



Colorado Department of Education SMART Act Supplemental Materials

January 17, 2024

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STRATEGIC PLAN

2017-2024



UPDATE JANUARY 2024



Our Vision

All students graduate ready for college and careers, and prepared to be productive citizens of Colorado.

Our Mission

Ensuring equity and opportunity for every student, every step of the way.



COLORADO
Department of Education

Our Values

ALL STUDENTS

COLLABORATION

COMMUNICATION

CUSTOMER SERVICE

HONESTY

INNOVATION

INTEGRITY

RESPECT

TRANSPARENCY

TRUST



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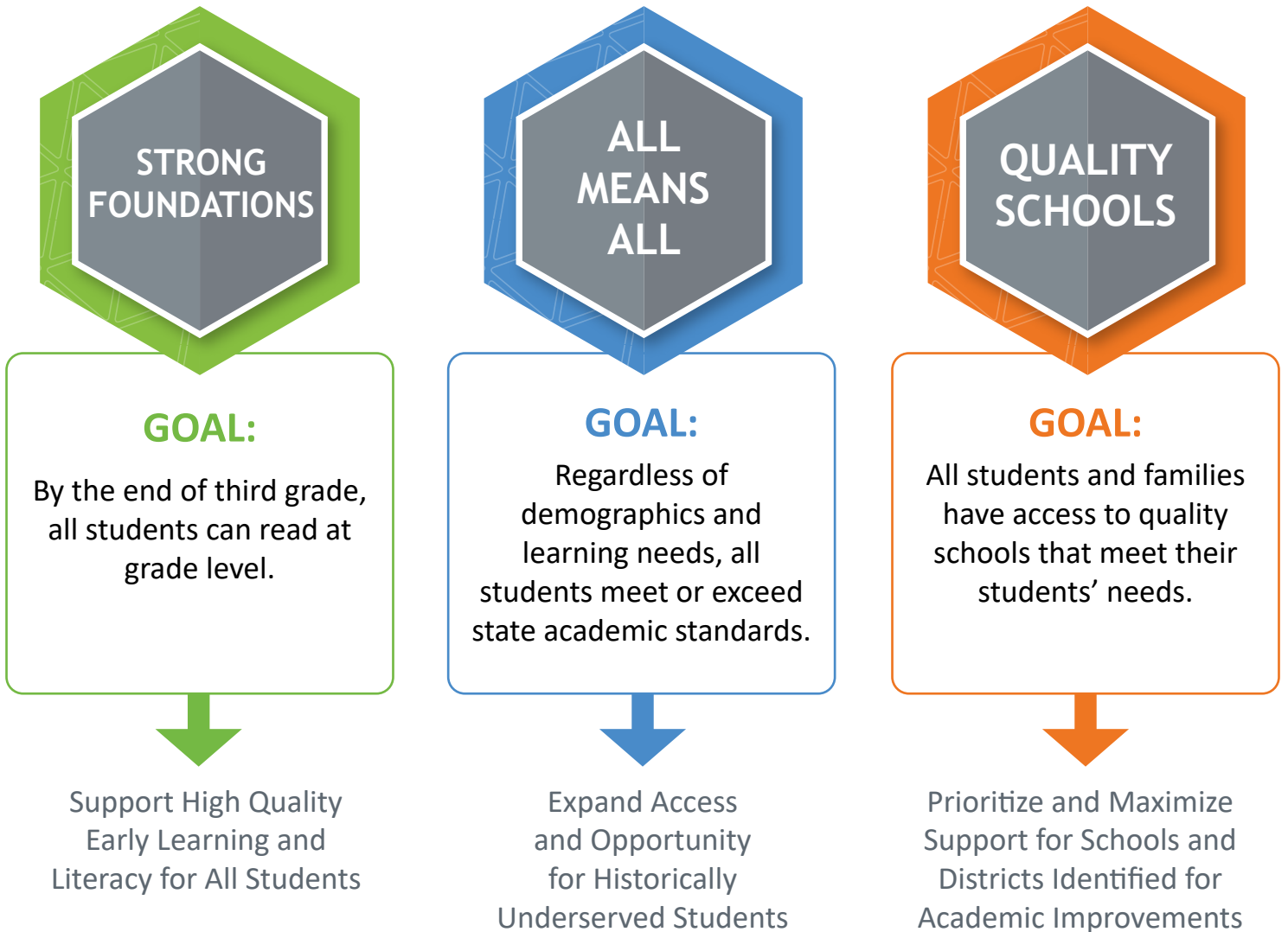
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KEY INITIATIVES

OVERVIEW





GOAL:

Students graduate high school with knowledge, skills and experience needed for career and college success.



Expand High School Options to Ensure All Students Are Ready for College and/or Living-Wage Jobs



GOAL:

High quality educators in every classroom; strong leaders in every building.



Develop a Strong Pipeline of High-Quality Teachers and Principals and Provide Deeper Support for School and District Leaders



Underpinning our success with each of our key initiatives will be our commitment to excellence with each of our core programs and operations. By holding ourselves to the highest degree of excellence in customer service and performance, we will effectively implement our key initiatives and accomplish our goals.

Guiding Principles

The following principles guide us as we undertake all of our work to implement state and federal laws and support districts, schools and teachers in Colorado.

- Equity and Access for All Students
- Flexibility, Choice and Innovation
- Continuous Improvement of Systems and Structures
- Collaboration and Partnership

Emerging from the Pandemic

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in spring of 2020, the impacts on students, educators, districts, and communities have been significant and varied. The initial and evolving response to the global health crisis required the Colorado education landscape to focus on the immediate health and safety needs of students and communities while, at the same time, addressing the academic and social-emotional needs of the students experiencing reductions in-person learning time and increased transitions between learning modes.

In response to these needs, CDE and districts across the state have leveraged the historic levels of education funding made available through the federal pandemic stimulus to address these needs created or exacerbated by the pandemic. In addition to expanding access to school meals, broadband, and other basic needs necessary to support students, the Colorado education community has coalesced to provide new and expanded programs to address the academic needs of the pandemic such as high-impact tutoring, high-quality curricular and instructional programming materials, strengthening efforts to recruit and retain educators, and expanding afterschool and summer programs that support academic acceleration while strengthening students' engagement in their learning.

Results from spring 2023 assessments show some improvements over the previous year, but there is still more work to be done to return to and exceed pre-pandemic levels of academic achievement and close historic opportunity and achievement gaps. When compared to 2019 assessment data (pre-pandemic), the 2023 CMAS data showed declines in every grade and subject area. In high school, the 2023 PSAT 9 and 10 and SAT scores showed declines from 2019 in both Evidence-based Reading and Writing (EBRW) and mathematics in almost every grade, with the largest drop in the SAT grade 11 math data (3.8 percentage points drop from 2019 in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations). Additionally, achievement gaps between historically lower performing and historically higher performing groups continued to persist in 2023.



However, when comparing 2023 assessment data to those of 2022, it appears that some of the strategic initiatives being implemented across the state to address lost learning time and the academic needs of students may be beginning to take hold. Specifically, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations scores improved for all CMAS Math assessments, and 3 out of 6 ELA assessments in 2023. In high school, the percentage of students meeting or exceeding expectations in PSAT and SAT scores increased in mathematics for grade 9 and both in mathematics and EBWR for grade 11 between 2022 and 2023. Similarly, K-3 reading assessment data show a slight decrease in the number of students with a significant reading deficiency from 2022 to 2023. With a focus on supporting the needs of those most impacted by the pandemic—including English language learners, students from historically underserved populations, and those struggling with mathematics achievement—the key initiatives of this strategic plan build upon and support the pandemic recovery work being undertaken in classrooms, schools, districts, and communities across Colorado so that our students can emerge stronger than before.



Support High Quality Early Learning and Literacy for All Students

GOAL: By the end of third grade, all students can read at grade level.

Research shows that proficiency in reading by the end of third grade enables students to make the shift from learning how to read to using reading skills to master more complex subjects. In fact, students who cannot read by the end of third grade are four times more likely to drop out of high school. By focusing on support for our youngest students and their educators, the department can ensure more students are reading at grade level by the end of third grade which builds a strong foundation for continued success in school.

Strategic Activities

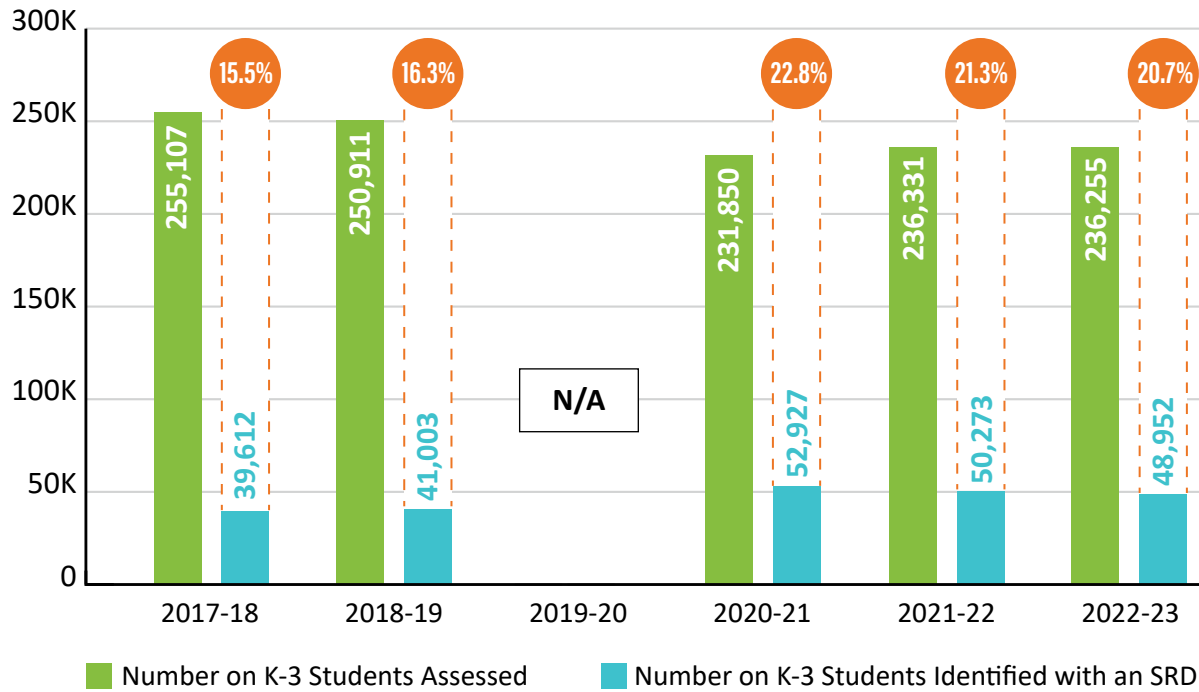
We will promote and develop high-quality, evidence-based early learning and literacy strategies.

- Support effective reading instruction and intervention for all students by providing multiple pathways for K - 3 teachers, elementary school principals and administrators and K - 12 reading interventionists to meet the evidence-based training requirement in the READ Act
- Support and review implementation of evidence-based reading instruction in teacher training programs
- Support local education providers' use of reading instructional materials that are high quality and are based on the science of reading

We will strengthen partnerships with the Colorado Department of Early Childhood as well as other state and local agencies, communities and libraries to support early learning and literacy in preschool through third grade.

- Support the transition of preschool programming to the new Department of Early Childhood (DEC) and the alignment of preschool special education services across CDE and DEC
- Support effective transitions between preschool and third grade with attention to the impact of the pandemic on enrollment
- Coordinate with university partners to develop a best practices guide for implementing effective transitions between preschool and third grade
- Provide technical assistance to districts in developing transition plans to effectively support students in preschool through third grade

Prevalence of Significant Reading Deficiencies in Colorado 2018-2023



Districts annually report the number of their K-3 students who are identified with a significant reading deficiency (SRD), meaning that a student does not meet the minimum skill levels for reading proficiency at the end of the school year. This student count is used by CDE to determine funding for intervention services. In the 2022-23 school year, 236,255 students took interim assessments, and among them, 48,952 (20.7%) were identified as having an SRD. This rate is down slightly from the 2021-22 rate of 21.3%.

What Progress Looks Like

- In spring 2023, there continued to be a reduction in significant reading deficiency rates in kindergarten through third grade from 21% in 2022 to 20.8 in 2023. CDE aims for this metric to decrease below pre-pandemic (16%) or lower levels by 2024-2025.
- Use newly updated Kindergarten School Readiness Assessment data collection to set a new baseline for kindergarten school readiness by 2022-23.
- Third-grade students meeting or exceeding expectations on the CMAS assessment in English Language Arts will return to or exceed pre-pandemic levels (41.3%) by spring 2025. In spring 2023, 94% of third graders participated in the CMAS English language arts assessment, with 40% of those tested meeting or exceeding standards.
- Children and young adult attendance (both in-person and virtual) at public library programs will increase by 2% from 1,093,915 in 2022 to 1,115,793 in 2024. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the cancellation of programming or library closures, attendance decreased from 2,362,418 in 2018 to 1,093,915 in 2022. With the addition of virtual programming, CDE hopes to start recovering towards pre-pandemic levels.



Expand Access and Opportunity for Historically Underserved Students

GOAL: Regardless of demographics and learning needs, all students meet or exceed state academic standards.

In Colorado, we are failing to ensure that students from historically underserved backgrounds – specifically those from economically challenged communities, highly mobile families, racial minority groups, English learners and students with disabilities – report academic outcomes that are truly reflective of their talents so they have a wide variety of options to thrive in our communities and succeed in today’s economy. Unfortunately, the pandemic has exacerbated opportunity and achievement gaps which have grown from pre-pandemic levels for many historically underserved student groups. By concentrating on educational equity as a foundational construct of our work at CDE, we will empower schools and districts in their efforts to increase access and opportunity for students and ultimately reduce the pervasive influence that persistent inequities have on student outcomes.

*** Educational equity means** that every student has access to the educational resources and rigor they need at the right moment in their education across race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background and/ or family income. (Adopted from The Council of Chief State School Officers)

Strategic Activities

We will develop the capacity within CDE to create a knowledgeable organization that can model equity, diversity and inclusion in order to support our schools and districts across Colorado.

- Continue to build CDE staff members’ knowledge and competency to increase student equity by engaging in equity, diversity and inclusion trainings, specific learning opportunities for supervisors, and cross-department resource sharing
- Continue to implement the recommendations from CDE’s workplace equity assessment in regards to internal climate, policies and practices and conducting equity analysis when developing new or revising departmental or external policies

We will expand our engagement with districts and other external partners to address issues of equity, access and opportunity through our grant programs.

- Maximize use of state and federal funding – including pandemic relief funds – to create opportunities for high-quality and accelerated learning through programs such as high-impact tutoring, extended school day, week and/or year, summer opportunities, and instructional and curricular supports, especially for students with disabilities, English learners, students who qualify for free and reduced lunch, migrant students and other students most impacted by the pandemic
- Highlight and learn from schools that are exceptional at providing access to high-quality learning experiences for all students and support schools that are working to provide greater access

Strategic Activities Cont.

We will support school and district efforts to develop school climates that create a sense of belonging for all teachers and students and lead to effective learning conditions.

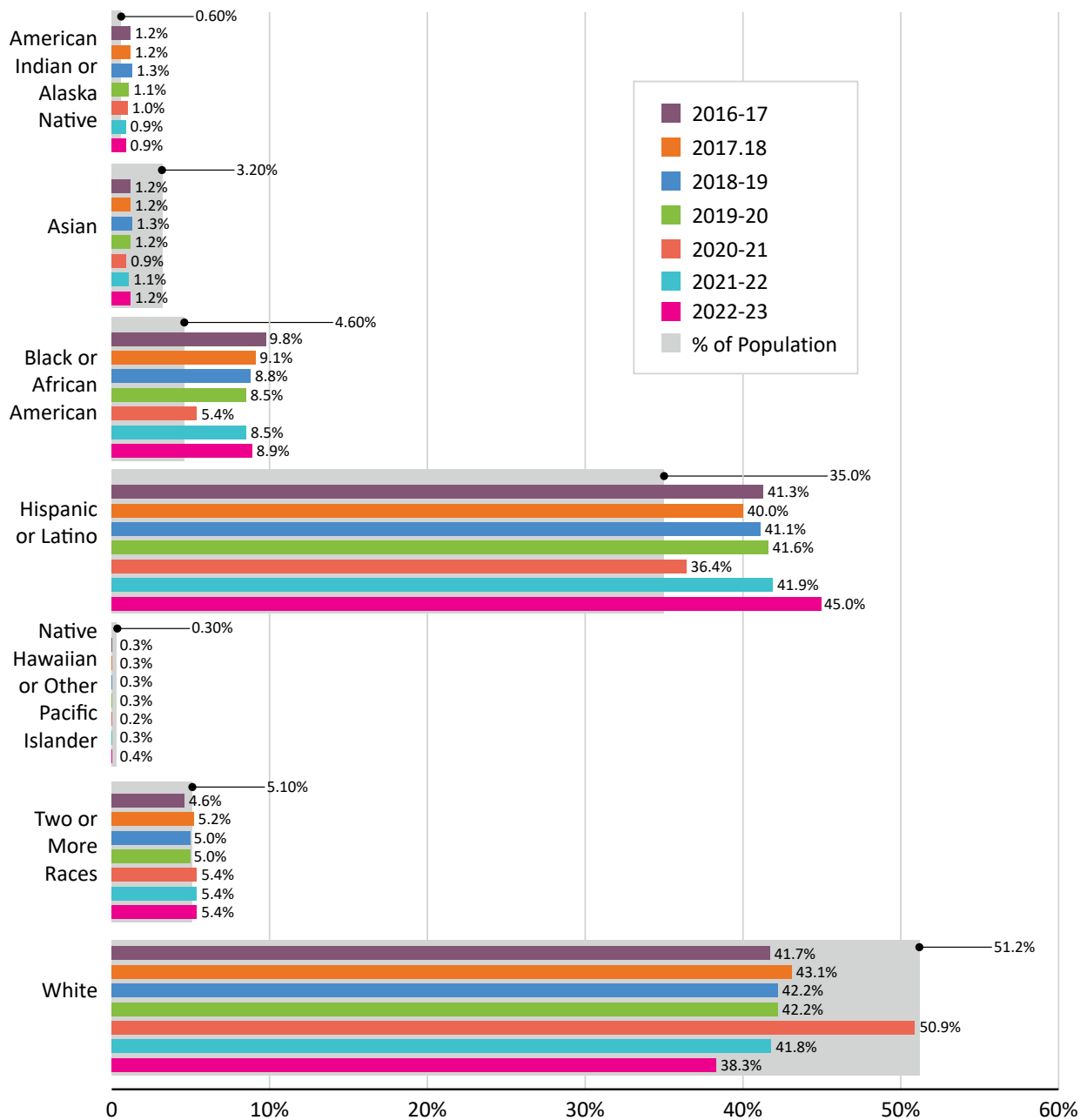
- Organize and communicate about the various resources focused on school climate and student well-being as part of an effort to decrease suspensions and expulsions involving historically underserved students
- Increase coordination of training and grant programs related to school climate work and better direct resources to those with the greatest needs
- Identify and monitor measures of school climate in our education systems

We will continue to implement and evaluate the impact of department programs that deploy resources and supports aimed at increasing equity for different disaggregated groups of historically underserved students.

- Raise awareness of existing programs that support historically underserved students, including but not limited to students who are homeless, in foster care, eligible for free or reduced price lunches, have a disability, English learners, migrants, neglected, delinquent, and other challenges
- Leverage technical assistance partners to continue to evaluate and improve existing programs and share results with stakeholders
- Continue developing and disseminating best practices and strategies for addressing student reengagement and learning needs focused on vulnerable populations and support communities in addressing potential learning gaps and student needs that were caused or exacerbated by the pandemic



Race and Ethnicity of Students Receiving Disciplinary Actions Over Time



Students cannot learn if they are not in class. Reducing discipline incidents and actions that remove students from class provides additional opportunities for those students to access learning opportunities and support.

This chart displays the data reported to CDE on the race and ethnicity of students receiving exclusionary disciplinary actions (in and out of school suspensions, expulsions, and others) compared to the race and ethnicity of the Colorado student population as a whole. The data reveals that students who are American Indian, Black, Latino or are of two or more races have consistently received exclusionary discipline at a rate disproportionate to their population in Colorado public schools.

What Progress Looks Like

- Students of color will not be over-represented in the group of students who receive 1 or more exclusionary disciplinary action (in and out of school suspensions, expulsions, and other). Since 2016-17, the percentage of students of color who received 1 or more disciplinary action has ranged from 57% to 62% with the exception of the 2020-21 school year. Over this time, students of color have represented 46% to 49% of the school population. The percentage of discipline actions that involved students of color increased to 58% in 21-22 and 62% in 22-23. CDE aims for this metric to decrease to the share of students of color in the school population.
- CDE will continue to remain within the top 5 states in the nation for students with disabilities in the general education setting.
- The percentage of districts identified as having medium or large gaps in equitable access to experienced educators or those teaching in-field based on 2020-2021 data was 38% and decreased to 35% based on 2022-2023 data. The goal is to decrease the percentage of districts identified with gaps, from 35% to 29% based on the 2023-2024 data. Note that these data are only available for districts eligible for equitable distribution of teachers analyses (small districts are exempt). They also exclude effectiveness ratings due to the pause in educator effectiveness data as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.





Prioritize and Maximize Support for Schools and Districts Identified for Academic Improvements

GOAL: All students and families have access to quality schools that meet their students' needs.

Schools and districts that are identified for improvement through the state and federal systems all have different needs based on the context of their communities. By working with each district and school to understand their needs and the reasons for their identification for support and improvement, and by investing in evidence-based strategies, we will help them progressively improve and maintain their academic performance.

Strategic Activities

We will foster relationships with Colorado local educational Providers (LEPs), including BOCES, districts, schools and charter authorizers, grounded in transparency and trust.

- Build and maintain meaningful relationships between CDE and LEPs across the state to promote improved outcomes for all students
- Ensure LEPs access streamlined resources and supports from across the department
- Build towards a transparent and accessible platform that integrates the Unified Improvement Plan system with data, grants management, and customer relationship systems to strengthen cross-CDE coordination in providing effective school and district support, including strategic allocation of funding opportunities



Strategic Activities Cont.

We will partner with districts to ensure they identify school needs, taking into consideration the reasons for identification for support and improvement, through a root cause analysis and match differentiated evidence-based practices to identified needs.

- Continue to develop needs assessment resources for districts and schools
- Support the capacity of districts and schools to accurately identify improvement needs through training and individualized technical assistance
- Define a common process and components to help districts identify school needs and match evidence-based supports aligned to the Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement

We will implement a coherent, integrated service delivery model that includes the development of evidence-based practices that are aligned with identified needs and reasons for schools being identified for support and improvement, and are grounded in Colorado's Four Domains for Rapid School Improvement: leadership for rapid improvement, talent management, instructional transformation, and culture and climate shift.

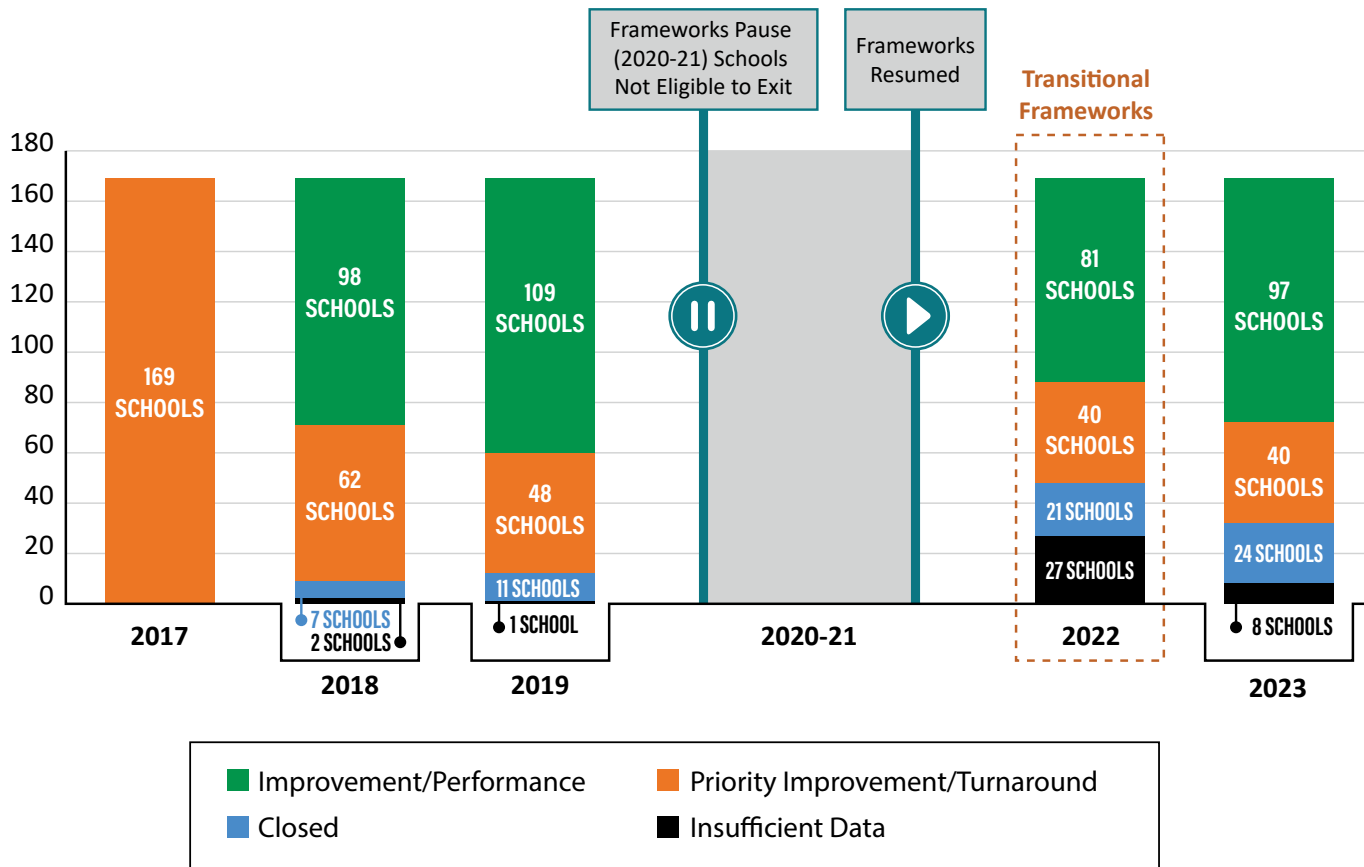
- Review and identify statewide needs of districts and schools through the use of data, taking into consideration the reasons for identification for support and improvement, program evaluation results and CDE's resources and infrastructure evaluation to determine how to leverage existing funding sources for identified schools and districts
- Implement evidence-based supports aligned to the needs of the school and/or district and focused on addressing the priority challenges of the state, with a focus on supporting those most impacted by the pandemic, including English Learners, historically underserved populations, and those struggling with math achievement
- Continue to build and refine the single grant application process for school improvement funds and expand the menu of evidence-based supports for districts to match unique local needs and reasons for identification for support and improvement with state and federal resources, decreasing the administrative burden on districts
- Design and deliver CDE support, expertise, and resources on the Colorado Four Domains of Rapid School Improvement and how they can be used to implement evidence-based practices to address needs and reasons for identification

We will provide resources and support districts and schools in progress monitoring implementation and consistently evaluating the effectiveness of the intervention to inform continuous improvement.

- Monitor the progress and implementation of supports and services to ensure progress towards addressing the needs and reasons for identification
- Evaluate the effectiveness of our support for schools and districts as measured through performance on the School Performance Frameworks and federal ESSA indicators and make adjustments needed to increase students’ academic outcomes
- Strategically coordinate program evaluation to develop internal quantitative and qualitative evaluations and impact of state supports



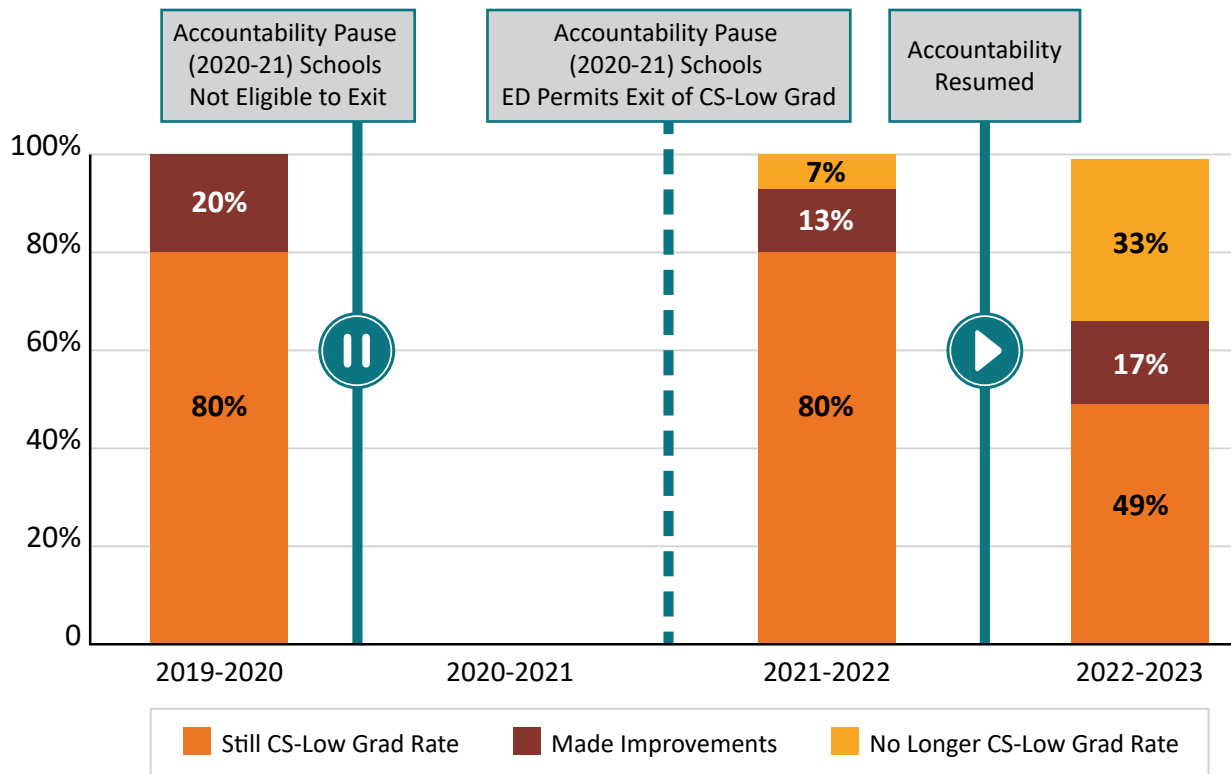
2017-2023 Schools Moving off of Priority Improvement or Turnaround



Each of the 169 schools in the Priority Improvement and Turnaround categories in 2017, the lowest two categories in the state’s accountability system, had different challenges to overcome to increase their students’ academic performance. Through grants and support programs, individual schools identified have made progress since 2017. Additional focus and clarity around support available for schools currently identified will increase the academic performance for approximately 89,997 students currently enrolled in identified schools. In particular, 31,319 students in 51 schools are receiving support from the most

recent School Transformation Grant. These data were not updated for the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school years due to the pause on calculating performance frameworks. In 2022, the General Assembly and the Colorado State Board of Education enacted policies that created Transitional Frameworks. While similar to the typical frameworks, it should be noted that there was more limited data available and some key features were changed (e.g., schools on the clock could not exit unless participating in the request to reconsider process and they needed at least 90% participation on state assessments).

Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CS) schools - Low Graduation Rate



In addition to the state’s accountability system, the [federal accountability system](#) provides insight into the performance of Colorado’s schools based on overall performance, performance of disaggregated groups, and graduation rates of high schools. One of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) identifications for support is for schools with

graduation rates below 67%. In 2022-2023, 49% of the 69 high schools identified in 2019-20, remained in this category, while 33% met the exit criteria and were no longer identified, and another 17% had improved graduation rates, which if sustained will result in the school exiting this category.

What Progress Looks Like

- Of the 169 schools with the lowest two ratings (Priority Improvement or Turnaround) on the state's accountability system in 2017, at least 136 (80%) will improve to earn a satisfactory rating or higher (Improvement or Performance) by 2024 and will sustain that rating.
- Districts with eligible schools that apply for funds will increase from 64% in 2021 to 75% in 2024.
- Final improvement plans for identified schools and districts that meet quality criteria and identify evidence-based strategies will increase from 91.8% in 2017 to 95% in 2024.





Expand High School Options to Ensure All Students Are Ready for College and/or Living-Wage Jobs

GOAL: Students graduate high school with knowledge, skills and experience needed for career and college success.

Students who graduate and work in Colorado need in-demand skills that meet business, industry and higher education standards. Three out of four jobs in Colorado (three million jobs currently) require education or training beyond high school.

By increasing options for high school students and fostering expansion of successful high school models, we can ensure that at least 66% of the class of 2023 will earn a postsecondary credential, certificate or degree within five years of graduating from high school. When we achieve this goal, we will fuel Colorado’s economy with educated students who are prepared for a college education, a good paying job or military service.

Strategic Activities

We will help school districts implement rigorous and useful Graduation Guidelines to expand options to support student engagement.

- Support community implementation strategies and expansion of options such as work-based learning experiences and industry credentials

We will foster expansion of innovative secondary, postsecondary, and work-based learning integration models and promising practices that allow students to earn postsecondary credit, industry credentials and gain work experience.

- Support the General Assembly and State Board of Education in identifying plans to leverage the [final recommendations](#) from the [H.B. 22-1215 Task Force](#).
- Identify and highlight noteworthy gains in high school completion as well as postsecondary and workforce readiness outcomes for students through ensuring that data systems are able to determine program impact
- Provide professional development and consultation to bring innovative practices to scale (such as programs where students gain workforce credentials and college credit while in high school) for the benefit of more students statewide
- Leverage federal ESSER relief funding via the Rural Coaction Grant Program to support rural districts to collaboratively develop and expand career-connected learning opportunities

Strategic Activities Cont.

We will promote Individual Career and Academic Planning (ICAP) as a tool to help students create a pathway for their future.

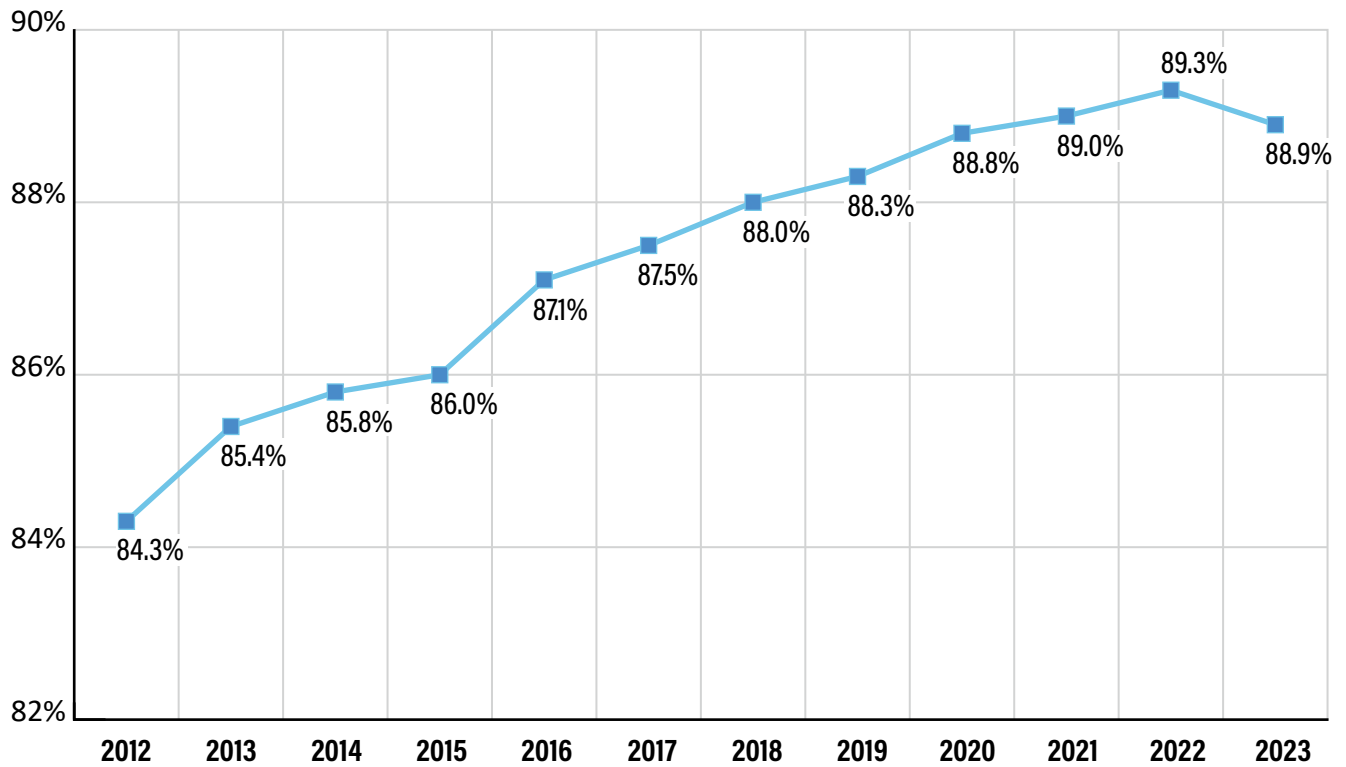
- Collect and share with stakeholders promising ICAP practices that increase students’ awareness of seamless pathways and opportunities in and beyond high school
- Equip all educators, through training such as the Colorado Career Conversations project, to have meaningful career conversations with students

We will engage community partners as an effective resource for getting students planning and ready for their futures.

- Provide flexibilities and training that support Local Education Providers to prepare students for good jobs, including expanding access to certificates and credential attainment
- Support collaborations across districts and the communities they serve in creating and expanding career-connected learning opportunities that position students for postsecondary success
- Collaborate with other state agencies, libraries, area workforce development boards and community partners to meet students’ needs, including participating in out of school time and Two-Generation programs that meet workforce training needs of student
- Provide accessible information to families about the opportunities and resources available for postsecondary and workforce learning



High School Completion Rates



Expanding high school options and graduation pathways improves student engagement and ensures that all students, regardless of their goals and needs, have a high school experience that is relevant to them. This has increased the high school completion rate over time, which in turn is key for postsecondary attainment. Strategic activities in this area are ongoing, with the goal to keep improving high school completion rates for all students, including those who need more than four years to graduate.

This chart shows 6-years completion rates, i.e., the share of a class that has finished high school by receiving a diploma, high school equivalency, or certificate of completion 6 years after they entered 9th grade. For example, in 2022, 89.3% of the class of 2016 had completed high school. In contrast, 84.3% of the class of 2010 had completed high school by 2012.

What Progress Looks Like

- Students completing a high school credential within six years will increase from 89.0% in 2021 to 91.0% by 2024.
- High school students attaining a postsecondary credential within six years of graduation will increase from 58.9% for the class of 2015 to 60.0% for the class of 2017.
- Students earning college credit while enrolled in high school will increase from 48% in 2021 to 50% in 2023. (Please note that 2023 data will not be available until 2024.)



Develop a Strong Pipeline of High-Quality Teachers and Principals and Provide Deeper Support for School and District Leaders

GOAL: High quality educators are in every classroom; strong leaders are in every building.

Research shows that teachers have a bigger impact on student performance than any other school-based factor. And the number one reason teachers leave is lack of support by a high-quality principal. We can learn from the workforce development approaches of public and private industries that focus on growing talent in a strategic and intentional way by recruiting, developing and supporting their workforce. By developing, deploying and supporting talent management and human capital development strategies for districts and schools, we can ensure that every classroom has an effective educator and all students are prepared for college, career and life.

Even more workforce challenges have come forward since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Colorado faces record shortages in other education-related areas including bus drivers, school nutrition staff, and school health professionals (such as school nurses). To help support this great need across the state, CDE has partnered with other organizations, such as the Colorado Community College System, the Department of Higher Education, the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment and the Colorado Workforce Development Council to recruit educational support staff from every corner of the state.

Strategic Activities

We will work in partnership to create high-quality educator preparation programs.

- Conduct a strategic analysis of educator preparation program rules, support and business practices involving educators in hard-to-fill content areas
- Complete necessary improvements in rules and support for educator preparation programs and the CDE licensing unit
- Review and ensure educator preparation programs are implementing high-quality pedagogy in face-to-face, hybrid, and online settings
- Review and ensure programs are teaching high-quality, evidence-based reading instruction strategies to teacher candidates

Strategic Activities Cont.

We will improve support to future and current educators and expand quality educator pipelines.

- Align the CDE Educator Talent division to focus on educator recruitment, development and career counseling within districts, communities, businesses and educator preparation entities
- Implement relevant Teacher Shortage Strategic Plan action items to encourage the entry of new teachers in the pipeline through focused programs and partnerships with school districts via grow your own programs, teacher apprenticeships, community colleges and state educator preparation programs
- Establish and grow the statewide mentoring program for preservice and new-to-the-profession educators
- Support the preparation of substitute educators through an online substitute training program and licensure consulting services

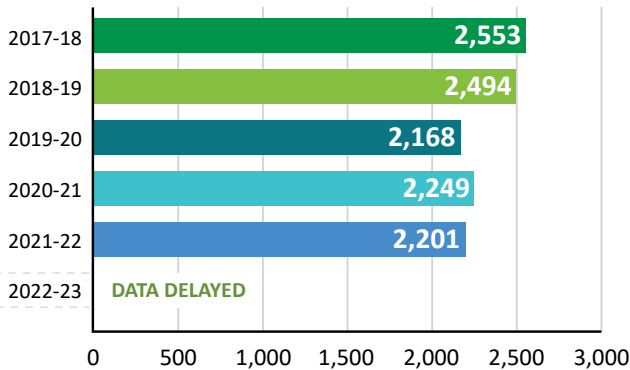
We will deepen our support for principals as they work to hire, develop and retain high-quality teachers to provide the highest outcomes for students.

- Facilitate the Principal Leadership Institute to support principals in creating a sense of collective teacher efficacy and an empowering culture and climate to increase teacher retention and satisfaction
- Assist principals' efforts to support their workforce through strategic implementation of educator effectiveness laws and human capital modeling systems
- Administer the Teaching and Learning Conditions Survey (TLCC) and assist school leaders in understanding, analyzing, and utilizing the data to improve school climate, working conditions, and educator retention

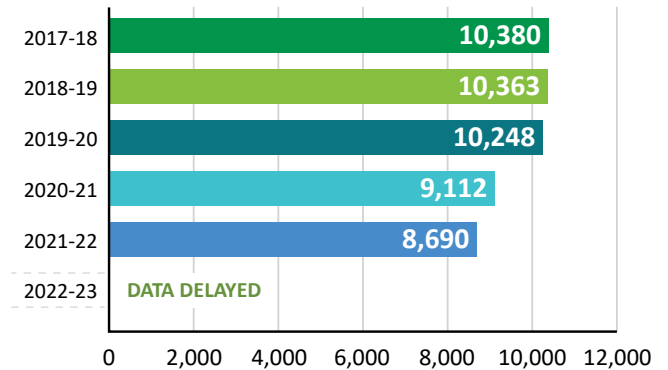


Enrollment and Completion in Educator Preparation Programs

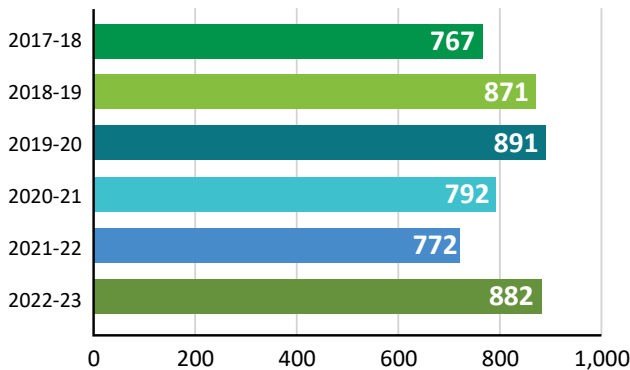
Number of individuals who completed an educator preparation program at an institute of higher education in Colorado



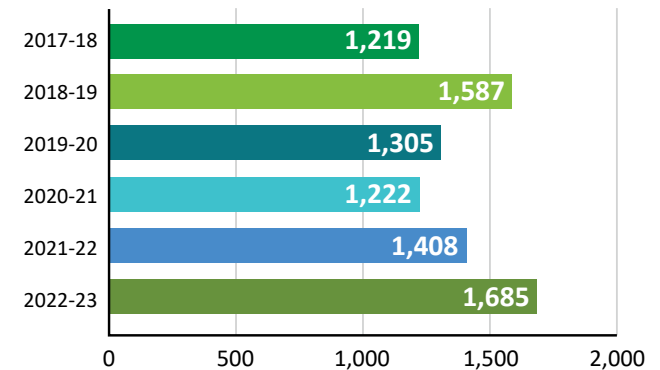
Number of individuals who enrolled in an educator preparation program at an institute of higher education in Colorado.



Number of individuals who completed an alternative licensing program in Colorado



Number of individuals who enrolled in an alternative licensing program in Colorado



During the 2022-23 school year, Colorado had approximately 9,700 teacher and special services provider openings. Of those openings, approximately 2,618 (more than a quarter) were not filled or were filled through shortage mechanisms, such as emergency licensing. Normally, these positions are filled by students graduating from educator preparation programs at colleges and universities or professionals who have completed an alternative licensure program. The annual number of new educators completing a Colorado preparation program has declined by about 11% between 2017-18 and 2021-22, the most recent five years for which both IHE and alternative licensure data are available. We continue to see areas of content and geographical shortage. Some of the open positions – especially in rural areas and in specific

endorsement areas including mathematics, early childhood and special education – end up either: (1) being filled by shortage mechanisms that include provisions for emergency authorizations, long-term substitutes, alternative licensure enrollees and retired educators; or (2) going completely unfilled during the year. The programs set in motion in the last six years were showing improvement in creating a stronger educator pipeline, declined during the pandemic and are beginning to gain traction again in the alternative licensure path. The need for educators, especially specialized service professionals, like school social workers and school psychologists, has increased significantly. Continued focus on recruiting and retaining our educators is a must.

What Progress Looks Like

- Initial educator licenses issued by CDE will increase from 4,490 in 2023 to the 2022 level of 5,958 in 2024.
- Statewide teacher turnover rate will return to the 2021 rate of 14.35% in 2024, down from the 2023 teacher turnover rate of 19.1%.





Organizational Excellence

By expanding the strength and capacity of our organizational health, we are able to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our supports to Colorado’s schools, districts and public libraries. As such, CDE is committed to continued and expanded excellence in our core programs and functions so we can effectively support each of our key initiatives. Teams across the department—including Accountability and Continuous Improvement; Accounting; Assessment; Budget; Capital Construction; Communications; Contracts & Purchasing; Educator Talent; Field Services; Human Resources;

Information Management Services; Policy & Legislative Relations; School Finance and Grants; School Nutrition; and School Transportation –are responsible for collaboratively executing essential programmatic and operational functions that allow the department to achieve our broader goals.

In order to ensure efficient and effective operations, CDE is focusing on improving internal systems and processes. The identified efforts for improvement include:

- Implementing a grants management system;
- Modernizing the data pipeline system;
- Comprehensively reviewing human resource processes and systems;
- Expanding financial supports to districts; and
- Providing districts with new data vehicles for financial transparency and nutrition.

Key Services

Distribute Funding to School Districts

Districts rely on CDE to allocate funds as part of its implementation of the School Finance Act and various other state and federal programs. Because district budgets depend on these funds, it is imperative that these allocations are timely, accurate and efficient. In addition, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Congress has passed three stimulus bills which include funding for education: the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (March 2020), the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act (December 2020) and the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act (March 2021). This has resulted in additional education funding of over \$2 billion for Colorado, the majority of which CDE is responsible for allocating and distributing to districts, as well as conducting on-going monitoring and reporting.

Strategic Operation

We will accurately and efficiently distribute state and federal funds to Colorado districts, including state and federal recovery funds related to COVID-19. By September 2024, CDE will establish integrated data systems (including a grants management system) to provide greater transparency into the allocation of funding to districts and schools and improve strategic decisions in those allocation processes.

Metric

- By June 2024, implement a grants management system that will support districts in applying for and managing grants awarded by CDE.

Key Services Cont.

Recruit and Retain Quality Employees

CDE’s Human Resources Office (HR) works to develop, implement and support programs and processes that add value for CDE employees. The services and supports provided by HR are designed to optimize employee empowerment, mutual trust, growth, learning, retention, diversity and accountability and create an overall great place to work! To recruit and retain quality employees, HR must provide appropriate systems and structures, talent engagement, talent lifecycle management, and support and growth for CDE employees.

