

Joint Budget Committee Hearing

Department of Education

December 18, 2014



COLORADO
Department of Education

QUESTIONS COMMON TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

Question 1: SMART Government Act:

- a. Please describe how the SMART Government Act is being integrated into the department's existing processes (both in terms of service delivery and evaluating performance).***
 - b. How is the data that is gathered for the performance management system used?***
 - c. Please describe the value of the act in the department.***
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RESPONSE:

SMART Government Act:

- a. Please describe how the SMART Government Act is being integrated into the department's existing processes (both in terms of service delivery and evaluating performance).

The SMART Act is embedded in CDE's ongoing strategic planning and performance management process. CDE's process includes the following:

- June-July: Review of strategic plan by CDE leadership team. Adjustments are made to reflect changing priorities, new areas of need, and new policies. Updated student performance data is added as it becomes available and analysis is performed on whether we met our student performance targets.
- August-September: Staff across the department provide feedback and input into the updated plan. The plan is then revised to reflect this input.
- October: The updated plan is shared with the State Board of Education.
- December: The updated plan is shared with the Joint House/Senate Education Committees.
- January-February: Unit plans are refined to ensure alignment with CDE's strategic plan (all unit plans must show alignment to CDE's goals)
- Ongoing: Goal teams for each of CDE's four strategic goals implement the goal plans, analyze data on performance, and refine strategies as needed.
- Ongoing: Each employee has a performance management plan that includes at least one shared goal tied to CDE's strategic plan.
- Ongoing: CDE monitors the operational performance metrics that are incorporated in the performance report (input/process/output metrics around such

areas as school finance disbursements, licensure cycle team, error-free reporting, etc.). These are used to refine processes as needed.

Through these ongoing processes, CDE uses the strategic plan and performance report to target and improve service delivery and evaluate performance.

b. How is the data that is gathered for the performance management system used?

The data gathered for each of the four goals of CDE's strategic plan is used to determine if our strategies are making a difference on student performance. Additional data is used to better understand root causes and help staff identify areas of need and potential strategies. A challenge of our data is that it comes late which makes it difficult to make midcourse corrections as needed. As a result, the department is working to identify and use leading indicators (like results from early literacy screening assessments administered at the beginning of the year and survey data) to better determine whether strategies are working along the way.

Data gathered for the operational performance report, such as licensure cycle time, is monitored on a regular basis to ensure that ongoing processes like licensure renewals are running smoothly.

c. Please describe the value of the act in the department.

The greatest value of the Act is the strategic plan. This, more than the operational performance report, drives our organization. The strategic plan focuses the department's work solidly on supporting every student, every step of the way through the four goals of:

- Start strong
- Read by third grade
- Meet or exceed standards
- Graduate ready.

Because the department's work is geared toward service delivery more than process management, the strategic plan has greater value than the operational performance report. We are working to identify ways to make the operational performance report more integrated with the strategic goals by capturing metrics related to our progress toward meeting our strategic goals. We will be exploring this option this winter and spring.

Question 2: Do you have infrastructure needs (roads, real property, information technology) beyond the current infrastructure request? If so, how do these needs fit in with the department's overall infrastructure priorities that have been submitted to the Capital Construction Committee or Joint Technology Committee? If infrastructure should be a higher priority for the department, how should the department's list of overall priorities be adjusted to account for it?

RESPONSE:

The Department did not submit a request to the Capital Construction Committee or the Joint Technology Committee this year.

Question 3: Describe the department's experience with the implementation of the new CORE accounting system.

- a. Was the training adequate?**
- b. Has the transition gone smoothly?**
- c. How has the implementation of CORE affected staff workload during the transition?**
- d. Do you anticipate that CORE will increase the staff workload on an ongoing basis? If so, describe the nature of the workload increase and indicate whether the department is requesting additional funding for FY 2015-16 to address it.**

RESPONSE:

- a. Was the training adequate?

The training materials and instruction provided were very helpful in preparing staff to work in the system, but there were some issues:

- While the training was a very good orientation, and covered many important areas, in several instances, the training environment did not function the same way the production environment did. As a result, employees did not understand how the real production environment functioned until they were actually using the new system in July 2014. This created some delays in processing payments and other transactions.
- Also, the training environment was somewhat unstable, so some training classes were delayed or had to end early due to the system environment being inoperative.
- Overall, the materials provided and hands-on training provided definitely helped prepare agency personnel to work in the system.

- b. Has the transition gone smoothly?

Implementing a statewide system the size of CORE, it is expected there will be challenges. Overall, the system is moving in the right direction, but some examples of the challenges agencies have faced to date:

- a. System availability: the system has often been down or unavailable for large parts of the day. This makes it difficult to get caught up on the extra work that was expected with transitioning to a new system.

b. Another challenge has been financial reporting, both reports available in the system and the information contained within those reports. For example, expenditure data, such as monthly payroll postings have been unavailable or delayed, so providing reporting with accurate expenditure data to management and program staff has been difficult. There is improvement every day, but budget to actual and other management reporting is behind schedule.

c. How has the implementation of CORE affected staff workload during the transition?

Over the short-term, the implementation of CORE has significantly increased the workload for accounting and purchasing staff in particular. The additional workload coupled with a very steep learning curve has made it difficult to catch up on the work that needs to be done. While the department has been able to make payments and pay employees, all aspects of using CORE are currently more time consuming than COFRS. This also is improving every day.

d. Do you anticipate that CORE will increase the staff workload on an ongoing basis? If so, describe the nature of the workload increase and indicate whether the department is requesting additional funding for FY 2015-16 to address it.

Currently, it is impossible to say what, if any, the increase in ongoing workload will be. The department is still working its way towards what a 'normal' monthly, quarterly and annual accounting cycle will be. However, there are at least two factors that seem they will result in some ongoing increase in workload:

1. CORE requires more keystrokes and input because more information is required to process a payment.
2. Navigation through the system takes more time than in COFRS. Most transactions require input into 6 different screens, and the wait time for each individual screen to load over time and thousands of transactions adds up. The department suspects this may be an ongoing issue.

Both of these challenges are expected to improve over time, as staff climbs the learning curve, but, since these are a function of the system time necessary to input transactions, it is possible that there will be an ongoing increase in workload and processing time. Once 'normal' workloads can be measured and quantified, additional resources may be necessary.

However, the department recognizes that the implementation of such a substantial new

system will drive additional short-term workload as employees adjust to new ways of doing business. As employees adjust to new business processes and become more familiar with the CORE system, it is expected that this short-term workload increase will dissipate. Any long-term staffing changes resulting from CORE -- whether increases or decreases -- will not be known before the system reaches a steady operational state. At this time, the Executive Branch is not submitting any requests for FY 2015-16 to address the impact of CORE on normal departmental financial services operations.

PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE AND THE STATE EDUCATION FUND

FY 2015-16 Request for School Finance

[Background Information: The Governor's request for school finance includes a net increase of \$381.1 million total funds (including increases of \$239.9 million General Fund and \$145.3 million cash funds from the State Education Fund and a decrease of \$4.1 million cash funds from the State Public School fund). The request includes an increase of \$380.6 million total funds for the State Share of Districts' Total Program line item and \$513,859 cash funds from the State Education Fund for the Hold-harmless Full-day Kindergarten Funding line item. The request would reduce the negative factor by \$200.0 million on a one-time basis from (\$894.2 million in FY 2014-15 to \$694.2 million in FY 2015-16) but does not specify an intended level for the negative factor beyond FY 2015-16. In addition, 174 school district superintendents have submitted a statement seeking an additional \$70.0 million in one-time funding for school districts.]

Question 4: Please discuss the out-year impacts of providing the proposed increase in FY 2015-16. Does the State Board of Education's opinion vary from the Governor's request for school finance?

RESPONSE:

As stated in the Governor's FY 2015-16 budget letter, "As we look beyond FY 2015-16, the ability of the State General Fund to protect the negative factor from rising above the FY 2014-15 level of \$894 million is uncertain. Under the current model and incorporating this proposal, the amount of new State General Fund monies in FY 2016-17 to keep the negative factor at ***the FY 2014-15*** level will be **\$560.4 million**. This currently exceeds the expected total new General Fund money available."

This is shown in the Attachment A below:

Attachement A: Summary of Public School Finance - Total Program

	FY 2014-15	FY 2015-16	Difference	FY 2016-17	Difference
Inflation Assumption	2.80%	2.80%	0.00%	2.60%	-0.20%
Funded Pupil Assumption	845,136	855,589	10,453	868,423	12,834
Total Program Calculation	\$6,827,646,456	\$7,107,937,820	\$280,291,364	\$7,402,139,256	\$294,201,436
Negative Factor Adjustment	(894,202,067)	(694,202,067)	200,000,000	(894,202,067)	(200,000,000)
TOTAL PROGRAM Requested	\$5,933,444,389	\$6,413,735,753	\$480,291,364	\$6,507,937,189	\$94,201,436

	FY 2014-15	FY 2015-16	Difference	FY 2016-17	Difference
State Public School Fund	\$98,977,700	\$94,910,156	(\$4,067,544)	\$94,910,156	\$0
State Education Fund	670,481,408	815,228,356	144,746,948	290,000,000	(525,228,356)
General Fund	3,184,047,461	3,423,942,876	239,895,415	3,984,318,265	560,375,389
Total State Share	3,953,506,569	4,334,081,388	380,574,819	4,369,228,421	35,147,033
Total Local Share	<u>1,979,937,820</u>	<u>2,079,654,365</u>	<u>99,716,545</u>	<u>2,138,708,768</u>	<u>59,054,403</u>
TOTAL PROGRAM Requested	\$5,933,444,389	\$6,413,735,753	\$480,291,364	\$6,507,937,189	\$94,201,436

State Education Fund	FY 2014-15	FY 2015-16	Difference	FY 2016-17	Difference
Beginning Balance	\$1,048,948,892	\$666,026,487	(\$382,922,405)	\$135,785,293	(\$530,241,194)
<i>One-third of 1% of State Taxable Income</i>	\$520,800,000	\$558,400,000	\$37,600,000	\$589,100,000	\$30,700,000
<i>Money from Prior Year-end Excess Reserves</i>	34,378,921	0	(34,378,921)	0	0
<i>Transfer: under SB 13-234</i>	25,321,079	25,321,079	0	25,321,079	0
<i>Other</i>	5,800,000	5,800,000	0	6,100,000	300,000
State Education Fund Revenues	\$586,300,000	\$589,521,079	\$3,221,079	\$620,521,079	\$31,000,000
Total Program (School Finance) Expenditures	670,481,408	815,228,356	144,746,948	290,000,000	(525,228,356)
Estimated Other Program Expenditures	298,740,997	304,533,917	5,792,920	312,915,300	8,381,383
State Education Fund Expenditures	\$969,222,405	\$1,119,762,273	\$150,539,868	\$602,915,300	(\$516,846,973)
ENDING BALANCE	\$666,026,487	\$135,785,293	(\$530,241,194)	\$153,391,072	(\$516,846,973)

The State Board has not taken a position concerning the Governor's request for school finance.

Question 5: Please discuss how one-time moneys would benefit school districts. How would districts use the funds?

RESPONSE:

Due to declines in revenue, districts have been forced to spend down reserves in order to balance their budgets or to forego educational programs for students. Fixed costs to operate buildings do not go away – they escalate – heating, maintenance, fuel, etc. When funding is cut, fixed costs still must be covered. One-time funds would be helpful to begin the restoration of reserves and to provide opportunities for addressing deferred maintenance and other non-salaried costs.

CDE surveyed members of the Financial Policies and Procedures Committee for their input.

Based on the information received, the districts stated that they could potentially use the funds in the following ways:

- Capital projects - specifically technology and electrical upgrades
- Facility maintenance
- Temporarily assist them with their special education programs
- One-time classroom educational investments, including curriculum upgrades and textbook purchases
- Replace aging buses, and other fleet vehicles
- Additional buses to meet the needs of a growing Special Education population
- Safety and security enhancements
- Technology infrastructure improvements
- Development of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs and facilities
- Professional development

Finally, the consensus is that the use of additional funding should be at the discretion of local boards of education, so that they may responsibly address critical needs specific to the district. District staff also shared the desire for any additional funding to be on-going in lieu of one-time.

Question 6: Please explain the advantages or disadvantages of providing funding through the school finance formula to reduce the negative factor when the negative factor would immediately go back up the following year. Is there a better way to do this than through the formula?

RESPONSE:

See the chart below for a side-by-side of advantages and disadvantages.

Include \$200 Million One-Time Funds in Finance Formula	
Advantages	Disadvantages
Funding is provided to districts through the formula and therefore, the distributions include adjustments for district characteristics: size, cost of living, at-risk students, etc.	Since the distribution would be through the formula, districts may not fully understand the nature of one-time funds that may be eliminated in the following year.
Mechanically follows the same distribution process therefore no changes to existing formulas or programming is needed.	Negative Factor percentage would have a large increase in the following year.
Districts are familiar with the distribution process through the School Finance Act.	Districts that are primarily funded with local share would receive a reduced or no allocation.
Under current law, districts would have discretion on the use of the funds.	

Below is a chart to “brainstorm other methods of distribution”:

Brainstorming for Other Methods of Distribution	
Advantages	Disadvantages
<i>Separate allocation and distribution to districts based on \$200 million being calculated through the formula. Range of \$22,460 - \$21,304,590</i>	
Leaves the calculation in the formula and becomes a separate distribution – could be paid in two installments, therefore providing opportunity for early one-time investments.	Some districts may prefer a more even distribution of funds throughout the year.
Could keep inherent nature of adjusting funding to districts based on characteristics.	Districts that are primarily funded with local share would receive a reduced or no allocation. (Could provide flat allocation to these districts)
The one-time nature of the funds would be apparent through a separate distribution.	
<i>Per pupil distribution- \$233.76 Range of \$11,687 - \$20,114,494</i>	
Simple calculation – easily distributed.	Does not account for district characteristics potentially providing less benefit to the smallest districts.
Districts that are primarily funded with local share would receive an allocation.	
<i>Flat amount per district - \$1,117,318</i>	
Simple calculation – easily distributed.	Creates large inequities in the benefit to a district based on the size.
Districts that are primarily funded with local share would receive an allocation.	

The following table includes estimates of one-time funding provided by the influx of \$200 million as a buy down of the negative factor compared to the funding provided for inflation and growth.

County	District	Governor's Proposal		Total Increase	Inflation & Growth	One-time
		Total Program After Negative Factor 2014-15	Total Program After Negative Factor 2015-16			
Adams	Mapleton	60,616,906	63,708,061	3,091,155	1,096,318	1,994,837
Adams	Adams 12 Five Star	296,785,657	325,983,172	29,197,515	18,990,276	10,207,239
Adams	Commerce City	59,487,117	64,691,163	5,204,047	3,178,426	2,025,620
Adams	Brighton	117,163,445	129,746,600	12,583,155	8,520,508	4,062,647
Adams	Bennett	7,235,560	7,558,027	322,467	85,809	236,658
Adams	Strasburg	7,325,388	7,944,793	619,405	370,636	248,769
Adams	Westminster	76,326,087	82,016,307	5,690,220	3,122,112	2,568,108
Alamosa	Alamosa	14,430,398	15,405,444	975,046	492,668	482,378
Alamosa	Sangre De Cristo	2,864,522	3,062,825	198,303	102,399	95,904
Arapahoe	Englewood	19,677,818	21,339,419	1,661,601	993,418	668,183
Arapahoe	Sheridan	12,047,009	12,740,074	693,064	294,145	398,919
Arapahoe	Cherry Creek	359,935,224	388,742,890	28,807,666	16,635,284	12,172,382
Arapahoe	Littleton	100,412,158	107,238,809	6,826,651	3,468,772	3,357,879
Arapahoe	Deer Trail	2,119,167	2,281,896	162,729	91,278	71,451
Arapahoe	Aurora	287,910,509	313,067,409	25,156,900	15,354,082	9,802,819
Arapahoe	Byers	4,382,350	4,665,819	283,469	137,372	146,097
Archuleta	Archuleta	9,769,395	10,155,484	386,089	68,099	317,990
Baca	Walsh	1,678,497	1,747,622	69,125	14,403	54,722
Baca	Pritchett	754,284	767,490	13,206	(10,825)	24,032
Baca	Springfield	2,535,837	2,704,379	168,542	83,862	84,680
Baca	Vilas	1,191,723	1,255,602	63,879	24,563	39,316
Baca	Campo	703,103	749,069	45,965	22,510	23,455
Bent	Las Animas	3,678,855	3,843,503	164,648	44,300	120,348
Bent	McClave	2,454,483	2,603,995	149,512	67,975	81,537
Boulder	St Vrain	198,759,265	218,343,584	19,584,320	12,747,509	6,836,811
Boulder	Boulder	204,438,193	220,624,978	16,186,785	9,278,539	6,908,246
Chaffee	Buena Vista	6,626,640	6,982,250	355,610	136,981	218,629
Chaffee	Salida	7,747,739	8,318,351	570,612	310,146	260,466
Cheyenne	Kit Carson	1,380,741	1,478,852	98,111	51,804	46,306
Cheyenne	Cheyenne	2,003,047	2,116,161	113,114	46,852	66,262
Clear Creek	Clear Creek	7,472,797	7,604,645	131,847	131,847	-
Conejos	North Conejos	7,072,251	7,537,706	465,455	229,433	236,022
Conejos	Sanford	3,145,593	3,371,296	225,703	120,140	105,563
Conejos	South Conejos	2,404,298	2,550,714	146,416	66,548	79,868
Costilla	Centennial	2,347,231	2,497,295	150,064	71,868	78,196
Costilla	Sierra Grande	2,614,317	2,792,473	178,156	90,718	87,438
Crowley	Crowley	3,592,514	3,782,156	189,642	71,215	118,428
Custer	Westcliffe	3,278,597	3,446,560	167,963	60,044	107,919

County	District	Governor's Proposal		Total Increase	Inflation & Growth	One-time
		Total Program After Negative Factor 2014-15	Total Program After Negative Factor 2015-16			
Delta	Delta	32,923,979	34,548,304	1,624,325	542,543	1,081,782
Denver	Denver	620,259,368	680,393,341	60,133,973	38,829,384	21,304,589
Dolores	Dolores	2,635,047	2,811,974	176,926	88,877	88,049
Douglas	Douglas	432,475,106	473,128,516	40,653,410	25,838,731	14,814,679
Eagle	Eagle	48,854,259	53,121,210	4,266,951	2,603,611	1,663,340
Elbert	Elizabeth	17,026,183	18,009,144	982,961	419,055	563,905
Elbert	Kiowa	3,133,893	3,315,801	181,908	78,084	103,825
Elbert	Big Sandy	2,910,299	3,094,753	184,455	87,551	96,903
Elbert	Elbert	2,266,618	2,389,665	123,047	48,221	74,826
Elbert	Agate	744,166	794,640	50,474	25,592	24,882
El Paso	Calhan	4,250,521	4,399,656	149,135	11,372	137,763
El Paso	Harrison	78,221,471	84,332,567	6,111,096	3,470,461	2,640,635
El Paso	Widefield	58,267,210	62,360,593	4,093,383	2,140,737	1,952,645
El Paso	Fountain	51,842,298	56,666,851	4,824,553	3,050,191	1,774,362
El Paso	Colorado Springs	209,018,117	222,327,216	13,309,099	6,347,552	6,961,547
El Paso	Cheyenne Mountain	32,322,172	34,649,006	2,326,834	1,241,898	1,084,935
El Paso	Manitou Springs	10,188,051	11,009,427	821,375	476,646	344,729
El Paso	Academy	157,807,486	171,892,981	14,085,495	8,703,154	5,382,342
El Paso	Ellicott	7,028,016	7,501,293	473,277	238,396	234,882
El Paso	Peyton	4,756,199	4,960,020	203,821	48,512	155,309
El Paso	Hanover	2,571,030	2,781,371	210,341	123,250	87,091
El Paso	Lewis-Palmer	39,883,507	43,325,271	3,441,765	2,085,156	1,356,608
El Paso	Falcon	122,695,401	132,605,209	9,909,808	5,757,652	4,152,156
El Paso	Edison	2,208,967	2,364,559	155,592	81,552	74,039
El Paso	Miami-Yoder	2,821,476	3,042,344	220,868	125,605	95,262
Fremont	Canon City	24,773,494	26,425,605	1,652,111	824,668	827,443
Fremont	Florence	10,446,314	10,892,244	445,930	104,870	341,060
Fremont	Cotopaxi	2,286,259	2,435,566	149,307	73,044	76,263
Garfield	Roaring Fork	41,682,199	45,208,353	3,526,154	2,110,583	1,415,571
Garfield	Rifle	31,941,083	34,868,515	2,927,431	1,835,622	1,091,809
Garfield	Parachute	7,573,069	7,981,962	408,893	158,961	249,933
Gilpin	Gilpin	3,363,307	3,582,293	218,986	106,816	112,169
Grand	West Grand	3,676,064	3,922,295	246,231	123,416	122,816
Grand	East Grand	8,536,208	9,141,207	604,998	318,767	286,231
Gunnison	Gunnison	12,642,874	13,463,584	820,710	399,136	421,574
Hinsdale	Hinsdale	1,093,103	1,128,069	34,967	(355)	35,322
Huerfano	Huerfano	3,881,688	4,012,978	131,290	5,635	125,655
Huerfano	La Veta	2,169,882	2,283,746	113,863	42,354	71,509
Jackson	North Park	2,311,700	2,537,087	225,387	145,945	79,442

County	District	Total Program After Negative Factor 2014-15	Governor's Proposal Total Program After Negative Factor 2015-16	Total Increase	Inflation & Growth	One-time
Jefferson	Jefferson	553,917,393	590,950,534	37,033,142	18,529,200	18,503,941
Kiowa	Eads	1,877,873	1,991,789	113,915	51,548	62,367
Kiowa	Plainview	968,759	1,019,038	50,279	18,371	31,908
Kit Carson	Arriba-Flagler	1,895,591	2,029,530	133,939	70,390	63,549
Kit Carson	Hi Plains	1,414,140	1,507,136	92,996	45,805	47,192
Kit Carson	Stratton	1,856,712	1,943,576	86,864	26,006	60,858
Kit Carson	Bethune	1,613,702	1,733,278	119,576	65,303	54,273
Kit Carson	Burlington	5,133,620	5,555,383	421,763	247,812	173,951
Lake	Lake	7,850,207	8,300,671	450,464	190,552	259,912
La Plata	Durango	33,647,134	36,128,105	2,480,971	1,349,722	1,131,249
La Plata	Bayfield	9,431,889	9,993,198	561,309	248,400	312,909
La Plata	Ignacio	5,775,395	6,166,584	391,189	198,100	193,089
Larimer	Poudre	191,659,827	208,255,391	16,595,564	10,074,637	6,520,927
Larimer	Thompson	102,333,441	110,249,491	7,916,050	4,463,900	3,452,150
Larimer	Estes Park	7,947,765	8,442,556	494,791	230,436	264,355
Las Animas	Trinidad	8,748,119	8,869,044	120,925	(156,784)	277,709
Las Animas	Primero	2,113,779	2,266,502	152,723	81,754	70,969
Las Animas	Hoehne	3,042,755	3,237,569	194,814	93,439	101,375
Las Animas	Aguilar	1,224,512	1,313,182	88,671	47,552	41,119
Las Animas	Branson	3,093,816	3,296,998	203,182	99,946	103,236
Las Animas	Kim	670,165	717,266	47,101	24,642	22,459
Lincoln	Genoa-Hugo	1,948,006	2,081,721	133,715	68,532	65,183
Lincoln	Limon	3,581,551	3,852,435	270,885	150,257	120,628
Lincoln	Karval	894,377	902,219	7,843	(20,408)	28,250
Logan	Valley	14,780,238	15,562,624	782,386	295,086	487,299
Logan	Frenchman	2,150,635	2,293,724	143,090	71,268	71,821
Logan	Buffalo	2,841,406	3,040,110	198,704	103,511	95,192
Logan	Plateau	2,086,283	2,228,507	142,225	72,445	69,779
Mesa	Debeque	1,690,498	1,778,549	88,051	32,361	55,690
Mesa	Plateau Valley	3,431,681	3,638,649	206,968	93,034	113,934
Mesa	Mesa Valley	144,669,867	155,998,685	11,328,817	6,444,160	4,884,657
Mineral	Creede	1,186,594	1,274,971	88,377	48,455	39,922
Moffat	Moffat	14,210,806	14,972,992	762,186	293,349	468,837
Montezuma	Montezuma	18,348,561	19,594,340	1,245,779	632,238	613,541
Montezuma	Dolores	5,371,468	5,785,455	413,987	232,832	181,155
Montezuma	Mancos	3,290,628	3,537,191	246,563	135,806	110,757
Montrose	Montrose	41,098,545	43,955,125	2,856,580	1,480,250	1,376,330
Montrose	West End	2,872,358	2,964,685	92,327	(504)	92,831
Morgan	Brush	10,766,960	11,645,974	879,014	514,353	364,661

County	District	Total Program After Negative Factor 2014-15	Governor's Proposal Total Program After Negative Factor 2015-16	Total Increase	Inflation & Growth	One-time
Morgan	Ft. Morgan	20,956,365	22,262,131	1,305,766	608,690	697,076
Morgan	Weldon	2,310,092	2,468,182	158,090	80,806	77,284
Morgan	Wiggins	3,929,666	4,197,160	267,494	136,072	131,422
Otero	East Otero	9,808,656	10,481,763	673,107	344,901	328,207
Otero	Rocky Ford	6,221,219	6,649,743	428,524	220,306	208,218
Otero	Manzanola	1,839,125	1,899,719	60,594	1,109	59,484
Otero	Fowler	3,306,086	3,531,312	225,226	114,653	110,573
Otero	Cheraw	2,310,679	2,465,791	155,112	77,903	77,209
Otero	Swink	3,008,703	3,175,984	167,280	67,833	99,447
Ouray	Ouray	2,364,935	2,527,754	162,820	83,670	79,149
Ouray	Ridgway	3,176,964	3,384,086	207,123	101,160	105,963
Park	Platte Canyon	7,417,628	7,627,672	210,044	(28,795)	238,839
Park	Park	4,355,523	4,663,667	308,144	162,115	146,030
Phillips	Holyoke	4,283,634	4,566,034	282,400	139,428	142,972
Phillips	Haxtun	2,592,173	2,755,339	163,166	76,891	86,276
Pitkin	Aspen	14,979,294	16,054,290	1,074,995	572,301	502,695
Prowers	Granada	2,252,951	2,388,318	135,368	60,584	74,783
Prowers	Lamar	10,941,529	11,697,301	755,771	389,504	366,268
Prowers	Holly	2,506,238	2,673,082	166,844	83,144	83,700
Prowers	Wiley	2,247,851	2,397,857	150,005	74,923	75,082
Pueblo	Pueblo City	118,570,808	125,942,821	7,372,013	3,428,471	3,943,543
Pueblo	Pueblo Rural	59,582,141	64,711,556	5,129,415	3,103,156	2,026,259
Rio Blanco	Meeker	4,880,210	5,321,140	440,930	440,930	-
Rio Blanco	Rangely	3,677,873	4,007,702	329,829	204,339	125,490
Rio Grande	Del Norte	3,875,427	3,978,046	102,619	(21,942)	124,561
Rio Grande	Monte Vista	7,787,165	8,300,710	513,545	253,632	259,913
Rio Grande	Sargent	3,405,461	3,625,174	219,713	106,201	113,512
Routt	Hayden	3,418,692	3,647,072	228,380	114,183	114,198
Routt	Steamboat Springs	16,683,048	18,035,186	1,352,137	787,416	564,721
Routt	South Routt	3,395,979	3,583,329	187,349	75,147	112,202
Saguache	Mountain Valley	1,583,292	1,650,239	66,947	15,275	51,673
Saguache	Moffat	2,384,971	2,491,867	106,895	28,869	78,026
Saguache	Center	5,120,339	5,567,846	447,507	273,166	174,341
San Juan	Silverton	998,029	1,065,721	67,692	34,322	33,370
San Miguel	Telluride	7,943,947	8,857,294	913,348	636,007	277,341
San Miguel	Norwood	2,781,316	2,989,693	208,378	114,764	93,614
Sedgwick	Julesburg	6,257,469	6,692,126	434,658	225,113	209,545
Sedgwick	Platte Valley	1,550,849	1,640,818	89,969	38,592	51,378
Summit	Summit	22,667,404	24,549,319	1,881,915	1,113,222	768,692

County	District	Governor's Proposal		Total Increase	Inflation & Growth	One-time
		Total Program After Negative Factor 2014-15	Total Program After Negative Factor 2015-16			
Teller	Cripple Creek	3,640,197	3,421,596	(218,602)	(218,602)	-
Teller	Woodland Park	16,909,608	17,856,672	947,063	387,932	559,131
Washington	Akron	3,032,883	3,211,545	178,662	78,102	100,560
Washington	Arickaree	1,444,973	1,537,613	92,640	44,494	48,146
Washington	Otis	2,181,199	2,320,065	138,866	66,220	72,646
Washington	Lone Star	1,507,033	1,598,417	91,385	41,335	50,050
Washington	Woodlin	1,166,835	1,206,792	39,958	2,171	37,787
Weld	Gilcrest	12,526,661	13,242,240	715,580	300,937	414,643
Weld	Eaton	12,535,092	13,549,783	1,014,691	590,418	424,273
Weld	Keenesburg	15,098,845	16,396,409	1,297,564	784,157	513,407
Weld	Windsor	31,207,155	34,243,293	3,036,137	1,963,906	1,072,232
Weld	Johnstown	23,046,350	25,399,658	2,353,308	1,557,990	795,318
Weld	Greeley	141,200,451	154,331,988	13,131,537	8,299,068	4,832,469
Weld	Platte Valley	9,250,638	8,686,864	(563,773)	(563,773)	-
Weld	Ft. Lupton	16,134,595	17,221,843	1,087,248	547,995	539,253
Weld	Ault-Highland	5,879,452	6,149,170	269,718	77,175	192,544
Weld	Briggsdale	2,162,973	2,006,066	(156,907)	(219,722)	62,814
Weld	Prairie	2,438,851	2,287,318	(151,533)	(223,154)	71,621
Weld	Pawnee	1,353,063	1,407,865	54,801	54,801	-
Yuma	Yuma 1	6,053,804	6,422,269	368,465	167,370	201,095
Yuma	Wray Rd-2	5,077,388	5,394,016	316,628	147,730	168,898
Yuma	Idalia Rj-3	1,911,897	2,030,026	118,129	54,564	63,564
Yuma	Liberty J-4	1,016,858	1,038,531	21,674	(10,845)	32,519
TOTALS		\$5,933,444,389	\$6,413,735,753	\$480,291,364	\$280,291,364	\$200,000,000

Question 7: Under current law, the “minimum state aid” provision of the School Finance Act will be reinstated in FY 2014-15. Based on the JBC Staff estimates, that reinstatement would require the distribution of \$363,079 to a total of six school districts, five of which would not otherwise receive state funding for school finance in FY 2015-16. Please explain why those five districts would be able to fully fund total program in FY 2015-16 with local revenues.

RESPONSE:

Under current law, the “minimum state aid” provision of the School Finance Act will be reinstated in FY 2014-15. Based on the JBC Staff estimates, that reinstatement would require the distribution of \$363,079 to a total of six school districts, five of which would not otherwise receive state funding for school finance in FY 2015-16. Please explain why those five districts would be able to fully fund total program in FY 2015-16 with local revenues.

Colorado public schools receive funding from a variety of sources. However, most revenues to Colorado's 178 school districts are provided through the Public School Finance Act of 1994 (as amended). Total Program is a term used to describe the total amount of money each school district receives under the School Finance Act. Total program is made up of both the state share of the formula and the local share. The local share of total program is generated through property taxes and specific ownership taxes (vehicle ownership taxes).

The first calculation to determine the split between local and state share for total program, is to determine how much property tax is generated through the district's assessed value and mill levy. This is compared to the total program amount generated through the school finance act. If the local share is lower than the amount needed to fund total program, the state “backfills” the amount needed to obtain total program.

Some district's total program funding is generated by local revenue only. These districts can assess mills against their total assessed value that generate enough funds to fully fund their total program without the need for state aid.

Status of the State Education Fund

[Background Information: The JBC Staff briefing document discusses the status of the State Education Fund in FY 2015-16 and subsequent years and the impact of providing ongoing funding for a variety of programs from the State Education Fund. The ongoing and increasing use of State Education fund moneys to support programs outside of school finance and categorical programs will increase pressure on the General Fund to support school finance going forward.]

Question 8: In FY 2014-15, the General Assembly provided \$3.0 million in one-time funding to support the development of a financial transparency system for education. Please provide an update on the status of that system.

RESPONSE:

House Bill 14-1292 set forth requirements for local education providers (LEPs) to begin reporting financial information tied to individual school sites. LEPs are school districts, BOCES, charter schools and the Charter School Institute. As reported in the fiscal note,

“...the bill continuously appropriates \$3 million for CDE beginning in FY 2014-15 to contract for a web view that pulls and displays financial information reported by school districts on district websites. The web view will provide a comparable format for examining expenditures across schools, districts, and other local education providers (LEPs), and must be available to the public no later than July 1, 2017. Although the \$3 million is continuously appropriated to the department through FY2017-18, the web view is expected to require some additional ongoing expenses, estimated at \$600,000 per year, starting FY2017-18, once the system is operating.”

