

Joint Budget Committee Staff FY 2025-26 Budget Briefing Summary

Education (Administration, Select Programs)

The Department of Education supports the State Board of Education in its duty to exercise general supervision over public schools, including accrediting public schools and school districts. The Department distributes state and federal funds to school districts, and it administers a variety of education-related programs. The Department develops and maintains state model content standards, and administers associated assessments. The Department also includes three independent agencies: (1) the Board of Trustees for the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind; (2) the State Charter School Institute Board, which is responsible for authorizing and monitoring institute charter schools; and (3) the Public School Capital Construction Assistance Board, which is responsible for assessing public school capital construction needs statewide and making recommendations concerning the prioritization of state financial assistance for school construction projects.

The Department’s FY 2024-25 appropriation represents approximately 17.9 percent of statewide operating appropriations and 29.1 percent of statewide General Fund appropriations. Most of this funding is distributed on a formula basis for school finance and categorical programs. The sections addressed in this summary are the Department’s *other* divisions and sections: department administration, the statewide assessment program, nutrition programs, public school capital construction, educator talent (including teacher licensure programs), student learning (including early literacy and facility school programs), school quality and support (including school accountability and transformation programs), student pathways (including health and wellness, dropout prevention, and career readiness programs), the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, state library programs, and the Charter School Institute.

Summary of Request

Department of Education						
Item	Total Funds	General Fund ¹	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
FY 2024-25 Appropriation						
FY 2024-25 Long Bill	\$7,440,463,982	\$4,701,504,172	\$1,764,077,511	\$104,652,889	\$870,229,410	732.8
SB 24-188 School Finance	48,593,794	0	48,593,794	0	0	1.0
SB 24-233 Property tax	378,861,731	0	378,861,731	0	0	0.0
Other legislation	-62,690,951	-174,126,551	160,656,296	-49,220,696	0	8.3
Total	\$7,805,228,556	\$4,527,377,621	\$2,352,189,332	\$55,432,193	\$870,229,410	742.1

Department of Education

Item	Total Funds	General Fund ¹	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
FY 2025-26 Requested Appropriation						
FY 2024-25 Appropriation	\$7,805,228,556	\$4,527,377,621	\$2,352,189,332	\$55,432,193	\$870,229,410	742.1
R1 State share of total program	-264,012,260	115,000,000	-379,012,260	0	0	0.0
R2 Categorical program increase	13,536,016	0	13,536,016	0	0	0.0
R3 CSI Mill levy equalization	1,738,755	0	1,738,755	0	0	0.0
R4 Supporting instructional coherence	150,000	0	150,000	0	0	0.0
R5 Student engagement	354,261	354,261	0	0	0	2.0
R6 READ Act training support	3,361,590	0	3,361,590	0	0	2.0
R7 CO Talking Book Library security	72,333	72,333	0	0	0	0.0
R8 National Student Clearinghouse	67,870	67,870	0	0	0	0.0
R9 Statewide Student Information System	200,000	200,000	0	0	0	0.0
R10 CSDB inflationary increase	377,809	377,809	0	0	0	2.3
R11 Career training and basic skills reduction	-550,000	-500,000	-50,000	0	0	0.0
R12 Inactive cash funds sweep	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
NP3 Retain MTCF refinance	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Other non-prioritized requests	-851,494	-247,972	6,478	-610,000	0	0.0
Centrally appropriated line items	2,643,100	809,728	614,873	309,650	908,849	0.0
Annualize prior year legislation	-3,567,610	-1,062,669	-2,504,941	0	0	0.8
Annualize prior year budget actions	-658,002	-658,002	0	0	0	0.2
Technical adjustments	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Total	\$7,558,090,924	\$4,641,790,979	\$1,990,029,843	\$55,131,843	\$871,138,259	749.4
Increase/-Decrease	-\$247,137,632	\$114,413,358	-\$362,159,489	-\$300,350	\$908,849	7.3
Percentage Change	-3.2%	2.5%	-15.4%	-0.5%	0.1%	0.0

¹Includes General Fund Exempt

R1 State share of total program: Most of the request for this item will be addressed in the School Finance briefing packet. However, the request includes a component that is relevant to public school capital construction assistance funding. Request R1 includes a proposal to cap BEST cash grants at \$129 million (the average of grants for the past five years) and direct any revenue greater than that to the State Public School Fund for school finance. The request estimates that this will provide \$58 million to the State Public School Fund for school finance in FY 2025-26.