Strategic Operation

We will connect CDE employees and our work to CDE’s values, creating a mission-driven and values-based culture. We will focus on building and streamlining hiring, onboarding, and other HR processes to ensure that we are best supporting CDE hiring managers in recruiting and retaining high-performing staff. We will continue refining our hybrid work policies to ensure that

we offer maximum flexibility to staff and leverage efficiencies through technology while meeting the business needs and obligations of CDE teams. In addition, we will revise CDE policies based on the CDE Workplace Equity assessment, in response to the recommendations from the third party evaluator and using the feedback from the CDE equity reviews. We will then develop metrics to track the progress of these new policies and efforts.

Metrics

- CDE will monitor and measure both retention and turnover rates and, by June 2024, establish metrics and establish annual goals for retaining high-quality staff.
- By June 2024, CDE will develop metrics specific to equity, diversity and inclusion in our HR processes.
- By June 2024, CDE will develop metrics and establish annual goals for expediting recruitment processes.

Create and Disseminate Academic Performance Reports

One of CDE’s primary responsibilities is to securely collect, store and publicly report key education data. CDE is prioritizing improving the functionality of the state’s Data Pipeline, as well as creating easy-to-understand reports to empower families and communities to make informed education-related decisions.

Strategic Operation

- Provide meaningful performance data to schools, districts and the public.
- Publicly provide accurate and timely school and district performance frameworks.
- Publicly provide accurate and timely student growth reports.
- Design, develop and launch an accessible, easy-to-understand school performance reporting system intended for the general public.
- Establish integrated data systems that improve the data submission experience for districts and schools.

Metric

- Ensure that 100% of district and school performance frameworks continue to be produced error-free annually.
- Continue to ensure that 100% of student growth reports will be produced error-free annually.
- Create a comprehensive and improved public data reporting system with first phase roll-outs by 2024.

Key Services Cont.

Efficiently Process Educator License Applications

The Educator Talent Division is responsible for the regulation, support, and development of educator quality and talent, including activities related to educator licensure. For the department to meet its key initiatives and broader goals, Colorado must have a strong pool of qualified, licensed professional educators to work in our schools and support student achievement. The licensing process must be efficient to make sure these educators are available to schools in a timely manner. With this in mind, the Educator Talent Division strives to continually decrease the amount of time it takes to process educator licenses. To further assist in supporting educators through the licensing process in a seamless, transparent and informative way, a new educator licensing system was launched, Colorado Online Licensing (COOL). The system has proven to streamline the process of applying for licensure while giving the applicant more real time information.

Strategic Operation

Maintain a minimal average cycle time between receiving an educator's completed application and issuing their license.

Metric

- The average cycle time – from receipt of a completed application and cleared fingerprint report to a license notification sent by email – will be consistently at 10 business days throughout 2023 and 2024.



Key Services Cont.

Provide Secure Technology, Applications and Information to CDE Staff and School District Employees

CDE’s Information Management Services Unit (IMS) supports the department and Colorado school districts through multiple services including providing network and Help Desk services; overseeing data collection, management and reporting; delivering project management; and ensuring information privacy and security. It is essential that the IMS teams provide secure tools for everyday use across CDE, while at the same time ensuring that technology can be used in a manner that reduces burden on school and district personnel.



Strategic Operation

We will support internal and external customer data needs and technology tools, while protecting state systems and sensitive information

- Enable secure data transfer across Colorado districts by implementing Sharepoint 365.
- Maintain industry-established security procedures by:
 - ◇ Implementing two-factor authentication for CDE supported applications
 - ◇ Implementing an upgraded Information Security Plan
 - ◇ Providing cyber security training to all permanent CDE employees
- Establish coordinated data systems (including an upgraded Data Pipeline, a grants management system and customer relations management system) to provide greater transparency into grant funding and associated processes, strengthen coordination and implementation of CDE supports for districts and to improve access to and visibility of integrated data.

Metric

- Implement a method for securely transferring data between LEAs by September 2024.
- Implement two-factor authentication for supported applications by June 2024.
- Following OIT’s approval of the department’s security plan, continue to implement security upgrades on an ongoing basis.
- Ensure 100% compliance with cyber security training yearly, by June 30.
- By September 2024, establish the systems necessary to implement and produce linked reporting for a grants management system and customer relations management system.

Key Services Cont.

Support Implementation of Existing and New Legislation, Rules and Regulations

Staff across the department are responsible for implementing new and existing legislation effectively and efficiently. In carrying out the duties prescribed by federal and state laws, the department collaborates across units to address challenges proactively and in a manner that does not create unnecessary burdens for districts, teachers or other stakeholders. We work to meet the intent of the legislation while maximizing coherence with existing structures and systems.



Strategic Operation

- Coordinate implementation of education laws while prioritizing CDE’s values.
- Collaborate with cross-department staff to understand and communicate the requirements of the law and state board rules to district staff, educators and other key stakeholders.
- Collaborate with cross-department staff to produce legislative reports that are accurate, informative, and drive continuous improvement.
- Conduct an equity analysis when developing new or revising departmental or external policies to consider possible biases in policies, potential burden created by policies, how to involve those who are impacted in decision-making, and strategies for reducing or mitigating negative impacts and reducing disparities.

Metric

- Develop and disseminate an integrated timeline document that provides superintendents with key dates for implementation of new and existing legislation annually by September 1.
- Respond to internal and external inquiries promptly, with timelines dependent on the amount of staff coordination required.
- Engage regularly with a broad set of stakeholders in order to gather feedback, listen to concerns, and provide updates on implementation of laws and CDE policy.

**2023-24 Regulatory Agendas for State Board of Education,
Capital Construction Assistance Board, and Facility Schools Board**

State Board of Education Regulatory Agenda

Basis for Adoption	Purpose	Rule	SBE Votes to Notice	Info Item on Board Agenda	Hearing Date	Tentative Adopt Date
HB 23-1231	Adjust priority considerations based on new legislation	1 CCR 301-106 Rules for the Administration of the 9th Grade Success Grant Program	June 2023	June 2023	August 2023	August 2023
C.R.S. 24-4-103	Add date to incorporation by reference based on recommendation from the Office of Legislative Legal Services (OLLS)	1 CCR 301-114 Rules for the Administration of the Healthy Meals for All Program	August 2023	August 2023	November 2023	November 2023
SB 23-007	Update definitions, per new legislation	1 CCR 301-98 Rules for Administration of the Adult Education and Literacy Grant	September 2023	September 2023	November 2023	December 2023
HB 22-1295	Update tuition cost/per-pupil revenue language to account for Universal Preschool Program	1 CCR 301-8 Rules for the Administration of The Exceptional Children's Educational Act	September 2023	September 2023	November 2023	December 2023
Administration of Education Accountability Act	Codify practices related to the process for establishing and assigning school codes	NEW 1 CCR 301-115 Rules for the Administration of School Codes	October 2023	October 2023	December 2023	December 2023/January 2024
HB 22-1295; SB 23-219; stakeholder feedback	Remove references to Colorado Preschool Program; amendments to funding for facility schools; amendments to modernize the rules to reflect the	1 CCR 301-39 Rules for the Administration of the Public School Finance Act of 1994	December 2023	November 2023; December 2023	February 2024	February 2024

**2023-24 Regulatory Agendas for State Board of Education,
Capital Construction Assistance Board, and Facility Schools Board**

Basis for Adoption	Purpose	Rule	SBE Votes to Notice	Info Item on Board Agenda	Hearing Date	Tentative Adopt Date
	educational delivery system, including feedback from the HB 1215 Task Force					
SB 23-087; SB 23-258	Amend rules to align with recent legislation for teacher apprenticeship as well as updates for special service provider pathways.	1 CCR 301-37 Rules for Administration of the Educator Licensing Act	January 2024	January 2024	March 2024	April 2024
HB 23-1231	Amend rules to include updates to multiple endorsement areas including inclusion of math standards in existing endorsements.	1 CCR 301-101 Rules for Administration of Educator License Endorsements	January 2024	January 2024	March 2024	April 2024
SB 23-219	Amend rules to address tuition costs rates for approved facility schools	1 CCR 301-8 Rules for the Administration of The Exceptional Children's Educational Act	March 2024	March 2024	May 2024	June 2024
HB 23-1212	Incorporate apprenticeship models	1 CCR 301-81 Rules Governing Standards for Individualized Career and Academic Plans	June 2024	June 2024	August 2024	September 2024

**2023-24 Regulatory Agendas for State Board of Education,
Capital Construction Assistance Board, and Facility Schools Board**

Capital Construction Assistance Board Regulatory Agenda

Basis for Adoption	Purpose	Rule	Notice Date	Hearing Date	Tentative Adopt Date
SB 23-220; SB 23-287	Amend rules to align with recent legislation	1 CCR 303-3 Rules for the Administration of the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) Program	September 2023	November 2023	November 2023

**2023-24 Regulatory Agendas for State Board of Education,
Capital Construction Assistance Board, and Facility Schools Board**

Facility Schools Board Regulatory Agenda

Basis for Adoption	Purpose	Rule	Notice Date	Hearing Date	Tentative Adopt Date
SB 23-219	Incorporate new approval process and accreditation criteria for facility schools	1 CCR 304-1 Rules for the Administration of the Facility Schools Act	October 2023	December 2023	December 2023

2024 SBE LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

The Colorado State Board of Education is committed to working with the Governor, the Colorado Legislature, school districts and other stakeholders to ensure equity and opportunity for every student, every step of the way.

By working together to keep all Colorado students as the focus, we believe in our collective ability to establish a vision and a plan to achieve a world class education system where all students graduate ready for college and/or careers, and are prepared to be productive citizens of Colorado.

STUDENT SUCCESS – *We support policy that...*

- Provides support for Colorado students to accelerate pandemic recovery and increase student academic performance, attendance and mental health.
- Encompasses the continuity of sequenced, coherent, and high-quality education from kindergarten to career or higher education.
- Ensures all students have access to the quality instruction needed to meet the Colorado Academic Standards and drive student-directed learning experiences towards essential skills.
- Provides opportunities for children to participate in programs which increase their readiness to learn in kindergarten, while ensuring that the Colorado Department of Education is able to fulfill its legal obligations under state and federal laws for children with Individual Education Plans (IEPs).
- Provides opportunities for kindergarteners to participate in programs which increase their reading readiness for first grade.
- Expands students' access to quality, evidence-based reading instruction and continuing development of literacy skills.
- Expands students' access to quality, evidence-informed, data-driven supports in math and science.
- Supports districts' ability to expand workforce readiness and multiple post-secondary pathways while in high school.
- Prioritizes closing achievement gaps and advancing all students' academic growth and achievement as appropriate for each local context.
- Provide resources and supports to districts for training and tools to create safe and inclusive learning environments.
- Supports cross-agency partnerships, collaborations and investments in mental health resources and supports for students and educators.
- Acknowledges that one of the most significant factors in student performance is a high-quality educator by prioritizing educator recruitment and retention to ensure a well-prepared and stable teaching workforce.
- Strives for an accountability system that is transparent and uniform, measures student growth, prioritizes district support, and meets federal requirements.

DATA COLLECTION & TRANSPARENCY – *We support policy that...*

- Minimizes and streamlines the administrative burden of data collection requirements on districts while balancing the need for robust data to inform educational decision making.
- Provides protection for individual student data in terms of collection, storage and transmission.
- Invests in secure and efficient data collection and reporting systems.

- Provides clear and reasonable direction regarding the implementation of the Colorado Open Meetings Law and the Colorado Open Records Act that preserves transparency and the public's access to information.

CHOICE AND ENGAGEMENT – *We support policy that...*

- Provides every student with high quality educational choices and varied learning experiences to best meet the student's individual learning needs.
- Ensures parents have access to information about education programs, their child's academic achievement, and the opportunities to participate in related discussions and decisions on behalf of their child.
- Supports districts in their efforts to build robust family, community, and industry partnerships to ensure all students develop lifelong learning skills.

FLEXIBILITY – *We support policy that...*

- Provides flexibility to schools and districts that deliver high quality, evidence-based services with improved student outcomes.
- Preserves flexibility for the Colorado Department of Education – rather than policy enacted through prescriptive statute – to deliver high quality education services while maintaining accountability to Colorado taxpayers.
- Provides flexibility in the way school districts meet reporting and implementation requirements in order to maximize student outcomes and minimize the burden on district staff.
- Keeps Colorado students' best interests in mind while anticipating and responding to new federal and state law.

SCHOOL FINANCE – *We support policy that...*

- Leads to the development of an equitable and comprehensive Colorado school finance system that meets the Constitutional obligation of providing a thorough and uniform educational system of free public schools throughout the state.
- Clearly communicates with, and engages the public around school finance.
- Takes into account state and local contribution capacity to ensure all students have equitable educational opportunities.
- Enhances and improves the Permanent Fund and protects it from further depletion.
- Supports the Colorado Department of Education's ongoing effort to streamline and enhance grants processes to better meet students' needs.
- Ensures grant programs include clear and measurable metrics of success and funding for a thorough evaluation and review.

While the State Board of Education supports policies as outlined above, we also encourage the General Assembly to prioritize a number of considerations when evaluating potential legislation:

- Weigh the administrative burden that implementing new policies places on educators, school districts and the Department of Education against the potential impact on student performance.
- Provide careful review and consideration of data-informed and evidence-based practices to maximize the impact of the investment of state resources and policies on students.

- Minimize unfunded mandates placed on schools so that school funding can be preserved for educational expenses that support student learning and performance.

STATE BOARD AUTHORITY

The Colorado State Board of Education is responsible for the general supervision of 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, the State Board of Education supports policy that recognizes its rulemaking and policy making authority, including, but not limited to academic standards, instructional time requirements and communicating priorities for the Colorado Department of Education and its staff.



CDE Competitive State Grants Inventory

Grant Name by Subject Area (includes link to grant program's web page)	FY 2022-23 Distribution Amount	Statutory Reporting Requirement ¹	Starting Year	Type of Grant
Drop-out Prevention				
Colorado Student Re-Engagement Grant	\$1,943,293	Yes	2016	Competitive
Expelled and At Risk Students	\$9,179,535	Yes	1997	Competitive
Ninth Grade Success Grant Program	\$729,371	Yes	2020	Competitive
Educator Workforce				
Educator Recruitment And Retention Program	\$4,984,612	Yes	2021	Competitive
Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant	\$3,000,000	Yes	2014	Competitive
School Leadership Program (Principal Leadership Institute)	\$89,231	Yes	2020	Competitive
Exceptional Student Services				
Gifted Educational Universal Screening And Qualified Personnel	\$2,130,859	No	2016	Competitive
Special Education Fiscal Advisory Committee: High Cost	\$4,000,000	Yes	2006	Reimbursement
Health				
Behavioral Health Care Professionals Grant Program (includes SLFRF²)	\$21,254,760	Yes	2014	Competitive / Reimbursement (SLFRF)
Comprehensive Health Education Grant (includes Student Wellness Grants)	\$875,000	No	1990	Competitive
K-5 Social and Emotional Health Act	\$2,337,154	Yes (no report yet)	2020	Pilot
Menstrual Hygiene Products Accessibility Grant	\$100,000	Yes	2021	Competitive
Physical Education Instruction Pilot Program³	\$238,000	Yes	2020	Competitive
Instruction				
Colorado Academic Accelerator Grant Program	n/a ⁴	Yes (no report yet)	2023	Competitive
Colorado High-Impact Tutoring	\$4,843,812	Yes	2021	Competitive
Computer Science Education Grant	\$250,000	Yes	2020	Competitive
Computer Science Education Grant For Teachers	\$402,656	Yes	2017	Competitive
Dyslexia Pilot Program	\$127,973	Yes	2020	Competitive
Early Literacy Grant	\$8,726,918	Yes	2012	Competitive
More Options				
Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee	\$524,570	Yes	2018	Reimbursement
Adult Education And Literacy (includes Opportunities for Credential Attainment)	\$1,621,144	Yes	2014	Competitive
Adult High School Program	n/a ⁴	Yes (no report yet)	2023	Competitive
Automatic Enrollment In Advanced Course Grant Program	\$220,888	Yes	2019	Competitive

1. If marked "Yes", cell includes link to most recent report.

2. The SLFRF portion of the Behavioral Health Care Professional grant funds allows for reimbursement to grantees after 2022-23.

3. The FY 2022-23 distribution amount for the PE pilot was appropriated in 2019.

4. These grants were created during the 2023 legislative session and only started distributing funds in FY 2023-24.



CDE Competitive State Grants Inventory

Grant Name by Subject Area (includes link to grant program's web page)	FY 2022-23 Distribution Amount	Statutory Reporting Requirement ¹	Starting Year	Type of Grant
More Options (continued)				
Career Development Incentive Program	\$4,286,089	Yes	2016	Reimbursement
Colorado Career Advisor Training Program	\$971,922	No	2022	Competitive
Concurrent Enrollment Expansion And Innovation Grant Program	\$1,433,384	Yes	2019	Competitive
FAFSA and CAFSA Completion Grant¹	\$930,446	Yes (no report yet)	2022	Competitive
School Counselor Corps Grant	\$11,853,034	Yes	2009	Competitive
Quality Schools				
Local Accountability Systems	\$448,172	Yes	2019	Competitive
School Transformation Grant (part of the EASI	\$5,782,984	Yes	2014	Competitive
Other				
BEST Capital Construction Grant	\$110,000,000	Yes	2008	Competitive
Bullying Prevention And Education Grant	\$1,928,844	Yes	2015	Competitive
Education Stability Grant	\$825,000	Yes	2019	Competitive
Facility Schools operational services grant	n/a ²	Yes (no report yet)	2023	Competitive
Local School Food Purchasing Programs	\$675,255	Yes	2019	Competitive
State Grants to Libraries	\$2,902,645	Yes	2014	Competitive
Grand Total	\$209,617,551			

1. The FY 2022-23 allocation for the FAFSA/CAFSA grant is an estimate. State statute allows funding to be spent over three years, and the department is currently reviewing the first round of applications for this grant. As a result, CDE has yet to determine the exact amount that will be allocated in year 1 (FY 2022-23).

2. This grant was created during the 2023 legislative session and only started distributing funds in FY 2023-24.

FY 2024-25 Summary of Change Requests

Schedule 10

Request Name	Interagency Review	Requires Legislation	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	Cash Funds	Reappropriated	Federal
Non-Prioritized Request								
NP-01 Annual Fleet Vehicle Request	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$3,571	0.0	\$3,571	\$0	\$0	\$0
NP-02 CORE Operating Resources	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$11,220	0.0	\$5,609	\$4,346	\$1,265	\$0
NP-03 DPA Central Services Omnibus Request	No Other Agency Impact	Yes	\$562,622	0.0	\$562,622	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal Non-Prioritized Request			\$577,413	0.0	\$571,802	\$4,346	\$1,265	\$0

Prioritized Request								
R-01 State Share of Total Program Increase	No Other Agency Impact	Yes	\$305,455,136	0.0	\$75,000,000	\$230,455,136	\$0	\$0
R-02 Categorical Programs Inflation Increase	No Other Agency Impact	Yes	\$24,897,897	0.0	\$0	\$24,897,897	\$0	\$0
R-03 CSI Mill Levy Equalization	No Other Agency Impact	Yes	(\$11,876,574)	0.0	(\$27,000,000)	\$42,123,426	(\$27,000,000)	\$0
R-04 Human Resources Capacity	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$298,662	0.9	\$298,662	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-05 School Finance System Modernization	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$200,000	0.0	\$200,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-06 ESSER Staff Closeout	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$571,416	0.0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$571,416
R-07 Facility School Baseline Funding Model Inflation	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$2,425,756	0.0	\$0	\$2,425,756	\$0	\$0
R-08 Facility Schools & RCCI Inclusion HSMA	No Other Agency Impact	Yes	\$0	0.0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-09 State Board of Education Operating	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$133,250	0.0	\$133,250	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-10 CDIP Enhancement	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$2,000,000	0.0	\$2,000,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-11 STEM Extended Learning Time Programming	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$8,000,000	0.9	\$0	\$8,000,000	\$0	\$0
R-12 Proactive Intervention Expansion	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$500,000	0.0	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-13 Ed Talent Mentorship Grant Program	No Other Agency Impact	Yes	\$3,132,271	1.2	\$3,132,271	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-14 Payroll Office Support	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$130,056	0.9	\$130,056	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-15 CDE Facility Needs	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$95,662	0.9	\$95,662	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-16 BEST Term-Limited FTE Continuation	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$7,423	0.0	\$0	\$7,423	\$0	\$0
R-17 Colfax Security	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$89,241	0.0	\$89,241	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-18 CSDB Annual Teacher Salary Increase	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$504,053	0.0	\$504,053	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-19 CSDB Deans of Deaf & Blind Schools	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$201,892	1.6	\$201,892	\$0	\$0	\$0
R-20 CSDB Preschool Personnel	No Other Agency Impact	No	\$166,575	1.8	\$166,575	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subtotal Prioritized Request			\$336,932,716	8.2	\$55,451,662	\$307,909,638	(\$27,000,000)	\$571,416


Total for Department of Education			\$337,510,129	8.2	\$56,023,464	\$307,913,984	(\$26,998,735)	\$571,416
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Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-01 State Share of Total Program Increase

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24
 OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25
 _____ X _____ Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$5,020,028,360	\$0	\$5,020,028,360	\$305,455,136	\$468,327,419
FTE		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total of All Line Items Impacted by Change Request	GF	\$4,238,686,861	\$0	\$4,238,686,861	\$75,000,000	\$270,000,000
	CF	\$781,341,499	\$0	\$781,341,499	\$230,455,136	\$198,327,419
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$5,020,028,360	\$0	\$5,020,028,360	\$305,455,136	\$468,327,419
03. School District Operations, (A) Public School Finance, (1)	FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Public School Finance - State Share to Districts'	GF	\$4,238,686,861	\$0	\$4,238,686,861	\$75,000,000	\$270,000,000
Total Program Funding	CF	\$781,341,499	\$0	\$781,341,499	\$230,455,136	\$198,327,419
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0


Auxiliary Data		
Requires Legislation?	YES	
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s: No Other Agency Impact

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-02 Categorical Programs Inflation Increase

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

X

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
			Request			
Total		\$666,743,429	\$0	\$668,335,084	\$24,897,897	\$24,897,897
FTE		73.1	0.0	73.1	0.0	0.0
GF		\$163,765,474	\$0	\$163,765,474	\$0	\$0
CF		\$334,642,458	\$0	\$335,748,358	\$24,897,897	\$24,897,897
RF		\$229,255	\$0	\$229,255	\$0	\$0
FF		\$168,106,242	\$0	\$168,591,997	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
			Request			
Total		\$497,872,233	\$0	\$498,341,267	\$14,897,764	\$14,897,764
03. School District Operations, (B)	FTE	63.0	0.0	63.0	0.0	0.0
Categorical Programs, (1) District Programs Required by Statute -	GF	\$93,572,347	\$0	\$93,572,347	\$0	\$0
Special Education	CF	\$247,285,957	\$0	\$247,285,957	\$14,897,764	\$14,897,764
Programs for Children with Disabilities	RF	\$191,090	\$0	\$191,090	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$156,822,839	\$0	\$157,291,873	\$0	\$0

Total		\$42,577,501	\$0	\$42,594,222	\$4,049,824	\$4,049,824
03. School District Operations, (B)	FTE	4.6	0.0	4.6	0.0	0.0
Categorical Programs, (1) District Programs Required by Statute -	GF	\$3,101,598	\$0	\$3,101,598	\$0	\$0
English Language Proficiency Program	CF	\$28,192,500	\$0	\$28,192,500	\$4,049,824	\$4,049,824
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$11,283,403	\$0	\$11,300,124	\$0	\$0

Total		\$68,867,402	\$0	\$68,875,078	\$3,644,973	\$3,644,973
03. School District Operations, (B)	FTE	2.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.0
Categorical Programs, (2) Other Categorical Programs - Public School Transportation	GF	\$36,922,227	\$0	\$36,922,227	\$0	\$0
	CF	\$31,907,010	\$0	\$31,914,686	\$3,644,973	\$3,644,973
	RF	\$38,165	\$0	\$38,165	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Total	\$30,514,944	\$0	\$30,514,944	\$1,809,554	\$1,809,554
03. School District Operations, (B)	FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Categorical Programs, (2) Other Categorical	GF	\$17,792,850	\$0	\$17,792,850	\$0	\$0
Programs - Trnsfr to DHE for Dist of State Asst for Career and Tech Ed	CF	\$12,722,094	\$0	\$12,722,094	\$1,809,554	\$1,809,554
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Total	\$14,677,532	\$0	\$15,750,903	\$496,819	\$496,819
03. School District Operations, (B)	FTE	1.5	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0
Categorical Programs, (2) Other Categorical	GF	\$5,500,000	\$0	\$5,500,000	\$0	\$0
Programs - Special Education Programs for Gifted and Talented Children	CF	\$9,177,532	\$0	\$10,250,903	\$496,819	\$496,819
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Total	\$9,499,542	\$0	\$9,513,437	(\$8,711)	(\$8,711)
03. School District Operations, (B)	FTE	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0
Categorical Programs, (2) Other Categorical	GF	\$5,788,807	\$0	\$5,788,807	\$0	\$0
Programs - Expelled and At-risk Student Services Grant Program	CF	\$3,710,735	\$0	\$3,724,630	(\$8,711)	(\$8,711)
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Total	\$1,599,991	\$0	\$1,599,991	\$5,347	\$5,347
03. School District Operations, (B)	FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Categorical Programs, (2) Other Categorical	GF	\$787,645	\$0	\$787,645	\$0	\$0
Programs - Small Attendance Center Aid	CF	\$812,346	\$0	\$812,346	\$5,347	\$5,347
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

	Total	\$1,134,284	\$0	\$1,145,242	\$2,327	\$2,327
03. School District Operations, (B)	FTE	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0
Categorical Programs, (2) Other Categorical	GF	\$300,000	\$0	\$300,000	\$0	\$0
Programs - Comprehensive Health Education	CF	\$834,284	\$0	\$845,242	\$2,327	\$2,327
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	YES		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-03 CSI Mill Levy Equalization

Dept. Approval By: Andra Denton

Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter

Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

X

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$54,364,000	\$0	\$54,364,000	(\$11,876,574)	(\$11,876,574)
FTE		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total of All Line Items Impacted by Change Request	GF	\$27,000,000	\$0	\$27,000,000	(\$27,000,000)	(\$27,000,000)
	CF	\$364,000	\$0	\$364,000	\$42,123,426	\$42,123,426
	RF	\$27,000,000	\$0	\$27,000,000	(\$27,000,000)	(\$27,000,000)
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$54,364,000	\$0	\$54,364,000	(\$11,876,574)	(\$11,876,574)
10. Charter School Institute, (A) Charter School Institute, (1)	FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Charter School Institute - CSI Mill Levy Equalization	GF	\$27,000,000	\$0	\$27,000,000	(\$27,000,000)	(\$27,000,000)
	CF	\$364,000	\$0	\$364,000	\$42,123,426	\$42,123,426
	RF	\$27,000,000	\$0	\$27,000,000	(\$27,000,000)	(\$27,000,000)
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data

Requires Legislation? YES

Type of Request? Education Prioritized Request

Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:


No Other Agency Impact

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-04: Human Resources Capacity

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24
 OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25
 _____ X _____ Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$6,320,641	\$0	\$6,250,225	\$298,662	\$296,433
FTE		43.2	0.0	43.2	0.9	1.0
Total of All Line Items Impacted by Change Request	GF	\$3,015,824	\$0	\$2,622,015	\$298,662	\$296,433
	CF	\$186,807	\$0	\$188,595	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,439,615	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$6,320,641	\$0	\$6,250,225	\$298,662	\$296,433
01. Management and Administration, (A)	FTE	43.2	0.0	43.2	0.9	1.0
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items, (1)	GF	\$3,015,824	\$0	\$2,622,015	\$298,662	\$296,433
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items - General	CF	\$186,807	\$0	\$188,595	\$0	\$0
Department and Program	RF	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,439,615	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data		
Requires Legislation?	NO	
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s: No Other Agency Impact



*Department Priority: R-04
 Human Resources Capacity*

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$6,320,641	\$298,662	\$296,433
FTE	42.6	0.9	1.0
General Fund	\$3,015,824	\$298,662	\$296,433
Cash Funds	\$186,807	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) requests \$298,662 of General Fund and 0.9 FTE in FY 2024-25 to hire an additional HR FTE and to implement a cloud-based Human Resource Information System. The Department further requests \$296,433 General Fund and 1.0 FTE to annualize the FTE and the ongoing license costs in FY 2025-26 and beyond. The Department currently operates without any meaningful technology assistance for HR files or other HR related activities and is encountering a substantial increase in overall HR workload. An HRIS system would provide the functionality needed for core HR processes such as employee data management, record keeping, data reporting and metrics, performance management, onboarding and possibly others while the new FTE would enable CDE to meet the increased workload. This request is to fund a basic cloud based system to enable a minimal level of HR functionality automation within CDE.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
No	Positive	No	22-2-112, C.R.S.

Current Program

The CDE HR Office manages critical personnel data, personnel actions, and reporting by using a combination of various platforms while guiding supervisors in recruiting, hiring, performance management, FMLA leave, and other human resource functions. The Department currently has 4.0 FTE within the HR Office for the approximately 500 FTE (when including federal funds) within the department.

The Department mainly uses spreadsheets and data extracts from payroll—both of which involve lots of data manipulation and manual entry to support. CDE does not currently have the capacity to track critical pieces of personnel information such as education, professional development, training, etc., nor is the HR Office able to provide this information to supervisors, as the department does not currently maintain any automated HRIS system.

Problem or Opportunity

The State continues to use severely outdated systems for critical processes such as payroll, and has never utilized a true Human Resources Information System (HRIS). Currently, the State has a payroll modernization project in the works; however, this statewide effort currently does not include any module for personnel management.

Historically, the only system to provide statewide HR data has been the Central Payroll Processing System (CPPS); however, it was never designed for nor can it function as a true HRIS as it is only designed to process payroll transactions. Every state agency has a different method of recording and tracking personnel data based on the resources/funding they have available. Many state agencies have created their own system to manage the hiring process and track employee data, CDE currently does not have any such system.

The main functions that require an HRIS for recording, tracking and reporting are:

- Personnel Change Workflows
- HR Metrics and Reporting

- Performance Management Records
- Leave Tracking (including FMLA, PTO, and all other forms of leave)
- Employee Education and Certifications
- Employee Training

The HR Unit’s workload has grown significantly over the past several years and while CDE recently received some additional HR resources (recent decision item - R-04 Department Infrastructure from FY 2022-23), the significant surge in workload, coupled with the absence of automated systems for tasks that should be ideally managed by an HRIS, continues to strain the HR Unit’s capacity to fulfill the Department’s requirements. It further impacts our ability to retain qualified staff (HR and otherwise) and creates challenges for the HR unit in doing the meaningful work necessary to guide, advise, and support managers and supervisors.

Post-pandemic, the number of recruitments at CDE has spiked. Table 1 details the increase in total recruitments over the past few years. Pre-pandemic, CDE averaged about 47 recruitments annually compared with an average of about 138 recruitments in the post-pandemic economy (a close to a 200% increase).

Table 1: Annual Recruitments

	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	FY 2020-21	FY 2021-22	FY 2022-23
Recruitments	20	50	70	81	184	148

While FY2021-22 marked our peak hiring year, recruitment levels persist at heightened levels, adding to the workload of CDE’s HR unit. The State is currently in the process of implementing the new statewide payroll system, however The State has not indicated any intent to create a singular time keeping or HR system for all agencies. Hence, an HRIS is a critical operating system needed to effectively and efficiently manage personnel. Continued use of Google Sheets, Excel spreadsheets, and other ad-hoc databases as mechanisms to track and report personnel data is inefficient and exacerbates the growing challenges.

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

A significant increase in workload, coupled with a lack of technology, has resulted in an overall capacity shortage within the CDE HR Office in comparison to the organization’s overall needs. To increase capacity and meet this need, the Department proposes hiring one additional FTE at the HR Specialist IV level and procuring a cloud based Human Resource Information System. Procuring a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) will provide the technology needed to effectively and efficiently manage and perform critical HR functions. Those functions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Platform to create, monitor, track, and report employee performance management.

- Leave Tracking (including FMLA, PTO, and all other forms of leave)
- Platform to initiate, approve, track, and report all personnel actions.
- Platform to generate critical HR Metrics such as:
 - Turnover (by division, units, offices, etc.)
 - Equal Pay Compliance
 - EDI / Demographic Reporting
 - Succession planning data
- Platform that allows all supervisors to have visibility of their staff's information such as wages, performance, education, etc.
- Track and report employee education and certifications
- Platform to provide, track, and report employee training.

Current systems (ad hoc spreadsheets, smartsheets, NeoGov transactions, etc.) are not connected and in some cases are either spreadsheets or don't actually exist (much of the data is not tracked due to no system to track). Procuring an HRIS system will allow the department to begin to track employee data points and better inform the overall decision making process.

The hiring of one additional FTE would still put CDE at the low end of where a sampling of other state agencies sits with FTE to HR staff ratios. The large increase in the number of staff recruitments emphasizes the need to increase the current ratio in order to begin to meet the recruitment needs and hire staff in a timely manner.

As further evidence of the current need, an informal survey of four other state agencies revealed that they averaged an HR-FTE ratio of approximately 1.5 per 100 staff members, in contrast to CDE's current ratio, which falls below 1 HR staff member per 100 employees. HR website Indeed.com indicates that ratios for organizations range from 3.4 for small organizations to 1.03 for large organizations, with an average of 2.57. Increasing the number of HR staff to 5, from the current 4, would put CDE at just over 1 HR staff per 100 employees.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

N/A

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

The availability and increased visibility of comprehensive employee data in a singular system will allow CDE leadership to view, analyze, and make sound and equitable decisions. This would include, but not is not limited to, decisions related to equitable compensation and promotional decisions.

Assumptions and Calculations

Please see the [attached workbook](#) for the cost estimates for the request, including FTE cost for the HR Specialist IV position.

This request is based on initial data from potential vendors. Costs could vary based on a final RFP and official proposals. However, the department believes that these costs should be representative of the costs that would be incurred for a basic HRIS setup.

Any HRIS system procured through this effort will not include a time and effort system as any time and effort system would need to be able to interface with the new Payroll system currently being implemented. Since this system has not yet been fully implemented and since there is a moratorium on any new implementations, this component will not be included at this time. The expectation is that CDE will implement a time and effort system once the moratorium is lifted and details of the new system are known.

The costs for the HRIS system are anticipated to be:

Table 2: Implementation Costs

Contract Project Manager to oversee Implementation	\$93,000 (six months @ \$90/hour)
Activation Costs	\$15,000
Data conversion/linking of systems	\$50,000
Initial Licensing Costs	\$50,000
Total	\$208,000

Table 3: Ongoing Maintenance Costs

Annual Licensing Costs	\$198,000 (\$16,500/month)
Total Ongoing Costs	\$198,000

Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental


N/A

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-05: School Finance System Modernization

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

_____ X _____

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$12,243,891	\$0	\$1,871,835	\$200,000	\$0
FTE		15.5	0.0	14.7	0.0	0.0
GF		\$1,737,074	\$0	\$1,737,473	\$200,000	\$0
CF		\$10,506,817	\$0	\$134,362	\$0	\$0
RF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$12,243,891	\$0	\$1,871,835	\$200,000	\$0
FTE		15.5	0.0	14.7	0.0	0.0
03. School District Operations, (A) Public School Finance, (1)	GF	\$1,737,074	\$0	\$1,737,473	\$200,000	\$0
Public School Finance - Administration	CF	\$10,506,817	\$0	\$134,362	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact



*Department Priority: R-05
 School Finance System Modernization*

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$12,243,891	\$200,000	\$0
FTE	15.5	0.0	0.0
General Fund	\$1,737,074	\$200,000	\$0
Cash Funds	\$10,506,817	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado Department of Education(CDE) has an internally developed School Finance System which supports the administration of the Public School Finance Act of 1994 and the Public School Transportation Funding. This system is used to determine the monthly school finance distributions for school districts, totalling \$9.1 Billion in FY 2023-24 as well as the \$69 Million in School Transportation Funding.

The Department is requesting one-time funding to investigate the feasibility of modernizing the State Equal and Audit modules of the School Finance System. The first step in this process will be to conduct an assessment and discovery process to develop a design approach and a detailed project plan for system functionality and sustainability. The Department estimates that this first phase will cost approximately \$200,000 for a contractor to perform this work.

Requires	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another	Statutory Authority
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Legislation		Department?	
No	Neutral	No	22-54-115, C.R.S.

Current Program

Under the provisions of the Public School Finance Act of 1994 (Section 22-54-115, C.R.S.), the State Board of Education is responsible for determining the amount of funding which local school districts receive monthly from the state. The Colorado Department of Education calculates the monthly entitlement amounts in accordance with the definitions and funding formula outlined in statute. These calculations are completed through a combination of spreadsheets and an internally developed School Finance System.

The internal School Finance System was implemented approximately 10 years ago. This system incorporates the initial monthly entitlements pursuant to the Public School Finance Act as well as any funding adjustments resulting from audit findings related to the pupil counts and At-Risk student counts.

In order to accomplish this, the system is split into three distinct modules:

- State Equal - This module is used to conduct limited calculations of district funding. Currently relies heavily on spreadsheet data uploads rather than database querying.
- Audit - This module is used to determine funding adjustments when input changes are identified through the regular pupil count audits. These changes impact the district funding from the State Equal module and may result in districts receiving additional funding or owing state funds back to CDE.
- Transportation - This module is used to do a basic calculation of transportation funding. Since no changes have been made to legislation regarding this funding, this portion of the system remains stable.

In recent years, changes to the School Finance Act, such as full-day kindergarten, the inclusion of reduced lunch in the at-risk funding and the English Language Learner (ELL) factor, has highlighted the inflexibility of the initial system build and has compromised the State Equal and Audit modules of the system. This has resulted in almost complete reliance on manual spreadsheets for calculations and manual processing for audit adjustments. Any changes to the Public School Finance Act are difficult if not impossible to incorporate into the system. Therefore, the upcoming potential changes due to the inclusion of a new at-risk measure pursuant to HB22-1202 and the work of the task force created by SB23-287 are anticipated to compound these existing issues.

The School Finance System is a critical component in fulfilling the Department's responsibility for administration of the Public School Finance Act. Given the complexity of the school finance calculations and the amount of funding distributed through the monthly payments, it is imperative to have a reliable automated system, rather than reliance on spreadsheets to perform these

calculations. Further, the calculation spreadsheets are not designed to incorporate audit adjustments when changes are identified to student counts and should only be utilized as a means of “checks and balances”.

Problem or Opportunity

There have been ongoing performance issues with the internal School Finance System in recent years due to changes in legislation. Subsequent to the implementation of new legislation, the inflexibility of the existing system has made it impossible to consistently produce reliable calculations, requiring almost complete reliance on spreadsheets for calculations and manual processing for audit adjustments.

For instance, the change to Full-Day Kindergarten, the inclusion of Reduced Lunch Students in At-Risk and the new ELL Factor, have all created significant challenges to the smooth operation of the School Finance System. The current system requires manual population of At-Risk and ELL counts into the system, making it much more vulnerable to human errors. Additionally, to date, the inclusion of the English Language Learners counts has not been incorporated into the audit true-up calculations in the School Finance System. The new At-Risk Measure will also be a challenge to incorporate into the existing Audit module.

The current system’s ability to effectively adapt to legislative changes in the Public School Finance Act is inadequate and requires immediate improvement. An automated system should be able to populate student counts based upon existing data reducing the potential of human error as a result of reliance on numerous spreadsheets to run complex calculations.

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

The Department believes that it is crucial to investigate modernization of the internal School Finance System. The first step in this process should be to conduct an assessment and discovery process to develop a design approach and a detailed project plan for system functionality and sustainability. The Department estimates that this first phase will cost approximately \$200,000 for a contractor to perform this work.

The results of the first phase would provide cost estimates to implement the identified recommended system functionality. These would be included in future budget requests as appropriate. Hence, the proposed timeline is to conduct an assessment and discovery process in FY 24-25, based upon which a FY 25-26 decision item/Budget Amendment will be presented. The Department would hope to have a functional automated system to be in place as early as July 2026, until then CDE will continue manual processes.

Furthermore, one potential approach may be to leverage the investment made by the Legislature to have the modeling tool created for the state’s funding formula. This tool allows flexibility to funding

models. It is possible that this system could be leveraged and expanded upon for use in the determination of funding distributions and subsequent audit adjustments.

Without the investment of funding to evaluate the best approach to modernize the School Finance System, the Department will be forced to continue with maintaining an unstable system and primarily relying upon spreadsheets for school finance calculations and manual processes to incorporate audit adjustments.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

N/A

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

This request is equity-neutral. The system is a tool to inform policy makers of potential equity impacts of various policy decisions but does not directly impact equity. The School Finance System is a critical system for the distribution of \$9.1 Billion in funding annually. The School Finance formula incorporates funding for historically underserved, marginalized students through the At-Risk and ELL funding. These aspects of the formula have changed in recent years, but have not been adequately incorporated into the School Finance System.

Assumptions and Calculations

In 2019, CDE hired a vendor to estimate the potential cost of modernizing the current School Finance system. Based on this potential cost estimate and current market conditions, the department assumes a contract to evaluate the feasibility of modifying the current system and creating a project plan for remediating it or developing a new system will cost approximately \$200,000. Any remaining funds from the first phase of project will be carried forward to the following phase.

Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental

N/A

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-06: ESSER Staff Closeout

Dept. Approval By: 

Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter

Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

X

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$694,328,011	\$0	\$694,751,431	\$571,416	\$0
FTE		56.1	0.0	56.1	0.0	0.0
GF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
CF		\$2,501,087	\$0	\$2,501,087	\$0	\$0
RF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FF		\$691,826,924	\$0	\$692,250,344	\$571,416	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$694,328,011	\$0	\$694,751,431	\$571,416	\$0
03. School District Operations, (C) Federal and Other Direct Support, (1) Federal and Other Direct Support - Appropriated Sponsored Programs	FTE	56.1	0.0	56.1	0.0	0.0
	GF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	CF	\$2,501,087	\$0	\$2,501,087	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$691,826,924	\$0	\$692,250,344	\$571,416	\$0

Auxiliary Data

Requires Legislation? NO

Type of Request? Education Prioritized Request

Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:

No Other Agency Impact



**Department Priority: R-06
 ESSER Staff Closeout**

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$694,328,011	\$571,416	\$0
FTE	56.1	0.0	0.0
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cash Funds	\$2,501,087	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$691,826,924	\$571,416	\$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado Department of Education is requesting \$571,416 in one-time federal SLFRF funds accrued by the state to support staff in the close out of ARPA-ESSER grants. This request is for a one-time appropriation to facilitate the closeout of ESSER projects and the creation of final reports after the ESSER funds no longer are available to state staff to charge to.

The department has several positions with duties related to ARPA-ESSER funding that will continue beyond the 9/30/2024 ARPA-ESSER grant expiration date. These duties include finalizing monitoring, processing reimbursements, closing out the grant, and conducting an evaluation of the grant program. Additionally, final reporting is due to the US Department of Education on 6/30/2025.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
No	Neutral	No	N/A

Current Program

The department has received more than \$1.8B in ESSER funding dating to March 2020. These funds have been allocated across the state to support a variety of pandemic related education initiatives and funded both temporary and permanent positions at the department. These positions have provided technical assistance to grantees, reviewed and approved budgets, processed reimbursement payments, conducted monitoring along with all other grant related activities.

Through the period ending May 30, 2023 the department has expended \$5.7M in payroll costs and anticipates expending an additional \$3.3M through September 30, 2024.

Problem or Opportunity

The conditions for receiving ESSER funds include mandatory monitoring and reporting as well as issuing grants on a reimbursement basis. These requirements necessitate work that can only occur after the expiration of grant funds on September 30, 2024.

Grantees will continue to be reimbursed for grant expenditures through 12/31/2024. The final reporting window will open in March 2025 with a due date of 6/30/2025. The department will taper staff off ESSER funds during FY23-24 and FY24-25, maintaining the minimum number of staff possible beyond September 30, 2024.

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

The department proposes using reverted SLFRF funds to cover payroll from October 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025. It is anticipated that CDE alone will likely have sufficient funds to cover this request in total reverted SLFRF appropriations. At present, CDE can confirm that \$445,039

was reverted from the Concurrent Enrollment SLFRF appropriation that expired June 30, 2023, almost enough to cover this cost on its own. While other CDE SLFRF appropriations do not yet have confirmed reversions, expectations are such that there will be sufficient SLFRF reversions to cover the \$571,416.

Consequently, we are requesting a total of \$571,416, which includes \$519,469 in payroll and \$51,469 in operating expenses. The proposal would be to identify previously appropriated SLFRF stimulus funds that will revert and could be classified as revenue loss dollars and appropriated to meet this need.

These funds will ensure the department meets the needs of our school districts and the federal requirements related to ESSER/ARPA funding. Without this funding the department does not have the staff bandwidth nor the funding to absorb the work.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

N/A, this request does not meet the criteria in C.R.S.2-3-210

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

The Department has identified this request as equity neutral, given that it supports the needs of students and school districts statewide.

Assumptions and Calculations

The following table outlines the positions, salary, and funding end date covered by the request.

Position	FY25 Salary, PERA (11.5%) and Medicare (1.45%)	FTE	Role's End Date	Prorated Cost
Fed. Programs - Senior Consultant	\$ 100,917	0.75	6/30/2025	\$ 75,688
Senior Consultant - Fed. Programs	\$ 91,387	0.25	12/31/2024	\$ 22,847
Supervisor - Fed. Programs	\$ 130,572	0.03	12/31/2024	\$ 3,264
Executive Director - Fed. Programs	\$ 200,912	0.08	6/30/2025	\$ 15,068
Supervisor - Fed. Programs	\$ 127,055	0.08	6/30/2025	\$ 9,529
Senior Consultant - Fed. Programs	\$ 100,943	0.75	6/30/2025	\$ 75,707

Senior Consultant - Fed. Programs	\$ 105,433	0.08	6/30/2025	\$ 7,907
Admin Assistant - Fed. Programs	\$ 53,471	0.38	6/30/2025	\$ 20,052
Principal Consultant - Fed. Programs	\$ 133,570	0.03	12/31/2024	\$ 3,339
Senior Consultant - Grant Programs	\$ 105,291	0.75	6/30/2025	\$ 78,968
Grants Specialist - Grants Fiscal	\$ 105,394	0.25	12/31/2024	\$ 26,349
Senior Consultant - Grants Fiscal	\$ 88,705	0.20	12/31/2024	\$ 17,741
Senior Consultant - Grants Fiscal	\$ 105,900	0.01	12/31/2024	\$ 1,324
Senior Consultant - Grants Fiscal	\$ 132,337	0.01	12/31/2024	\$ 1,654
Unit Director - Grants Fiscal	\$ 159,889	0.01	12/31/2024	\$ 1,999
Supervisor - Recovery Office	\$ 124,745	0.75	6/30/2025	\$ 93,558
Grants Specialist - Recovery Office	\$ 101,138	0.64	6/30/2025	\$ 64,475
FTE Total		5.03		\$ 519,469
10% Operating Costs				\$ 51,947
Total Costs				\$ 571,416

Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental


N/A.

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-07 Facility School Baseline Funding Model Inflation

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

_____ X _____

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$26,648,310	\$0	\$26,648,310	\$2,425,756	\$8,134,467
FTE		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
GF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
CF		\$26,648,310	\$0	\$26,648,310	\$2,425,756	\$8,134,467
RF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$26,648,310	\$0	\$26,648,310	\$2,425,756	\$8,134,467
FTE		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
05. Student Learning, (C) Facility Schools, (1)	GF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Facility Schools - Facility School Funding	CF	\$26,648,310	\$0	\$26,648,310	\$2,425,756	\$8,134,467
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact



Department Priority: R-07
Facility School Baseline Funding Model Inflation

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$26,648,310	\$2,425,756	\$8,134,467
FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cash Funds	\$26,648,310	\$2,425,756	\$8,134,467
Reappropriated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Summary of Request

The Department of Education (CDE) requests \$2,425,756 cash funds from the State Education Fund in FY 2024-25 and \$8,134,467 in FY 2025-26 to support ongoing educational programming and services to approved facility schools under the new baseline funding model created in SB 23-219. This request reflects a 9.1% increase in funding from FY 2023-24 to FY 2024-25 and a 30.5% increase in funding from FY 2023-24 to FY 2025-26.

CDE receives an annual appropriation to support approved facility schools baseline funding. Facility schools are housed within day treatment, residential treatment, and hospital settings. A new funding model was recommended by the SB 21-274 workgroup, and incorporated into law, via SB 23-219, to provide a more consistent revenue stream to approved facility schools. This model provides more adequate funding to educate youth in treatment facilities and improve student outcomes, and to continue educational programming (special education and general education) for all youth placed out of their home or home school district.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
No	Positive	No	C.R.S 22-54-129

Current Program

The Office of Facility Schools approves and oversees approved facility schools. These schools serve K-12 general education and special education students receiving publicly-funded educational services in various types of specialized institutions such as day treatment facilities, residential treatment facilities, and hospital settings across the state. Day treatment and residential treatment sites provide mental and behavioral health services (clinical) for children and youth. These services are for severe challenges beyond the services available in a traditional public school setting. This also includes rehabilitation for substance abuse, sex offender treatment, violent and aggressive behaviors.