The Financial Policies and Procedures (FPP) Advisory Committee formed a sub-committee to develop recommendations on how best to implement the requirements of HB14-1292, including recommendations that will be the least burdensome to LEPs. The following items cover the work of the FPP sub-committee to date, and items approved by the FPP committee:

- **Standard Website Templates** – At the Oct. 31, 2014 FPP meeting, three annual financial transparency templates were approved to be used by all LEPs: templates effective July 1, 2015, 2016 and 2017 (and subsequent years): pursuant to Section 22-44-304(4), C.R.S.
- **Financial Transparency Icon** – Beginning July 1, 2015, to easily arrive at required financial transparency information on LEP websites, the FPP committee approved two options:

- Use a standard financial transparency icon which is clearly visible somewhere on the LEP website homepage. When the icon is clicked, a user will be taken to the Standard Website Template which displays all required financial transparency information. The following icon was adopted:



- Create a hyperlink labeled “Financial Transparency” which is clearly visible on the LEP website homepage. When the hyperlink is clicked, a user will be taken to the Standard Website Template which displays all required financial transparency information.

Either option is acceptable, as long as the icon or hyperlink is clearly visible on the LEP’s homepage. The size and location of the icon on the LEP’s homepage is up to the LEP.

- **Individual School Site Level Reporting** – Pursuant to Section 22-44-105 (4)(e)(I) C.R.S., LEPs will be required to post FY 2015-16, and subsequent years financial data on their websites which will include expenditures tied to individual school sites. In order to facilitate the software vendor to easily access LEP financial data, the FPP committee approved using a standardized Excel file which will be posted by the LEP annually, on the LEP’s website. FY 2015-16 financial data will be the first data available and posted by LEPs and used for the website view, which will be available to the public July 1, 2017.
- **Request for Information (RFI)** – An RFI was issued on Dec. 11, 2014, to seek information from vendors that will inform the development and issuance of the Request for Proposal (RFP). The RFP will be issued spring 2015, and a vendor will be selected late summer 2015. The selected vendor will use annual LEP financial data to create a meaningful and clear website view, which will enable interested parties to make comparisons between school districts, individual schools, charter schools, BOCES and the Charter School Institute.
- **Next Steps** – The sub-committee is beginning work on the following:
 1. HB14-1292 district implementation guide
 2. Review of RFI responses when received
 3. Issuance of RFP
 4. Continued discussion on efficiency ideas around how the selected vendor will collect LEP financial data.

Question 9: In FY 2014-15, the General Assembly increased funding provided to boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES) to implement state education priorities by \$2.0 million cash funds from the State Education Fund. Please provide an update on how the Department is distributing those funds and how the BOCES are using those funds.

RESPONSE:

Please see the attached information. It includes:

- Attachment A: FY2014-15 BOCES Allocations showing the amount allocated to each of the 20 BOCES and Allocations by BOCES and by District.
- Attachment B: The Department's summary of the uses of funds during FY2014-15
- Attachment C: The final document is information provided by the Colorado BOCES Association with more detailed examples of how 12 BOCES around the state are utilizing the funds.

100%--all 178 school districts in the state are participating in this program.

Attachment A (Part 1): FY2014-15 BOCES Allocations showing the amount allocated to each of the 20 BOCES.

ALLOCATION - 2014-15

Total BOCES	20
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BOCES	Member Districts	First Allocation- 45%	Second Allocation- 45%	Third Allocation-10%	Amount Allocated 2014-15
Adams County BOCES	5	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 39,823.54	\$ 33,791.50	\$ 144,102.70
Centennial BOCES	20	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 159,294.15	\$ 47,856.73	\$ 277,638.54
Colorado Digital BOCES	2	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 15,929.42	\$ 7,974.23	\$ 94,391.31 *NEW
East Central BOCES	21	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 167,258.86	\$ 3,496.62	\$ 241,243.15
Expeditionary BOCES	5	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 39,823.54	\$ 103,538.84	\$ 213,850.04
Front Range BOCES	2	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 15,929.42	\$ 13,271.21	\$ 99,688.29
Grand Valley BOCES	6	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 47,788.25	\$ 14,312.85	\$ 132,588.76
Mt. Evans BOCES	3	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 23,894.12	\$ 956.71	\$ 95,338.49
Mountain BOCES	10	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 79,647.08	\$ 10,693.79	\$ 160,828.53
Northeast BOCES	12	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 95,576.49	\$ 2,576.37	\$ 168,640.53
Northwest BOCES	7	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 55,752.95	\$ 2,983.51	\$ 129,224.12
Pikes Peak BOCES	17	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 135,400.03	\$ 43,419.72	\$ 249,307.41
Rio Blanco BOCES	2	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 15,929.42	\$ 474.77	\$ 86,891.85
San Juan BOCES	9	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 71,682.37	\$ 5,023.75	\$ 147,193.78
San Luis Valley BOCES	15	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 119,470.61	\$ 3,213.72	\$ 193,171.99
Santa Fe Trail BOCES	6	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 47,788.25	\$ 1,424.78	\$ 119,700.69
South Central BOCES	15	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 119,470.61	\$ 14,317.12	\$ 204,275.39
Southeastern BOCES	12	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 95,576.49	\$ 1,360.79	\$ 167,424.94
Uncompahgre BOCES	5	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 39,823.54	\$ 778.86	\$ 111,090.06
Ute Pass BOCES	3	\$ 70,487.66	\$ 23,894.12	\$ 1,812.62	\$ 96,194.41
Total	177	\$ 1,409,753.25	\$ 1,409,753.25	\$ 313,278.50	\$ 3,132,785.00

These allocations are based on the following assumptions:

*Every district is participating in a BOCES as a member or non-member as outlined in the application except for Hinsdale County. They have chosen not to participate with the Uncompahgre BOCES.

*Every district is assigned to only one BOCES.

*Districts Funded Pupil Count from October, 2013 is the basis for the per pupil allocation. Adjustments are made to those districts with CSI schools.

*Per the MOU between the Adams County and Front Range BOCES, Front Range will receive the full allocation for both BOCES.

*Hinsdale County will be participating with San Luis Valley BOCES.

Attachment A (Part 2): FY2014-15 BOCES Allocations showing the amount allocated to each BOCES and District.

FINAL
2014-15 BOCES ALLOCATIONS
PER HB12-1345

ALLOCATION - 2014-15							
		%					
Appropriation longbill HB 14-1336			1,302,785.00				
School Finance Act HB 14-1298			2,000,000.00				
CDE Share 22-5-122(5)(a)			170,000.00				
Amount to Allocate			3,132,785.00				
First Allocation - Number of BOCES	45%		1,409,753.25				
Second Allocation - Member Districts in BOCES	45%		1,409,753.25				
Third Allocation - Per Pupil	10%		313,278.50				
Amount to Allocate			3,132,785.00				
Code	County	District	District Funded Pupil Count	CSI Funded Pupil Count	FY2014 Funded Pupil Count	Third Allocation-10%	Final Association
0010	ADAMS	MAPLETON 1	7,940.2	305.0	8,245.2	\$ 3,323.46	Adams County BOCES
0020	ADAMS	ADAMS 12 FIVE STAR	40,283.9	2,060.4	42,344.3	\$ 16,861.30	Adams County BOCES
0030	ADAMS	COMMERCE CITY 14	6,977.6	759.2	7,736.8	\$ 2,920.56	Adams County BOCES
0040	ADAMS	BRIGHTON 27J	15,878.3	748.6	16,626.9	\$ 6,646.05	Adams County BOCES
0050	ADAMS	BENNETT 29J	1,004.5	0.0	1,004.5	\$ 420.45	East Central BOCES
0060	ADAMS	STRASBURG 31J	992.3	0.0	992.3	\$ 415.34	East Central BOCES
0070	ADAMS	WESTMINSTER 50	9,652.4	611.2	10,263.6	\$ 4,040.13	Adams County BOCES
0100	ALAMOSA	ALAMOSA 11J	2,081.8	0.0	2,081.8	\$ 871.36	San Luis Valley BOCES
0110	ALAMOSA	SANGRE DECRISTO 22J	308.5	0.0	308.5	\$ 129.13	San Luis Valley BOCES
0120	ARAPAHOE	ENGLEWOOD 1	2,747.5	0.0	2,747.5	\$ 1,150.00	Front Range BOCES
0130	ARAPAHOE	CHERRY CREEK 5	51,197.5	0.0	51,197.5	\$ 21,429.32	Expeditionary BOCES
0140	ARAPAHOE	LITTLETON 6	14,857.6	0.0	14,857.6	\$ 6,218.82	Expeditionary BOCES
0170	ARAPAHOE	DEER TRAIL 26J	158.9	0.0	158.9	\$ 66.51	East Central BOCES
0180	ARAPAHOE	AURORA 28J	38,176.7	0.0	38,176.7	\$ 15,979.31	Expeditionary BOCES
0190	ARAPAHOE	BYERS 32J	578.8	0.0	578.8	\$ 242.26	East Central BOCES
0220	ARCHULETA	ARCHULETA 50J	1,411.5	0.0	1,411.5	\$ 590.80	San Juan BOCES
0230	BACA	WALSH RE-1	141.6	0.0	141.6	\$ 59.27	Southeastern BOCES
0240	BACA	PRITCHETT RE-3	56.6	0.0	56.6	\$ 23.69	Southeastern BOCES
0250	BACA	SPRINGFIELD RE-4	267.2	0.0	267.2	\$ 111.84	Southeastern BOCES
0260	BACA	VILAS RE-5	127.8	0.0	127.8	\$ 53.49	Southeastern BOCES
0270	BACA	CAMPO RE-6	50.0	0.0	50.0	\$ 20.93	Southeastern BOCES
0290	BENT	LAS ANIMAS RE-1	503.3	0.0	503.3	\$ 210.66	Santa Fe Trail BOCES
0310	BENT	MOCLAVE RE-2	259.7	0.0	259.7	\$ 108.70	Southeastern BOCES
0470	BOULDER	ST VRAIN RE-1J	28,011.8	0.0	28,011.8	\$ 11,724.67	Centennial BOCES
0480	BOULDER	BOULDER RE-2	28,959.2	0.0	28,959.2	\$ 12,121.22	Front Range BOCES
0490	CHAFFEE	BUENA VISTA R-31	912.9	0.0	912.9	\$ 382.11	Mountain BOCES
0500	CHAFFEE	SALIDA R-32J	1,100.9	0.0	1,100.9	\$ 460.79	Mountain BOCES
0510	CHEYENNE	KIT CARSON R-1	110.6	0.0	110.6	\$ 45.29	East Central BOCES
0520	CHEYENNE	CHEYENNE R-5 RE-5	169.9	0.0	169.9	\$ 71.11	East Central BOCES
0540	CLEAR CREEK	CLEAR CREEK RE-1	878.7	0.0	878.7	\$ 367.79	Mt. Evans BOCES
0550	CONEJOS	NORTH CONEJOS RE-1J	1,022.8	0.0	1,022.8	\$ 428.11	San Luis Valley BOCES
0560	CONEJOS	SANFORD 6J	372.9	0.0	372.9	\$ 156.08	San Luis Valley BOCES
0580	CONEJOS	SOUTH CONEJOS RE-10	228.7	0.0	228.7	\$ 95.73	San Luis Valley BOCES
0640	COSTILLA	CENTENNIAL R-1	212.3	0.0	212.3	\$ 88.86	San Luis Valley BOCES
0740	COSTILLA	SIERRA GRANDE R-30	265.6	0.0	265.6	\$ 111.17	San Luis Valley BOCES
0770	CROWLEY	CROWLEY RE-1J	470.1	0.0	470.1	\$ 196.77	South Central BOCES
0860	CUSTER	WESTCLIFFE C-1	406.6	0.0	406.6	\$ 170.19	South Central BOCES
0870	DELTA	DELTA 50J	4,958.0	0.0	4,958.0	\$ 2,075.23	Grand Valley BOCES
0880	DENVER	DENVER 1	80,526.1	0.0	80,526.1	\$ 33,705.15	Expeditionary BOCES
0890	DOLORES	DOLORES RE-1	268.1	0.0	268.1	\$ 112.22	San Juan BOCES
0900	DOUGLAS	DOUGLAS RE-1J	62,610.2	0.0	62,610.2	\$ 26,206.24	Expeditionary BOCES
0910	EAGLE	EAGLE RE-60J	6,182.4	278.0	6,460.4	\$ 2,587.72	Mountain BOCES
0920	ELBERT	ELIZABETH C-1	2,492.4	0.0	2,492.4	\$ 1,043.22	East Central BOCES
0930	ELBERT	KIOWA C-2	339.8	0.0	339.8	\$ 142.23	East Central BOCES
0940	ELBERT	BIG SANDY 100J	297.9	0.0	297.9	\$ 124.69	Pikes Peak BOCES
0950	ELBERT	ELBERT 200	200.4	0.0	200.4	\$ 83.88	Pikes Peak BOCES
0960	ELBERT	AGATE 300	50.0	0.0	50.0	\$ 20.93	East Central BOCES
0970	EL PASO	CALHAN RJ-1	495.9	54.6	550.5	\$ 207.56	Pikes Peak BOCES
0980	EL PASO	HARRISON 2	10,850.9	0.0	10,850.9	\$ 4,541.77	Pikes Peak BOCES
0990	EL PASO	WIDEFIELD 3	8,696.9	0.0	8,696.9	\$ 3,640.19	Pikes Peak BOCES
1000	EL PASO	FOUNTAIN 8	7,569.1	0.0	7,569.1	\$ 3,168.14	Pikes Peak BOCES
1010	EL PASO	COLORADO SPRINGS 11	27,840.6	2,479.6	30,320.2	\$ 11,653.01	Pikes Peak BOCES
1020	EL PASO	CHEYENNE MOUNTAIN 12	4,840.7	0.0	4,840.7	\$ 2,026.13	Pikes Peak BOCES
1030	EL PASO	MANITOU SPRINGS 14	1,422.3	0.0	1,422.3	\$ 595.32	Ute Pass BOCES

Attachment B
Department Summary of the Uses of BOCES Funds
Fiscal Year 2014-15

Below is a brief summary of each BOCES and how they plan to utilize the HB12-1345 funds to support their school districts in meeting state educational reforms and initiatives.

Northeast BOCES: The NE BOCES will continue to support the work of the Northeast Consortium for Student Achievement and Growth. This consortium work includes educator effectiveness professional development, implementation of state standards and a literacy design collaborative.

East Central BOCES: The East Central BOCES will support their districts in the continued work on the implementation of the state standards, the development and implementation of classroom formative assessments, data coaching, leadership training and the implementation of data teams to support the classroom teachers and instruction.

Santa Fe Trail BOCES: The Santa Fe Trail BOCES will utilize their funds to continue their implementation of the requirements of SB 191 Educator Effectiveness. Activities will include data management systems, refining student learning outcomes and student growth pie chart development and the training for administrators in the implementation and delivery of specific components of the PD 360 program.

Southeast BOCES: The Southeast BOCES will utilize the funds to support collaborative work and professional development for all educators in their region. The support includes data analysis and management for district and classroom assessments, online curriculum development and implementation, and the SEBOCES Fall Conference professional development activities.

South Central BOCES: The South Central BOCES will continue to utilize the funds to meet the requirements of the implementation of SB 191 Educator Effectiveness, specifically supporting the professional development needs of administrators and teacher leaders. In addition, the funds will support the work in data analysis and management, curriculum development and the gifted and talented program.

Pikes Peak BOCES: The Pikes Peak BOCES will support their districts by utilizing the funds in the area of classroom curriculum and instruction development and implementation and meeting the professional development needs of area educators in these two areas.

Ute Pass BOCES: The Ute Pass BOCES will focus their funds on the continued development of benchmark assessments in all grade levels and content areas. The funds will also support the

continued development and work of an electronic evaluation system for all educators in their region to utilize.

Colorado Digital BOCES: The Colorado Digital BOCES will utilize their funds to support the work in meeting the requirements of SB 191 Educator Effectiveness and the continued development of an online advanced learner program supporting student success in postsecondary education and the workforce.

Expeditionary BOCES: The Expeditionary BOCES continues to utilize their funds to meet the requirements of the READ Act. This support includes literacy interventions and the necessary professional development and resources and literacy interventionists in all grade levels supporting students in their classroom.

Front Range BOCES: The Front Range BOCES will utilize their funds to meet the continued requirements of the READ Act and SB 191 Educator Effectiveness. The work includes cross district professional learning communities and instructional rounds for instructional leaders within the schools and literacy support to improve student literacy outcomes through effective READ plans, School Readiness Plans and IEPs. Adams County BOCES has signed an MOU with the Front Range BOCES and will collaborate with them in the utilization of these funds.

Mt. Evans BOCES: The Mt. Evans BOCES will be utilizing the funds to continue their work with all of their teachers in effective technology use in the classroom. In addition, these funds will support their work in meeting the needs of the gifted and talented students and programming.

Centennial BOCES: The Centennial BOCES will utilize these funds to continue their work in the implementation of the READ Act and cognitive coaching for requirements of SB 191 Educator Effectiveness. In addition, the funds support the continued work and effectiveness of two cross district literacy cohorts.

Northwest BOCES: The Northwest BOCES has determined to utilize their funds to continue the support of the NW Regional Collaborative Day of professional development in educator effectiveness and literacy and the follow up activities in professional development to this collaborative effort.

Rio Blanco BOCES: The Rio Blanco BOCES will use their funds to support their continued work in standards based learning and leadership professional development activities. In addition, the funds will assist them in their mentor-mentee program and its continued support to the administrators and teachers in the region.

Mountain BOCES: The Mountain BOCES will utilize their funds in developing an effective professional development planning process and plan in conjunction with the Colorado Teacher and Principal Quality Standards.

San Luis Valley BOCES: The San Luis Valley BOCES will continue to utilize their funds in a collaborative effort to meet the requirements of the READ Act, develop and implement at all grade levels and content areas common assessments based on the state standards and support the work of the literacy interventionists.

San Juan BOCES: The San Juan BOCES will continue to utilize their funds in the implementation of a comprehensive professional development plan. The professional development plan will include data driven instructional strategies in literacy, peer coaching, development of common formative assessments in literacy and math, professional development management system, and classroom literacy and math curriculum development support.

Uncompaghre BOCS: The Uncompaghre BOCS will utilize their funds for their continued work in developing and implementing high quality math curriculum and instruction for all grade levels in their school districts. Activities include professional development for all teachers, coaching, effectively developing and utilizing math assessments in the classroom.

Grand Valley BOCES: The Grand Valley BOCES will continue utilizing the funds to support their work with the implementation and requirements of SB 191 Educator Effectiveness building leadership and instructional capacity in all of their school districts.

Attachment C: Examples of BOCES' Use of HB 12-1345 Funds to Support Teachers, Administrators and Support Staff

Centennial BOCES: Twenty-two school districts participated in the Implementation of the READ Act.

- K3 Teachers – READ plans and Implementation of the READ Act
- K1, 2 and 3 teachers – Reading Triage Workshops
- 160 teachers representing 34 different elementary school sites received the training
- 15 building and district administrators participated in the training
- 14 paraprofessionals attended the training offered for their job category

East Central BOCES: Professional Development Data Team Process Implementation

With HB-1234 allocations East Central BOCES has been able to support its 20 member districts with professional development that is specific to each district with respect to state standards, classroom instructional strategies, and formative assessments. The first year the HB 12-1345 allocation were used to provide districts with professional development in learning the Data Team Process, prioritizing the language arts standards, and writing formative assessments. The Data Team Process professional development had 100% of our members districts involved with 95 lead teachers and had 87 language arts teachers and administrators participating.

Year two of the HB 12-1345 allocation was all about implementing the Data Team process in our member districts. East Central BOCES hired 1.5 FTE of Data Team Coaches to work in our member districts. With our model schools we had 14 data teams, 44 teachers and 7 administrators participating in the work. In the second semester of the second year, nine more schools were added.

In year three of the HB 12-1345 allocation East Central BOCES was able to add another 1.5 FTE for a total of 3 FTE for Data Team Coaches and we have 46 data teams, 146 teachers, and 25 administrators in our member districts participating.

Most importantly the HB 12-1345 allocations have allowed for East Central BOCES to provide our member districts with the following:

- Professional Development at their school site, rather than driving to Limon. Teachers are able to spend more time in their classrooms teaching because of the on-site professional development and coaching support in the classroom.
- The implementation of the data team process ensures state standards are being taught in each school, as the formative assessments are assessing prioritized state standards.
- Each district or school can determine what content area their professional development needs to address; reading, writing, or math.

Northeast BOCES: 10 School Districts

Formed 23 Professional Learning Communities (PLC), made up of 10 school districts, 380 teachers, administrators and BOCES personnel. Each PLC addressed the standards, curriculum and developed common assessments to be used across all districts. Provided Education Effectiveness (SB-191) implementation training for all districts (teachers and administrators)

San Luis Valley BOCES: 14 Member School Districts

Formed the Valley Wide Professional Development Consortium for the 14 school districts. Provided professional development to create common curriculum and common assessments valley wide. Common assessments were developed for content areas and grade levels. Provided professional development on implementation of the SB-191 state model system.

14 superintendents, 32 building level principals and approximately 400 teachers and 60 support staff participated.

Mt. Evans BOCES: 3 Member School Districts

The BOCES provided professional development in the following areas:

- Gifted and Talented Education training to 75 regular education teachers
- “Classroom Technology Instruction That Works” – provided to 75 staff members across the BOCES
- Paraprofessionals as Classroom Educators – Training for 25 paraprofessionals to support instruction in the member districts

Expeditionary BOCES: 5 Member School Districts

Provided Early Literacy Intervention at the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning. Specialists who designed courses to support students who were identified as partially proficient or not at grade level in all elementary grades in the Rocky Mountain School of Expeditionary Learning. Approximately 20 percent (78 students) out of a total school population of 390 were served each year. Approximately 230 students served over four years. The students that participated continue to show growth as measured by TCAP and ACT.

South Central BOCES: 13 Member School Districts

Provided the following professional development:

- NWEA Assessment Training – principals and superintendents

- Alpine Training – teachers, principals and superintendents
- Gifted and Talented Training – general education teachers, SPED teachers and principals
- Grade level curriculum and local assessment development – teachers, principals and paraprofessionals in all districts

Front Range BOCES: 10 Member School Districts

Front Range BOCES Professional Learning Services to Principals, Assistant Principals, District Leaders and Support Staff that is supported by HB 1345 Dollars: Note that the majority of people we serve are school and district leaders, versus teachers.

Leaders for Educational Excellence: Cross-district professional learning communities and one-on-one coaching which improve principals’, assistant principals’ and coaches’ instructional leadership capacity, and in turn the instructional practices of teachers. Communities meet for two to three years. Sixty-five school leaders served.

Instructional Rounds: Cross-district learning experiences in which principals, assistant principals, district leaders and teachers practice classroom observation skills, pattern analysis across classrooms and prediction of student learning in various schools across the region. One hundred and thirty leaders and teachers served.

Schoolyard Scrimmage/Design Thinking: Cross-district learning experiences and consultations designed to improve school and district leaders’ strategic problem-solving and decision making skills using the Design Thinking process. Two hundred and twenty school and district leaders served.

Collaborative Action to Improve Early Literacy Outcomes: New initiative currently being launched to improve early literacy outcomes by facilitating authentic collaboration among all stakeholders who impact student performance from age zero through age seven. Twenty district leaders served.

Uncompahgre BOCES: 5 Member School Districts

Uncompahgre BOCES uses the funds that we have received to provide intensive instruction to 105 teachers, 19 paraprofessionals, and 13 administrators in the area of mathematics instruction, curriculum, and assessment.

Over the course of the past school year, and continuing into this year we have had the opportunity to hire a math coach to work with each district. This work has been beneficial to all teachers in our districts in helping them grow their skills in Math instruction. The selection and purchase of high quality curriculum is an outcome of the work with the coach.

Math scores have grown in several districts, but more importantly, staff members are learning skills and implementing what they learn in their classrooms. Student engagement, understanding, and utilization of these math techniques is evident in all districts to improve student achievement scores in math.

This year we have also added MTSS and Reading Instruction. We are currently training in the PTR method for behavior management, and have had 1 week long session of Orton-Gillingham reading training. More of classes in each of these areas are in the process of being planned for the rest of this year.

San Juan BOCES: 9 Member School Districts

Implementation of SB-191

As our first outcome of this work, we aimed to improve teacher professional practice ratings on specific components of the Teacher Quality Standards. During the 2012/13 school year, San Juan BOCES identified four elements to target professional development. Teachers in the San Juan BOCES increased their proficiency on these elements in the 2013/14 school year as demonstrated in end-of-year evaluation ratings. Notably, though ratings.

Additionally, the San Juan BOCES targeted student outcomes and growth with this work, as measured by the district performance frameworks (DPFs). Many of our member districts showed positive differences in their DPFs from 2013 to 2014. Teachers and administrators in all of our 9 member districts have received a variety of professional development to successfully implement SB-191 (Educator Effectiveness) as the San Juan BOCES was a pilot BOCES selected by CDE and the Colorado Legacy Foundation (now the Colorado Education Initiative). This professional development was provided over the past 2-3 years.

Rio Blanco BOCES: 2 Member School Districts

Rio Blanco BOCES, over the past three years has trained all district administration as well as teacher leaders in standards based education, supported the development of new curriculum, and help support engaged classrooms to support positive behavior in the classroom. In the past two years every staff member in both districts has been trained. This includes all administrators, all teachers, and all support staff including secretaries, lunch staff and custodians in positive classroom and personal safety. This year we trained two new district induction coordinators and 12 new mentors including BOCES Specialized Services Providers. The past three years the districts have used the training materials to develop a standards based lesson plan template used by both districts, as well as support with the teacher evaluation process (SB 191).

The Rio Blanco BOCES is supporting new training for both districts in early literacy. All preschool and primary teachers both general education and special education will participate in the training and follow up implementation. The final training for the year will be in support of collaborative teaming. This training will match special education and general education teams together to learn more about working together to support the needs of both general and special education students. Over the course of 2.5 years, Rio Blanco BOCES has provided training for approximately 150 teachers in our districts.

Santa Fe Trail BOCES – 6 Member School Districts

Since receiving these funds, the SFTBOCES has provided the following services and professional development to member districts. In the first year, the SFTBOCES employed a part-time consultant to provide coaching support and multiple professional development sessions for Superintendents, Principals and other District building evaluative personnel in order to develop their skills and capacity to complete high quality evaluations consistently throughout the SFTBOCES districts to meet SB-191 expectations. The consultant met with 6 SFTBOCES Superintendents three times to develop a plan and timelines for trainings. All superintendents and 12 principals were trained.

In the second year of receiving these funds the SFTBOCES provided the following services and professional development to member districts. The SFTBOCES employed a part-time Data Management Technician. The Data Management Technician, in coordination with the two consultants, created the SFTBOCES Educator Effectiveness Team (SB-191) and provided the following professional development:

- **What Data Should We Collect and How**
 - 6 Superintendents, 1 SFTBOCES Director, 12 Principals, 25 Teacher Leaders
- **How to Use Collected Data**
 - 12 Principals, 25 Teacher Leaders
- **Using Your Data System Effectively**
 - 6 Superintendents, 1 SFTBOCES Director, 12 Principals, 25 Teacher Leaders
- **Putting Data in User-Friendly Format**
 - 6 Superintendents, 1 SFTBOCES Director, 12 Principals, 25 Teacher Leaders
- **How to Determine & Request Data that Achieves the Expected Outcomes**
 - 6 Superintendents, 1 SFTBOCES Director, 12 Principals, 25 Teacher Leaders
- **How to Use Data to Determine Classroom Instruction**
 - 12 Principals, 25 Teacher Leaders
- **How to Analyze Data with Teachers to Impact Classroom Instruction – Part 1**
 - 12 Principals, 25 Teacher Leaders

- **How to Analyze Data with Teachers to Impact Classroom Instruction – Part 2**
 - 12 Principals, 25 Teacher Leaders
- **How to Use the CDE GatherRubric & Other tools to Identify Professional Development Needs**
 - 6 Superintendents, 1 SFTBOCES Director, 12 Principals, 25 Teacher Leaders

These trainings varied from ½ day to full day trainings. After the trainings, the Teacher Leaders returned to their respective buildings to implement what they had learned with the teachers in their buildings. The teacher leaders trained approximately 250 teachers in the 6 districts. The BOCES created this structure to assure sustainability and consistency throughout the SFTBOCES Districts.

Question 10: The General Assembly has provided \$3.0 million per year (from the State Education Fund) for the Quality Teacher Recruitment Program. How is that program working? What is the State getting for that money? Please provide an update.

RESPONSE:

The response to this question has been excerpted in part from the Year 1 evaluation of the program conducted by OMNI Institute. The full Year 1 evaluation report can be accessed at: <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/qualityteacherrecruitmentgrantprogramyear1>. Please note that 2013-14 was the first year of this grant program. It was a planning, recruitment, and training year. This school year (2014-15) is the first year that students recruited into the programs were placed in schools.

Section 22-94-101, C.R.S (Senate Bill 13-260), created the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program, which authorizes the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to fund teacher preparation programs to recruit, prepare, and place high-quality teachers in school districts that have had historic difficulty recruiting and retaining quality teachers.

In December 2013, through a competitive selection process, CDE awarded grant funds to the Public Education & Business Coalition (PEBC) and Teach For America (TFA)–Colorado, to place 65 and 95 teachers, respectively, in 17 Colorado school districts by fall 2014-15. In addition, CDE selected OMNI Institute to conduct a formative and summative evaluation of the program.

Below is a brief summary of the findings from Year 1 interviews with program leaders and staff, and district and higher education partners. Summative findings will be provided at the end of Year 2.

Program Approach

PEBC and TFA each seek to recruit, prepare, and place highly qualified teachers in high-need districts to promote effective teaching and increase student achievement. Each program implements a unique model to achieve these goals.

PEBC	TFA
Initiative to improve effectiveness of school systems by increasing teacher quality and retention district-wide, supporting ongoing development of residents and mentor teachers,	Founded to reduce educational inequities by placing high-quality candidates in high-need/hard-to-serve schools and by creating alumni to serve as advocates and leaders for

and enhancing capacity and collaborative leadership in partner schools and districts	change in educational policy and ideology
Colorado Only	Colorado is one of 48 TFA regions
Candidates agree to a 5-year commitment	Corps members agree to a 2-year commitment
Program admission is generally contingent on successful placement (i.e., matched to a mentor teacher or a principal request to fill an open position in a rural district)	Corps members are admitted to the program, assigned to Colorado, and then apply for open teaching positions in partner districts
In the first year, most candidates serve as residents in the classrooms of mentor teachers; about 15% serve as teachers of record in rural districts (based on current placement data)	In the first year, all corps members are placed as teachers of record.
Institute of Higher Education Partner: Adams State University, located in the San Luis Valley	Institute of Higher Education Partner: University of Colorado-Denver's ASPIRE to Teach Program
Grant goal: place 65 teachers in 14 partner districts	Grant goal: place 95 teachers in 3 partner districts

Program Strengths

Although each program implements a unique approach, they share several strengths.

A collaborative and responsive approach to district partnerships. District partners had high praise for both programs. PEBC and TFA-Colorado acknowledge the importance of being flexible and adaptive to meet district needs. Programs and district partners indicated that partnerships are successful when there is open, clear, and consistent communication; program responsiveness to unique district contexts; shared agreement on program vision and approach; and strong evidence of program effectiveness.

Implementation of a highly rigorous selection process. Each program uses multiple measures to assess candidates, including an initial application, résumés and transcripts, essays and written assessments, and individual and group interviews. Each also emphasizes selection of candidates who possess core characteristics of successful educators (e.g., coachable, reflective, and self-aware; a culturally-sensitive mindset; inherent belief that all children can learn and achieve; possession of relational skills needed to teach; a history of high achievement; persistence, self-efficacy, and the ability to overcome challenges).

Integration of theory and practice to effectively prepare teachers. The integration of theory and practice is a foundational element of PEBC’s program, enhanced in recent years through its partnership with Adams State University. TFA also is strengthening this element of the program through its recent partnership with the University of Colorado – Denver’s ASPIRE program. Both models employ summer institutes, coursework, observations of candidates in the field, timely feedback, and ongoing professional development.

Year 1 Challenges

Both programs expressed challenges unique to implementing in high-need and rural districts. Programs mentioned that high turnover in district and school leadership creates difficulties because of the considerable work involved in building relationships, program support, and district capacity. In addition, in rural areas, TFA-Colorado indicated that it must identify the best method to provide leadership, support and resources over dispersed areas. Although rural districts have a demonstrated need, they also have a lower number of students and open positions, which make it challenging for TFA to place clusters of corps members, its preferred placement approach. PEBC also indicated that expansion into rural communities is requiring adjustments to its model, and how it provides support to candidates placed as Year 1 teachers of record, as mentor teachers are teaching in different classrooms. Both programs are exploring opportunities to enhance program implementation in rural districts.

