidores ese año. Como la gente se quedó en casa, tuvo menos accidentes, pospuso cirugías y, a menudo, evitó ir al médico o al hospital, las aseguradoras terminaron pagando mucho menos.

Devolvieron parte de sus ganancias a los clientes, pero se quedaron con muchísimo más.

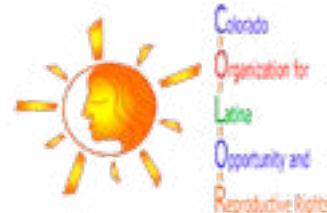
Mientras los actuarios de las compañías trabajan en la predicción de los gastos de 2023, esto podría cambiar si prevén más reclamos y gastos. El pago de millones de pruebas rápidas es algo que incluirán en sus cálculos.

### 4. Independientemente de las primas, ¿las pruebas costarán dinero del propio bolsillo?

Es muy posible. Si la aseguradora no tiene un acuerdo con una tienda en la que se pueda simplemente

Vea Pruebas, página 19

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## Cover /Portada

## Special Education Evaluations Plummet During Pandemic

By Melanie Asmar

**M**aría Barraza's 8-year-old son spent half of first grade and all of second grade online because of the pandemic. When he started third grade this fall, Barraza was concerned. Her son's writing and spelling were, in Barraza's opinion, "way below," and he couldn't yet read on his own, which meant he struggled in math too because he couldn't understand word problems.



"The pandemic is here... we cannot use the pandemic as an excuse and just wait and wait and wait until the child is three years behind."

Elisa Aucancela, El Grupo Vida

She took him for an expensive private evaluation in September. The results of two days' worth of tests confirmed what she suspected: He needed extra help in school. But Barraza said her repeated re-

quests that her son receive special education services went unheeded for months.

"I'm confused as to what the battle is," Barraza said. "What is the problem?"

Barraza isn't alone. In Denver Public Schools, the number of initial evaluations for special education services for students ages 3 to 21 fell by about 35% from the 2018-19 school year to the pandemic-interrupted 2019-20 school year and remained low the following year.

Statewide, initial evaluations fell by about 16% and similarly have not recovered. That means 4,200 fewer children across Colorado were evaluated in 2019-20 than in 2018-19.

If children don't get evaluated in a timely manner and start getting services, they can fall even further behind, lengthening the time it takes to catch up and affecting their self-esteem.

It's not just a Colorado issue. Districts across the country, including Chicago and New York City, have experienced a decrease in students getting referred or evaluated for special education services, raising concerns that children with disabilities aren't getting the help they need.



When the pandemic hit in March 2020 and schools shut down, special education evaluations came to a halt.

District administrators and special education teachers cite a host of challenges: staffing shortages, increased paperwork, new demands related to remote learning, and a hesitation to designate kids as having learning disabilities when they may be suffering the effects

of remote learning and pandemic-related family trauma instead.

"We don't want to leave a child behind if they need those [special education] services," said Julie Rottier-Lukens, director of special education for the 90,000-student Denver Public Schools. "And yet we don't want to make presumptions based on what we're seeing in front of us right now and discount that kids have been through a lot."

Parents say they're sympathetic to the challenges, but their children shouldn't pay the price.

#### No excuses

Elisa Aucancela, executive director El Grupo Vida, a local network of Latino parents of children with disabilities, said she feels schools sometimes use the pandemic as an excuse to wait to evaluate children who need more immediate help.

"It's especially frustrating when it happens to Spanish-speaking families whose children already have a diagnosis from a doctor," Aucancela said.

"When it's a disability, it's a disability," she said.

Marta Edith Flamenco's 4-year-old daughter has Dandy-Walker Syndrome, a congenital brain condition that affects the cerebellum and can cause developmental delays. Her daughter has received therapy through the county since she was born to help her eat, walk, and talk.

In 2020, when the girl was 3, Aucancela tried to refer the family for a school district special education

evaluation so she could enroll in public preschool. But, citing a long waitlist, the district encouraged the family to enroll their daughter in preschool first and then do the evaluation, Aucancela said. Flamenco did that — but within two weeks, she said she was hit with a \$550 preschool bill that her family couldn't pay because her husband was out of work.

"The school was telling us we'd have to pay," said Flamenco, who speaks only Spanish. "We stopped taking her because it was going to be too much."

Denver charges tuition for preschool on a sliding scale, but students who qualify for special education services attend for free. As it is now, Flamenco's daughter hasn't been in school for more than a year. She cries because she wants to go back, her mother said.

"She used to be so happy and ready and she would share what she saw, what she learned, and she came [home] and she was ready to rest," Flamenco said. "And now, she is so energetic. She's just here, and she really wants to go to school. She has tantrums about it."

Aucancela recently submitted another referral for special education services, and Flamenco said her daughter now has an appointment in March to get evaluated. Aucancela is pleased, but she said it's troubling that it took so long for the family to get what they needed.

"The pandemic is here," Aucancela said. But, she added, "we cannot use the pandemic as an excuse

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## Reducción Drástica en Evaluaciones de Educación Especial Durante la Pandemia



Cuando la pandemia llegó en marzo de 2020 y las escuelas cerraron, las evaluaciones de educación especial se detuvieron.

By Melanie Asmar

**E**l hijo de 8 años de María Barraza pasó la mitad del primer grado y todo el segundo grado aprendiendo en línea debido a la pandemia. Cuando comenzó el tercer grado este otoño, Barraza estaba preocupada. La escritura y la ortografía de su hijo estaban, en opinión de Barraza, "muy por debajo", y él todavía no podía leer por sí mismo, lo que significaba que también estaba teniendo dificultades en matemáticas porque no podía entender los problemas descritos verbalmente.

Ella lo llevó a hacer una costosa evaluación privada en septiembre. Después de dos días de pruebas, los resultados confirmaron lo que ella sospechaba: Él necesita ayuda adicional en la escuela. Sin embargo, Barraza dijo que por meses nadie atendió sus repetidas peticiones para que su hijo recibiera servicios de educación especial.

"No puedo entender eso", dijo Barraza. "¿Cuál es el problema?"

Y Barraza no está sola. En las escuelas públicas de Denver, el número de evaluaciones iniciales de servicios de educación especial para estudiantes de 3 a 21 años se redujo aproximadamente un 35% desde el año escolar 2018-2019 hasta el año escolar 2019-20 (interrumpido por la pandemia) y se mantuvo a un nivel bajo el año siguiente.

En todo el estado, las evaluaciones iniciales se redujeron alrededor de un 16% y tampoco se han recuperado. Eso significa que en

2019-20 se evaluaron 4.200 niños menos en todo Colorado que en 2018-19.

Los niños que no se evalúan a tiempo y no empiezan a recibir servicios pueden retrasarse aún más, lo cual extenderá el tiempo que les tomará ponerse al día y afectará su autoestima.

Esto no es solamente un problema en Colorado. Los distritos de todo el país, incluidos los de Chicago y Nueva York, han experimentado una reducción en el número de estudiantes referidos o evaluados para recibir servicios de educación especial, y esto causa la preocupación de que los niños con discapacidades no están recibiendo la ayuda que necesitan.

Los administradores de los distritos y los maestros de educación especial citan una serie de retos: escasez de personal, aumento del papeleo, nuevas exigencias relacionadas con el aprendizaje a distancia y dudas a la hora de decir que un niño tiene problemas de aprendizaje si en lugar de eso, quizás esté sufriendo los efectos del aprendizaje a distancia y el trauma familiar relacionado con la pandemia.

"No queremos dejar a un niño rezagado si necesita esos servicios [de educación especial]", dijo Julie Rottier-Lukens, directora de educación especial para las Escuelas Públicas de Denver, que atienden a unos 90,000 estudiantes. "Sin embargo, no queremos hacer presunciones basadas en lo que estamos viendo en este momento y descontar que los niños han pasado por mucho".

con discapacidades) dijo que cree que las escuelas a veces utilizan la pandemia como excusa para esperar a evaluar a los niños que necesitan una ayuda más inmediata.

Esto es particularmente frustrante cuando ocurre con familias que hablan español y sus hijos ya tienen un diagnóstico del médico, dijo Aucancela.

"Cuando es una discapacidad, es una discapacidad", dijo.

La hija de 4 años de Marta Edith Flamenco tiene el Síndrome de Dandy-Walker, una enfermedad cerebral congénita que afecta al cerebelo y puede causar retrasos en el desarrollo. Su hija ha recibido terapia a través del condado desde que nació para ayudarla a comer, caminar y hablar.

En 2020 (cuando la niña tenía 3 años) Aucancela trató de referir a la familia a una evaluación de educación especial del distrito escolar para que pudiera matricularse en el preescolar de una de las escuelas públicas. Sin embargo, citando una larga lista de espera, el distrito le dijo a la familia que matriculara a su hija en un preescolar primero y que la evaluación se hiciera luego, dijo Aucancela.

Flamenco lo hizo, pero dice que en las próximas dos semanas le llegó una factura de \$550 dólares del preescolar que su familia no podía pagar porque su esposo estaba desempleado.

“

"La pandemia está aquí. Pero no podemos utilizar la pandemia como excusa y esperar y esperar hasta que el niño tenga tres años de retraso".

Elisa Aucancela, El Grupo Vida

"La escuela nos decía que teníamos que pagar", dijo Flamenco, que solamente habla español. "Dejamos de llevarla a la escuela porque iba a ser demasiado".

Denver cobra matrícula por educación preescolar según los ingresos de la familia, pero los estudiantes que califican para recibir servicios de educación especial asisten gratis. En estos momentos

Vea [Evaluaciones](#), página 20

Foto/Photo: AdobeStock

### No hay excusas

Elisa Aucancela, directora ejecutiva de El Grupo Vida, (una red local de padres latinos de niños

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## State News / Noticias del Estado

## Charter School Applications Can't Ask About Disability

## COLORADO

By Erica Meltzer

**C**olorado charter schools will no longer be able to ask on their applications whether students require special education services.