In 2008, the Colorado General Assembly modified the methodology funding facility schools by:

- Removing pupils educated by facility schools from districts’ pupil enrollment counts for purposes of funding.
- Requiring facility schools to report information directly to CDE’S Facility Schools Unit concerning individual students, including the student’s district of residence and the actual number of attendance days each month.
- Allowing facility schools to bill CDE for statewide average per pupil revenues multiplied by 1.33, and allowing facility schools to bill for an additional one-third of per pupil revenue to support Summer school programs. In 2013, the General Assembly modified this provision to provide statewide base per pupil funding times 1.73 in an effort to increase funding for facility schools.

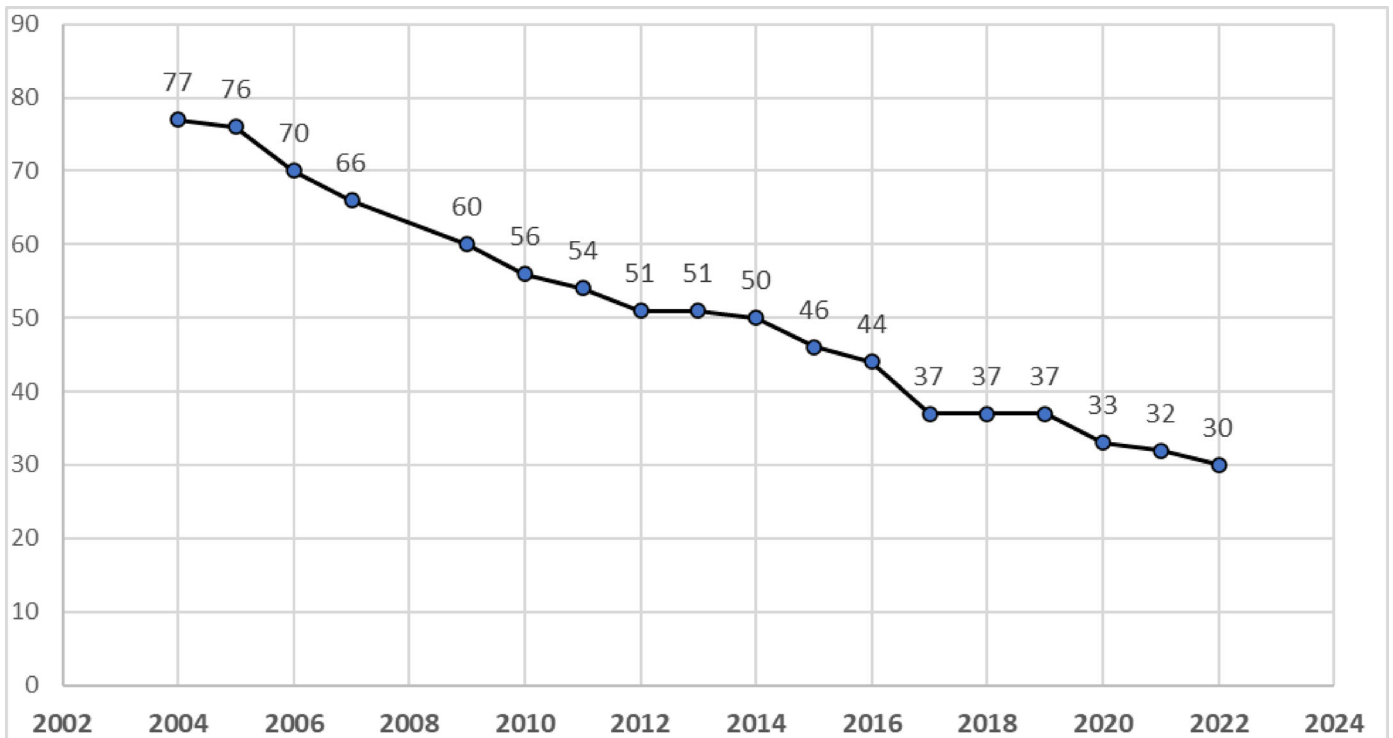
In 2021, the Colorado General Assembly passed SB 21-274, which established a workgroup to help address the rapid closure of facility schools that serve students in hospitals, residential child care placements and other day- and overnight placements that serve children and youth with high needs and to study and propose changes for a sustainable funding model. The new model presented by the workgroup, and incorporated into SB 23-219, provides a more adequate and consistent funding over the course of a school year and ensures facility schools can maintain necessary staffing and services to meet youth needs up to their service capacity.

Problem or Opportunity

Although the need for services has not decreased, the number of facility schools has significantly decreased over the past 18 years. CDE has seen a significant increase in referrals with youth in our hospitals and crisis centers and these youth are remaining in hospitals due to the lack of capacity in current treatment facilities.

The graph below illustrates the decline in numbers of operating facility schools in Colorado from 2004-2022.

Graph 1: Number of Approved Facility Schools



Some of the facility school closures were attributed to lack of adequate funding to sustain the staffing and services needed to provide educational programming in those settings under the previous PPR daily rate model.

Additionally, the lack of capacity has impacted school districts, the Department of Human Services, and Division of Youth Services. School districts have had to utilize home-bound services for youth that are not able to be placed in a facility. Human services has made exceptions to existing practices or additional allowances to address the lack of capacity in current facilities. There are limited options for step-down programs for youth transitioning from the Division of Youth Services, corrections/detention.

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

The new baseline funding model adopted under SB 23-219 provides more adequate and consistent funding for facility schools. The new model allows approved facility schools to maintain and/or increase student capacity and sustain staffing and services consistently throughout the year for youth in need of treatment. If facilities are able to increase their capacity to treat youth, then the students are also able to continue receiving educational programming and services (general education and special education). Increased capacity will provide needed treatment services for youth and children that are currently not able to access the services.

In order to adequately fund approved schools, pursuant to C.R.S. 22-54-129 (2.5)(d)(III), CDE may request additional funds for the current budget year or ensuing budget year as a part of its mid-year budget submission if required based on expenditure projections due to cumulative student enrollment data through November of a given budget year.

The baseline funding adjustment requested here is based on the estimated student enrollment count, the inflationary impacts on each cost element in the baseline funding model, which includes funding for special education directors, licensed teachers, relevant therapeutic staff, classroom teaching aides, school administration, non-personnel costs, and estimated onboarding of new facility schools in FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26. The cost breakdown can be found in Appendix A and the published fiscal note for SB 23-219 attached.

In addition to the baseline funding being requested in this Decision Item, SB 23-219 also appropriated funding for a shared operational services grant program to support shared costs and services between facilities. This will allow approved facility schools to build economies of scale and reduce duplication of services and costs.

A technical assistance center was another component included in SB 23-219 which will provide needed support and training to rural and remote school districts and BOCES in all areas of the state. This training and support will enable these schools to better serve students in need of specialized instruction and related services not available to them due to the geographic challenges and lack of treatment facilities in the area.

Finally, funding appropriated in SB 23-219 will also lead to an accreditation system for all approved facility schools, which will ensure a level of quality, consistency, and effectiveness of educational programming and services for students in treatment facilities across the state.

The consequences that would occur if this request is not approved is that many approved facility schools would not be able to continue providing educational programming within the treatment facilities. The capacity to educate youth in treatment could not be sustained or increased with the previous funding model. The lack of capacity to serve severely impacted students is already affecting school districts, families, treatment facilities, and hospitals at a critical level, as there are no other options available.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

This section is not applicable to this Decision Item pursuant to the criteria outlined in C.R.S. 2-3-210.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Many children and youth placed in treatment facilities face struggles academically and are below their grade level peers with regard to proficiency, due to their mobility. These students are entitled to an education and should maintain academic progress while receiving treatment services. Approved facility schools provide educational programming including CMAS, Co-Alt, ACCESS, PSAT, SAT, as well as curriculum resources aligned to the Colorado Academic Standards. Many approved facility schools serve special education students with disabilities and significant needs. Approved facility schools are able to provide specialized instruction and services to prepare students for postsecondary and workforce opportunities to live as independently as possible. Facility schools serve all students regardless of gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity or religion.

Assumptions and Calculations

The Department of Education (CDE) requests \$2,425,756 cash funds from the State Education Fund in FY 2024-25 and \$8,134,467 in FY 2025-26 to support ongoing educational programming and services to approved facility schools. Please see the accompanying calculation spreadsheet for detailed cost breakdown. The baseline funding model reflects an inflationary increase of 4.7% according to the June 2023 OSPB Economic Forecast. The request also reflects cost assumptions for a mix of small, medium, and large new specialized day schools CDE anticipates to open in fiscal years 2024-25 and 2025-26. The fiscal note for SB 23-219 has also been added as a reference.

Table 1: Facility Schools Baseline Funding (\$)

	FY 2023-24	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Baseline Funding	\$26,648,310	\$29,074,066	\$34,782,777
Difference from FY 24	\$0	\$2,425,756	\$8,134,467


Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental

This section is not applicable as the request will be submitted as a part of the November 1st, 2023 budget package.

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title **R-08 Facility Schools & RCCI Inclusion HSMA**

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24
 OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25
 _____ X _____ Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$115,268,088	\$0	\$79,237,732	\$0	\$0
FTE		3.1	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0
Total of All Line Items Impacted by Change Request	GF	\$115,268,088	\$0	\$79,237,732	\$0	\$0
	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$268,088	\$0	\$737,732	\$0	\$0
FTE		3.1	0.0	4.2	0.0	0.0
03. School District Operations, (D) Nutrition, (1) Nutrition - Healthy Meals For All Public School Students	GF	\$268,088	\$0	\$737,732	\$0	\$0
	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Total		\$115,000,000	\$0	\$78,500,000	\$0	\$0
FTE		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
03. School District Operations, (D) Nutrition, (1) Nutrition - HSMA School Meal Reimbursements	GF	\$115,000,000	\$0	\$78,500,000	\$0	\$0
	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	YES		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact



Department Priority: R-08
Facility School and RCCI Inclusion in HSMA

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$115,268,088	\$0	\$0
FTE	0.0	0.0	0.0
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
General Fund Exempt	\$115,268,088	\$0	\$0
Cash Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) requests legislation to include facility schools and residential child care institutions (RCCI) in the Healthy School Meals for All Program. It is assumed that the estimated fiscal impact of between \$183,848 and \$487,002 for FY 2024-25 and between \$258,793 and \$487,002 can be absorbed within the overall appropriation. This represents an increase of 0.16% to 0.42% of the FY 2023-24 appropriation. This request is ongoing as it will provide meal reimbursements, a wage/stipend increase for nutrition staff and participation with a local food program per 22-82.9-204, C.R.S. to approved facility schools as needed. This request does not require any additional appropriation to the already approved funding for the HSMA Program. The above mentioned GF increase is the estimate for the inclusion of Facility Schools and RCCI into the already approved funding. This request does not address one-time ARPA funds.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
Yes	Positive	No	22-32-120, C.R.S.; 22-54-123, C.R.S.

Current Program

Currently, state law does not include approved facility schools in the definition of school food authority (SFA) for state matching funds under the school lunch program. Section 22-32-120(8), C.R.S. defines a school food authority as a school district, the state charter school institute (CSI), a charter school collaborative, or a BOCES that operates an SFA. This definition does not include approved facility schools or other residential child care institutions (RCCIs). Hence, students at these institutions are currently unable to participate in the Healthy School Meals for All Program.

Problem or Opportunity

Regulations for state nutrition program funding rely on the state’s definition of a SFA, and because approved facility schools and other RCCIs are not included in the state’s definition of a SFA, they are ineligible for state nutrition programs.

Because state law does not currently include RCCIs and approved facility schools in the definition of a school food authority (SFA), these entities are not eligible for funding and/or reimbursement for several state programs. This includes the state match for the school lunch program, and other programs that rely on the definition in section 22-32-120(8), C.R.S., such as the Healthy Meals for All Program.

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

To align with federal regulations that allow approved facility schools in RCCIs to operate as SFAs and to provide students in these settings with access to state nutrition program funding, CDE recommends updating the definition of SFA in statute to include approved facility schools, in both residential and day treatment facilities. In addition to aligning with federal regulations, the recommendation will also increase access to free meals for underserved students. Approved facility schools enroll and provide services to a number of underserved students each year. With this change, these public schools will be able to provide the same access to meal reimbursement and programs in the same way that all other public schools in the state are eligible.

Suggested Language:

22-32-120. Food services - facilities - school food authorities - rules.

(8) As used in this section, “school food authority” means:

(a) A school district or the state charter school institute;

- (a.3) A charter school collaborative formed pursuant to section 22-30.5-603;
- (a.4) AN APPROVED FACILITY SCHOOL AS DEFINED PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-2-402, C.R.S.**
- (a.5) A board of cooperative services created pursuant to article 5 of this title that elects to operate as a school food authority pursuant to section 22-5-120; or
- (b) A district charter school or an institute charter school that:
 - (I) The commissioner of education or his or her designee provisionally authorizes as a school food authority pursuant to subsection (6) of this section; or
 - (II) The department of education authorizes as a school food authority pursuant to subsection (5) of this section.

22-54-123. Richard B. Russell national school lunch act - appropriation of state matching funds.

- (2) As used in this section, unless the context otherwise requires, “school food authority” means:
 - (a) A school district or the state charter school institute;
 - (a.3) A charter school collaborative formed pursuant to section 22-30.5-603;
 - (a.4) AN APPROVED FACILITY SCHOOL AS DEFINED PURSUANT TO SECTION 22-2-402, C.R.S.**
 - (a.5) A board of cooperative services created pursuant to article 5 of this title that elects to operate as a school food authority pursuant to section 22-5-120; or
 - (b) A district charter school or an institute charter school that:
 - (I) The commissioner of education or his or her designee provisionally authorizes as a school food authority pursuant to section 22-32-120 (6); or
 - (II) The department of education authorizes as a school food authority pursuant to section 22-32-120 (5).

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

N/A

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

This request will result in a positive change in equity, as it will include approved facility schools in the definition of “school food authority” where it was previously excluded. This additional state funding to facility schools would impact up to 456 additional students, the funding for wages and stipends could increase pay for kitchen employees that work at these facilities, and the local food program funds would help these facilities purchase more local foods to serve on their menus. Students in facility schools are academically vulnerable. Facility schools serve students facing mental health and behavioral health issues. Many are part of the child welfare system and meet many at-risk factors.

Assumptions and Calculations

The range of funding requested is due to the number of schools that currently participate in providing meals (\$183,848) to all schools eligible to participate (\$487,002), however the Department feels that a more realistic estimate in the increase of participating sites would be five (5) additional sites.

Assumptions and Calculations Summary Table					
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	Change	FY 2025-26 Request	Ongoing Costs past FY 2024-25
Total Funds	\$115,000,000	\$115,000,000	\$0	\$115,000,000	\$0
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
General Fund Exempt	\$115,000,000	\$115,000,000	\$0	\$115,000,000	\$0
Cash Fund - Name	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Breakdown of Funding	Estimated HSMA Paid Breakfast	Estimated HSMA Paid Lunch	Wages/Stipend \$3,000 or \$0.12/lunch	LFP \$5,000 or \$0.25/lunch	Total	Notes
Current Schools	\$11,276	\$44,572	\$48,000	\$80,000	\$183,848	estimate for SY 24-25
Current Schools plus estimated increase of 5 participating sites	\$22,843	\$67,950	\$63,000	\$105,000	\$258,793	potential estimate for subsequent years
All Schools	\$60,782	\$202,219	\$84,000	\$140,000	\$487,002	maximum cost IF all schools participated

If there are insufficient appropriations based on actual usage of the program, a supplemental may be required depending on actual data as it is received.

Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental (est. time allocation: 5%)


N/A

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-09: State Board of Education Operating

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24
 OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25
 _____ X _____ Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$425,560	\$0	\$442,555	\$133,250	\$133,250
FTE		2.5	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.0
Total of All Line Items Impacted by Change Request	GF	\$425,560	\$0	\$442,555	\$133,250	\$133,250
	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$425,560	\$0	\$442,555	\$133,250	\$133,250
01. Management and Administration, (A)	FTE	2.5	0.0	2.5	0.0	0.0
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items, (1)	GF	\$425,560	\$0	\$442,555	\$133,250	\$133,250
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items - State Board of Education	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact



Department Priority: R-09
State Board of Education Operating

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	425,560	133,250	133,250
FTE	2.5	0.0	0.00
General Fund	425,560	133,250	133,250
Cash Funds	0.00	0.00	0.00
Reappropriated Funds	0.00	0.00	0.00
Federal Funds	0.00	0.00	0.00

Summary of Request

The Colorado State Board of Education is the governing body of the Colorado Department of Education (CDE). The State Board of Education (SBE) requests a General Fund increase of \$133,250. This request is threefold and is broken down as follows:

- SBE Operating Request: \$77,250
- Computer Replacement: \$6,000
- IT Room Support: \$50,000

This change represents a 31.3% increase to the State Board of Education budget and is on-going.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
No	Neutral	No	N/A

Current Program

The Colorado State Board of Education is the governing body for the Colorado Department of Education. The board is comprised of nine elected officials, all representing their congressional districts and one member representing the state as the at-large representative. Colorado Revised Statutes 22-2-105(3) further provides that the state board members shall serve for a six-year term and serve without compensation but shall be reimbursed for any necessary expenses incurred by them in the performance of their duties as members. Every other year, the State Board elects a chairperson and vice-chairperson from its own membership. The law defines the powers and duties of the board. Some of those responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Appoints the Commissioner of Education and the Director of State Board Relations;
- Employs personnel of the Department of Education;
- Approves the Department of Education budget;
- Makes rules, regulations, and policies that govern the Colorado Department of Education, public education including pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, adult education, and public libraries;
- Accredits public school districts;
- Facilitates the provision of library services to the citizens of Colorado through the State Library;
- Distributes federal and state funds;
- Regulates educator licensing;
- Supervises adult basic education and public libraries;
- Appoints advisory committees;
- Grants waivers of Colorado education law and regulations;
- Exercises judicial authority with regard to appeals by charter schools; and
- Submits recommendations for educational improvements to the General Assembly and Governor

In order to execute their statutory duties, board members attend monthly two day meetings held in Denver. If necessary, the board will hold additional meetings, especially during the months of January-May during the legislative session. The board holds a meeting in a rural school district yearly. In addition to regular and special meetings, board members meet with constituents such as school administrators, teachers and students, attend in-state and out of state conferences, and serve on legislative and stakeholder committees.

Problem or Opportunity

Over the past three years the board has not traveled as much due to the pandemic. Now that the board can play more of an active role by meeting with people in person, the costs of performing their duties has increased. Additionally, during the last three years, the landscape of the board has changed and the workload has increased. Previous board members did not attend as many board meetings, serve on external committees or meet with district leaders as much as the new, current board members do. The number of yearly meetings have continued to increase, going up by around 3 additional meetings a year. This, along with inflation is causing an increase in costs. The Travel Price Index (TPI) has increased nearly 20% since 2019 per the U.S. Travel Association's Travel Index Report in April 2023¹.

The board previously used personal laptops to do their jobs, however, this is not sustainable and causes issues for sharing documents, attending remote meetings and maintaining equipment. Most board members have been provided CDE computers, but those need to be replaced every three years as that is the expected life of the laptop, and it costs less to proactively replace than to wait for the laptop to fail. Additionally, the new board room will require ongoing IT support to keep all systems running and up-to-date. This will require a contract with an outside vendor as this is not something SBE can maintain internally.

Problems related to operating costs have just started to become an issue this past year, primarily due to the rising costs associated with performing the duties as elected officials. The board has needed to use internal savings for extra expenses that have come up, however, as costs increase and board members continue to perform their duties, internal resources do not exist to continue to cover what is necessary.

Lastly, the State Board's next election is in 2024. Due to redistricting in 2021, following the 2020 census, the congressional districts for State Board members have changed. Of the four seats up for election, all could qualify for overnight stays in Denver for regular board meetings based on where they reside. We have already allocated funds to cover expenses for certain seats, such as Congressional Districts (CD) 3 and 8. However, there are other seats, like CD 2 and 4, for which expenses have not been budgeted, primarily because of the residential locations of our current members. However that could very well change as CD 2 has gotten significantly larger. With the next election, we anticipate the expenses for board members may change again as newer members spend more time meeting with their constituents, hold additional prep meetings with staff, and stakeholder meetings.

¹ https://www.ustravel.org/sites/default/files/2023-05/tpi_apr-2023.pdf

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

SBE seeks to increase the funding set for state board members to attend monthly meetings in Denver, conferences and travel within their districts. SBE also seeks to secure money for State Board members to have computers and necessary IT equipment to perform their duties. Lastly, the SBE requests on-going money to support the tech needs of the recently remodeled SBE room.

SBE Operating Increase (\$77,250) - For the FY 2022-23 budget, the board requested an increase related to needing two new members due to redistricting. However, prior to that, the board has not asked for any changes to their budget for at least the last ten fiscal years as they have been able to absorb most costs. Now that the board has expanded and inflation has increased, the board is feeling those effects. An increase in operational funding will allow new members the ability to perform their above mentioned duties, travel their districts to meet with their constituents and properly represent their districts during board meetings. This cost represents a \$58,250 increase in travel costs and travel changes in regards to the new board members, and a \$19,000 increase for anticipated upcoming new board member travel expenses.

Computer Replacement (\$6,000) - The board began using laptops after the pandemic to aid in remote meetings. This has become beneficial to both the board and staff, but the replacement plan of these computers will be an on-going request that needs to be incorporated into the budget.

IT Room Support (\$50,000) - The SBE board room renovation has required on-going funds to maintain the tech that was incorporated. This will require a contract with an outside vendor as this is not something SBE can maintain internally.

The proposed solution will increase the board's ability to accomplish the duties in which they were elected to carry out, and which they perform with no salary. If this proposal is not approved, it would negatively impact service delivery and the constituents of Colorado as State Board members would not be able to be reimbursed for all necessary things to do the job they were elected to do. The board room also serves all Coloradans including those who come in for outside meetings. Not having the funds to maintain it would negatively impact these services.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

N/A

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

This request is equity neutral. The mission of the Colorado State Board of Education is to provide all of Colorado’s children equal access to quality, thorough, uniform, well-rounded educational opportunities in a safe and civil learning environment.

Assumptions and Calculations

Assumptions and Calculations Summary Table					
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	Change	FY 2025-26 Request	Ongoing Costs past FY 2024-25
Total Funds	\$425,560	\$558,810	\$133,250	\$558,810	\$133,250
General Fund	\$425,560	\$558,810	\$133,250	\$558,810	\$133,250
Cash Fund - Name	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental


N/A

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-10: CDIP Enhancement

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24
 OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25
 _____ X _____ Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
			Request			
Total		\$9,520,000	\$0	\$9,520,000	\$2,000,000	\$0
FTE		0.9	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0
Total of All Line Items Impacted by Change Request	GF	\$9,520,000	\$0	\$9,520,000	\$2,000,000	\$0
	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
			Request			
Total		\$9,520,000	\$0	\$9,520,000	\$2,000,000	\$0
FTE		0.9	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0
07. Student Pathways, (C) Career Readiness, (1) Career Readiness - Career Development Success Program	GF	\$9,520,000	\$0	\$9,520,000	\$2,000,000	\$0
	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0


Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-11 STEM Extended Learning Time Programming

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

_____ X _____

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$24,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$8,000,000	\$0
FTE		2.6	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.9
Total of All Line Items Impacted by Change Request	GF	\$24,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,000,000	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$24,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$8,000,000	\$0
07. Student Pathways, (B) Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Reengagement, (1) Office of Dropout Prevention and Student Reengagement - Academic Accelerator Grant Program	FTE	2.6	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.9
	GF	\$24,500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$8,000,000	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0


Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-12: Proactive Intervention Expansion

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24
 OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25
 _____ X _____ Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$7,571,387	\$0	\$7,590,396	\$500,000	\$500,000
FTE		3.9	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0
GF		\$5,563,139	\$0	\$5,577,869	\$500,000	\$500,000
CF		\$2,008,248	\$0	\$2,012,527	\$0	\$0
RF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$7,571,387	\$0	\$7,590,396	\$500,000	\$500,000
06. School Quality And Support, (A)	FTE	3.9	0.0	3.9	0.0	0.0
Accountability and Transformation, (1)	GF	\$5,563,139	\$0	\$5,577,869	\$500,000	\$500,000
Accountability and Transformation - School Transformation Grant Program	CF	\$2,008,248	\$0	\$2,012,527	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-13 Ed Talent Mentorship Grant Program

Dept. Approval By: 

Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter

Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

X

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,132,271	\$3,132,271
FTE		0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	1.2
Total of All Line Items Impacted by Change Request	GF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,132,271	\$3,132,271
	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,132,271	\$3,132,271
FTE		0.0	0.0	0.0	1.2	1.2
04. Educator Talent, (A)	GF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,132,271	\$3,132,271
Educator Talent, (1)	CF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Educator Talent - Teacher Mentorship Grant Program	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data		
Requires Legislation?	YES	
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s: No Other Agency Impact



Department Priority: R-13
Ed Talent Mentorship Grant Program

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$0	\$3,132,271	\$3,132,271
FTE	0.0	1.2	1.2
General Fund	\$0	\$3,132,271	\$3,132,271
Cash Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	0	0

Summary of Request

The Department of Education (CDE) requests \$3,132,271 General Fund and 1.2 FTE in FY 2024-25 and ongoing to sustain support for the Teacher Mentorship Grant Program. The Teacher Mentorship Grant Program is currently funded with Federal American Rescue Plan (ARPA)/Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) dollars, which is set to expire September 30, 2024.

Support for new-to-the-profession teachers is a critical aspect in the successful retention of educators in our Colorado schools. With the current teacher shortage across the state, providing a high-quality mentorship program is essential for early career teachers. Additionally induction and mentoring is required for any new-to-the-profession teacher to obtain a professional teacher license.

The Mentor Teacher Grant Program would fund \$3M annually to school districts, BOCES or charter schools for induction and mentoring support for teachers in their first three years.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
Yes	Positive	No	C.R.S. 22-60.5-204

Current Program

No state level funding is allocated specifically for required statutory activities for new-to-the-profession teacher induction and mentoring. However, the Colorado Department of Education, Educator Talent Division identified a critical need and allocated ESSER funds for a competitive grant program for FY23 and FY 24. The program has awarded mentors grants in the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years, utilizing ESSER funds. Requests and awards are summarized in the table below.

Table 1: ESSER Awards for Teacher Mentorship

	Funding Years	Total Available	Total Requested	# of Program Applications	Average award	# of Programs Awarded
Mentor Grant Round 1	FY 22-23	\$9.5 million	\$17.5 million	36	\$364,000	26
Mentor Grant Round 2	FY 23-24	\$3.15 million	\$3.9 million	36	\$94,454*	33**

*maximum awards in round 2 were \$150,000

**8 programs have both round 1 and round 2 awards

By the Numbers

51 total grant programs

- 35 Districts
- 6 BOCES
- 9 Charter schools directly plus 1 CSI award funding 15 additional charter schools
- \$12.65 million awarded from ESSER III funds
- 8 LEAs participating in both round 1 and round 2
- All grants end by June 30, 2024 (with final reimbursements by September 30, 2024 when ESSER funds expire)

Round 1:

- 2-year award lasting through the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 school years

- 26 mentor programs funded
- \$9.5 million awarded from ESSER funds
- Average award of \$364,000 per grant program at the local level
- Approximately 1,900 teachers participated, including mentors and new teachers
- Far more requests than awards: \$14 million requested from 37 LEAs

Round 2:

- 1-year award lasting through the 2023-2024 school year
- 33 mentor programs funded
- \$3.15 million awarded from ESSER funds
- Average award of \$95,454 per grant program (max award of \$150,000)

Interest in the mentor grant program demonstrates a clear need for ongoing support for new teacher mentoring. The funding is particularly impactful in small and medium-sized districts where finding funding to focus on new teacher retention is a challenge.

ESSER grant funds have been used for mentor and inductee stipends, teacher release time, mentor training, technology for mentoring such as video observation, and other supports specifically for teachers in years 1-3 and their mentor teachers. Of the veteran teachers being trained as mentor teachers in these grant programs, 96% said they felt confident in their ability to meet the needs of their assigned new teacher.

Of new teachers who participated in a mentor grant program, 97% plan to stay in education. Given the 82.7% retention rate nationally of teachers in years 1-5, this demonstrates a significant impact of grant funds on new teacher's intent to stay.¹

Each spring, CDE would survey key stakeholders for feedback. Each participating mentor and mentee would be asked about their efficacy and preparedness around classroom management instructional strategies, and student engagement. Annually those data would be shared in a fall report along with longitudinal comparisons including tracking for retention of new teachers remaining in the profession compared to those not receiving the mentor grant program support.

Problem or Opportunity

With the ongoing teacher shortage in Colorado, new teacher retention is a critical issue. In FY23, more than 17% of educators turned over. This means that the educators left the classroom they were in and moved either to a new classroom, out of the state of Colorado, or possibly out of the field of education. Prior to FY 23, the turnover rate ranged from 14-16%. Hence, educator retention especially for those new to the workforce continues to be a growing concern. Ongoing mentor grant funds would provide

¹ "Public School Teacher Attrition and Mobility in the First Five Years.", National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Science, U.S. Department of Education. April 2015. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015337.pdf>

crucial support to those new teachers, improving both retention and instruction across the state, ultimately impacting student learning.

Although induction and mentoring is required by state statute for new-to-the-profession teachers, there is no state level funding available for district, BOCES and charter schools to implement the work of ensuring strong induction and mentoring programs. To support the immediate need of new teachers in the classroom, particularly during a critical and ongoing teacher shortage, the Colorado Department of Education utilized ESSER funding. These funds awarded 51 induction programs and cost \$12.65 million.

At the end of the 2023-24 school year, ESSER funds expire leaving no ongoing funds to support any local education agency in implementing induction and mentoring. The requests for funding and support have been wide and far across the school districts and they have made a difference in retaining educators after their first year.

13 programs were unfunded in rounds 1 and 2. Small to midsize schools districts, charter schools and rural school districts struggle to sustain in-depth mentoring and support for new teachers.

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

According to a national study conducted by the Institute of Education Science, “Mentors can make a difference. The federal study found that 92 percent of first-year teachers who had mentors returned to the classroom for a second year.”

While it is impossible to retain every teacher who enters the field, it is prudent for school districts to study and work to prevent teacher attrition as much as possible². Research has shown that establishing organized meaningful mentoring programs can be beneficial in reducing some of the reasons that teachers leave the profession³. Lipton and Wellman highlighted the many benefits of a mentoring program, stating that, “Novices who participate in high quality induction programs that include a comprehensive mentoring component have consistently shown that they increase beginning teacher retention, improve student achievement, and reduce the waste of financial and human resources associated with teacher turnover. Beginning teachers that are supported early in their careers have increased effectiveness in their classrooms, higher satisfaction, and greater commitment than those that do not experience these supports” (p. xv).⁴

² Callahan, Jaime. "Encouraging retention of new teachers through mentoring strategies." *Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin* 83.1 (2016): 6.

³ Breaux, Annette L., and Harry K. Wong. *New teacher induction: How to train, support, and retain new teachers*. Mountain View, CA: Harry K. Wong Publications, 2003.

Darling-Hammond, Linda. "The right start: Creating a strong foundation for the teaching career." *Phi Delta Kappan* 94.3 (2012): 8-13.

White, M., & Mason, C. Y. (2006). Components of a successful mentoring program for beginning special education teachers: Perspectives from new teachers and mentors. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 29(3), 191-201.

⁴ Lipton, Laura, Bruce M. Wellman, and Carlette Humbard. *Mentoring matters: A practical guide to learning-focused relationships*. Sherman, CT: MiraVia, LCC, 2003.

With this request for the technical and programmatic support of the requested 1.2 FTE, the ongoing *annual* appropriation of \$3 million will be used for districts, BOCES and charter schools to apply for a competitive grant to fund mentor and inductee stipends, teacher release time, mentor training, technology for mentoring such as video observation, and other supports specifically for teachers in years 1-3 and their mentor teachers.

Initial evaluation results from the grant implementation indicate that 97% of new teachers who participate in the program intend to stay in education and 95% intend to continue teaching. Participants (both mentors and new teachers) also demonstrate a high sense of self efficacy after participating in an expanded mentoring program, especially around classroom management. These initial results show promise that the Mentor Grant Program will significantly impact new teacher efficacy and retention. However, results are preliminary. Round 1 grants have existed for 1 year of the 2-year award and round 2 grants are just launching. Actual impact on retention will take longer to measure. Additionally, CDE plans to conduct annual evaluations each Spring to monitor the progress and impact of the program.

The anticipated outcomes for this program include increased retention of first year educators over a period of 2 to 7 years.

Goals and Objectives:

- Foster a culture of trust and mutual respect between mentors and mentees.
- Support mentees in setting clear and meaningful professional development goals.
- Provide ongoing feedback, guidance, and resources to support mentees' growth.
- Promote reflective practice and encourage mentees to critically examine their teaching strategies and classroom practices.
- Develop mentees' instructional skills, content knowledge, and pedagogical strategies.
- Enhance mentees' ability to effectively manage classroom dynamics and student behavior.
- Support mentees in incorporating research-based best practices into their teaching.
- Foster mentees' self-efficacy and confidence as educators.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

Not applicable to this request as a full evaluation cycle has not taken place. Qualitative responses from school districts, BOCES and charter schools indicate very strong support for developing and growing mentor teachers.

Going forward, assessment and evaluation of the program will include:

- Number of teachers retained from 2-7 years.
- Use of formative assessments to monitor and document mentees' progress.

- Summary of mentee and mentor self-reflection and evaluation of the mentoring process to identify areas for improvement.
- Collection of feedback from mentees to gauge the effectiveness of the mentoring program.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

Strong new teacher mentoring programs can have several equity impacts, which are crucial for promoting fairness and ensuring that all teachers, regardless of their background or circumstances, have access to high-quality support and professional development. Overall, a good new teacher mentoring program with a focus on equity ensures that all teachers, irrespective of their backgrounds, receive the necessary support and opportunities to thrive in their profession. It promotes inclusive and culturally responsive teaching practices, reduces achievement gaps, and empowers teachers to meet the diverse needs of their students, ultimately contributing to a more equitable educational experience for all.

- **Reducing Achievement Gaps:** A mentoring program that focuses on supporting new teachers in effectively addressing the needs of diverse learners can help reduce achievement gaps. By providing targeted guidance and strategies for differentiating instruction, managing diverse classrooms, and meeting the needs of marginalized students, the program can contribute to improved educational outcomes for all students, regardless of their background.
- **Retaining and Supporting Culturally Responsive Teachers:** A mentoring program that emphasizes culturally responsive teaching practices helps new teachers develop the skills and knowledge necessary to create inclusive and affirming classroom environments. This can positively impact students from marginalized backgrounds, as they are more likely to encounter teachers who understand and appreciate their cultural identities and backgrounds.
- **Addressing Implicit Bias and Stereotypes:** A well-designed mentoring program can help new teachers become aware of their own biases and stereotypes, enabling them to provide equitable opportunities and fair treatment to all students. Through self-reflection and guidance from mentors, new teachers can work towards creating a classroom culture that respects and values diversity.
- **Access to Professional Networks:** A mentoring program that fosters professional networks and connections can provide new teachers, especially those from underrepresented groups, with access to valuable resources, support, and opportunities for growth. This can help mitigate the potential disadvantages they may face due to limited networks and support systems.
- **Professional Development Opportunities:** An equitable mentoring program ensures that all new teachers have access to high-quality professional development opportunities that address their specific needs and challenges. By providing resources, workshops, and training

tailored to diverse contexts and instructional needs, the program helps new teachers enhance their skills and knowledge, promoting equitable instructional practices.

- **Career Advancement and Leadership Opportunities:** A mentoring program that supports new teachers in their career progression and leadership development can contribute to equitable distribution of leadership roles within the teaching profession. By nurturing talent and providing guidance, the program can help diversify the leadership pipeline and create opportunities for underrepresented groups to assume positions of influence and decision-making.

Assumptions and Calculations

The Department of Education (CDE) requests \$3,132,271 General Fund and 1.2 FTE in FY 2024-25 and ongoing to support the Teacher Mentorship Grant Program. The FTE is already in place at CDE, managing day to day operations of the Teacher Mentorship Grant Program. Please see the accompanying FTE calculation spreadsheet for detailed [cost breakdown](#).

Table 2: FTE Breakdown

Expenditure Detail		FY 2024-25			FY 2025-26		
Personal Services:							
	Classification Title	Biweekly Salary	FTE	Budget Amt	Biweekly Salary	FTE	Budget Amt
	FTE						
	GRANTS SPECIALIST IV	\$3,276	1.0	\$85,176	3,276	1.0	\$85,176
	GRANTS SPECIALIST II	\$1,917	0.2	\$9,970	1,917	0.2	\$9,970
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
	FTE Total	\$5,193	1.2	\$95,146		1.2	\$95,146
	Personnel Costs	<i>Percent/Cost</i>			<i>Percent/Cost</i>		
	PERA	11.50%		\$10,942	11.50%		\$10,942
	Medicare	1.45%		\$1,380	1.45%		\$1,380
	Personnel Total		1.2	\$107,468		1.2	\$107,468
	Central Appropriations	<i>Percent/Cost</i>			<i>Percent/Cost</i>		
	Health-Life-Dental	\$11,033		\$13,240	\$11,033		\$13,240
	STD	0.16%		\$152	0.16%		\$152
	AED	5.00%		\$4,757	5.00%		\$4,757
	SAED	5.00%		\$4,757	5.00%		\$4,757
	FAMLI	0.45%		\$428	0.45%		\$428
	Indirect Costs, if applicable						
	Leased Space, if applicable	\$4,650					
	Central Appropriations Total		1.2	\$23,334		1.2	\$23,334
	Operating Expenses:						
	One-Time Operating	<i>Operating Cost</i>	FTE	Budget Amt	<i>Operating Cost</i>	FTE	Budget Amt
	PC, One-Time	\$2,000	0.0	\$0	\$0	0.0	\$0
	Office Furniture, One-Time	\$5,000	0.0	\$0	\$0	0.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	One-Time Operating Expense Total			\$0			\$0
	Ongoing Operating	<i>Operating Cost</i>	FTE	Budget Amt	<i>Operating Cost</i>	FTE	Budget Amt
	Regular FTE Operating Expenses	\$500	2.0	\$1,000	\$500	1.0	\$500
	Cisco/Jabber Remote Phone	\$235	2.0	\$470	\$235	1.0	\$235
	Teacher Mentorship Grants	3000000.0	1.0	\$3,000,000	3000000.0	1.0	\$3,000,000
	Other		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Other		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Other		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Other		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Ongoing Operating Expense Total			\$3,001,470			\$3,000,735
	TOTAL REQUEST			\$3,132,271			\$3,131,536
	FTE			1.2			1.2
	General Fund			\$3,105,385			\$3,117,011

The \$3 million in mentorship awards will support 20-30 districts a year in a competitive grant process, which would average \$150,000 per request on average. The awards could go to stipends for the mentor, a mentor specialist in the district, mentor professional development/training, or other related activities. Based on the interest CDE got on this program the estimated dollar amount to fund all grant applicants is significantly higher. However, CDE believes \$3M will be sufficient to get districts on the path to capacity building and not use this as a mechanism for ongoing funding.

Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental

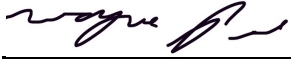
This section is not applicable as the request will be submitted as a part of the November 1st, 2023 budget package.

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-14: Payroll Office Support

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

_____ X _____

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
			Request			
Total		\$6,320,641	\$0	\$6,250,225	\$130,056	\$142,203
FTE		43.2	0.0	43.2	0.9	1.0
Total of All Line Items Impacted by Change Request	GF	\$3,015,824	\$0	\$2,622,015	\$130,056	\$142,203
	CF	\$186,807	\$0	\$188,595	\$0	\$0
	RF	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,439,615	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
			Request			
Total		\$6,320,641	\$0	\$6,250,225	\$130,056	\$142,203
01. Management and Administration, (A)	FTE	43.2	0.0	43.2	0.9	1.0
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items, (1)	GF	\$3,015,824	\$0	\$2,622,015	\$130,056	\$142,203
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items - General	CF	\$186,807	\$0	\$188,595	\$0	\$0
Department and Program	RF	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,439,615	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact



*Department Priority: R-14
 Payroll Office Support*

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$6,320,641	\$130,056	\$142,203
FTE	42.6	0.9	1.0
General Fund	\$3,015,824	\$130,056	\$142,203
Cash Funds	\$186,807	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) requests \$130,056 and 0.9 FTE for FY 2024-25 from the General Fund, and an annual allocation of \$142,203 and 1.0 FTE in subsequent years. This request for a payroll office supervisor will enable the Department to meet the payroll processing demands associated with the Office of the State Controller’s fiscal rule requiring all new employees to be put onto the bi-weekly payroll as, over time this requirement will come close to doubling the workload for the payroll office.

Due to the increased levels of payroll requirements, complexity of the current manual process, and fiscal rules from the Department of Personnel Administration (DPA) increasing the number of payroll transactions, CDE requests an Accounting Payroll Manager, who has management and analytical experience/skills to help with the implementation and oversight of the process.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
No	Neutral	No	22-2-112, C.R.S.

Current Program

Because CDE does not have an electronic timekeeping system (i.e. Kronos), the current payroll process within CDE is a very manual process that requires the payroll office as well as supervisors, to fill out most items within an excel spreadsheet and sign/submit via email. This process requires significant behind the scenes data manipulation in order to interface the data with CPPS appropriately.

The Department currently has 2.0 payroll FTE that process all payroll transactions each month for between 450 and 520 FTE (depending on the number of temps or federally funded staff). The vast majority of these staff have only one payroll transaction per month as part of the Monthly Payroll. For the 450 employees paid current on the monthly payroll, the payroll staff is required to gather each employee's funding source totals for the month, clean and compile the data, and work with OIT to reallocate these costs to CDE's various grants and state funds based on their reported percentages.

For the 70 employees on the biweekly payroll, the payroll office has approximately 400 biweekly payroll transactions to input per month depending on the number of biweekly pay periods that fall in the month. Payroll staff has to convert reported percentages to hours for bi-weekly staff, as the biweekly payrolls require manual input to CPPS based on hours worked per week and per funding source, rather than the percentages reported for the monthly payroll staff.

Problem or Opportunity

With the implementation of the partnership agreement requiring all current staff to be given the option to switch to bi-weekly and the Office of the State Controller implementation of new fiscal rules requiring all new hires be on the bi-weekly payroll, CDE is looking at potentially significant increases in total payroll transactions over the next few years. This is illustrated by the fact that this requirement, over time, will come close to doubling the number of biweekly payroll transactions handled each month by the payroll office. At present, the payroll staff are able to process the current 400 biweekly transactions per month, but when the number of transactions is doubled or even tripled, the staff will no longer be able to successfully complete all required payroll duties.

The department alluded to this challenge in the December 2022 JBC Hearing responses and indicated a budget request may be necessary.

This position will support the Accounting team and provide supervisory-level duties and responsibilities for other accountants, specifically the payroll team. Due to the increased levels of payroll requirements, complexity of our current manual process and fiscal rules from the DPA, the department needs an experienced Accountant to manage the payroll unit. The accounting unit will also utilize the higher level analytical skills for any future electronic timekeeping system implementation.

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

In order to meet the new requirements set by the Office of the State Controller and the partnership agreement surrounding payroll and state fiscal rules the department requests 1.0 FTE at the Accountant III level. Currently, the department processes payroll for approximately 520 employees each month, while approximately 70 of which are on bi-weekly payroll. In order to maintain a balanced workflow and successfully place all new hires on the bi-weekly payroll, CDE will require additional accounting support. This position will assist with the processing of biweekly payroll and further, it will oversee the payroll unit to ensure compliance with the new payroll requirements, state fiscal rules, and other accounting rules and regulations.

Hiring a new payroll supervisor, will enable operational services within CDE payroll and accounting services to meet the increased workload and the continued additional legislative actions increasing the overall FTE count, and as such, payroll transaction workload. This position will support the Controller and Deputy Controller in high level financial summaries, projections, reporting, and reconciling accounting data related to payroll and other corresponding aspects of the overall Accounting unit. Given the continued increase in transactional workload, it is not expected that the future implementation of a Time and Effort system will eliminate the need for this position.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

As this request is to meet operational requirements, evidence continuum is deemed N/A.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

The Department has identified this request as equity-neutral, given that it only affects departmental administrative operations with no identified equity impacts.

Assumptions and Calculations

The department requests 0.9 FTE in FY 2024-25 and 1.0 FTE in FY 2025-26 for a payroll supervisor (Accountant III). The [linked google](#) sheet outlines the associated costs.

Given the manual and complicated nature of the current payroll process within CDE, the department intends to hire an experienced payroll accountant. An accountant III with 10 years of experience would be ideal given the complexities and dynamics. The experienced accountant would also be invaluable in the event the department is able to begin to implement a time and leave modernization project in the near future.

The total costs outlined in the FTE calculation workbook are 0.9 FTE and \$130,056 in FY 2024-25 and 1.0 FTE and \$142,203 in FY 2025-26. Office furniture is excluded as the department operates a hybrid work environment with shared hoteling space for in-office days.

Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental


N/A

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-15: CDE Facility Needs

Dept. Approval By:  _____ Supplemental FY 2023-24
 OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter _____ Budget Amendment FY 2024-25
 _____ X _____ Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$6,320,641	\$0	\$6,250,225	\$95,662	\$98,443
FTE		43.2	0.0	43.2	0.9	1.0
GF		\$3,015,824	\$0	\$2,622,015	\$95,662	\$98,443
CF		\$186,807	\$0	\$188,595	\$0	\$0
RF		\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,439,615	\$0	\$0
FF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$6,320,641	\$0	\$6,250,225	\$95,662	\$98,443
01. Management and Administration, (A)	FTE	43.2	0.0	43.2	0.9	1.0
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items, (1)	GF	\$3,015,824	\$0	\$2,622,015	\$95,662	\$98,443
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items - General	CF	\$186,807	\$0	\$188,595	\$0	\$0
Department and Program Administration	RF	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,439,615	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact



Department Priority: R-15
CDE Facility Needs

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$6,320,641	\$95,662	\$98,443
FTE	43.2	0.9	1.0
General Fund	\$3,015,824	\$95,662	\$98,443
Cash Funds	\$186,807	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) requests a General Fund increase of \$95,662 and 0.9 FTE for FY 2024-25, annualized to \$98,443 and 1.0 FTE for FY 2025-26 and ongoing to obtain a dedicated staff member to address facility needs, including safety and security needs and coordination with Capital Complex. This represents an increase of 1.6% from the FY 2023-24 appropriation.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
No	Neutral	No	N/A

Current Program

These Facility needs are currently addressed by multiple staff members, some in unrelated units, including the Chief of Staff, Human Resources Director, and the Executive Assistant to the Commissioner as well as staff in the BEST unit. In addition to the facility needs at the CDE building, the Colorado Talking Book Library (CTBL) facility (owned by CDE) requires additional staff support to address building maintenance and safety issues, and project management of the controlled maintenance projects. Currently, two School Capital Construction (BEST) staff members provide ongoing support for these efforts. It would be more efficient and more appropriate to have a dedicated staff member to support all of the Department’s facility needs.

Problem or Opportunity

The Colorado Department of Education has not ever (based on current historical record) had a single staff person hired specifically to address the building operations needs of the agency’s facilities. Currently the responsibility of managing the operations, maintenance and security of a historic and century old building in Capitol Complex, the building owned by CDE known as the Colorado Talking Book Library, and space utilized by CDE within the State Services Building is being split across multiple positions which is diverting those staff from their other duties (sometimes inappropriately as the funding source for those staff is not aligned with the general administrative work). Given the size of our agency, the complexity of the spaces managed, and the maintenance needs of the Department, the current split approach is no longer viable and we are seeking a staff member that will be able to manage these roles and ensure the long-term safety and maintenance of CDE’s buildings and operations.

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

The Department proposes the addition of an Administrator IV position. This position will be responsible for:

- Ensuring the building maintenance for all three CDE locations is strategically planned and addressed;
- Liaising with Capitol Complex and State Architect staff;
- Managing all construction and improvement projects;
- Managing the security contract and emergency plans for 201 E. Colfax;
- Managing and coordinating the shared office space model (hoteling); and
- Serving as the primary contact for all CDE internal capital project procurement.

The creation of this new role will allow the Department to realign the resources being spent on the duties mentioned above towards the duties they were primarily hired to carry out. In particular, this will increase and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the services being offered by CDE. For staff hired to primarily provide externally facing supports, this will result in an increase of services available to Colorado districts and schools. For the staff hired to primarily provide internal services (e.g., HR Director, Chief of Staff), this will result in a realignment of efforts being focused on the continuous improvement of internal structures and supports. Finally, by having a single individual who is focused on this work entirely, it will result in a cohesive and strategic building operations plan that ensures that the Department can be proactive in addressing needs for the long-term stability of the CDE’s spaces. These will be measured by increased time being spent providing direct support to districts, increased efficiencies in our internal processes, and the creation and implementation of a long-range plan for building operations.

Without these funds and this position, the work identified above will continue to be carried out in a piecemeal manner by a variety of staff with other duties and responsibilities. This will decrease our long-range ability to support districts.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

N/A

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

This request is equity neutral, as all staff members will benefit from consistent management of security and maintenance needs.