R3 CSI Mill levy equalization: The request includes an increase of \$1,738,755 cash funds from the State Education Fund increase for mill levy equalization for Charter School Institute (CSI) charter schools. This brings support for equalization to \$50,959,451, including \$27,220,696 from the General Fund and \$23,738,755 from the State Education Fund. Statute requires that “beginning in the 2024-25 budget year and each budget year thereafter, the general assembly shall appropriate from the general fund the amount necessary each budget year to fund full mill levy equalization for all institute charter schools for the applicable budget year.” This is intended to ensure that students enrolled at CSI schools receive per pupil funding equal to the district per pupil funding in each district where a CSI school is located.

The cost of “full equalization” is not a fixed number and will continue to evolve over the course of the year. Early figures suggest that there will be a significant increase for both FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26, but specific figures are pending a January 2025 submission.

R4 Supporting instructional coherence [legislation required if adopt proposed funding mechanism]: The request includes an increase of \$150,000 cash funds for FY 2025-26, annualizing to \$100,000 in FY 2026-27 and ongoing, appropriated to the School Transformation Grant Program. The increase includes two components. First, it would enable the Department to contract with an external partner (EdReports) to develop an optional list of high quality instructional materials for English Language Arts in grades 4-12, filling out its existing lists of high quality instructional materials and ensuring better access to a list of materials across grades K-12 in both English language arts and math. Second, it would support 3-6 districts a year to join a cohort to engage in professional learning on instructional coherence, with an emphasis on high quality learning materials.

The request highlights evidence about the benefits of “instructional coherence”, in which the content of materials taught across different subject areas is related. This includes, for example, providing social studies instruction on the Great Depression while students are reading the Grapes of Wrath in their literature course and receiving related vocabulary support in their English Language Development course.

The request also highlights the needs of the 18 districts and 164 schools that have received a “turnaround” or “priority improvement” ranking for 2023 and the additional 47 districts and 390 schools that have received an “improvement plan” classification.

The initiative would enhance support for districts that are classified for “improvement” or “priority improvement” through a cohort model. The group of districts would receive support over four years. The interventions would facilitate district efforts to implement high quality, coherent instructional materials as part of school turnaround efforts. Among other supports, the initiative would offer staff at participating districts the opportunity to learn through visits to other districts that are implementing high quality instructional materials.

The request indicates that the funds would be from money in the Early Literacy Cash Fund (which originates as State Education Fund) which would be transferred to the State Public School Fund over the next four years. JBC Staff notes that any transfer of this type would require a bill and that the Early Literacy Fund is over-subscribed (insolvent) under the various proposals included in the Executive Request unless the General Assembly transfers additional State Education Fund money into the Fund (an option referenced in the statewide Marijuana Tax Cash Fund request). JBC Staff notes that a direct appropriation from the State Education Fund for this initiative would be less complex, if the General Assembly chooses to support it.

R5 Student engagement: The Department requests \$354,261 General Fund and 2.0 FTE in FY 2025-26, annualizing to \$267,384 General Fund in FY 2026-27 and ongoing, to address chronic absenteeism in Colorado schools. The request includes the addition of 2.0 FTE (principal consultants) and \$75,000 in first-year materials costs. The request notes that chronic absenteeism, defined as a K-12 student missing 10.0 percent or more of school days for any reason, spiked during the pandemic and remained at 31.1 percent in FY 2022-23. Chronic

absenteeism is significant across all grade levels, and the issue is particularly severe among certain groups such as multilingual learners (40.0 percent), students with individualized education plans (39.0 percent), and students qualifying for free/reduced priced lunch (43.0 percent). Student attendance has a significant relationship to student performance.