The rule change brings Colorado into compliance with federal rules issued more than five years ago. It was approved unanimously by the State Board of Education last month.

Charter schools will also have to make it clear on their websites that they don't discriminate and train employees to accurately answer questions about admissions policies in ways that don't deter the families of students with special needs, including those with disabilities and those learning English.

The change comes after Disability Law Colorado [filed com-](#)

plaints with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights against 29 charter schools that asked questions about disability status on their applications.

Most of the schools quickly updated their applications in response to the complaints. Administrators at many of the schools said they had no intent to discriminate, only to plan for student needs, but advocates said parents can be deterred by the questions.

While the application questions seemed to violate federal guidance issued in a 2016 memo, they were explicitly encouraged in Colorado's charter rules, which told schools to determine "during the pre-enrollment admissions process" whether a school is an appropriate placement for students with special needs, including those with disabilities and those learning English.

Bill Kottenstette, director of the Schools of Choice Unit within the



That work was in progress when the complaints were filed.

The rule changes make it clear that conversations about what services students need should take place after students are admitted. The new rules ban charter schools from asking questions on their applications that would identify a student as belonging to demographic groups that are legally protected from discrimination, require the applications to be accessible for people with disabilities, and require schools to offer language assistance to parents with limited English.

During last month's meeting, Alex Medler, executive director of the Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers, said recent research commissioned by the group found that parents complained repeatedly about a lack of information about how charter

Rule changes for charter school admissions bring Colorado in compliance with federal requirements. / Cambios en las reglas de admisión de las escuelas chárter hacen que Colorado cumpla con los requisitos federales.

Colorado Department of Education, said at a Jan. 12 meeting that the charter rule was adopted in 2012, prior to the adoption of the federal guidance.

Colorado charter schools enroll students with disabilities at a lower rate than the state average — and

at a lower rate than charter schools in most other states, according to a [study by the Center for Learner Equity](#).

The study was commissioned by the Colorado Department of Education, which convened a working group to suggest rules changes.

See [Disability](#) on page 17

## Solicitud de Escuelas Chárter No Puede Preguntar Sobre Discapacidad

## COLORADO

By Erica Meltzer

**L**as escuelas chárter de Colorado ya no podrán pre-guntar en sus solicitudes si los alumnos necesitan servicios de educación especial.

El cambio en esta regla hace que Colorado cumpla con las normas federales emitidas hace más de cinco años. La Junta Estatal de Educación aprobó el cambio por unanimidad el mes pasado.

Las escuelas chárter también tendrán que dejar claro en sus páginas de internet que no discriminan y que capacitan a sus empleados para contestar cualquier pregunta sobre las políticas de admisión correctamente para así no disuadir a las familias de estudiantes con necesidades especiales, lo cual incluye a los discapacitados y los que están aprendiendo inglés.

El cambio ocurrió después de que la organización *Disability Law Colorado* presentara quejas ante la Oficina de Derechos Civiles del Departamento de Educación de EE.UU. contra 29 escuelas chárter que hacían preguntas sobre discapacidad en sus solicitudes.

La mayoría de las escuelas actualizaron rápidamente su solicitud en respuesta a las quejas. Los administradores de muchas de las escuelas dijeron que no tenían intención de discriminar, sino solamente de planificar las necesidades de los estudiantes, pero los defensores de estudiantes con discapacidades dijeron que ese tipo de preguntas podría disuadir a los padres.

Las preguntas de la solicitud parecían violar las normas federales emitidas en un memorando en 2016, pero eran alentadas explícitamente en las reglas de las escuelas chárter de Colorado, que

les decían a las escuelas que determinaran "durante el proceso de admisión antes de la matrícula" si una escuela era la adecuada para un estudiante con necesidades especiales, incluidos aquellos con discapacidades y aquellos que están aprendiendo inglés.

Bill Kottenstette, director de *Schools of Choice Unit* dentro del Departamento de Educación de Colorado, dijo en la reunión que esa regla de las escuelas chárter fue adoptada en 2012, antes de la adopción de las normas federales.

Las escuelas chárter de Colorado matriculan menos estudiantes con discapacidades que el promedio del estado - y menos que las escuelas chárter en la mayoría de los otros estados, según un estudio del *Center for Learner Equity*.

El estudio fue comisionado por el Departamento de Educación de Colorado, que convocó un grupo

de trabajo para sugerir cambios en las reglas. Esa labor estaba en progreso cuando se presentaron las quejas.

Los cambios en las reglas dejan claro que las conversaciones sobre qué servicios necesitan los estudiantes deben tener lugar después de admitirlos a la escuela. Las reglas nuevas prohíben que las escuelas chárter hagan preguntas en su solicitud que pudieran identificar a un estudiante como parte de grupos demográficos legalmente protegidos contra discriminación,

requieren que las solicitudes sean accesibles para personas con discapacidades, y requieren que las escuelas ofrezcan asistencia para los padres cuyo dominio del inglés sea limitado.

Durante la reunión del mes pasado, Alex Medler, director ejecutivo de la *Colorado Association of Charter School Authorizers*, dijo que una investigación reci-

ente comisionada por el grupo encontró que los padres se quejaron repetidamente sobre la falta de información sobre cómo funcionan las admisiones de las escuelas chárter para estudiantes con discapacidades.

Él elogió los cambios en las reglas pero dijo que aún se necesita más.

"Necesitamos educar a los padres sobre sus opciones, y ayudar al distrito y al personal de las escuelas chárter a comunicárselas," dijo.

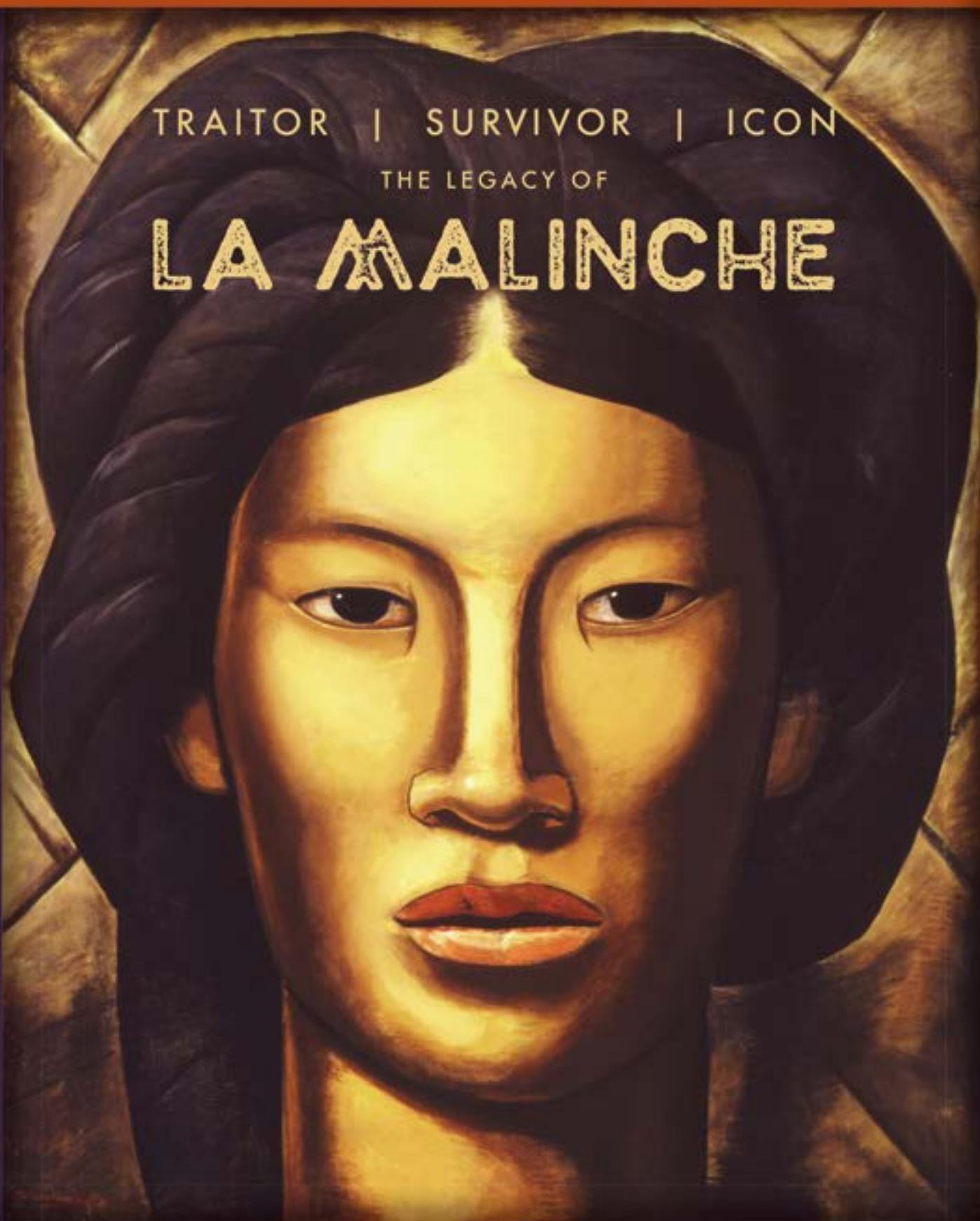
*Erica Meltzer es la jefa de la oficina de Chalkbeat Colorado. La reportera senior de Chalkbeat Ann Schimke aportó a este reportaje. Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por Chalkbeat.*

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**February 6–May 8, 2022**

Explore the enduring legacy of Mexico's La Malinche—one of history's most enigmatic and fascinating figures.

Image: Alfredo Ramos Martínez, *La Malinche/Young Girl of Tlaloc, Oaxaca*, 1940. Oil paint on canvas, 50 x 40½ in. Phoenix Art Museum. Photo © purchase with funds provided by the Friends of Mexican Art, 1999.6. ©The Alfredo Ramos Martínez Research Project, reproduced by permission.