Increasing the diversity of program candidates and recruiting STEM candidates are ongoing challenges for both programs as well as their district partners. PEBC noted that it is especially difficult in rural communities, and is working to form stronger rural partnerships and is exploring recruitment from rural communities outside of Colorado. Among other efforts, the TFA recruitment team has expanded its partnerships to include more Colorado colleges and universities with diverse student bodies and TFA-Colorado supports the Regional Diversity Initiative to bolster recruitment of diverse corps members.

Fall 2014 Placement Data

Number of Targeted, Recruited and Placed Teachers by October 2014, Overall and by Program

	TFA-Coloardo	PEBC	Total
Target Number	95	65	160
Recruited¹	71	57	128
Placed by October 2014	65	55	120
<i>Placed as Teachers of Record</i>	65	8	73
<i>Placed as Residents</i>	NA	47	47
Will Not Be Placed in a Target District²	6	2	8

¹ The number recruited refers to the number of candidates recruited and admitted into each teacher preparation program for placement in a target district through the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program.

Next Steps

At the end of the 2014-15 academic year, after candidates have been teaching for one year, vendors are slated to provide OMNI with educator effectiveness data. OMNI also will survey placed teachers and conduct a second phase of key informant interviews. The final Year 2 report will include data on program success in placing highly qualified teachers, as well as lessons learned over the two-year grant program.

² The number who will not be placed in a target district includes candidates who were placed in a district that is not part of the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program, or who withdrew from the program.

Question 11: In FY 2014-15, the General Assembly provided an additional \$27.5 million from the State Education Fund for programs serving English language learners. Please discuss the ongoing need for those funds. What is driving the need?

RESPONSE:

Although the additional \$27.5 million for English language learner (ELL) students will help tremendously, the need for additional funds in support of programs for English language learners will continue. The need is driven by:

- The number of English language learners in the state continues to grow. [See Table 1.]
- The percentage of Colorado’s student enrollment that is comprised of English language learners continues to increase. [See Table 1.]
- English language learners are enrolling in school districts that have not previously had English language learners. [See Table 1.]
- The majority of English language learners are enrolled in school districts that have been accredited with an improvement plan of Priority Improvement or Turnaround. [See Table 2.]
- Although progress has been made, significant gaps remain between student outcomes for ELLs vs. non-ELLs [See Chart 1 and Table 3.]
- ELLs are a heterogeneous group of students with variance among instructional strengths and needs.
- Research suggests that districts with higher fiscal allocations specifically made in support of English language development (ELD) programs produce favorable results for ELL students and overall district/school achievement. [See *The Council of the Great City Schools Report, “Succeeding with English Language Learners: Lessons Learned from the Great City Schools”* http://www.cgcs.org/cms/lib/dc00001581/centricity/domain/4/ell_report09.pdf].
- On average, the resources necessary to move ELL students to linguistic and academic proficiency are greater than they are to move non-ELL students to academic proficiency. Consequently, school districts are spending far more in support for English language learners than they receive through state and federal sources. [See Table B.]

Over the past 10 years, Colorado has experienced a steady increase in its number of English language learners. In 2003, Colorado’s schools educated 86,129 ELL students. That number increased to 124,701 in 2013. As a proportion of overall student enrollment in Colorado, that

is an increase from 11.5% of the total student enrollment in 2002-03 to 14.4% of total student enrollment in 2012-13. Currently, one in seven Colorado students is identified as an English language learner. The number of districts with ELLs has also increased with a related decline in the number of districts that do not have ELLs. ELLs comprise 20% or more of the student enrollment in over 30 school districts, many of them among Colorado’s largest school districts and also some of them among Colorado’s smallest school districts. October 1, 2013 student enrollment data present two hundred thirty-five languages, other than English, are spoken in the homes of Colorado’s students.

Table 1. ELL Enrollment as a Percentage of Overall Enrollment Across 10 Years

Year	Total Student Population	Total Number of ELLs*	Percent ELL	Number of Districts with ELLs	Number of Districts with No ELLs
2002-2003	751,862	86,129	11.5%	NA	NA
2007-2008	802,639	106,413	13.3%	153	30
2012-2013	863,561	124,701	14.4%	160	23
*State Definition of ELL; based on Student Count October					

In 2012, of all the ELLs in the state, 54% were enrolled in districts that were accredited with an improvement plan of Priority Improvement or Turnaround under Colorado’s system of educational accountability.

Table 2: Number of ELLs in Priority Improvement and Turnaround (PI/TA) Districts

Total PITA Student Enrollment	Number of ELLs Enrolled	Number of ELLs in State	Percent of ELLs
214,041	67,697	124,701	54.3%

Outcomes for Colorado’s ELL Students

As noted above, Colorado has made gains in improving outcomes for ELL students relative to other subgroups of students. The lines reflect the performance of subgroups of Colorado’s students. The bars reflect CDE’s performance targets for achievement by year.

Chart #1: Achievement for ELLs Compared to Other Subgroups of Students

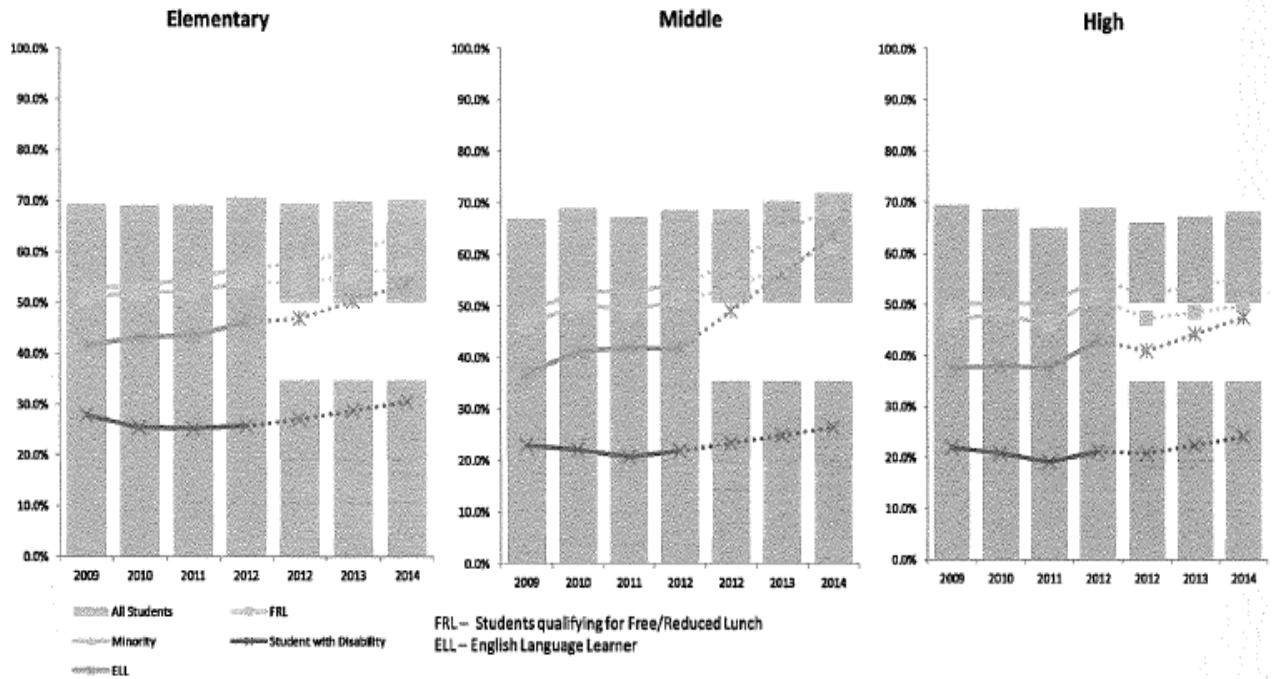


Table 3: ELL Proficiency in Reading, Math, and Writing Compared to Non-ELL Proficiency

This table reflects the steady but insufficient progress Colorado has made in improving achievement outcomes for ELL students when compared to their non-ELL peers. For example, in 2004, there was a 39% gap between ELLs and non-ELLs in reading proficiency. In 2013, that gap was narrowed to 29%. There has been a similar narrowing of the gaps in math (2%) and writing (10%). However, the current rate of progress projects that it would take 30 years to eliminate the achievement gap between ELLs and non-ELLs entirely.

Reading Percent Proficient and Advanced										
	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Non-ELL	71.1	71.3	72.3	73.1	73.3	73.9	73.9	73.4	74.9	74.8
ELL	32.1	32.6	32.8	34.5	37.8	38.9	40.9	41.6	43.5	45.7
Math Percent Proficient and Advanced										
	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Non-ELL	45.5	54.2	55.6	57.1	57.2	58.5	58.9	59.7	59.9	60.7
ELL	20.1	27.6	29.3	30.9	32.0	34.0	35.2	36.9	36.9	38.6

Writing Percent Proficient and Advanced										
	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Non-ELL	57.0	58.7	58.0	59.2	58.6	59.9	58.1	60.5	58.8	59.8
ELL	22.8	24.5	21.8	24.4	25.0	27.9	27.2	30.5	32.1	33.2

The ELL population in Colorado is a remarkably heterogeneous group of students marking diversity across demographic data as a defining characteristic. The linguistic and academic needs of ELL students vary greatly across this diverse population, requiring districts to differentiate instruction and to be prepared to meet the unique needs of ELLs while providing equitable access to grade level content. Refugee and migrant students in particular, represent a group of students that often require additional and intensive instruction because of interrupted education. Students that meet the United States refugee definition continue to increase in Colorado and often settle in areas and regions where the educational infrastructure is not established to provide the opportunity for these students to access grade level standards. These districts and communities struggle to find the fiscal resources to establish and provide equitable educational opportunities for these students. The increased ELPA funding has allowed districts to expand and develop programs that differentiate for the unique and diverse needs of all English language learners.

Table 4: Postsecondary Data for ELLs in Comparison to State Averages

ELL students significantly lag behind other students in indicators related to college and career readiness. Nearly one in two ELL students does not graduate. In 2004, ELL graduation rates were higher than the state average. In 2012, they lagged behind non-ELL graduation rates by over 20%. Dropout rates for ELL students are twice the state average. Average ACT scores for ELLs are 25% below the state average.

Postsecondary Data	Students	2004	2006	2008	2010	2012	2013
Graduation Rate	ELLs	88.6%	65.9%	52.0%	49.2%	53.3%	NA
	State Total (All students)	82.5%	74.1%	73.9%	72.4%	75.4%	NA
Dropout Rate	ELLs	5.3%	7.7%	6.8%	6.0%	5.1%	NA
	State Total (All students)	3.8%	4.5%	3.8%	3.1%	2.9%	NA
Colorado ACT Composite Score	Non-English Proficient (NEP)/Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students	NA	NA	12.7	12.6	16.1	13.6
	Students in ELL Programs	NA	NA	14.9	15.1	20.0	16.3
	State Total (All students with valid scores)	NA	NA	20.2	20.0	20.0	20.1

In recent years, the U.S. Office of Civil Rights (OCR) and U.S. Department of Justice have elevated efforts to clarify what is expected of states and school districts in providing educational opportunities for ELLs and have increased efforts in monitoring schools districts against those expectations. As a result, fifteen school districts have not met federal requirements and are currently operating under OCR “monitoring status” or Department of Justice “court order.”

In the 2013 TELL Survey, 41% of teachers said that they need more professional development regarding how to provide effective instruction to English language learners. CDE believes additional resources would enable school districts and BOCES to provide significant support to Colorado’s teachers in how to provide effective instruction to English learners.

Furthermore, a recent study conducted by the Council of Great City Schools, “*Succeeding with English Language Learners: Lessons learned from the Great City Schools*” (2009), found that increased funding for English language development programs, benefited overall district reform efforts and impacted the overall achievement of ELL students in five participating Great City school districts (p. 23). Colorado districts would benefit from a continued increase of funding specifically targeting ELLs, to ensure efforts supported with the initial allocation are sustained through coordinated implementation and ongoing evaluation to ensure positive and successful outcomes for ELL students.

In his FY 2015-16 Department of Education Staff Budget Briefing to the Joint Budget Committee, Craig Harper included the following table in Appendix C. Table B provides a comparison of actual district expenditures for certain categorical programs to available state and federal funding. The table reflects total FY 2012-13 district expenditures in support of English language proficiency programs in the amount of \$186,774,796. However, districts only received \$24,373,728 (13%) of that amount from state and federal sources, leaving the local share of expenditures at \$162,401,068. The 13% of total expenditures covered by state and federal funds for English language proficiency programs is less than half of the percentage covered under other categorical programs which range from 25.3% to 38.8%.

Table B: Categorical Program Revenues and Expenditures: FY 2012-13

Long Bill Line Item	State Funds	Federal Funds	Total State & Federal Funds	Total District Expenditures	State/Federal Share of Expenditures	Local Share of Expenditures
District Programs Required by Statute						
Special Education – Children with Disabilities	\$164,664,490	\$156,558,311	\$321,222,801	\$826,872,871	38.8%	\$505,650,070
English Language Proficiency Program	14,460,255	9,913,473	24,373,728	186,774,796	13.0%	162,401,068
Other Categorical Programs						
Public School Transportation	54,026,096	0	54,026,096	213,666,283	25.3%	159,640,186
Career and Technical Education	24,218,018	5,762,532	29,980,550	82,371,196	36.4%	52,390,646
Special Education – Gifted and Talented	9,280,600	0	9,280,600	30,659,347	30.3%	21,378,747
Total						\$901,460,717

Availability of Local Revenues and Mill Levy Overrides

Question 12: How much transparency does the Department have into the availability and use of local revenues by school districts? Does the Department track how school districts use local revenues? Please explain.

RESPONSE:

School districts report annual audited financial data to the department, including all local revenue, based on the uniform chart of accounts pursuant to Section 22-44-105(4)(a), C.R.S.

The following sources of local revenue are reported to the department:

- Taxes – this includes property tax, specific ownership, and mill levy overrides.
- Tuition – tuition cannot be charged for basic educational purposes, but may be charged for programs such as preschool.
- Transportation – transportation fees may be collected for excess transportation costs.
- Earnings on Investments – any earnings on allowed investments are available for use by districts, and are subject to applicable federal regulations such as arbitrage.
- Pupil Activity Fees – collected for various athletic and extracurricular student activities and are used for the purposes for which they are collected.
- Community Services Activity Revenue – collected from community organizations or agencies for services provided, such as adult education.
- Other Local Revenues
 - Revenue from the use of district owned facilities and equipment
 - Gifts and donations from private sources
 - Revenue from the sale of capital assets

Locally generated revenue is combined with state revenue to support educational programs within the district, as set forth in district budgets. Districts report their use of funds through the annual submission of financial data to the department using the standard chart of accounts.

When districts report expenditures, the local source of revenue for a particular expenditure is not identifiable. For some state programs, such as the categorical programs (special education, transportation, English language proficiency act, career technical education and gifted and talented), the amount of state and local revenues to fund the expenditures are known.

Question 13: Please discuss the school districts' use of mill levy overrides. How many are using overrides and how much money are those overrides raising? How do overrides affect districts' per pupil operating revenues? Please provide illustrative examples of the impact of overrides on operating revenues for districts that do and do not have access to significant override revenues. Please discuss potential concerns about equity between school districts that do and do not have override funds.

RESPONSE:

Currently there are 115 districts using overrides to generate an additional \$832 million in local revenues. On average, this results in an average increase of \$1,104 per pupil for districts with overrides. Of the 63 districts that do not have an override, 48 districts have less than 1,000 funded pupils. There are 107 districts with less than 1,000 funded pupils in the state. The following table illustrates the impact of override revenues for each district.

County	District	FY 2014-15 Funded Pupil Count	Total Program Per Pupil Funding (after Negative Factor)	Total Voter Approved Override	Override Per Pupil Funding	Total Per Pupil Funding including Voter Approved Override
Adams	Mapleton	8,203.9	7,000	4,884,050	595	7,595
Adams	Adams 12 Five Star	41,608.7	6,855	35,400,000	851	7,706
Adams	Commerce City	8,065.8	7,220	4,890,000	606	7,826
Adams	27J	17,150.2	6,770	750,000	44	6,814
Adams	Bennett	994.6	7,336	1,200,000	1,207	8,542
Adams	Strasburg	979.3	7,230	300,000	306	7,536
Adams	Westminster	10,528.7	7,269	8,363,712	794	8,063
Alamosa	Alamosa	2,152.3	6,848	0	0	6,848
Alamosa	Sangre De Cristo	321.4	9,003	0	0	9,003
Arapahoe	Englewood	2,745.1	7,236	4,655,850	1,696	8,932
Arapahoe	Sheridan	1,460.2	8,220	1,000,000	685	8,904
Arapahoe	Cherry Creek	51,432.7	6,982	84,604,511	1,645	8,627
Arapahoe	Littleton	14,799.8	6,765	28,813,581	1,947	8,712
Arapahoe	Deer Trail	164.1	12,999	6,508	40	13,039
Arapahoe	Aurora	39,600.0	7,349	37,339,028	943	8,292
Arapahoe	Byers	2,058.1	6,580	0	0	6,580
Archuleta	Archuleta	1,380.6	7,119	0	0	7,119
Baca	Walsh	137.5	12,184	0	0	12,184
Baca	Pritchett	50.5	14,149	100,000	1,980	16,130

Baca	Springfield	271.0	9,376	0	0	9,376
Baca	Vilas	102.1	10,292	0	0	10,292
Baca	Campo	50.0	14,270	154,646	3,093	17,363
Bent	Las Animas	482.5	7,521	0	0	7,521
Bent	McClave	263.5	9,410	125,783	477	9,887
Boulder	St Vrain	28,740.5	6,861	32,635,664	1,136	7,997
Boulder	Boulder	29,398.3	6,942	64,107,650	2,181	9,123
Chaffee	Buena Vista	900.6	7,214	2,044,227	2,270	9,484
Chaffee	Salida	1,114.3	6,947	2,497,712	2,242	9,188
Cheyenne	Kit Carson	109.7	12,507	318,410	2,903	15,410
Cheyenne	Cheyenne	170.4	11,801	564,141	3,311	15,111
Clear Creek	Clear Creek	868.0	8,446	1,839,046	2,119	10,565
Conejos	North Conejos	1,012.6	6,911	189,856	187	7,099
Conejos	Sanford	375.9	8,332	0	0	8,332
Conejos	South Conejos	219.2	11,133	0	0	11,133
Costilla	Centennial	223.9	10,820	0	0	10,820
Costilla	Sierra Grande	264.4	9,830	330,575	1,250	11,081
Crowley	Crowley	470.2	7,701	0	0	7,701
Custer	Westcliffe	391.1	8,423	0	0	8,423
Delta	Delta	4,899.3	6,757	0	0	6,757
Denver	Denver	84,044.2	7,355	129,959,655	1,546	8,901
Dolores	Dolores	267.0	9,831	0	0	9,831
Douglas	Douglas	63,354.2	6,764	33,713,000	532	7,296
Eagle	Eagle	6,723.5	7,300	8,061,631	1,199	8,499
Elbert	Elizabeth	2,450.9	6,889	0	0	6,889
Elbert	Kiowa	322.1	9,432	0	0	9,432
Elbert	Big Sandy	293.0	9,714	0	0	9,714
Elbert	Elbert	209.6	11,484	0	0	11,484
Elbert	Agate	50.0	14,689	0	0	14,689
El Paso	Calhan	532.5	7,936	0	0	7,936
El Paso	Harrison	11,148.2	7,125	5,750,000	516	7,640
El Paso	Widefield	8,693.4	6,667	3,950,000	454	7,121
El Paso	Fountain	7,639.2	6,667	700,000	92	6,759
El Paso	Colorado Springs	30,135.1	6,931	30,398,822	1,009	7,940
El Paso	Cheyenne Mountain	4,877.2	6,667	5,157,461	1,057	7,725
El Paso	Manitou Springs	1,430.8	7,113	1,900,000	1,328	8,441
El Paso	Academy	23,306.4	6,663	26,750,862	1,148	7,811
El Paso	Ellicott	1,004.6	7,484	0	0	7,484
El Paso	Peyton	619.2	7,699	0	0	7,699
El Paso	Hanover	239.0	10,972	0	0	10,972
El Paso	Lewis-Palmer	5,853.5	6,667	4,000,000	683	7,350
El Paso	Falcon	20,222.5	6,689	7,500,000	371	7,059
El Paso	Edison	203.1	11,400	0	0	11,400
El Paso	Miami-Yoder	273.9	9,953	40,575	148	10,101
Fremont	Canon City	3,715.6	6,667	0	0	6,667
Fremont	Florence	1,513.0	6,827	350,000	231	7,059

Fremont	Cotopaxi	207.1	11,133	0	0	11,133
Garfield	Roaring Fork	5,832.5	7,254	8,800,000	1,509	8,763
Garfield	Rifle	4,663.0	6,809	4,300,000	922	7,731
Garfield	Parachute	1,027.9	7,342	2,167,002	2,108	9,451
Gilpin	Gilpin	393.4	8,774	980,488	2,492	11,266
Grand	West Grand	433.3	8,456	550,000	1,269	9,726
Grand	East Grand	1,222.5	7,051	2,114,126	1,729	8,780
Gunnison	Gunnison	1,817.3	6,990	3,800,000	2,091	9,081
Hinsdale	Hinsdale	87.9	14,455	0	0	14,455
Huerfano	Huerfano	510.4	7,672	0	0	7,672
Huerfano	La Veta	204.1	10,711	0	0	10,711
Jackson	North Park	181.9	11,955	0	0	11,955
Jefferson	Jefferson	81,130.3	6,850	113,302,585	1,397	8,247
Kiowa	Eads	162.5	11,372	0	0	11,372
Kiowa	Plainview	70.0	13,151	64,538	922	14,073
Kit Carson	Arriba-Flagler	169.1	11,520	0	0	11,520
Kit Carson	Hi Plains	111.7	12,265	139,360	1,248	13,512
Kit Carson	Stratton	174.4	11,396	119,200	683	12,080
Kit Carson	Bethune	121.0	12,664	0	0	12,664
Kit Carson	Burlington	722.6	7,084	270,068	374	7,457
Lake	Lake	1,035.7	7,474	667,783	645	8,119
La Plata	Durango	4,840.9	6,882	8,221,262	1,698	8,581
La Plata	Bayfield	1,299.6	7,239	2,051,357	1,578	8,817
La Plata	Ignacio	768.2	7,724	1,100,000	1,432	9,156
Larimer	Poudre	28,935.0	6,661	35,012,147	1,210	7,871
Larimer	Thompson	15,122.3	6,667	14,040,000	928	7,595
Larimer	Estes Park	1,070.7	7,376	1,921,000	1,794	9,170
Las Animas	Trinidad	1,212.9	7,263	0	0	7,263
Las Animas	Primero	183.6	11,543	428,695	2,335	13,878
Las Animas	Hoehne	358.2	8,489	0	0	8,489
Las Animas	Aguilar	115.5	13,095	29,636	257	13,351
Las Animas	Branson	427.4	6,631	205,000	480	7,111
Las Animas	Kim	50.0	13,540	199,998	4,000	17,540
Lincoln	Genoa-Hugo	157.2	13,907	0	0	13,907
Lincoln	Limon	476.7	7,591	0	0	7,591
Lincoln	Karval	50.0	14,284	0	0	14,284
Logan	Valley	2,182.9	6,704	500,000	229	6,933
Logan	Frenchman	187.7	11,303	18,623	99	11,402
Logan	Buffalo	314.9	9,002	0	0	9,002
Logan	Plateau	177.7	11,570	481,496	2,710	14,279
Mesa	Debeque	139.0	12,632	5,222	38	12,670
Mesa	Plateau Valley	449.4	7,769	350,000	779	8,548
Mesa	Mesa Valley	21,677.2	6,667	8,491,114	392	7,059
Mineral	Creede	81.8	14,148	70,000	856	15,004
Moffat	Moffat	2,144.5	6,667	2,177,847	1,016	7,683
Montezuma	Montezuma	2,728.9	6,765	0	0	6,765

Montezuma	Dolores	725.2	7,480	390,000	538	8,018
Montezuma	Mancos	421.5	8,166	333,800	792	8,958
Montrose	Montrose	5,891.7	6,949	0	0	6,949
Montrose	West End	273.7	10,990	248,000	906	11,896
Morgan	Brush	1,453.6	7,146	400,000	275	7,421
Morgan	Ft. Morgan	2,991.2	7,027	550,000	184	7,211
Morgan	Weldon	219.4	11,011	9,618	44	11,055
Morgan	Wiggins	524.9	7,755	0	0	7,755
Otero	East Otero	1,322.5	7,367	0	0	7,367
Otero	Rocky Ford	800.1	7,724	0	0	7,724
Otero	Manzanola	144.6	12,804	0	0	12,804
Otero	Fowler	408.4	8,132	0	0	8,132
Otero	Cheraw	208.4	10,973	0	0	10,973
Otero	Swink	343.9	8,806	15,862	46	8,852
Ouray	Ouray	180.8	13,031	155,000	857	13,889
Ouray	Ridgway	339.6	9,655	516,372	1,521	11,175
Park	Platte Canyon	999.3	7,387	550,204	551	7,938
Park	Park	580.3	7,948	757,953	1,306	9,254
Phillips	Holyoke	588.5	7,423	447,872	761	8,184
Phillips	Haxtun	302.2	8,806	0	0	8,806
Pitkin	Aspen	1,678.3	9,069	4,615,942	2,750	11,819
Prowers	Granada	206.0	10,691	0	0	10,691
Prowers	Lamar	1,544.6	7,012	0	0	7,012
Prowers	Holly	278.3	9,051	0	0	9,051
Prowers	Wiley	228.2	10,253	0	0	10,253
Pueblo	Pueblo City	17,221.2	7,017	0	0	7,017
Pueblo	Pueblo Rural	8,919.9	6,667	0	0	6,667
Rio Blanco	Meeker	643.8	7,298	404,670	629	7,926
Rio Blanco	Rangely	496.7	7,367	671,263	1,351	8,719
Rio Grande	Del Norte	494.7	7,705	832,600	1,683	9,388
Rio Grande	Monte Vista	1,091.0	7,147	195,000	179	7,326
Rio Grande	Sargent	451.0	7,528	75,000	166	7,695
Routt	Hayden	379.2	9,113	905,473	2,388	11,500
Routt	Steamboat Springs	2,413.7	7,014	2,637,161	1,093	8,107
Routt	South Routt	373.5	9,149	914,457	2,448	11,597
Saguache	Mountain Valley	128.2	12,769	0	0	12,769
Saguache	Moffat	187.8	13,108	164,087	874	13,982
Saguache	Center	646.4	8,038	0	0	8,038
San Juan	Silverton	65.7	14,905	19,818	302	15,207
San Miguel	Telluride	868.8	9,398	1,848,603	2,128	11,526
San Miguel	Norwood	264.0	10,511	397,785	1,507	12,017
Sedgwick	Julesburg	766.5	6,816	0	0	6,816
Sedgwick	Revere	119.1	12,753	74,229	623	13,377
Summit	Summit	3,141.9	7,317	6,162,349	1,961	9,279
Teller	Cripple Creek	354.6	10,009	584,000	1,647	11,656
Teller	Woodland Park	2,484.7	6,738	1,100,000	443	7,181

Washington	Akron	345.7	8,818	0	0	8,818
Washington	Arickaree	108.6	13,204	257,823	2,374	15,578
Washington	Otis	211.2	10,954	0	0	10,954
Washington	Lone Star	109.8	13,184	0	0	13,184
Washington	Woodlin	89.8	13,724	231,953	2,583	16,307
Weld	Gilcrest	1,861.5	7,006	3,904,000	2,097	9,103
Weld	Weld County Re-3J	2,250.0	6,823	1,246,526	554	7,377
Weld	Eaton	1,884.9	6,761	1,200,000	637	7,398
Weld	Windsor	4,847.1	6,667	2,595,350	535	7,202
Weld	Johnstown	3,512.2	6,667	500,000	142	6,809
Weld	Greeley	20,603.5	6,857	0	0	6,857
Weld	Platte Valley	1,135.9	8,167	1,974,045	1,738	9,905
Weld	Ft. Lupton	2,236.8	7,219	2,675,000	1,196	8,415
Weld	Ault-Highland	784.0	7,421	900,000	1,148	8,569
Weld	Briggsdale	164.2	12,359	497,743	3,031	15,390
Weld	Prairie	182.4	13,250	75,000	411	13,661
Weld	Pawnee	80.4	16,124	130,000	1,617	17,741
Yuma	Yuma 1	773.4	7,782	1,194,000	1,544	9,326
Yuma	Wray Rd-2	664.5	7,435	400,000	602	8,037
Yuma	Idalia Rj-3	172.8	12,105	0	0	12,105
Yuma	Liberty J-4	73.4	14,453	292,380	3,983	18,436
	Total	844,973.2	NA	831,976,441	NA	NA

Many districts are unable to generate significant override revenues due to either the current override cap (25% of total program funding plus Cost of Living Amount) or very low assessed valuation. The table below shows the impact of these limitations.

	District A (High AV & Large Total Program)	District B (Small AV & Small Total Program)	District C (High AV & Small Total Program)
Assessed Valuation (AV)	\$ 427,998,390	\$3,255,194	\$189,343,990
Voter Approved Override	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
Required Mills to Generate \$3 million	7.009	921.604	15.844
Override Limit (25% of Total Program)	\$14,188,540	\$691,792	\$608,759
Required Mills to Generate Limit	33.151	212.519	3.215
Annual Tax Impact to Homeowner with Home Value of \$250,000	\$660	\$4,229	\$64

Given that the majority of districts without mill levy overrides or lower per pupil amounts generated by overrides are small districts, there is an equity issue in the ability of small districts to obtain additional revenues locally.

Question 14: Please discuss the impact of local mill levy reductions for total program funding. If a mill levy that was previously approved by voters is decreased, can it be increased again without a vote?

RESPONSE:

Pursuant to C.R.S. 22-54-106 (2) (a), school districts are not permitted to increase total program mills. If the assessed valuation for a district were to decrease such that the district could not fully fund total program through local share, the state would be required to “backfill” that difference. However, not all of the required state funds would be available to the district due to the impact of the negative factor.

FY 2015-16 DECISION ITEMS

R3 Field Implementation and Support

[Background Information: The Department's FY 2015-16 request includes an increase of \$1.3 million General Fund and 7.3 FTE in FY 2015-16 (annualizing to \$1.8 million General Fund and 10.5 FTE in FY 2016-17) to continue the Department's support of field implementation of S.B. 10-191 (Educator Effectiveness) and the Colorado Academic Standards adopted pursuant to S.B. 08-212 (CAP4K).]

Context for R3 Field Implementation and Support

The following information is provided as context to the questions below.

With the adoption of Colorado's Achievement Plan for Kids in 2008 (S.B. 08-212) and the passage of the Great Teachers and Leaders Act in 2010 (S.B. 10-191), the State of Colorado advanced changes to both what teachers teach and how they teach. The Colorado Academic Standards demand more of students and thus more of teachers to help all students to graduate college and career ready. The new educator evaluation system is designed to elevate teacher practice, support quality professional feedback, and stimulate ongoing professional development. Together, these two improvement initiatives marked significant change for educators across the state.

To support educators in implementing these changes, the department recognized the substantial intersection of these two initiatives and the need to combine state, federal, and outside support to provide districts with quality resources, tools, and technical assistance.

In December 2011, the department applied for and received the federal Race to the Top Phase III grant of \$17.9 million to be disbursed over four years (the grant ends in December of 2015). Half of the funds (\$8.9 million) were disbursed to the 161 districts that chose to participate in the grant and the remaining \$8.9 million were used by the state to support the development of the state's educator evaluation system and implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards.

In 2012, the Governor's Office requested one-time funds of approximately \$6.4 million to be spent over three years to support the implementation of the educator evaluation system, with specific focus on the development of the inter-rater agreement online system and the online performance management system. Those funds expire in June 2015.

In 2012, the department collaborated with the Colorado Education Initiative to support the integrated implementation of educator evaluation and standards and leveraged on-loan staff

support to deepen the implementation work with districts. These on-loan staff will end June 2015.

Collectively, these one-time resources, when annualized, average approximately \$4.3 million per year, including approximately 15.5 FTE. This investment of resources and talent enabled the department to develop the state model educator evaluation system, covering the higher one-time costs associated with initial design and development. It also helped fund the extensive educator outreach and engagement in the teacher-created district sample curriculum work.

The department's request does not maintain the level of additional funding at \$4.3 million per year and 15.5 FTE. Rather, it reduces the ongoing additional funds to \$1.9 million per year and 10.5 FTE. This is what the department estimates is needed to maintain quality ongoing and integrated implementation of educator evaluations and standards.

Question 15: Please discuss local school districts' use of the Department's technical assistance, tools, and systems for the implementation of educator effectiveness and the Colorado Academic Standards. How many districts are utilizing the services? If the services and systems were scaled back, how would the Department recommend prioritizing services to continue to help where needed (e.g., prioritizing rural districts)?