The Department's draft Strategic Plan includes a goal to reduce chronic absenteeism among Colorado students by 50.0 percent from the peak, to 17.8 percent by FY 2026-27. Currently, the Department does not have a funded position to support student attendance and engagement efforts. The Department's Dropout Prevention and Student Reengagement Office takes the lead on attendance-related work and administers three grant programs related to chronic absenteeism among high school students (Expelled and At-risk Student Services, Ninth Grade Success, and Student Re-engagement), but the focus of activities is not on attendance alone. The request indicates that the new staff would facilitate district learning cohorts and provide technical support for districts that are working on this problem; provide trainings and prepare training materials (e.g., video series and webinars) for districts; help expand other CDE units' training activities to address this issue; develop a best-practice database; develop a statewide communications plan; enhance supports for districts that have won related competitive grants; and explore options for enhancing student voices in districts, which is also expected to reduce absenteeism.

R6 READ Act training support: The Department requests one-time spending authority of \$3,361,590 from the Early Literacy Cash Fund, with roll-forward through FY 2026-27, and 2.0 FTE (term-limited), to train regional cohorts of K-3rd grade teachers in evidence-based intensive reading interventions and add funding for early literacy grants. The request notes that the external evaluation of READ Act services and internal department analysis indicates that *“while some positive outcomes are being achieved [from READ Act programs], students in the lowest score range on approved reading interim assessments, largely consisting of students with [individualized education plans/IEPs], student with or at-risk for dyslexia, and multilingual learners, have persistent reading deficits. While not unique to Colorado, these gaps are stubborn and disturbing.”*

The most recent external evaluation of the program (October 2024) identifies bright spots, including that districts are providing evidence-based reading instruction focused on the skills emphasized in the READ Act; the number of students being *newly* identified with a significant reading deficiency (SRD) has been decreasing since the pandemic (now at 4.7 percent); and proficiency rates on the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) reached an all-time high in FY 2022-23 overall. The training provided by the State for teachers and district leaders on evidence-based reading instruction has received strong reviews from district teachers and administrators. However, CMAS data indicate that the number of students scoring proficient remains extraordinarily low for any student who has been identified with an SRD at any point between kindergarten and third grade (5.1 percent), and rates are even lower for students with an SRD who were also English language learners or had an IEP. The Department has been engaged specifically on related supports for students with dyslexia since passage of H.B. 19-1134 (Dyslexia Working Group).

To address the reading needs of key student subgroups, the Department proposes to develop and deliver training for elementary educators in intensive reading interventions for students who are multilingual, have IEPs, or are at-risk for/identified with dyslexia. Once developed, the content will be made available in a hybrid, online, and in-person format. The request also proposes to add funding for early literacy grants. Cost components are shown in the table below.

	FY 2025-26 Request; roll-forward to FY 2026-27
Training Program content development for units for multilingual learners, students with IEPs, and students with dyslexia	\$801,000
Training Program content hosting	305,000
Program training materials	6,000
Term-limited FTE (2.0 FTE)	249,590
Early literacy grant program funds	2,000,000
Total	\$3,361,590

R7 CO Talking Book Library security: The Department requests an increase of \$72,333 General Fund for FY 2025-26 and ongoing to provide a contract guard at the Colorado Talking Book Library and State Publications Library at 180 Sheridan. There has been an increase in unhoused people, drug use, and vandalism at the location that has put people and property at risk. The request would expand the Department’s current security provider contract to add a position at this location during business hours on Monday through Friday.

R8 National Student Clearinghouse: The Department requests an increase of \$67,870 General Fund for subscription fees to the National Student Clearinghouse that are paid from the line item for Longitudinal Analysis of Student Assessment Results. This funding is required to enable the Department to comply with Section 22-11-204 (4)(IV), C.R.S., which specifies that one of the state’s school performance measures is the percentage of students graduating from a public high school who, in the school year immediately following graduation, enroll in a career and technical education program, community college, or four-year institution of higher education.

The National Student Clearinghouse connects data between education providers across the country, making it possible for both secondary and higher education providers to exchange and verify transcript and enrollment information across institutions throughout the country. Clearinghouse data enables the State, as well as individual secondary and post-secondary institutions, to understand and analyze the pathways students take from graduating from a particular high school to enrolling in postsecondary education. The Department historically purchased a tier of data for \$30,730 that is no longer available; *the minimum cost is now \$98,600.*

Historically, the contract with the Clearinghouse was housed in the Department of Higher Education but paid for by the Department of Education. In February 2024, the two departments learned about the increased cost for the contract. For FY 2024-25, the two departments are splitting the cost, but neither agency has the budget to continue to cover costs in future years.

