

# Personal Belief Exemption Stakeholder Engagement

AIM Best Practice Webinar:  
Addressing Vaccine Hesitancy/Confidence  
March 12, 2014



Colorado Department  
of Public Health  
and Environment

# Current Policy

- CRS §25-4-902 and 6 CCR 1009-2
- School must have on file for each student an official certificate of immunization documenting all required immunizations.
  - “In Process” If not up to date then student has 14 days to receive the immunization(s) or make a written plan, suspended if not fulfilled
- Option of claiming an exemption in order to be in compliance (§25-4-903)
  - Medical, religious and personal belief
  - Only required to be completed upon enrollment



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# Why address PBE process in CO?

- Exemption rate in 2010-2011 was 7.2%
  - National median = 2009/10: 1.3%<sup>1</sup> and 2011/12: 1.5%<sup>2</sup>
- PBEs account for >90% of exemptions since '03
- Pertussis epidemic drew attention to PBEs as potential contributor
  - 1500 cases in 2012 and 2013; 5-year average 324
- PPHF funding available from CDC to examine school immunization best practices
  - Awarded funds to evaluate current PBE process
- Concerned CO stakeholders reached out to CDPHE

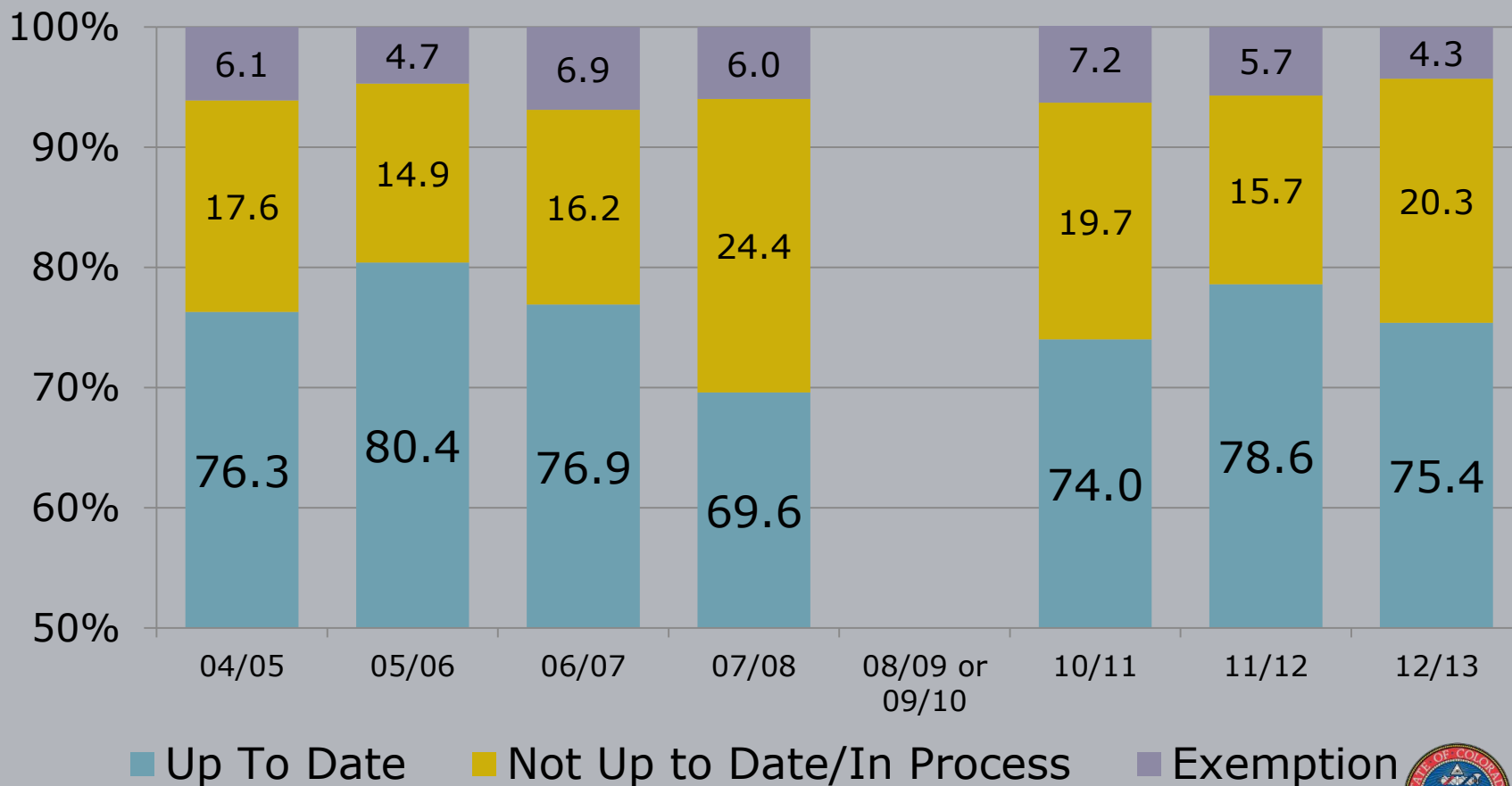


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<sup>1</sup>CDC. MMWR. 2011. 60(21);700-704

