

COLORADO CANNABIS EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND POLICY PROJECT

Twenty First Meeting of the Scientific Review Council (SRC)

MEETING OVERVIEW & MINUTES

August 19, 2025

Project Attendees: Greg Tung, Annie Collier, Ashley Brooks-Russell, Travis Leiker, Cathy Bradley, Daphna Rubin, Zachary Giano, Dana Dolecki, Neeloo Soleimanpour, Louis Leslie, Valerie Yim, Tianjing Li

SRC Attendees: Chris Urbina, Greg Kinney, Joe Shacht, Lesley Brooks, Paula Riggs, Kent Hutchinson, Erica Wymore, Kennon Heard

Guests: James Corbett, Initium Health

Welcome & Introductions

- Drs. Bradley and Urbina called the meeting to order and outlined the agenda for the day's discussion.
- Dr. Urbina pointed out the Dean is going to talk a little bit about the status of the project as well as events at the school and state.
- The pair previewed updates from the Research Core, Education Core, and the Tea on THC campaign team.
- Then, they acknowledged the meeting would wrap with public comment.

Conflicts of Interest

- Dr. Ashley Brooks Russell reported an unpaid, advisory role with Electratect, a start-up developing a cannabis breathalyzer. No payments received at this point.
- No other conflicts of interest were reported.

Current Status of the School and the Project

- Dean Bradley announced the formal rebranding of the initiative as the Colorado Cannabis Education, Research, and Policy Project (COCERP).
- She emphasized that all future publications and work products would acknowledge the full team and funding under one cohesive identity saying, "It's really meant to give acknowledgement to all the work this team has been doing over the years."
- She also introduced the core project team that's responsible for quality control of abstracts and papers, delivery of campaign materials, fiscal accountability and oversight,

and other needs that will ultimately enhance the quality of the work produced by ColoradoSPH.

- Drs. Collier and Tung are Co-PIs and overseeing the education and research cores respectively.
- Travis Leiker is now point person for liaising with government relations, administration, and finance pertinent to this project.
- Daphna Rubin is a lead professional research assistant liaising with both the education and research teams as well as Initium Health.
- Finally, the Dean acknowledged the upcoming special legislative session, noting that there is some uncertainty around potential cuts due to a state-level budget shortfall.

Research Core Update

- Dr. Tung reiterated the focus on outreach, education, and communication, while maintaining scientific rigor. CO CERP recognized as a leading academic project on high-concentration cannabis research.
- The scoping review now includes more than 80,000 identified records, 50,000 screened publications, and almost 600 studies under further review; annual updates to the scoping review are planned subject to funding.
- Drs. Tung and Li also reviewed several upcoming publications including one in the Annals of Internal Medicine, focused on mental health. Others include the Journal of Cannabis Research.
- Questions were posed concerning long-term funding. Dr. Tung reminded the group that the state legislation requires us to only accept state funding for the purposes of this project. No other grants or charitable dollars are allowed.

Education Core Update

- Dr. Collier reported the latest updates for the education campaign.
- Starting with the promoting perinatal wellness project, the chatbot is in final development phase and will focus on coping skills, education, and wellbeing. It is currently in beta testing and will be deployed among providers later this fall.
- The team is further developing motivational interviewing modules for parents, loved ones, educators, and trusted adults to develop skills. They include communications strategies to deter young people from using cannabis and to inform them about the harms of high potency THC without judgment.
- Members of the SRC, including Dr. Riggs, encouraged developing these tools for clinicians and front-line health care workers. The group acknowledged that this was under consideration and, as a first step, continuing medical education events are being developed to better inform providers as a first step.

- Dr. Collier and her team are piloting and evaluating a youth art curriculum for middle and high school students in 2 schools. Ultimately the goal is to provide curricula through the Tea on THC website. Outstanding student art may be eligible to participate in the Hear/Say exhibit this Spring alongside commissioned artists.
- The art exhibits are planned for the front range, with specific targets in both Ft. Collins and Colorado Springs.
- The education team is expanding its outreach through exhibition and sponsorship at various events across Colorado including Public Health in the Rockies, the annual Health Links Conference, and others.
- Finally, CO CERP is partnering with the ColoradoSPH Centers for Health, Work and Environment, to support workforce outreach including educating employers and workers alike on the core components of the Tea on THC campaign.

Tea on THC Updates and Campaign Highlights

- James Corbett presented the final FY 24-25 year-end metrics for the campaign.
- Notable highlights include: 36M+ impressions, exceeding the goal of 35M; high community engagement, for example the click through rates on Meta are 2.61% and for display ads it's 13.98% (insert benchmark as comparison). "Both exceeded our internal goals," Mr. Corbett stated.
- Finally, the Tea on THC campaign site receives more than 20,000 visitors each month – outpacing other long-standing campaigns at the state and national levels.
- Mr. Corbett also emphasized the use of real faces and stories to build trust: "Authentic visuals foster an emotional connection... and improve recall."
- He also underscored the importance of influencer strategies, including recent videos about breastfeeding and baby health, mental health strategies, and back to school conversations for young people and parents, and so forth.
- The Initium Team is finalizing its annual report and that will soon be available online.

Future Directions

- The team discussed expanding the campaign to older adults (65+) and the LGBTQ+ population. It was noted that we have data showing high use among LGBTQ individuals, but we need more on aging populations.
- The SRC reaffirmed its need to focus on the core populations and further implementing the campaign as currently constructed but outreach to new groups is both compelling and doable in a phased, responsible approach.

- Dr. Tung proposed a phased approach, stating “This year, we build the scientific foundation and toolkits. Next year, we consider implementation.”
- Some, including Dr. Riggs, inquired if the team is capturing clinical populations like diabetes or neurological disorders in the scoping review. She underscored that this could be important moving forward.
- Dr. Li reminded the group that the review has been broad but noted that adding new coding categories could help in the next phase of population outreach.

Public Comment

- Dr. Urbina then opened the conversation to the public for questions and answers. Travis Leiker noted that only one question came in and it had three components: 1. A report to the legislature; 2. The campaign progress report; and 3. How is the CSPH web content being promoted.
- Mr. Leiker responded that the recommendations to the legislature will be shared in late 2025, the campaign progress report should be released in September on the campaign site. And finally, he will investigate the website traffic for the CO CERP Project but noted that traffic needs to be driven to the education campaign more.

Next Steps/Questions

- The meeting concluded with gratitude for the team’s work and a look ahead. There will be continued focus on youth, young adults, and pregnant individuals
- The scientific groundwork for expanded populations will continue to move forward. And the team is committed to enhancing community visibility and outreach.
- The next SRC meeting is November 20, 2025 from 9:00–11:00 AM.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:50 am.