Dates: Saturday, June 11: The Legacy of La Malinche is organized by the Denver Art Museum. This exhibition has been made possible in part by a major grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities; Democracy demands wisdom. Additional funding is provided by Furthermore: a program of the J. M. Kaplan Fund, University of Denver, College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, the donors to the Annual Fund Leadership Campaign, and the residents who support the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District (SCFD). Promotional support is provided by ECHO Magazine and CBS4. Special thanks to the National Institute of Anthropology and History and Mexico's Secretary of Culture.



Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this exhibition do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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## State News / Noticias del Estado

## MCA Denver's Scholarship Application Launches for 2022

**COLORADO**

The Museum of Contemporary Art Denver (MCA Denver) announced the 2022 Failure Award Scholarship worth \$20,000 for a graduating high school senior who demonstrates innovation, creativity, fearlessness, and a willingness to risk failure in the pursuit of something new.

The Failure Award scholarship rewards a Colorado student who embraces the spirit of creative risk-taking with scholarship dollars that can be used at any accredited post-secondary institution towards educational expenses.

"While so much of student life is focused on achievement, MCA Denver believes that in order to create something original and authentic, it is necessary to risk failure. The Failure Award is given not on the basis of academic merit or



18-year-old Kaley Corinaldi MCA Denver 2021 scholarship winner.

athletic prowess, but rather on a student's demonstration of a willingness to take these risks," said Sarah Kate Biae, MCA Denver Director of Programming.

The Failure Award is based on documentation of a project the

student created or produced while in high school that demonstrates originality and creativity. This can be a creative project, like a novel, a play, an opera; a technology-based project like a design for a new car, or a spaceship, or a robot; or some-

thing that falls outside of these criteria altogether. Some projects may present solutions to problems in the world, however, all projects will be considered, no matter how harebrained, impractical, or absurd.

Interested applicants can apply via the museum's website at [www.mcadenger.org](http://www.mcadenger.org) or by creating an account to access the application through The Denver Foundation by April 1, 2022. To be eligible, applicants must:

- Be a resident of and attend high school in Colorado
- Graduate from high school in the spring of 2022
- Plan to attend an accredited college or university in the fall of 2022
- Be able to attend the Failure Awards on April 30, 2022

Finalists will be selected based on their project descrip-

tion and supporting documentation, demonstration of creative risk-taking, and presentation. If selected, students will present their project to a panel of judges, as well as to the visiting public, during the MCA Denver Failure Awards. Each student will be given up to ten minutes to present their work and then will answer questions from the panel. Participants will be evaluated on originality, innovation, and their ability to present a project within the theme of risking failure as an integral part of the creative process.

The scholarship is generously supported by the Fries Foundation.

To learn more about the selection process, important dates and more, visit [www.mcadenger.org](http://www.mcadenger.org).

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## Se Lanza la Solicitud de Becas de MCA Denver para 2022

**COLORADO**

El Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Denver (MCA Denver) anunció la Beca

Premio al Fracaso de 2022 con un valor de \$20,000 para un(a) estudiante de último año de preparatoria que demuestre innovación, creatividad, valentía, y la disposición

de arriesgarse a fracasar en su búsqueda por algo nuevo.

La Beca Premio al Fracaso recompensa a un(a) estudiante de Colorado que adopta el espíritu

de tomar riesgos creativos con dólares de becas que se pueden usar en cualquier institución postsecundaria acreditada para gastos educativos.

"Mientras que tantas cosas de la vida estudiantil están centradas en los logros, en el Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Denver creemos que para poder crear algo original y auténtico, es necesario arriesgar el fracaso. El Premio al Fracaso no se otorga con base en mérito académico o destreza estética, sino en la demostración de disposición para tomar estos riesgos," dijo Sarah Kate Baie, Directora de Programación del Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Denver.

El Premio al Fracaso se basa en documentación de un proyecto creado o producido durante la preparatoria que demuestre originalidad y creatividad. Esto puede ser un proyecto creativo como una novela, una obra de teatro, una ópera; un proyecto basado en la tecnología como el diseño para un nuevo automóvil, o una nave espacial, o un robot; o algo que caiga completamente fuera de estos criterios. Algunos proyectos pueden presentar soluciones a problemas en el mundo, pero, todos los proyectos se van a considerar sin importar que tan descabellados, imprácticos o absurdos sean.

Los candidatos interesados pueden aplicar solicitando a través de la página web [www.mcadenger.org](http://www.mcadenger.org) o creando una cuenta para acceder a la solicitud a través de

La Fundación Denver antes del 1ro de abril, 2022. Para ser elegibles, los solicitantes deben:

- Ser residentes de y atender a la preparatoria en Colorado
- Graduarse de la preparatoria en la primavera de 2022
- Planear asistir a una universidad acreditada en el otoño de 2022
- Poder asistir al Premio al Fracaso el 30 de abril de 2022

Los finalistas serán seleccionados con base en la descripción de su proyecto y en la documentación del mismo, demostración de riesgos creativos y presentación. Si son seleccionados, los estudiantes presentarán su proyecto a un panel de jueces, así como al público que atendió, durante los Premios al Fracaso del Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Denver. A cada estudiante se le otorgarán diez minutos para presentar su trabajo y después responderán preguntas del panel. Los participantes serán evaluados por su originalidad, innovación y su habilidad para presentar un proyecto que enmarque el tema de tomar riesgos como parte integral de un proceso creativo.

La beca es generosamente apoyada por la Fundación Fries.

Para aprender más sobre el proceso de selección, fechas importantes y más, visita [www.mcadenger.org](http://www.mcadenger.org).

**Para Noticias de Colorado:**  
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## State Launches Tax Time Enrollment Program for Health Coverage

### COLORADO

**T**here's something new that Coloradans can look forward to when filing their 2021 State tax return—an opportunity to enroll in free or low-cost health coverage.

Thanks to a [state law](#) passed in 2020, starting this tax season, residents can mark on their Colorado tax return that they are uninsured and interested in finding out if they qualify for free or low-cost health coverage. With the check of a box, uninsured tax filers opt-in to share their information with [Connect for Health Colorado](#), the official health

insurance marketplace. By doing so, they can qualify for a special enrollment period with Connect for Health Colorado or be connected to coverage with Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid program).

Residents must file their Colorado state tax return and select the new checkbox option on their return by April 15th to qualify for this special enrollment period.

"More Coloradans than ever have access to the affordable, equitable, high-quality health care they need," said Lt. Governor and Director of the Office of Saving People Money on Health Care Di-

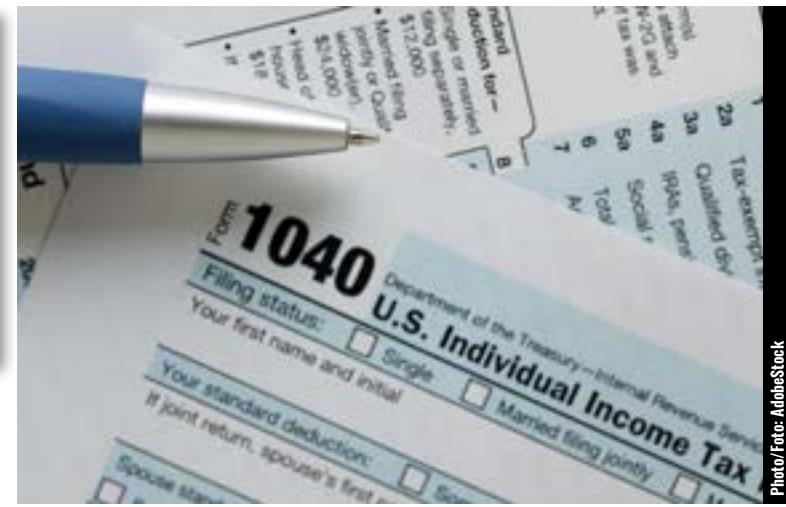
anne Primavera. "This is an exciting opportunity to help even more Coloradans get covered, and I encourage all those who are eligible

See [Enrollment](#) on page 17

“

"A pandemic is no time to be without health insurance."

Kim Bimestefer, Dept. of Health Care Policy & Financing



Photo/Foto: AlamyStock

Colorado offers a new way to get health insurance outside of the annual enrollment period. / Colorado ofrece una nueva forma de obtener un seguro médico fuera del periodo de inscripción anual.

## Programa de Inscripción para la Cobertura de Salud

### COLORADO

**H**ay algo nuevo que los habitantes de Colorado pueden esperar cuando presenten su declaración de impuestos estatales de 2021: una oportunidad para inscribirse en una cobertura de salud gratuita o de bajo costo.

Gracias a una ley estatal aprobada en 2020, a partir de esta temporada de impuestos, los residentes pueden marcar en su declaración de impuestos de Colorado que no tienen seguro y que están interesados en saber si califican para una cobertura de salud gratuita o de bajo costo. Al marcar una casilla, los

declarantes de impuestos sin seguro optan por compartir su información con [Connect for Health Colorado](#), el mercado oficial de seguros de salud. Al hacerlo, pueden calificar para un período de inscripción especial con Connect for Health Colorado o ser conectados a la cobertura con Health First Colorado (el pro-

grama de Medicaid de Colorado). Los residentes deben presentar su declaración de impuestos del estado de Colorado y seleccionar la nueva opción en su declaración antes del 15 de abril para calificar para este período de inscripción especial.

Vea [Inscripción](#), página 19

“

"Una pandemia no es momento para estar sin seguro médico".

Kim Bimestefer,  
Departamento de Política y Financiación de la Atención Sanitaria.

## DeGette, Eshoo, Upton Join Forces to Advance Cures 2.0, ARPA-H Act

### NEW MEXICO



Photo/Foto: Rep. DeGette

U.S. Reps. Diana DeGette (D-CO).