Assumptions and Calculations

Assumptions and Calculations Summary Table					
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	Change	FY 2025-26 Request	Ongoing Costs past FY 2024-25
Total Funds	\$6,248,491	\$6,344,153	\$95,662	\$6,346,924	\$98,433
General Fund	\$2,943,674	\$3,039,336	\$95,662	\$3,042,107	\$98,433
Cash Fund - Name	\$186,807	\$186,807	\$0	\$186,807	0
Reappropriated Funds	\$3,118,010	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,118,010	0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0

	Administrator IV
Total FTE	0.9
Total Salary Cost (includes salary, Medicare, PERA)	\$71,300
Total Centrally Appropriated Costs (includes HLD, AED, SAED, STD)	\$16,627
Total One-Time Operating Costs	\$7,000
Total Ongoing Operating Costs	\$735
Total Costs	\$95,662

FTE Table:

Expenditure Detail		FY 2024-25			FY 2025-26		
Personal Services:							
	Classification Title	Biweekly Salary	FTE	Budget Amt	Biweekly Salary	FTE	Budget Amt
	<i>FTE</i>						
	ADMINISTRATOR IV	\$2,698	0.9	\$63,126	2,698	1.0	\$70,140
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
	FTE Total	\$2,698	0.9	\$63,126		1.0	\$70,140
	<i>Personnel Costs</i>	<i>Percent/Cost</i>			<i>Percent/Cost</i>		
	PERA	11.50%		\$7,259	11.50%		\$8,066
	Medicare	1.45%		\$915	1.45%		\$1,017
	Personnel Total		0.9	\$71,300		1.0	\$79,223
	<i>Central Appropriations</i>	<i>Percent/Cost</i>			<i>Percent/Cost</i>		
	Health-Life-Dental	\$11,033		\$9,930	\$11,033		\$11,033
	STD	0.16%		\$101	0.16%		\$112
	AED	5.00%		\$3,156	5.00%		\$3,507
	SAED	5.00%		\$3,156	5.00%		\$3,507
	FAMLI	0.45%		\$284	0.45%		\$316
	Indirect Costs, if applicable						
	Leased Space, if applicable	\$4,650					
	Central Appropriations Total		0.9	\$16,627		1.0	\$18,475
Operating Expenses:							
	<i>One-Time Operating</i>	<i>Operating Cost</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>Budget Amt</i>	<i>Operating Cost</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>Budget Amt</i>
	PC, One-Time	\$2,000	1.0	\$2,000	\$0		\$0
	Office Furniture, One-Time	\$5,000	1.0	\$5,000	\$0		\$0
	Other One-Time		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	One-Time Operating Expense Total			\$7,000			\$0
	<i>Ongoing Operating</i>	<i>Operating Cost</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>Budget Amt</i>	<i>Operating Cost</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>Budget Amt</i>
	Regular FTE Operating Expenses	\$500	1.0	\$500	\$500	1.0	\$500
	Cisco/Jabber Remote Phone	\$235	1.0	\$235	\$235	1.0	\$235
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Ongoing Operating Expense Total			\$735			\$735
TOTAL REQUEST				\$95,662			\$98,433
	FTE		0.9			1.0	
	General Fund			\$95,662			\$98,443
	Cash Fund (NAME)			\$0			\$0
	Reappropriated Funds			\$0			\$0
	Federal Funds			\$0			\$0

Link to FTE table shown above:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1XgVO2tdzCchpBN11jkiAdj0CfM3wkoPLJgrTdbhWXc/edit?usp=sharing>

N/A

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-16: BEST Term-Limited FTE Continuation

Dept. Approval By: 

Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Leiter

Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

X

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
			Request			
Total		\$1,646,679	\$0	\$1,719,028	\$7,423	\$7,423
FTE		16.0	0.0	16.0	0.0	0.0
GF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
CF		\$1,646,679	\$0	\$1,719,028	\$7,423	\$7,423
RF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
FF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
			Request			
Total		\$1,646,679	\$0	\$1,719,028	\$7,423	\$7,423
03. School District Operations, (E) Public	FTE	16.0	0.0	16.0	0.0	0.0
School Capital	GF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Construction, (1) Public School Capital	CF	\$1,646,679	\$0	\$1,719,028	\$7,423	\$7,423
Construction - Division of Public School Capital	RF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Construction Assistance	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact



Department Priority: R-16
BEST Term-Limited FTE Continuation

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$1,646,679	\$7,423	\$7,423
FTE	1.0	0.0	0.0
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0
Cash Funds	\$1,646,679	\$7,423	\$7,423
Reappropriated Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) requests \$102,584 cash funds from the Public School Capital Construction Assistance Fund and the continuation of 1.0 FTE in FY 2024-25 and ongoing to support the continuation of staff in the Capital Construction Program. The request reflects a marginal increase in administration funding from FY 2023-24 to FY 2024-25 and is ongoing because the FTE is currently on staff.

In FY 2022-23, a term-limited position (through FY 2023-24) was approved for a fifth regional program manager (RPM) for the Capital Construction Unit (CCU) and the Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) grant program due to a significant increase in the number of grant requests and complexity of requests the program continues to receive. Given the continued workload and additional responsibilities given to the office in recent years, this request is to make the term-limited FTE permanent. With this FTE, the CCU has been able to provide additional support for charter schools and rural districts that may struggle with facilities planning, completing grant applications, and managing approved projects.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
No	Positive	No	C.R.S. 22-43.7-105

Current Program

The Capital Construction Unit (CCU) is part of the School District Operations Division and oversees a series of programs and resources for capital construction funding as well as technical assistance for local education agencies for facility needs (master planning, design, maintenance, construction, procurement, etc.). The CCU manages emergency construction grants as needed and various capital funding opportunities as prescribed by the legislature. The four main program areas are:

Building Excellent Schools Today (BEST) grants provide funding in the form of competitive grants to school districts, charter schools, institute charter schools, boards of cooperative educational services, and the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. BEST has generated over \$3.5 billion in school improvement projects since FY 2008-09, with an award in almost every school district in the state. BEST funds can be used for the construction of replacement schools as well as general construction and renovation of existing school facility systems and structures. Staff works with the (nine-member, appointed) Capital Construction Assistance Board to establish and maintain processes and procedures and to prioritize projects annually for funding.

- BEST Grants:
 - Cash funds are typically used to fund smaller projects, such as roofs, boiler replacements, and fire alarms.
 - Lease-Purchase or COP funds are typically used to fund larger projects, such as new schools, major renovations, and additions. These grants are financed through Certificates of Participation and repaid with Assistance Fund revenues.
- Emergency Grants: available for unanticipated events that threaten health or safety or render all or a significant portion of a public-school facility unusable for educational purposes.
- Other Grants as Assigned: FY20 Full Day Kindergarten Grants, FY22 Air Quality Improvement Grants. FY24 Supplemental Grants (two rounds).

The Charter School Capital Construction Program distributes just over \$30 million annually on a per-pupil basis for construction, demolition, remodeling, maintaining, financing, purchasing, or leasing of land, buildings, or facilities. The program offers technical support for facilities related and

accounting questions and is funded with a percentage of marijuana excise tax revenue and State Education Fund dollars.

The Facility Insight Assessment Program focuses on establishing an industry-based standard to compare the cost of replacing major systems against replacing an entire facility with a goal of assessing every school facility in the state every five years. Current BEST grants are prioritized for assessments to support decisions made by the Capital Construction Assistance Board.

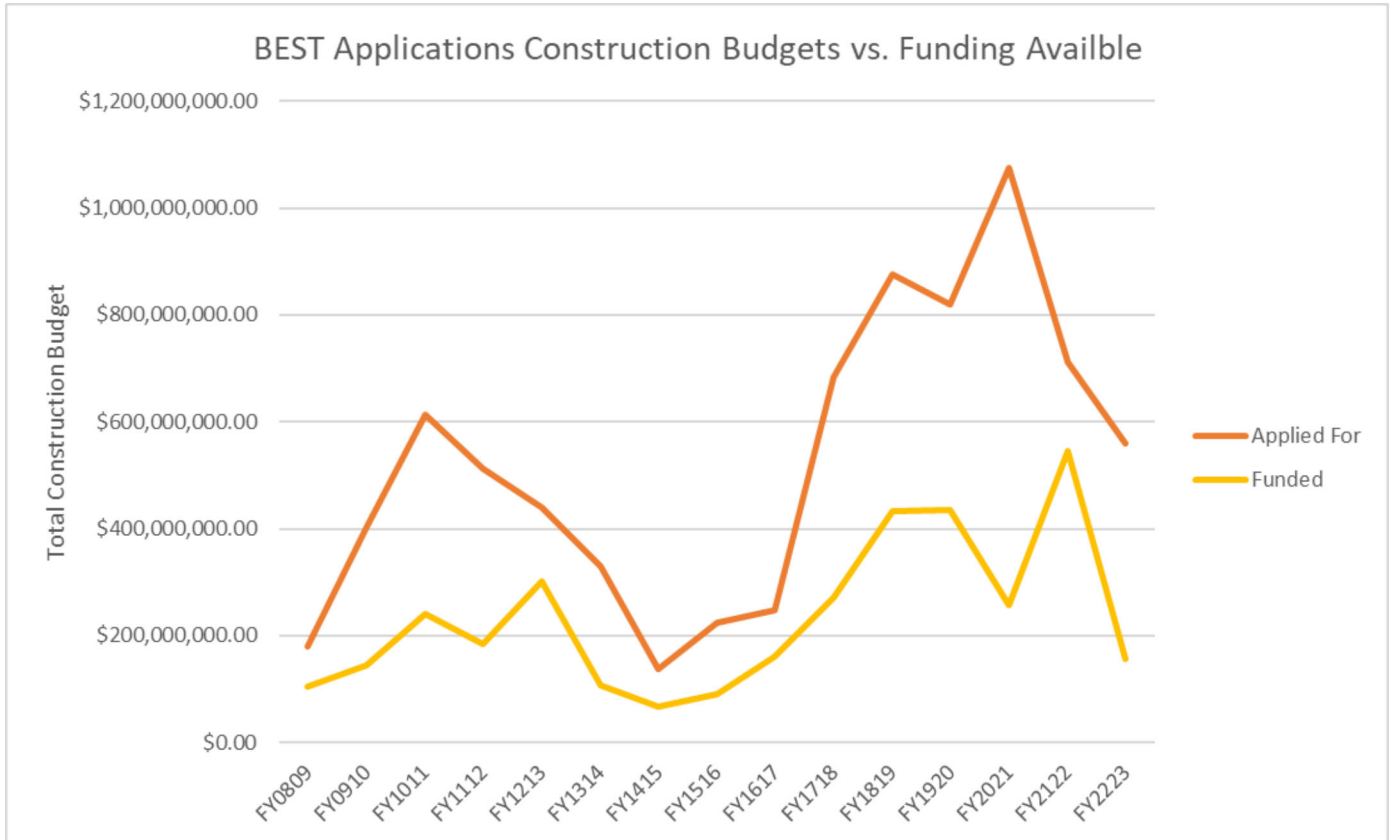
As the delegate to the Office of the State Architect the CCU oversees requests and reporting, project management, and support for capital construction and controlled maintenance projects at the Colorado Talking Book Library and at 201 Colfax.

Problem or Opportunity

With aging facilities and minimal budgets across the state, each year, there are more districts and charter schools inquiring about our programs and supportive measures. CDE estimates about \$20 billion in deferred maintenance needs in Colorado’s public schools, with the largest burden on rural school districts with low assessed values. The CDE Schools of Choice Unit has indicated through a recent survey that capital needs support and development is currently the greatest need for Colorado charter schools.

With increased need, increased revenues from the State Land Board, and the addition of marijuana excise tax revenues, the legislature increased the allowable debt obligation of the BEST program and five series of certificates of participation were issued, ending in 2021. The BEST program awarded approximately \$1.7 billion in projects between FY 2009 and FY 2018 and approximately \$2 billion between FY 2019 and FY 2024. The average dollar amount awarded per year has increased from approximately \$170 million to \$330 million. More importantly, the average annual dollar amount of projects applied for in those time spans has doubled from \$377 million per year to \$800 million. This illustrates the need for more than the amount the program is actually able to award.

Graph 1: BEST Application Construction Budgets vs. Funding Available



The number of Regional Program Managers (RPM) in this office has varied over the years, but since FY 2019, when the major increase in workload began, there have been four RPMs. While the dollar amount available for awarding projects has declined from a peak in FY 2021, the complexity of projects and the number of applications received remains high.

Additionally, beginning in FY 2020, HB19-1055 stipulated that the amount of marijuana excise tax transferred to the Charter School Capital Construction (CSCC) Program annually be equal to the percentage of students in charter schools as of June 1 of the prior fiscal year. This has resulted in a marked increase in revenue and distributions for this program, creating its own administrative complexities (including managing monthly distributions, supporting school leaders with facility and accounting questions, collecting data from all charters, and multiple reporting requirements).

Graph 2: Charter School Capital Construction Distributions by Year

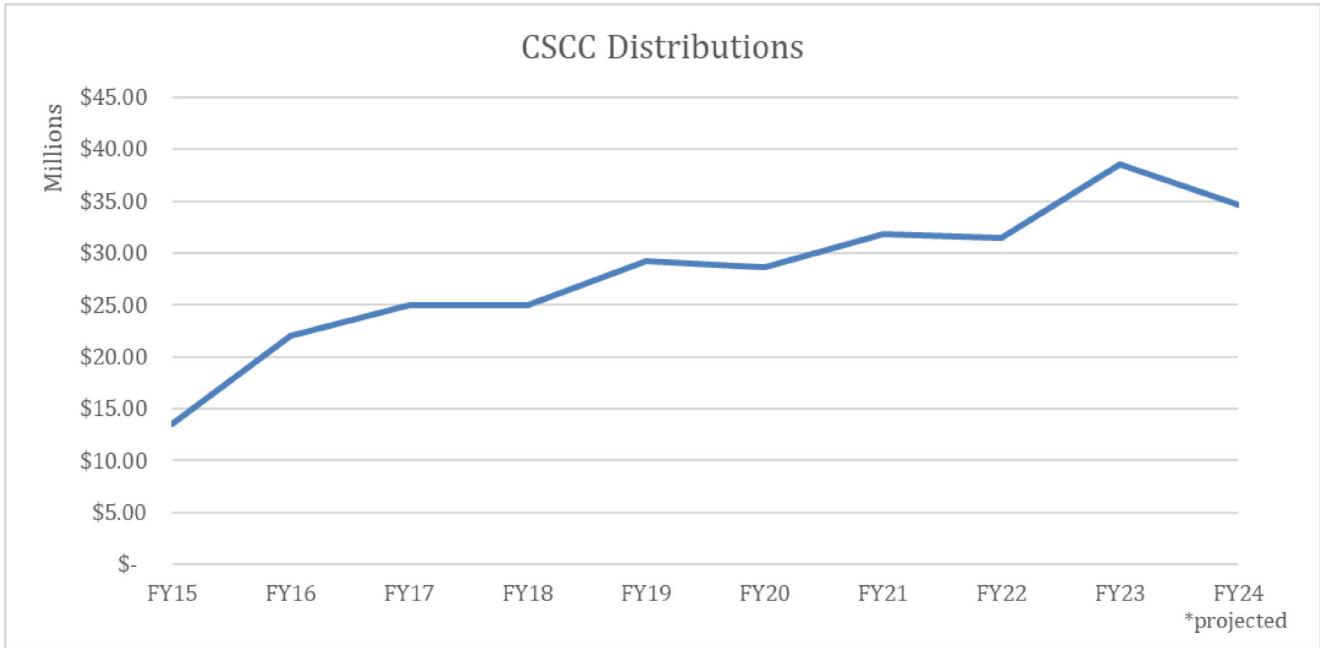


Table 1: Charter School Capital Construction Program

CSCC Program	FY 2015 - FY 2019	FY 2020 - FY 2024
Total Distributions	\$114,750,000	\$165,276,817
Average Annual Distributions	\$22,950,000	\$33,055,363

The challenges faced by Colorado’s public schools continue. The COVID 19 Pandemic only exacerbated these issues by causing unprecedented inflationary and supply chain issues which is pushing projects past their three-year appropriations and creating the necessity for emergency and supplemental grant programs to be administered on top of normal workload. The demand for additional school support and in-person visits, more grants to be awarded, and more focused outreach has and will remain.

Any additional staffing and capacity allows the Capital Construction Unit to work more collaboratively with a number of state departments.

The BEST grant program positively impacts and overlaps with grants and professional supports offered by a number of state departments:

- Department of Public Safety’s School Safety Resource Center,
- Department of Local Affairs’ Division of Local Governments,

- Department of Public Health and Environments’ Division of Disease Control and Public Health Response and Water Quality Control Division,
- Office of Internet Technology’s Colorado Broadband Office,
- Department of Labor and Employment’s Office of Just Transition,
- History Colorado’s State Historical Fund grant program.

Rapid growth of these programs started in FY 2019 and FY 2020. The COVID 19 Pandemic exacerbated a need for school facilities support at a point where the department was already understaffed. This is managed by attending to immediate needs (processing reimbursements) and emergency issues rather than being able to provide the true support our department strives for and believes we can provide for Colorado public schools.

Current staffing levels were designed to maintain programs and support efforts over ten years ago. Legislative changes to programs, the addition of new programs and grants, aging facilities, and an ever-increasing need for professional support requires additional capacity. Staffing is insufficient to properly maintain the program’s integrity, ability to manage our programs, support school facilities, and maintain focused outreach.

The need for additional staffing in this office is not necessarily related to the amount of revenue received or projected. The recent spike in outputs of the BEST program is because of financing through Certificates of Participation. However, facility deficiencies and district needs for additional support remain. Administration costs for this office (including the additional RPM) is less than 1% of anticipated revenue in FY 2024.

Table 2: Capital Construction Assistance Fund Revenue Breakout

Fiscal Year	State Land Board	Lottery	Marijuana Funds	Interest Earnings	JBC Transfer	Total Revenue
FY 2020-21	\$67,034,722	\$7,603,614	\$40,000,000	\$3,818,117	\$10,000,000	\$128,456,453
FY 2021-22	\$112,440,959	\$9,270,625	\$97,344,277	\$3,502,840	\$50,000,000	\$272,558,701
FY 2022-23	\$107,745,046	\$9,270,625	\$61,600,000	\$10,900,000	\$0	\$189,515,671
FY 2023-24	\$40,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$77,400,000	\$2,207,702	\$20,000,000	\$142,107,702
FY 2024-25	\$40,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$80,500,000	\$2,359,254	\$0	\$125,359,254
FY 2025-26	\$40,000,000	\$2,500,000	\$80,500,000	\$2,295,573	\$0	\$125,295,573

**CDE projects revenues conservatively and/or at statutory minimums. Typically, well below historical averages.*

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

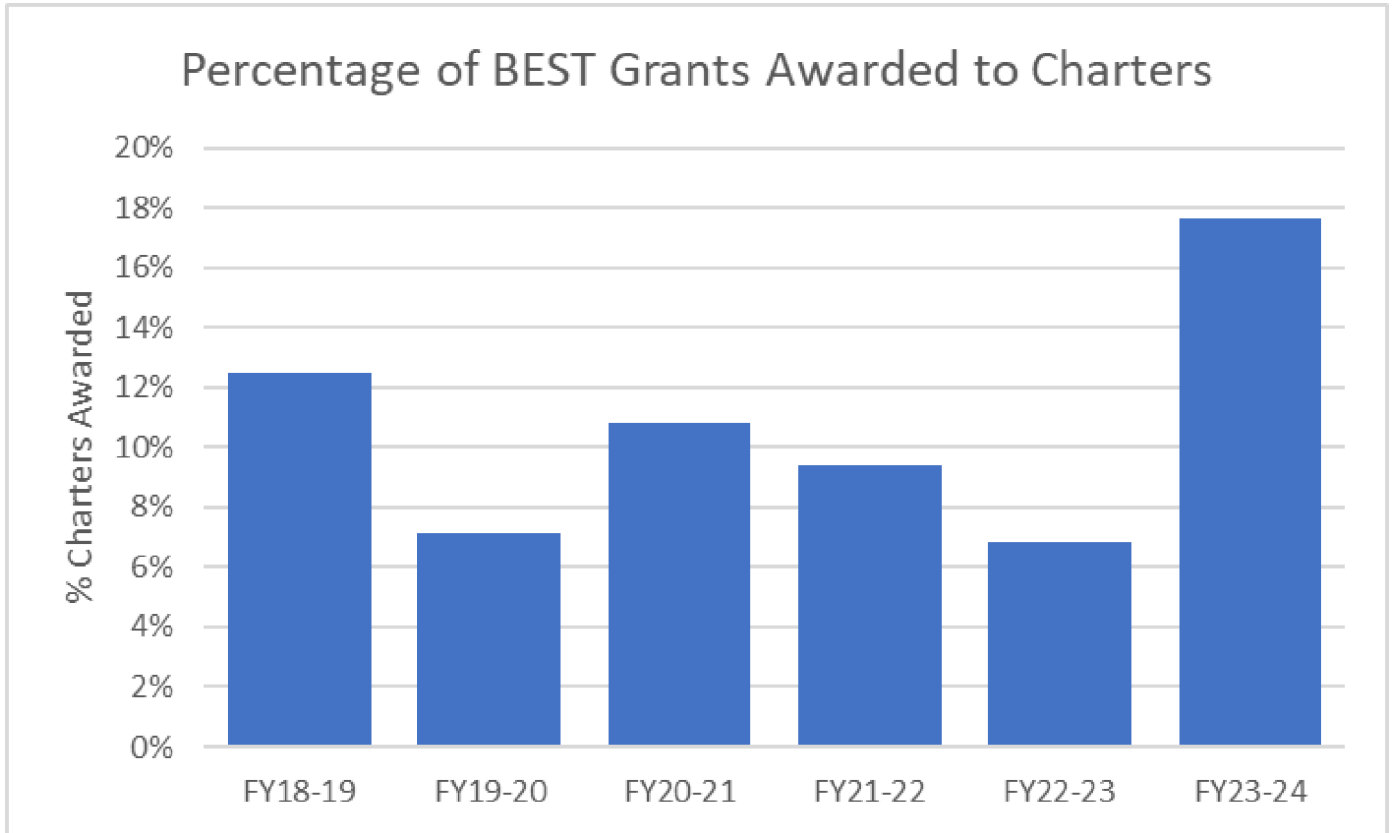
The term-limited FTE was hired in the middle of FY 2023, the Department can already see some positive effects. The BEST program currently manages over 135 active projects valued at over \$1.5 billion at any given time. With four Regional Program Managers, that is equal to almost 34 projects per staff person. A fifth RPM reduces this number to 27, increasing the amount of time staff can spend with each active project to assist grantees in spending grant funds appropriately and following grant guidelines.

In the FY 2022 BEST grant round, the program hit a high with an average of 19 grant requests to review per RPM. With the addition of a fifth RPM for the FY 2024 grant round, the number was reduced to a more manageable 11 grant requests per RPM. This allowed all staff to work more closely with applicants to refine project requests.

SB23-220 created two additional supplemental grants to address escalation created by the COVID 19 Pandemic. The additional RPM was invaluable in managing the additional complexities of standing up alternate grant programs during the busiest time of year.

The fifth RPM focused directly on charter applications for the FY 2024 BEST grant round, which resulted in better preparation and clearer presentations from charter applicants in an extremely competitive grant round. This significantly improved the outcome for charter schools, with 18% of total grant awards going to charter applicants, doubling the average of 9% over the previous five fiscal years.

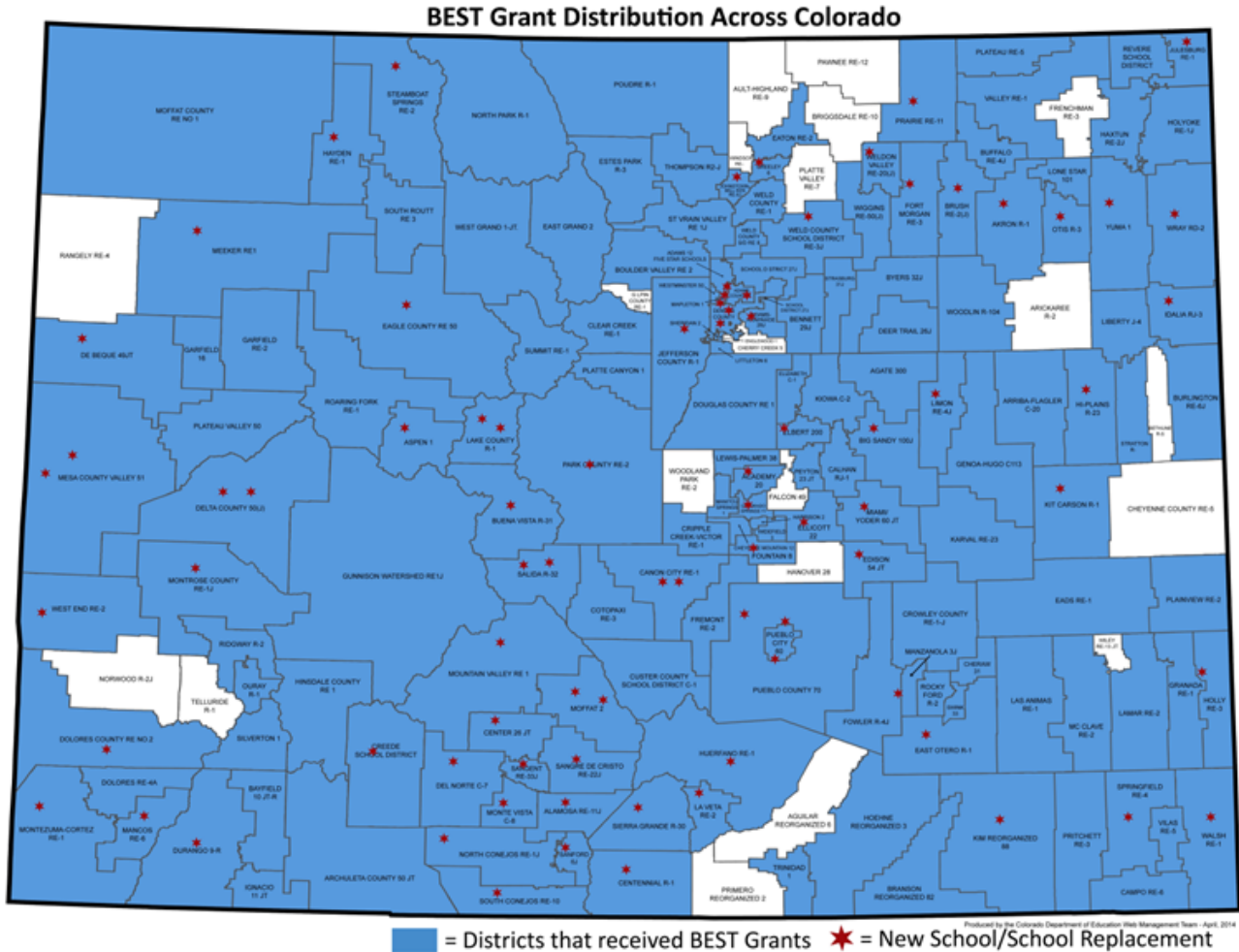
Graph 3: Percentage of BEST Grants Awarded to Charter Schools



This additional RPM now manages the Charter School Capital Construction program. Often, charter schools need support and direction in the proper use and handling of these funds, and so staff have been able to engage in outreach through webinars, panels, and webcasts. Charter leaders have voiced their support for this outreach and the ability to work with staff who are focused on charter school needs and support.

Transfer of this workload is allowing a senior RPM in the office to focus efforts on LEAN Six Sigma process improvement efforts, increase coordination efforts with partner state departments (mentioned above) and apply for a Supporting America's School Infrastructure grant (ED-GRANTS-060223-001) to develop a pilot master planning program to better support smaller school districts who often lack the internal capacity for this important planning effort.

Graph 5: BEST Grant Distributions Across Colorado



The proposed solution to hire a permanent fifth RPM will significantly increase the support delivered to rural districts and charter schools. This will allow the CCU to operate more in an outward-facing manner in the following ways:

- Revise its current assignments for district support to distribute workload. An effort of tracking and logging targeted outreach will begin with a thorough review of facility deficiencies across the state, as gathered through the Facility Insight Assessment Program.
 - Outreach logs will track an attempt to touch every district and eligible charter in the state within one year.
- Increase in-person district site visits to to work with district leaders and boards to better understand capital deficiencies and safety concerns.
 - This will result in better applications and ease for board members as measured by annual board and grantee surveys.

- Focus efforts on LEAN Six Sigma process improvement efforts, increase coordination efforts with partner state departments, and focus on a Supporting America’s School Infrastructure grant to develop a pilot master planning program to support smaller school districts who often lack the internal capacity for this important planning effort.
 - Success will be measured by completed LSS projects every year as well as successful application and implementation of the pilot master planning program.
- Permanently establish a single point of contact for the Charter School Capital Construction program and Charter BEST grants.
 - Success will be measured through customer feedback, quicker response to accounting and facility related questions, accuracy of annual reporting, and improved timing of distribution of funds.

The consequences of not retaining a permanent fifth RPM will continue to put a strain on the program’s ability to meet the needs and requests of school districts and charter schools across the state. The CCU programs and responsibilities have increased throughout the years, putting additional workload and responsibilities on the staff and department. Due to the nature of the CCU and the amount of money overseen by the program annually, consequences could arise within the department, but most importantly negative impacts districts without proper program support and guidance could become more frequent.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

This section is not applicable to this Decision Item pursuant to the criteria outlined in C.R.S. 2-3-210.

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

At its core, BEST exists to combat inequalities in public schools in two ways. The first (as discussed in the “Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes” section above) is to solve health, safety, and security deficiencies in all Colorado public schools. Studies show that extreme barriers to achieving self-actualization without first meeting the basic needs in school facilities. BEST addresses needs for every disproportionately impacted population referenced here. The second is to provide greater amounts of state funding support to districts and charters that cannot access capital funding to solve these deficiencies. The percentage of local matching dollars that is required for a BEST grant is based on criteria outlined in CRS 22.43.7-109, ranging from the school district assessed value per pupil, to median household income and percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-cost lunch to the district’s current available bonding capacity. These factors address needs most directly for Colorado’s rural communities.

Any increase to the support the CCU can give to school districts and/or improvements that can be made to the process by which all grant applicants are reviewed will have a positive effect on outcomes for historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected groups

Assumptions and Calculations

The Department of Education (CDE) requests an increase of \$7,423 cash funds for a total of \$102,584 cash funds from the Public School Capital Construction Assistance Fund and 1.0 FTE in FY 2024-25 and ongoing to support the continuation of staff in the Capital Construction Program. Please see the accompanying [FTE calculation](#) spreadsheet for detailed cost breakdown.

Table 3: FTE Cost Breakdown

Expenditure Detail		FY 2024-25			FY 2025-26		
Personal Services:							
	Classification Title	Biweekly Salary	FTE	Budget Amt	Biweekly Salary	FTE	Budget Amt
	<i>FTE</i>						
	PROJECT MANAGER II	\$2,827	1.0	\$73,499	2,827	1.0	\$73,499
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
		\$0		\$0	-		\$0
	FTE Total	\$2,827	1.0	\$73,499		1.0	\$73,499
	<i>Personnel Costs</i>	<i>Percent/Cost</i>			<i>Percent/Cost</i>		
	PERA	11.50%		\$8,452	11.50%		\$8,452
	Medicare	1.45%		\$1,066	1.45%		\$1,066
	Personnel Total		1.0	\$83,017		1.0	\$83,017
	<i>Central Appropriations</i>	<i>Percent/Cost</i>			<i>Percent/Cost</i>		
	Health-Life-Dental	\$11,033		\$11,033	\$11,033		\$11,033
	STD	0.16%		\$118	0.16%		\$118
	AED	5.00%		\$3,675	5.00%		\$3,675
	SAED	5.00%		\$3,675	5.00%		\$3,675
	FAMLI	0.45%		\$331	0.45%		\$331
	Indirect Costs, if applicable						
	Leased Space, if applicable	\$4,650					
	Central Appropriations Total		1.0	\$18,832		1.0	\$18,832
	Operating Expenses:						
	<i>One-Time Operating</i>	<i>Operating Cost</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>Budget Amt</i>	<i>Operating Cost</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>Budget Amt</i>
	PC, One-Time	\$2,000	0.0	\$0	\$0	0.0	\$0
	Office Furniture, One-Time	\$5,000	0.0	\$0	\$0	0.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	Other One-Time		0.0	\$0		0.0	\$0
	One-Time Operating Expense Total			\$0			\$0
	<i>Ongoing Operating</i>	<i>Operating Cost</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>Budget Amt</i>	<i>Operating Cost</i>	<i>FTE</i>	<i>Budget Amt</i>
	Regular FTE Operating Expenses	\$500	1.0	\$500	\$500	1.0	\$500
	Cisco/Jabber Remote Phone	\$235	1.0	\$235	\$235	1.0	\$235
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Other		1.0	\$0		1.0	\$0
	Ongoing Operating Expense Total			\$735			\$735
	TOTAL REQUEST			\$102,584			\$102,584
	FTE			1.0			1.0
	General Fund						
	Cash Fund ((Public School Capital Construction Assistance Fund			\$102,584			\$102,584

Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental

This section is not applicable as the request will be submitted as a part of the November 1st, 2023 budget package.

Department of Education

Funding Request for the FY 2024-25 Budget Cycle

Request Title

R-17: Colfax Security

Dept. Approval By: 

Supplemental FY 2023-24

OSPB Approval By: Adrian Lester

Budget Amendment FY 2024-25

X

Change Request FY 2024-25

Summary Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$6,320,641	\$0	\$6,250,225	\$89,241	\$89,645
FTE		43.2	0.0	43.2	0.0	0.0
GF		\$3,015,824	\$0	\$2,622,015	\$89,241	\$89,645
CF		\$186,807	\$0	\$188,595	\$0	\$0
RF		\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,439,615	\$0	\$0
FF		\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Line Item Information	Fund	FY 2023-24		FY 2024-25		FY 2025-26
		Initial Appropriation	Supplemental Request	Base Request	Change Request	Continuation
Total		\$6,320,641	\$0	\$6,250,225	\$89,241	\$89,645
01. Management and Administration, (A)	FTE	43.2	0.0	43.2	0.0	0.0
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items, (1)	GF	\$3,015,824	\$0	\$2,622,015	\$89,241	\$89,645
Administration and Centrally-Appropriated Line Items - General	CF	\$186,807	\$0	\$188,595	\$0	\$0
Department and Program	RF	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,439,615	\$0	\$0
	FF	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Auxiliary Data			
Requires Legislation?	NO		
Type of Request?	Education Prioritized Request	Interagency Approval or Related Schedule 13s:	No Other Agency Impact



**Department Priority: R-17
 Colfax Security**

Summary of Funding Change for FY 2024-25			
		Incremental Change	
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	FY 2025-26 Request
Total Funds	\$6,320,641	\$89,241	\$89,645
FTE	43.2	0.0	0.0
General Fund	\$3,015,824	\$89,241	\$89,645
Cash Funds	\$186,807	\$0	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0

Summary of Request

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) requests a General Fund increase of \$89,241 for FY 2024-25, and \$89,645 for FY 2025-26 and ongoing to address the safety and security needs of 201 E. Colfax in the Capitol Complex. This represents an increase of 1.4% from the FY 2023-24 appropriation. This request is ongoing as it will require an ongoing contract to fulfill this need.

Requires Legislation	Equity Impacts	Impacts Another Department?	Statutory Authority
No	Neutral	No	N/A

Current Program

As of today, the Colorado Department of Education has a contract with a security vendor that provides a single security guard from 8am to 4pm. Having a single security guard means that any time that guard goes on break, eats lunch, or conducts security checks of the building, the front door is unguarded. Over recent years, security concerns at the State Office Building (SOB at 201 E. Colfax) location continue to be an issue with 8 reported security incidents near the SOB between January 2022 and June 2023. The current security setup is no longer sufficient. As more staff return to the office more frequently, safety and security are one of their top concerns.

Problem or Opportunity

The current security situation has been present for well over a decade. The move to remote work during the pandemic put this request and concern on hold but, with the return to office, CDE must now revisit the safety and security of the building and staff. Current funding does not allow for us to increase the costs sufficiently to meet the needs of properly securing the building.

Proposed Solution and Anticipated Outcomes

The solution proposed here is two-fold. First, for FY 2024-25, CDE is proposing to increase the contract with our current security provider to have two guards present at all times. This will ensure that as one guard is taking a break, eating a meal, or inspecting the building, the doors are still secure. This also includes the purchase and use of a weapons detection system that will allow guards to quickly identify someone walking through the system that could potentially be bringing a weapon and address the situation. The dollar amount mentioned in this request is assuming that two security guards and other security equipment mentioned above are implemented in FY 24-25 and ongoing.

However, an alternate strategy that CDE is also pursuing is to work with the Colorado State Patrol to provide security similar to what is currently provided at other State locations included at the State Services Building at 1525 Sherman Street. This would include a regular rotation of CSP officers and the other safety equipment operated by those officers. Since CSP currently controls the internal cameras and the ability to lock and unlock the doors of the SOB, transitioning to full security by CSP ensures a seamless security system for the building that will integrate with all other safety measures being implemented by CSP. This is being postponed to a later date as the CSP has informed CDE that they have already finalized plans for FY 2024-25 and could not

accommodate this request at this time. The Department will return for resources if the Colorado State Patrol can integrate us into their security umbrella.

Supporting Evidence and Evidence Continuum

N/A

Promoting Equitable Outcomes

This request is equity neutral, as all staff members as well as the State Board of Education and other community stakeholders, will benefit from the improved security efforts.

Assumptions and Calculations

Assumptions and Calculations Summary Table					
	FY 2023-24 Appropriation	FY 2024-25 Request	Change	FY 2025-26 Request	Ongoing Costs past FY 2024-25
Total Funds	\$6,248,491	\$6,337,732	\$89,241	\$6,338,136	\$89,645
General Fund	\$2,943,674	\$3,032,915	\$89,241	\$3,033,319	\$89,645
Cash Funds - (GED Fees)	\$186,807	\$186,807	\$0	\$186,807	\$0
Reappropriated Funds	\$3,118,010	\$3,118,010	\$0	\$3,118,010	\$0
Federal Funds	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Breakdown of Request	FY 2024-25	FY 2025-26
Evolv Express Single Lane Weapons Detector (subscription)	\$26,883	\$25,099
Increase staffing with Current Vendor by 1	\$62,358	\$64,546
Total Request	\$89,241	\$89,645

Supplemental, 1331 Supplemental

N/A

Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee Program Grant

Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness



Introduction

Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) courses are offered to high school students and reflect the content taught in a college-level course. Students taking such courses have the option to take an Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate exam following completion of a course. Some institutions of higher education, including all state public institutions in Colorado pursuant to Colorado Commission on Higher Education policy, offer credit based on a student's AP and IB passing exam score. To take an AP and IB exam, students must pay an exam fee.

The Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee Program Grant covers the cost of the exams with the intention of increasing the number of eligible students who take AP and IB exams and receive scores for which college academic credit is awarded. The program provides funds to high schools to pay for all or a portion of AP and IB exam fees on behalf of eligible students.

Funding and participation

- For the 2022-23 school year, 13 districts and 37 schools participated in the Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee Program. This program is available for individual schools to apply if their districts choose not to.
- For the 2022-23 school year, eligible students* took 8,040 AP exams and 1,267 IB exams. These exam fees were funded at \$53.00 per AP exam and \$77.69 per IB exam for a total of \$524,55.23.

Exams administered

Included is a list of the 39 AP exam courses and 32 IB exam courses, with the number of exams administered to eligible students per course, for which funding was requested (as reported** by the 13 participating school districts and 37 schools combined).

**"Eligible student" means a student enrolled in a high school who is a low-income individual, as defined in [20 U.S.C. sec. 9832\(3\)](#) and who is planning to take one or more advanced placement exams or International Baccalaureate exams.*

***Numbers in tables do not add up to the total number of reported AP and IB exams.*

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

- For more information, visit the Accelerated College Opportunity Exam Fee Grant Program webpage: http://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/apexam_fee
- For questions, contact Marina Estrada Kokotovic at Kokotovic_M@cde.state.co.us

AP exams administered to eligible students as reported by schools and districts

Advanced Placement Course	Number of Exams Administered
AP Capstone	0
AP Research	25
AP Seminar	190
AP Art History	22
AP Music Theory	5
AP Studio Art 2-D	39
AP Studio Art 3-D	13
AP Studio Art Drawing	16
AP English Language and Composition	836
AP English Literature and Composition	339
AP Comparative Government and Politics	9
AP European History	29
AP Human Geography	442
AP Macroeconomics	52
AP Microeconomics	37
AP Psychology	294
AP United States Government and Politics	325
AP United States History	432
AP World History	253
AP Calculus AB	236
AP Calculus BC	86
AP Computer Science A	61
AP Computer Science Principles	159
AP Statistics	234
AP Biology	227
AP Chemistry	63
AP Environmental Science	192
AP Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism	4
AP Physics C: Mechanics	28
AP Physics 1: Algebra based	109
AP Physics 2: Algebra based	16
AP Chinese Language and Culture	6
AP French Language and Culture	7
AP Latin	0
AP German Language and Culture	1
AP Italian Language and Culture	0
AP Japanese Language and Culture	5
AP Spanish Language and Culture	535
AP Spanish Literature and Culture	29
TOTAL EXAM FEES REQUESTED	5552

IB exams administered to eligible students as reported by schools and districts.

IB Exam Course	Number of Exams Administered
Theory of Knowledge	66
Language A: literature	27
Language A: language and literature	167
Literature and performance	0
Classical languages	3
Language B	66
Business management	18
Economics	17
Geography	0
Global Politics	1
History	0
Information technology in a global society	22
Philosophy	67
Psychology	0
Social and cultural anthropology	4
World religions	94
Biology	4
Chemistry	0
Computer Science	37
Design Technology	17
Environmental systems and societies	1
Physics	1
Sports, exercise and health science	24
Mathematical Studies SL (known as Math Studies)	6
Mathematics SL	32
Mathematics HL	35
Further Mathematics HL	55
Dance	0
Film	17
Music	9
Theatre	0
Visual Arts	31
English HL	5
Europe HL	0
Spanish HL	1
TOTAL EXAM FEES REQUESTED	864

John W. Buckner Automatic Enrollment in Advanced Courses Grant Program

Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness



Introduction

Well-performing students from traditionally underrepresented groups and low-income students of all racial and ethnic backgrounds do not enroll in advanced classes at the same rate as their peers, regardless of preparedness. In addition, students who have access to a rigorous curriculum perform better across multiple measures, including graduating high school and completing higher education. All students deserve the opportunity to learn higher-level content.

The John W. Buckner Automatic Enrollment in Advanced Courses Grant Program, [Senate Bill 19-059](#), is intended to increase the number of students enrolled in advanced courses for subjects in which the student has demonstrated proficiency.

The first year of funding for the program was the 2019-20 school year.

Funding and Participation

Approximately \$220,000 is available for the 2023-24 fiscal year. Grants will be awarded for a one-year period with funding in subsequent years contingent upon continued appropriations and grantees meeting all grant, fiscal and reporting requirements.

Allowable services or activities include:

- Expanding the number of advanced courses offered by the Local Education Provider (LEP), including the use of technology to increase the number of advanced courses offered;
- Incentivizing teachers to teach advanced courses, including teacher training and professional development in areas relating to advanced course instruction;
- Developing advanced course curriculum; and
- Expanding parent and student awareness of advanced course availability and enrollment as well as student success in advanced courses.

Prohibited use of funds include hiring new teachers for the purpose of teaching advanced courses.

Eligibility

A Local Education Provider (LEP) is eligible for the grant program if it automatically enrolls each student entering the ninth grade, or higher, in an advanced course based on any of the following criteria:

- The student achieved a score that is equivalent to, or exceeds, meeting or exceeding expectations on the state assessment administered the preceding academic year.
- Any other measure, applied to all students enrolled in a LEP that, in the judgment of the LEP, is an indicator that a student demonstrates the ability to succeed in an advanced course.

School districts, schools, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services and charter schools can apply for this grant. If a district applies, a school operating within that district may not submit a standalone application. A school can apply only if its district does not intend to apply.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

- For more information, including an FAQ and use of funds examples, visit the John W. Buckner Automatic Enrollment in Advanced Courses webpage: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/autoenrollment>
- For questions, contact Alena Barczak at barczak_a@cde.state.co.us or 303-548-8427.



	Applicant	Selected for Funding?	Funds Requested	Funds Awarded
Year 1 (2019-20)	George Washington High School (DPS)	Yes	\$12,100	\$12,100
	John F. Kennedy High School (DPS)	Yes	\$41,910	\$41,910
	Northfield High School (DPS)	Yes	\$86,550	\$86,550
	Thomas Jefferson High School (DPS)	No	\$20,000	N/A
	Calhan School District RJ-1	Yes	\$21,249	\$21,249
	Paonia High School (Delta County SD 50J)	Yes	\$25,850	\$25,850
				Total Requested: \$207,659
Year 2 (2020-21)	<i>The legislature did not allocate funding this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.</i>			
Year 3 (2021-22)	John F. Kennedy High School (DPS)	Yes	\$39,700	\$44,792.16
	Fremont School District RE-2	Yes	\$4,825	\$5,802.09
	Sierra High School (Harrison RE-2)	Yes	\$29,104	\$32,259.64
	Northeast BOCES	Yes	\$78,850	\$78,850
				Total Requested: \$152,479
Year 4 (2022-23)	Aspen School District 1	No	\$69,344	N/A
	Canon City School District RE-1	Yes	\$59,063	\$41,398
	Fort Morgan School District RE-3	Yes	\$92,470	\$64,814
	John F. Kennedy High School (DPS)	No	\$57,500	N/A
	Littleton School District 6	Yes	\$50,000	\$35,046
	Steamboat Montessori School (Charter School Institute)	Yes	\$39,951	\$28,002
	Woodland Park School District RE-2	Yes	\$72,389	\$50,739
			Total Requested: \$440,717	Total Awarded: \$219,999
Year 5 (2023-24)	Application closes January 15, 2024. Grantees announced by March 15, 2024.			

Reporting

Grantees are required to submit an annual report to the Colorado Department of Education that includes:

- The number of students enrolled in advanced courses before and after implementation of the grant program;
- The number of students automatically enrolled in advanced courses by the LEP before and after implementation of the grant program;
- Demographic information of students automatically enrolled in advanced courses, including grade, race, ethnicity, gender and socioeconomic information before and after implementation of the grant program;
- The number of students in grades 4-8 automatically enrolled in advanced courses before and after implementation of the grant program if applicable; and
- The ways in which grant dollars were utilized.

Data has only been fully collected for one cohort. The first cohort of grantees (2019-20) was scheduled to submit their annual report in summer of 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this reporting requirement was waived and the data not collected. During the second year of the grant (2020-21), funding was not provided due to the ongoing COVID-19



pandemic. Annual reports for the third cohort (2021-22) were due June 30, 2023, but only one grantee submitted their report. Cohort 4 (2022-23) is currently in their implementation year with the annual report due by June 30, 2024.

Career Development Incentive Program

Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness



COLORADO
Department of Education

Program Overview

The Career Development Incentive Program (CDIP), or [Career Development Success Program in House Bill 18-1266](#), provides financial incentives for school districts and charter schools to encourage high school students to complete qualified industry credential programs, pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship programs, internships or qualified Advanced Placement (AP) courses.

[The list of qualifying programs/courses](#) was developed based on Colorado labor market data; existing secondary programs that correspond with high growth, high demand occupations; and business/industry feedback.

The CDIP program year is from July 1 – June 30 annually. The 2022-23 program year is funded through reimbursements in fiscal year 2023-24.

Funding

Year	Total Requests	Requests Funded	Dollar Amount
2016-17	3,106	1,807	\$1,000,000
2017-18	5,777	3,688	\$2,000,000
2018-19	6,764	5,133	\$4,800,000
2019-20	9,110	6,441	\$4,279,837
2020-21	6,709	6,147	\$6,033,028
2021-22	12,573	9,130	\$4,286,089
2022-23	20,297	10,791	\$4,214,771
TOTAL	56,612	43,137	\$26,613,725

*An additional \$1.5 million dollars were allocated to the 2020-21 year from recovery funds, which allowed the funding of eligible programs in tiers 1, 2, and 3.

The specific dollar amount of each incentive depends on the total number of completed programs in the state and the number and type of completed programs reported by districts. The funding is distributed in tiers with industry credentials funded before all other qualified programs. The three Career Development Incentive Program tiers are:

1. Industry certification programs, pre-apprenticeships or apprenticeships
2. Workplace training programs (internships)
3. Computer science Advanced Placement (AP) courses

2022-23 Program Participation

- Eighty-four school districts (61 in 2021-22) and 10 charter schools (nine in 2021-22) reported students who completed qualified industry credential programs. Thirty-one (22 in 2021-22) were categorized as small rural, and 22 (13 in 2021-22) were categorized as rural.
- CDIP saw a 61% increase in total requests, from 12,573 in 2021-22 to 20,237 in the 2022-23 year.