R9 Statewide Student Information System: The Department requests \$200,000 one-time General Fund in FY 2025-26 to fund consulting services to provide an updated analysis of the

benefits and feasibility of implementing a statewide Student Information System (SIS). Student Information Systems are systems like PowerSchool and Infinite Campus that are typically used by individual schools and districts to house information like grades, attendance, and schedules, and—in this instance—could be used as a way for districts to report local education provider data to the Department. An in-depth analysis from 2019 considered if purchasing such a system on a statewide basis would be beneficial. The results of this earlier analysis were mixed, as districts supported a statewide SIS that they could use on an optional basis, but they were skeptical of the price. In light of this, as well as more pressing needs related to the pandemic, work in this area stopped.

Due to the development of new technologies, as well as ever-increasing demands on districts for data-reporting, the Department believes a statewide SIS should be reconsidered. It proposes engaging department staff and consulting services to: review the conclusions of the 2019 study; evaluate whether a statewide SIS would ease the burden of required statewide data collections; evaluate the ability of a statewide SIS to save districts money by increasing economies of scale; engage in broad-based stakeholder engagement; and use this process to better understand the specific requirements that would be needed by districts to eliminate the need for other systems.

The request notes that there is currently a great deal of variance in how individual local education providers manage data they submit to the State, which drives significant workload to correct errors. A statewide SIS could improve statewide data collection that is currently submitted through the “Data Pipeline”, facilitate Department assistance in quality management, and greatly ease the transcript/transfer process for students among districts.

R10 CSDB inflationary increase [legislation requested]: The request includes \$377,809 General Fund based on a 2.5 percent inflation rate estimate for FY 2024-25. The Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind is requesting a statutory change to provide ongoing funding for the school at the higher rate of either inflation (Denver-Aurora-Lakewood CPI) for a given fiscal year or the statutorily required teacher salary increase from the surrounding D11 district. The goal of this new funding mechanism is to enhance budget autonomy for the school while minimizing the administrative burden across all involved offices. The request states that the it includes both funding for a teacher salary increase and additional operating costs and 2.3 FTE, for a total increase of \$377,809 General Fund.

The request emphasizes that the school has historically submitted decision items to address needs from increased caseloads or operational inefficiencies. The CSDB’s General Fund growth shows significant variability, creating management challenges, and the process of submitting budget requests is demanding. The request notes that if CSDB had received increases based on inflation since FY 2018-19, its appropriation would be \$106.1 million, compared to \$102.8 million now.

R11 Career training and basic skills reduction [legislation required for one component]: The request identifies two programs that the Department indicates can be reduced without affecting services provided to districts: reducing the Colorado Career Advisor Training appropriation by \$500,000 General Fund and eliminating the \$50,000 State Education Fund appropriation for Basic Skills Placement.

Career Advisor Training: In 2022, the legislature created the Colorado Career Advisor Training Program in S.B. 22-165 to support training for career advisors, including school counselors as well as workforce center, higher education, adult education, and nonprofit career advisors. The bill required an appropriation of \$1.0 million for FY 2022-23, and the fiscal note indicated that this amount was required ongoing. The funding was used to develop an online self-paced “Meaningful Career Conversation” course, and several other short on-line tools for career advisors and advisees. Since then, thousands of career advisors have been trained. The Department indicates that with natural attrition in the field and the development of new advising tools, some ongoing funding is required to maintain the system. However, the cost to maintain these supports is less than what was necessary for the initial creation of the training and tools. The Department anticipates that only \$500,000 is necessary to meet statutory requirements moving forward, allowing for a reduction of \$500,000.

Basic Skills Placement: Funding was initially authorized in the 2012 School Finance Act (HB12-1345) and was later revised in 2019. The appropriation is intended to offset the costs of administering the basic skills placement or assessment test students in grades nine through twelve. The funding has not been utilized in over seven years, so the request would eliminate a \$50,000 appropriation that has reverted each year. Eliminating this appropriation requires a statutory change.