**U**S. Reps. Diana DeGette (D-CO), Anna Eshoo (D-CA) and Fred Upton (R-MI) have joined forces to advance two critical health care bills aimed at revolutionizing America's biomedical research capabilities and creating a new advanced research agency for health modeled after the Department of Defense's highly successful DARPA program.

The move became clear during a key congressional subcommittee hearing on Tuesday in which the lawmakers all expressed support for each other's legislation and vowed to work together to get both bills approved by the full House as soon as possible.

See [DeGette](#) on page 17

Once approved, the measures – the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health Act (H.R. 5585), introduced by Eshoo, and Cures 2.0 (H.R. 6000), introduced by DeGette and Upton – would not only create a new Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health, known as ARPA-H, to find new cures and treatments for some of the world's most difficult diseases, but would also provide the new agency the framework it needs to be successful.

"ARPA-H and Cures 2.0 are complementary and the chair will seek to move them together so that we can advance the legislation, not only through the full committee, but through the full House of Representatives," said Eshoo, who serves as chairwoman of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health.

"When Fred and I first teamed up in 2015 to draft the 21st Century Cures Act, we couldn't have imagined the incredible success it would have for this country," DeGette said during the hearing. "Because of it, we have a better understanding of the human brain, we've made huge strides in regenerative medicine, we've increased funding

## ATTENTION BOULDER COUNTY

All **residents and business owners** who have sustained losses as a result of the Marshall Fire can **apply for federal disaster aid** here:

### DisasterAssistance.gov

### 1-800-621-FEMA (3362)

For **hearing and speech impaired**, call:

### 1-800-462-7585

**Toll-free** telephone numbers will operate from **7 a.m. to 10 p.m. MT**

## State News / Noticias del Estado

## Program Helps Early Childhood Educators Advance Their Careers

## NEW MEXICO

Early Childhood (EC) educators—the dedicated professionals who work with children ages 0-5—make an average of \$12.24 nationally and only \$10.26 per-hour in New México. Home-based educators often make even less because of the long hours they put in to run their home business.

This low pay, and the essential role provided by EC educators that COVID-19 highlighted even more, is why New México's Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) funds an incentive program that supplements wages for educators through a twice-annual wage supplement while providing scholarships so EC educators can go back to school and increase their training and earning power.

The statewide effort is called the ECECD Scholarship and Wage Supplement Program and Central New México (CNM) Ingenuity serves as the administrator for the program. With several million dollars in funding, CNM oversees the Scholarship, Wage Supplement and Bilingual Incentive programs available to EC educators. EC educators can earn two annual wage



Graciela Bazzanella is working to further her career as an educator. / Graciela Bazzanella está trabajando para impulsar su carrera como educadora.

supplements provided they are working at least 20 hours per-week, make less than \$16/hour, and have a minimum of five credits in early childhood education.

The scholarship side of the program covers the entire cost of tuition, books, and fees for any educator taking early childhood education classes at a New México postsecondary institution. Bilingual EC educators can also apply for a one-time supplement of \$1,500 and anyone interested in bilingual coursework as part of an Early Childhood degree can have

their classes paid for as part of the scholarship program.

The requirement that educators enroll in college classes is key to the wage supplement and scholarship program because several recent studies have shown that well-trained EC educators have a lasting and increased impact on a child's education and overall success.

"It's critical for children of all ages, but especially in the early formative years, to have access to educators who are well prepared with the knowledge and skills to educate children in their most crit-

ical stage of development," says Holly Gurule, the CNM Program Director for the ECECD Scholarship and Pay Incentive Programs. "The education our educators receive helps them create an understanding of child development that provides a background for everything from creating lesson plans and supplemental materials that foster learning, to opening a daycare or preschool center, and assisting parents in developmentally appropriate communication and care of their young children."

There are 10 levels of wage supplements and they vary based on education level. Educators with at least five credit hours (Level 1) can get two yearly payments of \$260. Educators that have an associate degree (Level 5) are eligible for two yearly payments of \$1,248. And educators who have a bachelor's degree (Level 10) are eligible for two payments of \$2,548.

Graciela Bazzanella, who moved to New México during the middle of the pandemic, started working at La Esperanza Childhood Development Center and immediately got her Child Development Certificate. Then she found out about the ECECD program from her director

**“The entire program is really encouraging. I thought, ‘if it’s free and they’re paying me to further my education, why not?’”**

Graciela Bazzanella

and used the scholarship to enroll in the Early Childhood Multicultural Education program at CNM. She's currently receiving a twice-annual Level 3 wage supplement and will go up to a Level 4 and 5 as she continues her education.

Graciela says that the wage supplement, plus the ability to take free CNM classes online and in the evening have been a huge help.

"As a mom and a full-time employee the flexibility and financial support have made everything so much easier," she says. "The entire program is really encouraging. I thought, 'if it's free and they're paying me to further my education, why not?!"

For more information or to apply, visit [eecd scholarship.org](http://eecd scholarship.org).

**For More New México News:**  
[ELSEMANARIO.US](http://ELSEMANARIO.US)

## El Programa Ayuda a los Educadores a Avanzar en sus Carreras

## NEW MEXICO

Los educadores de la primera infancia (EC) -los profesionales dedicados que trabajan con niños de 0 a 5 años- ganan un promedio de 12,24 dólares a nivel nacional y sólo 10,26 dólares por hora en Nuevo México. Los educadores a domicilio suelen ganar incluso menos debido a las largas horas que dedican a su negocio en casa.

Esta baja remuneración, y el papel esencial que desempeñan los educadores de EC que COVID-19 destaca aún más, es la razón por la que el Departamento de Educación y Cuidado de la Primera Infancia (ECECD) de Nuevo México financia un programa de incentivos que complementa los salarios de los educadores a través de un suplemento salarial dos veces al año, a la vez que proporciona becas para que los educadores de EC puedan volver a la escuela y aumentar su formación y su poder adquisitivo.

El esfuerzo estatal se denomina Programa de Becas y Suplementos Salariales de la ECECD y Cen-

**“**

"Todo el programa es realmente alentador. Pensé: 'si es gratis y me pagan para que siga estudiando, ¿por qué no?".

Graciela Bazzanella

tral New México (CNM) Ingenuity actúa como administrador del programa. Con varios millones de dólares de financiación, CNM supervisa los programas de becas, suplementos salariales e incentivos bilingües disponibles para los educadores de la CE. Los educadores de AE pueden obtener dos complementos salariales anuales siempre que trabajen al menos 20 horas a la semana, ganen menos de 16 dólares por hora y tengan un mínimo de cinco créditos en educación infantil.

La parte de la beca del programa cubre el coste total de la matrícula, los libros y las tasas para cualquier educador que tome

Vea [Educadores](#), página 19

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**city of albuquerque**

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## Support Available for Students, Families in English and Spanish



Photo: AdobeStock

A new workshop series will assist families and caregivers to help kids learn to read. / Una nueva serie de talleres ayudará a las familias y a los cuidadores a que los niños aprendan a leer.

### NEW MEXICO

The New Mexico Public Education Department recently launched a Quarantine Response Hotline to provide on-demand technical support and homework help to students who are missing school due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The hotline, **800-805-1192**, is available to quarantined and self-isolating K-12 students in districts and charter schools participating in ENGAGE New México, a Public Education Department pro-

gram created early in the pandemic to help keep students engaged in learning.

"As the pandemic evolves, we have to pivot again and again to embrace new strategies," said Public Education Secretary (Designate) Kurt Steinhaus. "A year ago, that meant remote learning. In the current Omicron surge, we have a lot of students missing class because they're required to isolate or quarantine. Last year's remote-learning options aren't always available, so offering this homework hotline is another pivot to meet student needs."

Eligible students can call the hotline between 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. Monday through Friday to get connected to an academic success coach provided by the Graduation Alliance, the Public Education Department's ENGAGE New México partner. Video chats are also available to students needing more in-depth assistance, and callers can choose to receive help in English or Spanish.

Students who are missing school due to the COVID-19 pandemic do not have to be referred to the ENGAGE New México program for ongoing support to get help from the hotline, and there is no cost to students, districts or charter schools.

The Public Education Department partnered with Graduation Alliance in spring 2020 to provide individual academic coaches for students in grades K-12 and their families who might be struggling amid remote learning. In its first year, ENGAGE New México provided more than 11,000 "interventions" – the program's term for student coaching sessions. Find out [here](#) if your district or state-chartered school is participating in ENGAGE New México.

### Reading Workshop

Registration is now open for a series of three workshops to help families and caregivers learn strategies to help young readers improve their literacy skills at home.

The Public Education Department, in partnership with TNTP (formerly known as The New Teacher Project), is offering the virtual Family Literacy Academy, with sessions in Spanish and English, over February, March and April.

All workshops begin at 5 p.m. The first will be held Feb. 15 in English and Feb. 17 in Spanish and will focus on background knowledge and vocabulary. The second will be held March 29 in English and March 31 in Spanish and will focus on print concepts and fluency. The third, on April 26 (English) and April 28 (Spanish), will focus on comprehension. Register [here](#) for the English workshops.

Participants will get information, tools and strategies to help young readers in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade. All sessions will offer breakout rooms by grade level bands to give participants targeted support for building literacy skills in the home.

"You'll learn similar techniques to what your child's teacher is using to teach reading at school, but through fun strategies that will fit right into your daily routine at home," said Katherine Avery, the Public Education Department's director of Strategic Outreach. "Teachers study the science of reading, but you don't have to have an education degree to apply science-of-reading strategies at home. We'll get you started at the Family Literacy Academy."

Participants will learn about "structured literacy" programs, which help children build skills sequentially and logically – starting with foundational skills like decoding symbols into words and building up to spelling, expanded vocabulary, comprehension and writing.

The structured literacy approach helps every child learn to read, but it's essential for children with dyslexia, a learning disability that can make learning to read especially hard.

