Strengthening Advocates

By working in deep partnership with community-facing organizations, our education ecosystem will reorient so students, families, and educators are consistently and authentically leading the processes to address challenges within public education.

Throughout the established education policy landscape, we are seeing a growing call to involve students and families in the policy process; yet, the depth and authenticity of that involvement is commonly limited by systemic biases relating to race, class, and maintaining the status quo as well as a lack of content expertise and capacity. Despite their best efforts to challenge and disrupt, community-facing organizations and individuals who work on behalf of students and families are impacted by these same biases and limitations, which in turn hinders their ability to affect change. Climb Higher believes our community-facing partners are an essential element of the education ecosystem because of their deep relationships with those with the greatest and most direct insight into the education system. Climb Higher actively seeks out opportunities to elevate the expertise of these partners and connects them to our broader network of organizations and leaders.

Looking Forward

Climb Higher is ideally suited to strengthen advocates because of our expertise, our existing infrastructure, and our relational trust.

We know the ins and outs of education policy and how it gets done.

With extensive staff experience operating within the existing power structures, we understand the behind-the-scenes process of how education policy is identified, designed, and passed. By sharing this expertise and strengthening the relevant skills with community advocates, CHC will enable partners to navigate the common pitfalls and opportunities they will inevitably face.

Climb Higher has the existing infrastructure to connect advocates to the networks and opportunities necessary for policy success.

This essential level of access, in combination with a deep and nuanced understanding of the who, what, and how of the education policy process, puts CHC in a position of maximum impact to open up existing power structures to the voices and influence of community advocates.

Since its inception, CHC has recognized that our success is predicated on the buy-in and trust of our partners.

We have invested deeply, both financially and relationally, in understanding the unique needs of community advocates and providing the appropriate supports accordingly. We provide a unique and valued space in which collaboration can take place across organizations and this added capacity has led to extensive buy-in.

Key Areas of Focus within Strengthening Advocates:

Facilitate ongoing learning of essential policy skills and history

Create direct channels of access to individuals of influence and systems of power
Program Spotlight

Systems Impact Institute
This year-long program is designed for community-facing partners leading systems change who want to develop their skills, deepen their understanding, and extend their impact within the education policy landscape. We will explore questions like:

- How do Power and Politics influence all stages of the policy process and how can you navigate that system from within and without?
- What can be learned from the history and in depth content of education policy and related social movements in Colorado and nationally, and how can those lessons strategically inform current efforts?
- What will it take for you and your organization to emerge as an education policy leader?

The Institute will be designed around a series of 10 sessions grouped into five 2-day (back-to-back) convenings, during September, November, January, March, May, and July.

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**COMMUNICATION**

**PERSONAL LEADERSHIP**

**RELATIONSHIP BUILDING**

Organizations will be selected to participate in the inaugural cohort. Multi-day, in-person sessions over the year.

$20K

Grant funding provided to participants to support organizational development.