As required by state law, Colorado Revised Statutes 22-54-138, participating districts, BOCES and charter schools cannot receive a distribution of more than ten percent of the total number of completed industry certificates reported by districts and charter schools. Therefore, one district received funding for only 1,063 certificates, rather than the amount reported, thus reducing the total number of credentials funded.



2022-23 Reported Programs Breakdown

Qualified Programs	# Reported	# Funded	\$ Amount Funded
Industry-Recognized Certificates	15,421	10,430	\$4,214,771
Pre-Apprenticeships	305	246	
Apprenticeships	123	115	
Internships	2285	0	\$0
Advanced Placement Computer Science Courses	2163	0	\$0
Total	20,297	10,791	\$4,214,771

2022-23 Reported Demographics

Gender	
Female	37%
Male	63%

Where can I learn more?

- For more information, visit the [Career Development Incentive Program page](#).

Comprehensive Quality Physical Education Instruction Pilot Program

Health Education Services



COLORADO
Department of Education

OVERVIEW

The Comprehensive Quality Physical Education Instruction Pilot Program, through the Health Education Services Office, provides funding to schools or districts to implement model physical education policies. The Colorado Department of Education funded three districts (four schools) for a three-year grant program, approximately \$80,000 per school year to implement the grant focus areas. Due to COVID-19 it was challenging for schools to implement quality physical education in a remote setting. To allow for the best use of funding CDE extended the grant period to the 2023-24 school year. This will allow additional opportunities to address grant focus areas and extended evaluation efforts to explore the effectiveness of the Comprehensive Quality Physical Education Pilot.

GRANT FOCUS AREAS

Districts awarded funds for the pilot program are required to use the grant to implement a comprehensive quality physical education instruction program that includes the following components:

- Implementing daily physical education for all students for 30–45 minutes, depending on grade levels, with moderate to vigorous physical activity for at least half of the physical education class time.
- Classes should be comparable to the class size for academic subjects and in safe, clean and well-maintained indoor and outdoor spaces that support physical education instruction.
- Curriculum should meet Colorado’s physical education standards at each covered grade level, provide regular assessment and student progress monitoring.
- Policy that prohibits the removal of a student from the physical education program for academic reasons or as a form of punishment; and a prohibition against exempting students from physical education instruction with limited, specified exceptions.
- Prepare a three-year comprehensive quality physical education instruction action plan that includes class schedules, physical education curriculum, physical education teacher qualifications, a professional development plan and sample physical education assessments and assessment rubrics.

Current Grantees:

McAuliffe Middle School is an urban school located in Denver Public School District.

Haskin Elementary School and **Skoglund Middle School** are two rural schools in Center Consolidated School District 26JT.

B.F. Kitchen Elementary School is a suburban school in Thompson School District R2-J.

Grantees have:

- Received needs-based professional development.
- Engaged in monthly communities of practice convenings.
- Attended professional development on key grant focus areas.
- Engaged in baseline and yearly data collection for grant evaluation.
- Prepared comprehensive quality physical education instruction action plans.

To learn more on the Comprehensive Quality Physical Education Instruction Pilot Program, use this QR Code:



WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

- Jamie Hurley at hurley_j@cde.state.co.us or 303-866-6453
- View all CDE fact sheets: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/communications/factsheetsandfaq>

Innovative Learning Opportunities Pilot (ILOP) Program

Postsecondary & Workforce Readiness



ILOP Program Overview

The Innovative Learning Opportunities Pilot (ILOP) Program was created through [SB 19-216](#). This program enables participating Local Education Providers (LEPs) to offer ninth through 12th grade high school students a variety of learning experiences that usually occur outside of the classroom. These learning experiences should be designed to enrich students' education and support them in successfully transitioning from high school to postsecondary education and/or the workforce.

Innovative learning opportunities may include work-based learning such as apprenticeships or residency programs, competency-based learning or capstone projects and other learning experiences that are designed to help students develop and demonstrate personal, entrepreneurial, civic and interpersonal and professional skills as described in Colorado Department of Education's (CDE's) [Essential Skills Required in the Colorado Academic Standards](#).

Selected LEPs will be allowed to count their part-time high school students that participate in the LEP's Innovative Learning Plan as full-time students regardless of the actual number of teacher-pupil instruction hours and teacher-pupil contact hours for each student.

The first ILOP cohort was in the 2020-21 school year. Each year a new cohort is added, and it is the intent of the General Assembly to increase the number of LEPs that participate in this program to 100% by 2025-26.

Funding and Participation

Selected LEPs do not receive additional funding above their regular, per pupil funding. However, LEPs can count their part-time students who are participating in ILOP opportunities as full-time students regardless of seat time at the high school.

Eligible ILOP applicants include:

- A LEP or a group of LEPs
- A school district
- A Board of Cooperative Services (BOCES):
 - On behalf of its member school districts; or
 - To implement an Innovative Learning Plan in a public high school that it operates
- A district charter school authorized by a school district:
 - As part of its authorizing school district, or
 - Independent of its authorizing school district
- An institute charter school authorized by the state Charter School Institute

2023-24 Cohort

- Banning Lewis Preparatory Academy (Falcon School District 49)
- Bayfield School District
- Northeast Colorado BOCES (Akron R-1, Buffalo RE-4J, Frenchman RE-3, Haxtun RE-2J, Julesberg RE-1, Lone Star #101, Otis R-3, Plateau RE-5, Revere, Wray RD-2, Yuma-1)



Participating LEPs 2022-23

1,062 students accessed ILOP opportunities across 24 LEPs.

The Academy of Charter Schools (Charter School Institute)	Holyoke School District Re-1J
Alamosa School District RE-11J	Jefferson County School District R-1
Boulder Valley School District RE-2	Lewis-Palmer School District 38
Clear Creek School District RE-1	Montezuma-Cortez School District RE-1
Colorado Early Colleges (Charter School Institute)	Mountain Valley School District RE-1
Colorado River BOCES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • De Beque School District 49JT • Garfield School District 16 • Roaring Fork School District RE-1 	Pueblo County 70 School District
Durango School District 9-R	South Routt School District RE 3
East Grand School District 2	Steamboat Springs School District RE-2
Education ReInvisioned BOCES	Vilas School District RE-5
Estes Park School District R-3	Weld School District RE 3-J
Falcon District 49	Weld School District Re-8
Hayden School District RE-1	West Grand School District 1-JT

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE?

- For more information, visit the Innovative Learning Opportunities Pilot Program webpage: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/postsecondary/ilop>
- For questions, contact Erica Ryan at ryan_e@cde.state.co.us



COLORADO
Department of Education

COVID Relief Annual Update Legislative Report 2023

Pursuant to 22-2-146, C.R.S.

Submitted to:

**Colorado House Education Committee
Colorado Senate Education Committee**

By:

**Office of Strategic Recovery
Colorado Department of Education**

December 2023

Office of Strategic Recovery
201 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203



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Executive Summary

Three primary rounds of COVID Relief funding were provided to Colorado between March 2020 and March 2021. These federal funding sources were (1) the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act in March 2020; (2) the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act in December 2020; and (3) the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act in March 2021. This report provides the total amounts that the Colorado Department of Education (Department) received and was authorized to spend at the state level under each act; the designated purposes on which the Department spent the funds received; the specific amount allotted to each purpose; and data the Department has concerning the results and/or impacts for each funded purpose. This report is submitted to meet the legislative requirements as defined in section 22-2-146, C.R.S.

The vast majority of COVID relief funds received by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) was funded through the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) funds, established in the CARES Act (ESSER I), and further funded under the CRRSA Act (ESSER II) and the ARP Act (ESSER III). These funds were used to provide vital support to Colorado local education agencies (LEAs) and schools as they worked to transition to remote programs, reopen schools safely, maximize in-person instructional time, and address the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students, educators, and families. Funds were allowed to be used to implement actionable strategies to meet the urgent needs of students and educators as LEAs and schools have worked to return to and safely sustain in-person instruction, address the educational inequities that have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and address students' social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs.

Colorado received more than \$1.8 billion in ESSER funds across the three rounds of federal COVID relief funding. Of these ESSER funds, 90% (\$1.6 billion) was distributed directly to LEAs through Part A of Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). The remaining 10% of ESSER funds (\$180.7 million) were reserved by CDE to meet state-level needs.

The CARES, CRRSA, and ARP Acts also created non-ESSER funds for a variety of programs that provided funding for education-related recovery needs. These included Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER), Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS), the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), and State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF). Additional programs related to pandemic recovery in education include the Child Nutrition, Homeless Children and Youth, IDEA, and Library programs, totaling an additional \$717.8 million.

Across three federal legislative acts, Colorado received over \$2.6 billion in COVID Relief funds for K-12 education. As mentioned previously, the majority of relief funds were administered through the ESSER 90% allocation program (\$1.6 billion). The remaining funds have supported a variety of programs aimed at addressing student needs. Funds will continue to be distributed through specified programs through the 2023-24 school year.

Part One - Overview of Pandemic Relief Funding

Colorado Federal Education Pandemic Relief Funding

In March 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act was signed into law, establishing the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF), including the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER I) and other programs. ESSER I dollars were appropriated to states based on the 2019-2020 Title I shares. Colorado was allocated \$836.6 million from the U.S. Department of Education from the CARES Act, including \$121 million to form the ESSER I fund (see Figure 1, orange).

In December 2020, the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act was signed into law, providing an additional \$567.2 million to Colorado via the Education Stabilization Fund, including an allocation of \$519.3 million from the U.S. Department of Education to form the ESSER II Fund (see Figure 1, blue).

In March 2021, the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act was signed into law, providing an additional \$1.3 billion to Colorado in funding for the ESF, including an allocation of \$1.2 billion from the U.S. Department of Education to form the ESSER III Fund (see Figure 1, green).

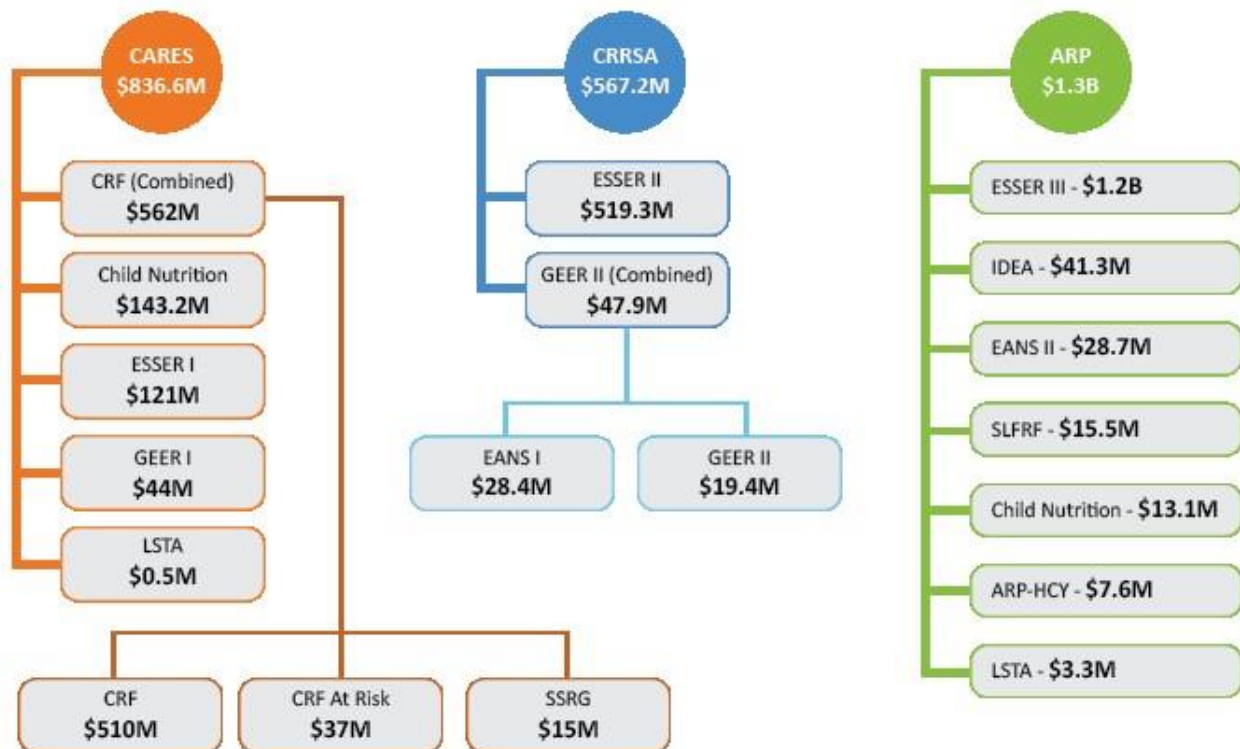


Figure 1: Colorado Education Pandemic Relief Funds

While ESSER federal funds represented the majority of funding provided for COVID relief, additional programs created by federal legislation were allocated to Colorado to support education-related pandemic relief efforts. Those established in the CARES Act include the Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER) program, and funding for library services (the Library Services and Technology Act;



LSTA). The CRRSA Act, in addition to a second round of GEER funding, added the Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) program. The ARP Act provided additional funds to EANS and LSTA and added funding for students with disabilities (IDEA), emergency school nutrition programs, funding to support homeless children and youth (HCY), and state and local fiscal recovery funds (SLFRF).

Table 1: Summary of CDE Portion of Federal Pandemic Relief Funding¹

Federal Program (Enacting Legislation)	Direct Allocation	State Allocation or Activities	State Administration	Total
CRF (CARES)	\$ 510,000,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 510,000,000
Child Nutrition (CARES)	\$ 143,151,717	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 143,151,717
ESSER I (CARES)	\$ 108,894,404	\$ 11,494,409	\$ 604,969	\$ 120,993,782
CRF - At-Risk Students (CARES)	\$ 37,000,000	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 37,000,000
CRF - Safe Schools Reopening Grant (CARES)	\$ 14,404,967	\$ 0	\$ 595,033	\$ 15,000,000
GEER I (CARES) ²	\$ 0	\$ 9,836,598	\$ 117,527	\$ 9,954,125
LSTA (CARES)	\$ 492,824	\$ 7,128	\$ 20,399	\$ 520,351
ESSER II (CRRSA)	\$ 467,391,880	\$ 49,335,809	\$ 2,596,622	\$ 519,324,311
GEER II (CRRSA)	\$ 0	\$ 13,360,378	\$ 0	\$ 13,887,730
EANS I (CRRSA)	\$ 28,233,931	\$ 0	\$ 200,000	\$ 28,433,931
ESSER III (ARP)	\$ 1,050,438,565	\$ 110,879,626	\$ 5,835,770	\$ 1,167,153,961
IDEA (ARP)	\$ 41,260,993	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 41,260,993
EANS II (ARP)	\$ 28,509,729	\$ 0	\$ 200,000	\$ 28,709,729
SLFRF (ARP)	\$ 0	\$ 15,214,654	\$ 310,000	\$ 15,524,654
Child Nutrition (ARP)	\$ 10,083,303	\$ 2,364,478	\$ 623,337	\$ 13,071,118
ARP-HCY (ARP)	\$ 5,762,832	\$ 1,880,944	\$ 0	\$ 7,643,776
LSTA (ARP)	\$ 3,147,212	\$ 15,000	\$ 103,209	\$ 3,265,421

¹ For a list of abbreviations, see Glossary on page 62.

² Note that GEER I and II values in Figure 1 are for all GEER funds awarded to the State of Colorado while the GEER I and II values in Table 1 are for only those allocated to CDE.

Part Two - ESSER Overview

Colorado ESSER Funds

As stated in Section 1, ESSER dollars were appropriated to states based on the 2019-2020 Title I shares, with 90% of funds allocated to local education agencies (LEAs) that received a Title I allocation in the most recent fiscal year. The remaining 10% of ESSER appropriations were reserved to address state-level needs caused or exacerbated by the pandemic. The resulting distribution of funds by ESSER funding source is shown in Figure 2.

In Colorado, a total of \$1.6 billion in ESSER funding was allocated to LEAs, while the State reserved \$180.7 million in ESSER set-aside funding (Table 2).

Funding Direct to Districts



Figure 2: Colorado ESSER Funds

Table 2: Federal Pandemic Relief Funding Summary

LEA ESSER Funding	State ESSER Funding	Total ESSER Funding
\$1.6 Billion	\$180.7 Million	\$1.8 Billion

Each ESSER funding source was established with timelines for the use of funds, which are awarded on a reimbursement basis. ESSER I funds could be obligated through September 30, 2022; ESSER II funds could be obligated through September 30, 2023; and ESSER III funds can be obligated through September 30, 2024 (Table 3).



Table 3: Federal Pandemic Relief Funding Summary

	ESSER I (CARES Act) March 2020	ESSER II (CRRSA Act) December 2020	ESSER III (ARP Act) March 2021	Total ESSER Funding
Total State Allocation	\$ 120,993,782	\$ 519,324,311	\$ 1,167,153,961	\$ 1,807,472,054
Allocation to LEAs	\$ 108,894,404 <i>90% of total funding Title 1 formula</i>	\$ 467,391,880 <i>90% of total funding Title 1 formula</i>	\$ 1,050,438,565 <i>90% of total funding Title 1 formula</i>	\$ 1,626,724,849
State Set-Aside and Administrative Costs	\$ 12,099,378 <i>10% of total funding</i>	\$ 51,932,431 <i>10% of total funding</i>	\$ 116,715,396 <i>10% of total funding</i>	\$ 180,747,205
Funding Period	Through September 30, 2022	Through September 30, 2023	Through September 30, 2024	



Direct Allocation to LEAs - Distribution and Use of Funds

Under the federal requirements for ESSER, each State Education Agency (SEA) must allocate at least 90 percent of the ESSER funds it receives as subgrants to LEAs in proportion to the amount of funds each LEA received in the most recent fiscal year under Title I, Part A of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). These funds could be used for a broad range of activities to prevent, prepare for, or respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, including its impact on the social, emotional, mental health, and academic needs of students.

As of October 31, 2023, Colorado has distributed, from the direct allocation to LEAs, over \$108 million from ESSER I, \$451 million from ESSER II, and \$592 million from ESSER III³ (Table 4).

Table 4: ESSER LEA Direct Allocations and Distributions

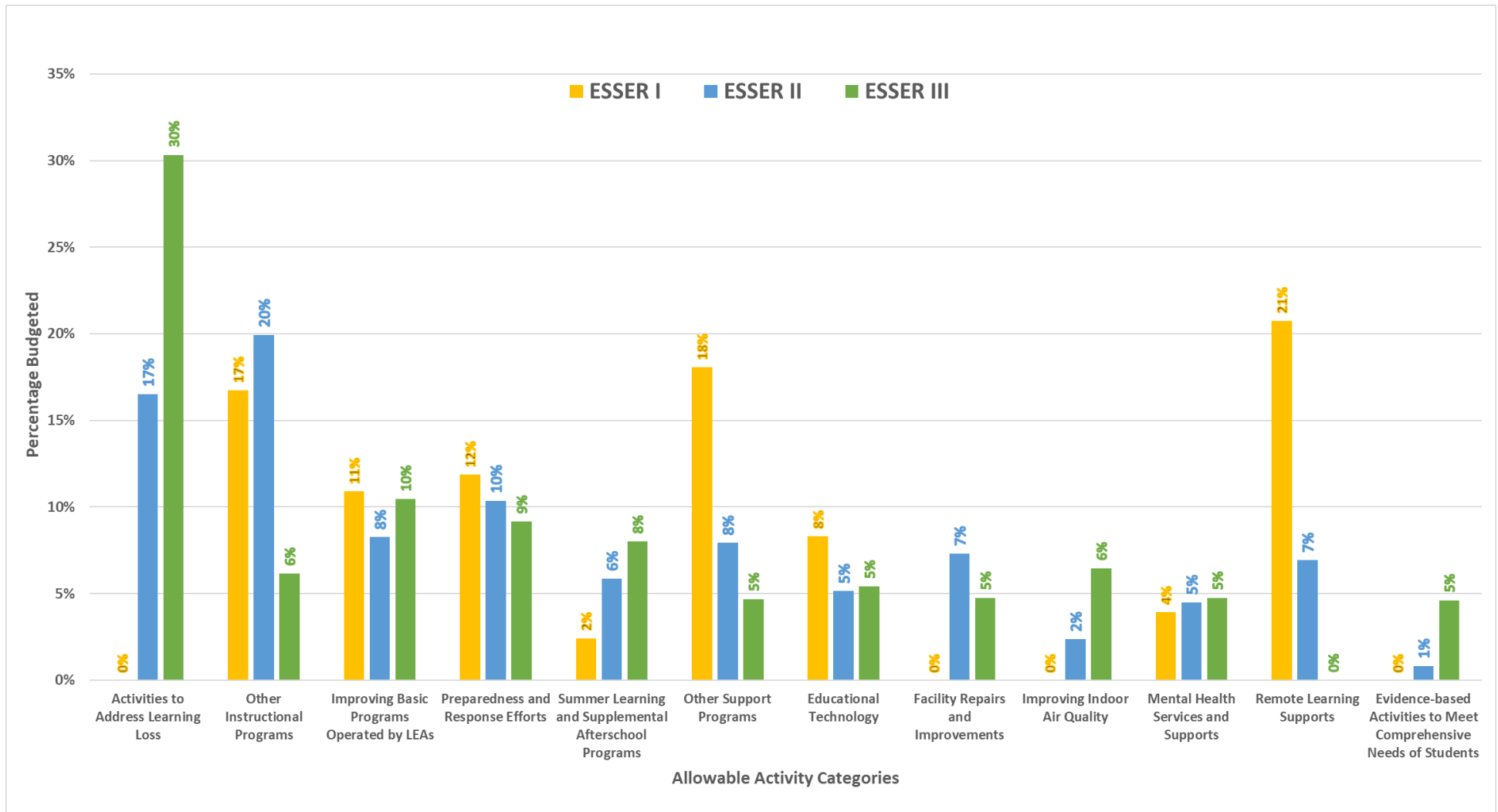
Allocated Purpose	Total Funding Allocation	Total Funding Distributed ⁴	Percentage of Total Funding Allocation Distributed
ESSER I 90%	\$ 108,894,404	\$ 108,850,808	99.96%
ESSER II 90%	\$ 467,391,880	\$ 451,317,918	96.56%
ESSER III 90%	\$ 1,050,438,565	\$ 592,860,981	56.44%

Figure 3 shows the top uses of the 90% ESSER LEA Direct Allocation funds for each ESSER in order of total dollar amount spent in each category through October 31, 2023.

³ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

⁴ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II grantees had until November 15, 2023, to submit requests for reimbursement for activities concluded by September 30, 2023. Similarly, ESSER III funds must be obligated by September 30, 2024. As a result, ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts in this report should not be considered final.

Figure 3: ESSER 90% Use of Funds





State Set-Aside - Distribution and Use of Funds

The 10 percent of ESSER funds not allocated directly to LEAs constitute the “state set-aside”, which could be used to meet state-level needs as defined by the State Board of Education (9.5%) and to administer these funds (up to 0.5%). Colorado received \$180,747,205 in state set-aside from ESSER I, II and III combined and has distributed over \$84.1 million as of October 31, 2023⁵.

Table 5: ESSER State Set-Aside Allocations and Distributions

Allocated Purpose	Total Funding Allocation	Total Funding Distributed ⁶	Percentage of total funding allocation distributed
ESSER I 10%	\$12,099,378	\$12,078,037	99.8%
ESSER II 10%	\$51,932,431	\$34,811,647	67.1%
ESSER III 10%	\$116,715,396	\$ 37,372,782	31.9%

Tables 6 through 8 below detail how the 10% state allocation was used for ESSER I, II and III.

⁵ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

⁶ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II grantees had until November 15, 2023, to submit request for reimbursement of activities concluded by September 30, 2023. As a result, the ESSER II funds distribution amounts in this report should not be considered final. ESSER I funds had to be obligated before September 30, 2022, and are final.



ESSER I - CARES Act - State Allocation

Total Allocation: \$ 12,099,378

Total Distributed: \$ 12,078,037

Table 6: Uses of ESSER I 10% State Allocation

Program	Total Allocation	Total Expended	Percentage of Total ESSER I State Allocation
Supplemental funding to LEAs and tribal nations receiving little/no ESSER funds from the 90% allocation	\$ 2,983,226	\$ 2,983,226	24.7%
Funding to support pandemic needs of existing 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grantees	\$ 2,480,848	\$ 2,480,848	20.5%
Purchase of updated high-quality ELA and mathematics curriculum	\$ 1,595,732	\$ 1,585,732	13.2%
Additional reimbursements for previously approved ESSER activities from the 90% allocation	\$ 1,370,760	\$ 1,359,421	11.3%
District broadband infrastructure and family internet access	\$ 1,238,518	\$ 1,238,518	10.2%
Stipends for student online class registration	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	5.4%
Teacher recruitment and retention	\$ 447,276	\$ 447,276	3.7%
AmeriCorps funding to support education workforce	\$ 407,598	\$ 407,598	3.4%
Substitute teacher pool expansion program	\$ 320,450	\$ 320,450	2.6%
Administrative costs	\$ 604,968	\$ 604,968	5.0%



ESSER II - CRSSA Act - State Allocation

Total Allocation: \$ 51,932,431

Total Distributed⁷: \$ 34,811,647

Table 7: Uses of ESSER II 10% State Allocations

Program	Total Allocation	Total Expended	Percentage of Total ESSER II State Allocation
Supplemental funding to LEAs and tribal nations receiving little/no ESSER funds from the 90% allocation	\$ 16,712,387	\$ 14,140,668	32.2%
Small-dollar teacher classroom projects	\$ 11,422,879	\$ 0	22.0%
Funding for new 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grantees	\$ 7,743,161	\$ 7,514,418	14.9%
Integration of CDE data systems	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 2,686,880	7.7%
High-impact tutoring	\$ 2,960,000	\$ 2,677,629	5.7%
Educator workforce fund	\$ 2,851,055	\$ 2,592,429	5.5%
Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI) grants and supports	\$ 840,538	\$ 681,443	1.6%
Pilot program for synchronous online learning	\$ 750,000	\$ 162,158	1.4%
Teacher recruitment and retention	\$ 650,000	\$ 650,000	1.3%
Purchase of updated high quality mathematics curriculum	\$ 548,761	\$ 336,310	1.1%
Transportation assistance for students to attend higher-performing schools	\$ 306,682	\$ 306,682	0.6%
Blended learning initiative	\$ 162,500	\$ 160,802	0.3%
Technical assistance	\$ 146,847	\$ 94,750	0.3%
Rural program development grant	\$ 141,000	\$ 115,704	0.3%
Substitute teacher pool expansion program	\$ 100,000	\$ 95,153	0.2%
Administrative costs	\$ 2,596,621	\$ 2,596,621	5.0%

⁷ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II grantees had until November 15, 2023, to submit requests for reimbursement for activities concluded by September 30, 2023. As a result, the ESSER II distribution amounts in this report should not be considered final.



ESSER III - ARP Act - State Allocation

Total Allocation: \$ 116,715,396

Total Distributed⁸: \$ 37,372,782

Table 8: Uses of ESSER III 10% State Allocations

Program	Total Allocation	Total Expended	Percentage of Total ESSER II State Allocation
Supplemental funding to LEAs and tribal nations receiving little/no ESSER funds from the 90% allocation	\$ 24,556,358	\$ 11,368,794	21.0%
Expanded Learning Opportunities	\$ 22,716,565	\$ 7,583,476	19.5%
Rural Coaction	\$ 21,648,534	\$ 4,860,796	18.6%
Peer-mentoring of early-service educators	\$ 12,421,652	\$ 3,362,528	10.6%
Purchase of updated high-quality ELA and mathematics curriculum	\$ 7,180,357	\$ 4,746,423	6.2%
Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI) grants and supports	\$ 5,414,034	\$ 2,439,618	4.6%
Extending time for 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) grantees	\$ 4,302,549	\$ 0	3.7%
Integration of CDE data systems	\$ 4,200,000	\$ 68,771	3.6%
AmeriCorps funding to support education workforce	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 232,987	1.3%
Transportation assistance for students to attend higher-performing schools	\$ 1,489,285	\$ 5,488	1.3%
High-impact tutoring	\$ 1,407,717	\$ 0	1.2%
Professional learning	\$ 1,150,893	\$ 81,665	1.0%
Statewide capacity building	\$ 975,683	\$ 293,652	0.8%
Technical assistance	\$ 866,000	\$ 314,705	0.7%
Pilot program for synchronous online learning	\$ 750,000	\$ 0	0.6%
Substitute teacher pool expansion program	\$ 300,000	\$ 115,494	0.3%
Administrative costs	\$ 5,835,769	\$ 1,898,385	5.0%

⁸ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.



Part Three - ESSER State Allocation Program Descriptions and Available Results

This section of the report provides details on each of the programs funded by the State allocation from ESSER I, II and III. Programs are organized from largest to smallest total ESSER allocation.

Targeted Supplemental Funding

Table 9: ESSER Supplemental Award Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁹	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 2,983,226	\$ 16,712,387	\$ 24,556,358	\$ 44,251,971
Total Distributed¹⁰	\$ 2,983,226	\$ 14,140,668	\$ 11,368,794	\$ 28,492,688
Percentage of total funding allocation distributed	100.0%	84.6%	46.3%	64.4%

Supplemental funding was made from the state reserve fund to LEAs which received little-to-no funding from the 90% Title 1 ESSER allocations. Funds were also distributed to facility schools, tribal nations, and BOCES. Recipients could use these funds for a variety of allowable activities to respond to, prepare for, or prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Explanation of Supplemental Funding Formula

Districts receiving little or no funding under the Title I formula received supplemental funds in the following ways:

ESSER I

- Districts with a lower percentage of Free and Reduced-price Lunch (FRL)-eligible students compared to the state average were allocated funding to bring them to a total ESSER I allocation of \$15,000 (including the allocation based on the Title I formula).
- Districts with a higher percentage of FRL-eligible students compared to the state average were allocated funding to bring them to a total ESSER I allocation of \$25,000 (including the allocation based on the Title I formula).
- Additionally, districts with a higher percentage of FRL-eligible students compared to the state average AND whose ESSER I per pupil average was less than the ESSER I state average (including the funds allocated in the previous bullet), were allocated funding to bring them to the statewide average ESSER I per pupil amount.
- Further, two districts received funding to supplement CRF funds to adjust for large FRL data corrections.
- Boards of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) were provided funding equal to 5% of FY18-19 unfunded special education expenditures.
- BOCES were allocated \$150 per student counted in the BOCES brick-and-mortar schools.
- Each of the tribal nations was allocated \$35,000.
- Districts receiving Title VI funding for eligible students were allocated \$100 per eligible student.
- Facility Schools ¹¹received \$600 per student.

⁹ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

¹⁰ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.

¹¹ Facility Schools are residential, day treatment, and hospital programs approved by CDE to receive school finance funding, hire their own teachers, and provide educational services to the students placed with them by a public agency.



ESSER II

- Districts with a lower percentage of FRL-eligible students compared to the state average were allocated funding to bring them to a total ESSER II allocation of \$60,000 (including the allocation based on the Title I formula).
- Districts with a higher percentage of FRL-eligible students compared to the state average were allocated funding to bring them to a total ESSER II allocation of \$100,000 (including the allocation based on the Title I formula).
- Additionally, districts with a higher percentage of FRL-eligible students compared to the state average AND whose ESSER II per pupil average was less than the ESSER II state average (including the funds allocated in the previous bullet), were allocated funding to bring them to the statewide average ESSER I per pupil amount.
- Administrative Units were provided funding based upon Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA) student counts and overall fund split.
- BOCES were provided funding using the distribution approach in H.B. 12-1345.
- BOCES were allocated \$600 per student counted in the BOCES brick-and-mortar schools.
- Each of the tribal nations was allocated \$140,000.
- Districts receiving Title VI funding for eligible students were allocated \$400 per eligible student.

ESSER III

- Districts with a lower percentage of FRL-eligible students compared to the state average were allocated funding to bring them to a total ESSER III allocation of \$90,000 (including the allocation based on the Title I formula).
- Districts with a higher percentage of FRL-eligible students compared to the state average were allocated funding to bring them to a total ESSER II allocation of \$150,000 (including the allocation based on the Title I formula).
- Additionally, districts with a higher percentage of FRL-eligible students compared to the state average AND whose ESSER II per pupil average was less than the ESSER II state average (including the funds allocated in the previous bullet), were allocated funding to bring them to the statewide average ESSER I per pupil amount.
- Administrative Units were provided funding based upon ECEA student counts and overall fund split.
- BOCES were provided funding using the distribution approach in H.B. 12-1345.
- BOCES were allocated \$1,200 per student counted in the BOCES brick-and-mortar schools.
- Facility Schools received \$1,200 per student.
- Each of the tribal nations was allocated \$280,000.
- Districts receiving Title VI funding for eligible students were allocated \$600 per eligible student.

Table 10 shows how recipients of Supplemental funding from the ESSER 10% state allocation planned to use their funds, as identified from LEA applications.



Table 10: Available Data on Planned Uses of Supplemental Funds¹²

Planned Use of Funds	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III
Activities to Address Learning Loss	-	X	X
Administering High Quality Assessments	-	X	
Cleaning & Sanitization Supplies	X	X	X
Discretionary Funds for Principals	X	-	-
Educational Technology	X	X	X
Evidence-based Activities to Meet Comprehensive Needs of Students	-	X	X
Facility Repairs and Improvements	-	X	X
Improvement of Secondary and Postsecondary Career and Technical Education (Perkins CTE Act allowable activities)	-	X	X
Improving Basic Programs Operated by Local Educational Agencies (ESEA allowable activities)	X	X	X
Improving Indoor Air Quality		X	X
Mental Health Services & Supports	X	X	X
Planning for Long-Term School Closures	X	X	X
Preparedness and Response Efforts	X	X	X
Professional Learning Related to Remote Learning	X	X	-
Remote Learning Supports	X	X	
Staff Training on Sanitation	-	X	X
Summer Learning & Supplemental Afterschool Programs	X	X	X
Supports for Students Experiencing Homelessness (McKinney-Vento allowable activities)	-	X	X
Supports for Students with Disabilities (IDEA allowable activities)	X	X	-
Tracking Student Attendance and Improving Student Engagement	-	X	-
Other ¹³	X	X	X

¹² LEAs may revise their applications based on changing needs. The uses of funds are from LEA applications as of October 30, 2023.

¹³ The “Other” category includes: Other Instructional Programming, Other Administration Activities, Other Support Programs, Other Improvements of Instructional Services, and Other Activities Necessary to Maintain Operation and Continuity of Services.



Expanded Learning Opportunities

Table 11: Expanded Learning Opportunities Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ¹⁴	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 22,716,565	\$ 22,716,565
Total Distributed¹⁵	NA	NA	\$ 7,583,476	\$ 7,583,476
Percentage of total funding allocation distributed	NA	NA	33.4%	33.4%

Overview

Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) are programs or initiatives offered by schools or community-based organizations that allow students different opportunities to accelerate, enrich, or strengthen their engagement in learning beyond their normal school program or school day. The ELO grant program distributed funds to create ELOs that address students’ academic and personal needs, ensure families can engage in and support their students’ learning, and continue to strengthen schools and communities during recovery from COVID-19.

Program Objectives

This funding opportunity seeks to accelerate student learning and strengthen student engagement in their learning by:

- 1) Providing students with comprehensive out-of-school time programs, including after school and during the summer, that build upon a student’s school-day instruction to provide the continuity necessary to meet their academic, social, emotional, and mental health needs exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2) Providing students a safe and healthy environment where additional educational enrichment services, programs, and activities are offered to students, particularly those who are disproportionately adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3) Offering families of students served opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children’s education, ultimately to positively impact student academic outcomes.
- 4) Providing students and their families with a deeper connection to their school and community, allowing them to understand and take advantage of the full breadth of school and community support and opportunities available to them.

ELO Grantee Information

2022-2023 School Year (Program Year 1)

- For the 2022-2023 school year, 43 afterschool and summer providers were awarded grants offering a total of 60 afterschool and summer programs. These projects served students in 58 school districts across the state, 33 of which are rural districts. ELO grantees include:
 - 17 Districts
 - 11 Community-Based Organizations serving 29 districts
 - 11 Charter Schools
 - 3 Libraries
 - 1 Institute of Higher Learning

¹⁴ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

¹⁵ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Summer Programs

- \$10,601,000 in grant funding awarded
- Served 8,271 students in Year 1 of the program

Afterschool Programs

- \$9,677,888 in grant funding awarded
- Served 4,802 students in Year 1 of the program

Program Outcomes

As part of the ELO grant application process, applicants were required to identify how their ELO program aligned with one or more programs focus areas based on the following seven areas:

Academic Program Objectives

- Math
- English-Language Arts (ELA)
- English-Language Development (ELD)
- Academic “Other”

Social-Emotional/Mental Health (SEMH) Objectives

- Engaging Youth
- Engaging Families
- SEMH “Other”

Table 12: ELO Program Objectives

Program Term	Program Focus	Academic				Socio-Emotional/Mental Health		
		Math	ELA	ELD	Other Academic	Engaging Youth	Engaging Families	Other SEMH
Afterschool	Number of Objectives*	9	8	2	24	15	11	26
	Met or Exceeded	4 (44%)	2 (25%)	2 (100%)	12 (50%)	11 (73%)	8 (73%)	10 (38%)
	Partially Met	2 (22%)	5 (63%)	.	7 (29%)	2 (13%)	1 (9%)	9 (35%)
	In-Progress	.	.	.	4 (17%)	2 (13%)	1 (9%)	5 (19%)
	Did Not Meet	2 (22%)	1 (13%)	.	1 (4%)	.	1 (9%)	2 (8%)
	Incomplete**	1 (11%)
Summer	Number of Objectives*	14	22	1	41	25	9	24
	Met or Exceeded	1 (7%)	7 (32%)	.	16 (39%)	18 (72%)	5 (56%)	11 (46%)
	Partially Met	5 (36%)	8 (36%)	.	8 (20%)	4 (16%)	2 (22%)	3 (13%)
	In-Progress	5 (36%)	5 (23%)	1 (100%)	13 (32%)	2 (8%)	0	7 (29%)
	Did Not Meet	2 (14%)	1 (5%)	.	3 (7%)	.	1 (11%)	2 (8%)
	Incomplete**	1 (7%)	1 (5%)	.	1 (2%)	1 (4%)	1 (11%)	1 (4%)

* Programs could select more than one program objective.

** One objective was reported incomplete by a community-based organization that did not receive an adequate number of survey responses from community members to meaningfully measure the outcome.



Rural Coaction

Table 13: Rural Coaction Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ¹⁶	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 21,648,534	\$ 21,648,534
Total Distributed ¹⁷	NA	NA	\$ 4,860,796	\$ 4,860,796
Percentage of total funding allocation distributed	NA	NA	22.5%	22.5%

Overview

The Rural Coaction competitive grant program was created with the aim of expanding student pathway opportunities and career-connected learning partnerships among and across districts and BOCES. Funds were distributed to three cohorts of recipients, with Cohort I targeting district coalitions with strong existing partnerships, Cohort II targeting groups building new coalitions, and Cohort III targeting previously unfunded proposals from Cohorts I and II.

Grant Awards

Across the three cohorts, grant awards were issued to 17 partnerships of rural LEAs, BOCES, and/or institutes of higher learning from October 2022 to January 2023. These Rural Coaction programs are serving an estimated 37,800 rural students. Funds are being used: (1) to develop career pathways, apprenticeships, internships, and industry certifications; (2) for career exploration, job shadows, and an accessible school-to-career pipeline; and (3) to design and implement comprehensive regional approaches to career-connected learning (see Table 14 for sample program descriptions). All funded projects are multi-year and include a sustainability plan detailing expected ways local funding will replace the awarded grant funding after September 2024 when the award period is complete.

Grant Progress

As of Fall 2023, all recipients report continued work towards the planned grant activities. Due to the multi-year nature of recipients' projects, grant activities remain ongoing. Recipients have used grant funds to hire, reassign, or add additional duties over 15 staff positions and fund 11 different professional development opportunities directly related to recipients' funded projects. Of recipients hiring new staff, 35% hired 1 position, 11.8% hired 2 positions, and 35% hired 3 or more positions.

A total of 44 program objectives were created by grant recipients. Of those, 18% (n=8) are in-progress, 54% (n=24) are partially met, 23% (n=10) have been met, and 5% (n=2) have been exceeded. Table 15 provides sample program objectives that grantees report as met or partially met. For partially met objectives, grantees anticipate that continued efforts during SY 2023-2024 will result in the objective becoming fully met.

¹⁶ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

¹⁷ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Table 14: Examples of Program Descriptions

East Central BOCES services 20 rural districts on the eastern plains of Colorado. This project expects to:

- Increase the number of course offerings available to our districts (especially in CTE areas) and increase student engagement in those courses.
- Increase the number of qualified teachers able to offer new courses.
- Increase the number of students enrolled in CTE classes.
- Increase the number of certifications earned by students.
- Increase the number of internships or mentorships offered to students through partnerships with local industry.

Participating districts will increase student career pathways in the following ways:

- 1) Career-Connected Learning:
 - a. Pathways in outdoor recreation and leadership, construction trades, and business and technology.
 - b. Expanding courses, concurrent enrollment, and credentialing in Adobe Certified Professional, Microsoft Office Certification, Emergency Medical Technician, and Certified Nursing Assistant
 - c. Continuing to grow the student internship program, which currently has a 100% student placement rate.
- 2) Student Engagement:
 - a. Creating a student-developed advisory committee with regular feedback sessions to ensure transparency, communication, and responsive programming.
- 3) Capacity-Building:
 - a. Creating opportunities for students and staff to engage in cooperative learning.
 - b. Increasing both hands-on and virtual learning opportunities across the participating districts.

Table 15: Examples of Program Objectives

All 48 K-2 students experience at least two College and Career Readiness activities each semester in their K-2 curriculum, such as guest speakers, field trips, and direct instruction on college and career readiness by June 1, 2023.

A nonprofit organization is formed, with formal agreements in place, and is financially sustainable. A program manager position is leveraged across all districts and higher education partners.

Create and/or refine current career pathway programs as measured by course offerings by July 2024.

Develop a network of work-based learning opportunities to increase access and awareness for students in the region within the grant period.

50% (or 4,392) students in grades 4-12 across the 6 districts engage in one or more pathway activities by the start of the Fall 2022 school year.

Collaborate on the expansion of new career pathways and the roadmap to high quality development and implementation of pathways.

Future Data Collection and Analyses

Student-level participation and student-level outcome data will be required from grant recipients at the conclusion of the 2023-24 school year. Further program evaluation efforts are underway and will be informed by this student-level participation data alongside final local program reports.



21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)

Table 16: 21st CCLC Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ¹⁸	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 2,480,848	\$ 7,743,161	\$ 4,302,549	\$ 14,526,558
Total Distributed¹⁹	\$ 2,480,848	\$ 7,514,418	\$ 0	\$ 9,995,266
Percentage of total funding allocation distributed	100.0%	97.0%	0.0%	68.8%

Overview

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) is a pre-existing federal grant program which provides opportunities for academic enrichment, offer students a broad array of additional services, programs, and activities, and offer families of students served by community learning centers opportunities for active and meaningful engagement in their children’s education. ESSER funding was provided to both: (1) Supplement existing “Cohort 8” programs to provide support for ongoing CCLC programs in Spring 2021 (ESSER I); and (2) Provide funding to expand CCLC programs to increase the number of Cohort 9 centers (ESSER II and ESSER III).

ESSER I

ESSER I funding allowed 46 21st CCLCs from Cohort 8²⁰ to expand dedicated access to technology in out of school time (OST) programs, add opportunities for experiential learning, and increase access to summer programming. Funding was also used to ensure health/safety protocols were met, including reducing student/staff ratios, and purchasing additional cleaning supplies, masks, and other necessities related to COVID prevention. The 46 Cohort 8 centers could choose from up to four possible uses for supplemental funding for 21st CCLC centers: (1) Addressing COVID Learning Impacts; (2) Preparing and returning to in-person learning; (3) Additional data collection efforts; and (4) Other innovative activities to address new and unique needs of students and their families (Table 17).

Table 17: 21st CCLC Priority Areas for ESSER 1 Supplemental Funds

Priority	Number of Centers ²¹
Addressing COVID-19 learning impacts	38
Preparing and returning to in-person learning centers	17
Additional data collection and reporting efforts	13
Other innovative activities to address new and unique needs of students and their families	33

¹⁸ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

¹⁹ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.

²⁰ Additional details are available from the [Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers \(CCLC\)](#) program.

²¹ Centers (N=46) could select one or more options, so the sum of priorities is greater than the number of centers.

**ESSER II and III**

Funding from ESSER II allowed for an additional 15 centers in CCLC Cohort 9. These centers served 3,973 students during the 2022-2023 school year. ESSER III funds will allow these additional centers to continue serving students for the 2023-2024 school year (Table 18). In addition to these awards, these centers were provided with additional funds to provide professional development to staff.

Table 18: E2 OST Cohort Data for 2021-2023

Cohort E2 OST	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Total Programs	15	14	14
Number of Districts	12	11	11
Number of Sites	32	31	31
Total students served (4+ hours)	3,733	3,973	TBD
Total regular students (75+ hours)	1,944	1,975	TBD



Mentor Teacher Grant Program

Table 19: Mentor Teacher Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ²²	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 12,421,652	\$ 12,421,652
Total Distributed ²³	NA	NA	\$ 3,362,528	\$ 3,362,528
Percentage of total funding allocation distributed	NA	NA	27.1%	27.1%

Overview

The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) established the Mentor Teacher Grant Program in 2021. Initially, CDE allocated \$9.5 million from the ESSER III state reserve to the Mentor Teacher Grant Program (Mentor Grant), which provided funding for 26 grantees from across the state to provide targeted mentor training, increase the number of mentor teachers, and compensate mentor teachers. The amount requested by eligible grantees far exceeded the initial ESSER III allocation and so CDE expanded the allocation with an additional \$2.9 million for a second round of grantees. As school districts in Colorado continue to address the disruption in learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic for both students and teachers alike, the Mentor Grant funding increased the quality of their mentoring program, trained and compensated mentor teachers, and increased support for teachers in their first three years of teaching.

Program Objectives

This grant program exists to:

- Deepen mentoring programs at the local level, specifically targeting pre-service mentoring programs for student teachers/clinical residencies and new to the profession (probationary) teachers in their first 3 years of teaching, including educators working under initial, alternative, and/or emergency licensure.
- Improve retention of new to the profession teachers and mentor teachers.
- Broaden the skills of mentor teachers to maximize mentor/mentee relationships and build instructional capacity.

Mentor Grantee Information- 2022-23

Twenty-six grants were awarded to 22 school districts, two charter school entities, and two Board of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES) for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. The two charter school entities include the Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI), which supported twelve of their approved charter schools, and an individual charter school also authorized by the CSI. Twelve grantees (46%) were either rural school districts or BOCES that serve only rural school districts. These recipients reported working with 1,940 mentors and mentees, 22% of whom identified as male and 16% identified as teachers of color.

Mentor Grantee Information- 2023-24

The twenty-six grantees described above have a second year, the 2023-24 school year, to complete their grant activities. In addition, CDE created an additional one-year, second round of funding for new Mentor Grant grantees for the 2023-24 school year. As of October 31, 32 new mentor programs have been funded. No program outcomes or impacts are available for these grantees at the time of writing this report.

²² Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

²³ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Mentor Teacher Grant Program Outcomes

To capture the progress grantees made in year one of the grant, CDE received mid-grant progress reports from grantees and administered two surveys (one pre-participation and one post-participation) to mentors and mentees. The mid-grant progress report asked grantees to report successes and challenges. The surveys focused on the following measures: school connectedness; school leadership support; intentions to stay in education; and teacher efficacy. It is important to note that the first round of grantees only have one year of data.

Key survey findings include:

- 97% of Mentor Grant survey respondents reported that they intended to remain in education at the conclusion of the 2022-23 school year.
- 96% of mentor survey respondents felt confident in their ability to meet the needs of their new teachers.
- 91% of new teacher survey respondents felt confident in their mentor's abilities to meet their needs.

Below are examples from some grantees of the impacts the Mentor Grant has had. The information comes from the self-reported mid-grant reporting form.

- Grantee #1: Science teacher attrition dropped from 32% in 2021-22 to 12.5% in 2022-23.
- Grantee #2: The overall teacher turnover rate decreased from 24.21% in 2021-22 to 16.73% in 2022-23.
- Grantee #3: 92.2% of mentors agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident in their ability to grow professionally, and 93.5% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt confident in their ability to help others grow professionally.
- Grantee #4: 91% of teachers in the mentoring program remained in their teaching positions for the following academic school year.

Mentor Teacher Academy

In collaboration with iLearn Collaborative, CDE is offering a Mentor Teacher Academy to teachers free of charge as part of a pilot program in the 23-24 school year. The course focuses on the skills of high-quality mentoring, including coaching, communication, and feedback, combining online asynchronous content and synchronous small-group coaching sessions via Zoom. Teachers can choose to access only asynchronous content. If they do, they will receive 20 hours of re-licensure credit. Teachers who access the asynchronous material and participate in the synchronous meetings will receive 35 hours of re-licensure credit.

Participants in the course are able to apply mentoring skills to support new teachers. The content is built around *Mentoring Matters* by Lipton and Wellman (3rd edition). Participants need to have a copy of the text to support their learning.