Up to 20% of the population displays signs of dyslexia by some estimates, which is why New

**See Students on page 16**

## Apoyo Disponible para Estudiantes y Familias en Inglés y Español

### NEW MEXICO

El Departamento de Educación Pública de Nuevo México lanzó recientemente una línea telefónica de respuesta a la cuarentena para brindar apoyo técnico y ayuda con las tareas escolares a los estudiantes que faltan a la escuela debido a la pandemia de COVID-19.

La línea directa, 800-805-1192, está disponible para los estudiantes de K-12 en cuarentena y autoaislados en los distritos y escuelas charter que participan en ENGAGE Nuevo México, un programa del Departamento de Educación Pública creado a principios de la pandemia para ayudar a mantener a los estudiantes comprometidos con el aprendizaje.

"A medida que la pandemia evoluciona, tenemos que pivotar una y otra vez para adoptar nuevas estrategias", dijo el Secretario de Educación Pública (designado) Kurt Steinhaus. "Hace un año, eso significaba el aprendizaje a distancia. En la actual oleada de Omicron, tenemos muchos alumnos que faltan a clase porque se les exige

aislamiento o cuarentena. Las opciones de aprendizaje a distancia del año pasado no siempre están disponibles, por lo que ofrecer esta línea de ayuda para los deberes es otro giro para satisfacer las necesidades de los estudiantes."

Los estudiantes elegibles pueden llamar a la línea directa entre las 7 a.m. y las 8 p.m., de lunes a viernes, para conectarse con un entrenador de éxito académico proporcionado por la Alianza para la Graduación, el socio de ENGAGE New México del Departamento de Educación Pública. También hay chats de video disponibles para los estudiantes que necesitan una asistencia más profunda, y los que llaman pueden elegir recibir ayuda en inglés o en español.

Los estudiantes que faltan a la escuela debido a la pandemia de COVID-19 no tienen que ser referidos al programa ENGAGE Nuevo México para recibir apoyo continuo para obtener ayuda de la línea directa, y no hay costo para los estudiantes, los distritos o las escuelas charter.

Vea [Estudiantes](#), página 21

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tud y declarar su independencia, mediante una revuelta épica (1791-1804) que llena de gloria la historia de esta nación caribeña.

Pero como suele ocurrir a través de la historia con el desarrollo de las naciones y sus desajustes por corrupción, violencia, pobreza y falta de apoyo, las oleadas de migrantes van y vienen creando un círculo vicioso que, hasta nuestros días, no cesa. Y los haitianos en años recientes, como en oportunidades previas, han estado inmersos de crisis en crisis, ya sea política o porque la furia de la naturaleza, a través de terremotos y huracanes, los ha llevado a salir de su nación buscando un mejor porvenir.

Por otro lado, la política migratoria de Estados Unidos hacia los haitianos ha sido caótica y prejuiciosa. Cómo olvidar las desgarradoras imágenes de haitianos hacinados en la frontera entre Estados Unidos y México en condiciones infráhumanas siendo perseguidos por agentes fronterizos, incluso a caballo, cual si fueran presas de caza.

Ya el grupo [Haitian Bridge Alliance](#) había detectado y dado a conocer en diciembre de 2021 una serie de anomalías que enfrenta la comunidad haitiana migrante en la zona fronteriza México-Estados Unidos, sobre todo en Texas. Menciona, entre otras, la "denegación

de acceso a abogados e intérpretes disponibles; atención médica inadecuada; ausencia de exámenes de detección basados en el miedo; bloqueo del acceso a los medios de comunicación; alimentos y agua inadecuados; intimidación física por parte de agentes de CBP; y declaraciones engañosas por parte del Departamento de Seguridad Nacional (DHS)".

Ahora mismo hay miles de refugiados haitianos varados en México porque Estados Unidos, durante la presidencia del demócrata Joe Biden, sigue aplicando el Título 42 del gobierno de Trump, argumentando que por las restricciones de la pandemia del Covid estos solicitantes de asilo tienen que hacerlo desde México, donde son víctimas de crimen, violencia y racismo.

Desde marzo de 2020, por ejemplo, miles de migrantes con casos sólidos de asilo han sido expulsados a México o incluso a sus países de origen. Se calcula, por ejemplo, que desde septiembre de 2021 el gobierno de Biden ha deportado a más de 14.000 haitianos a una na-

ción rota que no puede absorberlos ni atender sus necesidades más básicas. De hecho, considerada la economía más pobre de la región latinoamericana y del Caribe, difícilmente Haití repuntará en el corto plazo, tomando en cuenta los más recientes datos de la Comisión Económica para América Latina y el Caribe (Cepal) en los que indica que dicha región "[desacelerará su ritmo de crecimiento](#) en 2022 a 2.1%, luego de crecer 6.2% promedio el año pasado".

A eso se suma, según el reporte, "persistencia e incertidumbre sobre la evolución de la pandemia, fuerte desaceleración del crecimiento, se mantienen la baja inversión, productividad y lenta recuperación del empleo, persistencia de los efectos sociales provocados por la crisis, menor espacio fiscal, aumentos en las presiones inflacionarias y desequilibrios financieros".

En el caso específico de Haití, dice por su parte el [Banco Mundial](#) "el 60% de la población haitiana, o 6.3 millones de personas, sigue siendo pobre, y el 24%, o 2.5 mil-

lones, se encuentra en situación de pobreza extrema".

Así, aunque esa nefasta política pública de deportaciones implementada por el gobierno estadounidense afecta a migrantes de todas partes, el caso haitiano, por su crudeza y porque plantea abiertamente prejuicios raciales, es por demás ofensivo. Solamente pensemos si esos migrantes, haitianos y no haitianos, fueran rubios de tez blanca y ojos claros, ¿se les trataría igual?

Por eso todos debemos conmemorar la historia afroamericana porque de una forma u otra estamos interconectados. No debemos olvidar lo que tenemos en común: un pasado y un presente de lucha contra el racismo y el prejuicio que siguen asomando sus horribles rostros en pleno Siglo 21.

*Maribel Hastings es Asesora Ejecutiva de América's Voice.*

*David Torres es Asesor en Español de América's Voice.*

**Leer Más Comentarios:**  
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## Iglesias

Working with my legal team has also reminded me that there are people who care about transgender people and are willing to help us fight for what we need. My message to people who want to do something to help is that you can be an advocate by encouraging your friends and family members to be more accepting of transgender people. Everyone needs to understand that being trans is real and that our medical needs are real and serious.

I wish that prison officials and other people understood how hard it is to be transgender in prison because we have to fight not just for our basic rights, like medical care, but also for our safety. I have faced violence and discrimination from staff and other prisoners just for being who I am, and it has not been easy.

I want the Bureau of Prisons to do the right thing and give me the surgery I need. It shouldn't take a court order for me and other transgender people to get adequate health care, as has happened in the past. A federal judge has already ordered the Bureau of Prisons to evaluate me for surgery, but they are still dragging their feet. I want them to stop creating barriers — and to understand that we are human, too.

**Read More Commentary:**  
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## Dorantes

Schools and community organizations in Salinas should invest more in developing college and career readiness. This could be done through career fairs and schoolwide college visits.

For example, in the Natchez-Adams School District in Mississippi, students have the opportunity to get training in different career paths at the Fallin Career & Technology Center. Students can take courses there in digital media technology, health science and health teaching, among others.

Natchez-Adams high school students also have a program through which they can get a head start on higher education. They can enroll at their local community college and take classes to get associate degrees. This pathway is strongly encouraged, and 75 percent of students in the 2021 graduating class of the Natchez Early College Academy received associate degrees this way.

I believe high schools in Salinas and elsewhere should implement similar programs to help students feel more prepared as they enter college and the workforce. That would be the first step, but promoting the programs would be the second. Students would be grateful for it.

I encourage the Salinas Union High School District and other districts to consider creating more programs that will help students get not only high-quality college and career information but also high-quality assistance for their future endeavors.

*Carolyn Dorantes is a junior at Rancho San Juan High School. She writes for the Voices of Monterey Bay and the Student Voice Journalism Fellowship.*

**Read More Commentary:**  
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## Students

México is now screening every first-grade student for signs of dyslexia. The screening is not a diagnosis, but it helps educators intervene early on if a child needs it before those challenges become ingrained in the upper grades.

**For More New México News:**  
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## Tests

of their earnings back to customers, but they pocketed a lot more.

As the companies' actuaries work on predicting 2023 expenditures, premiums could go up if they foresee more claims and expenses. Paying for millions of rapid tests is something they would include in their calculations.

#### 4. Regardless of my premiums, will the tests cost me money directly?

It's quite possible. If your insurance company doesn't have an arrangement with a retailer where you can simply pick up your allotted tests, you'll have to pay for them — at whatever price the store sets. If that's the case, you'll need to fill out a form to request a reimbursement from the insurance company. How many times have you lost receipts or just plain neglected to mail in for rebates on something you bought? A lot, right?

Here's another thing: The reimbursement is set at \$12 per test. If you pay \$30 for a test — and that is not unheard of — your insurer is only on the hook for \$12. You eat the \$18.

A few free tests are supposed to arrive at every American home via the U.S. Postal Service. And the Biden administration has activated a website where Americans can

order free tests from a cache of a billion the federal government ordered.

#### 5. Will this help bring down the costs of at-home tests and make them easier to find?

The free covid tests are unlikely to have much immediate impact on general cost and availability. You will still need to search for them. The federal measures likely will stimulate the demand for tests, which in the short term may make them harder to find.

But the demand, and some government guarantees to manufacturers, may induce test makers to make more of them faster. The increased competition and supply theoretically could bring down the price. There is certainly room for prices to decline since the wholesale cost of the test is between \$5 and \$7, analysts estimate. "It's a big step in the right direction," Gee said.