<sup>2</sup>CDC. MMWR. 2012. 61(33);647-652

# Colorado Kindergartners School Survey 2004/2005 – 2012/2013



# Consequences of PBEs

- States with PBEs have higher overall exemption rates<sup>1,2</sup>
- Ease of PBE process associated with higher PBE rates<sup>1,3</sup>
- Children whose parents claim PBEs more likely to get and transmit vaccine preventable diseases (VPD)<sup>4,5,6,7,8,9</sup>
- Increased PBE rates result in increased VPD incidence in communities<sup>1,4,10</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Omer et al., JAMA 2006;296(14)

<sup>2</sup>Omer et al., N Engl J Med 2012;367(12)

<sup>3</sup>Rota et al., Am J Public Health, 2001

<sup>4</sup>Feikin et al., JAMA 2000 (Colorado 1987-1998, Retrospective Cohort)

<sup>5</sup>Salmon et al., JAMA 1999 (U.S., Retrospective Cohort)

<sup>6</sup>Glanz et al., Pediatrics 2009 (Colorado 1996-2007, Case-Control)

<sup>7</sup>Glanz et al., Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med (Colorado 1998-2008, Case-Control)

<sup>8</sup>CDC MMWR, 2008 (U.S., Descriptive Analysis)

<sup>9</sup>Fiabelkorn et al., J Infect Dis 2010 (U.S., Descriptive Analysis)

<sup>10</sup>Omer et al., Am J Epidemiol 2008



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# Stakeholder Process

- CDPHE, the Colorado Children's Immunization Coalition, and The Keystone Center planned and implemented the process to achieve the following outcomes:
  1. Gain a better understanding of the current state of PBE attitudes and opinions
  2. Meaningfully participate in facilitated in-depth discussions on current PBE policies and practices
  3. Generate potential policy and/or rule changes to the PBE system.
  4. Make final recommendations to be formally submitted to CDPHE in a written report.



# Participants

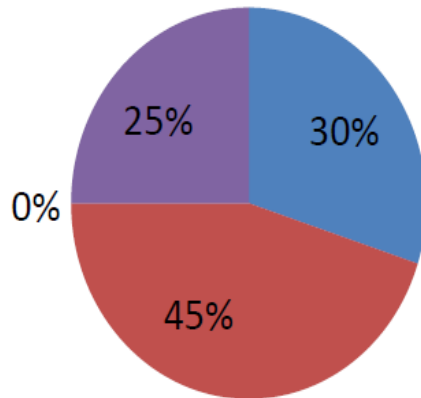
- 57 participants in 8 sector-specific focus group and key informant interviews
- 25 stakeholders – 3 meetings
  - Local/state public health, physicians, nurses and healthcare providers, state legislative representatives, school nurses and administrators, parents/guardians, and advocacy organizations



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# Participant Opinions

## Should Colorado Make Changes to the Personal Belief Exemption



- Opinion Changed, Should Make Changes (30%)
- Opinion NOT Changed, Should Make Changes (45%)
- Opinion Changed, Should NOT Make Changes (0%)
- Opinion NOT Changed, Should NOT Make Changes (25%)





# Final Recommendations

- Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and/or Board of Education to hold school districts accountable for immunization policy\*
- CDPHE, CDE and Colorado Department of Human Services to establish joint policy on immunization data collection and sharing\*
- Require education and/or counseling prior to exemption
- Publicly available publication of immunization and exemption rates by schools and licensed childcare centers
- Medical practitioner or health official signature for exemption
- Annual renewal of exemption

\*Recommended with full consensus



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# Legislation Introduced – HB1288

- Rep. Pabon (D4) and Sen. Aguilar (D32)
- Recommendations from stakeholder process:
  - Disclosure of benefits and risks of vaccination
  - Transparency of immunization and exemption rates
  - Joint policy on data collection
  - School compliance with immunization laws/rules



# Lessons Learned

- Model great for gathering different perspectives
- Neutral, 3<sup>rd</sup> party facilitator important
- Invite your opposition (but beware)
- Steering Committee/Stakeholders should be mutually exclusive
- Should have focused on all non-medical exemptions



# Questions?

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