Schools and districts are encouraged to provide stipends for participation as much as possible as part of a larger induction program or mentoring stipend. Teachers spend approximately 20 hours in the online course and an additional 15 hours in the synchronous small-group coaching sessions.

As of November 2023, 179 teachers have enrolled in the course. Districts will provide stipends to 108 registered teachers. Of the 179 enrolled teachers, 130 chose asynchronous coaching sessions, and in addition to the asynchronous work, the remaining 49 have multiple opportunities to learn and connect through "live" online meetings. Participating teachers are associated with the following 45 entities: 26 school districts, 13 charter schools, 2 private schools, 3 BOCES, and 1 facility school.



Supporting Colorado Teachers Program

Table 20: Supporting Colorado Teachers Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III	Total
Total Allocation ²⁴	\$ 0	\$ 11,422,879	\$ 0	\$ 11,422,879
Total Distributed ²⁵	NA	\$ 0	NA	\$ 0
Percentage of total funding allocation distributed	NA	0%	NA	0%

Overview

The purpose of this competitive grant was to partner with a provider to quickly expand opportunities for teachers to secure materials and equipment for designing customized learning experiences. The COVID-19 pandemic forced teachers to work longer hours to support in class and remote learning while also completing increased administrative tasks. This program is designed to provide the classroom supports needed by teachers to address their students’ pandemic-related needs.

Award Recipient

DonorsChoose.org, a 501(c)3 organization, was awarded this competitive grant. Colorado educators submitted projects to DonorsChoose of up to \$1,000 for classroom materials to remedy the impact of interrupted academic learning or to support students’ social, emotional, and mental well-being to recover from COVID-19. Once projects were approved by DonorsChoose, CDE funding was applied to 100% of the project cost. Once the teacher confirmed that materials were still needed, DonorsChoose ordered and delivered requested materials to the educator’s school.

Criteria for Educator Inclusion

Project requests could be made by anyone who meets both the following criteria:

- Is employed full time by a Colorado school district, charter school, Bureau of Indian Affairs school or Head Start center; and
- Spends at least three-quarters of their work time directly interacting with PreK-12th grade Colorado public school students.

Examples of qualifying positions include K-12 classroom educator, PreK educator, school librarian, school nurse, school psychologist, etc.

Outputs

From August 24 to September 25, 2023, 21,352 projects were provided CDE funding. This funding went to teachers in 1,670 schools across Colorado representing 168 school districts. The top subjects represented in projects that received funding were: 1) Literacy and Language; 2) STEM; and 3) Life Skills.

Additional Funding

In addition to the \$11,422,879 CDE awarded from ESSER II to DonorsChoose to be applied to educator projects, \$6,708,000 was added from GEER II and reverted EANS I funds through an interagency agreement to CDE from the Office of the Governor. These additional funds increased the total amount of CDE funding for this project to \$18,130,879.

²⁴ Additional funding (\$6,708,000) from GEER II and EANS I also contributed to this program.

²⁵ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Curriculum and Instructional Materials

Table 21: Curriculum and Instructional Materials Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ²⁶	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 1,595,732	\$ 548,761	\$ 7,180,357	\$ 9,324,850
Total Distributed²⁷	\$ 1,585,732	\$ 336,310	\$ 4,746,423	\$ 6,668,465
Percentage of total funding allocation distributed	99.4%	61.3%	66.1%	71.5%

Two grant awards were issued from the ESSER state set-aside for the purchase of curriculum. The first grant award, issued in the summer of 2022, was funded through ESSER I and ESSER III. These awards were distributed to 66 grantees for the purchase of high-quality K-3 reading and/or K-8 mathematics curriculum from a list of options curated by CDE. These purchases were estimated to impact over 99,900 students. To date, 120 purchases have been reported by these grantees, including reporting for 51 purchases for curricula in K-3 reading and 74 purchases for curricula in K-8 math. The most frequent mathematics curriculum purchased was created by Envision Mathematics (14 purchases) and the most frequent reading curriculum purchased was created by Amplify (11 purchases).

In the summer of 2023, a second round of curriculum funding from ESSER II provided an additional 13 grantees with K-12 mathematics curriculum. Additional data on the outcomes of these grant awards will be collected after the completion of the 2023-24 school year.

²⁶ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

²⁷ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Integrated Data Systems

Table 22: Integrated Data Systems Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ²⁸	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 4,000,000	\$ 4,200,000	\$ 8,200,000
Total Distributed ²⁹	NA	\$ 2,686,880	\$ 68,771	\$ 2,755,651
Percentage of total funding allocation distributed	NA	67.2%	1.6%	33.6%

Overview

CDE is investing ESSER state set-aside funds to award contracts to two companies to upgrade, modernize, and align the agency’s data collection system and grants management systems, and to hire the staff needed to provide technical assistance in the design, integration, and implementation of these tools used to support districts. This will ensure Colorado families, teachers, and district leaders are provided with robust technical assistance systems that allow for easier submission of data by districts to CDE to pinpoint student groups or content areas most affected by the pandemic and the schools and districts in need of additional supports. With a modernized grants management system, districts will be able to seamlessly apply for supports and services to address the needs of students disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 to ensure they emerge from the pandemic stronger.

Data Pipeline Modernization

The Data Pipeline Project, contracted to Zivaro, Inc., was executed on April 25, 2023, to upgrade and re-platform the aging CDE Data Pipeline and associated dependencies. Work has been ongoing and is planned to be completed by September 2024.

Grants Management System

The Grants Management System initial contract work was completed in October 2023 and is now live. The new grants management system, the Grants Administration, Implementation, and Navigation System (GAINS) is active and is beginning to pilot new grant programs. Upgrades include a streamlined application process, improved communication, comprehensive grant reporting, and enhanced security.

²⁸ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

²⁹ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Empowering Action for School Improvement (EASI)

Table 23: EASI Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ³⁰	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 840,538	\$ 5,414,034	\$ 6,254,572
Total Distributed ³¹	NA	\$ 681,443	\$ 2,439,618	\$ 3,121,061
Percentage of total funding allocation distributed	NA	81.1%	45.1%	49.9%

Overview

ESSER II and ESSER III provided funds to expand school and district improvement efforts through the Empowering Action through School Improvement (EASI) grant. The funding through ESSER allowed for four primary approaches served through the EASI grant structure:

1. Direct service allocations to increase CDE staff capacity to serve low performing schools and districts, as defined by state and federal accountability systems, through professional learning opportunities for districts (ESSER II);
2. Enhanced funding of EASI in the 2021-22 grant cycle to expand the number of schools and districts, identified as low performing through state and federal accountability systems, that are served by multi-year evidence-based supports (ESSER III);
3. Building capacity of current EASI grantees with additional funding to bolster implementation support (ESSER III); and
4. The design, piloting, and early implementation of District Strategic Planning as a new EASI support (ESSER II & III).

Direct service allocations to increase CDE staff capacity and provide targeted learning totaled \$200,966. This amount included funding for consultants to support the Connect for Success program to conduct school site visits and professional learning for Transformation Network grantees. Additional information about Connect for Success is available [at this website](#). Details about the approach of the Transformation Network, including evaluation information, is available on the [CDE Transformation Network website](#).

The increased funding of EASI Cohort 5 in the 2021-2022 grant cycle awarded \$3,357,317 of ESSER III funds targeted to schools and districts identified as low performing through state and federal accountability systems. These additional funds supported 29 different local education agencies with school and district improvement efforts through established evidence-based interventions and supports. Evidence-based supports included Transformation Network, Connect for Success, the School Turnaround Leadership Development program, Colorado Multi-tiered System of Supports (COMTSS), and District Design and Led initiatives. The impact of these funds is forthcoming as the grant provides for a multi-year funding structure that will conclude in the 2023-2024 school year. More information about each of the supports is available [at this website](#).

ESSER III funds also supported EASI grantees through funds aimed to bolster implementation support. Four school districts, ranging from small rural to urban/suburban, were awarded a total of \$214,307. These funds were focused on incentivizing the use of an approved school improvement provider to support implementation of EASI funded school improvement efforts. Grantees were all active recipients of EASI grants and these funds enhanced implementation efforts based on the previously awarded EASI support.

³⁰ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

³¹ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



The final programmatic approach of integrating ESSER funds with the EASI grant structure was geared towards the development and implementation of new EASI support called District Strategic Planning. District Strategic Planning pairs a district with an approved external provider to engage in a comprehensive review of systems and structures and then provides funding for stakeholder engagement, improvement planning, and early implementation support. Six school districts were awarded a total of \$380,000 ESSER funds. The final outcome of the initial pilot of District Strategic Planning is still outstanding as districts are currently in the early implementation phase of the support. Initial feedback from districts on this pilot has been positive. Due to this positive feedback, District Strategic Planning has been added into the annual EASI grant cycle as an available service. More information about District Strategic Planning as an EASI support is available [at this website](#).



Statewide Capacity Building

Table 24: Statewide Capacity Building Programs – Sum of Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ³²	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 1,175,324	\$ 750,000	\$ 2,775,683	\$ 4,701,007
Total Distributed³³	\$ 1,175,324	\$ 745,153	\$ 642,133	\$ 2,562,610
Percentage of total allocation distributed	100%	99.4%	23.1%	54.5%

Overview

One of the focus areas approved by the State Board of Education for the ESSER set-aside in August 2021 was the strengthening of state capacity to support the state’s districts and schools in accelerating and expanding opportunities for all students – both now and in the future. In line with that goal, CDE has entered into interagency agreements with Serve Colorado and the Colorado Center for Rural Education to expand the statewide educator workforce. CDE has also included ESSER funds for internal staffing to facilitate statewide recruiting and retention of early education teachers, new educators, and substitute teachers through professional development and improved recruitment activities through local workforce development centers, ed prep programs, and LEAs.

AmeriCorps Programs

Table 25: AmeriCorps Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ³²	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 407,598	\$ 0	\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,907,598
Total Distributed³³	\$ 407,598	NA	\$ 232,987	\$ 640,585
Percentage of total allocation distributed	100%	NA	15.5%	33.6%

AmeriCorps ESSER I Program

CDE formed an interagency agreement with Serve Colorado to provide emergency staffing to make up for school staff absences due to COVID-19. United Way of Southwest Colorado and Colorado State University provided 7 rural school districts with 129 AmeriCorps members for 15,582 work hours of paraprofessional support, summer school activities, and COVID-19 response from April 2021 through July 2022. Additionally, 10 substitute teacher authorizations were issued to AmeriCorps members to cover teacher staffing shortages.

AmeriCorps ESSER III Program

CDE partnered with Serve Colorado to coordinate alternative educator preparation grants that fund a two-year program for AmeriCorps members to serve within school districts while working toward securing their alternative teaching license. In year one of the program, AmeriCorps members serve as tutors in schools while enrolled in a one or two-year residency-based Colorado approved alternative teacher preparation program. As of August 2023, there are approximately 30 AmeriCorps members enrolled in the program.

³² Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

³³ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



UNC Substitute Bootcamp

Table 26: UNC Substitute Bootcamp Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ³⁴	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 320,450	\$ 100,000	\$ 300,000	\$ 720,450
Total Distributed³⁵	\$ 320,450	\$ 95,153	\$ 115,494	\$ 531,097
Percentage of total allocation distributed	100%	95.2%	38.5%	73.7%

The Colorado Center for Rural Education, housed at the University of Northern Colorado, distributed substitute stipends of \$300 each to new substitutes. This stipend reimbursed the cost of fingerprinting, application costs, and attendance at “Substitute Boot Camp.” From May 2021 to October 2023, 1,399 individuals successfully completed the Substitute Boot Camp.

Survey results given to participants of the Substitute Boot Camp in November of 2022 show that the major reasons participants chose to substitute were: living in the community where they work (51%); having the same schedule as their children (23%); no longer being employed as a full-time educator (11%); and “other reasons” (15%). Most respondents had clear intentions to remain as substitutes (82%), while a small minority did not intend to remain as a substitute (18%). This is in line with respondents’ timeline of intention to remain a substitute, where 19.2% intended to remain a substitute for less than six months, 17.4% intended to remain for six months to one year, and 63.4% intended to remain for longer than one year. Of respondents, 32.6% were interested in pursuing a career as a teacher after the completion of their substitute teaching experiences. Survey respondents served as substitute teachers in 75 school districts.

Early Childhood Career Navigators

Table 27: Early Childhood Career Navigators Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ³⁴	Total
Total Allocation	\$0	\$0	\$ 475,683	\$ 475,683
Total Distributed³⁵	NA	NA	\$ 75,774	\$ 75,774
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	NA	15.9%	15.9%

Funds were used to add CDE staffing in the development of a new Early Childhood Career Navigation team. The Early Childhood Career Navigation Team uses knowledge, intention, and collaboration to inclusively guide, connect, and support individuals in pursuit of a career in the field of early childhood. More information about this program can be found at the [CDE Early Childhood Career Navigation website](#).

³⁴ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

³⁵ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



EdTalent Statewide Capacity Building (Other)

Table 28: Statewide Capacity Building (Other) Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ³⁶	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 447,276	\$ 650,000	\$ 500,000	\$ 1,597,276
Total Distributed³⁷	\$ 447,276	\$ 650,000	\$ 217,878	\$ 1,315,154
Percentage of total allocation distributed	100%	100%	43.6%	82.3%

Funds were used to hire additional recruitment and retention specialists to facilitate statewide recruiting and retention of new educators and substitute teachers through professional development for substitute educators and improve recruitment activities through local workforce development centers, ed prep programs, and LEAs. More information about this program can be found on the [Educator Recruitment and Retention website](#).

³⁶ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

³⁷ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



High-Impact Tutoring Program

Table 29: High Impact Tutoring Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ³⁸	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 2,960,000	\$ 1,407,717	\$ 4,367,717
Total Distributed ³⁹	NA	\$ 2,677,629	\$ 0	\$ 2,677,629
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	90.5%	0%	61.3%

Overview

Colorado’s high-impact tutoring program grant (HITP) was created in alignment with H.B. 21-1234. Initial grant awards were distributed in February 2022. Overall, 18 grantees were awarded in this initial round of funding, 17 of which were able to implement their programs beginning in the Spring semester of 2022.

In the 2021-22 school year, HITP grantees reported services to 3,800 K-12 students at 74 schools totaling more than 35,000 aggregated hours of high-impact tutoring. Preliminary reporting from grantees indicates 88% of programs offered tutoring in math and 65% offered tutoring in reading, writing, and communications. Initial grantee end-of-year reports indicate student growth in reading, math, engagement, and other goals associated with participation in HITP.

In the 2022-23 school year, HITP grantees reported services to 5,300 K-12 students at 128 schools totaling more than 200,000 aggregated hours of high-impact tutoring. Preliminary reporting from grantees indicates that 88% of programs offered tutoring in math and 88% offered tutoring in reading, writing, and communications. These numbers include 76% of programs offering tutoring in both math and reading, writing, and communications.

HITP Legislative Reports

In accordance with H.B.21-1234, the High-Impact Tutoring Program has submitted reports to the Colorado Legislature on program activities, outputs, and outcomes. The most recent version of this report can be found at [Supplemental Education High-Impact Tutoring Programs](#).

³⁸ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

³⁹ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Education Workforce Program Grant

Table 30: Education Workforce Program Grant Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 2,851,055	\$ 0	\$ 2,851,055
Total Distributed ⁴⁰	NA	\$ 2,592,429	NA	\$ 2,592,429
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	90.9%	NA	90.9%

Overview

A strong, talented education workforce is critical for schools and districts to provide safe in-person learning and address the social, emotional, mental health and academic impact of the pandemic. This includes ensuring educators, leaders, and support staff are in place and supported as they offer programs to provide in-person learning, address learning loss, complete unfinished learning, and meet the COVID-related needs of Colorado students. To this end, CDE created the Education Workforce Program Grant (EWP Grant) to provide funds to ensure LEAs have the capacity to meet the need for recruiting, retaining, and supporting the educator workforce during the pandemic. This was a one-year grant program operating during the 2022-23 school year.

Program Objectives

The EWP Grant’s goal was to allow grantees to address local challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. Allowable activities included, but were not limited to, increasing educator and staff compensation; building and maintaining a cadre of high-quality substitute educators; supporting educator well-being, including improving working conditions; increasing the availability of qualified adults and personnel to support educators, students, and staff; and making investments in grow your own educator programs and the educator pipeline.

Education Workforce Program – Year 1 (2022-23)

Grantees comprised 16 school districts, nine charter schools (seven Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) authorized schools and two district schools), three Boards of Cooperative Education Services (BOCES), one facility school and one individual public school.

Education Workforce Program Grant Outcomes

The EWP Grant allowed grantees to address local education workforce needs that developed during the COVID-19 pandemic. This flexibility resulted in a variety of activities, including: hiring an interventionist to help support teachers; supporting retention and professional development activities; marketing for teacher candidates; new hire stipends; longevity stipends; wellness stipends; relocation assistance; substitute teacher incentives; bus driver incentives; hiring long term substitutes for school buildings; providing additional instructional coaching for novice math teachers; staff building activities; book studies; creating a special education generalist alternative licensure program; supporting paraprofessionals; and increasing teacher salaries and benefits.

In addition, CDE asked grantees to administer one of four different surveys to collect information on the grant. The surveys were: (1) a workplace climate survey; (2) a workplace climate survey with additional questions on stipends; (3) a teacher efficacy survey; and (4) a teacher efficacy survey with additional questions on stipends. Survey selection was based on grant recipients’ activities and stated outcomes. Survey administration was not a requirement of the grant, and not all grant activities could be measured using one of the four surveys.

⁴⁰ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Key survey findings include:

- Over 96% of respondents without stipends reported that the school district is a safe place for students to learn and a safe place to work, and that they would recommend the school district as a good place for students to learn.
- Over 94% of survey respondents with stipends reported that the school district is a safe place for students to learn and a safe place to work.
- Survey respondents reported that incentives and stipends supported their efforts to engage with the school and district community, increased the belief that their efforts positively impacted students, positively impacted their career and supported their intent to stay in their current school district.

Below are some examples of the impact the Education Workforce Program Grant had, as reported by grantees:

- Improved teacher retention rates (in one case, 100% staff retention);
- Successfully helped recruit and relocate 16 staff (including hard to fill positions such as custodial, bus drivers, maintenance, special education paraprofessionals and nutrition services staff);
- Built a cadre of high-quality substitute educators for our schools;
- Improved student test scores in our school district;
- Hired more diverse candidates in our school district;
- Improved use of data to drive school improvement in our school district;
- Improved school climate for educators and students in our school; and
- K-12 students in our district reported having a higher number of trusted adults from which they can obtain help or support.



Online Learning

Table 31: Online Learning Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁴¹	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 650,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 750,000	\$ 2,150,000
Total Distributed ⁴²	\$ 650,000	\$ 162,158	\$ 0	\$ 812,158
Percentage of total allocation distributed	100%	21.6%	0%	37.8%

Overview

ESSER I funds were provided to the Colorado River BOCES to expand access to the statewide online/blended learning program. As a result of this expansion, there were an additional 7,667 supplemental online course registrations in the Spring and Fall of calendar year 2022.

ESSER I funds were also used to offer students summer tutoring and homework support and to provide outreach and awareness to educators about a new K-12 open education resource (OER) learning platform, created to share instructional ideas, content, and learning resources through virtual means. Additionally, funds are being used to develop synchronous online courses to offer to systems and students in need of live teacher-pupil instruction through a virtual environment.

ESSER II funds sustained a need for enhanced services from the Colorado River BOCES as the designated BOCES to run the statewide supplemental online and blended learning program (see section 22-5-119, C.R.S.). Through this funding, the Colorado River BOCES was able to accomplish the following:

- *Expanded access to low-cost supplemental online courses provided through Colorado Digital Learning Solutions (CDLS).* Grant funds were used to help offset the cost of increased student enrollment and participation in the CDLS program when compared to participation pre-pandemic.
- *Built out, expanded, and implemented a synchronous supplemental online course delivery model known as CC Live.* Through ESSER II funding, Colorado Classrooms LIVE (CC-Live) was implemented as a pilot program – supported through a collaboration between the Colorado River BOCES and Colorado Digital Learning Solutions – to build state capacity for operating supplemental online courses with regular, synchronous learning integrated into the program. CC-Live brings highly-qualified Colorado teachers into classrooms across Colorado through live virtual instruction. This pilot aims to develop a model of teaching and learning in Colorado classrooms that mixes the benefits of the traditional in-person learning experience for Colorado students with live virtual teachers and instructional technologies. Additional information about this program is available [here](#).
- *Continued Buildout of an Open Educational Resources (OER) library for K-12.* Grant funds in FY 22-23 were leveraged to further expand a live OER library for K-12 – transitioning from a limited content “hub” to a more dynamic and robust microsite that could allow for multiple content hubs to be available at all times moving forward. The OER library for K-12 has significantly expanded Colorado educator access to open educational resources (OER) across the state. The OER project provides free, accessible, and customizable learning materials, fostering collaborative learning environments, and reducing the financial burden on students.

⁴¹ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

⁴² Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



ESSER III will continue the further evolution and statewide delivery of a synchronous online learning option through the statewide supplemental online and blended learning program. In addition, the funding will extend the availability of an enhanced Open Education Resource (OER) environment for K-12 educators that was first created during the pandemic.



Rapid Request

Table 32: Rapid Request Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 1,370,760	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 1,370,760
Total Distributed	\$ 1,359,421	NA	NA	\$ 1,359,421
Percentage of total allocation distributed	99.2%	NA	NA	99.2%

Twenty-eight LEAs and three facility schools received additional funding to supplement already-approved ESSER I, II and III grant budget line items wherein the costs exceeded the original allocation. Allocations to the 31 recipients averaged \$45,692 per recipient.



ESSER Transportation Assistance Grant

Table 33: ESSER Transportation Assistance Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁴³	Total
Total Allocation	\$0	\$ 306,682	\$ 1,489,285	\$ 1,795,967
Total Distributed ⁴⁴	NA	\$ 306,682	\$ 5,488	\$ 312,170
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	100.0%	0.4%	17.4%

Overview

This grant program exists to provide funding to eligible applicants to create new or extend existing transportation programs that would provide eligible students transportation to a school other than the school that the student is currently attending or is designated to attend in the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school years. Through this program, students are able to attend a higher performing school of their choice within their current or an adjacent district and access high-quality instruction to support the acceleration of their learning as students and families continue to recover from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Grantees and Student Participation

This competitive grant was awarded to two grantees: RootED Denver and the Community Leadership Academy. Both grantees began transporting students in the 2022-23 school year and are continuing to transport students under this grant award in the 2023-24 school year.

During the 2022-23 school year, 37 students received transportation assistance to four receiving schools. Most participating students were transported less than six miles from their departure point, though two students were regularly transported over 10 miles. 81% of participating students received over 100 rides and 55% of participating students received over 150 rides. The average participating student received rides for 80 school days, though there was substantial variation in the number of days students utilized the services, with individual participating students varying from one ride to 163 rides over the course of the 2022-23 school year.

⁴³ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

⁴⁴ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Professional Learning

Table 34: Professional Learning Programs – Sum of Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁴⁵	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 1,150,893	\$ 1,150,893
Total Distributed⁴⁶	NA	NA	\$ 81,665	\$ 81,665
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	NA	7.1%	7.1%

Ongoing professional learning is a critical component of building and sustaining educator’s capacity to provide effective learning experiences for all students. After the disruption of the pandemic, many students in Colorado have unfinished learning, as evidenced by the drops in assessment scores. Now more than ever, it is critical for educators to employ effective instructional practices and align their instruction to standards to maximize every moment they have with students. Helping students catch up will continue to be a major focus for the next few years and will require all educators to use the most effective strategies available.

Compounding the impacts of the pandemic on student learning, educators also have had reduced access to professional learning opportunities. Many organizations that provide professional learning reduced operations during the pandemic, including the professional teaching associations that traditionally offer content area-focused annual conferences. Most districts focused their available professional learning time on helping educators to transition towards teaching remotely.

Professional Learning programs created with ESSER funds are designed to address these compounding needs – the need for high quality instruction to occur and the need for professional learning opportunities where educators can hone their skills to support the academic recovery of Colorado students. Four programs received ESSER funding: the Math Intervention Project; Colorado CoLabs; Professional Learning Cohorts; and the Regional Math Professional Development grant.

Math Interventions Project

Table 35: Math Interventions Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁴³	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 771,786	\$ 771,786
Total Distributed⁴⁴	NA	NA	\$ 0	\$ 0
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	NA	0%	0%

Intervention strategies for literacy and writing are well-developed and supported in Colorado through the READ Act passed by the Colorado Legislature in 2012. After the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, many students in Colorado have unfinished learning in mathematics evidenced by drops in recent assessment scores. Now more than ever, it is critical for educators to have access to and employ effective, evidence-informed instructional practices that are designed to address gaps in students’ prior knowledge and reteach concepts that are not mastered the first time they are taught.

Therefore, the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) has entered into a contract to create math intervention toolkits and training materials which will be housed on a website for free use by the public. All portions of the

⁴⁵ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

⁴⁶ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



intervention toolkits, training materials, and other deliverables created and delivered to CDE under the contract resulting from this work will be fully owned by the State with no ongoing costs upon termination of the contract.

Colorado CoLabs

Table 36: Colorado CoLabs Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁴⁷	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 113,000	\$ 113,000
Total Distributed⁴⁸	NA	NA	\$ 76,158	\$ 76,158
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	NA	67.4%	67.4%

CDE’s Office of Standards and Instructional Support is working with institutions of higher education, Colorado-based teaching organizations, and local school districts to offer regional professional development in various locations around the state. The goal of these learning experiences is to broaden access to high-quality, standards-aligned professional learning opportunities for educators, prioritizing regions that have historically had limited access to professional learning. The 2022 CoLabs engaged over 300 Colorado educators in professional learning for the following content areas: English language arts; mathematics; science; physical education; comprehensive health; and school administration.

In 2023, CDE expanded CoLabs efforts and engaged 443 Colorado educators in READ Act training, support for aligning systems to the Colorado Academic Standards and Colorado English Development Standards, and sessions that supported understanding of the recently revised Colorado Standards for social studies and the arts.

In 2024, CDE will be working to co-create the CoLabs experience with Northeast BOCES. The aim of this CoLabs experience is to engage up to 400 Colorado educators in meaningful professional learning and cultivate relationships with statewide and local partners.

Professional Learning Cohorts

Table 37: Professional Learning Cohorts Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁴⁷	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 225,000	\$ 225,000
Total Distributed⁴⁸	NA	NA	\$ 0	\$ 0
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	NA	0%	0%

Professional Learning Cohorts are CDE-led collaborative groups of district and school leaders actively working to improve student outcomes. Leaders typically join for four to eight virtual, hybrid, or in-person cohort sessions over the course of a year. All cohorts focus on a specific problem of practice, establish leader connection and collaboration across districts, include CDE experts, and are designed to empower leaders. There are approximately 259 current participants in learning cohorts, spanning approximately 88 districts and 66 school sites across the state. The District Improvement Strategy Office at CDE, housed in the Field Services and Supports Unit, designs, manages, and facilitates learning cohorts in collaboration with various offices and units across the department.

⁴⁷ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

⁴⁸ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Learning Cohort activities can include site visits to schools and districts across the state, professional learning through CDE and external partners, grant opportunities for implementation, and a spotlight on best practices for districts through the lens of leaders. Eight separate Professional Learning Cohorts were held during the 2022-23 school year. The eight Learning Cohort focus areas were: Math Instruction; Chronic Absenteeism; Principal Leadership; Family, School and Community Partnerships for Teams; Strategies to Support Highly Mobile Youth; Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Education; Alternative Education Campus Leadership; and Family, School, and Community Partnerships for Principals.

Learning Cohorts continue to grow and expand. The District Improvement Strategy Office is adding additional learning cohorts on school safety and Special Education, among other topics, in the Spring of 2024. Participant feedback from learning cohorts is overwhelmingly positive as evidenced by cohort evaluations and informal feedback from the field.

ESSER II and ESSER III provided funds to expand school and district improvement efforts through CDE-led Professional Learning Cohorts. The funding through ESSER allowed for:

1. Direct service allocations to increase CDE staff capacity to support professional learning cohorts;
2. The design, implementation, and expansion of Professional Learning Cohorts; and
3. Grant funding to support schools specifically focusing on improving outcomes for students in mathematics as well as district and school teams enhancing support for chronically absent students.

Grant awards were distributed to 12 schools across 8 districts in 2023 to specifically enhance improvement efforts in Professional Learning Cohorts. More information about Professional Learning Cohorts can be found on the [Field Services District Improvement Strategy Office website](#).

Regional Math Professional Development

Table 38: Regional Math PD Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁴⁹	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 41,107	\$ 41,107
Total Distributed⁵⁰	NA	NA	\$ 5,507	\$ 5,507
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	NA	13.4%	13.4%

This grant program provided districts with funding to send teacher-leaders to two specific train-the-trainer events in June 2023, the National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics (NCSM) Summer Leadership Academy and the Colorado Council of Teachers of Mathematics (CCTM) Learning Institute. These teacher-leaders are now being provided stipends to develop and lead a region-wide professional development day in a centralized location in the San Luis Valley in January 2024 focused on effective math teaching practices.

Five grantees were awarded funds to support 12 total teacher-leaders to attend each conference in the summer of 2023. These teacher-leaders are being provided with \$1,200 stipends to develop professional development on effective math practices to be delivered to colleagues in January 2024.

⁴⁹ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

⁵⁰ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Connecting Colorado Students Grant Program

Table 39: Connecting Colorado Students Grant Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 1,238,518	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 1,238,518
Total Distributed	\$ 1,238,518	NA	NA	\$ 1,238,518
Percentage of total allocation distributed	100%	NA	NA	100%

The Connecting Colorado Students Grant program provided grants to Local Education Agencies directed at improving and expanding K-12 internet access. Twenty-four school districts were awarded funding. Funds were used to install WiFi towers and radios, develop cloud-managed WiFi, purchase hotspot devices for students and families, and provide internet service directly to homes through local internet service providers. This contributed to an increase in the total area served by internet infrastructure by 280 square miles within the 24 school districts, bringing the total unserved area within the districts from 1,260 square miles in October 2019 to 980 square miles in April 2022.



Technical Assistance

Table 40: Technical Assistance Programs - Sum of Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁵¹	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 146,847	\$ 866,000	\$ 1,012,847
Total Distributed⁵²	NA	\$ 94,750	\$ 314,705	\$ 409,455
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	64.5%	36.3%	40.4%

ESSER set-aside funding has been used to provide technical assistance to the field by initiating several projects, both to increase the communication and impact of existing pandemic funding as well as to prepare for continued strategic learning and interventions for LEAs following the expiration of pandemic relief funding. These projects include:

- Convening leaders around pandemic-related challenges faced by their districts and schools, with the goal to provide a venue for identifying shared challenges, sharing strategies, and providing solutions for addressing such challenges
- Creating a pilot program to test the feasibility of allowing large, more populated school communities to partner with smaller communities to provide virtual learning opportunities in difficult to staff content areas
- Providing funds to organizations to carry out the critical role of transparency and communication with families and communities about the needs of the community’s students and schools caused or exacerbated by the pandemic, continued community engagement around developing needs, the use of COVID relief funds in addressing those needs, and the impact of those funds on addressing the COVID-related needs
- Designing a pilot program with the South Central BOCES to create new cross-district communication solutions. This is serving an urgent need to ensure that parents and communities are aware of how the BOCES and member districts are navigating COVID recovery and will provide insights around how the BOCES and member districts can leverage communications support centralized through the BOCES.
- Convening a group of stakeholders from across Colorado to discuss the safety needs of Colorado schools, examining best and promising practices and policies from across the nation in addressing those needs, and building a report of the group’s findings with recommendations for the role of the of the state in addressing the needs and opportunities related to improving student mental health and school safety, as identified by stakeholders
- Providing initial funding for a new position at CDE to support schools and districts with the development and implementation of community safety plans that can help address the health (social, emotional, mental) and safety (physical, emotional, psychological) needs of students and staff, particularly needs that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. This position is housed in CDE’s Field Services Unit and will be funded in the future with the federal Safer Communities Grant funding.

⁵¹ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

⁵² Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Blended Learning

Table 41: Blended Learning Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 162,500	\$ 0	\$ 162,500
Total Distributed ⁵³	NA	\$ 160,802	NA	\$ 160,802
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	99.0%	NA	99.0%

Program Overview

Blended Learning is a teaching strategy that combines remote/digital and in-person elements. It was used extensively in Colorado schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. CDE started the Blended Learning Initiative (BLI) for collective conversation across districts, schools, and the state to look at lessons learned, how students have been impacted, how education has evolved, and next steps to ensure that CDE work in this area is backed by robust research, conversation, and stakeholder engagement on what is best for K-12 education. Throughout the BLI, CDE engaged district and school leaders, educators, and families, including students, to provide feedback about blended and online learning. The goal of the BLI is to find the most appropriate updates to Colorado law and board rule that will open more flexible learning options to districts and schools.

Program Activities

The main program activities under the BLI include the Blended Learning and Supplemental Online Course Variance Waiver, Internal BLI Student Outcome Impact Data Project, External Research Scans, Convening Meetings, and Stakeholder Engagement.

Blended Learning and Supplemental Online Course Variance Waiver – During the 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 and under its authority for issuing variance waivers, CDE has allowed all Colorado districts and schools the opportunity to apply for the Blended Learning and Supplemental Online Course Variance Waiver for specific students. This waiver’s purpose has been to allow exceptions for a limited number of students who are enrolled in brick-and-mortar schools to access off-site and/or asynchronous instruction beyond current limits without it having a detrimental impact on funding eligibility. Because new questions about instructional time have emerged during and through the pandemic related to when and how students enrolled in brick-and-mortar environments learn, the Department offered this limited variance waiver until an updated policy is established through a formal rulemaking process. The State Board of Education is scheduled to formally begin the rulemaking process in December.

BLI Student Outcome Impact Data Project – This project will evaluate the K-12 students who participated in the waiver over the three school years: 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24. By looking at internal attendance, academic growth, and performance data, the evaluation will compare students participating in flexible learning and instructional models with those not participating.

External Research Scans – CDE contracted with a variety of external entities to identify and summarize best practices for blended and online learning. These findings were used to create an internal CDE report to further inform policy discussions around blended and online learning.

Convening Meetings – These allowed CDE to meet with invited education leaders and stakeholders to discuss research, policy, and best practices for blended and online learning.

⁵³ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Stakeholder Engagement - Throughout the fall of 2022, the Keystone Policy Group worked in partnership with the BLI team to design and manage a multi-platform stakeholder engagement process regarding statewide perspectives on the use of online and blended learning by educators, parents and students. A report of their findings can be [found here](#).



Rural Program Development Grant

Table 42: Rural Program Development Grant Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 0	\$ 141,000	\$ 0	\$ 141,000
Total Distributed⁵⁴	NA	\$ 115,704	NA	\$ 115,704
Percentage of total allocation distributed	NA	82.1%	NA	82.1%

Forty-seven LEPs were awarded \$3,000 to develop or expand out-of-school time (OST) programs, create Career and Technical Education (CTE) opportunities, or institute other academic enrichment programs. Categories for use of funds include: Before/Afterschool programs; Career-Connected Learning; Student Engagement Programs; School Climate Programs; Summer School Programs; and Other Academic Programs. Table 43 shows the program types approved for each of the 47 rural grantees.

Table 43: Reported Program Types Across Program Recipients

Program Type	Number of Programs
Other Academic Programs	15
Other Student Engagement	12
Career Connected Learning	7
Before/After School Programs	5
Summer School Programs	5
School Climate Programs	3
Total	47

⁵⁴ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



ESSER Administrative Costs

Table 44: Administrative Cost Allocations and Distributions

	ESSER I	ESSER II	ESSER III ⁵⁵	Total
Total Allocation	\$ 604,968	\$ 2,596,621	\$ 5,835,769	\$ 9,037,376
Total Distributed ⁵⁶	\$ 604,968	\$ 2,596,621	\$ 1,898,385	\$ 5,099,992
Percentage of total allocation distributed	100%	100%	32.5%	56.4%

Federal legislation allowed for 0.5% of total federal funding from each of ESSER I, II, and III to be reserved for state-level indirect costs and administrative costs associated with distribution, monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of ESSER funds.

⁵⁵ Programs have until September 30, 2024, to expend ESSER III funds.

⁵⁶ Distribution values are as of October 31, 2023. ESSER II and ESSER III distribution amounts should not be considered final.



Part Four – Other Federal Education Pandemic Relief Funding

Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER)⁵⁷

Quality Teacher Recruitment

Total Allocation: \$ 3,707,033

Distribution: \$ 3,178,582

The Quality Teacher Recruitment (QTR) Grant Program authorizes CDE to fund programs to coordinate recruitment, preparation, and placement of highly qualified teachers in school districts that have had difficulty attracting and retaining high-quality teachers. The 2020-22 QTR grant cycle was funded through the GEER Fund. In 2020-21, 627 teachers served the entire year in high-needs classrooms reaching an estimated 43,218 students across 45 Colorado school districts and 5 charter school systems. In 2021-22, grantees supported 502 teachers, 34,000 students, 40 Colorado school districts, and 1 charter school system. Additional GEER funds from reverted ARP EANS fund are supplementing the QTR program for the 2023-24 year. A further description and evaluation of the Quality Teacher Recruitment program can be found [here](#).

Empowered Remote Learning

Total Allocation: \$ 6,000,000

Distribution: \$ 6,000,000

Funds were provided to the Colorado River BOCES to expand access to the statewide online/blended learning program by: (1) enrolling students in an additional 57,700 courses in the 2020-21 school year and 3,300 additional courses in Fall 2021; (2) providing over 2,000 teachers professional learning in blended learning instruction; and (3) offering online/blended learning instruction consultation to 10 additional districts. Capacity was also expanded for emergency remote teaching through creation of a free, publicly available open education resource learning platform for Colorado K-12 educators and creation of content for parents/guardians alongside on-demand access to home-based learning resources available through Rocky Mountain PBS’s “Colorado Classroom”.

Colorado Charter School Institute Funding

Total Allocation: \$ 656,917

Distribution: \$ 656,917

The Colorado Charter School Institute (CSI) was awarded additional GEER funding by the Governor’s office. Funds were proportionally allocated on a per pupil basis to the 38 CSI-authorized schools. Funds were used for budgeted personnel and services diverted to a substantially different use, distance learning, public health expenses, economic support, payroll for public health and safety employees, improvements to telework capabilities, and COVID-19 testing and tracing.

⁵⁷ Additional GEER funds from reverted ARP EANS funds were allocated to CDE in November 2023. This report only includes COVID Relief funding through October 31, 2023. Details on this new funding will be added to the December 2024 version of this report.

**Math Accelerator**

Total Allocation: \$ 6,000,000

Distribution: \$ 0

The Governor allocated \$6 million of GEER funds to support mathematics acceleration in Colorado. CDE contracted with Zearn Math, a digital platform designed to accelerate learning in mathematics. GEER funds are paying for licenses to the digital platform for all public schools serving students through 8th grade. In addition, teachers receive training and funds for schools to use the Zearn Math paper-based mathematics curriculum, if they choose.

The goal of funding for the Zearn Math program is to increase mathematics achievement for all K-8 grade students in Colorado by providing access to all elementary, middle, and K-8 schools in Colorado to support student learning during the 2023-2024 school year. To date, 907 schools have been enrolled across the state for their use of the digital platform, educators have been trained on the use of the platform, and schools have been enrolled in the anchor program for impact study. Future activities will include continued enrollment of schools for the digital platform use, continued reimbursement of curricular materials, and a possible Year 2 contract.

Supporting Colorado Teachers Program

Total Allocation: \$ 6,708,000

Distribution: \$ 0

GEER II, in combination with reverted EANS I funds, were transferred to CDE via an interagency agreement to contribute to the Supporting Colorado Teachers Program. This to create a second round of the Supporting Colorado Teachers Program. Details on this program are available on page 27.

Imagination Library

Total Allocation: \$ 475,000

Distribution: \$ 475,000

Funds from GEER II were used by the Imagination Library of Colorado in addition to state funds to provide additional books (and their associated shipping costs) to children from birth to five years old so that young children can have access to high-quality, age-appropriate books monthly at no cost to families. In addition, the funding was used to assist local affiliates which temporarily lack the current budgeting or funding to meet or otherwise have financial difficulty meeting the county-based programs' funding requirements of paying for 50% of book costs.

Open Educational Resources

Allocation: \$ 177,378

Distribution: \$ 114,016

GEER II funds were provided to the Colorado River BOCES to provide additional support to the Open Educational Resources (OER) project described on page 38.

Administrative Costs

Total Allocation: \$ 117,527

Distribution: \$ 37,934

These funds were reserved for indirect and administration costs.



Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS)

Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) I Awards

Total Allocation: \$ 28,233,931

Purchases: \$ 13,588,622

Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) EANS I funds were awarded to non-public schools to address educational disruptions caused by the COVID-19 emergency. These funds were used to purchase or reimburse schools for allowable secular, neutral, and non-ideological services and assistance, including sanitization, personal protective equipment, COVID testing, educational technology, and connectivity under the CRRSA EANS program. During the first round of funding, each school was awarded \$700 per student and schools with low-income students were awarded an additional \$700 per low-income student.

The Governor's office authorized a second round of funding called the Governors Additional Emergency Nonpublic Schools program which allowed CDE to award \$2,312,463 in additional funds for the same activities under the EANS program. CDE was allowed to take \$213,265 in administrative and \$30,923.43 in indirect costs. Schools applied for up to \$100,000 each.

Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) I Administrative Funds

Total Allocation: \$ 200,000

Distribution: \$ 200,000

These funds were reserved for indirect and administration costs.

Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) II Awards

Total Allocation: \$ 28,509,729

Purchases: \$ 4,684,083

American Rescue Plan Act (ARP) EANS II funds were awarded to non-public schools to address the educational disruptions caused by the COVID-19 emergency. Funds have been used to purchase allowable secular, neutral, and non-ideological services and assistance, including sanitization, personal protective equipment, COVID testing, educational technology, and connectivity under the ARP EANS II program. Schools that enrolled a significant percentage of students from low-income families and were most impacted by the COVID-19 emergency are eligible for funding and have an opportunity to request \$1,900 per student. Final spending is underway and any unused funds will revert to the Governor's office for GEER purposes.

Emergency Assistance to Non-Public Schools (EANS) II Administrative Funds

Total Allocation: \$ 200,000

Distributions: \$ 200,000

These funds were reserved for indirect and administration costs.



Coronavirus Relief Funds

Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) – General

Total Allocation: \$ 510,000,000

Distribution: \$ 509,937,624

CRF funds were distributed to LEAs to support a wide range of eligible activities in responding to the pandemic in Colorado's schools. The most common uses included facilitating distance/remote learning, diverting budgeted personnel and services to different purposes, personal protective equipment, food programs, improving telework capabilities of employees, economic supports, administrative expenses, and other public health expenses.

Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) for At-Risk Students

Total Allocation: \$ 37,000,000

Distribution: \$ 37,000,000

CRF funds for at-risk students could be used for any allowable use under the original CRF. The most common uses for these funds were providing economic support, diverting budgeted personnel and services to different purposes, and facilitating distance/remote learning.

Coronavirus Relief Funds (CRF) - Safe Schools Reopening Grant

Total Allocation: \$ 14,404,967

Distribution: \$ 14,374,144

These grants were created to support schools needing additional resources to safely reopen for in-person learning. The most common expense categories were related to public health and personal protective equipment.

Administrative Costs

Total Allocation: \$ 595,033

Distribution: \$ 414,142

These funds were reserved for indirect and administration costs.



Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

Total Allocation: \$ 41,260,993

Distribution: \$ 34,255,286

IDEA funds under the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act were eligible for any allowable use under IDEA. There are no specific reporting requirements for recipients of ARP IDEA funds.



Child Nutrition

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act Meal Reimbursements

Total Allocation: \$ 143,151,717

Distribution: \$ 85,101,009

These funds provided meal reimbursements to LEAs during the pandemic. Funds were used to reimburse claims for meals served from March 27, 2020, through September 30, 2020.

Emergency Costs for Child Nutrition

Total Allocation: \$ 10,083,303

Distribution: \$ 9,977,004

These funds provided additional funding for local child nutrition program operators whose revenues declined or were temporarily interrupted during the early months of the pandemic due to COVID-19 related restrictions and closures. Program operators experienced widespread and significant gaps in funding, and in many cases were forced to expend their savings, draw funds from other sources, and cut or even suspend operations. The relief provided by these reimbursements addressed such shortfalls.

Farm to School State Formula Grant

Allocation: \$ 1,049,935

Distribution: \$ 105,665

CDE was provided funds to improve food and agricultural supply chain resiliency. The intended purpose of these funds is to support efforts to coordinate and provide technical assistance to build and increase the capacity to procure and use local foods in program meals as well as provide agricultural education opportunities for participating children. These funds are available to be expended until September 2026.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – Pandemic-EBT

Total Allocation: \$ 894,785

Distribution: \$ 891,017

Funds provided under this award were available for all necessary, allowable, and reasonable costs to child nutrition operators of implementing and administering P-EBT. Examples of allowable costs under this grant include salaries of personnel, outreach, equipment, supplies, support services (to include contracts for staffing or system related work that show clear allocation to the P-EBT Program), labor associated with reporting student-level P-EBT data, or other expenses associated with the administration of the P-EBT program.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Grant

Total Allocation: \$ 419,758

Distribution: \$ 280,439

Equipment Assistance Subgrants were awarded through a competitive process to eligible School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - EBT Administrative Costs

Total Allocation: \$ 623,337

Distribution: \$ 573,261

These funds were reserved for indirect and administration costs.



Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness

American Rescue Plan Act-Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) Formula Allocation

Total Allocation: \$ 4,300,318

Distribution: \$ 2,235,343

Funding was distributed to 31 LEAs and 3 BOCES based on an LEA's allocation under ESEA Title I and the LEA's proportional share of the number of children and youth experiencing homelessness identified by each LEA relative to all LEAs in the State. Funding has been used to support the necessary expenses associated with the identification, enrollment, retention and educational success of children and youth experiencing homelessness.

American Rescue Plan Act-Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) Grant Allocation

Total Allocation: \$ 1,462,514

Distribution: \$ 1,236,662

Twenty-one LEAs and five BOCES were awarded funds through a competitive grant process to increase the identification of children and youth experiencing homelessness, provide wraparound services considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and provide assistance needed to enable children and youth experiencing homelessness to attend school and participate fully in school activities. Funds were used to increase capacity at the LEA level for greater outreach, identification, connection to wraparound services and access to greater professional development opportunities.

American Rescue Plan Act-Homeless Children and Youth (ARP-HCY) State Reserve

Total Allocation: \$ 1,880,944

Distribution: \$ 215,511

Funds are being used to build awareness, increase capacity, and strengthen collaborations with community-based organizations (CBOs). CDE awarded 3 grants to CBOs across the state: Homeward Alliance; Shiloh House; and Morgan County Interagency Oversight Group. Funding is being used to support outreach and emergency supports to children and youth experiencing homelessness.

Additionally, CDE has partnered with the state and local agencies, organizations, and stakeholders to develop and deliver Regional Collaborative Conversations (RCCs) to support Highly Mobile Youth. RCCs are CDE-sponsored regional events with professional development, action planning, networking, and resource sharing. The first of these RCCs was held in Alamosa in April 2022, and nine additional RCCs across different regions of the state have resulted in over 400 participants, representing 130 organizations, and 30 school districts across the state. Through these RCCs, CDE has distributed over \$60,000 in basic needs items to homeless youth serving organizations.

The Office of Student Support at CDE has also hired a contractor to support ongoing training and technical assistance at the local levels to strengthen capacity for greater outreach, identification, and connection to needed services for students experiencing homelessness.



Libraries

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Library Distribution (Coronavirus Aid Recovery and Economic Security Act)

Total Allocation: \$ 520,351

Distribution: \$ 492,287

This grant program was offered to support the role of libraries in responding to the coronavirus pandemic. Funds distributed under this grant were used for a variety of purposes to meet the needs of the grantee library's community including providing pandemic hotspot services, ensuring social distanced access to computers and internet, expanding access to digital materials such as databases and audiobooks, and offering learning resources such as "take and make kits" for children. 52 public library jurisdictions were awarded a total of \$464,760. Additional funds were retained for state-level activities and administrative costs.

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Library Distribution (American Rescue Plan Act)

Total Allocation: \$ 2,987,441

Distribution: \$ 2,987,441

Funds were distributed using the same model as state grants to libraries. 22 State Academic Libraries, 92 Public Library Jurisdictions, 123 School Library Districts, the Colorado Talking Book Library, and state-run Institutional Libraries all received funds. Funds were used for: library purchases of digital materials including eBooks, eAudiobooks, and databases; technology such as Wi-Fi enabled hotspots, tablets, and ChromeBooks available for check-out by patrons; new purchase or replacement of outdated computers, printers, scanners, self-check machines, and remote kiosks; materials for outdoor programming; "take and make kits" for all ages; and personal protective equipment.

Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Administrative Costs

Total Allocation: \$ 277,980

Distribution: \$ 277,980

These funds were reserved for indirect and administration costs.