*Damon Darlin for Kaiser Health News. Kaiser Health News, a nonprofit news service covering health issues. It is an editorially independent program of the Kaiser Family Foundation, which is not affiliated with Kaiser Permanente.*

**Read More COVID-19 News:**  
[ELSEMANARIO.US](#)

## DeGette

for Alzheimer's research and cancer research."

"We've got some real champions, bipartisan, on both sides of the Capitol looking for ARPA-H, knowing that DARPA was so successful," Upton said.

The witnesses at Tuesday's hearing agreed that the ARPA-H Act and Cures 2.0 should be seen as complementary pieces of legislation and should be moved together.

"The ultimate goal here is to improve health care for everybody in this country," said Dr. Geoffrey Ling, a professor of Neurology at Johns Hopkins University, who testified at the hearing. "To do that, you have to attack the entire problem in total. ARPA-H is just a small piece. Cures 2.0 actually embraces much more of the health in form, the policy issues, working with FDA and a number of other things that are absolutely essential to realizing this ultimate goal that we have."

The hearing of the Health subcommittee comes just days after President Biden announced new steps his administration was taking to reignite the Cancer Moonshot program, which was included in DeGette and Upton's original 21st Century Cures Act, and called on Congress to advance legislation needed to create the new ad-

vanced research agency to "end cancer as we know it."

Modeled after the Pentagon's Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, or DARPA — which has been responsible for developing some of the most consequential technologies of our time, including the Internet, GPS and self-driving cars — ARPA-H would be run by a relatively small number of program managers who would each be given a high degree of autonomy to choose which high-risk, high-reward projects to pursue.

Under the terms of the proposals, ARPA-H, like DARPA, would provide some of the nation's greatest minds access to the federal government's virtually limitless resources to make the impossible, possible; and help shape the future of medicine in the U.S. for many years to come.

While the ARPA-H Act would provide the authorization needed to create the new agency, Cures 2.0 would provide the framework needed to ensure it's able to work seamlessly with other key health care agencies — such as the National Institutes of Health, FDA, CDC and more — to achieve its goals.

**For More Colorado News:**  
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## Disability

school admissions work for students with disabilities.

He praised the rule changes but said more is needed.

"We need to educate parents about their options and help both district and charter staff communicate it," he said.

*Erica Meltzer is a Bureau Chief with Chalkbeat Colorado. Chalkbeat Senior Reporter Ann Schimke contributed to this report. Chalkbeat is a nonprofit news organization covering public education. This story was originally published by Chalkbeat.*

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## Enrollment

to mark the box on their 2021 tax returns and learn more."

"The Department of Revenue is honored to partner with Connect for Health Colorado on this important initiative," said Executive Director Mark Ferrandino. "Working together to serve Coloradans is the foundation of our mission and we are innovating new ways to meet our customers where they are."

"This tool will help reduce the uninsured rate by connecting eligible but not insured residents to affordable coverage," said Connect for Health Colorado's Chief Executive Officer Kevin Patterson. "We are here to inform Coloradans about free and reduced-cost health coverage options. I encourage residents and tax preparers to check that box and take advantage of this new sign-up opportunity this tax season."

Residents can enroll in coverage through Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid program) or the Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) program any time during the year if they qualify.

"A pandemic is no time to be without health insurance," said Kim Bimestefer, Executive Director for the Department of Health Care

Policy & Financing. "Our Department is now covering 1 in 4 Coloradans, or 1.6 million people. With zero premiums, no deductible and very low copays, Health First Colorado, as well as our other safety net programs like Child Health Plan Plus, are here to cover Coloradans who qualify. Checking the box will help connect you to our coverage options."

**Other Enrollment Opportunities**  
People who don't use or qualify for the Tax Time Enrollment program might be eligible to sign up for health insurance now if they have a different qualifying circumstance, like losing employer-sponsored health insurance or being affected by the Marshall Fire or by COVID-19.

Representatives, Assisters and certified Brokers are available and ready to help residents figure out which special enrollment period they may qualify for and how to enroll. Contact Connect for Health Colorado at 855-752-6749 or [ConnectforHealthCO.com](#) to enroll and find free, local enrollment assistance.

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and just wait and wait and wait until the child is three years behind."

**Stretched thin**

Meanwhile, special educators are "overloaded and overworked and overwhelmed," said Hillary Daniels, a special education teacher at Denver's Hallett Academy elementary school.

When the pandemic hit in March 2020 and schools shut down, special education evaluations came to a halt. Teachers had no real guidance for how to teach online, let alone conduct the type of tests needed to identify a student for special education. The district may consider evaluations done by outside providers, like the one Barraza obtained for her son, but they aren't obligated to accept them when making decisions, a district spokesperson said.

The evaluations the district would have conducted in spring 2020 got pushed to the fall — and though officials came up with guidelines for how to do them virtually, it wasn't easy, said Rob Gould, president of the Denver Classroom Teachers Association and a former special educator.

"It's really hard to tell through a computer screen: Is this a learning disability? Is this an emotional disability? Or is this frustration because they can't hear the teacher?" he said.

The setting presented challenges too. Before the pandemic, when Daniels would evaluate a student, it was she and the student in a quiet room at school. At home, she said, a student may be in a virtual evaluation while their sister is yelling in the background or horns are honking outside.

That meant that even if educators completed a virtual evaluation, it might not be accurate. Daniels recalls one student who, when school buildings reopened and he returned for in-person learning, did not match the individualized education program, or IEP, based on his virtual evaluation. The goals listed in his IEP focused on paying attention, staying on task, and improving his speech. When he got to school, his teachers realized he couldn't yet hold a pencil — an important skill that was hard to evaluate online and had been completely missed.

"This child comes to us, and the needs he demonstrates in front of us in person are much different than the paper we got that tried to explain this child," Daniels said.

In that case, the student had to be re-evaluated for motor skills and cognitive concerns, Daniels said. Such unexpected re-evalu-

ations, when added to the regular flow of initial evaluations, planned re-evaluations, and annual IEP reviews, put special educators behind.

The data reflects that. Per federal law, districts must complete evaluations within 60 days from when a student's parents give consent. Whereas Denver Public Schools completed 93% of initial evaluations for students ages 3 through 21 within 60 days in pre-pandemic 2018-19, that percentage dropped to 87% in 2019-20 and 84% last school year, according to state data.

On top of doing evaluations, the district asked special educators to write contingency plans that spelled out how each child would receive their services during virtual learning. Later, the district asked educators to review if the services each student received virtually were adequate or if the student qualified for makeup services because they missed so much.

Rottier-Lukens, Denver's special education director, said the decisions were based on equity. For example, rather than wait for savvy parents to ask for the makeup services, officially known as compensatory services, the district is reviewing each child's case proactively. But she acknowledged that doing so takes time and has contributed to a feeling among special education teachers and specialists of "being pulled right, left, and center."

Daniels knows that feeling well. Whereas some special education teachers or specialists may be forced to spend less time working directly with students to complete what Gould called a "tsunami of paperwork," Daniels has ended up taking her paperwork home.

"My work-life balance does not exist," she said.

**Short staffed**

Staffing shortages have also contributed to the problem. It was difficult for districts to fill special education positions before the pandemic, but officials said it's even tougher now. Denver Public Schools had 19 unfilled special education teacher positions and 118 unfilled special education paraprofessional positions as of January.

Rottier-Lukens said she's also seeing more mid-year resignations than ever before.

"Typically, most teachers will fulfill their contract at least," she said. "They'll make it somehow to the end of the year. I'm seeing a lot more people just resigning in October."



If children don't get evaluated in a timely manner and start getting services, they can fall even further behind.

Photo/Foto: AdobeStock

and accommodations he needs to succeed in school. She said she knows they exist.

"That's all I would like," she said.

**Know your rights**

If a parent suspects their child has a disability, they can initiate the special education evaluation process by telling their child's school they'd like an evaluation. More information [here](#).

School districts must complete initial special education evaluations within 60 days of a parent or guardian signing a consent form. More information [here](#).

Students and their families are eligible for support from an advocate as they navigate the process. In Denver, an organization called Advocacy Denver has both English- and Spanish-speaking advocates on staff. More information [here](#).

If a parent disagrees with the results of their child's special education evaluation, they can request the school district pay for an independent educational evaluation by an evaluator who doesn't work for the district. More information [here](#).

Some parents pay for independent evaluations themselves. While the school district must consider the recommendations of the private evaluator, it does not have to accept them. More information [here](#).

*Melanie Asmar is a Senior Reporter with Chalkbeat Colorado. Originally published at Chalkbeat.*

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## Pruebas

recoger las pruebas, se tendrá que pagar por ellas, al precio que establezca la tienda. Si ese es el caso, se tendrá que llenar un formulario para solicitar el reembolso a la aseguradora. ¿Cuántas veces una persona una persona ha perdido los recibos o simplemente se ha olvidado de enviarlos por correo para solicitar un reembolso? Muchas, ¿verdad?

Y otra cosa. El reembolso está fijado en \$12 por prueba. Si se paga \$30 por una prueba —nada inusual— la aseguradora solo se responsabiliza por \$12. Al consumidor le toca pagar \$18.

La administración Biden acaba de activar un sitio web del correo en el que los estadounidenses pueden ordenar algunos kits de pruebas gratis, que pagará el gobierno federal.

#### 5. ¿Ayudará esto a reducir los costos y a que sea más fáciles de encontrarlos?

Es poco probable que las pruebas gratuitas de covid tengan un impacto inmediato en el costo y la

## Inscripción

"Esta herramienta ayudará a reducir la tasa de no asegurados al conectar a los residentes elegibles pero no asegurados con una cobertura asequible", dijo el director ejecutivo de Connect for Health Colorado, Kevin Patterson. "Estamos aquí para informar a los habitantes de Colorado sobre las opciones de cobertura médica gratuita y de costo reducido. Animo a los residentes y a los preparadores de impuestos a marcar esa casilla y aprovechar esta nueva oportunidad de inscripción en esta temporada de impuestos."