R12 Inactive cash funds sweep [legislation required]: The Department’s budget team analyzed cash fund balances and line items with reversions from the prior year and identified funds that appear not to be in use but have residual balances. Approximately \$160,000 can be swept from the Rural Schools Cash Fund, as funding for rural schools is being addressed through a different mechanism. An additional approximate \$100,000 total can be swept from four other inactive funds: the High-cost Special Education Fund, Teacher Residency Expansion Program, Financial Reporting Fund, and Public Education Fund. Money remains available in these funds for various reasons including residual interest earnings and repealed statutes.

NP3 Retain MTCF refinance: The Statewide R7 request for Marijuana Tax balancing includes a request to continue, for a third year, the refinance of a \$5,378,678 appropriation from the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund for the Early Literacy Competitive Grant Program using money from the Early Literacy Cash Fund. The request acknowledges that because two Department of Education requests also propose to draw on the fund balance of the Early Literacy Fund, “this refinance proposal may require an additional one-time transfer of State Education Fund dollars of \$4.5 million above the ongoing \$34 million transfer the Early Literacy Fund receives from the State Education Fund.” Staff believes a direct appropriation from the State Education Fund to substitute for a portion of the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund money would also be an option, rather than the proposed transfer, if the General Assembly wishes to implement the Department of Education requests but also needs to balance the Marijuana Tax Cash Fund appropriations.

Other non-prioritized requests: The request includes adjustments that originate in the Governor’s Office of Information Technology (OIT) and the Department of Personnel that are summarized in the table below.

Other non-prioritized requests

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	FTE
NP2 OAC staffing	\$6,478	\$0	\$6,478	\$0	0.0
NP1 Vehicle lease payments	2,028	2,028	\$0	0	0.0
NP4 Communication services for persons with disabilities	-860,000	-250,000	0	-610,000	0.0
Total	-\$851,494	-\$247,972	\$6,478	-\$610,000	0.0

Centrally appropriated line items: The request includes adjustments to centrally appropriated line items that are summarized in the table below.

Centrally appropriated line items

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
Salary survey	\$1,659,158	\$649,333	\$251,468	\$182,709	\$575,648	0.0
Health, life, and dental	770,261	344,978	201,765	64,856	158,662	0.0
Step Plan	377,596	144,466	57,000	37,338	138,792	0.0
Statewide indirect cost policy	200,427	0	80,544	37,965	81,918	0.0
Capitol Complex leased space	161,454	46,014	29,385	14,692	71,363	0.0
CORE adjustment	125,677	62,832	48,688	14,157	0	0.0
Risk management & property	97,147	97,147	0	0	0	0.0
ALJ services	35,540	0	35,540	0	0	0.0
DPA Paid family leave	15,884	16,408	3,337	439	-4,300	0.0
Payments to OIT	-603,726	-445,641	-121,664	-36,421	0	0.0
Legal services	-129,406	-79,973	-43,351	-6,082	0	0.0
Workers' compensation	-45,685	-21,950	-5,961	-1,544	-16,230	0.0
PERA direct distribution	-11,182	-5,671	2,860	-8,371	0	0.0
AED and SAED adjustment	-8,534	3,121	74,150	9,766	-95,571	0.0
Shift differential	-1,382	-1,382	0	0	0	0.0
Short-term disability	-129	46	1,112	146	-1,433	0.0
Total	\$2,643,100	\$809,728	\$614,873	\$309,650	\$908,849	0.0

Annualize prior year legislation: The appropriation includes adjustments for the FY 2025-26 impact of prior year legislation.

Annualize prior year legislation

Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
SB23-219 Supports to students and facility schools	\$4,771,421	\$0	\$4,771,421	\$0	1.0
HB24-1448 New public schI finance formula	486,660	-13,340	500,000	0	0.0
HB20-1032 Timing K-12 ed standards review	118,246	118,246	0	0	0.0
HB08-1384 Survey teaching & learning conditions	50,000	50,000	0	0	0.0
HB24-1331 Out-of-school time grant program	45,530	45,530	0	0	0.1
HB24-1216 Supports in juv justice system	25,729	25,729	0	0	0.7
SB24-069 Clarify IEP info	16,419	16,419	0	0	0.1
SB24-070 Remote testing and online ed prgrm	13,200	0	13,200	0	0.0