RESPONSE:

Letters of Support

Please see the end of this section for letters of support from 40 districts, BOCES and schools that provide greater detail on the ways in which districts and BOCES are using and valuing the technical assistance and support the department is providing for educator effectiveness and standards implementation. The districts and BOCES that submitted letters of support include:

1. Adams 14	11. Denver Public Schools	20. Hinsdale	30. Plateau Valley
2. Aguilar	12. Dubuque Community School District	21. Holyoke	31. Platte Canyon
3. Alamosa	13. Durango	22. Hotchkiss	32. Poudre
4. Archuleta	14. East Central BOCES (represents 21 districts)	23. Lake County	33. Pritchett
5. Bayfield	15. Ellicott	24. Lamar	34. Sangre de Cristo
6. Buffalo	16. Fountain Ft. Carson	25. Moffat RE-1	35. Steamboat Springs
7. Calhan	17. Garfield RE-2	26. Monte Vista	36. Summit
8. Canon City	18. Garfield 16	27. Morgan County	37. Thompson
9. Centennial	19. Gunnison Watershed	28. Northwest BOCES (represents 6 districts)	38. Trinidad
10. Cherry Creek		29. Otis	39. Windsor Charter Academy
			40. Woodland Park

The Colorado Children’s Campaign, Stand for Children, and the State Council for Educator Effectiveness have also submitted letters of support.

Below, please find specific information about the number of districts using the range of technical assistance, support, models, and tools offered by the department.

Educator Evaluation Support

State Model Educator Evaluation System. S.B. 10-191 and State Board of Education rules outline a series of activities the Colorado Department of Education is required to do to support districts in the high quality implementation of the law. Central to the law and rules is the requirement that the department create and maintain a model evaluation system that is fair, valid, and reliable and is available for optional use by districts and BOCES. The State Model Educator Evaluation System includes evaluation systems for principals and assistant principals, teachers, and nine categories of specialized service professionals. The chart below identifies the number of districts using these systems.

Number of Districts Using the State Model Educator Evaluation System As reported in June 2014

Licensed Personnel Evaluations Systems 2013-2014 SY	Districts Using the State Model System
Principal	155
Teacher	162

In addition to the districts using the State Model System, 14 BOCES report using the State Model System for their licensed personnel.

Districts and BOCES Reporting Use of the State Model System for Specialized Service Professionals

Specialized Service Professional Section 4.04 (2014/2015 SY)	
School Audiologists	54
School Counselors	131
School Nurses	99
School Occupational Therapists	70
School Orientation and Mobility Specialists	51
School Psychologists	77
School Physical Therapists	62
School Speech and Language Pathologists	75
School Social Workers	62

Hybrid System for Teachers and Principals:

- 7 districts are using a hybrid system that includes the State Model for evaluating teachers OR principals and a local system for the other group: *Mapleton 1, Buena Vista R-31, Eagle County RE 50, Jefferson County R-1, Woodland Park RE-2, Silverton*, and Falcon 49**.

*State Model for Teachers.

Locally-Developed Systems for Teachers and Principals:

- 11 districts have developed, or adopted, their own evaluation systems for teachers and principals: *Academy 20, Boulder Valley, Denver, Douglas, Englewood, and Falcon 49*, Fowler, Harrison, Holly, Holyoke, and Poudre.*

*Note: Falcon 49 has three district zones. One uses the State Model System; the others use their own local systems.

Districts and BOCES using the State Model System access the state’s guidance and user-guides on all parts of the system including, but not limited to, the evaluation cycle, technical guidance on how to use and score the rubrics, how to create measures of student learning and

how to evaluate measures of student learning to ensure fairness and validity. Department staff must maintain these resources, update them based on user feedback, and provide districts with training and support in using the resources. In addition, the law requires that the model system be “fair, valid, and reliable.” This requires ongoing research and analysis of the state model rubrics and processes to ensure they are measuring what they purport to measure and result in fair evaluations for educators.

Online Performance Management System (RANDA). The RANDA Colorado State Model Performance Management System is an optional online tool that supports districts in the implementation, data collection and effective use of the State Model Evaluation System. The tool is designed to assist districts with managing the paperwork inherent in implementing evaluation systems. The online system was launched in the summer of 2014. **92 local education agencies** (including districts, BOCES and several charter schools) have opted to use the system. The performance management system includes electronic interfaces and data collection tools for the state model evaluation rubrics, measures of student learning/outcomes, final effectiveness ratings, and aggregate reports to support principals and district leaders to provide useful and actionable feedback and possible professional development opportunities for educators. This system streamlines the paperwork and administrative functions of the educator evaluation process. Early feedback from district users is that the system is greatly valued, easy-to-use, and a significant time saver.

Elevate Colorado. To support quality implementation of the educator evaluation system, the department has created Elevate Colorado, an online tool that allows evaluators to view videos of teacher practice, rate the practice using the state model educator evaluation rubric, and compare their ratings with master scorers. The tool aids in establishing greater inter-rater agreement (the likelihood that two evaluators viewing the same practice will rate the practice similarly). Inter-rater agreement is a key part of a sound evaluation process. The creation of this tool has involved educators across the state as master scorers. In addition, the tool is used by department, district, and approved training providers to improve quality of implementation. Currently, over 75 districts and 58 approved training providers are engaged in using Elevate with more districts using the system by the day.

Approved Trainers. The law requires the state to approve training providers who provide training to educator evaluators. To date, the department has approved 58 training providers (including some districts and BOCES) to provide training on the State Model Evaluation System or on their own educator evaluation system. For those providers approved to train on the State Model Evaluation System, the department provides ongoing training and support. This works as a “train the trainer” network and allows the state to expand its capacity to provide support to districts and BOCES.

Educator Instructional Support – Standards Implementation

Integration of educator effectiveness and standards implementation. As the department worked with districts to implement the new educator evaluation system, the department became acutely aware of the integral connection between educator effectiveness and the Colorado Academic Standards. First, the educator evaluation rubric is premised on teachers knowing the Colorado Academic Standards and being able to teach them effectively. Second, the evaluator’s ability to effectively evaluate teachers is based on the assumption that the evaluator also understands the Colorado Academic Standards and what it looks like when a teacher is effectively teaching the standards. As the department began working with districts, staff learned that, given the newness of the standards and the fact that they were being implemented the same year as the new evaluation systems, many teachers and their evaluators did not feel comfortable with the standards or have the aligned curriculum, resources, and tools to teach the standards.

Designed in response to district requests. In March of 2012, the department hosted a one-day summit on the new Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) that garnered feedback from participants regarding the “next steps” for successful standards implementation. Participants expressed a strong desire for the state to assist districts in developing sample standards-based curriculum resources. These comments confirmed months of feedback the department heard from the field about the need for support with curriculum based on the new standards. At the same time, the state received a letter from the leadership of CASSA (Colorado Association of School Superintendents and Senior Administrators) requesting assistance in developing sample curriculum that districts could choose to use.

These grass-roots requests supplied the initial foundation and support for CDE to begin convening teachers across Colorado to build sample curriculum designed to help districts successfully implement all ten content areas of the Colorado Academic Standards and support educators’ effectiveness in teaching the new standards. The Colorado District Sample Curriculum Project is a teacher-led project that is oriented and guided by a fundamental principle: curriculum samples must be created by and for teachers. The project builds the capacity of teachers to design curriculum for their districts.

District involvement in standards work. The project is described in depth in question 3 of the Common Written Questions to all departments. It has involved multiple phases and resulted in hundreds of teacher-created curriculum samples and resources for districts. To date, educators from 121 Colorado school districts have been involved in the first three phases of Colorado’s District Sample Curriculum Project. Representing the full cross-section and diversity of the state, teachers from districts with less than one hundred students worked

alongside teachers from Colorado’s largest metropolitan-area districts to produce the curriculum overviews in the first phase of the Project. In the Project’s next phase, districts assembled 6-teacher teams comprised of general education, special education, English language learners, and gifted and talented educators/specialists to create full instructional units based on the overviews. Again, the response was overwhelming, with rural, urban, mountain, and suburban districts all putting together curriculum-writing teams. Districts and their teachers across the state are actively using the samples and continue to work with the department to build more.

Illustrative quotes of educators using the sample curriculum resources and tools are provided below.

Being able to locate an entire unit in one place with resources, standards, and assessments gives me more time to create lessons and less time trying to "figure out" what to teach. Lisa Gatzke, Cortez School District (social studies)

Thank you for the opportunity to participate in the building of the Instructional Units. Our teachers are proud of their work and excited to use the units in their classrooms. It truly helped them see how to dig deeper into the standards by tying in real life authentic learning, planning units based on performance assessment (not what's in a textbook), and differentiating and connecting instruction across content areas. Linda Murray, Woodland Park School District (science)

The DSCP Theatre Units of Study were both informative and insightful for helping me to establish a unit plan and individual lesson plans, allowing me to grow my instructional practice and directly address the standards within my classroom. Jay Seller, PhD, Adams 12 (drama and theatre arts)

I have used the 2nd grade music instructional unit, “Musical Ecosystem.” While I have not used the unit exactly as written, it has given me a solid long-range plan to use this year to address instrument families with my 2nd grade students. There were lots of ideas and helpful resources that made creating my lesson plans easy, fun and different! I could also rest assured that the content standards were being met by presenting the lessons (or variations thereof) in this unit. “Thank you” to those who worked on this project and this unit in particular. Your hard work has helped me a lot this year! Alyssa Johnson, Music Specialist, Zach Elementary, School Poudre School District (music)

Working to design and implement the Kindergarten Curriculum unit has helped me refine my teaching skills and become more familiar with our Colorado standards. My young

students have benefited from the work we researched and designed, and I am confident that my teaching is helping them to master our new Colorado Math standards. My students have fun while learning as well ...they are becoming great math thinkers! Kathy Faber, Pagosa Springs, Archuleta School District (mathematics)

If the services and systems were scaled back, how would the Department recommend prioritizing services to continue to help where needed (e.g., prioritizing rural districts)?

As noted earlier, the department believes that it has scaled back the required resources to the minimum needed to maintain quality implementation of the state’s educator evaluation system and implementation of the standards. The state and federal one-time funds amounted to approximately \$4.3 million annually and about 15.5 FTE. This budget request is asking for an additional \$1.9 ongoing annually to sustain the work and 10.5 FTE (an estimated reduction from the one-time funding rate of approximately \$2.4 million and 5 FTE).

If further scale back were required on the educator evaluation implementation side, the department would prioritize basic maintenance of the State Model System (rubrics, tools, training and approval of training providers, data collection, and monitoring). The department would most likely have to compromise by letting go staff who support districts with their communications needs regarding educator evaluation and standards implementation, devoting fewer or no resources/support to the principal rubrics and the specialized services rubrics (i.e., just prioritize support on the teacher system), and dismissing staff who support districts with implementation of the measures of student learning. The only functions the state would provide would be minimal maintenance of the teacher evaluation system and training of the approved training providers. It is likely that the costs for the RANDA Online Performance Management System would need to be passed to districts to support ongoing license fees; and user fees would need to be charged for the Elevate Colorado online inter-rater agreement system.

If the two positions requested to support standards implementation were not funded, the state would prioritize staff by content area – most likely eliminating content specialists in the non-tested content areas. Support for continued curriculum and instructional support work would be curtailed. Rural districts that have been relying on the leveraging and convening role the content specialists have played would be impacted by diminished ability of a smaller staff to support them. The Standards and Instructional Support team has functioned in a content support role for rural districts who may have only one math teacher. By investing in this team, the state is supporting dozens of rural districts.

Question 16: How many new FTE has the Department added to provide technical support over the past six years and for what programs? Are those staff operating in “silos” and could/should they be cross trained to provide multiple services rather than having so many technical assistance staff working with the same districts? Please explain.

RESPONSE:

Over the past six years, the department submitted decision items and received approval for the following additions of technical support.

Fiscal Year	Department FTE Added Tech/Field Sup.	Programs
2008-09	5.0	Content specialists
2009-10	2.2	Licensure support
2010-11	0.0	
2011-12	0.0	
2012-13	8.0	Educator effectiveness
2013-14	3.4	Accountability and improvement planning
2014-15	5.9	English learners; college & career readiness
Total:	24.5	

Of note, during that same time frame, the General Assembly adopted legislation that added 53.5 FTE. Please see the spreadsheet (Attachment A) accompanying this answer for further detail.

Are those staff operating in “silos” and could/should they be cross trained to provide multiple services rather than having so many technical assistance staff working with the same districts?

To the specific question of the JBC, with the exception of the licensure support positions which focus exclusively on licensure processing, the staff identified in the above chart work across units and programs to support districts to the extent possible. It is important to note that each of these FTE was requested to fulfill specific job functions that account for 100% of their time. For example, the college and career ready FTE support graduation guidelines, implementation of individual career and academic plans (ICAPs), and related career and college readiness programs. The English learner specialists support implementation of the English Language Proficiency Act and provide targeted expertise to districts needing

assistance with their English learner population. Both roles are full time. While the English learner specialists are knowledgeable about how English learners can access and use ICAPs, navigate through the graduation guidelines, etc., they are not best suited to help a district when it has challenges with how to run those programs; just as the college career readiness specialist would not be able to assist districts with meeting the needs of English learners struggling to attain English proficiency. As another example, the content specialists are all deeply knowledgeable of the implementation of standards – their work across all content areas is driven by common templates, approaches, and research. However, when a district requests specific assistance with math content, they want the department’s math expert to respond, not someone with minimal math background trained in multiple programs and content. In addition, many of the programs that staff are required to implement such as educator effectiveness (S.B. 10-191), accountability, the English Language Proficiency Act, etc., have complex program requirements and in some cases, inter-connected federal law, that require a high degree of program-specific knowledge and expertise. Finally, strict time and effort reporting requirements related to all funding streams contribute to the need to ensure that staff members spend their time on the programs/work they are funded to implement and support. What these examples illustrate is that, while these staff members share their knowledge and expertise and collaborate across units, the amount of work to be completed in each area, the depth of knowledge required for each role, the level of expertise needed by the districts, and the need to ensure alignment with time and effort reporting does not lend itself well to a pure generalist model.

That said, the department maintains three field service support FTE who serve as generalists and the first point of contact for districts. These individuals have general knowledge of a broad range of programs, initiatives, and work occurring at the state and district level. They are former district administrators and have worked closely with districts across the state. They are briefed monthly by staff from across the department through the *CDE Update*, a monthly communication to districts. They travel to, attend, and present briefly at every monthly regional superintendent council meeting across the state. They are able to respond to many of the more general questions that districts raise. They then refer any questions that require deeper expertise to program specialists. The field specialists also report back to program staff any areas of general concern they are hearing from districts. This ensures that program staff have a good understanding of the needs in the field.

To the broader issue of “silos” that this question implies, the department is committed to working in a strategic, coordinated, and collaborative manner across all units to support districts. For the past six years, the department has been working to shift its role from one that was viewed by many as purely compliance to one that is much more focused on service and support. To do this has required changes in the department’s organizational and operating structure. From an organizational standpoint, the organization has four primary

divisions: achievement and strategy; accountability and performance support; innovation, choice, and engagement; and school finance and operations. The division leads comprise the department's executive team and meet twice a week to discuss cross-division needs and address areas of misalignment, concerns from districts, needs in the field, etc. The leads of all the units comprise the department's cabinet, which meets twice a month to ensure that all units are aware of one another's work, solving implementation problems together, leveraging each other's staff and expertise, and coordinating work.

Operationally, the major initiatives of the department are guided by CDE's strategic plan and four strategic goals. Cross-unit goal teams meet to advance the department's work in each goal. For example, the department's goal to ensure that all students are proficient readers by the end of third grade includes staff from the literacy office, early childhood office, exceptional student services unit, English learner office, standards and instructional support office, learning support office, and more. All of these individuals come together to ensure they are well-versed on the READ Act and play a role in implementing the cross-agency goal of early literacy attainment. The same is true of each of the other goals of the department.

The department has created the Unified Improvement Plan (UIP) template to pull improvement planning requirements into a single plan. This has helped the field and the department to create coherence across state and federal accountability requirements and multiple program requirements. This includes state accreditation, ESEA (e.g., Title I, IIA, III), Student Graduation Completion Plans, READ Act, gifted education and various competitive grants (e.g., Colorado Graduation Pathways, Tiered Improvements grants, and Diagnostic Reviews).

To support the state's priority improvement and turnaround districts, the department has developed several cross-department initiatives to coordinate supports. First, the department has established coordinated support teams for each district on the accountability clock to align services. These teams are led by a performance support manager assigned to the priority improvement or turnaround district and include staff from across the department (e.g., exceptional student services, English learners, accountability, unified improvement planning, educator effectiveness, literacy, and learning supports). These cross-unit teams develop and implement targeted and coordinated plans to assist the state's lowest performing districts, leveraging staff time and resources across units and funding streams. Second, the department works in teams to review all UIPs (described above) for schools and districts on the accountability clock. Annually, there are approximately 200 plans that need feedback developed within a six-week window. Led by the Improvement Planning Unit, staff from across the department participate in review teams and co-construct feedback to the schools and districts.

Also on an operational level, major initiatives such as educator effectiveness and the READ

Act are guided by internal cross-unit leadership teams to ensure broad cross-agency knowledge of the initiative and to leverage time, talent, and resources across programs/units to accomplish the objectives of the initiative.

Finally, the department is implementing internal data and process enhancements to better aid collaboration across the organization. For example, the department launched a district data dashboard that allows department staff to see performance, staffing, and funding trend data in one place for a district and supports the improvement planning process. The tool allows staff across the department to see a more comprehensive picture of the needs, programs, and work in a district, better enabling collaboration across the department and coordination of resources to meet districts' needs. In addition, the department is piloting a customer relationship management software tool to better track touch points with districts across units.

As discussed, at an organizational, operational, and process level, the department is committed to providing districts with targeted and coordinated service and support. The department is working to accomplish this while balancing funding streams, time and effort reporting, and the need for program specialists and expertise in the field.

Attachment A		
Colorado Department of Education		
Additions to Program/Technical Assistance FTE		
FY2008-09 through FY2014-15		
	Department Requested FTE <u>Approved</u>	Legislative Initiative FTE <u>Approved</u>
FY2008-09		
General Fund and Cash Funds		
Department Decision Items/Supplementals:		
Content Specialists DI-4	5.0	
Special Bills:		
HB08-1388 School Finance Act		6.0
SB08-017 Credentialing		1.0
SB08-038 Regional Service Cooperatives		1.0
SB08-130 Innovation Schools		1.0
SB08-212 Preschool to Post-secondary		5.0
HB08-1204 Facility Schools Unit		3.0
HB08-1335 BEST		5.0
HB08-1370 Counselor Corps		1.0
HB08-1386 Leadership Academy		1.5
Long Bill Impacts:		
None		0.0
Subtotal FY2008-09	5.0	24.5

FY2009-10	Dept FTE	Leg FTE
Department Decision Items/Supplementals:		
Office of Professional Services (Licensure) - Implement HB08-1344	2.2	
Special Bills:		
SB09-123 Healthy Choices Dropout Prevention		0.1
SB09-163 Accountability Alignment		2.7
HB09-1243 Office of Dropout Prevention		2.0
Long Bill Impacts:		
Public School Capital Construction, Implement HB08-1335 - JBC Action		4.0
Subtotal FY2009-10	2.2	8.8
FY2010-11	Dept FTE	Leg FTE
Department Decision Items/Supplementals:		
None	0.0	
Special Bills:		
SB10-054 Educational Services for Jailed Juveniles		0.2
Long Bill Impacts:		
Special Education - Gifted and Talented		0.5
Healthy Choices Dropout Prevention		0.1
Subtotal FY2010-11	0.0	0.8
FY2011-12	Dept FTE	Leg FTE
Department Decision Items/Supplementals:		
None	0.0	
Special Bills:		
HB11-1121 Safer Schools Act		0.9
Long Bill Impacts:		
None		
Subtotal FY2011-12	0.0	0.9
FY2012-13	Dept FTE	Leg FTE
Department Decision Items/Supplementals:		
Educator Effectiveness Unit Administration	3.0	
Educator Effectiveness Implementation	5.0	
Special Bills:		
HB12-1238 Early Literacy Competitive Grant Program - READ Act		8.8
Long Bill Impacts:		
None		
Subtotal FY2012-13	8.0	8.8

FY2013-14	Dept FTE	Leg FTE
Department Decision Items/Supplementals:		
Accountability and Improvement Planning	3.4	
Special Bills:		
SB13-193 Increasing Parent Engagement (SACPIE)		1.0
HB13-1257 Local-Level Educator Evaluation System		1.0
SB13-217 K-12 Accreditation Criteria Alternate Ed Campus		0.2
Long Bill Impacts:		
Early Literacy Per Pupil Funding		1.0
BOCES Funding		1.0
Subtotal FY2013-14	3.4	4.2
FY2014-15	Dept FTE	Leg FTE
Department Decision Items/Supplementals:		
English Language Learner (ELL) Program	4.1	
College and Career Readiness	1.8	
Special Bills:		
SB14-150 School Counselor Corps Grant Program		1.0
SB14-215 Marijuana Revenue - Health Professionals		1.0
HB14-1085 Adult Ed Literacy Grant Program		1.0
HB14-1102 Education of Gifted Students		1.0
HB14-1118 Advanced Placement Incentives Pilot Program		0.3
HB14-1276 CPR Grant Training Program		0.3
HB14-1298 School Finance Act - Colorado Preschool Program		0.7
HB14-1298 School Finance Act - English Language Learners		0.5
HB14-1376 Core Course Level Participation Performance Report		0.2
Long Bill Impacts:		
Breakfast After the Bell		0.3
Subtotal FY2014-15	5.9	6.3
Grand Total FY2008-09 thru FY2014-15	24.5	54.3

Question 17: Please address the fiscal note process for S.B. 10-191 (Educator Effectiveness). Why should the General Assembly approve the request for additional funding for a program that is so far in excess of the costs anticipated in the fiscal note?

RESPONSE:

The cost estimates provided during the 2010 Legislative Session only anticipated the first two years of the program. Based on the way the program has evolved since then, it was not possible to anticipate the costs beyond the first two years. The primary, albeit not the only, reason the costs have increased is an assumption provided in the 2010 fiscal note, quoted below:

“Districts would need to ensure that their evaluation systems meet or exceed the guidelines for measures of effectiveness established by State Board rule. This may require them to develop or purchase new evaluation tools and spend time on data collection and analysis of multiple measures of student performance.”

When the costs for the bill were originally provided, the department assumed all districts would develop their own evaluation systems. However, during the first two years of implementation, as the department worked with districts and other stakeholders to develop the rules and framework for the evaluations, it became apparent that many districts did not have the resources, in staff or dollars, necessary to implement systems which would comply with the requirements of SB10-191. As a result, the biggest single driver of increasing costs over the original fiscal note is the cost to maintain the State Model Educator Evaluation System developed by the department and support the vast majority of districts that have adopted the system (162 districts for the teacher system, 155 for the principal system, and a significant portion of districts for each of the 9 specialized service professionals evaluation systems).

In this particular case, the two-year window for fiscal notes worked well for the early implementation of SB10-191 because it was impossible to know in 2010 exactly what the ongoing costs would be for a project of this magnitude. The 3.0 FTE and \$250,000 appropriated in the first two years, coupled with initial federal funds received from Race to the Top (awarded in December 2011), provided the initial resources for the department to work with districts and identify the necessary components and type of implementation to meet the requirements of the bill. It was through a statewide effort that it became apparent the most cost-effective and efficient implementation would be a State Model Educator Evaluation System that districts can use, as opposed to the original assumption that the

state's 178 districts would design, maintain, and implement their own systems with the costs incurred and spread across all districts.

Not only does the system adopted by the majority of districts provide savings, efficiencies and expertise to smaller districts which might not have the resources to implement their own evaluation system, it also provides consistency of data and evaluations across the state, which will facilitate reporting to the General Assembly and other stakeholders. The original reading and cost estimates for the bill did not and could not anticipate the statewide system that is now in place because the department did not have the necessary information for what would be required until working extensively to develop the requirements, processes, and guidelines both internally and with districts across the state.

While the costs described in the original fiscal note did not and could not anticipate the excess costs the department is now seeing, it was only through the funding provided during the first two years that the department could determine the costs of the system now in place. The department also benefited significantly from state and federal one-time funds that supported the substantial, more one-time in nature, design costs during the first four years of implementation. With the design of many of the core components and supporting resources of the system completed and the knowledge of the number of districts using the State Model System, the department is better able to anticipate the ongoing funds needed to implement S.B. 10-191.

Question 18: Please discuss other states' progress with educator evaluation systems. How are other states' handling the issue? How does Colorado's system compare?

RESPONSE:

Over the last four years, states implemented remarkable changes to their educator evaluation systems. Rather than rating all educators as either “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory,” with no expected standards, tools or structures, states and school districts now use new multi-tiered evaluation systems to support their teachers, principals and specialized service professionals in their professional growth. Most states now require districts to incorporate measurements of student academic growth and rubrics from higher-quality classroom observations into their ratings of teachers and principals. And teachers and principals are starting to receive financial incentives or face potential consequences based on these evaluation results. ⁽ⁱ⁾

The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality reports that now at least 43 states have some form of multiple measure educator evaluation system in place at varied levels of implementation. They list 18 states that have a similar structure to Colorado, meaning districts can select a state-developed system to support their implementation of the law. This type of structure puts state departments in a new role—similar to a district office—in that they are creating and supporting evaluation rubrics, user guides, guidance documents, trainings, and technology platforms to guide the implementation of the district-level evaluation work.

While CDE does not know the full extent of implementation or support within each of those states, it is fair to say that Colorado is in a similar position on implementing evaluation systems. Colorado has completed its first year of implementation and has identified the challenges and complexities of supporting districts with the roll-out of these robust evaluation systems. A few states, including Tennessee and Delaware, started their state evaluations systems a few years prior to Colorado and as a result are further ahead; while other states started more recently and are looking to Colorado for guidance (Nevada and Arizona). In multi-state level convenings, CDE hears similar challenges with implementing systems within states with *high quality*. Common challenges are: how to provide districts with professional development on conducting high quality observations; how to support principals in conducting fair, consistent evaluations; and how to support evaluators in providing actionable feedback based on high quality multiple measures of teaching practice.

After the initial phase of creation and development of the 11 state model evaluation systems (teachers, principals and 9 groups of specialized service professionals), CDE now knows that

162 districts are using the State Model Evaluation System for teachers, 155 districts are using the system for principals, 14 BOCES are using the model system for their licensed personnel, and many districts are using the model system for specialized service professionals. This means that CDE is providing direct support to these districts to train educators, answer daily questions, provide ongoing updates and troubleshoot with teachers, principals, district administrators and specialized service professionals. CDE is the “help desk” if any educators in these districts have questions, concerns, feedback on, or need help using any of the state model systems. CDE is also a resource to districts using their own locally developed systems.

CDE continues to learn about the depth of hands-on support that districts need from the department to implement evaluations in a fair, consistent and supportive manner. To meet the goals of the evaluation system as articulated in the legislation, the state must not only have a strong model evaluation system in place, it must also support districts in implementing that system well. A great rubric and sound system falls apart if it is implemented poorly by evaluators. Districts have asked for support in improving the quality of the implementation of the evaluation process, especially with the measures of student learning (or growth component of the evaluation process). In response, the department has provided (or is in the process of providing) the following resources, all of which need to be constantly kept up-to-date and refined over time:

- 11 rubrics to measure the professional practices for teacher, principals and specialized service professionals
- Rubric implementation process guides;
- Guidance documents on the measures of student learning component of the evaluations and on-site training/technical assistance to districts to help them set up the growth portion of their evaluations (this is hands-on, intensive, district-by-district support);
- Online professional development and support modules on a variety of teaching practices;
- RANDA web-based performance management system to organize the vast amounts of evaluation information, provide a means to seamlessly link evaluation needs to professional development resources and an organization system to help evaluators manage observation schedules, conversations and paperwork;
- Elevate Colorado- a video library, coded by experts to show evaluators the standard of high quality teaching in Colorado;
- Modules of how to give high quality feedback to educators;
- Resource guides on each of the professional practices being measured for each of the 11 educator groups included in the state model system; and

- Evaluator networks and professional learning communities to support improvements in conducting high quality, consistent evaluations and feedback to educators.

While it is comprehensive, complex and detail oriented work, a Bellwether Education Partners report cites evidence to suggest that evaluation reform is an effort worth making—if done right. Comprehensive evaluation systems can help teachers improve their practice, lead to improved recruitment and retention of high-quality educators, and, ultimately, boost student achievement—if evaluations are conducted in a high quality manner.

In looking at a few examples of comparable state systems, CDE finds that the support and staff of the Colorado Department of Education Educator Effectiveness unit is comparable to these states. From a cursory review of state department websites, for example, the Tennessee Department of Education has at least 13 staff in their educator effectiveness unit to assist districts in the implementation of their educator effectiveness system. TN also has a variety of consultants they employ to support districts beyond the 13 staff at the department. TN has a similar number of districts (142) to support. Massachusetts has a team of over 9 staff members to support implementation of educator evaluations. Oregon has at least six team members.

Since CDE is now operating more like a district central office to the districts and BOCES that are using the State Model System, it is reasonable to compare us to a district office creating and implementing educator evaluation systems. For example, a Colorado district that supports its own evaluation system has a team of over 15 staff to support approximately the same number of schools as CDE has districts in implementing evaluation systems.

⁽ⁱ⁾ Excerpt from: Alderman and Chuong (August 2014). Teacher Evaluations in an Era of Rapid Change: From Unsatisfactory to “needs improvement” Bellwether Education Partners. <http://bellwethereducation.org/publication/teacher-evaluations-era-rapid-change>.

Question 19: Please discuss the impact and status of school districts' implementation of student learning objectives.

RESPONSE:

Student Learning Objectives (SLO) is one way to assess teachers' contributions to student growth in educator evaluation systems. At the heart of an SLO is a specific learning goal that an educator identifies and a specific measure of student learning used to track progress toward that goal. One example of an SLO is below:

Role: Physical Education
(Elementary) Grade Level(s): 5
Content Area: PE

Rationale: This objective supports the unified improvement plan goals.

Population: 80% of the students who attend 85% of the time will improve their upper body strength at least 30% as measured by the fitness gram push-up test.

Interval of Time: One school year

Assessment: Fitness Gram

Baseline: Fourth grade students have not been tested on their upper body strength. Most students cannot perform one push up without bending. Students also do not perform full range of motion; they do not go 90 degrees.

Expected Growth: I expect at least a 30% growth for [Teacher's name removed]'s class

Learning Content: Students work on their upper body strength every time they attend PE.

Strategies: Practice pushups every day for warm up. Activities that use push-ups for re-entry.

There are many options for student growth measures that can be used in an SLO. It is possible to use large scale standardized tests, including state standardized tests, for SLOs. However, it is also possible to use other methods for assessing learning, such as end-of-course exams in secondary courses, student performance demonstrations in electives like art or music, and diagnostic pre- and post-tests in primary grades or other relevant settings.

Teachers, principals and other administrators and their supervisors can set SLOs for any subject, grade or group of students. Groups of teachers in the same subject or grade or in the same school or district can set them as well. With their supervisors, principals can set

objectives focused on school-wide learning goals, and district-level administrators can develop SLOs with district goals in mind.

SLOs show potential for use as student growth measures in the evaluation process, and they are also an important method for improving instructional practice. Some research on the use of SLOs found that rigorous and high-quality growth objectives were associated with higher student achievement. Like well-constructed SLOs, good instruction includes gathering data, setting goals based on that data, and then assessing whether the goals have been met. ⁽ⁱⁱ⁾

Districts across Colorado are looking at the benefits of using SLOs in their evaluation systems as a way to better understand student learning, improve instructional practice, and serve as one of the multiple measures in educator evaluations. SLOs are an often-used strategy for educators who are not teaching in a state-tested subject area, and thus need to find other ways to measure student growth. Districts in Colorado are in varying states of trying SLOs in their educator evaluations. It takes time to learn how to best create and use high quality SLOs in teaching practice as well as in evaluation systems. CDE is at the beginning of our process for assisting districts in using SLOs. CDE is working with various partners and organizations that have expertise in creating high quality SLOs to support districts in their use of this strategy.

Currently CDE does not have a complete inventory of which district are using SLOs, but in a recent study supported by the Colorado Education Initiative, 40% of districts in that study (53 district participated) report using SLOs in their educator evaluation system.

⁽ⁱⁱ⁾ Excerpt from: Reform Support Network. Targeting Growth: Using Student Learning Objectives as a Measure of Educator Effectiveness. Downloaded from: http://msde.state.md.us/tpe/TargetingGrowth_Using_SLO_MEE.pdf.

Question 20: Please discuss school districts’ capacity to fully implement the educator effectiveness system in FY 2015-16, including both the observation and growth components of the evaluation system.

RESPONSE:

CDE has a variety of ways of understanding the ability of local education agencies to implement educator evaluation systems. CDE collects “assurances” from all districts and BOCES each July to determine if districts are implementing the system according to the State Board rules. During the July 2014 assurance collection, 164 districts reported that they have implemented all portions of the evaluations system in accordance with the State Board of Education rules on implementing S.B. 191.