Los residentes pueden inscribirse en la cobertura a través de Health First Colorado (el programa de Medicaid de Colorado) o el programa Child Health Plan Plus (CHP+) en cualquier momento del año si cumplen los requisitos.

"Una pandemia no es momento para estar sin seguro médico", dijo Kim Bimestefer, Directora Ejecutiva del Departamento de Política y Financiación de la Atención Sanitaria. "Nuestro Departamento está cubriendo ahora a 1 de cada 4 habitantes de Colorado, es decir, a 1,6 millones de personas. Con primas cero, sin deducible y copagos muy bajos, Health First Colorado, así como nuestros otros programas de

disponibilidad. Habrá que seguir buscándolas. Se estimulará la demanda, lo que a corto plazo puede hacer que sean más difíciles de encontrar.

Pero la demanda, y algunas garantías del gobierno a los fabricantes, pueden hacer que se produzcan más rápido. El aumento de la competencia y de la oferta podría, en teoría, hacer bajar el precio. Desde luego, hay margen para que los precios bajen, ya que el costo al por mayor de la prueba es de entre \$5 y \$7, según estiman los analistas. "Es un gran paso en la dirección correcta", señaló Gee.

*Damon Darlin for Kaiser Health News. Esta historia fue producida por Kaiser Health News, un programa editorialmente independiente de la Kaiser Family Foundation que no está relacionado con Kaiser Permanente.*

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## Educadores

clases de educación infantil en una institución postsecundaria de Nuevo México. Los educadores bilingües de EC también pueden solicitar un suplemento único de 1.500 dólares y cualquier persona interesada en realizar cursos bilingües como parte de un título de educación infantil puede tener sus clases pagadas como parte del programa de becas.

El requisito de que los educadores se matriculen en clases universitarias es clave para el suplemento salarial y el programa de becas porque varios estudios recientes han demostrado que los educadores de la primera infancia bien formados tienen un impacto duradero y mayor en la educación y el éxito general de los hijos.

"Es fundamental para los niños de todas las edades, pero especialmente en los primeros años de formación, tener acceso a educadores bien preparados con los conocimientos y las habilidades para educar a los hijos en su etapa más crítica de desarrollo", dice Holly Gurule, Directora del Programa de Becas e Incentivos Salariales de la CNMI. "La educación que reciben nuestros educadores, les ayuda a crear una comprensión del desarrollo del niño que les proporciona un fondo para todo, desde la creación de planes de lecciones y

materiales complementarios que fomentan el aprendizaje, hasta la apertura de una guardería o centro preescolar, y la asistencia a los padres en la comunicación y el cuidado de sus hijos pequeños de manera apropiada para el desarrollo."

Hay 10 niveles de complementos salariales y varían en función del nivel educativo. Los educadores con al menos cinco horas de crédito (nivel 1) pueden recibir dos pagos anuales de 260 dólares. Los educadores que tienen un título de asociado (Nivel 5) pueden recibir dos pagos anuales de 1.248 dólares. Y los educadores que tienen una licenciatura (Nivel 10) pueden recibir dos pagos de 2.548 dólares.

Graciela Bazzanella, que se trasladó a Nuevo México en plena pandemia, empezó a trabajar en el Centro de Desarrollo Infantil La Esperanza e inmediatamente obtuvo su Certificado de Desarrollo Infantil. Luego se enteró del programa ECECD a través de su directora y utilizó la beca para inscribirse en el programa de Educación Multicultural de la Primera Infancia en el CNM. Actualmente está recibiendo un suplemento salarial de nivel 3 dos veces al año y subirá a un nivel 4 y 5 a medida que continúe su educación.

Graciela dice que el suplemento salarial, además de la posibilidad de tomar clases gratuitas del CNM en línea y por la noche han sido de gran ayuda.

"Como madre y empleada a tiempo completo, la flexibilidad y el apoyo financiero han hecho todo mucho más fácil", dice. "Todo el programa es realmente alentador. Pensé: 'si es gratis y me pagan para que siga estudiando, ¿por qué no?'".

Para obtener más información o presentar una solicitud, visite [eecd scholarship.org](#).

*Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.*

**Para Noticias de Colorado:**

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Museum of Natural History  
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO BOULDER





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**Los niños que no se evalúan a tiempo y no empiezan a recibir servicios pueden retrasarse aún más, lo cual extenderá el tiempo que les tomará ponerse al día y afectará su autoestima.**

la hija de Flamenco lleva más de un año sin ir a la escuela. La niña llora porque quiere regresar, dijo su madre.

"Sólo estaba tan contenta y lista, y compartía lo que veía, lo que aprendía, y llegaba la casal y estaba lista para descansar", dijo Flamenco. "Ahora, tiene mucha

energía. Solamente está aquí, y realmente quiere ir a la escuela. Tiene rabietas por eso".

Aucancela presentó recientemente otro referido para servicios de educación especial, y Flamenco dijo que su hija ahora tiene una cita en marzo para ser evaluada. Aucancela está contenta, pero

dice que es preocupante que la familia haya tardado tanto en conseguir lo que necesitaba.

"La pandemia está aquí", dijo Aucancela. "Pero no podemos utilizar la pandemia como excusa y esperar y esperar hasta que el niño tenga tres años de retraso", agregó.

### Sobrecargados

Mientras tanto, los maestros de educación especial están "sobrecargados de trabajo y abrumados", dijo Hillary Daniels, maestra de educación especial en la escuela primaria Hallett Academy de Denver.

Cuando la pandemia llegó en marzo de 2020 y las escuelas cerraron, las evaluaciones de educación especial se detuvieron. Los maestros no recibieron instrucciones reales sobre cómo enseñar en línea, y mucho menos realizar el tipo de pruebas necesarias para identificar que un estudiante necesita educación especial. El distrito podría considerar evaluaciones hechas por proveedores externos, como la que Barraza obtuvo para su hijo, pero no están obligados a aceptarlas a la hora de tomar decisiones, dijo un portavoz del distrito.

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Las evaluaciones que el distrito tenía programadas para la primavera de 2020 se atrasaron hasta el otoño — y aunque los funcionarios establecieron directrices para hacerlas virtualmente, no fue fácil, dijo Rob Gould, presidente de la *Denver Classroom Teachers Association* y ex maestro de educación especial.

"Es muy difícil determinarlo a través de una pantalla de computadora: ¿Se trata de un problema de aprendizaje? ¿O es un problema emocional? ¿O es frustración porque no pueden oír al maestro?", dijo.

La situación también presentaba sus desafíos. Cuando Daniels evaluaba a un estudiante antes de la pandemia, lo hacían ella y el estudiante en un salón tranquilo de la escuela. En la casa, dijo, un estudiante puede estar en una evaluación virtual mientras su hermana grita o se escuchan bocinas afuera.

Por eso, si los maestros hacían una evaluación virtual los resultados podrían no ser los correctos. Daniels recuerda a un estudiante que, cuando las escuelas volvieron a abrirse y él regresó para el aprendizaje en persona, no coincidía con

el programa individual de educación (IEP) diseñado según su evaluación virtual. Las metas incluidas en su IEP se enfocaban en prestar atención, mantenerse en la tarea y mejorar su habla. Cuando llegó a la escuela, los maestros se dieron cuenta de que aún no sabía sostener un lápiz, una destreza importante que no se podía evaluar en línea y que se había pasado por alto completamente.

"Este niño llegó, y las necesidades que demuestra delante de nosotros en persona son muy diferentes a las del papel que nos entregaron para tratar de explicar cómo es él", dijo Daniels.

En ese caso, el estudiante tuvo que ser reevaluado para determinar sus destrezas motoras y si tenía problemas cognitivos, dijo Daniels. Estas reevaluaciones inesperadas, cuando se añaden al flujo regular de evaluaciones iniciales, reevaluaciones planificadas y revisiones anuales del IEP, hacen que los maestros de educación especial se retrasen.



**"Es muy difícil determinarlo a través de una pantalla de computadora: ¿Se trata de un problema de aprendizaje? ¿O es un problema emocional? ¿O es frustración porque no pueden oír al maestro?"**

Rob Gould,  
Denver Classroom Teachers Association

Y los datos lo reflejan. Según las leyes federales, los distritos tienen que completar las evaluaciones en un plazo de 60 días a partir de que los padres del estudiante den su consentimiento. Mientras que las Escuelas Públicas de Denver completaron un 93% de las evaluaciones iniciales para estudiantes de 3 a 21 años en los 60 días en el año 2018-19 (antes de la pandemia), ese porcentaje se redujo a 87% en 2019-20 y a 84% el año escolar pasado, según los datos estatales.

Además de hacer evaluaciones, el distrito pidió que los maestros de educación especial redactaran planes de contingencia que explicaran cómo cada estudiante recibiría sus servicios durante el aprendizaje virtual. Más tarde, el distrito les pidió a los maestros que revisaran si los servicios que cada estudiante estaba recibiendo virtualmente eran adecuados o si el estudiante calificaba para recibir

**Evaluaciones 2**

servicios de recuperación había perdido mucha instrucción.

Rottier-Lukens, directora de educación especial de Denver, dijo que las decisiones se basaron en equidad. Por ejemplo, en lugar de esperar que los padres más avisados soliciten los servicios de recuperación (cuyo nombre oficial es servicios de compensación, o *compensatory services*), el distrito está revisando el caso de cada niño de forma proactiva. No obstante, ella reconoció que esto toma tiempo y ha contribuido a que los maestros y especialistas de educación especial tengan la sensación de que están siendo "arrastrados a derecha, izquierda y centro".

Daniels conoce bien esa sensación. Mientras que algunos maestros o especialistas de educación especial podrían verse obligados a dedicar menos tiempo trabajando directamente con los estudiantes para poder completar lo que Gould denominó un "tsuna-

mi de papeleo", Daniels ha acabado llevándose su papeleo a casa.