State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF)

School Health Professional Grant Program

Total Allocation: \$ 7,000,000

Distribution: \$ 405,703

The School Health Professional Grant Program (funded through H.B. 22-1243 and S.B. 22-147) is designed to provide funds to eligible education providers to enhance the presence of school health professionals in both elementary and secondary schools. Grant awards were issued in January 2023 to 28 LEAs. To date, over half of the award recipients have hired a school health professional, while the remainder are using contracts for services of health professionals. Of awardees, 85.7% of Local Education Agency work plans associated with this grant have indicated they have provided professional development in prevention education and screenings.

Adult Education and Literacy Grant Program

Total Allocation: \$ 5,000,000

Distribution: \$ 1,349,554

This grant program was offered to provide training to adults disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 public health emergency for better employment outcomes. Adult education and literacy programs receiving these funds applied as either a workforce development partnership (focusing on workforce goals and outcomes) or education attainment partnership (focusing on the basic and more advanced skills needed to function effectively as parents, caregivers, employees, and citizens of the United States). These programs must focus their mission to ensure that more low-skilled, low-income adults attain the basic literacy, digital literacy, and numeracy skills so that they may improve their, and their children's, ability to participate in the current and future in-demand sectors of employment, function effectively in supporting and advocating for their children's education, and actively participate in society. Adult education and literacy programs are defined as programs that provide adult basic education, adult education leading to a high school equivalency credential, English as a second language instruction, or integrated basic education and skills training. (See section 22-10-103(1), C.R.S.).

Per section 22-10-104(II), C.R.S., Adult Education and Literacy Programs may include:

- In-person or online instruction;
- The development of documented learning plans describing courses or credits an eligible adult needs to complete an adult education and literacy program and fulfill the graduation requirements of the program;
- Coaching between an adult education provider and an eligible adult related to the student's pace and progress with the learning plan described in subsection (1)(a)(II)(B);
- Mentorship between a coach and an eligible adult to facilitate the completion of the eligible adult's learning plan described in subsection (1)(a)(II)(B) of this section to prepare the student to succeed in the adult education and literacy program and in the eligible adult's future endeavors. Funds must be used to provide services to eligible adults who lack sufficient mastery of the basic literacy, digital literacy, and numeracy skills necessary to enable the person to function effectively in the workplace;

In the first year of distribution of this grant, 1,533 learners were enrolled in sectoral job training programs working toward workforce training completion and job attainment. Of those learners, 422 completed sectoral job training programs.



Colorado Department of Education (CDE) State Board Room Renovations

Total Allocation: \$ 1,774,654

Distribution: \$ 1,576,208

As a result of the 2020 Census, Colorado now has eight congressional districts and the State Board of Education expanded from seven elected members to nine. This project was awarded in FY22 and was converted to SLFRF funds (revenue recovery) later in the fiscal year. The State Board Room now accommodates all nine members, includes increased capacity for public attendance, updated ADA, electrical and safety codes, and better supports public engagement through up-to-date technology for hybrid meetings and remote participation.

The State Board of Education has been using the space since April 2023. Substantial Completion for this project occurred in August 2023. CDE continues to work on minor outstanding construction tasks and toward remedying some issues with the audio-visual system before final closeout with the general contractor. It is anticipated that this project will be complete in the spring of 2024.

Concurrent Enrollment Expansion and Innovation Grant Program

Total Allocation: \$ 1,750,000

Distribution: \$ 1,432,027

In 2021, the state legislature authorized American Rescue Plan Act dollars from the federal coronavirus state fiscal recovery fund to support impacted communities of the public health emergency (see S.B. 21-268). \$1,750,000 was allocated to the Concurrent Enrollment Expansion and Innovation Grant Program. The program helped mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on populations disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 by supporting students in obtaining college credits to earn necessary credentials to strengthen Colorado's workforce.

The grant program provided grants to partnering local education providers and institutions of higher education to expand and innovate concurrent enrollment opportunities to qualified students. The most common activities under the grant program included covering the costs of textbooks, supplies, and fees for students and reimbursing graduate tuition costs for high school teachers to become qualified concurrent enrollment instructors. When a high school has a qualified concurrent enrollment instructor in the high school building, the number of students who have access to postsecondary courses increases dramatically. As a result, transportation and other barriers to these courses are removed. It is a sustainable approach to improving students' postsecondary and career readiness.

Of the 13 grant recipients, four were designated as rural or small rural districts, six were urban/suburban districts, one was a charter school, and two were institutions of higher education. The list of grantees and the awards distributed can be found [here](#). The following self-reported data from grant recipients details the success of the program:

- 20,282 qualified students concurrently enrolled in postsecondary courses;
- 112,912 transferable postsecondary credits earned through concurrent enrollment;
- 1,046 concurrent enrollment students that complete an associate degree or certificate from an approved career and technical education program; and
- 32 teachers earned a credential in order to teach concurrent enrollment courses.



Conclusion

COVID Relief Funds for education were administered through a variety of programs within Colorado. These include the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER), Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER), Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF), emergency funding for each of: Child Nutrition, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Homeless Children and Youth (HCY), Libraries, and State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds (SLFRF) programs. The majority of pandemic relief funds were administered through the ESSER 90% allocation program. The remaining ESSER 10% state set-aside funds and other education-related pandemic relief funds have supported a variety of programs aimed at addressing student needs. Funds will continue to be distributed through specified programs through the 2023-24 school year.



Glossary of Acronyms

21 st CCLC	21st-Century Community Learning Center
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ARP	American Rescue Plan Act
BLI	Blended Learning Institute
BOCES	Boards of Cooperative Educational Services
CARES	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CC-Live	Colorado Classrooms LIVE
CCTM	Colorado Council of Teachers of Mathematics
CDE	Colorado Department of Education
CDLS	Colorado Digital Learning Solutions
COMTSS	Colorado Multi-tiered Systems of Supports
CSI	Charter School Institute
CTE	Career and Technical Education
CRF	Coronavirus Relief Fund
CRRSA	Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act
EANS	Emergency Aid for Non-public Schools
EASI	Empowering Action for School Improvement
ECEA	Exceptional Children’s Education Act
ELA	English Language Arts
ELD	English Language Development
ELO	Expanded Learning Opportunities
ESEA	Elementary and Secondary Education Act
ESF	Education Stabilization Fund
ESSER	Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund
EWP	Education Workforce Program
FRL	Free and Reduced-Price Lunch
GAINS	Grants Administration, Implementation, and Navigation System
GEER	Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund
HITP	High-Impact Tutoring Program
HCY	Homeless Children and Youth
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
LEAs	Local Education Agencies
LSTA	Library Services & Technology Act
LTTAP	Learning and Transparency Technical Assistance Program
NCSM	National Council of Supervisors of Mathematics
NSLP	National School Lunch Program
OER	Open Educational Resources
OST	Out of School Time
QTR	Quality Teacher Recruitment
P-EBT	Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer
RCCs	Regional Collaborative Conversations
READ Act	Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development Act
SEA	State Education Agency



SEMh	Social-Emotional/Mental Health
SFA	School Food Authorities
SLFRF	Coronavirus State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds
SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
SSRG	Safe Schools Reopening Grant
UNC	University of Northern Colorado

Draft Independent Evaluation of the Colorado READ Act: Per-Pupil Funding Year 3 Summary Report



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Colorado READ Act EVALUATION



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Executive Summary

- **Reversing trends from the pandemic, during the 2021–2022 school year fewer students were identified as having an SRD. Nearly three times as many students were exited from SRD status compared with the previous year.**
- **Colorado Measures of Academic Success proficiency rates and reading subsection proficiency rates remain extremely low for students who have ever been identified with an SRD and even lower for students with an SRD who are also English learners or have an Individualized Education Program.**
- **The new requirement for 45 hours of evidence-based training in teaching reading was broadly impactful on teacher practice and has continued a trend towards alignment across districts in the adoption and implementation of reading instruction aligned with the science of reading.**
- **Site visit school and district leaders gave consistently strong, positive support for Early Literacy Grants. These leaders indicate the grants led to improved K–3 instructional practices and improved student performance on literacy assessments.**



In 2019, the Colorado General Assembly passed and signed into law SB 19-199, which included a provision mandating that an independent, external multiyear evaluation of the Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act program be conducted (see 2020 Annual Report on the Colorado READ Act for an overview of updates in SB 19-199).¹ The evaluation is now underway and is being conducted by an independent research team led by WestEd that includes APA Consulting and RTI International.

The key legislative goals for this evaluation are as follows:

1. Help state policymakers and district leaders understand impacts of READ Act funding and support on students, families, schools, and districts
2. Learn and share successes and best practices across districts and schools
3. Inform improvements to the READ Act by understanding how funds were used
4. Get direct feedback from school and district leaders about how the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) can best support further improvement in READ Act implementation

This report relies on numerous sources of information (see Appendices 1–2 for a detailed description of data collected and analytic methods used), including

- extant data from the student, school, and Local Education Provider (LEP) level from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and publicly available datasets;
- inventories of LEP staff and principals, reading coaches, and teachers at schools that received READ Act funding and participated in READ Act activities; and
- site visits with a sample of schools receiving Early Literacy Grants (ELGs) and LEPs that received READ Act funding, with a focus on schools and LEPs that have been successful (relative to others in

¹ See <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdedepcom/readactreport>.



the state) in moving students who have ever been identified with a significant reading deficiency (SRD) toward proficiency on the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS).

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Modest gains in achievement levels indicate a return to prepandemic levels of performance for some students, but students with multiple identifications remain underserved. Analysis of 2021–2022 SRD designation and CMAS English Language Arts (ELA) scores suggest that there was a bounce back to prepandemic achievement levels in reading for early elementary students in Colorado. However, this trend was not evident for students identified with multiple designations² whose SRD identification rates remained higher and CMAS ELA proficiency rates remained much lower than for students identified with SRD without multiple designations. Despite this recovery, CMAS proficiency remains stubbornly low for students who have ever been identified with an SRD (4.1% in the 2021–2022 school year).

Professional development requirements were seen as positively impacting teacher practice and alignment towards science of reading principles. There was consensus on statewide inventories and during site visits that the new requirement for 45 hours of evidence-based training in teaching reading was broadly impactful on teacher practice and has continued a trend towards alignment across districts in the adoption and implementation of reading instruction aligned with the science of reading.

Postpandemic Recovery

Reversing trends from the COVID-19 pandemic, during the 2021–2022 school year, fewer students were identified as having an SRD and more students exited from SRD status than in the previous year. In 2021–2022, 4.7% of students were newly identified as having an SRD. This is 1.2

² For example, SRD and English learner or SRD with an Individualized Education Program.



percentage points lower than in the previous year. In addition, nearly three times as many students were exited from SRD status compared with the previous year (1.7% of K–3 students in 2020–2021 to 4.6% K–3 students in 2021–2022).

Additionally, the percentage of students who remained designated as not having an SRD in 2020–2021 or 2021–2022, nearly reset to prepandemic rates. From 2015–2016 through 2018–2019, between 53% and 55% of students remained designated as not having an SRD from year to year. During the 2020–2021 school year, that percentage fell to 33% as more students were designated as having an SRD during the pandemic. During the 2021–2022 school year, the percentage rose to 47%, that is, 47% of students who were not identified as having an SRD in 2020–2021 remained not identified with an SRD during the 2021–2022 school year.

Unfortunately, in line with findings from the previous 2 years, only 4.1% of students who had ever been identified with an SRD reached proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam in 3rd grade in the 2021–2022 school year compared with 55.2% of students who had never been identified as having an SRD reaching proficiency on the 3rd-grade CMAS ELA exam, the highest rate observed during the READ Act data collection period (2014–2015 to present). The findings when analyzing the Reading subscore of the CMAS ELA were similar to those when examining the overall score—students who were ever designated as having an SRD were unlikely to meet or exceed expectations on the CMAS ELA exam reading subsection.

Recommendation: CDE and the external evaluation should focus attention on persistently low rates of proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam and explore the gap between students who are not designated with having an SRD (either through exiting SRD status or whose interim assessment scores are above the threshold for SRD status) but do not reach proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam.



Continued Challenges for Students With Multiple Identifications

In line with findings from the previous 2 years, *students with Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) or English learners (ELs) who were also identified as having an SRD reached proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam at lower rates than their general education peers who had been identified with SRDs.* Just more than 1% of students designated as having an SRD who also had IEPs demonstrated proficiency (1.3%). Students with IEPs who were not designated as having an SRD had different outcomes, with 34.3% reaching proficiency, which was in line with previous years.

A similar pattern exists for students who were learning English. Very few students designated with SRDs who were also ELs reached proficiency (2.5%). In contrast, 34.3% of ELs who were not designated as having an SRD reached proficiency, which was in line with the 2018–2019 rate. This suggests that students with dual identifications continue to be underserved by the READ Act on their journey to reading English at grade level by the end of 3rd grade. The evaluation of READ Act materials identified weaknesses in supports provided for ELs and students with IEPs.³

These challenges are likely related to continued challenges in serving students with multiple identifications identified by district- and school-based staff. District administrators reported less clarity about supporting non–general education students under the READ Act, specifically students with disabilities and ELs. In particular, exiting students with disabilities and ELs from SRD status, identifying which of their plans (READ Plan, IEP, etc.) should act as primary guidance, and understanding how to support students with multiple identifications (SRD and EL, etc.) were areas of confusion. A sizeable minority of teachers also reported feeling unprepared to support students with IEPs under the READ Act.

³ See <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readactevaluationmaterialsummary>.



Recommendation: CDE should identify additional resources and strategies to better serve students with multiple designations. For example, additional professional learning that focuses on teaching reading to ELs and students with IEPs and specific recommendations and guidance for areas of confusion (primary guidance, exiting students with multiple designation).

The 45-Hour Professional Development Requirement Was Impactful on Teacher Practice

By May 2023, some 13,218 teachers had completed a READ Act–required evidence-based training in teaching reading and had passed the end-of-course assessment. *Educator role groups showed high rates of perceived usefulness, applicability, and quality of the training program, according to this year’s teacher, coach, and principal inventories. Site visit schools uniformly reported seeing positive impacts on teacher practice resulting from the training requirement.* Perceived impacts showed up in several ways. First, schools reported greater teacher knowledge of evidence-based practices related to the five components of reading. Second, schools reported positive shifts in teachers’ instructional approaches more aligned with evidence-based practices taught in the trainings. In particular, teachers paid more explicit and systematic attention to teaching phonics and phonemic awareness. Third, schools reported that teachers were more effective at supporting the needs of different students. Site visit schools noted that teachers had improved their ability to identify student needs, design lessons and differentiate instruction according to those needs, and select materials targeted to meet needs in an engaging manner. Ongoing coaching from a literacy specialist and dedicated time to participate in professional learning communities with peers were cited as the most effective structures for supporting implementation of new practices learned in the training. While all site visit schools reported some type of impact on teachers, a sizeable number of schools also noted evidence of improved student learning as a result of the training.



This kind of pattern would not be surprising in the context of adopting a whole-school instructional reform such as the science of reading approach. Typically, shifts in student learning are first preceded by shifts in teacher practice, which in turn often require shifts in teacher knowledge, beliefs, and mindsets. In this sense, the findings related to professional development are consistent with expected patterns and will be a focus of the evaluation moving forward.

Recommendation: CDE should continue to support districts and schools to provide ongoing, job-embedded coaching to sustain implementation of new teacher learning such that it translates into meaningful improvements in student outcomes.

Strong, Positive Support for ELGs

Overall, school and district leaders in the site visits gave consistently strong, positive support for ELGs. These leaders indicated that the grants led directly to improved K–3 teacher instructional practices and improved student performance on literacy assessments. School and district leaders reported that ELG funding produced direct, positive changes in student reading performance that would not have happened without the grants. These leaders often stated that student performance improvements happened very rapidly, even after just 1 year of ELG implementation.

Bringing in an external literacy expert on a monthly basis to work with teachers was typically identified by school and district leaders as the single most impactful element of ELG-funded activities. Such external experts were highly valued because they brought fresh perspectives and a high degree of credibility into schools. They also directly coached teachers, observed and modeled instruction, and leveraged extensive outside knowledge to help schools improve instruction. These outside consultants were routinely identified as the driving force behind needed changes to instructional practices and subsequent successes in raising student reading performance, which is consistent with



findings about coaching and literature on the importance of job-embedded professional learning.⁴

Recommendation: CDE could consider providing periodic grant funds to support ongoing visits from external literacy consultants for schools that have successfully completed their ELGs to help sustain their impact and combat staff turnover. In addition, CDE could consider asking districts and schools to outline their plans and strategies for sustaining these positions past the life of the grant.

⁴ See <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readactevaluationmaterialssummary>.



1

Introduction

Three broad research questions guided the evaluation.

- **How are LEPs and schools implementing READ Act provisions?**
- **To what extent has the implementation of the READ Act led to a reduction in the number of students identified as having significant reading deficiencies?**
- **To what extent do students identified with a significant reading deficiency achieve reading proficiency by the third grade?**



The importance of achieving early-grade reading proficiency for later student academic success is well documented. Researchers and education leaders consider the achievement of reading proficiency by the end of the 3rd grade to be crucial to a child’s future academic success and financial independence.⁵ To help schools and districts support all children in achieving this goal, the Colorado State Legislature passed the Colorado Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Act in 2012 to replace the Colorado Basic Literacy Act.⁶ The READ Act provides school districts with funding and support to aid literacy development for kindergarten through 3rd-grade (K–3) students, especially those identified with significant reading deficiencies (SRDs) who are at risk of not reading at grade level by the end of 3rd grade.

READ Act

Backward mapping intended outcomes identified in the READ Act through activities and inputs illustrates how authors of the Act intended the pieces to fit together to improve reading outcomes (Exhibit 1). To ensure that 3rd-grade students have the necessary reading skills to succeed in higher grade levels and beyond, the READ Act established mechanisms to ensure that all K–3 students receive reading instruction based on the science of reading and students identified with SRDs receive appropriate science-based interventions to address their needs. Teachers complete evidence-based training in reading that enables them to deliver instruction and provide support aligned with the science of reading. Local Education Providers (LEPs) select core instructional programs, interventions, professional development programs, and assessments from the

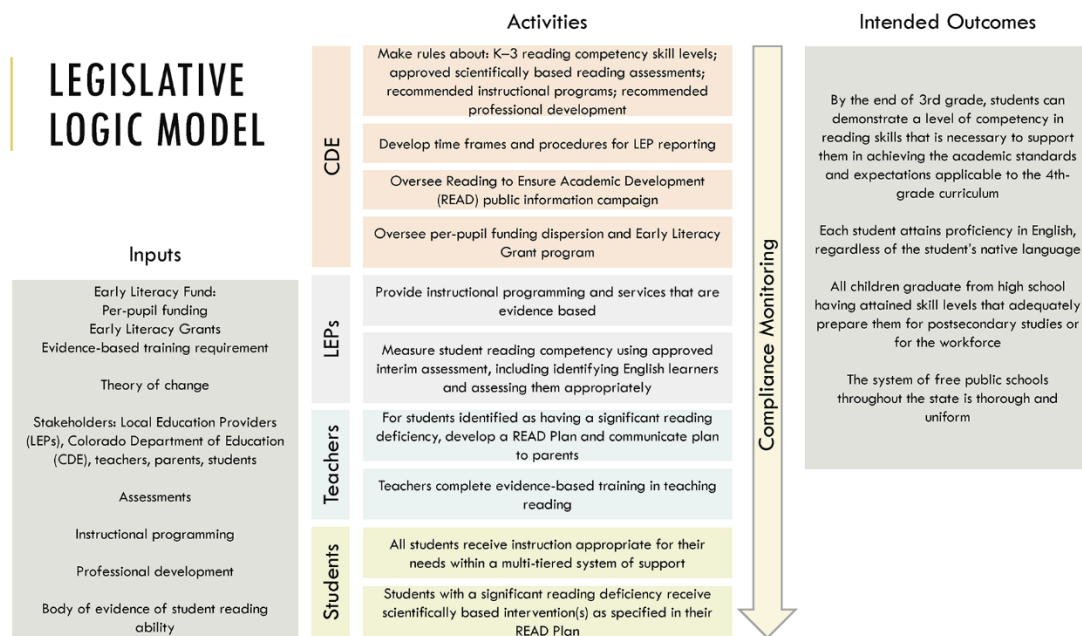
⁵ Hernandez, D. J. (2011). *Double jeopardy: How third-grade reading skills and poverty influence high school graduation*. The Annie E. Casey Foundation; Fiester, L. (2013). *Early warning confirmed: A research update on third-grade reading*. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. <https://www.aecf.org/resources/double-jeopardy>.

⁶ The READ Act includes many of the same elements as the Colorado Basic Literacy Act, including a focus on K–3 literacy, assessment, and individual plans for students reading below grade level with the addition of (a) funding to support these efforts, (b) requirements for parent communication, and (c) an explicit focus on students identified as having a significant reading deficiency.



Advisory List of Professional Development and Instructional Programming that CDE has developed and disseminated. CDE also determines grade-level competency in reading, monitors LEP use of READ Act per-pupil funds, administers the ELG program, and oversees READ Act reports (Exhibit 1).

Exhibit 1. READ Act Legislative Logic Model



Under provisions of the READ Act, schools use an interim assessment from the Advisory List to identify students with SRDs. After screening, students are given a diagnostic assessment to identify areas of need and develop an individual READ Plan. The READ Act specifies certain components required in all READ Plans; however, each plan must be tailored to meet individual student needs and updated regularly based on progress monitoring.

The Colorado General Assembly placed four broad requirements on the State Board of Education and CDE to administer the READ Act: rulemaking, accountability, information dissemination, and funding dissemination.

Functionally, CDE’s activities can be placed into six categories: compliance, instruction, assessment, curriculum, prekindergarten to kindergarten transition, and State-Identified Measurable Result (Exhibit 2).



1. Managing compliance ensures that READ Act funds are used effectively and lawfully and educators understand READ Act requirements.
2. Informing human capital through training requirements and providing recommended lists of professional development programs ensures that teachers know how to provide reading instruction that is scientifically grounded.
3. Reviewing and approving K–3 reading assessments allows students identified with SRDs to be effectively identified and to receive appropriate interventions.
4. Reviewing and recommending curriculum and interventions ensures that students receive reading instruction that is scientifically grounded.
5. Aligning prekindergarten and kindergarten readiness standards with K–3 reading standards supports effective prekindergarten practices.

In addition to specifying that the Colorado State Board of Education must approve a set of reading assessments, the READ Act charges CDE with creating Advisory Lists Of Instructional Programming⁷ and Professional Development⁸ that are scientifically grounded and evidence based.

⁷ See <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/advisorylistofinstructionalprogramming2020>.

⁸ See <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readactprofessionaldevelopmentevidence/teachertraining>.



Exhibit 2. CDE READ Act Roles and Activities Aligned With Outcomes

Legislated Requirements		CDE Activities	Desired Outputs	
Colorado Department of Education (CDE)	Make rules about K-3 reading competency skill levels; approved scientifically based reading assessments; recommended instructional programs; recommended professional development	Compliance	Manage dispersal of per-pupil and Early Literacy Grant funds	LEP staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of READ Act requirements
			Ensure that LEP use of funds is allowable and lawful	
			Oversee LEP READ Act reporting	
			Manage READ Act data (funding, assessment, etc.)	
	Develop time frames and procedures for Local Education Provider (LEP) reporting	Instruction	Provide multiple paths for K-3 teachers to meet the evidence-based training requirement in SB 19-199	Teachers participate in training for scientifically based literacy instruction
			Review and support implementation of evidence-based reading instruction in teacher preparation programs	Preservice programming is aligned with scientifically based literacy instruction
	Maintain advisory list of professional development programs			
	Oversee Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) public information campaign	Assess	Maintain list of approved K-3 interim assessments	Students are effectively identified as having a significant reading deficiency and engage in appropriate interventions
			Provide guidance around how to use assessment results and how to use data to inform instruction	
	Oversee per-pupil funding dispersion and Early Literacy Grant program	Coordinate	Maintain Advisory List of K-3 literacy instructional programming	LEPs adopt CDE-recommended curricula and instructional materials
			Provide guidance around K-3 literacy instructional programming, including the extent to which programming is appropriate for students with specific needs	
		Pre-K transition	Support LEPs in implementing quality inclusive preschool	Pre-K pre-literacy and kindergarten readiness standards are aligned with K-3 reading standards
			Coordinate with university partners to develop best practices for implementing effective P-3 transitions	
			Align preschool licensing requirements with district-based programs	
		SME	Provide LEPs technical assistance in developing transition plans to support P-3	
			Provide Structured Literacy instructional materials to participating schools	
	Provide intensive literacy coaching for K-3 teachers and school leaders			
	Evaluate, adjust and align the preservice literacy education of future elementary principals, K-6 teachers, and special education teachers			
		Focus Family, School, and Community Partnering program on early literacy goals		

LEPs may use READ Act funds to purchase instructional programming from the Advisory List (they may also purchase instructional programs that are not on the Advisory List if they do not use READ Act funds since the READ Act specifies that all instruction should be evidence and scientifically based). The 2019 revision of the READ Act requires all K-3 teachers to complete 45 hours of evidence-based training in teaching reading. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the deadline for meeting this requirement was extended to August 1, 2022 (see Chapter 3 for discussion of the evidence-based training requirement).

The Comprehensive ELG program was also created in 2012 as part of the READ Act. This fund was created primarily to provide resources through ELGs for Colorado schools and districts to implement interventions, programs, and supports specifically for K-3 students identified with SRDs. Schools may apply individually or as part of a consortium of schools. To help ensure that these funds are appropriately targeted, the state has provided districts with a list of approved, evidence-based education interventions that have been supported by the ELG since 2012. Districts, in turn, are required by statute each year to provide information to CDE regarding their planned usage of funds to support students identified with SRDs. In 2018, House Bill 18-1393 allowed for the creation of two



grant programs in addition to the original Comprehensive ELG program. Sustainability grants allow districts and schools that have completed Comprehensive ELGs to receive additional funding to continue their activities. Annual Professional Development grants provide funding to districts and schools to support the implementation of evidence-based reading programming and strategies. In addition to these programs, supplemental awards are also made based on availability of funding.

Evaluation of READ Act

In 2019, the Colorado General Assembly passed and signed into law SB 19-199, which included a provision mandating that an independent, external multiyear evaluation of the READ Act program be conducted (see 2020 Annual Report on the Colorado READ Act for an overview of updates in SB 19-199).⁹ The evaluation is now underway and is being conducted by an independent research team led by WestEd that includes APA Consulting and RTI International.

The key legislative goals for this evaluation are as follows:

1. Help state policymakers and district leaders understand impacts of READ Act funding and support on students, families, schools, and districts
2. Learn and share successes and best practices across districts and schools
3. Inform improvements to the READ Act by understanding how funds were used
4. Get direct feedback from school and district leaders about how the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) can best support further improvement in READ Act implementation

Aligned with these goals, the evaluation is guided by three broad research questions:

⁹ See <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdedepcom/readactreport>.



1. How are LEPs and schools implementing READ Act provisions?
2. To what extent has the implementation of the READ Act led to a reduction in the number of students identified with SRDs?
3. To what extent do students identified with an SRD achieve reading proficiency by the 3rd grade?

In addition, this year's report focuses special attention on three specific topics identified in last year's report. The first of these topics is classroom level implementation of the READ Act. In the first two years of the evaluation, we gained insight from district and school leaders about READ Act implementation and impact. This year we were able to conduct in-person site visits at schools who were successful at meeting the goals of the READ Act. These schools had relatively higher rates of helping students who had been identified as having an SRD partially meet, meet, or exceed proficiency on the Colorado Measures of Academic Success (CMAS) (See Appendix 1 for full discussion of site visit criteria.) During these visits, we observed classroom reading instruction and conducted in depth interviews with instructional staff in order to gain insight about READ Act implementation at the classroom level at schools who have successfully supported students under the READ Act. Secondly, given the new requirement for evidence-based training in teaching reading, we focused on the perceived impact of that training on teacher knowledge, beliefs and practices. Third, given the large numbers of students who do not reach proficiency on the CMAS at 3rd grade, we wanted to examine READ Act trends for students in 4th–12th grades.

In order to answer these evaluation questions and examine these special topics, the report relies on numerous sources of information (see Appendices 1–2 for a detailed description of data collected and analytic methods used), including



- extant student, school, and LEP-level data from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) and publicly available dataset;¹⁰
- inventories of LEP staff and principals, reading coaches, and teachers at schools that received READ Act funding and participated in READ Act activities; and
- site visits with a sample of schools receiving Early Literacy Grants (ELG) and LEPs that received READ Act funding, with a focus on schools and LEPs and schools that have been successful (relative to others in the state) in moving students who have ever been identified with an SRD toward proficiency on the CMAS.

Purpose and Organization of This Report

The report of the third year of the evaluation describes READ Act implementation during the 2022–2023 school year as well as findings related to three main topics identified in last year’s report: classroom-level implementation of the READ Act (Chapter 2), the new requirement for evidence-based training in teaching reading (Chapter 3) and READ Act supports beyond 3rd grade (Chapter 4). It also details findings related to ELGs (Chapter 5), READ Act per pupil funding and related spending (Chapter 6), and student outcomes (Chapter 7).

It also important to note several limitations regarding this year’s report. First, as noted in last year’s report, in-depth analysis to determine the comparability of the interim assessments and the feasibility of establishing a common growth scale across assessments found that neither the content of assessments nor the student scores that identify students with an SRD are fully comparable and do not allow for the creation of a single growth-to-standard model. As such, this report does not include any quantitative analysis about growth-to-standard. Next year, with multiple years of post-pandemic achievement data and access to additional interim assessment data from districts participating in the Early

¹⁰ CDE’s publicly available is available here: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval>



Literacy Assessment tool we are planning to explore the feasibility of a regression discontinuity design to evaluate the impact of SRD identification. Second, this is first year that we have been able to conduct in-person site visits, so this year serves as another baseline in terms of observing and documenting classroom level implementation of the READ Act. In addition, CDE did not provide useable school level-literacy curriculum data which limited our ability to present trends in instructional material use in this year's report.



2

Overall Approaches to Reading

- **There is consistent evidence of intentional district-wide alignment of reading approaches, instructional materials, and supports**
- **Building on findings from the first two years of the evaluation, districts, administrators, coaches and teachers reported widespread implementation of reading instruction aligned with the science of reading**
- **District administrators and staff at site visit schools cited the use of evidence-based instructional materials and the Advisory List as key drivers of increased student engagement and learning**
- **One challenge cited was the absence of 4th–5th-grade materials on the Advisory List which limited alignment within elementary schools**



District Requirements, Guidance, and Support

The evaluation found consistent evidence of intentional districtwide alignment of reading approaches, instructional materials, and supports. Efforts to align materials and approaches across districts that were identified in last year's report were confirmed through the statewide inventory of district administrators. As of 2023, most districts either require or provide guidance on reading instructional materials, assessments, and minimum amounts of time spent on teaching the science of reading.

- Sixty-five percent of district administrators reported that decisions about instructional materials were made at the district level and all elementary schools used the same programs from the Advisory List. This was up from 59% of responding district administrators in 2022.
- Seventy-three percent of districts reported that decisions about assessments were made at the district level and all elementary schools within those districts used the same assessments from the Advisory List.
- Forty-three percent of districts reported that decisions about minimum amounts of time spent teaching the science of reading were made at the district level and all elementary schools had a minimum amount of time to spend teaching the science of reading. The majority of districts reported mandating daily instruction in phonemic awareness (67%), phonics (68%), fluency (63%), vocabulary (58%), comprehension (67%) and reading in the disciplines (53%).

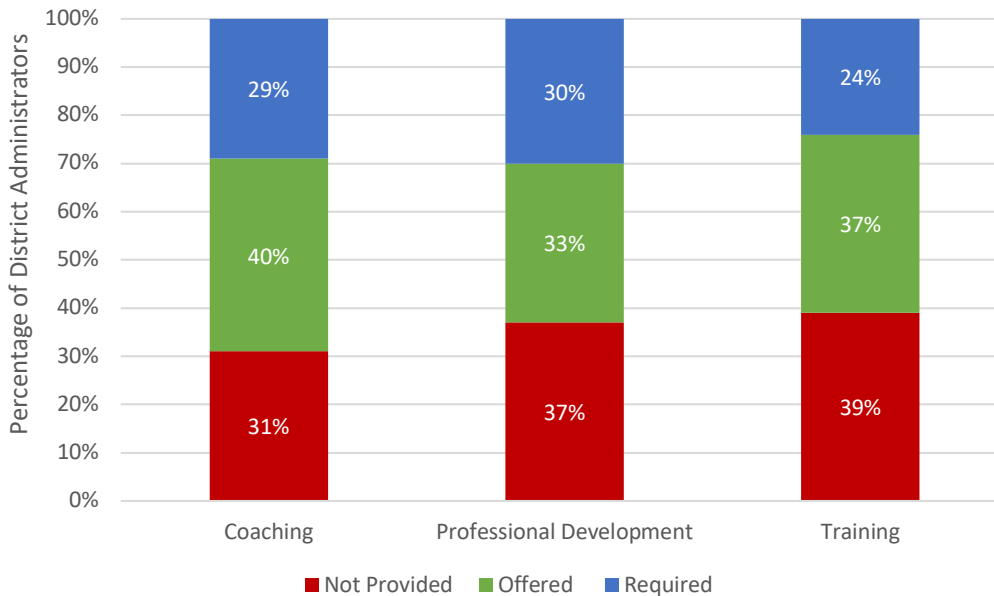
Staff from site visit schools corroborated these findings. Six of the 10 schools visited emphasized that their school's approach was driven by district guidance related to approach, materials, and supports aligned with the science of reading. One site visit school, for example, described a culture of data use and progress monitoring aligned with READ Act expectations. Staff noted that this approach was aligned with the district's science of reading expectations and that the district



provided monthly meetings for school leaders to address READ Plans along with assessments and instructional programs.

Seventy-six percent of district administrators reported on the inventory that they were providing or requiring at least one support beyond the required 45 hours of evidence-based training in teaching reading during the 2022–2023 school year. Additional supports included professional development (63% offered or required), coaching (69% offered or required) and training (61% offered or required) (see Exhibit 3). Notably, at least a third of districts reported that they did not provide professional development (37%), coaching (31%), or training (39%) related to the science of reading beyond the 45 hour requirement (Exhibit 3).

Exhibit 3. District Support for Science of Reading



Continued Evidence of Reading Instruction Aligned With READ Act and Based on Science of Reading

Building on findings from the first 2 years of the evaluation, there was consistent evidence of widespread implementation of reading instruction aligned with READ Act requirements that is focused on the five foundational reading



skills. The majority of teachers responding to the inventory reported daily instruction in each of these foundational skills (Exhibit 4). Frequency also varied by grade. For example, 91% of kindergarten teachers reported daily instruction in phonological awareness compared with 45% of 3rd grade teachers (see Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 4. Frequency of Instruction by Science of Reading Component 2022–2023 School Year

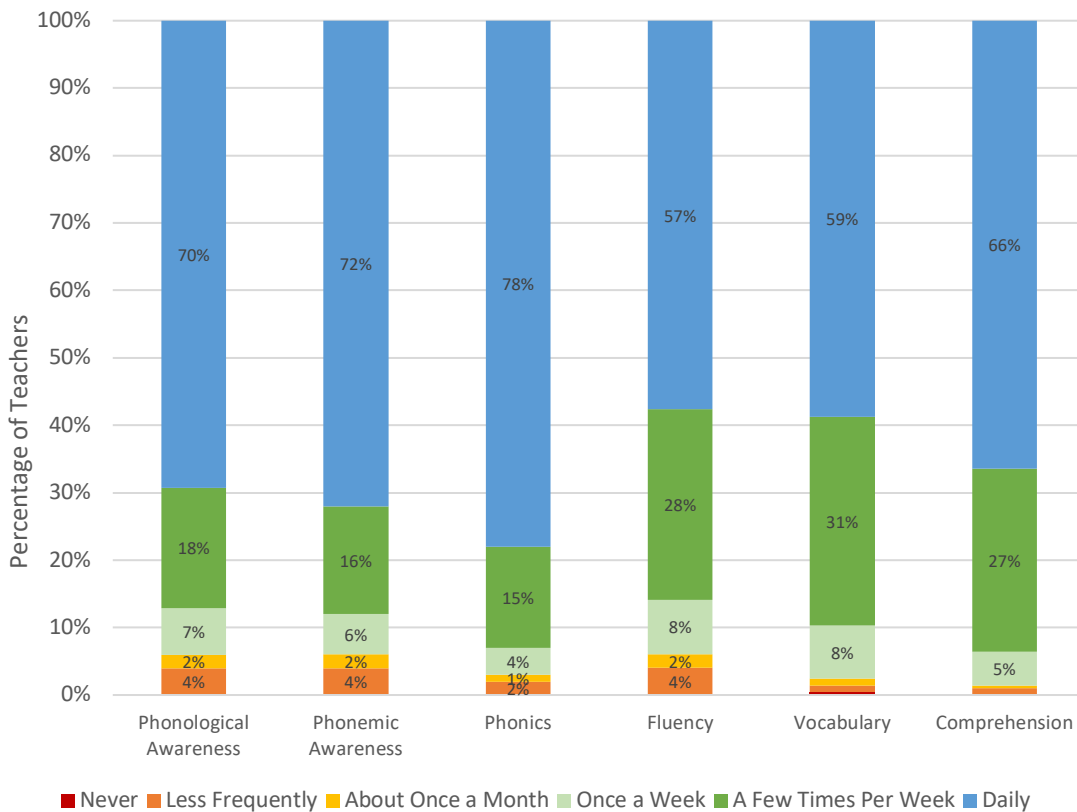
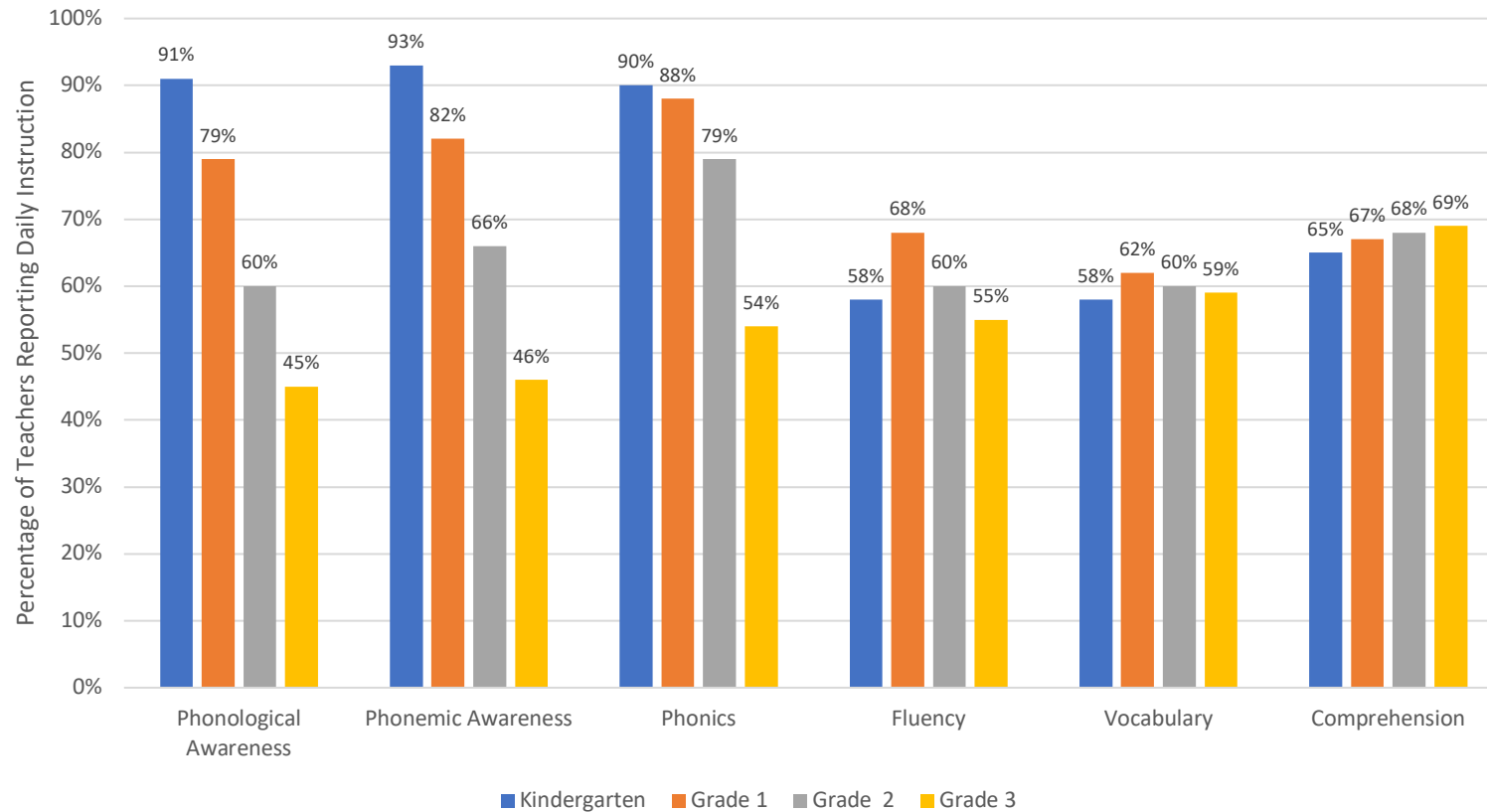




Exhibit 5. Daily Instruction by Science of Reading Component and Grade 2022–2023 School Year





Observations of classroom instruction during site visits confirmed that reading instruction in selected schools was aligned with the science of reading. As shown in Exhibit 6, there were numerous examples of systematic and explicit instruction in each of the five foundational skills during literacy blocks.

New Focus on Science of Reading

ABC Elementary's approach to reading—a new one—was to focus on the science of reading. Teachers reported that using evidence-based materials aligned with the science of reading and seeing how these materials helped students learn to read shifted their focus to the science of reading. As a result, the district was in the process of selecting a new core program on the Advisory List.

Exhibit 6. Examples of Class Instruction Aligned With Science of Reading

Phonics. The teacher displayed a ladder with 10 rungs, with each rung containing a high-frequency word. Students took turns “climbing the ladder” by reading a word. On individual erasable whiteboards, students wrote the words with symbols to show the phonics rule and the syllable split. The teacher used hand signals to help students break down or “chop” words into sounds and syllables. The teacher used these same hand gestures in the kindergarten class. Students worked on rhymes, and the teacher modeled sounds using the hand gestures.

Fluency and Phonics. Students practiced reading words on a list with fluency (read each word in a row, then read the row fast). Then the teacher asked students to get into their small groups for an activity (“odd one out”). The teacher presented four words (e.g., bee, these, seal, tree) and asked students to decide which one did not belong and why. Students worked individually first and then shared their response with their group members to come to a consensus. The teacher asked each group to share their decision. To end the lesson, students worked in pairs to find words in a set of sentences that included the “ee” or “ea” sound and to read the sentences (e.g., I see a peach seed).

Vocabulary. The teacher stated that they would review vocabulary. She told them to turn and talk to a neighbor about a tradition, which was one of the vocabulary words. The teacher called on students to say the vocabulary word's definition in their own words for each word listed on the chart paper.

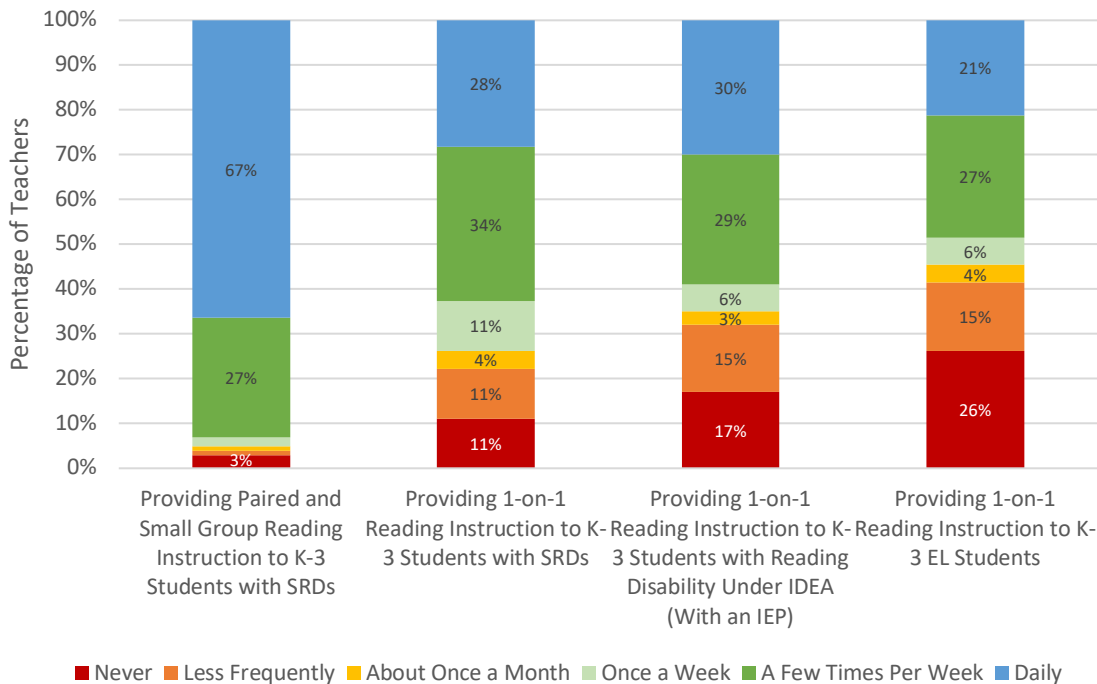
Comprehension and Fluency. Students read a title of a story, “Can We Pat Tim?,” and the teacher asked students what they thought the story would be about. Students read the story out loud to themselves while the teacher listened. The teacher focused on comprehension by asking students questions about the story (e.g. “What is Tim?,” “What do Dot and Ted ask at the end of the story?”). Students answered (e.g., “Tim is a pig”) and practiced vowel sounds with the teacher providing a word and students pronouncing the sound that the vowel made. To end the lesson, students worked on sight word fluency by reading columns of words out loud quickly and accurately.



Reading Instruction Based on Data, Targeting Specific Student Needs in Small Groups

In line with findings from the past 2 years, districts and schools used a data-driven approach to reading focused on intentional grouping and targeted interventions based on student needs. Classroom teachers and coaches were more likely to provide small group instruction for students identified with SRDs under the READ Act when compared with offering other types of reading support such as one-on-one instruction (Exhibit 6). The majority (67%) of teachers reported engaging in daily paired and small group instruction for students identified with SRDs. There was greater variability in the frequency with which teachers provided one-on-one instruction to students identified with SRDs, English learners (ELs), and students with reading disabilities (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7. Frequency of K–3 Reading Activities 2022–2023 School Year



Note. EL = English learner; IDEA = Individuals With Disabilities Education Act; IEP = Individualized Education Program; SRD = significant reading deficiency.



Site visit participants also emphasized the importance of data-driven instruction and targeted interventions based on student needs and frequent monitoring of progress. This included providing quality core instruction for all students and supporting students identified with SRDs with supplemental and intervention programming aligned with specific areas for skill development as specified in their READ Plan.

Data Driven Instruction for Students Identified with SRDs

Teachers at ABC Elementary consistently provided immediate feedback to students on READ Plans. For students on READ Plans and others who struggled with a particular phoneme, an observed phonemic awareness strategy in the kindergarten classroom was students wearing a star around their neck containing a phoneme to practice. This prompted any staff member in the school to stop them and ask them about it, then work with them briefly on that particular phoneme.

Successes Related to Reading Approach

The main successes reported by district administrators and staff at site visit schools were centered on the adoption and implementation of evidence-based instructional materials and the usefulness of the Advisory List, both of which resulted in student engagement and learning. Sixty-one percent of district administrators responding to the inventory reported that instructional materials were successful or very successful in exiting students from SRD status. This was reiterated by staff at site visit schools who emphasized the importance of specific programs on the Advisory List when asked about successes related to their approach to K–3 reading. School staff reported that these evidence-based programs aligned with the science of reading helped students develop foundational skills and led to student engagement, viewed as a key mediator of growth in reading proficiency. The usefulness of the Advisory List was viewed as another success. Site visit participants reported that the Advisory List promoted the adoption of evidence-based programs aligned with the science of reading and that guidance from CDE was helpful for selecting programs and understanding the purpose behind the READ Act. Site visit participants reported that the adoption of these evidence-based programs from the Advisory list



supported the development of foundational skills and fostered student engagement.

Challenges Related to Reading Approach

Challenges were cited with regard to instructional materials, the Advisory List, and supporting learning and adoption of new teaching practices. Several site visit schools reported that their core programs were not sufficient and had to be supplemented. This was exemplified in one school that cited challenges with a core instructional program that did not support seamless generalizability from learning a phonics skill in isolation, then transferring that skill to reading a decodable text at the kindergarten level. Another school indicated that its core program, which was on the Advisory list, was not aligned with state standards, which led to challenges and additional burden to modify the program and/or identify additional resources to meet state standards.

Although some schools reported that the Advisory List was useful and impactful in the adoption of evidence-based materials, they also reported challenges in the lack of inclusion of 4th- and 5th-grade materials, which would foster alignment across elementary schools. In addition, one school suggested that CDE provide a process or guidance for educators on how to select evidence-based materials aligned with the science of reading between the two-year reviews cycles given the constant influx of updated versions of programs and new materials.