Annualize prior year legislation					
Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
HB21-1087 Teaching & learning conditions survey	8,500	8,500	0	0	0.0
HB24-140 Higher Ed support homeless youth	577	577	0	0	0.0
HB24-1282 Ninth-grade success grant & performance reporting	0	0	0	0	0.0
HB24-1063 Addressing abbreviated school days	0	0	0	0	-0.2
HB22-1374 Foster care success	0	0	0	0	0.2
HB24-1290 Student educator stipend	-4,197,000	0	-4,197,000	0	0.0
HB24-1446 Prof dev science teachers	-3,000,000	0	-3,000,000	0	0.0
HB24-1364 Education-based workforce readiness	-779,836	-800,005	20,169	0	-0.7
SB23-221 Healthy Schl Meals Program Fund	-400,000	0	-400,000	0	0.0
HB24-1063 Addressing abbreviated schl days	-134,394	-134,394	0	0	0.0
SB24-048 Substance use disorder recovery	-115,805	-115,805	0	0	-0.1
SB24-162 Best practices prevent discrimination in schls	-111,111	0	-111,111	0	0.0
SB 24-188 School finance	-101,620	0	-101,620	0	0.0
HB24-1164 Free menstrual products	-100,000	-100,000	0	0	0.0
SB23-296 Prevent harassment and discrimination schls	-64,500	-64,500	0	0	0.0
HB24-1393 ASCENT program modifications	-45,600	-45,600	0	0	0.0
HB24-1331 Out-of-school time grant program	-45,530	-45,530	0	0	-0.2
HB24-1136 Healthier social media use	-4,596	-4,596	0	0	-0.1
HB23-1231 Math in pre-k through 12th grade	-3,900	-3,900	0	0	0.0
Total	-\$3,567,610	-\$1,062,669	-\$2,504,941	\$0	0.8

Annualize prior year budget actions: The request includes adjustments for the FY 2025-26 impact of prior year budget actions.

Annualize prior year budget actions						
Item	Total Funds	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reapprop. Funds	Federal Funds	FTE
FY24-25 R14 Payroll office support	\$12,147	\$12,147	0	0	0	0.1
FY24-25 R15 CDE facility needs	2,781	2,781	0	0	0	0.0
FY24-25 R4 Human resources capacity	2,229	2,229	0	0	0	0.1
FY 24-25 R17 Colfax security	404	404	0	0	0	0.0
Prior year salary survey	0	0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.0
Prior year step pay	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
Annualize MTCF refinance	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
FY24-25 R6 ESSER staff closeout	-571,416	-571,416	0	0	0	0.0
FY24-25 R18 CSDB teacher salary	-104,147	-104,147	0	0	0	0.0
Total	-\$658,002	-\$658,002	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.2

Technical adjustments: The request includes technical adjustments with a net \$0 fiscal impact.

Issues Presented

This is a summary of the briefing issues presented to the Joint Budget Committee by their dedicated non-partisan staff.

Budget Reduction Options: The Executive Budget Request includes proposals for General Fund savings totaling \$932,217 for the Department of Education budget sections other school finance and categorical programs. This represents 0.8 percent of the General Fund appropriations in these sections of the budget. This issue brief reviews these proposals and additional options identified by staff.

Healthy School Meals for All: Demand for the Healthy School Meals for All Program, which offers free meals for all public school students, has outstripped projections, and expenditures are likely to exceed revenue in future years. This issue explores the recommendations of the Technical Advisory Group charged with examining possible solutions.

Budget Estimates for Ballot Initiatives: TABOR (3)(c) requires the Ballot Information Book (Blue Book) to include revenue estimates for certain measures that change tax policy. When these forecasts are too low, a second popular vote is required. This issue explores options to reduce the likelihood that such additional votes are required.

Building Excellent Schools Today: The Executive Budget Request includes a proposal to cap revenue to the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) program for cash grants at \$129.0 million, diverting \$58.0 million to support public school finance. This issue provides additional background on the BEST program, which is supported primarily by state land board revenue and marijuana excises taxes, as well as a related program for charter school facilities assistance. Both programs received increases through H.B. 24-1448 (New School Finance Formula).

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To read the entire briefing: Go to <http://leg.colorado.gov/content/budget/budget-documents> to use the budget document search tool. Select this department's name under *Department/Topic*, "Briefing" under *Type*, and select a *Start date* and *End date* to show documents released in November and December of 2024.