In addition, over the past 3 years, CDE has been working with 26 pilot districts in their implementation of evaluation systems. CDE asks teachers from the pilot districts about their perceptions on the implementation of systems in their district. Their reflections shed light on the depth of implementation of education efforts, including evaluation, in those pilot districts. Some of the relevant survey questions and responses are below:

Relevant Teacher Survey Item	Metric	2013-14 All Teachers (n=1497)
What is your level of knowledge regarding the requirements of the state’s new educator evaluation and support law (S.B. 10-191)?	% of teachers who report good or complete understanding (as opposed to no or some knowledge)	62.3%
What is your level of knowledge regarding the Teacher Quality Standards (TQS) adopted by the State Board of Education as part of the implementation of S.B. 10-191?	% of teachers who report good or complete understanding	59.3%
What is your level of knowledge regarding the new Colorado Academic Standards (CAS)?	% of teachers who report good or complete understanding	75.7%
I see alignment in my district's policies regarding assessment, evaluation, and standards.	% of teachers who agree or strongly agree	See the three items below
I see alignment in my district's policies regarding assessments and the standards.	% of teachers who agree or strongly agree	86.0%

I see alignment in my district's policies regarding standards and evaluation.	% of teachers who agree or strongly agree	86.2%
I see alignment in my district's policies regarding assessments and evaluation.	% of teachers who agree or strongly agree	81.0%
I am optimistic about the ability of district policies and initiatives related to assessments, standards, and evaluation to improve the instruction in my classroom.	% of teachers who agree or strongly agree	69.2%

The department has conducted studies of the first two years of the pilot. The current study results can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/smesteacherpilotreport2013-14>. The study lends insight into the use of the state model educator evaluation rubric and variation in ratings provided by districts.

In addition, the Colorado Education Initiative conducted a study of how districts are structuring their measures of student learning for educator evaluations. 53 districts participated in their study. The study demonstrated that districts are actively working to meet the requirements of the growth component of S.B. 191. For an executive summary of the study, visit: <http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/MSL-Executive-Summary.pdf>

The above survey data and studies referenced show, however, that there is a continuum of implementation quality across the state. CDE continues to receive requests from districts that are at the very basic level of implementation and need the department's support in explaining the evaluation process, scoring the rubric and understanding the support tools for evaluations. Some districts have told the department that they are struggling to implement the measures of student learning component of the evaluation rating. Other districts are further along and are now seeking the department's support in more complex questions of implementation, such as how to have more inter-rater agreement (consistency in ratings) among their evaluators, how to use more complex types of measures of student learning and how to use evaluation data to connect to deep professional supports.

The assurances, pilot studies, external studies, and anecdotal experiences all confirm that districts are actively working to implement their educator evaluation systems. These data sources also confirm that there continues to be a need for supports tailored to the unique needs of districts. While some districts would like more time to practice with growth, others are eager to move forward and express frustration with extended timelines, noting the mixed

messages that this creates in the field. Overall, the department feels that districts are on track with implementation.

Question 21: The Department is requesting \$246,686 General Fund and 2.0 FTE to support two content specialist positions that have been funded as “employees on loan” from the Colorado Education Initiative. Please discuss how this request complies with Section 24-75-1305, C.R.S., which prohibits agencies from requesting funds to backfill private gifts, grants, and donations.

RESPONSE:

While it is now clear that the department should have, it did not consider Section 24-75-1305, C.R.S., when preparing the request. The department had no intent to violate Section 24-75-1305, C.R.S. It believed it was acting in good faith implementing the Colorado Academic Standards and educator effectiveness. In addition, based on clarification with JBC staff and a deeper review of the statute, the department believes it is complying with the statute.

During the JBC briefing, JBC staff noted that, provided a portion of the request is funded with state resources, the Office of Legislative Legal Services has stated that those requests do not violate 22-75-1305, C.R.S. which focuses on programs that rely entirely on grant funding. Based on this statement and a review of the statute, it would appear the request complies with the section in question. The state provides funding for content specialists, the Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act, and educator effectiveness.

It is also important to note that state statute specifically authorizes the department to seek gifts, grants, or donations of any kind from public or private entities to carry out the standards implementation work and similar language authorizes the department to pursue external resources for the educator effectiveness efforts. Both initiatives include state funding and authorize the department to seek additional funds and resources as needed. This work crosses both areas, with specific focus on the standards implementation efforts of the Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act (S.B. 08-212 also known as Colorado’s Achievement Plan for Kids or CAP4K). Relevant statutes are below.

22-7-1010 (3), C.R.S. – from the Preschool to Postsecondary Education Alignment Act

(3) The department of education and the department of higher education are authorized to receive and expend gifts, grants, or donations of any kind from a public or private entity to carry out the purposes of this Part 10, subject to the terms and conditions under which given; except that the department of education or the

department of higher education may not accept a gift, grant, or donation if the conditions attached thereto require the use or expenditure thereof in a manner contrary to law.

22-9-105.7 (1), C.R.S. – from S.B. 10-191

(1) The department is authorized to seek, accept, and expend gifts, grants, and donations for the implementation of [section 22-9-105.5](#); except that the department may not accept a gift, grant, or donation that is subject to conditions that are inconsistent with this or any law of the state. The department shall transmit all moneys received to the state treasurer, who shall credit the same to the great teachers and leaders fund, which fund is hereby created and referred to in this section as the "fund". Moneys in the fund are continuously appropriated to the department for the direct and indirect costs associated with implementing [section 22-9-105.5](#).

The department appreciates any guidance from the JBC both on the appropriate interpretation of 24-75-1305, C.R.S. with regard to this request, and how the JBC would like the department to move forward.

Question 22: Please provide background on the Colorado Education Initiative (CEI). What is the origin of CEI? How is the CEI licensed in Colorado (non-profit, public, private, etc.)?

RESPONSE:

The Colorado Education Initiative (CEI), founded in 2007 (under the name Colorado Legacy Foundation, or CLF), is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that works in close partnership with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). CEI has its own 16-member board of trustees that governs the organization. The Lieutenant Governor and Commissioner of Education (the positions, regardless of the individuals in office) are both non-voting members of CEI's board. CEI is nonpartisan and is not an advocacy organization.

As excerpted from CEI's website:

CEI is an independent non-profit that collaborates with the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), schools and districts across the state to accelerate achievement for all Colorado students. We believe every student can reach his or her full potential with the right set of supports. This means that every student in Colorado is prepared and unafraid to succeed in school, work, and life, and to take on the challenges of today, tomorrow, and beyond. Our innovative partnership with CDE and schools and districts in communities across Colorado help us find innovative ways to reach every learner, every day.

CEI's primary programmatic areas include: educator effectiveness and professional learning, innovation (especially with regard to use of time and resources), health and wellness, and Legacy Schools (supporting access to Advanced Placement classes in high needs schools). CEI and CDE partner on projects and grants, when appropriate, to try out innovative approaches to implementation and to deepen support to districts as they seek ways to best meet the needs of their students.

To learn more about CEI, please visit their website at: <http://www.coloradoedinitiative.org>.

Question 23: What value are the external employees (the employees on loan) providing to school districts? Which districts are they helping and how?

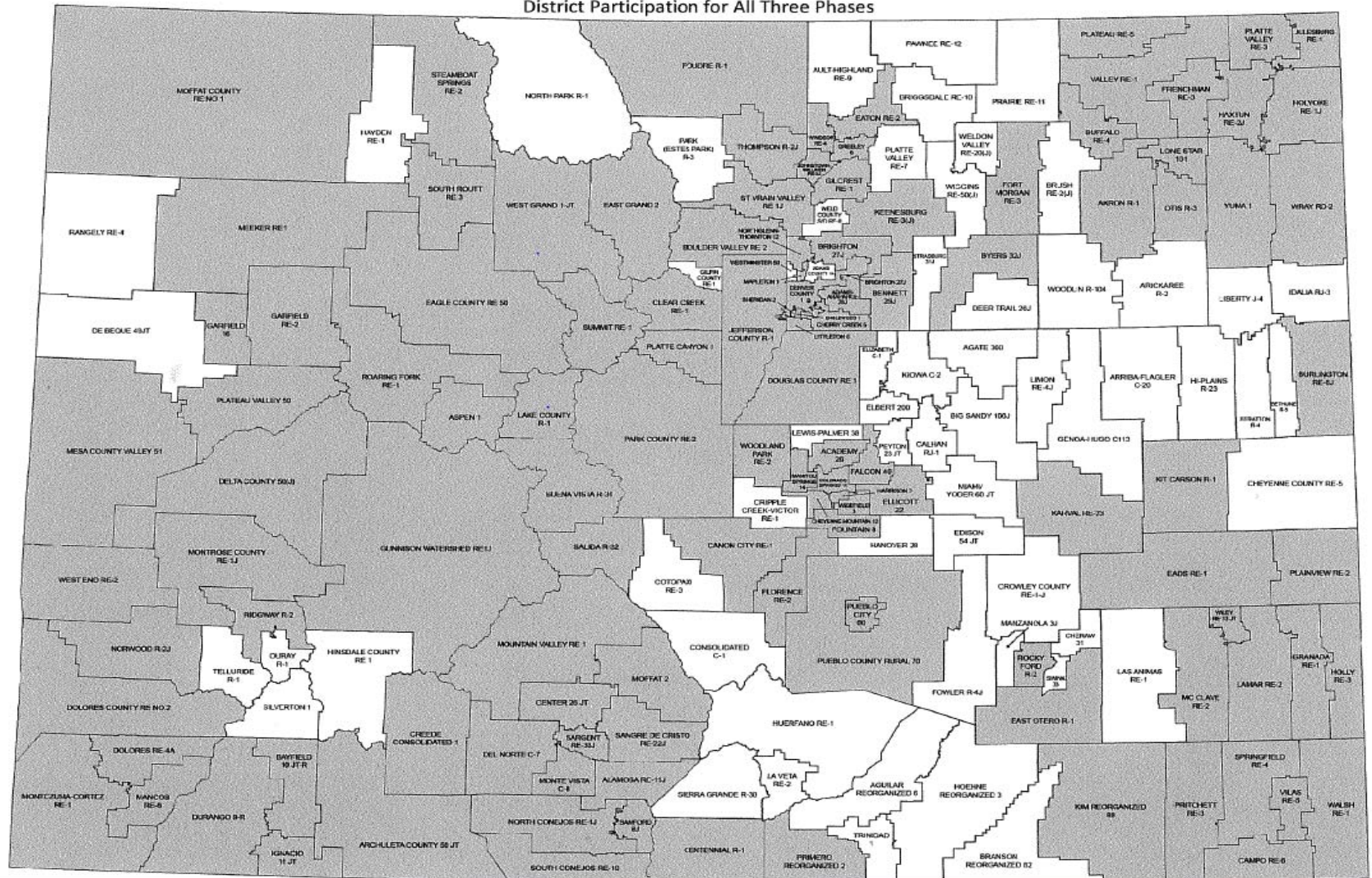
RESPONSE:

The employees on loan have been integral in adding capacity to the department to support districts in implementing the Colorado Academic Standards and the new educator evaluation system which is premised on a strong understanding of the standards. The two on loan positions are the Director of Standards and Instructional Support and the K-12 Literacy Specialist. Both work with the department's existing content specialists in the Standards and Instructional Support Office.

Collectively, the Standards and Instructional Support Office has been implementing the District Sample Curriculum Project which has engaged 121 districts and thousands of teachers in creating teacher-developed sample curriculum that districts can use. A map of the districts that have been engaged in this work is provided on the following page. In addition to this project, the team provides individualized technical assistance to districts in support of district-based curriculum, instructional programming decisions, instructional needs, content-specific questions, etc.

The letters of support at the end of this section and the educator quotes highlighted in question 15 speak to the value these staff are providing to districts.

Colorado's District Sample Curriculum Project
 District Participation for All Three Phases



Note: Gray area indicates district participation for all three phases.

Question 24: Should non-state employees, funded and employed by an external entity, have been leading the Department's standards implementation work and supervising state employees? If the positions were necessary in FY 2012-13, why did the Department not request approval for the positions from the General Assembly?

RESPONSE:

The Director of Standards and Instructional Support and Literacy Specialist were provided as on- loan, at-will staff by the Colorado Education Initiative in January and February of 2012 to support the integrated implementation of the new educator evaluation system and Colorado Academic Standards.

These staff function as CDE employees. Their job descriptions, supervision, day-to-day work and evaluations fall exclusively within the department's control.

The Director reports to the Executive Director of the Teaching and Learning Unit, a cabinet-level position in the department. The Executive Director supervises the Director's work, approves the work plan for the office, and conducts the Director's performance reviews pursuant to CDE's performance review procedures and protocols. The Executive Director has the authority to terminate work and services if the Director is not meeting CDE's objectives and deliverables. The Executive Director of the Teaching and Learning Unit reports to the Associate Commissioner of Achievement and Strategy, and pursuant to CDE policy, is required to review the evaluations of her direct reports. As such, the Associate Commissioner gives final sign off on the evaluation of the Director of Standards and Instructional Support. In addition, through weekly meetings, the work of the Standards and Instructional Office, including the contributions of the on-loan employees, are reviewed and monitored to ensure work plans are being met and performance is being maintained.

The Director of Standards and Instructional Support oversees the at-will staff in the Standards and Instructional Office. All staff performance evaluations are conducted pursuant to CDE's performance review procedures and protocols. In accordance with those procedures, all performance evaluations completed by the Director are reviewed by his supervisor, the Executive Director of the Teaching and Learning Unit, prior to performance reviews being conducted with employees. The reviews are also submitted to CDE's Office of Human Resources for compliance.

Both on-loan staff are listed as part of the Standards and Instructional Support team on the department's website.

Because these staff function as at-will employees and the above noted checks and balances with regard to work plans and performance evaluation/reporting structures have been in place, the department does not believe that the use of on-loan staff has been inappropriate. In addition, the use of on-loan staff enabled the department to leverage resources through its relationship with CEI. CDE and CEI have collaborated on integrating the implementation of standards and educator evaluations, which is why the staff on loan came in this area. As the feedback from districts has illustrated, these positions and the work they have been performing are highly valued. As a result, the department is seeking to move them to ongoing, state-funded positions.

We understand the concerns raised by committee members and are open to recommendations from the JBC on the best way to address staff on loan which could include being sub-granted the funds to hire the staff directly, listing the staff as "on loan" employees on the website, reporting "on loan" employees to the JBC, etc. We look forward to discussing this with the committee and moving forward on your guidance.

If the positions were necessary in FY 2012-13, why did the Department not request approval for the positions from the General Assembly?

With regard to this question, as noted earlier, the department was able to obtain staff on loan from CEI to support the integrated implementation of standards and educator evaluations. The department believed it was operating within the requirements for both SB10-191 and CAP4K (SB08-212) which authorize the department to receive and expend gifts, grants, or donations of any kind from a public or private entity to carry out the purposes of these acts.

As noted earlier, the department is open to guidance from the JBC with regard to steps it would like the department to follow with regard to on loan staff in the future.

LETTERS of SUPPORT

November 19, 2014

Dear Members of the Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express my support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding, specifically, for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts in the areas of educator evaluation, instructional support, and communication and outreach with districts.

The support the Department provides in these core areas is essential to our work. The work on educator evaluation and instructional support is of particular interest in Adams 14 and we are mindful of its importance across the state as districts work to improve student outcomes, align instruction to new standards and assessments, and provide the type of support our educators need to be successful in the classroom.

We are also reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System, which has been created, managed and run by the Colorado Department of Education. If we are to continue to implement SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner, it is essential that we continue to receive support from the Educator Effectiveness unit. Without this important team at CDE, Adams 14 would have to use our limited resources on such supports, which we would prefer to keep in the classroom.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Pat Sánchez

Superintendent

Adams County School District 14

Aguilar School District Re-6

420 North Balsam Street – PO Box 567

Aguilar, Colorado, 81020 – 0567

Telephone: (719) 941-4188 Fax: (719) 941-4279



November 29, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

We are writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in the Aguilar School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources. CDE's department of Educator Effectiveness has been invaluable in helping us get up and running with RANDA.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,



Dr. Stacy Houser

Superintendent

Aguilar School District

The Aguilar School District Re-6 does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national origin, sex, or handicap in admission or access to or treatment or employment in its educational programs or activities



Alamosa Public Schools
"Committed to Excellence"

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts. As the Assistant Superintendent in the Alamosa School District, I have been extremely impressed with the level of support that CDE has given to our rural district. We have taken advantage of a number of resources and opportunities that CDE has provided to support our efforts of delivering effective instruction so that our students are empowered to reach their fullest potentials.

I was able to attend the ESEA Leadership Academy that was put on by CDE to provide districts up-to-date information and guidance about ESEA programs and other state initiatives related to them. Through this training, I learned more about the READ Act and Title I funds. I received clarification on funding and also heard from other districts about programs and resources that they have benefitted from. Trish Boland, Director of Federal Program Administrative Unit, also took the time to visit our district and provide further support on our Consolidated Grant and Federal Programs. I was thoroughly impressed with her level of expertise and her willingness to support our district in our efforts.

Paul Jebe, Regional Support Consultant, came to our district and trained our 1338 team on the use of the Model Educator Evaluation System. We are heavily reliant on this system, which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. We have successfully trained our staff on the use of this system and are well into the evaluation process for the year. Teachers and administrators have developed professional growth plans and we are preparing for mid-year reviews. We have all found the system to be very user friendly and are pleased with the process. Mr. Jebe did an excellent job working with our staff. He has continued to keep in contact with us, checking in on our progress. We are hoping to have him back in the near future to help us finalize decisions related to Measures of Student Learning.

We are also taking advantage of the Reading Foundations Academy put on by CDE. Donna Bright, Principal Consultant, has helped to set up a session in Alamosa so that our teachers can have the necessary training and resources to give our students explicit, systematic reading instruction with an emphasis on foundational skills based in the standards. Pam Gjellum and Jane Burk, Regional Tech. Assistants, have taken the time to meet with me on several occasions. We have analyzed our approach to reading instruction at the elementary level, they have provided me with valuable resources, and the two of them will be providing the Reading Academy training to our elementary teachers.

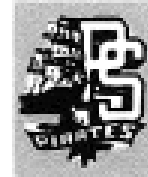
As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Carrie Zimmerman
Assistant Superintendent

Administrative Office

209 Victoria Street
Alamosa, Colorado 81101
(719) 587-1600 Telephone
(719) 587-1712 Fax
www.alamosa.k12.co.us



September 29, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

Our district has been fortunate to be a participant in the Integration Project through the Colorado Legacy Foundation (now the Colorado Education Initiative). As part of this process, we worked closely with CDE to pilot the Colorado Model Educator Evaluation System and worked extensively with CDE throughout the process. Their support proved extremely valuable as we implemented new standards, piloted new assessments and the teacher and principal rubrics. Whenever we had a question, they were there with resources and support.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Archuleta School District 50 Jt. as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Linda Reed, Superintendent
Archuleta School District 50 Jt.
309 Lewis Street, Pagosa Springs, CO 81147 – (970) 264-2228 – FAX (970)264-4631

Page 1



October 14, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The Bayfield School District has been deeply involved in the implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards and the work of the content specialists in particular has been an invaluable resource in these efforts. As we have worked through the significant pace of change, that has been mandated upon Districts, the CDE communications staff has provided us with critical resources. The advice and materials supplied by CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

The Bayfield School District has implemented a comprehensive evaluation system that is heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE. If we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner that continued support is paramount. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Troy D. Zabel, Superintendent Bayfield Schools

*Troy D. Zabel
Superintendent*

Bayfield School District 10 Jr-R

24 Clover Drive • Bayfield, CO 81122 • (970) 884-2496 • FAX (970) 884-4284



Buffalo School District RE-4J
315 Lee Street
Merino, Colorado 80741
970-522-7424

October 13, 2014

Board of Directors

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Superintendent:
Rob Sanders

High School
Principal:
Lonnie Brungardt

Elementary
Principal:
Ann Archuleta

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for the Colorado Sample Curriculum work. The department is currently headed up by Brian Sevier and is supported by several content specialists.

Being a superintendent in a rural district we wear many hats. I for one, also serve my district as the transportation director as well as part time athletic supervisor. We are not large enough to justify separate positions. Which brings me to the point of the Colorado Sample Curriculum Project. The state of Colorado is comprised of approximately 120 districts that are considered rural. I do not believe that many of them have a written curriculum. Such was the case when I arrived at Merino. We decided that the best way to implement the new standards was with the adoption of the State Sample Curriculum. We went from not having any curriculum to a properly scoped and sequenced curriculum almost overnight. We have contributed as a district with the development of one of the units as well as sent teachers to the initial curriculum work. We also joined a consortium of districts in the northeast that have agreed on a common calendar and have all adopted the Colorado Sample Curriculum as part of a project that we have embarked upon.

I also know that the work is not yet complete. It is for this reason I hope you will vote to support the budget request by the Department. The guidance and direction we receive from Brian Sevier and his department is invaluable and we truly need this project to continue.

Sincerely,

Rob Sanders
 Superintendent
 Buffalo School District

"Building Tomorrow's Leaders Today"

CALHAN SCHOOL DISTRICT
"Promoting High Standards and Social Responsibility"

November 17, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

Please accept this correspondence from Calhan School District as a letter of support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

Like every other school district in Colorado, Calhan continues to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resource. We appreciate and welcome whatever assistance is made available to us. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Calhan School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. Additionally we appreciate the support provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a clear and transparent manner. On many occasions, the materials provided by these CDE staff have helped us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders.

At the beginning of the 2014/15 school year, Calhan School District adopted the RANDA System to implement the Model Educator Evaluation System. We rely on the staff at CDE to provide us with the support we need to continue the implementation of SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. It is critical that CDE sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System to support the school districts around the state. Without the resources provided by CDE, Calhan School District would have to develop our own system or invest in an expensive commercially produced system. This would further strain our limited resources.

Please continue to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Respectfully,



Linda Miller
Superintendent
Calhan School District



CANON CITY SCHOOLS

SCHOOL DISTRICT FREMONT RE-1

101 North 14th Street
Canon City, Colorado 81212

Phone (719) 278-5700
Fax (719) 278-5739

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF
ROBIN GOOLDY, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools
MIKY MANCHESTER
Director of Human Resources
L.F. "BUDDY" LAMBERT, MBA
Director of Business Services
SHAWN KOHL
Chief Information Officer
KRISTEN JAYERNOK
Director of Special Services
DOMINIC CAROCHI
Director of Student Services

November 21, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Canon City Schools as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders -- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

DominiC Carocho
Canon City Schools, Director of Student Services

Centennial School District R-1

P.O. Box 350, San Luis, CO 81152
(719) 672-3404

Brian Crowther, Superintendent

Board of Education

Augustine Esquivel, President

Carlos DeLeon, Vice-President

Lari Espinoza, Secretary

Michelle Esquivel, Treasurer

Randa Lobato, Member



PK-12 Principal

Mr. Curtis Garcia

November 11, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Centennial School District R-1 as we work to update our curriculum to reflect the demands and rigor of the new state standards. Several of our teachers have had the opportunity to work directly with content specialists in the development of Sample Curricula and engage in deep professional learning that has been shared across our district. Continuing this work is central to our District's goals and will remain an on-going need.

We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change. As we continue to deepen our knowledge around key policy changes, the tools and resources that have been developed by CDE have proven to be invaluable in our communications with our stakeholders.

As one of Colorado's smallest rural districts, we are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. The guidance, data and feedback we have received as a result of our work with the Model Educator Evaluation System has enabled our district to grow and adjust beyond what we would have been able to accomplish without this kind of targeted support. This has been especially true with regard to our district's effort to establish inter-rater reliability as we prepare for the looming challenge of portability of educator ratings across districts. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

With the reality of continued change as we work to implement the READ Act and graduation proficiency requirements, we look forward to the potential insights and supports the Department will create if these positions are continued. This support is necessary for our district to appropriately and successfully meet the needs of our students.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,


Brian Crowther
Superintendent


Curtis Garcia
Principal


Kimba Rael
Teacher/Liaison

At Centennial School District our Mission is to provide the best education for all students utilizing a variety of research-based curricula and cultural resources; effective communication among parents, community and staff; and collaboration to create a safe learning environment that provides opportunities to our students for success in a global society.

Harry C. Bull, Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent
Educational Services Center
4700 South Yosemite Street
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
720-664-4262



November 3, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Cherry Creek School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders, many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'H. Bull, Jr.', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive in style.

Harry C. Bull, Jr.

Denver Public Schools

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

TEL 720-423-3300

FAX 720-423-3318

TTY 720-423-3741

WEB www.dpsk12.org



Discover a World of Opportunity™

November 13, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

We are going through a time of great change that brings with it both wonderful opportunities and significant change for kids, schools, and school districts. CDE plays a critical role in the success of these changes. We have greatly appreciated the resources, support, and thought partnership of CDE and believe they have a very important role to play going forward for us and school districts throughout the state.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field implementation support budget request by the Department.

Best,



Tom Boasberg
Superintendent

DeBeque School District 49-JT

730 Hinter Avenue, P.O. Box 70
DeBeque, CO 81630
School Office (970) 283-5196
High School Fax (970) 283-5198
District Office (970) 283-5418
District Office Fax (970) 283-5211
www.dbschools.org



Rodney Graham - President
Travis Graham - Vice President
Adrian Walck - Secretary-Treasurer
Ryan Rose - Director
Aaron Largent - Director
Alan Dillon - Superintendent

Dedication to: excellence, community service, collaboration, perseverance, and innovation

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in De Beque School District 49JT as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alan Dillon', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Alan Dillon

Superintendent of Schools

DeBeque 49JT



Dan Snowberger
Superintendent of Schools

October 3, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in the Durango School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change. We've adopted an aggressive reform agenda that will be successful with the right level of support available in the Department.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. This model has proven highly effective in Durango and has done so because of strong support and collaboration with CDE staff. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to endorse the field support budget request by the Department. Should I be able to provide more information or testimony, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

Sincerely,

Dan Snowberger
Superintendent

Office of the Superintendent
Durango School District 9-R • 201 E 12th Street • Durango, CO 81301 • (970) 247-5411 • Fax (970) 247-8581



Joining forces to enrich
educational opportunities for Colorado

800 2nd Street
PO, Box 710
Limon, Colorado 80628
719-775-2342
Fax 719-775-9714

Agate School Dist.
Agate, CO 80101
(303) 764-2741

Aricareas School Dist.
Anton, CO
(970) 383-2202

Auriba-Flagler School Dist.
Flagler, CO
(719) 765-4684

Bennett School Dist.
Bennett, CO
(303) 644-3234

Belhune School Dist.
Belhune, CO
(719) 346-7513

Burlington School Dist.
Burlington, CO
(719) 346-8737

Byers School Dist.
Byers, CO
(303) 822-5292

Cheyenne Wells School Dist.
Cheyenne Wells, CO
(719) 767-5856

Dear Trail School Dist.
Dear Trail, CO
(303) 769-4421

Elizabeth School District
Elizabeth, CO
(303) 646-1836

Genoa-Hugo School Dist.
Hugo, CO
(719) 743-2428

Hi-Plains School Dist.
Vona, CO
(970) 664-2616 (H.S.)
(970) 664-2636 (Elem.)

Idalia School Dist.
Idalia, CO
(970) 354-7298

Karval School Dist.
Karval, CO
(719) 446-5311

Kiowa School Dist.
Kiowa, CO
(303) 621-2220

Kit Carson School Dist.
Kit Carson, CO
(719) 962-3219

Liberty School Dist.
Joes, CO
(970) 358-4288

Limon School Dist.
Limon, CO
(719) 775-2351

Strasburg School Dist.
Strasburg, CO
(303) 622-9211

Strotton School Dist.
Strotton, CO
(719) 348-5369 (H.S.)
(719) 348-5521 (Elem.)

Woodlin School Dist.
Woodrow, CO
(970) 386-2233

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in East Central BOCES as we work with our member districts to ensure their curriculum reflects state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help East Central BOCES member districts communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. As small rural districts we do not have the capacity to create this system and attempting to do so would further strain our limited resources.

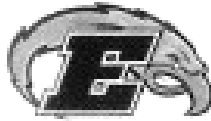
As a Model Educator Evaluation Provider for our member districts, I rely greatly on the CDE Educator Effectiveness Team's expertise as I prepare to train East Central BOCES member district staff in the system. The materials they have created to support Model Evaluation Providers is outstanding. They also are just a phone call away when I need more clarification around certain aspects of the evaluation rubric, Student Learning Outcomes, or RANDA, the evaluation tool provided by CDE. We are also working closely with our Regional Implementation Support Consultant in the Educator Effectiveness Unit, to provide regional training to our principals, using the Elevate System to support the eacher evaluation process in their schools. Once again, our member districts could not do this work as efficiently without the support of CDE.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote in favor of the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Don Anderson, Executive Director
East Central BOCES

Ellicott Middle School



330 S. Ellicott Hwy.
Ellicott, Colorado 80808
Phone: (719)683-2700 ext. 2
Fax: (719) 683-5430

Chris Smith
Principal
Diane Garduno
Assistant Principal

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request, for funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts. The curriculum work (and the sample curriculum project) that has been facilitated by CDE has been an amazing opportunity for our teachers and our district.

I have worked in the Ellicott School District for 16 ½ years and during this time our district has experienced challenges that many small school districts have faced. Although we have adopted the new Colorado Academic Standards, aligning the appropriate instructional units and resources has been quite challenging. Prior to the economic downturn, our district followed cycles for curriculum/program adoption and we were able to update our instructional resources. With the increase in mandates and the decrease in funding, our district has needed to freeze all adoptions for materials and programs. At this time, most of our textbooks are ten years old (or more) and our resources for instruction are not aligned with the new standards. This has made the implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards quite challenging. Teachers work with and know the standards, but strong implementation has eluded us. We find our teachers relying on the outdated textbooks to guide their instruction.

In the fall of 2012, I had the privilege of working with CDE and the English Language Arts content specialist, to create the unit overviews for 3rd grade English Language Arts. In 2013 our secondary Social Studies teachers participated in the build out of one Geography unit for High School Social Studies. This year, we feel very fortunate to continue this work with unit creation in Math, Social Studies, and Science, but it is time-consuming work that is most effective and efficient when facilitated by experts. The content specialists at CDE have been essential to our district moving forward with these units. Our district has begun and will continue this work, but is overwhelmed by the immense number of content areas and units that are yet to be created. The teachers who have participated in this work have stated that this is the best professional development that they have ever had. This type of enthusiasm will undoubtedly increase teacher and student engagement.

If the Joint Budget Committee could provide funding to complete this project and continue, and perhaps expand, the content specialist positions, all school districts across the state would have a way to communicate and share the curriculum work that is being done. We would have additional instructional support and content area expertise, when we are struggling to find highly qualified or highly experienced teaching staff.

The work that has been done is invaluable and must be continued. Without funding, school districts will continue to work in isolation and spend much wasted time recreating similar work.

Your efforts to assist the school districts across the state are greatly appreciated.

Diane Garduno

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Diane Garduno". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, flowing 'D'.

MS Assistant Principal & District Assessment Coordinator
Ellicott School District



Fountain • Fort Carson
SCHOOL DISTRICT EIGHT

November 6, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for our school district as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders, many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed, and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to start over to create our own system. Doing so would further strain our limited resources and hinder any progress we have made with teachers related to evaluation and continuous growth.

For these reasons, we hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Serrano".

Cheryl Serrano
Superintendent of Schools

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lori Smith".

Lori Smith
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction



Garfield School District No. Re-2

Dr. Susan Birdsey, Superintendent

Dave Lindenberg, Assistant Superintendent

Board of Directors

Chris Pearson, Board President

Anne Guettler, Vice President

Patrick Burwell, Secretary

Scott DeFierthy, Treasurer

Shirley Parks, Board Member

October 2, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts. Today more than ever we look to CDE as a partner. In the midst of all of the educational reform and budget cuts our district is still seeing improvement, I believe the support we receive from CDE is an important reason for some of that success.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Garfield Re-2 School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. As a district we have worked closely with CDE in the development of our curriculum. With their expertise and in partnership with CDE we have been able to support our staff and students with strong implementation of our new standards. The content specialists at CDE have been instrumental in our success.

We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources and be virtually impossible.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Dr. Susan Birdsey
Superintendent

839 Wiltier River Avenue, Rifle, CO 81650-3500 (970) 665-7600 Fax (970) 665-7623

Garfield County School District No. 16

0460 Stone Quarry Road

Parachute, CO 81635

Dr. Ken Haptonstall, Superintendent

Sean Taylor, Director of Academic Achievement

Rose H. Belden, Director of Business Services

(970) 285-5701 FAX: (970) 285-5711

October 2, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Garfield 16 as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change. We feel that the “team” approach that CDE has brought to our work is enabling our school system to focus on the essential outcome of having each and every child prepared for post secondary options, or the workforce.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Dr. Ken Haptonstall, PhD.

Board of Directors: Megan Alstatt, Dr. Kevin Coleman, Cheralae Medina, Lynn Shore, and Lori Hinkle

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Gunnison Watershed School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Doug Tredway
Superintendent of Schools
Gunnison Watershed School District



November 17, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts. Such support from CDE is no less than a requirement for our district to implement legislative mandates.

Hinsdale County School District RE-1 has fewer than 100 students but for the past 4 years has been ranked the #1 school district in Colorado based on the state's accountability system. Our success depends on the excellent support we receive from CDE. Implementing the requirements of SB191 is overwhelming for a small district like ours. We absolutely depend on the Model Educator Evaluation System. The training that the outstanding staff at the Educator Effectiveness unit at CDE provides is the reason that the system work for us. The legislature cannot expect to pass incredibly onerous laws like SB191 (I support its intent! Its implementation is just plain lots of work) without providing support.