"El equilibrio entre mi vida y trabajo no existe", dijo.

**Poco personal**

La escasez de personal también ha contribuido al problema. A los distritos les resultaba difícil cubrir los puestos de educación especial antes de la pandemia, pero los funcionarios dicen que ahora es aún más difícil. Las Escuelas Públicas de Denver tenían 19 vacantes de maestros de educación especial y 118 vacantes de paraprofesionales de educación especial en enero.

Rottier-Lukens dijo que también está viendo más renuncias a mitad de año que nunca.

"Normalmente, la mayoría de los maestros cumplen su contrato como mínimo", dijo. "Ellos buscan la manera de llegar al final del año. Ahora estoy viendo a mucha más gente renunciar en octubre".

Debido a todos estos factores, algunos defensores de la causa dicen que hay que tener cuidado a la hora de dar la alarma sobre los retrasos en las evaluaciones de educación especial. Al preguntarle por los posibles efectos de la situación en los estudiantes, Gould (jefe del sindicato) volvió a hablar de la dotación de personal.

"El efecto es que no es seguro que los estudiantes tengan un instructor", dijo. "Todos estamos en un punto de quiebre ahora. Me preocupa que la gente elija otra profesión en vez de ésta".

Barraza (que lleva meses luchando para que su hijo de 8 años sea evaluado) no culpa a los maestros, y dice que se espera demasiado de ellos. Ella ha experimentado las consecuencias de primera mano: La maestra de tercer grado de su hijo renunció el semestre pasado, diciendo que era por angustia mental.

Pero la compasión de Barraza no significa que sea menos inflexible a la hora de conseguir que su hijo reciba los servicios y adaptaciones que necesita para tener éxito en la escuela. Ella dice que sabe que existen.

"Eso es todo lo que quiero", dijo.

**Conoce tus derechos**

Si un padre sospecha que su hijo tiene una discapacidad, puede iniciar el proceso de evaluación de educación especial diciéndole a la escuela de su hijo que desea una evaluación.

Los distritos escolares tienen que completar las evaluaciones iniciales de educación especial en un plazo de 60 días a partir de la firma del consentimiento por parte de uno de los padres o tutores legales.

Los estudiantes y sus familias son elegibles para recibir ayuda mientras navegan por el proceso. En Denver, la organización Advoca-

cy Denver tiene personal disponible para ayudar en inglés y en español.

Si un padre no está de acuerdo con los resultados de la evaluación de educación especial de su hijo, puede solicitar que el distrito escolar pague una evaluación educativa independiente hecha por un evaluador que no trabaje para el distrito.

Por otro lado, algunos padres pagan ellos mismos las evaluaciones independientes. Aunque el distrito escolar tiene que tomar en cuenta las recomendaciones del evaluador privado, no está obligado a aceptarlas.

Para más información, pulsa aquí.

**Melanie Asmar** es Reportera  
Senior de Chalkbeat Colorado.

Esta historia fue publicada originalmente por Chalkbeat.

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**Estudiantes**

Avergüé aquí aquí si su distrito o escuela chárter estatal está participando en ENGAGE Nuevo México.

**Taller de lectura**

Ya está abierta la inscripción para una serie de tres talleres para ayudar a las familias y a los cuidadores a aprender estrategias para ayudar a los jóvenes lectores a mejorar sus habilidades de lectura en casa.

El Departamento de Educación Pública, en asociación con TNTP (antes conocido como The New Teacher Project), está ofreciendo la Academia de Alfabetización Familiar virtual, con sesiones en español e inglés, durante febrero, marzo y abril.

Todos los talleres comienzan a las 5 de la tarde. El primero se celebrará el 15 de febrero en inglés y el 17 de febrero en español, y se centrará en los conocimientos previos y el vocabulario. El segundo tendrá lugar el 29 de marzo en inglés y el 31 de marzo en español, y se centrará en los conceptos de impresión y la fluidez. El tercero, el 26 de abril (inglés) y el 28 de abril (español), se centrará en la com-

prensión. Inscríbase [aqui](#) para los talleres en español.

Los participantes obtendrán información, herramientas y estrategias para ayudar a los jóvenes lectores desde el preescolar hasta el quinto grado.

El enfoque estructurado de la alfabetización ayuda a todos los hijos a aprender a leer, pero es esencial para los niños con dislexia, un problema de aprendizaje que puede hacer que aprender a leer sea especialmente difícil.

Según algunas estimaciones, hasta el 20% de la población presenta signos de dislexia, por lo que Nuevo México está examinando a todos los alumnos de primer grado para detectar signos de dislexia. El examen no es un diagnóstico, pero ayuda a los educadores a intervenir tempranamente si un hijo lo necesita antes de que esos problemas se arraiguen en los grados superiores.

*Traducido por Juan Carlos Uribe-The Weekly Issue/El Semanario.*

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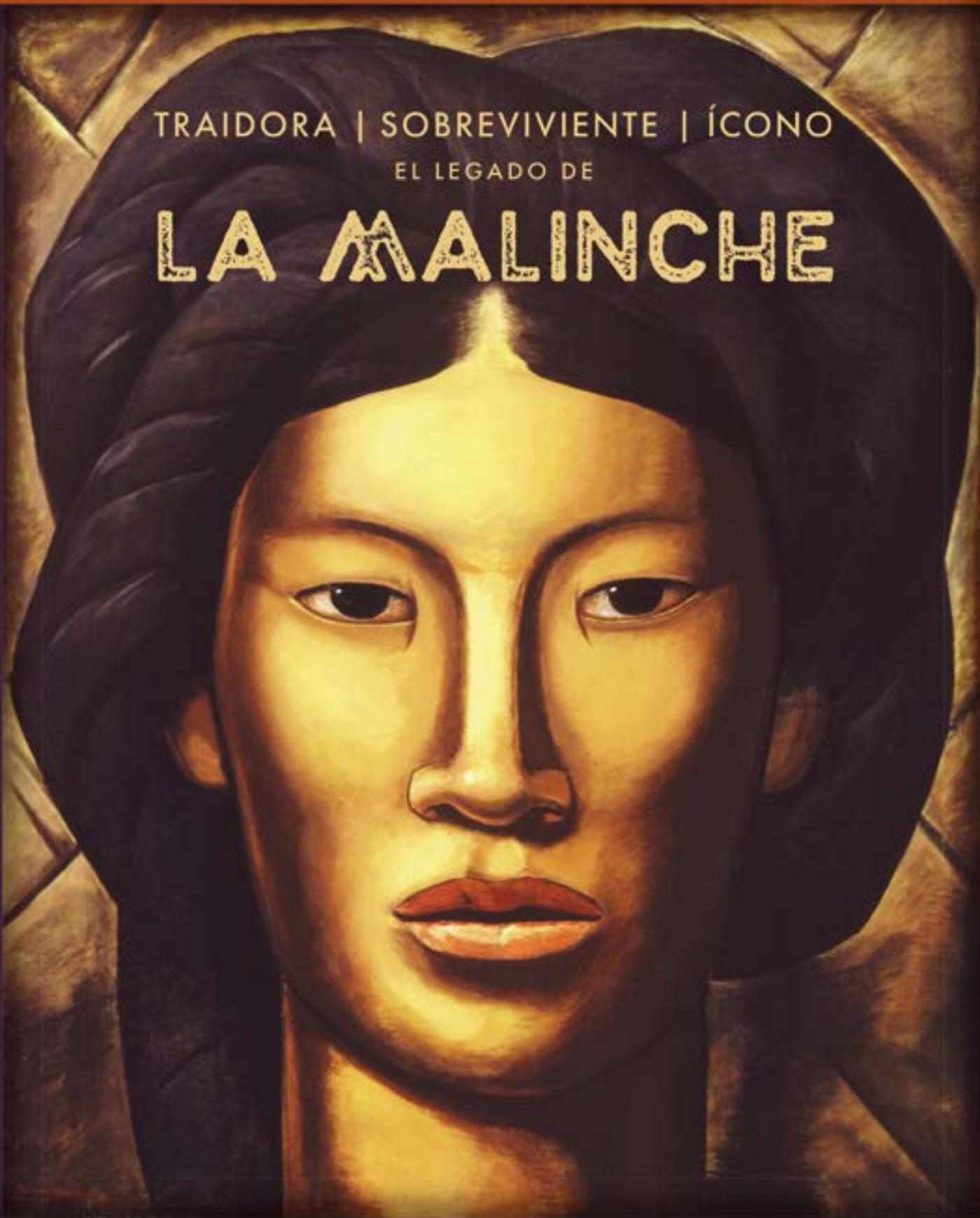
# EXPANSIÓN DE LA MESA POR LA JUSTICIA

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**Del 6 de febrero al 8 de mayo de 2022**

Explore el legado perdurable de una de las figuras más enigmáticas y fascinantes de la historia de México.

Imagen: Alfredo Ramos Martínez, La Malinche (Mochilejo de Toluca, Guerrero), 1940. Óleo sobre lienzo; 50 x 40 1/2 in. Phoenix Art Museum. Adquisición del museo con fondos proporcionados por Amigos del Arte Mexicano, 1979.6. ©Proyecto de Investigación Alfredo Ramos Martínez, reproducido con autorización.

TrotMora, redrevista, Jessie Ellegood de La Malinche ha sido organizada por el Denver Art Museum. La exposición ha sido posible en parte gracias a una subvención del National Endowment for the Humanities. La democracia exige sabiduría. A continuación, recibe el apoyo de Furthermore, un programa del Fondo J.M. Kaplan Fund, University of Denver College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences, así como de los donantes a la competencia benéfica Annual Fund Leadership Campaign y de los residentes que brindaron su apoyo al Distrito de Organizaciones Científicas y Culturales (SCFD), por sus esfuerzos en Inglaterra. Apoya promocional proporcionada por ZINN Magazine y CRSA. Un agradecimiento especial al Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia y la Secretaría de Cultura de México.



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