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New Research and Blueprint4SummerCO Fuel ReSchool's Efforts to Address Disparities in Summer Learning for Denver Metro-Area Youth

Blueprint4SummerCO website also launches Summer College Prep opportunities

DENVER (March 4, 2019) – [ReSchool](#), a Denver-based non-profit organization focused on designing a more expansive, equitable and accessible education system with, and for, learners across Colorado, is announcing efforts to address learning disparities in Denver based on new research that found students with low access to summer camps and classes are more likely to be Black and Latino, live in homes with lower median household incomes and have parents with a high school diploma or less while students with the best access to summer activities are more likely to be white, live in homes with higher median incomes and have college-educated parents. The research, along with ReSchool's partnership with families through its [Learner Advocate Network](#), uncovered challenges to access that exist partly due to proximity of programs, high costs, and a lack, seemingly, of diverse options. The research study, "[Access to Out-of-School Resources in Denver,](#)" was conducted by the [University of Washington's Data Science for the Social Good](#) (DSSG) program and the [Center on Reinventing Public Education \(CRPE\)](#) and used data from Reschool's [Blueprint4SummerCO](#) website along with other sources.

Based on this research, ReSchool is leading the charge to expand access to quality, diverse summer learning for all kids by building awareness of Blueprint4SummerCO as a resource for families, leveraging scholarship money raised by ReSchool and available through providers, and partnering with a growing number of learning providers across the metro-area to amplify activities that integrate culture and history into their programming.

Blueprint4SummerCO is a free, easy-to-use, mobile-friendly website brought to Colorado by ReSchool that offers an organized, searchable way to access thousands of summer activities and learning opportunities. Camps and experiences listed on Blueprint4SummerCO span various communities in the Denver Metro area, for kids age 3-18, and in multiple interest areas, cultures and traditions. For example, [Visions Performing Arts](#) is dedicated to the preservation of African American performing arts and celebrating African American History for future generations and [Museo de las Americas](#) builds cultural competencies and unlocks new understanding of academic content through summer programming focused on the arts and cultures of the Americas.

"Our goal is to provide a space where all families can access information about summer learning opportunities that fit their desires and needs while working to make many of those opportunities more accessible through scholarships," said Selamawit Gebre, who leads the out-of-school work at Reschool Colorado.

Blueprint4SummerCO lists a number of low-cost and free options for families on the website to ensure that cost isn't a barrier to access. In 2018, over half of the listings on the site were free or low cost and over half of the summer providers offered scholarships. In addition, ReSchool, distributed more than \$50,000 in scholarships in 2018, paying for or significantly reducing the cost of out of school experiences for 195 kids. ReSchool is on track to distribute more than \$50,000 in out of school scholarships, most of which will go to summer experiences, again in 2019. Reschool is seeking further impact by partnering with organizations whose summer scholarship funds sometimes go unused to ensure more youth from low-income families know about these opportunities.

Additional studies demonstrate the positive impacts of out-of-school learning. For example, out-of-school experiences offer important ways for students to develop academic skills like critical thinking and problem solving, as well as social-emotional skills such as persistence and teamwork. These experiences may be especially important for low-income students and students of color, who are less likely to have access to teachers and curricula that develop these skills in school. ([CRPE Education Equality in the Future](#)).

"The most impactful learning experiences most people have in their lifetimes occur in places and spaces outside of school," said Amy Anderson, Executive Director at ReSchool Colorado. "Yet, most efforts in education today focus exclusively on how to improve schools. This is what makes ReSchool unique. While it is very important for kids to have a solid home base of a school, what is equally, if not more important, is to have access to enriching learning experiences and meaningful relationships with a diversity of people beyond school."

"ReSchool is doing the right work by being intentional that there are programming options on Blueprint4SummerCO rooted in history and different cultures. It is so important for kids to feel both seen in what they participate in and to gain context." said Claudia Moran of Museo de las Americas. "Museo builds cultural competencies and unlocks new understanding of academic content through summer programming focused on the arts and cultures of the Americas."

Parents with children ages 3-18 can search for activities on Blueprint4SummerCO based on any number of preferences such as age, gender, interests, cost and zip code – even special considerations such as sessions for students with disabilities or gifted students, those offering before and after care, or that have scholarships available. The website can be displayed in multiple languages through Google Translate and provides information about day camps, sleep-away camps and sports camps; art, music and science programs; free activities, and academic enrichment courses. Over 3,000 summer sessions were listed on the Blueprint4SummerCO website in 2018, and ReSchool plans to add thousands more in 2019.

New this year, the Blueprint4SummerCO website now includes a database of opportunities for high school-aged students preparing for college. The [College Prep national database](#) is accessible through Blueprint4SummerCO and lists thousands of opportunities in Colorado and across the U.S. For example, students can attend experiences to prepare for college level music courses, conduct research on a topic of interest, find a paid internship, join a community service institute to earn college credit, take a dance

or swim camp to prepare for college level competitions, learn about college admissions and living, and prepare for ACT or SAT tests.

Blueprint4SummerCO is not only free and easy for parents to use but it also gives Colorado camps and organizations the opportunity to list their offerings for free, receive additional exposure, and obtain geographic and demographic analytics regarding interest in their program offerings. Providers also have the opportunity to apply for matched scholarship contributions raised by ReSchool Colorado.

In 2015, Blueprint4Summer was launched in St. Louis by Maxine Clark, founder of the Clark-Fox Family Foundation and Build-A-Bear Workshop. ReSchool licenses the Blueprint4Summer platform from the Clark-Fox Foundation.

For more information about [Blueprint4SummerCO](#), to learn about programs and to connect with other parents online, "like" Blueprint4SummerCO on [Facebook](#) or follow on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

About ReSchool Colorado

After investing for decades to improve public education in various ways, the Donnell-Kay Foundation launched [ReSchool Colorado](#) in 2013 -- a bold effort to design a modernized, learner-centered system of education in Colorado. ReSchool's goal is to build the supply of existing and new learning resources that allows learners to personalize their education pathways in new, dynamic ways, ensuring an experience that is equitable, empowering, and world-class. ReSchool believes learning happens in a lot of different places, within and beyond school, and recognizes the need to coordinate and curate those resources in a way that is accessible to all families and students.

Blueprint4SummerCO is a tool that is part of ReSchool Colorado's broader efforts to modernize our education system and strengthen people's capacity to access and navigate complex systems of learning.

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