Additionally, the content specialists at CDE and the communications staff there are essential parts of our district's team for implementation of the new Standards and Assessments that Colorado is undertaking.

Small districts like ours are providing an excellent education for our students. We do not, though, have the capacity *at all* to make our own teacher evaluations or district level standardized assessments or talking points for new initiatives. CDE's help in these areas is essential.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Leslie Nichols, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Hinsdale County School District RE-1

P.O. Box 39 | 614 North Silver Street | Lake City, Colorado 81235 | 970-944-2314 (office) | 970-944-2662 (fax)

Administration

Bret Miles
Superintendent

Sharon Thompson
Director of Finance

Brenda Krueger
Board Secretary



Holyoke School District Re-1J

435 S. Morlan Ave., Holyoke, CO 80734
Phone: 970-854-3634 Fax: 970-854-4049
<http://holyoke.schoolfusion.us>

Board of Education

Kris Camblin
Kim Killin
Linda Jelden
Michelle Van Overbeke
Dennis Herman
Jon King
Pat Wiebers

Dear Joint Budget Committee,

This letter has been written to show strong support from the field for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions targeted to support school districts.

The Sample Curriculum project and content specialists are the best example of support from CDE that I have experienced in 15 years of administration. This work has been extremely helpful for the Holyoke School District as we have relied on the work by the Department to implement curriculum changes after the adoption of the Colorado Academic Standards. Small school districts do not have the personnel with specific expertise to rewrite curriculum. Our district has been working with eight other districts to implement the new curriculum and standards, so this work is positively impacting many students in northeastern Colorado.

In addition to the quality curriculum resources and the expertise from content specialists, the Holyoke School District is particularly excited to use the latest work from this unit, tools for communicating with parents about standards. We believe these will be valuable resources to teachers and parents and we are delighted the department has the staff and expertise to develop these resources. Our district would never have the personnel and time to put together this work.

This CDE budget request is for the most valuable work the Department is doing that directly impacts student achievement. I hope the JBC can see that this minor budget request will continue to fund the most important work out of CDE.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bret Miles

Hotchkiss K-8 School

"Caring, Challenging, and Always Learning"

Play! Be There! Choose Your Attitude! Make Their Day!

465 Lorah Lane Hotchkiss, CO 81419
Carrie Yantzer, Principal

970-872-3325
Fax: 970-872-3808
Casey Carlquist, Asst. Principal

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

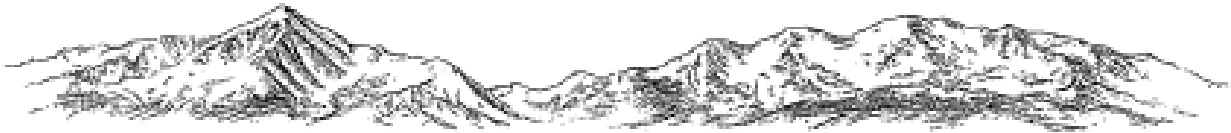
School districts are struggling daily due to the high demands and limited funding. However, the work from the Standards and Implementation team has been an exceptional resource for many schools and school districts. The implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards, SB 191 and other factors has been a strain on educators, not because they can't comply with the requirements, but the strain is due to not having resources and understanding. The work that the content specialists have provided from their written work on the curriculum projects, as well as their professional learning has been invaluable. These resources have been a welcome support for many schools and school districts. It is essential to have these positions for the work to continue. The partnership with the Colorado Department of Education and teachers has improved due to the work of this essential group.

I sincerely hope you will vote to support this budget request as this team and their work is a vital component to continuing our Colorado educational success.

Sincerely,



Carrie Yantzer
Hotchkiss K8 School Principal



Lake County School District R-1

October 16, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As a school district striving to offer every student a rigorous education in a climate of limited resources, we are incredibly appreciative of the support we receive from CDE. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Lake County School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards.

We also benefit greatly from the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders.

We are also grateful for the Model Educator Evaluation System, which has been created, managed and run by CDE. The system has enabled our implementation of SB191 to be fair, effective and professional. The Model Educator Evaluation System supports us in ensuring that every student has access to a quality teacher.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,


Dr. Wendy Wyman
Superintendent

107 Spruce St. + Leadville, CO 80461 + Phone (719) 486-6800 + Fax (719) 486-2048

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Lamar School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,



Dave Tecklenburg Lamar School District Superintendent



MOFFAT COUNTY
SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-1

Administrative Offices
October 7, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Moffat County School District RE-1 as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders -- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,



Brent Curtice, Superintendent

Moffat County School District RE-1

775 Yampa Avenue • Craig, CO 81625 • (970) 824-3268 Fax (970) 824-6655 • moffatsd.org

MONTE VISTA SCHOOL DISTRICT

Inspiring the Pursuit of Excellence, One Student at a Time!

November 25, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

The last two years have seen a much stronger level of support from CDE staff in aligning their support personnel with what is needed to meet the onerous demands place upon schools by legislative actions. It is this type of focused support that will help, especially smaller districts, weather the storm of demands on our time.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in the Monte Vista School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders.

Without the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE, Monte Vista schools would never have been able to shoulder the burdens of SB-191. We believe the law has great intentions and will ultimately lead to improved instruction and learning, beyond what can be measured by any sit-down test. If we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner we cannot do without the sustained efforts and excellent support of CDE staff. We simply do not have the financial or human resources to complete this task. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will be "run over by the truck" and not able to get up and finish this important work.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Regards,



Robert A. Webb

Robert A. Webb
Superintendent

345 East Prospect
Monte Vista
Colorado 81144
U.S.A

PHONE 719.852.5996
CELL 719.850.1954
E-MAIL rwebb@monte.k12.co.us
WEB SITE <http://www.monte.k12.co.us>



Morgan County School District Re-3

District Support Center

715 West Platte Avenue

Fort Morgan, Colorado 80701

October 8, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Morgan County School District Re-3 as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

I would also like to assure you that the support we have received from the Educator Effectiveness Unit at CDE has been exemplary. Managing the implementation of SB191 at the district level has been a daunting task requiring many hours of work and planning. We are pleased to have the support of the Educator Effectiveness Unit staff and the many training and implementation resources that they developed for our benefit. As a result of their fine leadership, we have been able to roll out the educator evaluation process in a way that we believe supports the effectiveness of our instructional system.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department. Please feel free to contact me for additional information should you wish to do so.

Sincerely,

Joy Perry

Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum and Assessment

Morgan County School District Re-3

970-370-6113

jperry@morgan.k12.co.us

(970) 867-5633 • Fax (970) 867-0262

www.morgan.k12.co.us



Joining forces to enrich educational
opportunities for Northwest Colorado

P.O. Box 773280
325 7th Street
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477
970-879-0381 • FAX 970-879-0442

East Grand Schools

P.O. Box 125
Granby, CO 80446
970-887-3581

Hayden Schools

P.O. Box 78
Hayden, CO 80639
970-376-3884

North Park Schools

P.O. Box 798
Walsby, CO 80480
970-723-3300

South Routt Schools

P.O. Box 138
Oak Creek, CO 80467
970-736-3313

Steamboat Springs Schools

P.O. Box 774368
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477
970-879-1539

West Grand Schools

P.O. Box 514
Kenning, CO 80446
970-724-3217

October 17, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts to meet the current mandate of all components within the Educator Effective Initiative.

As this state's mostly small rural school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists have been very helpful for staff in Moffat, Hayden, Steamboat Springs, South Routt, West Grand, East Grand and North Park School districts of the Northwest BOCES, as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff, as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE content specialists help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers, and other stakeholders—many of whom have questions, as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also extremely reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed, and run by the Colorado Department of Education. If School Districts are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective, and professional manner, we need to have the support and sustainability of the Model Educator Evaluation System to be kept up and running well. We absolutely do not have the means to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Amy L. Bollinger
Northwest BOCES Executive Director

Otis Public Schools

Michelle Patterson
Principal PreK-12

Elementary & Bookkeeping
(970) 246-3413 & (970) 246-3366
FAX (970) 246-3318

High School, 301 Work St. Elementary, 518 Dungan St.
Otis, Colorado 80743



KENDRA ANDERSON
Superintendent of Schools

High School
(970) 246-3488 or (970) 246-3753
FAX (970) 246-3487

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

We are writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Otis R-3 School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders -- - many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. This is next to impossible for the Otis School District as our resources are VERY LIMITED.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Kendra Anderson
Superintendent

Plateau Valley School District 50

Today's Educational Opportunity for Tomorrow's World

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts. I understand times have been tough in Colorado and throughout the country for the past several years. I hope everyone working for Coloradans understand the importance of a great educational system.

At the local levels schools and districts feel the struggles of balancing our budgets while meeting state demands, most of which can have a positive effect on student learning. This being said, working in a small district with fewer resources we rely more heavily on CDE for help in many areas. We meet with them for help on building improvement plans to excel into the 21st century and have been lucky enough to have some content specialists work directly with our teachers to improve teaching and learning. Mary Pittman, a CDE math specialist, spent six days with our teachers at the Plateau Valley School District last year and helped us realize how to better teach math. She was a great teacher instructor and was VERY knowledgeable in her area. Without people like Mary, small districts will struggle more to find the resources necessary to improve teaching and learning.

CDE has also offered help and given me resources in communicating out to parents and the community at large about policy and state initiatives on which we are working. The staff at CDE has been helpful in showing me where resources are so I can share them with my community.

I also rely on the staff at CDE with help in implementing other initiatives like SB191, the Model Educator Evaluation System. This is a huge undertaking and without help from CDE it would be impossible for small districts to implement. Their advice and expertise is invaluable.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,



Greg Randall

Superintendent of Schools
Plateau Valley School District 50

56600 Highway 330 - Collbran, CO 81624-9776
(970) 487-3547 (970) 487-3876 Fax
www.pvsd50.org

PLATTE CANYON SCHOOL DISTRICT
Educational Excellence in Safe Schools
P.O. Box 1069, Bailey, Colorado 80421
303.838.7666
Dr. James Walpole, Superintendent

September 29, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding of positions that are targeted at supporting school districts. Smaller school districts do not have sufficient resources to support implementation of the multiple state initiatives. The educational support staff at CDE provide services vital to our work, particularly those that are providing guidance and assistance with implementing the Educator Evaluation System. We do not have the capacity/resources to create our own sophisticated Educator Evaluation System if CDE can't sustain the Model Educator Evaluation system. We also rely on CDE staff who provide support with curriculum development aligned with Colorado's standards.

Please continue to provide the funding necessary for these important services provided by the Colorado Department of Education.

Sincerely,



James W. Walpole, Ed.D.
Superintendent



Joint Budget Committee
Legislative Services Building, 3rd Floor
200 East 14th Avenue
Denver, Colorado 80203

October 21, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express my support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we depend on the assistance and reinforcement gained from these support positions. As a State Council for Educator Effectiveness (SCEE) member, I have been aware of the tools and support trainings that CDE has developed to help districts that are using the State Model System. Please give the Department the resources they need to provide a State Model System to those districts who need or choose to use it. These resources are invaluable and require technical expertise to develop. It is crucial that our Department of Education have these resources for districts if our system and the implementation of SB 191 are to be professional and appropriate. Through their work in curriculum development, implementing standards-based instructional materials, and aligning assessments to the current standards, the curriculum content specialists in Poudre School District have been successful in aligning instruction to the Colorado Academic Standards. The CDE communications staff supports our efforts to implement policy changes by giving us information we can use to communicate with our stakeholders in a transparent and effective manner.

For these reasons, I hope you will support the budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Sandra Smyser, Ph.D.
Superintendent



Pritchett School District RE-3

P.O. Box 7 Pritchett, CO 81064
Phone: (719) 523-4045 or (719) 523-4293
Fax: (719) 523-6991

533 Irving Street
Pritchett, CO 81064

10/6/2014

Joint Budget Committee
Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax Ave.
Denver, CO 80203

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to express my support for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts such as Mr. Paul Jebe, Regional Implementation and Support Consultant. I can speak first hand to the support, encouragement, and increased understanding the people in such positions have provided to districts such as Pritchett. As a dual role superintendent/principal, I wear many hats, which means I am stretched very thin. At times, I have felt overwhelmed, confused, and frustrated yet the support such as Mr. Paul Jebe provided put me at ease and increased my level of understanding and thus my ability to implement state initiatives such as the Educator Effectiveness Evaluation Model.

I have also been so impressed with the quality of the personnel providing the trainings. Having served for several years as the Director of Professional Development at the college level and a presenter at several national education conferences; I would like to think that I know something about providing effective support and professional development. Mr. Jebe is a model of outstanding and highly effective field support needed by individuals such as myself. Without hesitation, he is one of the most highly skilled and knowledgeable individuals I have encountered during my career in education.

In closing, without such support as that provided by quality individuals such as Paul, my implementation of the state evaluation model would be hit and miss and without any level of fidelity. It is my hope that such support position receive continued funding because of their critical support to myself and the countless others they support.

Respectfully submitted,

Philip Trejo
Superintendent/Principal
Pritchett School District

CHRISTY ESKEW
P.O. BOX 133
PRITCHETT, CO 81064

MARK CRANE
23334 CO. RD. 13
PRITCHETT, CO 81064

CASEY EVERETT
10734 CO. RD. 3.1
PRITCHETT, CO 81064

MARK WILSON
43670 CO. RD. 2.1
LAS ANIMAS, CO 81054

JERRY CASEBOLT
P.O. BOX 116
PRITCHETT, CO 81064

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Sangre de Cristo School District as we work to update our curriculum (state sample curriculum) to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, I don't know how we would continue pushing inter-rater reliability, which is a huge positive to bringing about positive change. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

John Stephens

Principal

Sangre de Cristo District



STEAMBOAT SPRINGS SCHOOL DISTRICT RE-2

phone: 970-871-3199
fax: 970-879-3943

Dr. Brad Meeks
Superintendent

325 7th Street
Steamboat Springs, CO 80487

October 6, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

We are writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in the Steamboat Springs School District as we work to update our systems and supports to reflect state standards and meet the requirements of various state mandates. We have also found the assistance provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner to be a huge asset. As a small rural district we have limited capacity to perform these functions on our own. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. We have found the Educator Effectiveness unit to be extremely responsive to our needs. The supports and materials that have been created by this unit have allowed us to move forward at a much greater pace than would have been possible without their existence and expertise. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system. Doing so would further strain our limited resources and in all likelihood be impossible without negative impacts on the direct services we could provide within our classrooms to our students.

For these reasons, we hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Martin L. Lamansky
Director of Teaching and Learning

Dr. Brad Meeks
Superintendent



BOARD OF EDUCATION
MS. MARGARET CARLSON, PRESIDENT
MS. ERIN YOUNG, VICE PRESIDENT
MS. SUE WILCOX, TREASURER
MS. ALISON CASIAR, SECRETARY
MR. J KENT MCHOSE, DIRECTOR
MR. DAVEMILLER, DIRECTOR
DR. MARELYN TAYLOR, DIRECTOR

DR. HEIDI PACE, SUPERINTENDENT

November 6, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

Please accept this letter as strong support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As our district continues to struggle with balancing state demands for recent education reforms in a climate of limited resources, we are The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Summit School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards.

We also value the help provided by the CDE communications team as we work to implement policy changes in an effective and efficient manner. The guidance and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change. More importantly, these tools have helped us actively engage our parents and community members in the critical work of our public education program here in Summit.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Heidi Pace
Heidi Pace, Ph.D.
Superintendent



800 South Taft Avenue • Loveland, CO 80537
Office (970) 613-5013 • Fax (970) 613-5088

Stan Scheer, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

December 1, 2014

Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax Avenue, Room 405
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Thompson School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Respectfully,

Dr. Stan Scheer
Superintendent of Schools
Stan.Scheer@thompsonschools.org

Empower to learn – Challenge to achieve – Inspire to excel

www.thompsonschools.org



800 South Teft Avenue • Loveland, CO 80537
Office (970) 643-6175 • Fax (970) 643-5089

Jeri Crispe
Director of Secondary Education

December 1, 2014

Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax Avenue, Room 405
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Thompson School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Respectfully,

Jeri Crispe
Director of Secondary Education
Jeri.Crispe@thompsonschools.org



800 South Taft Avenue • Loveland, CO 80537 • Office (970) 613-5000 • Fax (970) 613-5089

November 25, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Thompson School District, as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. Last year CDE came to Thompson School District to work with our Art, Music, Health and Science teachers. They helped us access and use the CDE Sample Curriculum. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change. We have been incredibly fortunate in Thompson School District to be working with CDE staff from the beginning to bring the essential components of the standards and curriculum to fruition. The greatest asset has been the networking and collaborative opportunities that have been made available through our partnership with CDE.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources. The continuous improvement, evaluation and systems alignment would not have been possible without the tireless effort of the CDE team. I have been witness to this work as a leader in a pilot district. For these reasons, and many more, I hope you will vote to support the field and support the budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Carmen Williams
Director of Assessment and PD
Thompson School District
970-613-6785



800 South Taft Avenue • Loveland, CO 80537
Office (970) 613-5059 • Fax (970) 613-5089

Margaret Crespo, Ed.D.
Chief Academic Officer

December 1, 2014

Colorado Department of Education
201 East Colfax Avenue, Room 405
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Thompson School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders --- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Respectfully,

Dr. Margaret Crespo
Chief Academic Officer
Margaret.Crespo@thompsonschools.org



800 South Taft Avenue • Loveland, CO 80537 • Office (970) 613-5000 • Fax (970) 613-5089

October 22, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Thompson School District, as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders — many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change. We have been incredibly fortunate in Thompson School District to be working with CDE staff from the beginning to bring the essential components of the standards and curriculum to fruition. The greatest asset has been the networking and collaborative opportunities that have been made available through our partnership with CDE.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources. As a member of the State Council for Educator Effectiveness from its inception, I have seen the incredible work framed by CDE. The continuous improvement, evaluation and systems alignment would not have been possible without the tireless effort of the CDE team. I have been witness to this work, not only as a SCEE member, but as a leader in a pilot district. For these reasons, and many more, I hope you will vote to support the field and support the budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Chief Academic Officer
Thompson School District
970-613-5059



TRINIDAD SCHOOL DISTRICT #1

P.O. BOX 790
TRINIDAD, COLORADO 80322
OFFICE: 719-846-3324
FAX: 719-846-2967
www.tsd1.org

SCOTT MADER
INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

WILLIAM R. COMBOYA
BUSINESS MANAGER

October 20, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

This correspondence serves as my expression of support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts. Trinidad School District has had the good fortune to have tapped into a wide range of CDE personnel who have serviced the District through personalized in-services and needed consultation. These services have been very professional and extremely helpful.

Our Colorado School Districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources and we need the exceptional professional services provided by staff at the State level. Trinidad School District #1 especially looks to the expertise provided us by the content specialists who assist us as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards. We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers and other stakeholders -- many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change.

Finally, we need the CDE staffs who have managed the implementation of SB 191 if we are to continue to implement this Bill properly and make it a Statute that helps teachers and principals improve professionally. SB 191 can make a difference in student achievement but only if it is put in place with fidelity. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch and doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For all of the above reasons, I encourage you to vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely,

Scott H. Mader

Scott H. Mader
Interim Superintendent,
Trinidad School District #1

Trinidad School District #1 Continuously Rating The Bar

Trinidad School District #1 (TSD #1) does not discriminate on basis of disability, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age, in access to employment or, provision of and TSD #1's program, benefits, or activities. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding policy: Dorothy Salinas, TSD #1, P.O. Box 790, Trinidad, Colorado 80322, (719) 846-3324



680 Academy Ct.
Windsor, CO 80550
970.674.5020

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts.

As schools and districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The lack of resources in many ways is even more pronounced at charter schools.

We are heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. The addition of RANEA has been extremely helpful in managing the evaluation process as well as providing educators specific, actionable and timely feedback, which in many cases has prompted them to improve their instructional practices. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch. Doing so would further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Best Regards,
Jeremy Schriener
Assistant Principal
Windsor Charter Academy



Serving Woodland Park, Divide and Florissant

Linda Murray
Assistant Superintendent

December 1, 2014

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

I am writing to you to express strong support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted at supporting school districts. As a smaller district, we do not have the staff and/or departments to support and lead strong content and curriculum development alone and have appreciated the resources made available to us during this time of reform and change in almost every aspect of our work.

As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, we need whatever help we can get. The work of the content specialists in particular has been very helpful for us in Woodland Park School District as we work to update our curriculum to reflect state standards and prepare students for the new assessments. We participated in several projects over the past two years and found the work through the content specialists to be far more valuable than any locally purchased curriculum costing thousands of dollars. The time spent to create strong standards-based units was invaluable in helping our teachers understand how to address all of the standards, design interdisciplinary units with particular attention to depth of knowledge, critical thinking, relevant and authentic learning and performance tasks that truly demonstrate student learning.

We also need the help provided by the communications staff as we work to implement policy changes in a transparent manner. The advice and materials supplied by these CDE staff help us communicate more effectively with parents, teachers, and other stakeholders – many of whom have questions as we implement legislatively directed change. Again, as a small district, we appreciate the work from CDE as we do not have the staff in our district to address these communication supports.

We are also heavily reliant on the Model Educator Evaluation System which has been created, managed and run by CDE if we are to continue implementing SB191 in a fair, effective and professional manner. If CDE cannot sustain the Model Educator Evaluation System, we will have to create our own system from scratch and further strain our limited resources.

For these reasons, I hope you will vote to support the field support budget request by the Department.

Sincerely

Linda Murray
Assistant Superintendent, WPSD Re-2
719-686-2012



December 5, 2014

Dear Members of the Joint Budget Committee:

As an organization that strongly supports the successful implementation of key reform measures such as the Great Teachers and Leaders Act, we also support the Colorado Department of Education's budget request to ensure continued funding for positions that directly support school districts in this important work.

In conversations across the state, we have heard about the high value teachers and school leaders place on the support provided by CDE's Educator Effectiveness Unit. The vast majority of school districts in Colorado employ the State Model Educator Evaluation System, and rely heavily on CDE ensuring the ongoing validity of the evaluation rubrics and tools, maintaining the online performance system, and providing training and technical assistance. Without continued funding, the Department will be less able to maintain a fair and reliable evaluation system, or provide the same level of support for implementation, which could lead to districts having to expend local funding and resources to develop their own lower-quality systems and, ultimately, a duplication of efforts.

Additionally, we believe it is important for the Department to continue offering services to school districts as they pertain to successful implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards and aligned assessments. The next two years, as new systems are put in place and as parents, students, and educators raise questions and concerns around standards and testing requirements, it is critical that the Department is able to help districts explain the many changes being implemented in an easily understandable manner. This will allow districts to prioritize making sure teachers feel supported in their classrooms and students are receiving an excellent education.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask for your support regarding the field support budget item requested by CDE.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chris Watney
President & CEO

Geoff Colwell
Vice President, K-12 Education Initiatives

1580 Lincoln Street Suite 420 Denver, CO 80203 303.839.1580 TEL 303.839.1354 FAX info@coloradokids.org

www.coloradokids.org



Dear Joint Budget Committee:

On behalf of Stand for Children Colorado, which represents parents, educators, and community members focused on improving education for all Colorado students, I am writing to strongly support the Colorado Department of Education's (CDE) budget request to ensure continued funding for positions that support school districts as they implement key reform measures adopted by the legislature.

While we recognize concerns raised during the Department's Joint Budget Committee briefing, we believe that the work of CDE's Educator Effectiveness Unit is critical to successful implementation of important reforms, specifically Senate Bill 191 and new Colorado Academic Standards. Nearly every school district in the state has chosen to use the Model Educator Evaluation System created by the CDE. The Educator Effectiveness Unit has provided support to these districts in the work of adopting and implementing educator evaluation processes and systems. In addition, the Educator Effectiveness Unit has provided valuable trainings, resources, and guidance to districts on various aspects of the new reforms. Many of these districts have limited capacity to create systems required by statute on their own and therefore rely on the support of the Educator Effectiveness Unit.

The work of CDE's communications staff is also very important. We have seen a significant increase in questions and concerns from parents, students, and teachers around standards, evaluations, and testing requirements. CDE needs to be able to help districts explain the components of these issues in a clear, understandable manner. Communications support from the state allows districts to better communicate with their stakeholders and prioritize the important work of implementation to ensure an excellent education for all Colorado students.

Although educator effectiveness work was originally funded on a one-time basis, the amount of work that still needs to be done to ensure successful reform implementation and the ongoing need for resources and technical support among districts demonstrate the importance of providing continued funding to the educator effectiveness work.

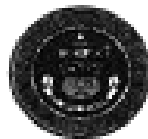
For these reasons, we ask for your support of the field implementation and support of educator effectiveness and the Colorado Academic Standards requested by the CDE.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mateos Alvarez", is written over a large, light-colored scribble or watermark.

Mateos Alvarez
Interim Executive Director
Stand for Children Colorado

1201 E. Colfax Ave., Suite 201, Denver, CO 80218 | 303-831-6408 | colinfo@stand.org | www.stand.org/colorado



State Council for Educator Effectiveness

November, 14 2014

Joint Budget Committee
Colorado Legislature
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Joint Budget Committee:

We are writing to you to express support for the Colorado Department of Education's budget request for continued funding for positions that are targeted support school districts in the quality implementation of the Colorado Academic Standards, new assessment systems and educator evaluation systems.

The State Council for Educator Effectiveness (the Council) is a 15-member Governor-appointed body, including representation from teachers, principals, specialized service professionals, school board members, district administrators, parents/guardians, students, higher education, the charter school community, and the business community.

In 2010, to guide the implementation of S.B. 191, the Council was charged with defining teacher and principal effectiveness; establishing levels of effectiveness and performance standards; developing guidelines for a fair, rigorous, and transparent system to evaluate teachers, principals, and specialized service professionals, and recommending State Board rules to prepare, evaluate, and support teachers and principals. To that end, we know how difficult and complicated it can be to implement a high quality evaluation system that has the appropriate tools and supports associated with it.

Most districts (160) have opted to implement and are reliant on the Colorado State Model Educator Evaluation System, which was based on the recommendations that the Council provided to the State Board and has been created, managed, and run by CDE. There are several concrete examples of how CDE has supported districts with implementation of this state model system. One example is found in the RANDA performance management system. This technology system was created by CDE and is in alignment with system requirements for the Colorado State Model Educator Evaluation System. Without CDE's support for this system, every school district across Colorado would be designing and developing technology systems to support the evaluation process. Another concrete example of CDE's support to districts is the beginning of an inter-rater agreement system, called Elevate Colorado. This system is in support of norming common expectations for high quality instructional practice in classrooms across the state. If districts are to continue implementing S.B. 10-191 in a fair, effective, and professional manner, they need CDE systems, resources, and staff to support them. There has been increasing demand for these supports over the last few years. As school districts continue to struggle with balancing state demands in a climate of limited resources, they need all the support they can get.

Continuing to fund resources at CDE will allow CDE to sustain the Colorado State Model Educator Evaluation System and provide districts supports that are essential to successful implementation of S.B. 191.

For these reasons, we hope you will vote to support the budget request by the Department. If you need more information or have questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Smith", written over a horizontal line.

Matt Smith
Chair

Members of the State Council for Educator Effectiveness

R4 State Review Panel Online Portal

[Background Information: The Department's request includes an increase of \$77,375 General Fund to enhance and maintain an online system to streamline the State Review Panel's reviews of schools and school districts for the statewide accountability system.]

Question: 25: What is the role of the Governor's Office of Information Technology in formulating this request? Is the Internet Portal Authority involved in the request? Please explain.

RESPONSE:

This is a revision and expansion of the department's existing system. The department is using an OIT-approved vendor and the Internet Portal Authority has been involved in the planning and will continue to be involved through implementation.

R7 Building Excellent Schools Today Statewide Priority Assessment

[Background Information: The Department's request includes an increase of \$3.5 million cash funds from the Public School Capital Construction Assistance Fund and 6.0 FTE to reconfigure the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) priority assessment database and provide additional assistance to schools and school districts applying for funding from the BEST program. The request includes \$2.7 million in one-time funding to reconfigure the database and \$792,914 and 6.0 FTE to support a team of assessors to provide additional assistance to school districts and maintain the priority assessment database going forward.]

Question 26: Please put the \$2.7 million requested to reconfigure the database in context with the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) overall budget. How does the cost to reconfigure the database compare to the assistance the program will provide? How much value will the database provide if the State is reaching the cap on certificate of participation (COP) payments for BEST?

RESPONSE:

- For fiscal year FY 2013-14 BEST received approximately \$95.3 million in revenue. The one-time cost to reconfigure and reclassify the assessment represents approximately 3 percent of the Division's overall budget. Additionally, Division personnel and operation costs will increase budgetary obligations from 0.84 percent to 1.47 percent annually for the purpose of updating and maintaining the database.
 - The Office of State Auditor's audit recommendation 1c, from the 2013 performance audit, recommends that the Division perform targeted outreach to prospective applicants based on data outlined in audit recommendation 1a (reclassifying existing data points to identify health, safety, security, overcrowding and technology). In order to implement the audit recommendation and provide targeted outreach effectively, statewide data needs to be updated and structured so high-need facilities can be identified and prioritized. In addition, current data is essential for assisting with funding decisions in accordance with 22-43.7-109(5) C.R.S. which states "The Board, taking into consideration the financial assistance priority assessment conducted pursuant to 22-43.7-108 C.R.S, shall prioritize applications that describe public school facility capital construction projects deemed eligible for financial assistance."
 - Even with the program reaching its statutory cap for issuing COP's, the Capital Construction Assistance Board will continue to award numerous grants each year through its cash fund. Presently, the BEST grant program anticipates total annual
-

awards ranging from \$30 million to \$50 million. A key feature of the updated database will be the option to run reports on facility systems that have high health and safety needs, a function that cannot currently be performed. Furthermore, the facility database will continue to be utilized to validate scopes, provide direction to prospective applicants, and assist the Capital Construction Assistance Board with grant evaluation and prioritization of funding.

- The database also provides valuable forecast models for determining statewide facility needs and annual required funding. The facility assessment database will continue to serve as a statewide resource for school districts and charter schools that do not presently have facility data maintained or stored at the local level.

Question 27: Please explain the level of detail of the information stored in the program's database. For example, will the database provide information to first responders in an emergency (e.g., does it include building blue prints)? Is the information in the database subject to Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) requests, and does the information in the database create a vulnerability? Will the updated database just contain information on the capital maintenance status of all of the schools?

RESPONSE:

- The facility condition assessment, as performed, evaluated the physical condition of each facility. It included a visual, non-destructive, assessment of roughly 51 systems that could be analyzed using a life-cycle cost model. The database includes approximately 300 data points related to the condition, suitability and energy efficiency of each facility. Each data point is given a rating score, which is used to calculate an overall score.
 - Blueprints, when available, were used during the assessment to evaluate code and suitability of a facility; however, they were not retained nor are they maintained in the database.
- Pursuant to 22-43.7-108(2)(c) C.R.S. “The board or the division shall make the data collected available to the public in a form that is easily accessible and complies with any federal or state laws or regulations concerning privacy.” Presently, the Division provides State-level data on the Division’s website with access to individual school-level reports within CDE’s SchoolView data center. The data collected in this assessment poses minimal security vulnerabilities. The information in the database is subject to the Colorado Open Records Act.
- The updated assessment will continue to evaluate and collect the facility condition and program suitability data as outlined above.

Question 28: Has the Office of Information Technology reviewed the request to reconfigure the database? Who would do the reconfiguration? What is the origin of the \$2.7 million estimate? Please explain.

RESPONSE:

- The Office of Information Technology (OIT) has not reviewed this request; however, it is anticipated that OIT will participate in the request for proposals process to reconfigure the database.
- The Division will issue a request for proposals, through State procurement, to hire a contractor to perform the scope of work. The request for proposals will be based on the results of the work by the Division and Capital Construction Assistance Board to define an updated structure for the database to include consolidation and reclassification of existing data points related to criteria for health, safety, security, overcrowding, technology and other.
- Per audit recommendation 1a, The Capital Construction Assistance Board, with the support of the Division, worked with the current contractor, Parsons, to arrive at a scope of work and the estimated cost of \$2.7 million dollars to reconfigure, consolidate and modify the existing facility database.

STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

[Background Information: The JBC Staff briefing document includes a menu of potential options to modify the existing statewide system of standardized assessments.]

Question 29: Please discuss the impact of scaling assessments back to the federal (minimum) requirements on: (1) the calculation of student growth, particularly in high school; and (2) the statewide accountability system.

RESPONSE:

Background:

Scaling back the state assessments to the federal minimums has the potential to impact the student growth calculations and statewide accountability system in a variety of ways, depending upon which of several courses of action the department takes in response to the elimination of some state assessments (as described below).

