

Voice of the Rocky Mountain Empire

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UNIVERSAL PRE-K

Program coming to state by 2023

Change to increase number of children eligible to 66,000

By Alex Burness
The Denver Post

Colorado will offer universal pre-K by 2023, and government leaders announced Wednesday that their plan to do so includes creating the 20th state department.

Gov. Jared Polis promised that adding a Department of Early Childhood would improve the state's ability to consolidate funding from disparate sources — local, federal, state and grant money — and offer easier, centralized access to resources for parents.

“Early-childhood advocates have been asking for years for this,” said House Speaker Alec Garnett, a Denver Democrat who will help shepherd a bill through the legislature to create this new state department. “We’re finally here to deliver on that ask.”

Florida, Vermont and the District of Columbia currently offer free universal pre-K without enrollment caps or funding limitations. President Joe Biden has proposed taking this nationwide, with \$200 billion to fund universal early childhood education for all students for the two years before kindergarten. (Colorado’s plan concerns only one year before kindergarten.)

The seed money for this initiative comes from the November passage of Proposition EE, which took effect Jan. 1, imposing for the first time a tax on vaping products and eventually tripling state cigarette taxes by 2027. Starting in the 2023-24 fiscal year, the bulk of

PRE-K » 8A

COVID-19 VACCINE

Suspending patents supported by Biden



A COVID-19 patient receives oxygen in a parked car while waiting for a hospital bed to become available in New Delhi, India, on April 25 as a volunteer checks her oxygen saturation level.

Atul Loke, © The New York Times Co.

By Thomas Kaplan, Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Rebecca Robbins
© The New York Times Co.

WASHINGTON» The Biden administration came out on Wednesday in support of waiving intellectual property protections for coronavirus vaccines, siding with international efforts to bolster production amid concerns about vaccine access in developing nations.

The United States had been a major holdout at the World Trade Organization over a proposal to suspend some of the world economic body’s intellectual property protections, which could allow drug-makers across the globe access to the closely guarded trade secrets of how the viable vaccines have been made. But President Joe Biden had come under increasing

pressure to throw his support behind the proposal, drafted by India and South Africa and backed by many congressional Democrats.

Katherine Tai, the United States trade representative, announced the administration’s position on Wednesday afternoon, as the pandemic continues to spiral in India and South America.

“This is a global health crisis, and the extraordinary circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic call for extraordinary measures,” she said in a statement. “The administration believes strongly in intellectual property protections, but in service of ending this pandemic, supports the waiver of those protections for COVID-19 vaccines.”

Support from the White House is not a guarantee that a waiver will be adopted. The European Union has also been standing in the way, and changes to international intellectual property rules require unanimous agreement. Tai said the United States would participate in negotiations at the World Trade Organization over the matter, but that they would “take time given the consensus-based nature of the institution and the complexity of the

PATENTS » 6A

BUSINESS

MORATORIUM ON EVICTIONS NIXED

A federal district judge struck down the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention moratorium on evictions extended by President Joe Biden until June 30. »9A

NATION

FACEBOOK BAN ON TRUMP STANDS

Facebook’s oversight board upheld the social network’s ban of former President Donald Trump, but said an “indefinite” ban on the former president was unreasonable. »12A



Rogelia Aula Martinez gets a hug from her daughter, Johanna, 4, as she waits the required 15 minutes after getting her first vaccination shot at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Early College on April 27 in Denver. Helen H. Richardson, The Denver Post

COLORADO

Vaccination pace slows; hospitalizations steady

By Meg Wingerter
The Denver Post

Colorado is vaccinating fewer people than it was earlier in April, even as the state’s COVID-19 situation remains ambiguous — but the public health officials don’t expect problems from the Biden administration’s plan to redirect vaccine doses.

Under the previous distribu-

More options: Walmart, Sam’s Club and Target will offer in-store COVID-19 vaccinations. »6A

tion plan, if a state didn’t order all of the doses it was eligible for in a given week, it could get them the following week. When the administration’s change starts next week, states will no longer be able to “roll over”

COVID » 6A

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