Reducing the state assessment requirements to the federal minimum requirements would cause the following changes to our currently legislated assessment system:

- Eliminate the social studies assessments in elementary, middle and high school
- Eliminate the 9th grade English language arts and mathematics assessment
- Require either the 10th or 11th grade English language arts and math assessment
 - A college entrance exam could potentially be used to meet the federal requirements for high school assessment if a federal peer review of the college entrance exam finds that it measures the depth and breadth of the Colorado Academic Standards in reading, writing and communication; mathematics; and science. Historically, states have had to augment the ACT (by adding additional items or content) to meet technical requirements to cover their standards. It is important to note that currently Colorado does not give a writing production college entrance exam. If a stand-alone or augmented college entrance exam will cover the standards, then the potential to use it as part of CMAS to meet requirements at the high school level, may exist.
- ACT is not a federal requirement and could be eliminated if we moved to the federal minimum assessment requirements, if it is not used as the high school content assessment.

For the purpose of answering this question, we are going to assume that we need 10th or 11th

grade CMAS PARCC English language arts and math assessments and a high school CMAS science assessment, and that ACT would not be approved to be the single high school content assessment. Additionally, for sub-part (2) we kept ACT in the simulation as there has been widespread support for the assessment in Colorado.

(1) While Colorado has historically only measured growth in content areas with consecutive grades (reading, writing and math), our growth model will allow calculations of growth in non-consecutive grades. If the state were to move to the federal minimum assessment requirements, we would not have assessments in grade 9, and possibly grade 10, thus impacting growth measures at the high school level. It is possible for growth to be calculated from 8th grade to 10th or 11th grade. Some other states (Hawaii, Massachusetts, Nevada and Oregon, for example) use the same growth model as Colorado to measure growth at the high school level when assessments are not given in consecutive years. Delaware, Nebraska, North Dakota and Pennsylvania use other growth models to measure growth between non-consecutive assessments.

While it is possible to calculate growth between non-consecutive assessments, the validity of growth scores across two or more years is questionable, depending on how the results may be used. A number of variables can impact a growth percentile calculated from an 8th grade score to a 10th or 11th grade score, thus raising a number of questions, including:

- What do these growth scores really represent?
- Can growth scores across two or more years be attributed to some action by a school or a specific teacher?
- Are the results appropriate to use for school and district accountability?
- Are the results appropriate to use as a measure of student learning for educator evaluations?

Of the referenced states measuring growth between non-consecutive assessments, the growth component of their accountability frameworks is weighted much less than Colorado's current weighting (other states weigh growth between 10-40% of the high school framework compared to Colorado at 50%). Adjusting weights in the accountability frameworks is one way to take into consideration the validity of the growth metric.

In order to make a more informed recommendation regarding the use of growth from non-consecutive assessments in school and district accountability, CDE will run data simulations that will help us understand the impact. As Colorado has assessed reading, writing and math in grades 3-10, consecutively, we can compare the student growth percentiles and the median growth percentiles (aggregated numbers) from our current assessment system, to one where we simulated not assessing students in 9th grade. If the simulated 8th grade to 10th grade individual student growth percentiles and the median growth percentiles for schools and

districts are highly correlated with the existing 9th and 10th grade student growth percentiles and median growth percentiles, that would indicate that it may be appropriate to use non-consecutive assessment growth percentiles for school and district accountability. However, if the results are low to moderately correlated, that would indicate that using non-consecutive assessment growth percentiles for accountability purposes may not be valid, as the scores may not actually describe meaningful growth. That could cause us to rethink how much we weight growth in our accountability frameworks or if we include it at all at the high school level.

CDE is planning to run these simulations at the beginning of the new year. Results will be shared with the Technical Advisory Panel for Longitudinal Growth (legislated technical advisory group) and the panel will collaborate with department personnel in developing a recommendation regarding the potential use and limitations of non-consecutive assessment growth percentiles.

(2) As growth indicators are an integral part of Colorado's school and district accountability frameworks, a change in growth metrics could affect school and district accountability. There are many policy and calculation decisions that would need to be made if the state reduced the high school assessments that would determine the actual impact on accountability. Specifically, decisions would need to be made around using non-consecutive assessment growth results, the weighting of the indicators (achievement, growth, growth gaps and post-secondary workforce readiness), the use and weight of English language proficiency growth, etc. Depending upon these decisions, the outcomes could vary greatly.

CDE has simulated one such scenario using the following decision rules (right column) for calculations. Comparisons to the current 2013/2014 School Performance Frameworks (SPF)/District Performance Framework (DPF) are on the left. As shown below, the decision for this simulation was to not use non-consecutive assessment growth at the high school level, and thus not have a growth or growth gap indicator (although English language proficiency growth could be included).

	2013 SPF	Simulated Federal Min. SPF
Elementary and Middle Schools	Achievement (25%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCAP- reading, writing, math and science Growth (50%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, writing, math and English language proficiency Growth Gaps (25%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, writing, math 	Achievement (25%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCAP- reading, writing, math and science Growth (50%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, writing, math and English language proficiency Growth Gaps (25%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, writing, math
High Schools	Achievement (15%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCAP- 9th and 10th grade reading, writing, math and science Growth (35%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, writing, math and English language proficiency Growth Gaps (15%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, writing, math Postsecondary Workforce Readiness (35%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 11th Grade CO ACT ▪ Graduation and dropout 	Achievement (30%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TCAP- 9th and 10th grade reading, writing, math and science Growth (0%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading, writing, math and English language proficiency Growth Gaps (0%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading, writing, math Postsecondary Workforce Readiness (70%) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 11th Grade CO ACT ▪ Graduation and dropout
Districts	Aggregated Elementary, Middle and High School results	Aggregated Elementary, Middle and High School results

CDE compared the results of the 2013 SPFs and DPFs to the results on the simulated, federal minimum frameworks based on the 2013 assessment and growth results. Again, actual results could vary greatly based on decision rules, as well as the new CMAS assessment results, including English language arts instead of reading, social studies inclusion, potential enhancements and revisions to post-secondary workforce readiness measures, and changes to cut-points.

Based on the assumptions in the table above, the following changes to the 2013 school frameworks would be observed:

For schools with a high school level (378 schools), 29 would receive a higher rating, 39 would receive a lower rating and 309 would receive the same rating.

2013 SPF Rating		2013 Rating with Federal Minimum Metrics Only				
		Insuff Data	Turnaround	Priority Imp	Improvement	Performance
	%	0%	3%	7%	17%	72%
Insuff Data	0%	0	0	0	0	0
Turnaround	3%	0	9	1	0	0
Priority Imp	6%	0	4	13	7	0
Improvement	18%	1	0	11	36	21
Performance	73%	0	0	2	22	251

For schools with elementary and middle school levels (1284 schools), 70 would receive a higher rating, 58 would receive a lower rating and 1,156 would receive the same rating.

2013 SPF Rating		2013 Rating with Federal Minimum Metrics Only				
		Insuff Data	Turnaround	Priority Imp	Improvement	Performance
	%	0%	2%	8%	19%	71%
Insuff Data	0%	0	0	0	0	0
Turnaround	2%	0	21	9	0	0
Priority Imp	8%	0	6	83	19	1
Improvement	19%	0	1	15	185	41
Performance	70%	0	0	0	36	867

For districts (182), 11 would receive a higher rating, 28 would receive a lower rating and 143 would receive the same rating.

2013 DPF Rating		2013 Rating with Federal Minimum Metrics Only					
		Insuff Data	Turnaround	Priority Imp	Improvement	Performance	Distinction
	%	0%	1%	14%	30%	47%	8%
Insuff Data	0%	0	0	0	0	0	0
Turnaround	2%	0	2	1	0	0	0
Priority Imp	9%	0	0	15	2	0	0
Improvement	29%	0	0	10	38	5	0
Performance	51%	0	0	0	14	76	3
Distinction	9%	0	0	0	0	4	12

Thus, those systems with high school levels would be more likely to experience a lower rating under the federal minimum system than elementary and middle schools, which are not impacted by the lack of growth at the high school level.

The department also looked at the impact based on poverty rates, enrollment size and performance level. There does not appear to be a systematic impact based on poverty rates or

enrollment size. Schools and districts with Improvement or Performance ratings tend to see more change in percent of points earned on the frameworks (both positive and negative) than schools identified as Turnaround or Priority Improvement.

This is just one way of applying a federal minimum assessment system to the state school and district accountability system. Based on this application, districts and high schools would see a slightly negative impact, but not one that is systemic based on poverty rates or system size. However, other applications and decisions could have different impacts.

Question 30: Some Colorado schools offer dual enrollment where high school students are taking college courses on a full-time basis and yet those students are still required to take the statewide standardized assessments. Why is the State continuing to assess those students, when they have already completed their high school requirements and been admitted to college courses? Could eliminating those assessments generate savings? Please explain.

RESPONSE:

The following statute requires all Colorado public school students to take the assessments for their grade-level.

C.R.S. (22-7-409) 1.2a 1.d.1 “...every student enrolled in a public school shall be required to take the assessments administered pursuant to subsection (1) of this section at the grade level in which the student is enrolled...”

Students taking concurrent enrollment courses while in high school are completing their district’s graduation requirements by taking courses that count for both high school and college credit at the same time. These students are considered high school students since they are enrolled in a 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade year of school and their district receives per pupil funding from the state to fund their education. These students are held to the same requirements as all other students in their grade. Once students have completed their 12th grade year and district graduation requirements, they are no longer eligible to continue their education into a 13th year, with the expectation of the ASCENT program (outlined below).

- Approximately 26,900 students participated in dual enrollment programs of any type (18,000 in concurrent enrollment) in the 2012-2013 academic year. This represents about 22 percent of all 11th and 12th graders in public high schools in Colorado. “Dual enrollment” is used to refer to the broad array of programs available to high school students that allow them to take college-level courses for credit. “Concurrent enrollment” refers only to the statewide programs created by House Bill 09-1319 and detailed in the Concurrent Enrollment Programs Act (C.R.S. §22-35-101 et seq.).
- Overall, participation in all dual enrollment programs increased by 12 percent between 2011-2012 and 2012-2013. In 2012-13 there was a 30% increase in participation in concurrent enrollment.
- Denver Public Schools had the greatest number students participating in Concurrent Enrollment out of all Colorado school districts. Crowley County School District, a small

rural district, had the highest percentage of high school students in Concurrent Enrollment (88%).

2012-13 Concurrent Enrollment and ASCENT Credentials Earned

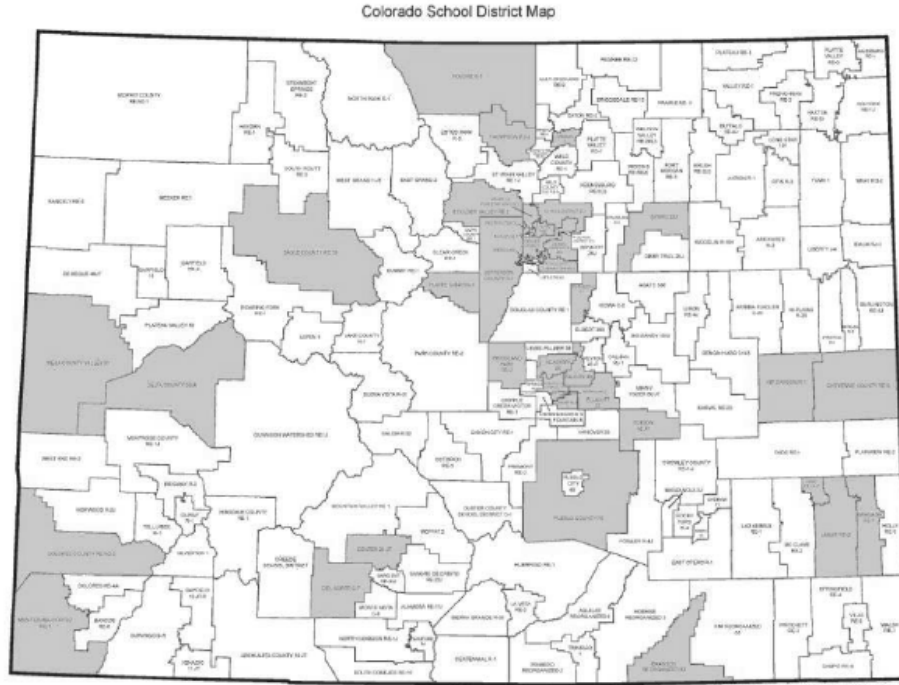
Credential Type	Number of Students
Certificate (less than 1 year)	562
Certificate (least 1 year, less than 2)	85
Associates Applied Science	9
Associates of General Studies	21
Associate Degree (AA or AS)	98
Total	775

Nearly 800 students in concurrent enrollment or ASCENT programs earned some type of postsecondary credential in 2012-13. This is a 60 percent increase over last year's total credential completion number (483).

Accelerating Students Through Concurrent Enrollment (ASCENT)

ASCENT is a 5th year of high school that only 424 students in 38 school districts are participating in during the 2014-15 academic year. These students are eligible to take either a part-time or full-time schedule of college courses with ongoing supports from their high school. CDE has provided clear guidance to districts that 5th year seniors, including ASCENT students, should not take their senior assessments for a second time as these requirements were met during their first 12th grade year. As such, savings are not generated.

2014-15 ASCENT Participating Districts



The purpose of the ASCENT program is to:

- Increase the percentage of students participating in postsecondary education, especially low-income and traditionally underserved populations, in addition to:
- Decrease the number of students who do not complete high school.
- Decrease the time required for a student to complete a postsecondary credential.
- Increase the number of educational pathways available to students.

Question 31: Does the Department track the time and money spent on local (school district mandated) assessments? How much instructional time and money are spent on such assessments, relative to the statewide system?

RESPONSE:

The department does not have a mechanism for tracking the time and money spent on local school district assessments. However, House Bill 14-1202 which created the Standards and Assessments Task Force included a study of the time and costs associated with state and local assessments. The study was completed by Augenblick, Palaich, & Associates (APA). The full study can be accessed at:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdedepcom/finalassessmentstudyreportwithappendices>. Page 14 begins the section on time. Page 27 begins the section on cost. Excerpts of the relevant sections on time and cost from the executive summary of the report are provided below.

Time

The APA study examined time spent by teachers on state and local assessments. They provided a range of analyses. The analyses most pertinent to the question from the JBC are provided below. Interested committee members are encouraged to refer to the full study for more detail.

The APA survey asked respondents to estimate the amount of time teachers spent preparing for and administering assessments. No respondent group reported consistently higher or lower time estimates than other groups. Time estimates for teachers of untested subjects were lower than those for teachers of tested subjects. Estimates for specialist teachers were similar to those for teachers of tested subjects. The following tables report teacher time. For elementary school teachers, where a teacher is likely to be the teacher of a tested subject for all assessments, the tables report the time estimate for the teacher of a tested subject. For secondary school teachers, the tables report a range, with the lower number the time required of a teacher of an untested subject and the higher time for the teacher of a tested subject.

Total Time (In Hours) Spent by Teachers Preparing and Administering State Assessments					
Grade	School Readiness	READ Act	TCAP	CMAS	ACT
Kindergarten	0.0				
1st		63.4			
2nd		63.4			
3rd		63.4	40.9		
4th			40.9	33.6	
5th			40.9	33.6	
6th			23.6 - 40.9		
7th			23.6 - 40.9	14.0 - 33.6	
8th			23.6 - 40.9	14.0 - 33.6	
9th			23.6 - 40.9		
10th			23.6 - 40.9		
11th			23.6 - 40.9		13.4 - 24.6
12th				28.0 - 67.1	

Total Time (In Hours) Spent by Teachers Preparing and Administering Local Assessments					
Grade	School Readiness	Early Literacy	Interim	PWR	Other
Kindergarten		98.9	60.8		7.7
1st		100.9	70.9		8.7
2nd		98.9	72.4		8.9
3rd		94.8	68.9		8.9
4th		88.6	67.0		8.9
5th		88.6	65.8		8.9
6th			28.8 - 67.9		6.6 - 8.9
7th			29.9 - 70.4		6.7 - 8.2
8th			30.4 - 71.6		6 - 8.2
9th			25.1 - 59.2	1.1 - 7.8	6 - 8
10th			24.3 - 57.2	1.2 - 8.4	6 - 8
11th			22.6 - 53.2	1.4 - 10.0	6 - 8
12th			21 - 51	1.1 - 8.1	6 - 8

Costs

Through interviews with district, school, and parent representatives from five districts, APA gathered information about three kinds of costs: 1) capacity costs to reach needed capacity; 2) opportunity costs from diverting resources to assessments; and 3) direct costs of purchasing assessment materials, paying for substitutes or stipends, printing costs for reports, and providing snacks and incentives. Capacity costs varied widely, as districts start from very different places in the base level of technology. The following table illustrates the total direct assessment costs incurred by schools, districts, and the state, with approximately \$36.7 million of cost contributed by CDE. Only accounting for direct costs, and not the additional opportunity costs incurred by redirected staff time or capacity costs to ensure needed technology is in place if not already present, in total \$70-\$90 per student is spent on assessments.

Total <u>Direct</u> Assessment Costs Incurred by Schools, Districts, and the State		
	Costs Based on Average	Costs Based on Weighted Average
State Assessments	\$53,249,941	\$44,944,910
Local Assessments	\$25,128,725	\$16,184,812
Total	\$78,378,666	\$61,129,722

Question 32: Is the assessment system a significant driver the Governor's request for one-time funding (or one-time reduction in the negative factor)?

RESPONSE:

No. As stated in the Governor's FY 2015-16 budget letter, the request includes an additional \$200 million from the State Education Fund intended as a one-time increase for school districts to allocate as their elected boards decide. The requested increase was not related to the assessment system per se but rather about recent discussion around the negative factor and financial needs of school districts overall.

OTHER QUESTIONS

Question 33: Under current law, the continuous appropriation for the Office of Professional Services to support educator licensure efforts will expire at the end of FY 2014-15 and the office will be subject to legislative appropriation again beginning in FY 2015-16. What is the Department's position regarding the expiration (or potential extension) of that continuous appropriation?

RESPONSE:

The department would like to see legislation to extend the continuous appropriation. If the JBC would like to pursue this as a committee bill, the department will be pleased to work with the committee. Below, please find background information on the Office of Professional Services and Educator Licensing and how continuous spending authority has made a significant positive impact on the management of the office, in addition to the continued need for the flexibility afforded by continuous spending authority.

Background

CDE's Office of Professional Services and Educator Licensure is responsible for evaluating applications and issuing educator authorizations, credentials and licenses to qualifying individuals. This process includes performing background checks on all applicants for educator licensure. The office oversees the licensing of approximately 38,000 applications a year with approximately 10% of those cases entering into enforcement for investigation associated with possible revocation, denial, or suspension of a license. The office also oversees educator preparation across the state which includes 24 designated agencies that offer alternative educator preparation programs and, in conjunction with the Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE), approximately 28 institutes of higher education educator preparation programs.

Because of the complexity of the licensing process and high volume of applications in 2011 and prior, the evaluation process commonly required 16 weeks or longer to complete. To alleviate an educator application evaluation timeline that was much too long, in 2011 the legislature passed H.B. 11-1201 concerning measures to facilitate the issuance of educator licenses. One of the provisions of this bill was to permit CDE continuous spending authority for the educator licensure cash fund during the 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 fiscal years.

Use & Impact of Continuous Spending Authority

Continuous spending authority was to be used to offset the direct and indirect costs incurred in issuing educator licenses and, specifically, to assist CDE in reducing the processing time for issuing or renewing an educator license to six weeks or less. The use of continuous spending authority worked.

During the past three years, CDE’s Professional Services and Educator Licensure Office has used its continuous spending authority to quickly hire staff during periods that it has received a particularly high volume of applications and to promptly respond to problems in the online e-licensing system that has played a significant role in reducing cycle times.

To date, the Office has effectively reduced processing times to fewer than six weeks and applications now commonly require just two weeks. Customer service has also improved considerably, with call center wait times averaging two minutes, rather than the 17-21 minutes that they previously averaged. The e-licensing system created a more streamlined application process for the applicant and for the team members evaluating those applications.

Continuous spending authority has allowed flexibility in hiring staff to accommodate workload and priorities. For example, staff has been added and reduced with significant consideration to workload, priorities and stakeholder needs. The chart below indicates that beginning in fiscal year 2011-12 of HB 11-1201, staff was able to be increased to 25 full time equivalents (FTE). This increase in team members resulted in a significant decrease in processing time for licenses. As the system improved and the timelines shortened, staff was able to be trimmed and/or moved to support other services such as the evaluation of license and call center support.

	Total Staff based on Hours
FY2007-08	17.9
FY2008-09	19.9
FY2009-10	22.2
FY2010-11	20.7
FY2011-12	25.0
FY2012-13	24.6
FY2013-14	23.3

Continued Need for Continuous Spending Authority

While significant progress has been made in processing licenses and the call center support is better meeting stakeholder needs, there are three areas of continuous need in the office: online e-licensing system alignment, investigation requirements, and educator preparation.

The online e-licensing system is now operating efficiently, but can be made more user-friendly and refined to better align with other data systems at CDE. The public facing e-licensing database that schools use to inquire about background-check warnings is not fully aligned with the department's legacy database systems. This means that the department's stakeholders must refer to two different databases in order to ensure that they are checking the background information of each applicant they hire. This is a statutory requirement of the office and of public and charter schools, and while the intent of the statute is being met through the public access of two databases, it is cumbersome, time consuming, and potentially confusing for districts and schools to reference two very different databases in order to ensure their educators do not have any background-check warnings.

The second area in which continuous spending authority would support the office is in the investigative work that is conducted by the enforcement unit. Currently there are over 300 outstanding investigations being conducted. Of those cases, over 100 of them are over 6 months old. The investigation process can be time consuming, detailed and difficult. When difficult cases arise, continuous spending authority is used to hire and/or move resources directly to the point of need. The ability to apply additional resources to this area when needed would reduce processing times and could significantly reduce a backlog that has existed, although been decreasing, for years. Additionally, the number of enforcement cases has not and will not decrease. The cases that require attorney general support are becoming increasingly complex. More complex cases require more time and effort on the part of the investigators as well as more time and support from the attorney general's office.

The third area of support is educator preparation. The educator preparation team consists of two people – an infield team member and an administrative support team member. This team oversees over 50 different educator preparation entities. The need to provide additional support and resources to these entities becomes increasingly important to ensuring that all students have highly talented and prepared educators from the very first day that new teachers and leaders enter a classroom.

Considering each of these areas is important to the continued support that CDE has been able to provide to educators across the state. The needs for targeted and flexible support in educator licensing is still high. As in the past, continuous spending authority will allow CDE to fully respond to educator needs capably and without unnecessary delay thereby ensuring that Colorado has talented, safe and morally ethical educators in our classrooms with children.

Question 34: How does Colorado rank nationally in terms of the distribution of federal funds for education? Is there any way to increase the receipt of federal education funds in Colorado?

RESPONSE:

Colorado ranks 28th in the nation for revenue from federal sources for public elementary and secondary education.

The majority of the federal funds for education are formula driven, such as Title I for academically at risk students and IDEA for students receiving special education services. CDE does frequently apply for and receive competitive based federal grants. CDE will continue to look into and optimize all federal funding opportunities that are appropriate.

Ranking	State	Revenue from Federal Sources for Public Elementary - Secondary School Systems 2012	Ranking	State	Revenue from Federal Sources for Public Elementary - Secondary School Systems 2012
	United States	59,532,214	26	Oklahoma	773,014
1	California	8,793,325	27	Minnesota	740,098
2	Texas	6,140,296	28	Colorado	705,634
3	New York	3,769,627	29	Arkansas	666,267
4	Florida	3,068,321	30	Oregon	550,894
5	Illinois	2,430,413	31	Iowa	512,246
6	Pennsylvania	2,145,208	32	Connecticut	509,564
7	Ohio	2,007,733	33	New Mexico	491,732
8	Michigan	1,866,406	34	West Virginia	432,223
9	Georgia	1,862,297	35	Utah	426,702
10	North Carolina	1,831,015	36	Kansas	410,051
11	Louisiana	1,527,734	37	Nevada	403,548
12	New Jersey	1,371,038	38	Nebraska	366,016
13	Virginia	1,365,551	39	Alaska	352,005
14	Tennessee	1,257,953	40	Hawaii	318,728
15	Indiana	1,096,902	41	Idaho	266,087
16	Washington	1,057,045	42	Maine	239,982
17	Arizona	1,050,228	43	Montana	214,164
18	Missouri	994,192	44	South Dakota	212,615
19	Kentucky	983,232	45	Rhode Island	204,682
20	Massachusetts	979,175	46	New Hampshire	187,243
21	Wisconsin	907,311	47	Delaware	183,793
22	Maryland	859,635	48	North Dakota	160,050
23	South Carolina	848,254	49	Wyoming	144,728
24	Mississippi	795,110	50	District of Columbia	137,742
25	Alabama	789,954	51	Vermont	124,451
					* in thousands

(Public Education Finances: 2012 U.S. Census Bureau published May 2014)

Question 35: The JBC Staff is recommending that the JBC run legislation to eliminate most of the “dual line item appropriations” in the Department’s budget. Please discuss the Department’s position regarding that recommendation.

RESPONSE:

The department supports this recommendation. As the JBC Analyst noted during the briefing, the dual appropriations can create confusion about the department’s budget by creating the impression that the department’s budget is larger than it actually is, and the management of staff in individual cash funds does present challenges that would be alleviated, if the dual appropriations were eliminated.

Question 36: The Department's use of private leased space has increased in recent years, and the JBC Staff is recommending consolidating all of the Department's private leased space funding into a single Leased Space line item. Please address the Department's participation in the capitol complex master plan process. Has the Department participated? Please explain.

RESPONSE:

The department supports the JBC Staff recommendation to consolidate all of the department's private leased space funding into a single Leased Space line item. As JBC Staff indicated, the department's use of private sector space has increased due to legislative initiatives and a lack of space in the main facility located within the capitol complex. The department uses the services of the Department of Personnel & Administration's (DPA) Real Estate Programs for all of our private sector space to ensure the most cost effective leases. Further, the department actively participated with DPA's Office of the State Architect in the capitol complex master plan process.

Question 37: During a JBC Staff briefing regarding the Department of Human Services, staff recommended moving Part C Child Find evaluation responsibilities from the Department of Education to the Department of Human Services. What is the Department of Education's position on the staff recommendation?

RESPONSE:

The Department of Human Services is the lead agency for the implementation and compliance of Part C responsibilities of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in the State of Colorado. The Exceptional Student Services Unit of the Colorado Department of Education supports moving the birth through two Child Find responsibilities for screening and evaluation to the Colorado Department of Human Services.

Currently, significant differences exist between IDEA Part C and Part B responsibilities. Differences in timelines, procedures and services are often confusing for parents. Moving the Part C screening and evaluation activities to CDHS should result in a more efficient and streamlined process if families do not have to work with two separate agencies during the initial identification and evaluation process.

To accomplish this change, the current Colorado Revised Statute, C.R.S. 22-20-118, would need to be revised.

ADDENDUM: OTHER QUESTIONS FOR WHICH SOLELY WRITTEN RESPONSES ARE REQUESTED

Questions Common to All Departments

Question 1: Provide a list of any legislation that the Department has: (a) not implemented or (b) partially implemented. Explain why the Department has not implemented or has partially implemented the legislation on this list.

RESPONSE:

The department has identified several education statutes that were intended to be implemented with gifts, grants or donations or other resources that have not ultimately been made available. While CDE has attempted to meet the intent of such statutes, where possible, there are some that have not been fully implemented. Please find a description of these areas below.

Section 22-2-109(7) requires CDE to administer a survey to superintendents who employ principals who (1) have a principal authorization, (2) have an initial principal license, or (3) have obtained a professional principal license without first holding an initial principal license and who are in their first three years of employment as a principal. The law also requires the State Board of Education to submit to the House and Senate Education Committees an annual written summary report of the survey. The legislation is intended to provide an opportunity to assess the quality and effectiveness of principal preparation programs or alternative forms of principal preparation and to solicit feedback from superintendents concerning the principal licensure standards. To CDE staff's knowledge, the survey of superintendents has never been funded or administered. The intent of the legislation is partially met, however, through the department's process for reviewing traditional and alternative educator preparation programs for reauthorization, which process includes gathering feedback from various stakeholders, including, when available, educators who work for and the superintendents who supervise graduates of principal preparation programs. Reports concerning the effectiveness of approved educator preparation programs are presented biennially to the House and Senate Education Committees. Additionally, in implementing the Educator Effectiveness legislation (SB 10-191), CDE will be collecting, monitoring, and publicly reporting information about the performance of all principals on the State Principal Quality Standards.

Section 22-2-108(4) requires the state board to submit an annual report detailing the total amount of federal funds received by the State Board of Education in the prior fiscal year, accounting how the funds were used, specifying the federal law or regulation that governs the

use of the federal funds, if any, and providing information regarding any flexibility the board has in using the federal funds. To CDE staff's knowledge, this report has never been funded or completed. The department's annual budget submission to the JBC does include a schedule that lists out most, if not all, federal funds received and/or distributed by CDE and the purpose of those funds. This report does not provide information about the flexibility the board has in using various federal funding; the gathering and reporting of that information would impose a significant burden.

Section 22-36-106(2)(b) requires that CDE make information available to the public about the enrollment options which are available throughout the public school system in Colorado. CDE is then required to study and evaluate the available enrollment options and, based upon that study, to make a report to the House and Senate Education Committees each January. The department's public portal, SchoolView, provides detailed information about the performance of all public schools in Colorado, and also provides information about the courses and programs offered by each school. A study of enrollment options, however, has never been funded or reported to the House and Senate Education Committees.

Section 22-7-707 (3) requires CDE to annually report on the Teacher Development Grant Program, including the list of grant recipients, summary of the progress made by grant recipients, and information about the effectiveness of the program. CDE has not received funding to administer this grant program and so has no available data to report.

Section 22-27.5-106 (2) requires CDE to provide an annual report on the number and amounts of Dropout Prevention Activity Program grants awarded, a description of the programs that received grants, the number of students participating in each program, and the student dropout rates of the schools at which the programs were operated. CDE has not received funding to administer this grant program for the past 3 years and so has no available data to report.

Section 22-29-104 requires CDE to annually provide a summary of any reports submitted by districts concerning any character education program they have developed. It is optional for districts to submit a report on these programs. CDE has never received a report from any district and so has never had any available information to summarize.

Section 22-58-104 (4) requires the Alternative School Funding Models Pilot Program Advisory Council to annually report on any data collected by participating school districts and charter schools. Since the passage of this law in 2010, no school district or charter school has yet volunteered to participate in the program.

Section 22-69-106 (1) requires CDE to provide a report on the Alternative Teacher

Compensation Grant Program, “so long as grant moneys were awarded to at least one school district pursuant to the grant program during the preceding calendar year.” CDE has not received funding to administer this grant program for the past 2 years and so has no available data to report.

Section 22-93-103 (4) requires CDE to annually report on administration of the School Bullying Prevention and Education Grant Program, including the number of grant recipients, amounts awarded, the number of students receiving services under the grant program and any gifts or donations received to administer the program. CDE has not received funding to administer this grant program and so has no available data to report.

Additionally, there are other grant programs that were created by the legislature in the past but have not been funded recently. These programs do not require CDE to report information to the legislature, but are also not currently being implemented. These include:

- Closing the Achievement Gap Program (sections 22-7-611 to 22-7-613, C.R.S.);
- Summer School Grant Program (sections 22-7-801 to 22-8-807, C.R.S.);
- Principal Development Scholarship Program (sections 22-9.5-101 to 22-9.5-104, C.R.S.);
- Early Childhood Educator Development Scholarship Program (sections 22-9.7-101 to 22-9.7-104);
- Student Re-engagement Grant Program (section 22-14-109);
- Second Chance Program for Problem Students (sections 22-52-101 to 22-52-107, C.R.S.);
- Colorado Information Technology Education Grant Program (sections 22-81.5-101 to 22-81.5-107, C.R.S.); and
- Healthy Choices Dropout Prevention Pilot Program (sections 22-82.3-101 to 22-82.3-110, C.R.S.).

Question 2: What is the turnover rate for staff in the department? Please provide a breakdown by office and/or division, and program.

RESPONSE:

The turnover rate for the Colorado Department of Education for fiscal year 2013-14 was 11 percent.

Division	Total Regular	Terms	Percentage
Communications	5.0	0.0	0.0%
School Finance	48.0	6.0	12.5%
Commissioner	3.0	0.0	0.0%
Achievement & Strategy	188.0	19.0	10.1%
Innovation, Choice & Engagement	89.0	10.0	11.2%
State Board	2.0	0.0	0.0%
Accountability, Performance & Support	136.0	17.0	12.5%
Total:	471.0	52.0	11.0%

Question 3: Please identify the following:

- a. The department's most effective program;***
- b. The department's least effective program (in the context of management and budget);***
- c. Please provide recommendations on what will make this program (2.b.) more effective based on the department's performance measures.***

RESPONSE

3 a. Most effective program

Colorado's District Sample Curriculum Project

The department has many programs that are yielding powerful results (Counselor Corps, the Colorado Preschool Program, the Early Literacy Assessment Tool Project, and more). We have identified the District Sample Curriculum Project as the most effective project to share with the Joint Budget Committee based on the significant involvement of educators across the state in the project and the strong support for the work from districts of all sizes.

In March of 2012, the department hosted a one-day summit on the new Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) that garnered feedback from participants regarding the “next steps” for

successful standards implementation. Participants expressed a strong desire for the state to assist districts in developing sample standards-based curriculum resources. At the same time, the state received a letter from the leadership of CASSA (Colorado Association of School Superintendents and Senior Administrators) requesting the state's assistance in developing sample curriculum that districts could choose to use.

These grass-roots requests supplied the initial foundation and support for CDE to begin working with educators across Colorado to build curriculum designed to help districts successfully implement all ten content areas of the Colorado Academic Standards (CAS). The Colorado District Sample Curriculum Project is an evolving project that is oriented and guided by a fundamental principle; curriculum samples must be created by and for educators.

Phases

The project has several phases. Each phase builds on the work before as the Standards and Instructional Support team responds to input from educators.

Phase I - Curriculum Overview Samples (Fall 2012)

During the 1st phase of the Project, Colorado educators worked together in grade level and content area teams to engage in process of translating Colorado Academic Standards (CAS) into curriculum overview samples. Highlights of the 1st phase:

- 500+ educators participated in curriculum-creation workshops
- 47 of 64 Colorado counties represented
- 70+ of 178 Colorado school districts represented
- 700+ curriculum overviews produced in all content areas (k-12)

Process Guide for translating CAS into curriculum overviews released to help districts replicate workshop processes

Phase II - (Area) Refining Workshops (Spring 2013)

During the 2nd phase of the Project, the Standards and Instructional Support team conducted area workshops across the state to get feedback on the Project, the curriculum overview samples, and the curriculum support tools still needed in the state. Highlights of the 2nd phase:

- Hundreds of educators (in 5 BOCES across the state) participated in two-day workshops to help refine and provide feedback on the 700+ unit overview samples
- Area-workshop participants engaged in process of modifying existing samples and creating new unit overviews for district/school use
- Standards and Instructional Support content specialists finalized and posted website support tools to help educators better understand and use curriculum overview samples

Phase III - Instructional Unit Samples (Fall 2013-Winter 2014)

During the 3rd phase of the Project, the Standards and Instructional Support (SIS) team traveled across Colorado to work with educators to build units based on select curriculum overview samples. In three-day workshops, district-teams of general education, special education, ELL, and gifted and talented educators/specialists worked together to plan for the instruction of all students. Highlights of the 3rd phase:

- 100 + units produced-one unit in each grade k-12 for mathematics, reading, writing, and communicating, science, social studies, comprehensive health, visual arts, drama/theatre, dance, and music
- Each unit includes learning experiences, resource suggestions, differentiation options, and assessment ideas
- 68 districts represented

To date, educators from 121 Colorado school districts have been involved in all three phases of Colorado's District Sample Curriculum Project; authoring and/or refining the curriculum overviews and instructional unit samples. Across the state, thousands of Colorado educators have voluntarily given their time and offered their expertise in service to a project designed to support all teachers in the transition to the new Colorado Academic Standards. Representing the full cross-section and diversity of the state, teachers from districts with less than one hundred students worked alongside teachers from Colorado's largest metropolitan-area districts to produce the curriculum overviews in the first phase of the Project. Then, in the Project's third phase, districts assembled 6-teacher teams comprised of general education, special education, ELL, and gifted and talented educators/specialists to create full instructional units based on the overviews. Again, the response was overwhelming, with rural, urban, mountain, and suburban districts all putting together curriculum-writing teams.

Phase IV – Continued Build out of the Unit Samples & Integration of Performance Assessments and Student Learning Objectives (Spring 2014 – December 2016)

To meet demand, continued work will occur with districts to build out more sample units. This fall and next spring, for example, the standards team is working with teachers across the state to build personal financial literacy and physical education units in grade K-12. In addition, educators have asked for support with integrating high-quality assessments aligned to the units. They have also asked for ways to develop student learning objectives based on the sample units that could be used for the growth portion of their educator evaluation. The team will be working with districts to accomplish this work and provide samples that other districts can use.

Participant Feedback

As we progress through the phases of the Project, we are also collecting feedback from the curriculum authors and educators across the state. Here's a sample of what people are saying...

About the Project and the Colorado Academic Standards...

- *My perceptions of the standards are completely different after the curriculum project.*
- *Through my participation in the workshops for Colorado's District Sample Curriculum Project I gained a much deeper level of familiarity with both my grade level standards and the larger conceptual themes that run through the standards.*
- *The standards promote good teaching. I'm excited to have more in depth in my curriculum.*

About the Project and standards implementation...

- *This work helped me to see how the standards could be interwoven to strengthen the developed units so that the units become tighter and more cohesive instead of just a batch of standards thrown together with some similarities. Making these connections for teachers and students is very important. This work reinforced the idea that standards are not just a list of concepts or skills to be checked off as they are taught.*
- *I think many of my colleagues see the new standards in groups that work independent of each other rather than overlapping and interconnected standards. This was helpful to show others how the standards can be linked together in an instructional unit.*

About the Project and working with fellow Colorado educators...

- *I got to work with wonderful colleagues, people who love teaching like I do. Being a teacher is lonely sometimes, especially at a small school, and I was put with these two ladies who are, like, curriculum geniuses. It was one of the most intellectually challenging and engaging experiences I have had since the beginning of my career.*
- *I am so thankful for this opportunity. It was so nice to connect with other teachers to create meaningful work and to feel that teachers' voices do matter.*

3 b. Least effective program (in the context of management and budget)

From a student outcomes perspective, the state continues to be challenged by large and persistent achievement gaps and low performance of students with disabilities. While this question refers to management and budget, the department felt it was important to highlight these two areas as significant priorities for statewide focus and effort. CDE's four strategic

goals are aimed at addressing these disparities over time for students at all levels of the preK-12 system.

In the context of management and budget, the department has selected the investigation function of educator licensure. While the department has made significant progress in reducing the cycle time for the processing of initial licenses and renewals (less than 21 days), there remains a substantial backlog of cases requiring investigation. Of the 39,000 applications received annually, approximately 10% of them require investigation for an event that may disqualify the applicant from a license. These investigations range in levels of severity, intensity, and complexity. A case that may seem straightforward (e.g., conviction for a DUI) may be far more complex (e.g., if that conviction involved harm to a minor).

The department has three individuals who are responsible for conducting the investigations. Currently there are over 300 outstanding investigations being conducted. Of those cases, over 100 of them are over 6 months old. An applicant is referred to investigations if he/she self-discloses a potentially disqualifying event on his/her application, if he/she does not clear the background check, and/or for other flags in the system (e.g., reporting by an employer). Much of the wait time is for legal proceedings to move to completion, documentation to be provided by the applicant (a good deal of time can be lost in waiting for paperwork to be sent and/or responses from the applicant), and information to be sent from other states or agencies. The department's investigators work closely with the Attorney General's Office, seeking advice and turning cases over that require litigation.

3 c. Please provide recommendations on what will make this program (2.b.) more effective based on the department's performance measures.

Now that the cycle time for initial applicants and renewals of licenses has been reduced and processes have been improved through the use of Lean principles, the department is focusing on ways to streamline the investigation process. The executive director of the licensure office has conducted a process flow analysis of the investigation process, looking for areas of potential waste and/or backlogs. The main challenges identified through this process were the number of staff to address the volume of cases and the time lost waiting for information. With regard to the volume/staff challenge, the department has found that the availability of continuous spending authority has been critical in enabling the department to add temporary staff when needed to meet the changing volume of the regular licensure process. The department is examining ways of using temporary staff (which would be contingent on the department maintaining continuous spending authority) and/or cross-training current staff to assist with the less complex components of the investigation process (e.g., tracking down paperwork, making follow up calls to applicants, etc.). The department is also working with the Attorney General's Office to review the backlog and identify cases that the Attorney

General's Office can take given their likelihood of requiring litigation. In addition, the department is exploring instituting processes where an applicant's case would be closed if, upon a specified number of documented attempts to reach the applicant, the applicant fails to respond and/or fails provide requested information in his/her possession.

Question 4: How much capital outlay was expended using either operating funds or capital funds in FY 2013-14? Please break it down between the amount expended from operation and the amount expended from capital.

RESPONSE

The department expended a total of \$529,356 for capital outlay. It was all from operating funds, as the department has no lines in its Long Bill for capital expenditures. In general, the expenditures fell into the following three categories:

Description	Amount
Information Technology Equipment	\$208,758
Software Purchases	\$225,240
Misc. Library Purchases—primarily books	\$95,358
Total:	\$529,356

Question 5: Does Department have any outstanding high priority recommendations as identified in the “Annual Report of Audit Recommendations Not Fully Implemented” that was published by the State Auditor’s Office on June 30, 2014? What is the department doing to resolve the outstanding high priority recommendations?

RESPONSE

No, the department does not have any outstanding high priority recommendations in the “Annual Report of Audit Recommendations not Fully Implemented.”

APPENDIX I

**COLORADO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
2015 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES**

Colorado State Board of Education

2015 Legislative Priorities



2015 Legislative Priorities

1. School Finance

Support development of a comprehensive, equitable, and predictable approach to financing Colorado's public schools.

- a. Create a system of funding that allocates resources to schools in a manner that more accurately reflects where students are enrolled over the course of the school year, instead of the current system of a single count date.
- b. Prioritize school finance resources to:
 1. Ensure that all students have access to resources to meet Colorado Academic Standards.
 2. Support schools and districts in their efforts to improve outcomes for students with persistently low performance.
 3. Support both in-school classroom learning and blended, distance, and online learning options.
 4. Promote administrative efficiencies among all districts.
- c. Reward teachers and schools whose students out-perform in growth and reduce achievement gaps.
- d. Oppose state policies which create unfunded mandates on schools, districts, and the Department of Education.
- e. Recognizing that the Permanent Fund was established with a goal of providing for Colorado students, now and in the future, work to enhance and improve the fund and to oppose any legislation that will further deplete it.

2. Great Teachers and Leaders

Support policies which ensure all Colorado students have great teachers and leaders.

- a. Support policies which help schools and districts identify, attract and recruit promising individuals to the education profession.
- b. Support policies which identify, recognize, and reward highly effective educators.
- c. Create an aligned system of educator licensure, induction, professional development, and evaluation.
- d. Support policies to hold educator preparation programs accountable for the effectiveness of their graduates.
- e. Leverage quality education beyond the classroom through online options and partnerships.

3. Statewide System of Accountability and Support

- a. Provide targeted support and authority to enable a range of pathways to turn around the state's lowest performing schools and districts.
- b. Identify and reward schools and districts that are successfully decreasing achievement gaps and provide targeted interventions to those struggling with persistent and large gaps.
- c. Promote and support policies that positively impact the closing of student achievement gaps in Colorado.

COLORADO STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

4. Standards and Assessments

- a. Support policies which focus on student mastery of the Colorado Academic Standards through multiple pathways that move beyond seat time and Carnegie units.
- b. Fully fund the development and implementation of a comprehensive system of statewide assessments including funding for technology needed to administer tests.
- c. Support assessment policies that reduce the scope of statewide assessments; provide relevant and timely data to educators and a meaningful experience for students; value student performance growth over time and use valid measures; have a limited impact on instructional time; and consider sampling where assessment purposes pertain to state interests.
- d. Support assessment policies that include local choices from an approved menu of options with a focus on performance tasks and allow for cross-district collaboration on scoring, validity, comparability. Any local choices should align closely with Colorado's graduation guidelines and provide transparency.

5. Increased Flexibility

- a. Provide regulatory relief to districts and schools by maintaining existing flexibility while supporting legislation which eliminates redundant or obsolete requirements and provides more flexibility to schools and school districts and the Colorado Department of Education to deliver high quality education services.
- b. Provide flexibility in the way small school districts of fewer than 1,000 students meet reporting requirements and implementation requirements in order to minimize the burden on small district school staff.

6. Innovation and Choice

Support policies which:

- a. Assure that every student has educational choices to best meet his/her individual learning needs.
- b. Increase opportunities for Colorado students to experience effective blended learning models and expanded learning opportunities.
- c. Allow for the restructuring of the school day and/or school year to close achievement gaps and maximize learning time for all students.

7. Early Childhood Education

Support state policies that increase opportunities for children to participate in programs which will increase their ability to be ready to learn in Kindergarten.

8. Data Collection and Access

- a. Continue and increase support for the refinement and enhancement of SchoolView to enable parental access to school and district performance data.
- b. Enhance safe schools through an amendment to Safe School Reporting requirements under 22-32-109.1(2)(b), C.R.S. to include reporting of instances of marijuana use resulting in conduct and discipline code violations.
- c. Increase support for enhanced measures of data privacy and security for both school districts and the department of education so that system-wide data security and privacy practices are strengthened. Support policies which enhance educator and student data security and privacy while ensuring transparency.



9. State Board Authority

Support the Colorado State Board of Education's constitutional responsibility for the general supervision of the public schools through collaboration with the legislative and executive branches and with non-profit organizations and the private sector. In furtherance of its constitutional responsibility, support the authority of the state board through recognition of its rulemaking authority rather than through prescriptive statute.

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
FY 2015-16 JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING AGENDA**

**Thursday, December 18, 2014
1:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

1:30-1:50 INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING COMMENTS

1:50-2:10 QUESTIONS COMMON TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

1. Do you have infrastructure needs (roads, real property, information technology) beyond the current infrastructure request? If so, how do these needs fit in with the Department's overall infrastructure priorities that have been submitted to the Capital Development Committee or Joint Technology Committee? If infrastructure should be a higher priority for the Department, how should the Department's list of overall priorities be adjusted to account for it?

CSDB addresses infrastructure needs through controlled maintenance and capital construction requests. We have submitted a five-year plan to the State Architects Office for controlled maintenance and have a current request with the Capital Development Committee.

4:30-5:00 COLORADO SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

[Background Information: With R5, the Department is requesting an increase of \$1.1 million General Fund and 11.5 FTE in FY 2015-16 (annualizing to \$1.2 million and 12.6 FTE in subsequent years) to enhance school services in accordance with the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind's (CSDB) strategic plan. The request includes three major components: (1) \$304,489 and 5.9 FTE (annualizing to \$439,438 and 6.0 FTE) to extend the CSDB school year by 10 days (this component does not include new staff but reflects increased work time for the existing staff); (2) \$501,846 and 5.6 FTE (annualizing to \$521,269 and 6.2 FTE) to add *additional* CSDB staff; and (3) \$275,844 (annualizing to \$245,124) to support increased operating expenses, including technology updates and general operating expenses increases.]

2. Please describe the anticipated impact of extending the CSDB school year by 10 student contact days. What results can the State expect? Please explain.

Many students who attend CSDB are performing academically significantly below many of their peers who are hearing and sighted. Historically, the average attendance rate for students, during the regular school year, is 95%. Data has consistently shown that students regress over long extended breaks. Beginning in the 2011-2012 school year, CSDB modified the school calendar to reduce the summer break to approximately 8 weeks. Since implementing this, we have seen

a decline in summer learning loss in approximately 10% of our student population. With the addition of 10 student contact days, CSDB could reduce the extended break even more, which we believe will decrease the impact of summer learning loss.

The student population at CSDB is very diverse. All of our students have been identified with at least one disability. In addition, 27% of the students we serve have an identified additional disability and 12% come from homes where a primary language other than English is used. These factors, on top of the student's hearing or vision disability, contribute to students having academic, communication, and social delays. Increasing the number of contact days would provide additional time for these students in an environment that is accessible to them. Students who are Deaf/hard of hearing would have more time in an American Sign Language environment to promote continued language development, and students who are blind/low vision would have additional time to further develop their academic and literacy skills, as well as their skills in the Expanded Core Curriculum skills.

3. Please explain how the proposed 10 day extension will occur. Will you extend the school year farther into June? Will the hourly equivalent of 10 days be distributed throughout the summer?

CSDB will extend the school year by adding 10 additional days in June.

4. The request seeks additional funding for the "outreach program." Why is this called an "outreach program" when it appears to provide services throughout the State rather than marketing?

Outreach is a term that has been used for more than twenty years to refer to services that are provided to students, who are being educated in settings other than on the CSDB campus, and their parents and staff. The term denotes "reaching out" beyond the boundaries of the physical campus to support students and other stakeholders throughout the state.

5. The JBC Staff recommended using the school's existing outreach service fee structure (in which school districts pay fees to the CSDB for the provision of services) to offset some of the General Fund impact of the request for additional outreach services staff. Please discuss the viability of using fee revenue to reduce the General Fund impact and whether the CSDB/Department would support staff's suggestion.

Only two of the FTE requested, the teacher of the deaf and the teacher of the visually impaired, provide revenue-generating services that cover some of the hours needed in the job roles. The roles of these two positions include many duties such as developing and coordinating summer programs for families and for students, as well as developing and providing professional development trainings that do not generate significant revenue. The general nature of the contract services provided to districts and BOCES is temporary in nature (maternity leave, interim periods when a school district or BOCES staff member leaves employment and another staff member is hired, etc.). These services must be provided in order that the educational and related services identified within the students' Individual Education Program (IEP) may be met.

The costs for these services are estimated, based upon the projected needs of the district or BOCES. If the costs rise significantly above the projected costs, a contract revision is developed with the school district or BOCES. Staff must also be paid to attend mandated and recommended professional development training, in order to maintain a "high quality" of skill. These hours of staff time are not revenue-generating. All revenue generated is used to cover the costs of requested services and meet the goals established in the CSDB Strategic Plan.

(The following question requires only a written response.)

6. The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind is requesting an increase of \$225,778 General Fund in FY 2015-16 to support increased information technology costs and implement an information technology "lifecycle." Please explain how instructional goals are enhanced by the use of this type of computer equipment and tie those goals to the specific changes in funding in the request where possible.

Technology has the ability to level the playing field and improve the access to information for students who are Deaf/hard of hearing and/or blind/low vision. The overall goal of the Academic portion of the CSDB Strategic Plan is that "Students will demonstrate the core content knowledge and 21st century skills required to be college and/or career ready." CSDB is currently in the process of transitioning

from traditional text book curriculum to electronic curriculum. As we transition, our goal is to move to a 1-1 device environment for students using electronic curriculum and books. In the grade levels in which we have moved to electronic curriculum, there has been a positive impact for students. Digital curriculum provides a lot of visual support that is very beneficial to students who are Deaf/hard of hearing. The curriculum is visual and interactive and helps support language development for students. The curriculum also includes a lot of auditory support which is highly beneficial for students who are blind/low vision. In addition, assistive technology devices, such as a Braille Port, can be paired with electronic curriculum for students who are blind/low vision.

In addition to transitioning to electronic curriculum, the new Colorado summative assessments are computer-based assessments. In order to ensure that our students can be successful in taking a computer-based assessment, they need to develop the skills to utilize technology effectively.

To achieve our goals of implementing electronic curriculum, providing appropriate assistive technology, and preparing our students for computer-based assessments, we need funding to support not only the purchase of the initial equipment but also funding to continue to support infrastructure needs and replace equipment as it reaches the end of the usable life cycle. All of the funding, in some way, is directly tied to our goals of improved outcomes for students to include getting devices into the hands of students, staff equipment to be used in the classroom, and the network support required to tie this all together (to include wireless network, servers, and internet filters required to keep students safe and secure in an online environment). All of the items in the request work in conjunction with each other and have diminished or limited impact in isolation.

ADDENDUM: OTHER QUESTIONS FOR WHICH SOLELY WRITTEN RESPONSES ARE REQUESTED

1. How much capital outlay was expended using either operating funds or capital funds in FY 2013-14? Please break it down between the amount expended from operating and the amount expended from capital.
\$5,460 – Operating
\$185,914 – Controlled Maintenance

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
FY 2015-16 JOINT BUDGET COMMITTEE HEARING AGENDA**

**Thursday, December 18, 2014
1:30 pm – 5:00 pm**

1:30-1:50 INTRODUCTIONS AND OPENING COMMENTS

1:50-2:10 QUESTIONS COMMON TO ALL DEPARTMENTS

(The following questions require both a written and verbal response.)

1. SMART Government Act:
 - a. Please describe how the SMART Government Act is being integrated into the Department's existing processes (both in terms of service delivery and evaluating performance).
 - b. How is the data that is gathered for the performance management system used?
 - c. Please describe the value of the act in the Department.

2. Do you have infrastructure needs (roads, real property, information technology) beyond the current infrastructure request? If so, how do these needs fit in with the Department's overall infrastructure priorities that have been submitted to the Capital Development Committee or Joint Technology Committee? If infrastructure should be a higher priority for the Department, how should the Department's list of overall priorities be adjusted to account for it?

3. Describe the Department's experience with the implementation of the new CORE accounting system.
 - a. Was the training adequate?
 - b. Has the transition gone smoothly?
 - c. How has the implementation of CORE affected staff workload during the transition?
 - d. Do you anticipate that CORE will increase the staff workload on an ongoing basis? If so, describe the nature of the workload increase and indicate whether the Department is requesting additional funding for FY 2015-16 to address it.

2:10-3:00 PUBLIC SCHOOL FINANCE AND THE STATE EDUCATION FUND

FY 2015-16 Request for School Finance

[Background Information: The Governor's request for school finance includes a net increase of \$381.1 million total funds (including increases of \$239.9 million General Fund and \$145.3 million cash funds from the State Education Fund and a decrease of \$4.1 million cash funds from

the State Public School fund). The request includes an increase of \$380.6 million total funds for the State Share of Districts' Total Program line item and \$513,859 cash funds from the State Education Fund for the Hold-harmless Full-day Kindergarten Funding line item. The request would reduce the negative factor by \$200.0 million on a one-time basis from (\$894.2 million in FY 2014-15 to \$694.2 million in FY 2015-16) but does not specify an intended level for the negative factor beyond FY 2015-16. In addition, 174 school district superintendents have submitted a statement seeking an additional \$70.0 million in one-time funding for school districts.]

4. Please discuss the out-year impacts of providing the proposed increase in FY 2015-16. Does the State Board of Education's opinion vary from the Governor's request for school finance?
5. Please discuss how one-time moneys would benefit school districts. How would districts use the funds?
6. Please explain the advantages or disadvantages of providing funding through the school finance formula to reduce the negative factor when the negative factor would immediately go back up the following year. Is there a better way to do this than through the formula?
7. Under current law, the "minimum state aid" provision of the School Finance Act will be reinstated in FY 2014-15. Based on the JBC Staff estimates, that reinstatement would require the distribution of \$363,079 to a total of six school districts, five of which would not otherwise receive state funding for school finance in FY 2015-16. Please explain why those five districts would be able to fully fund total program in FY 2015-16 with local revenues.

Status of the State Education Fund

[Background Information: The JBC Staff briefing document discusses the status of the State Education Fund in FY 2015-16 and subsequent years and the impact of providing ongoing funding for a variety of programs from the State Education Fund. The ongoing and increasing use of State Education fund moneys to support programs outside of school finance and categorical programs will increase pressure on the General Fund to support school finance going forward.]

8. In FY 2014-15, the General Assembly provided \$3.0 million in one-time funding to support the development of a financial transparency system for education. Please provide an update on the status of that system.
9. In FY 2014-15, the General Assembly increased funding provided to boards of cooperative educational services (BOCES) to implement state education priorities by \$2.0 million cash funds from the State Education Fund. Please provide an update on how the Department is distributing those funds and how the BOCES are using those funds.
10. The General Assembly has provided \$3.0 million per year (from the State Education Fund) for the Quality Teacher Recruitment Program. How is that program working? What is the State getting for that money? Please provide an update.

11. In FY 2014-15, the General Assembly provided an additional \$27.5 million from the State Education Fund for programs serving English language learners. Please discuss the ongoing need for those funds. What is driving the need?

Availability of Local Revenues and Mill Levy Overrides

12. How much transparency does the Department have into the availability and use of local revenues by school districts? Does the Department track how school districts use local revenues? Please explain.
13. Please discuss the school districts' use of mill levy overrides. How many are using overrides and how much money are those overrides raising? How do overrides affect districts' per pupil operating revenues? Please provide illustrative examples of the impact of overrides on operating revenues for districts that do and do not have access to significant override revenues. Please discuss potential concerns about equity between school districts that do and do not have override funds.
14. Please discuss the impact of local mill levy reductions for total program funding. If a mill levy that was previously approved by voters is decreased, can it be increased again without a vote?

3:00-3:15 BREAK

3:15-4:00 FY 2015-16 DECISION ITEMS

R3 Field Implementation and Support

[Background Information: The Department's FY 2015-16 request includes an increase of \$1.3 million General Fund and 7.3 FTE in FY 2015-16 (annualizing to \$1.8 million General Fund and 10.5 FTE in FY 2016-17) to continue the Department's support of field implementation of S.B. 10-191 (Educator Effectiveness) and the Colorado Academic Standards adopted pursuant to S.B. 08-212 (CAP4K).]

15. Please discuss local school districts' use of the Department's technical assistance, tools, and systems for the implementation of educator effectiveness and the Colorado Academic Standards. How many districts are utilizing the services? If the services and systems were scaled back, how would the Department recommend prioritizing services to continue to help where needed (e.g., prioritizing rural districts)?
16. How many new FTE has the Department added to provide technical support over the past six years and for what programs? Are those staff operating in "silos" and could/should they be cross trained to provide multiple services rather than having so many technical assistance staff working with the same districts? Please explain.

17. Please address the fiscal note process for S.B. 10-191 (Educator Effectiveness). Why should the General Assembly approve the request for additional funding for a program that is so far in excess of the costs anticipated in the fiscal note?
18. Please discuss other states' progress with educator evaluation systems. How are other states' handling the issue? How does Colorado's system compare?
19. Please discuss the impact and status of school districts' implementation of student learning objectives.
20. Please discuss school districts' capacity to fully implement the educator effectiveness system in FY 2015-16, including both the observation and growth components of the evaluation system.
21. The Department is requesting \$246,686 General Fund and 2.0 FTE to support two content specialist positions that have been funded as "employees on loan" from the Colorado Education Initiative. Please discuss how this request complies with Section 24-75-1305, C.R.S., which prohibits agencies from requesting funds to backfill private gifts, grants, and donations.
22. Please provide background on the Colorado Education Initiative (CEI). What is the origin of CEI? How is the CEI licensed in Colorado (non-profit, public, private, etc.)?
23. What value are the external employees (the employees on loan) providing to school districts? Which districts are they helping and how?
24. Should non-state employees, funded and employed by an external entity, have been leading the Department's standards implementation work and supervising state employees? If the positions were necessary in FY 2012-13, why did the Department not request approval for the positions from the General Assembly?

R4 State Review Panel Online Portal

[Background Information: The Department's request includes an increase of \$77,375 General Fund to enhance and maintain an online system to streamline the State Review Panel's reviews of schools and school districts for the statewide accountability system.]

25. What is the role of the Governor's Office of Information Technology in formulating this request? Is the Internet Portal Authority involved in the request? Please explain.

R7 Building Excellent Schools Today Statewide Priority Assessment

[Background Information: The Department's request includes an increase of \$3.5 million cash funds from the Public School Capital Construction Assistance Fund and 6.0 FTE to reconfigure the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) priority assessment database and provide additional assistance to schools and school districts applying for funding from the BEST program. The request includes \$2.7 million in one-time funding to reconfigure the database and \$792,914 and 6.0 FTE to support a team of assessors to provide additional assistance to school districts and

maintain the priority assessment database going forward.]

26. Please put the \$2.7 million requested to reconfigure the database in context with the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) overall budget. How does the cost to reconfigure the database compare to the assistance the program will provide? How much value will the database provide if the State is reaching the cap on certificate of participation (COP) payments for BEST?
27. Please explain the level of detail of the information stored in the program's database. For example, will the database provide information to first responders in an emergency (e.g., does it include building blue prints)? Is the information in the database subject to Colorado Open Records Act (CORA) requests, and does the information in the database create a vulnerability? Will the updated database just contain information on the capital maintenance status of all of the schools?
28. Has the Office of Information Technology reviewed the request to reconfigure the database? Who would do the reconfiguration? What is the origin of the \$2.7 million estimate? Please explain.

4:00-4:20 STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

[Background Information: The JBC Staff briefing document includes a menu of potential options to modify the existing statewide system of standardized assessments.]

29. Please discuss the impact of scaling assessments back to the federal (minimum) requirements on: (1) the calculation of student growth, particularly in high school; and (2) the statewide accountability system.
30. Some Colorado schools offer dual enrollment where high school students are taking college courses on a full-time basis and yet those students are still required to take the statewide standardized assessments. Why is the State continuing to assess those students, when they have already completed their high school requirements and been admitted to college courses? Could eliminating those assessments generate savings? Please explain.
31. Does the Department track the time and money spent on local (school district mandated) assessments? How much instructional time and money are spent on such assessments, relative to the statewide system?
32. Is the assessment system a significant driver of the Governor's request for one-time funding (or one-time reduction in the negative factor)?

4:20-4:30 OTHER QUESTIONS

33. Under current law, the continuous appropriation for the Office of Professional Services to support educator licensure efforts will expire at the end of FY 2014-15 and the office will be

subject to legislative appropriation again beginning in FY 2015-16. What is the Department's position regarding the expiration (or potential extension) of that continuous appropriation?

34. How does Colorado rank nationally in terms of the distribution of federal funds for education? Is there any way to increase the receipt of federal education funds in Colorado?
35. The JBC Staff is recommending that the JBC run legislation to eliminate most of the "dual line item appropriations" in the Department's budget. Please discuss the Department's position regarding that recommendation.
36. The Department's use of private leased space has increased in recent years, and the JBC Staff is recommending consolidating all of the Department's private leased space funding into a single Leased Space line item. Please address the Department's participation in the capitol complex master plan process. Has the Department participated? Please explain.
37. During a JBC Staff briefing regarding the Department of Human Services, staff recommended moving Part C Child Find evaluation responsibilities from the Department of Education to the Department of Human Services. What is the Department of Education's position on the staff recommendation?

4:30-5:00 COLORADO SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND THE BLIND

[Background Information: With R5, the Department is requesting an increase of \$1.1 million General Fund and 11.5 FTE in FY 2015-16 (annualizing to \$1.2 million and 12.6 FTE in subsequent years) to enhance school services in accordance with the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind's (CSDB) strategic plan. The request includes three major components: (1) \$304,489 and 5.9 FTE (annualizing to \$439,438 and 6.0 FTE) to extend the CSDB school year by 10 days (this component does not include new staff but reflects increased work time for the existing staff); (2) \$501,846 and 5.6 FTE (annualizing to \$521,269 and 6.2 FTE) to add *additional* CSDB staff; and (3) \$275,844 (annualizing to \$245,124) to support increased operating expenses, including technology updates and general operating expenses increases.]

38. Please describe the anticipated impact of extending the CSDB school year by 10 student contact days. What results can the State expect? Please explain.
39. Please explain how the proposed 10 day extension will occur. Will you extend the school year farther into June? Will the hourly equivalent of 10 days be distributed throughout the summer?
40. The request seeks additional funding for the "outreach program." Why is this called an "outreach program" when it appears to provide services throughout the State rather than marketing?

41. The JBC Staff recommended using the school's existing outreach service fee structure (in which school districts pay fees to the CSDB for the provision of services) to offset some of the General Fund impact of the request for additional outreach services staff. Please discuss the viability of using fee revenue to reduce the General Fund impact and whether the CSDB/Department would support staff's suggestion.

(The following question requires only a written response.)

42. The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind is requesting an increase of \$225,778 General Fund in FY 2015-16 to support increased information technology costs and implement an information technology "lifecycle." Please explain how instructional goals are enhanced by the use of this type of computer equipment and tie those goals to the specific changes in funding in the request where possible.

ADDENDUM: OTHER QUESTIONS FOR WHICH SOLELY WRITTEN RESPONSES ARE REQUESTED

1. Provide a list of any legislation that the Department has: (a) not implemented or (b) partially implemented. Explain why the Department has not implement or has partially implemented the legislation on this list.
2. What is the turnover rate for staff in the department? Please provide a breakdown by office and/or division, and program.
3. Please identify the following:
 - a. The department's most effective program;
 - b. The department's least effective program (in the context of management and budget);
 - c. Please provide recommendations on what will make this program (2.b.) more effective based on the department's performance measures.
4. How much capital outlay was expended using either operating funds or capital funds in FY 2013-14? Please break it down between the amount expended from operating and the amount expended from capital.
5. Does the Department have any outstanding high priority recommendations as identified in the "Annual Report of Audit Recommendations Not Fully Implemented" that was published by the State Auditor's Office on June 30, 2014? What is the department doing to resolve the outstanding high priority recommendations?
[http://www.leg.state.co.us/OSA/coauditor1.nsf/All/1FE335CE3162803F87257D7E00550568/\\$FILE/1422S%20-%20ANNUAL%20REPORT%20OF%20AUDIT%20RECOMMENDATIONS%20NOT%20FULLY%20IMPLEMENTED%20AS%20OF%20JUNE%2030,%202014.pdf](http://www.leg.state.co.us/OSA/coauditor1.nsf/All/1FE335CE3162803F87257D7E00550568/$FILE/1422S%20-%20ANNUAL%20REPORT%20OF%20AUDIT%20RECOMMENDATIONS%20NOT%20FULLY%20IMPLEMENTED%20AS%20OF%20JUNE%2030,%202014.pdf)