Lastly, site visit school staff cited challenges with insufficient training, viewing the adoption of new materials and approaches as a learning zone where new practices conflicted with instructional staff's desire for proficiency and confidence. These conditions were further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and demographic shifts which resulted in more students with reading difficulties and increased challenges engaging families with limited time.



3

Professional Development; Evidence-Based Requirements

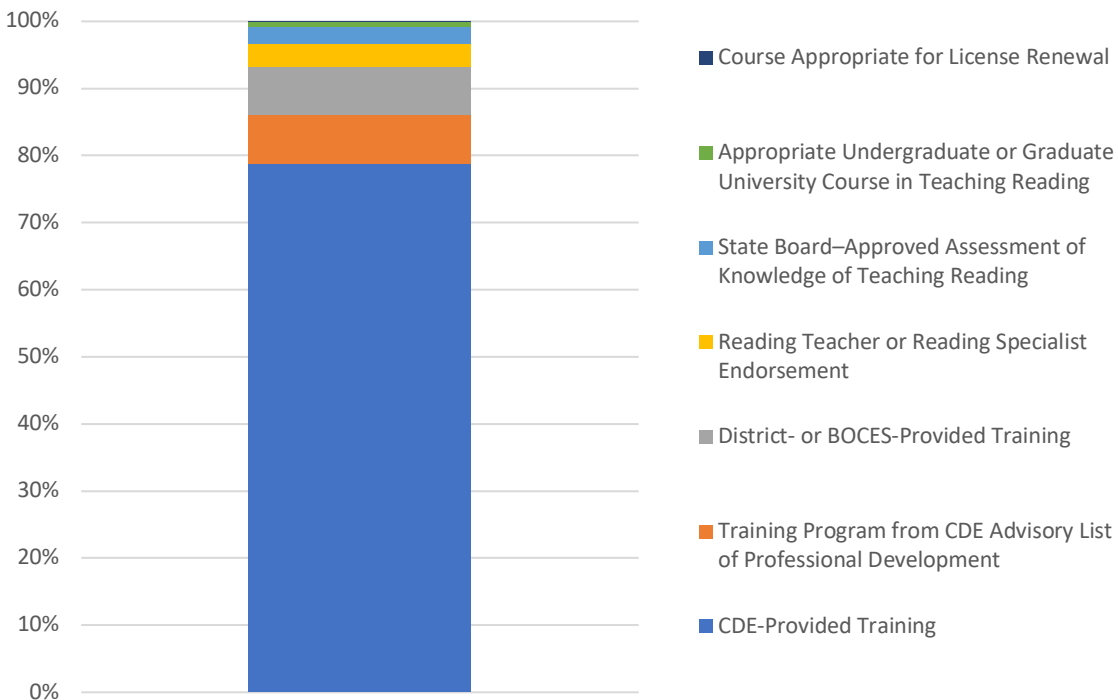
- **Site visit schools reported observing positive impacts on teacher practice resulting from the 45-hour training requirement.**
- **Most schools reported that positive impacts on teacher knowledge, instructional approaches, and ability to support different student needs had also led to increases in student learning.**
- **On the whole, educators found the training to be valuable but expressed frustration at the time commitment required and described challenges related to incorporating what they had learned into lesson planning in a timely fashion.**
- **Ongoing coaching from a literacy specialist and dedicated time to participate in professional learning communities with peers were cited as the most effective structures for supporting implementation of new practices learned in the training.**



Professional Development; Evidence-Based Requirements

Colorado school districts receiving READ Act per-pupil funds were required to ensure that all K–3 teachers had completed 45 hours of evidence-based training in teaching reading by August 1, 2022. As described in the Year 2 report, over 70% of teachers and coaches and 30% of principals responding to the inventory had already completed this training as of April 2022. By May 2023, 13,218 teachers had completed a READ Act-required evidence-based training in teaching reading and had passed the end-of-course assessment.¹¹ Consistent with the trend from the Year 2 report, the majority (79%) did so by completing the CDE-provided training (Exhibit 8). Some schools reported that teachers in 4th and 5th grades, specialists, and interventionists completed the training as well, based on data gathered from site visits.

Exhibit 8. How Teachers Completed 45-Hour Training Requirement



Note. n = 13,218 teachers. BOCES = Boards of Cooperative Educational Services; CDE = Colorado Department of Education.

¹¹ We were unable to calculate the overall percentage of teachers who completed the requirement since CDE was not able to provide an overall number of K-3 teachers who were eligible for the requirement.



Impact of Training Program

Educator role groups showed high rates of perceived usefulness, applicability, and quality of the training program, according to this year's teacher, coach, and principal inventories. Specifically, 85% principals believed the training had been "very useful" or "somewhat useful" for teachers and coaches in their schools, compared with only 13% who found it "a little useful" and 2% who found it "not at all useful." Ninety percent of coaches and 88% of teachers rated the training as "very applicable" or "somewhat applicable" to their coaching and teaching, respectively. Additionally, 93% of coaches and 85% of teachers rated the training as "high quality" or "somewhat high quality."

Site visit schools uniformly reported seeing positive impacts on teacher practice resulting from the training requirement. Perceived impacts showed up in several ways. First, schools reported greater teacher knowledge of evidence-based practices related to the five components of reading. While participants expressed differing views on specific aspects of the program to which they attributed this shift in knowledge, schools in general reported that teacher awareness of evidence-based practices had grown as a result of the training's emphasis on the science of reading. In several instances, schools noted that this overall shift in knowledge had opened up greater dialogue among staff about research-based strategies to teach reading. Consequently, there was a greater sense of cohesion around the schools' approach to reading instruction.

Second, schools reported positive shifts in teachers' instructional approaches. Survey responses indicated that the training had an impact on actual instruction at schools, with 87% of principals and 85% of coaches rating the program as "very impactful" or "somewhat impactful" on instruction. Teachers expressed slightly lower levels of impact than principals and coaches, with 77% rating the program as "very impactful" or "somewhat impactful." Data from site visits supported the notion that instructional approaches had shifted in the selected schools. Participants reported that instruction was now more aligned



Professional Development; Evidence-Based Requirements

with evidence-based practices taught in the trainings. In particular, teachers paid more explicit and systematic attention to teaching phonics and phonemic awareness.

Third, schools reported that teachers were more effective at supporting the needs of different students. Site visit schools noted that teachers had improved their ability to identify student needs, design lessons and differentiate instruction according to those needs, and select materials targeted to meet needs in an engaging manner. A common theme across site visit findings was that teachers felt better equipped to diagnose skill deficits due to their increased awareness of the five reading components and the evidence-based practices for improving students' mastery of them.

While all site visit schools reported some type of impact on teachers, a sizeable number of schools also noted evidence of improved student learning as a result of the training. Eight of 10 sites specifically mentioned observing growth in students' reading abilities in addition to seeing changes to teachers' instructional practice. For example, three schools reported increases in the number of students meeting growth or proficiency targets for the year, a development they attributed to changes in instruction these students experienced from their teachers who completed the training. Other schools noted improvements in specific skills, such as students' ability to break down words. Two schools indicated that the trainings benefited lower-performing students especially, who saw improvements in their learning due to their teachers targeting instruction more effectively to meet their needs. Students in early grades appeared to benefit as well because teachers were more adept at explicit instruction in phonics and teaching students how to manipulate letter-sound relationships. For example, one school observed that more kindergartners were prepared for 1st grade than in previous years due to a more explicit instructional focus on foundational skills in phonics.



Supports for Teacher Training

Data collected from site visits indicated that most schools supplemented the required training with additional professional development and ongoing peer learning supports.

A common support strategy was the use of professional learning communities. Six of 10 schools cited dedicated time for professional learning communities as important structures for enhancing teacher collaboration and cementing understanding around science of reading strategies. Topics covered in these professional learning communities included examining student data to inform reading instruction and continued study of the science of reading, for example through a staff book study. In some instances, the increased focus on science of reading was folded into existing professional learning community structures (e.g., in regular grade-level staff meetings), while in other instances new peer learning opportunities were created to accommodate the ongoing training needs of teachers. For example, in one school, administrators set aside time for a monthly professional learning community led by a literacy specialist to provide additional coaching support to teachers.

Whether part of a formal professional learning community or not, most (7 of 10) schools described using a literacy coach, interventionist, or similar role to help staff implement practices learned in the training and provide additional instructional support to students. In some instances, this individual was based at the school, while in others they were based at the district and shared by multiple sites. Coaches reported delivering a variety of supports, according to educator survey results. Most coaches (60%) provided small group instruction to students identified with SRDs on a daily basis; to a lesser extent, they also provided one-

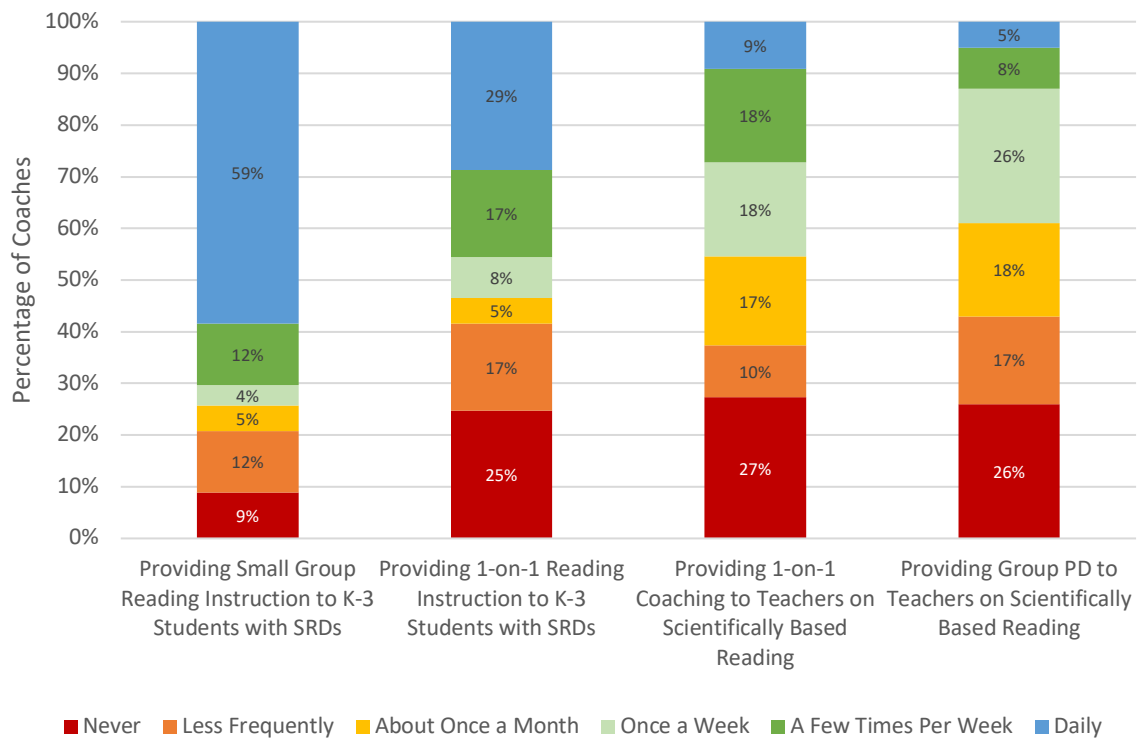
Diverse Forms of Support

Educators at ABC Elementary reported receiving diverse forms of support, ranging from additional training and materials support (e.g., supplementary Orton-Gillingham training for school staff) to administrator support for class coverage, so that teachers could observe each other implementing practices learned in the training.



one-one instruction to students with SRDs (Exhibit 9). About one quarter (26%) of coaches reported providing group professional development to teachers on scientifically based reading at a frequency of once per week; 18% reported doing so once per month, while an additional 13% did so at least a few times per week.

Exhibit 9. Frequency of K–3 Coaching Activities 2022–2023 School Year



Note. PD = professional development; SRD = significant reading deficiency.

Successes and Challenges Related to Training Requirement

Consistent with findings from the Year 2 report, the training program was broadly perceived to be valuable and instructive, but difficult to complete due to the amount of time it required and due to other competing demands on teachers' time. Most schools reported that it took teachers longer than 45 hours to complete the training requirement and often necessitated time outside of school hours, despite the release time they were given to do it. Relatedly, schools reported some difficulty in implementing new learnings from the trainings and



effectively incorporating them into planning in a timely fashion, given the volume of training required and the shift in some teachers' mindsets that it required. With the exception of one school, the demanding nature of the training did not appear to dampen educators' appreciation of the new teaching strategies they gained through participation.

One school noted it would have been helpful to require all teachers in 4th and 5th grades, administrators, and paraprofessionals to take the training too, preferably at the same time as the rest of the school staff, to promote more cohesive understanding of instructional expectations schoolwide. Other schools noted the benefit of teachers going through the training at the same time, as it gave them an opportunity to support each other and promoted collaboration within the school, especially if the administration provided dedicated time for a professional learning community or similar structure to support continued professional learning. The CDE training, in particular, provided a "common language" around the science of reading that helped school teams achieve consistent understanding of instructional expectations. It also facilitated dialogue within the school about approaches to reading, encouraging a collaborative culture to flourish. Providing coaches with the opportunity to collaborate with each other was also cited as a successful support structure. According to one school, literacy interventionists participated in a monthly district meeting to network with interventionists at other schools, share best practices, review their data, and craft goals.

As noted above, the most immediate impacts observed were related to teachers' knowledge and instructional practice. However, some schools reported early signs that these shifts translated into increases in student learning as well. This pattern is not surprising in the context of adopting a whole-school instructional reform such as the science of reading approach. Typically, shifts in student learning are first preceded by shifts in teacher practice, which in turn often require shifts in teacher knowledge, beliefs, and mindsets. In this sense,



the findings related to professional development are consistent with expected patterns.

ABC Elementary's Experience with the Evidence-Based Training Requirement

Opting for a whole-school approach to the training, all licensed K–5 instructional and paraprofessional staff completed the CDE course and had the opportunity to participate in monthly meetings to discuss the coursework. Staff described observing multiple benefits to this approach. Going through the training together allowed staff to develop a common language and understanding of effective approaches to teaching reading. Teachers were able to apply specific instructional strategies learned in the trainings within a schoolwide community of support. The school in turn reported observing strong evidence of student growth in specific reading skills as teachers learned to target instruction more effectively to their needs. The school also reported greater clarity around the alignment of CDE and district expectations related to reading instruction as a result of taking the CDE course. Most notably, school administration provided ongoing support structures to ensure that new teacher knowledge could be sustained and continually developed throughout the year. Professional learning communities provided collaborative time for staff to reflect on their practice, and administrators provided opportunities for teachers to take supplementary training if needed. Staff also participated in a book study.

ABC Elementary's experience was not without its challenges: educators reported that the CDE course was very time-consuming, and the training modules varied somewhat in their quality. There was a recognition that more work needed to be done to help students achieve higher levels of proficiency in skills like comprehension, despite the strong growth observed in components such as phonics, phonemic awareness, and fluency. However, ABC Elementary's experience demonstrates how a coordinated, whole-school approach to the training—reinforced by ongoing peer-to-peer support structures integrated throughout the school year—can result in meaningful changes in educators' knowledge and instructional practice.



4

Identifying and Supporting Students With Significant Reading Deficiencies

- District administrators reported that state guidance was clear for serving general education students under the READ Act.
- District administrators had less clarity about clarity about supporting students with IEPs and English Learners. In particular, exiting those students from SRD status, identifying which of their plans should act as primary guidance, and understanding how to support students with multiple identifications. A sizeable minority of teachers also reporting feeling unprepared to support students with IEPs under the READ Act.
- READ Act interim and diagnostic assessments were important for informing READ Plan development and instructional strategies



Process of SRD Identification

The vast majority of all parties responding to the inventories (more than 85% of principals, coaches, teachers, and district administrators) and 7 of 10 site visit schools reported using a body of evidence approach to identify students with SRDs. Interim assessments, curriculum-based measures, student’s classroom work (assignments, worksheets etc.), and to a lesser extent informal assessments informed their body of evidence (Exhibit 10). Nearly all respondents reported using interim assessments as part of the body of evidence approach, which is supported by data showing that 99.5% of student SRD designations align with vendor-assigned cut scores for SRD designation.¹²

Using a Body of Evidence Approach

ABC Elementary provided staff with steps for SRD identification. First, staff tested students using Acadience Reading at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. Next, staff discussed students receiving a qualifying score at the grade-level professional learning community. Teachers considered a body of evidence to determine whether the student qualified. The body of evidence consisted of teacher observation, data collected from common grade-level unit assessments from SuperKids, and common assessments created by teachers to assess skills along the continuum such as letter identification, rhyming, deletion, substitution, and blending words. Additional items in the body of evidence included observations made by the literacy team, a review of students’ documentation from previous grades or schools, and communication with families and/or staff who worked with students previously. Finally, staff decided whether students needed more opportunity to learn before making a determination; or staff ensured the body of evidence showed a pattern of below-grade-level reading warranting SRD determination.

Exhibit 10. Body of Evidence for Identification of SRDs by Role

Role	Interim Assessments	Classroom Work	Curriculum-Based Measures	Informal Assessments
Coach	98%	80%	87%	71%
Teacher	93%	80%	82%	72%
Principal	95%	77%	82%	75%

Note. SRD = significant reading deficiency.

¹² Observations corresponding to Indicadores Dinámicos del Éxito en la Lectura (IDEL) and Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening in Spanish (PALS Español), and interim assessments that are not currently approved by Colorado, do not have an SRD classification (in the dataset used for the evaluation) that is defined solely by the cut scores on the interim assessment.

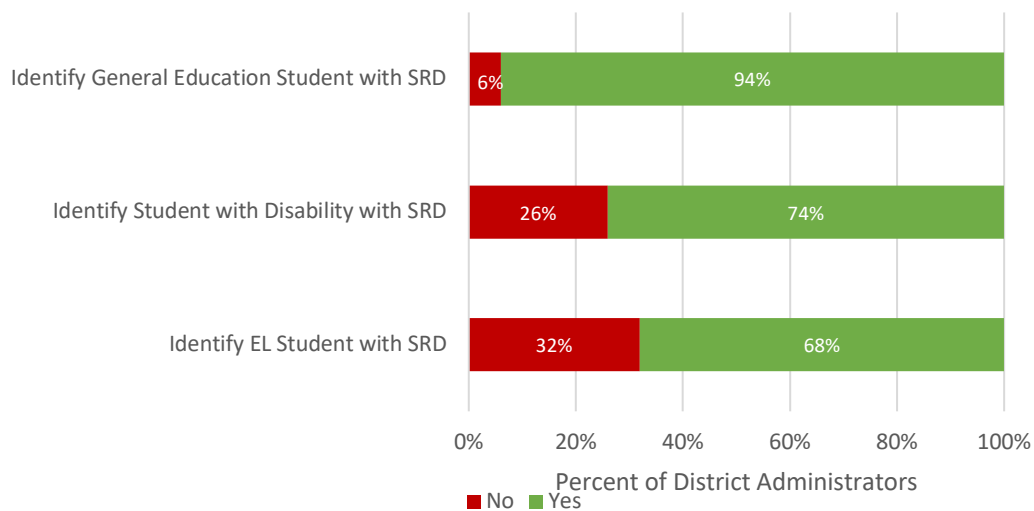


Training and Support for READ Plan Development and Implementation

State and District Guidance

District administrators reported that state guidance was clear for serving general education students under the READ Act, in particular for identifying students with SRDs (94% agreement) and developing READ Plans to support them (86% agreement) (Exhibit 11). Teachers were slightly less confident in their ability to identify students with SRDs (70% were confident) and develop READ Plans (67% were confident). While these confidence levels are relatively high, the gap between district administrators' and teachers' confidence in their SRD identification may reflect on district guidance that communicates state guidance and district policies to teachers. All ten of the schools that participated in site visits relied on district guidance and support for identifying and supporting students with SRDs including templates, training, and district level staff who supported teachers as they developed and implemented READ Plans.

Exhibit 11. Districts' Perceptions on State Guidance for Identification of SRDs



Note. EL = English learner; SRD = significant reading deficiency.



District administrators reported less clarity about supporting non-general education students under the READ Act, specifically students with disabilities and ELs. In particular, exiting students with disabilities and ELs from SRD status, identifying which of their plans (READ Plan, IEP, etc.) should act as primary guidance, and understanding how to support students with multiple identifications (SRD and EL, etc.) were areas of confusion. Only 36% of districts reported having specific district policies with respect to developing, implementing, and monitoring plans for students with multiple identifications. Additionally, 31% of coaches and 29% of teachers indicated that IEPs and READ Plans were stand-alone documents, with only 13% of coaches and 25% of teachers indicating that they were fully integrated into a cohesive document. However, 70% of teachers indicated that they were confident or very confident supporting students with multiple identifications.

READ Plan Development and Implementation

The majority (54%) of districts reported that schools in their district were responsible for collecting and reviewing their own READ Plans and monitoring the fidelity of implementation (55% of districts). Only 23% of districts indicated that the district reviewed all READ Plans. Thirty percent of districts reported monitoring fidelity, and 20% said that they sample READ Plans for fidelity of implementation. Fifty-two percent of principals reported being involved with READ Plan development and implementation most or all of the time, and 47% reported monitoring READ Plan implementation most or all of the time.

Coaches' role in READ Plan activities varied significantly from district to district. Teachers were the most likely to always be involved in READ Plan activities including communicating with parents (63% always); exiting students from READ Plans (34% always); reviewing (54% always), developing (53% always), and tracking progress on READ Plans (51% always); and conducting interim assessments (49% always). The majority of coaches and teachers indicated that they collaborated throughout the school year to discuss student



READ Plans, and the majority of coaches (63%) and teachers (68%) reported collaborating with teachers as students transitioned to the next grade.

Supporting Students Beyond 3rd Grade

The number of students in grades four or higher who maintain READ Plans has grown every year from the start of READ Plan data collection, ranging from about 27,000 students to nearly 50,000 students per year.¹³ In 2021–2022 school year, 8% of 4th–12th-grade students had a READ Plan. The majority these students are in elementary and middle school grades (see Exhibit 12). Fewer than 25% of post-3rd-grade students maintaining a READ Plan in any given year are in high school (9th–12th grades).

Exhibit 12. Percentage of post 3rd grade students with READ Plans by year

	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2020–2021	2021–2022
Grade 4	15.3%	17.3%	19.5%	5.7% ^a	22.4%
Grade 5	11.8%	12.6%	15.4%	16.6%	3.1% ^a
Grade 6	7.8%	9.4%	10.8%	14.2%	12.9%
Grade 7	4.9%	6.5%	8.2%	11.4%	11.8%
Grade 8	0.0%	4.4%	5.9%	8.4%	9.8%
Grade 9	0.0%	0.0%	3.3%	6.2%	6.7%
Grade 10	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	4.1%	4.5%
Grade 11	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.5%	3.2%
Grade 12	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%

^a Due to the pandemic, sample sizes for these grade levels are much smaller than in previous years.

Note: These data are reported from 2016–2017 onwards due to CDE data collection cadence and data quality issues in the earliest years of collection.

Notably, the majority of students maintaining READ Plans post 3rd grade are Hispanic (between 56.6% and 58.1% of the dataset per year). In general,

¹³ Although SRD status and READ Plan statuses are not the same, CDE has indicated that for students post-third grade, their READ Plan status is a more reliable indicator of receiving reading supports than their reported SRD status.



non-White students are disproportionately represented among students post-3rd grade who maintain READ Plans (see Exhibit 12).

Exhibit 13. Post-3rd Grade READ Plan by Race and Year

Race	Group	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2020–2021	2021–2022
AI/AN	Enrollment	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.7%	0.6%
	Active READ Plan	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%	0.9%	0.9%
Asian	Enrollment	3.1%	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%	3.2%
	Active READ Plan	2.0%	2.1%	2.0%	2.2%	2.1%
Black	Enrollment	4.6%	4.6%	4.5%	4.5%	4.5%
	Active READ Plan	6.2%	6.9%	7.0%	7.7%	7.1%
Hawaiian/PI	Enrollment	0.2%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%
	Active READ Plan	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%
Hispanic	Enrollment	33.5%	33.7%	33.6%	34.2%	34.5%
	Active READ Plan	56.6%	56.7%	56.8%	58.1%	57.5%
Two or More Races	Enrollment	4.0%	4.2%	4.4%	4.6%	5.0%
	Active READ Plan	2.9%	2.9%	3.0%	3.0%	3.3%
White	Enrollment	53.8%	53.4%	53.4%	52.5%	51.9%
	Active READ Plan	31.1%	30.2%	30.0%	27.5%	28.6%

More students in upper grades move off of READ Plan status each year than in K–3 and far fewer are newly given a READ Plan. Between about 6-10% of students in the dataset have their READ Plan removed year to year and no more than 1% are newly given a READ Plan. This trend is similar across student identity groups.

Inform Instructional Decisions

READ Act interim, diagnostic, and summative tests were very important for informing K–3 instructional strategies (Exhibit 14) according to principals and coaches. READ Plans as well as assessments in addition to READ Act interim, diagnostic, and summative assessments were also indicated to be important sources of information for informing K–3 reading strategies, but by a lower proportion of coaches and principals. In contrast, only 32% of teachers indicated



that READ Act interim assessment data were used to inform their reading instruction. However, 79% of teachers reported that non-READ Act assessment data and READ Plans were used to inform reading instruction, in line with what coaches and principals reported.

Exhibit 14. Percentage of Respondents Indicating Source is Important in Informing K-3 Reading Strategy

Source	Principals	Coaches
READ Act Interim Test	66%	63%
Diagnostic and Summative Tests	74%	69%
Non-READ Act Test	51%	56%
READ Plan	41%	49%

Note. READ = Reading to Ensure Academic Development.

About half of principals reported that staff in their schools used READ Plans for instructional decisions most or all of the time (47%). Both teachers and coaches varied in how much impact they felt READ Plans had on day-to-day instructional decisions, with 38% of coaches and 28% of teacher indicating that READ Plans had strong influence on work in small groups and one-on-one work with students.

There was a disconnect between the guidance districts provided and the guidance that school staff members believed they needed to make informed decisions about exiting students

from READ Plans and SRD status. A notable proportion of principals, teachers, and coaches still believed that district guidance on how to exit students from SRD status was completely or somewhat unclear (Exhibit 15). Seventy-six percent of districts reported providing written guidance regarding exiting students from READ Plans.

Using interim assessments and READ Plans to inform instruction

Teachers at ABC Elementary accessed the “Early Warning System” in the Infinite Campus student information system to view PALS assessment scores and see which benchmarks a student did not meet. The teacher then selected a skill area and an intervention, from a set of interventions, to add to the student’s READ Plan.

Typically, teachers selected one skill area at a time, unless the identified skill could be addressed better together with another skill in which the student scored low.



Exhibit 15. Percentage of Respondents Indicating School or District Guidance Was Completely or Somewhat Unclear by Role

Role	School	District
Principals	n/a	31%
Teachers	33%	34%
Coaches	29%	29%

As with entering students into SRD status, a body of evidence approach was most often used to exit students from SRD status as well. To exit students from SRD status, districts often required the use of interim assessment scores (74% of district administrators), diagnostic assessment scores (59%), and determination of the extent to which students met READ Plan goals (52%). In addition, approximately 70% of district administrators recommended including student work and formative classroom information. There was more variability in incorporating parent input into exit decisions—20% required parental input, 52% recommended it, and 24% did not recommend it. District reports aligned with teachers' and coaches' input, who reported using diagnostic and summative assessments all the time to exit students from SRD status (58% coach; 49% teachers), determination of the extent to which students met goals in their READ Plan (43% coach; 40% teachers), then interim assessments (48% coach; 39% teacher) and other reading assessments (41% coach; 30% teacher). They reported similar variability in incorporating parental input.

According to principals, coaches, and teachers, exiting students from and reentering them in READ Plans was infrequent. Almost 70% of principals and coaches reported that students infrequently or never exit and then reenter a READ Plan. Teachers were more likely, however, to report higher rates of exiting and reentering READ Plans, with only 55% of teachers reporting that students infrequently or never exit and then reenter a READ Plan.



Parental and Family Involvement

District and school employees reported high levels of variability in the extent to which parents were involved in SRD determination and implementation (Exhibit 16). According to coaches and teachers, parents were most likely to be involved in implementing READ Plan activities at home and least likely to be involved in progress monitoring.

Exhibit 16. Percentage of Respondents Reporting Parental Involvement

Amount of Time	Role	Identifying SRD	Developing READ Plans	Implementing READ Plan Activities at Home	Progress Monitoring
All or most of the time	Coach	25%	33%	43%	13%
	Teacher	36%	25%	50%	13%
Rarely or never	Coach	51%	45%	16%	73%
	Teacher	38%	59%	17%	63%

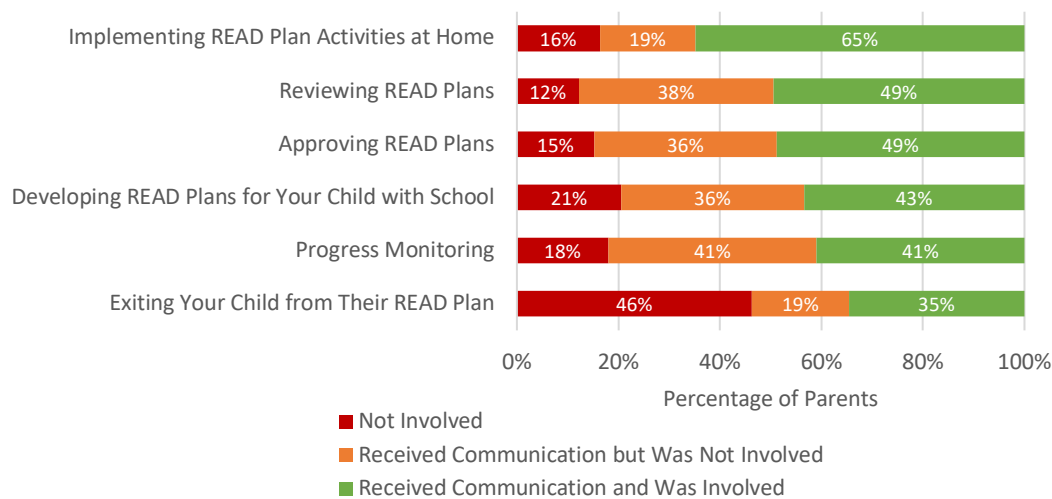
Note. READ = Reading to Ensure Academic Development.

Parents were most likely to report involvement with implementing READ Act activities at home (65%) with a smaller percentage (43-49%) reporting involvement in developing, reviewing and approving READ Plans (Exhibit 17). The majority of parents (71%) report that their school has supported them in implementing READ Act activities at home and feeling comfortable implementing those activities (75%). Parents were least likely to receive communication or be involved with exiting their child from their READ Plan (46% not involved). Sixty-one percent of parents reported that their child’s reading skills improved or improved greatly as a result of their READ Plan.

Family and Community Involvement with the READ Act
 ABC Elementary found success in support from and collaboration with the community. Teachers held family connection meetings at the beginning of the year, in addition to hosting family learning nights to share data and strategies for supporting reading at home.



Exhibit 17. Parent reports of involvement by READ Act Activity



Note. READ = Reading to Ensure Academic Development. N varied by number of responses to a particular item between 136 and 175.

Successes and Challenges Identifying and Supporting Students with SRDs

Four of the ten site visit schools reported that using a body of evidence was helpful for designating students as having an SRD and pinpointing specific literacy learning challenges to personalize READ Plans. Several (4) schools also emphasized the success of district guidance and support for identifying and supporting students with SRDs as well as alignment across grade levels which promoted collaboration and consistency. Additional areas of success site by schools included continuous progress monitoring and opportunities to identify and celebrate student growth.

Following trends identified in the first two years of the evaluation, district administrators, teachers, and coaches reported challenges serving ELs and students with IEPs under the READ Act. In particular, exiting those students from SRD status, identifying which of their plans (READ Plan, IEP, etc.) should act as primary guidance, and understanding how to support students with multiple identifications (SRD and EL, etc.) were areas of confusion. A sizeable minority of teachers (29%) also reported feeling unprepared to support students with IEPs



under the READ Act. In addition, site visit school staff identified challenges connecting to families and providing clear supports for supporting their students' growth. Several schools (3) also cited staffing challenges as a clear impediment to successful READ Act implementation, reporting that there weren't sufficient teachers and support staff to support intervention support.

Challenges with Exiting Students

CDE guidance for exiting students from READ Plans states that students stayed on a READ Plan until they demonstrated reading competency. ABC Elementary reported that it would benefit from better guidance from CDE on procedures for exiting students from READ Plans.

ABC Elementary had concerns about developing and implementing READ Plans for ELs and exiting them from READ Plans until CDE issued guidance addressing these issues in November 2022. ABC Elementary believed if this guidance were offered sooner, it would have helped alleviate their concerns.



5

Early Literacy Grant

- Overall, school and district leaders in the site visits gave consistently strong, positive support for ELGs. These leaders indicated the grants led directly to improved K–3 teacher instructional practices and improved student performance on literacy assessments.
- Bringing in an external literacy expert on a monthly basis to work with teachers was typically identified by school and district leaders as the single most impactful element of ELG-funded activities.
- Challenges identified with regard to ELGs included finding a consultant whose instructional and curricular philosophies matched those of the district or school and teacher turnover and the resulting loss of institutional knowledge that was gained through ELG activities.



Overall, school and district leaders in the site visits gave consistently strong, positive support for ELGs. These leaders indicated that the grants led directly to improved K–3 teacher instructional practices and improved student performance on literacy assessments. Notably, as discussed in more detail below, many school and district leaders reported that positive turnarounds in student achievement happened rapidly—sometimes within a single year after full implementation of ELG activities.

The ELG Application Process

Site visit interviews included questions designed to gather information directly from school and district leaders about their experiences applying for ELGs. These questions are important not only to inform CDE and state policymakers about the application process but also to provide insight into whether the existing process might encourage or hinder future districts from applying for grants and whether districts that have been through the process have any lessons learned that could be shared with future school and district leaders.

In general, the ELG application process was reported to be time-consuming and onerous, with district leaders referring to this process as “extensive,” “lengthy,” and “challenging” to complete. Site visit participants from some smaller districts described the ELG application process as “overwhelming.” Participants indicated that having a liaison or contact person readily available at CDE to answer application questions would have been helpful. Some participants also commented that they benefited from having access to an experienced, external literacy consultant who could guide them through the application

Challenges with ELG Application Process

Site visit participants described the ELG application process as “extensive,” “lengthy,” “challenging,” and in some cases, “overwhelming.”



writing process and that providing more districts with the opportunity to access such external expertise to inform the application process would be of great benefit.

Participants also suggested that many small, rural districts simply did not have the staff available to take on the challenge of completing an onerous application process, and that this process could be streamlined to encourage more small districts to participate. Districts that had dedicated grant application managers on staff appeared to fare much better in handling the application process and in some cases were able to draw on prior successes applying for ELGs to reapply in later years for different schools in their districts.

With regard to the process for accessing ELG funds once grants were awarded, input from the 11 site visit districts was much more positive. CDE's structure for disbursing ELG funds was regarded as streamlined and well organized. The process benefitted from being handled electronically, with reimbursement requests filed online and funds received electronically straight into district accounts. Site visit participants also shared their appreciation that CDE allowed them to carry over unused ELG funds to the following school year if needed.



How ELG Funds Were Deployed

Site visits explored how grantees used ELG funds. The most common use of funds included the following:

- Hiring an **external literacy consultant** to visit ELG school sites on a monthly basis to support and coach K–3 teachers.
- Hiring **additional school-level staff** to support K–3 literacy activities. Such additional staff typically included
 - full-time reading coaches (either district based, or school based) who came into ELG schools to directly coach teachers on literacy instruction; and
 - full- or part-time reading interventionists or reading tutors to support teachers and work directly with students.
- Purchasing **new core reading curricula** for K–3 classrooms as well as consumable materials designed to support implementation of the new core curriculum.
- Purchasing **supplemental literacy materials and intervention programs** for K–3 such as Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words (SIPPS) and Heggerty, a resource to teach phonemic awareness, to ensure a systemic approach to reading instruction.

Most Commonly Reported Uses of ELG Funds

1. Hiring **external literacy consultants**
2. Hiring **additional staff** in schools such as literacy coaches
3. Purchasing new core K–3 **reading curricula**
4. Purchasing new **supplemental literacy materials** and intervention programs

Elements of the four items above appeared in all ELG sites visited by the evaluation team. Some districts reported additional uses of funds, including the following:

- Use of ELG professional development funds to provide **LETRS training** to teachers on the science of teaching reading. Funds were used not only to help provide the training but also to provide stipends to teachers, which was viewed as an important investment to recognize teacher time needed to complete the training.



- Providing **professional development** for K–3 teachers to implement newly purchased core reading curricula or supplemental literacy materials.
- Purchasing **other literacy materials** designed to support instruction in the classroom or for parents to work with their children at home.

Districts reported that core curriculum purchases using ELG funds were guided by the state’s Advisory List of Instructional Programming. Districts relied on this list to ensure new curriculum purchases were research-based and approved by the state.

Successes and Challenges With ELG Implementation

The 11 ELG site visits conducted by the evaluation team included a significant focus on exploring with school and district leaders the challenges and successes experienced during their ELG participation. Following is a summary of these successes and challenges followed by a brief set of recommendations and lessons learned for CDE and state policymakers to consider.

Benefits of External Literacy Consultants

Bringing in an external literacy expert on a monthly basis to work with teachers was typically identified as the single most impactful element of ELG-funded activities.

Successes Associated With ELGs

Bringing in an external literacy expert on a monthly basis to work with teachers was typically identified by school and district leaders as the single most impactful element of ELG-funded activities.

Such external experts were highly valued because they brought fresh perspectives and a high degree of credibility into schools. They also directly coached teachers, observed and modeled instruction, and could leverage extensive outside knowledge to help schools improve instruction. These outside consultants were routinely identified as the driving force behind needed changes to instructional practices and subsequent successes in raising student reading performance.



Another theme that emerged consistently across site visits was the high value and positive impact associated with using ELG funds to pay for reading coaches and interventionists to work in schools. Site visit participants reported that having these personnel regularly in schools served a crucial role in reinforcing on a day-to-day basis the messages received during monthly visits from their external literacy consultants. These monthly visits, while crucial, needed more continual daily and weekly support that could only be provided by having personnel such as reading coaches in schools regularly, and site visit participants indicated that ELG funding made hiring these staff members possible.

Impact of ELG

Schools reported that ELGs produced rapid, positive changes in student reading performance, sometimes in a single year, that would not have happened otherwise.

School and district leaders reported that ELG funding produced direct, positive changes in student reading performance that would not have happened without the grants. These leaders often stated that student performance improvements happened very rapidly, even after just 1 year of ELG implementation.

In one district, for instance, leaders indicated that their school struggled consistently with low student reading performance but that after receiving an ELG and cultivating high staff buy-in to ELG-funded activities, the school saw rapid performance gains and was awarded the Colorado Governor's award for being a top school in the state for student literacy growth. School and district staff attributed this success directly to the work accomplished with ELG funding.

In another district, leaders reported their student reading performance was among the lowest 5% nationwide. A key goal for the school was to raise achievement rapidly so that nearly 50% of K–3 students performed at or above grade level. The school met and exceeded this goal quickly during its ELG, with close to 60% of K–3 students reading at or above grade level by the end of the grant. School staff attributed these rapid gains directly to ELG participation.



Yet another district shared that prior to receiving the ELG, the district was nearing turnaround status with the State of Colorado due to low student performance. Leaders shared that implementation of their ELG had a direct impact on improving this performance. In fact, during a 4-year period in which their ELG was implemented, leaders stated that student performance rose rapidly, and the district was recognized as a Colorado district of distinction.

Rapid improvements in student achievement and in K–3 instructional practices were often facilitated by school and district efforts to generate *high staff buy-in* to ELG activities. Actions taken to help promote such buy-in are discussed below in the “Recommendations and Lessons Learned” section.

Impacts of ELG Professional Development Funds

Districts that invested ELG professional development funds into providing LETRS training reported positive impacts on K–3 literacy instruction.

Districts that invested ELG professional development funds into providing their teachers the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) training also reported significant positive impacts on K–3 literacy instruction. In particular, LETRS was reported to provide staff with in-depth knowledge of the science of teaching reading. Leaders recommended that all staff in the school complete this training, including K–5 educators, paraeducators, and school leaders. The provision of stipends for staff to complete the training was viewed as critical because it demonstrated that educators’ time was valued and that the training should be taken seriously.

Other examples of ELG successes cited by school and district leaders included the following:

- Improved **teacher collaboration** across classrooms and grade levels. The enhanced teacher collaboration that ELGs produced also resulted for some schools in a new emphasis on common planning



time for teachers, with schools modifying their daily schedules to ensure common planning time was protected.

- Increased **teacher proficiency in using data** to inform instruction. ELGs helped teachers learn to identify students with low reading performance and to monitor these students to ensure they saw a year's worth of growth every school year.
- Improved educator effectiveness **placing students into small, targeted groups** for literacy instruction.
- Enhanced **teacher attitudes and beliefs** around the value of using literacy assessment data to inform instruction.
- Improved ability of teachers to **develop appropriate interventions** for students with the highest literacy learning challenges. Schools reported that this enhanced capacity led directly to increased student literacy assessment scores.

Challenges Associated With ELGs

Site visit participants uniformly indicated that the investment of ELG funds into bringing in an external literacy consultant to support teachers was one of the most impactful aspects of their ELG grant experience and that these external consultants sparked innovation and effective changes in K–3 literacy instructional practices. However, finding a consultant with the right fit was critical, and participants described certain challenges that arose. First, in some cases, districts or schools faced challenges in terms of finding an external consultant whose instructional and curricular philosophies lined up with those of the district or school. If such alignment was not present, friction or confusion with educators resulted, along with the perception of “mixed messages” being sent by the district and external consultant. Second, some schools and districts lost valuable time at the beginning of their ELGs when the consultant work was not aligned well with school or district philosophies, and districts were unclear if they were allowed to replace the consultants and what the process would be with CDE to execute such a replacement. Third, in a few cases, site visit participants



indicated that, even when there was a strong fit with an external consultant, over a period of years teachers experienced “consultant fatigue.” It could be beneficial to bring in a fresh consultant when this occurs. Ideas to address these challenges surfaced during site visit discussions. These ideas are discussed in the “Recommendations and Lessons Learned” section below.

Another challenge to successful ELG implementation that was identified was the need to overcome some veteran teachers’ resistance to a

Importance of Educator Buy-In

Site visit participants often stressed the need to involve teachers in the decision-making process and to take steps to help generate strong educator buy-in prior to, and during, the ELG application and implementation process.

new literacy curriculum, coaching style, or core instructional philosophy. Site visit participants often stressed the need to involve teachers in the decision-making process and to take steps to help generate strong educator buy-in prior to, and during the ELG application and implementation

process. Ideas to help generate such buy-in are also presented in the “Recommendations and Lessons Learned” section below.

The greatest threat to sustainability of the ELG impacts that school staff identified was teacher turnover and the resulting loss of institutional knowledge that was gained through ELG activities. A lack of ongoing grant funding could exacerbate impacts of staff turnover when such funding ends and schools or districts eliminate components of the ELG program. Most critical is the need to find continued funding to support dedicated literacy coaches that could work regularly with teachers in schools to maintain an ongoing focus on literacy and on activities and training that began under ELGs.

Two additional challenges were cited by some site visit participants. First, it became difficult for some schools to pull teachers out of the classroom as a group for professional development due to current substitute teacher shortages. These shortages meant schools had to be extremely creative in providing professional development, such as



developing asynchronous professional development opportunities or providing stipends to encourage teachers to complete such professional development outside of the regular school day.

Second, some site visit participants reported that it was a challenge when materials that were at one time listed on the Advisory Lists of Professional Development and Instructional Programming were removed. Districts reported using ELG funds and significant internal resources to purchase new instructional programs as well as major investments of resources and staff time to complete training needed to implement these programs, only to find in later years that the programs were no longer approved. This represented an enormous lost investment that districts indicated was both not easy to recoup and that could demoralize staff who invested efforts into learning new materials.

Recommendations and Lessons Learned

Based on the input discussed above that was received through the 11 site visits, the following recommendations and lessons learned were identified by the evaluation team:

1. Most site visit participants indicated that the work of ELG-funded external literacy consultants was the single most impactful element of their grants. Use of these consultants should therefore continue to be an integral component of ELGs awarded in the future. In some cases, site visit participants reported that valuable time was lost during the grant due to a lack of clear alignment between the district's instructional, curricular, and assessment philosophy and the external literacy consultant's coaching philosophy. Potential actions which could help address these challenges include the following:
 - a. CDE could make more information available regarding consultant backgrounds, experience, and philosophies to enhance district ability to determine the degree of alignment prior to selecting a consultant.
 - b. CDE could make clear in advance that schools may change external literacy consultants at any time.



- c. CDE could provide clear guidance on how to expediently replace external literacy consultants if needed when the fit is not right and could make staff available to support schools in changing external literacy consultants when needed, including communicating with and matching new consultants to districts.
 2. A key lesson learned across many of the site visits was **the importance of cultivating strong buy-in from teachers** and other staff prior to applying for ELGs and during key steps of ELG implementation. Future districts could and should learn from these experiences, and CDE could support this by sharing these lessons learned with future ELG applicants. For instance, districts experienced greater success with ELG implementation by doing the following:
 - a. Bringing school leaders and teacher leaders into meetings early in the ELG application process to gather their input and feedback on the grant's design.
 - b. Putting a process in place for vetting external literacy consultants with teachers prior to the start of their work in the school. Ideally this vetting should take place after the ELG award, rather than naming a consultant in the grant application. Teachers in particular should have a chance to meet with consultants and be comfortable with their fit in the school.
 - c. Providing information to teachers and instructional leaders in advance of ELG applications regarding new core reading curriculum options or new supplemental reading interventions and allowing educators to vote on their preferred options.
 - d. Emphasizing creation of a consistent message and approach to ELG implementation and literacy instruction across classrooms and grade levels.
 3. The single greatest threat identified to the lasting success of ELGs was a lack of **sustainability** over time due to staff turnover. Such turnover could mean that gains made towards building staff instructional capacity during the grants could be lost as teachers and leaders leave schools. Schools and districts identified several



options to combat threats to ELG's sustainability caused by teacher and principal turnover, including the following:

- a. Additional periodic grant funds could be provided to support ongoing visits from an external literacy consultant to schools that have successfully completed their ELGs. Such funding would be in addition to current ELG sustainability grants but provided at lower amounts. Consultant visits could take place at a greatly reduced frequency but would help maintain the momentum created during the grant period and ensure continuity through inevitable staff turnover.
 - b. Schools and districts could provide stipends or other compensation for teachers who participated in an ELG to enable them to serve as mentors to new teachers who were not at the school during the ELG. In this way, the progress made during ELGs could be passed along to successive teachers.
 - c. Continued funding of dedicated literacy coach positions that were funded through ELGs was identified as an effective strategy for sustaining practices beyond the life of the grant. These coaches played a valuable role in onboarding new teachers as turnover occurred and could sustain and perpetuate new instructional strategies and philosophies that began during ELGs. CDE could consider asking schools and districts to outline in their initial grant applications what their plans or strategies are for sustaining these positions past the life of the grants.
4. The ELG application process could benefit from CDE providing districts with additional **support during the application process**, particularly small districts. CDE could deliver such support by
- a. offering online workshops to support applicants, with the workshops recorded for any district applicant to access and view at a later time;
 - b. establishing online office hours with a staff person, CDE-appointed representative, or outside experts who could help answer application questions or support grant writing activities; and



- c. conducting a review of the application process itself, with input from district leaders who have been through the process and shown success with grant implementation to identify options for streamlining the process, including improved use of online forms to save progress and submit all required information.



Funding

6

- Making decisions around READ Act per-pupil spending is a collaborative process, however, district literacy leaders and school principals have the most influence over these decisions.
- READ Act per-pupil funds are most frequently spent on salaries of reading coaches and on purchasing instructional programs.
- Schools and LEPs reported receiving insufficient funding and expressed a need for additional staff, instructional program materials, and guidance and resources for ELs and 4th- and 5th-grade students.
- Limitations of READ Act per-pupil funds have resulted in LEPs using other funding streams to meet READ Act expectations.



Background on READ Act Per-Pupil Funding

Annually, READ Act per-pupil intervention funds are allocated to LEPs based on the number of eligible students in the LEP (i.e., K–3 students in public schools, operated by the LEP, who were identified as having an SRD and as receiving instructional services pursuant to READ Plans in the previous year). Currently, the statute permits that LEPs use the per-pupil funding only for one or more of the following seven allowable categories:

- Operate a summer school literacy program
- Purchase core reading instructional programs that are on the Advisory List
- Purchase and/or provide approved, targeted, evidence-based or scientifically based intervention services to students which may include services provided by a reading interventionist
- Provide technology, including software, that is on the Advisory List; may include professional development for use of technology
- Purchase from a Board of Cooperative Educational Services the services of a reading specialist or reading interventionist
- Purchase tutoring services focused on increasing students' foundational reading skills
- Provide professional development programming to support K–3 educators in teaching reading

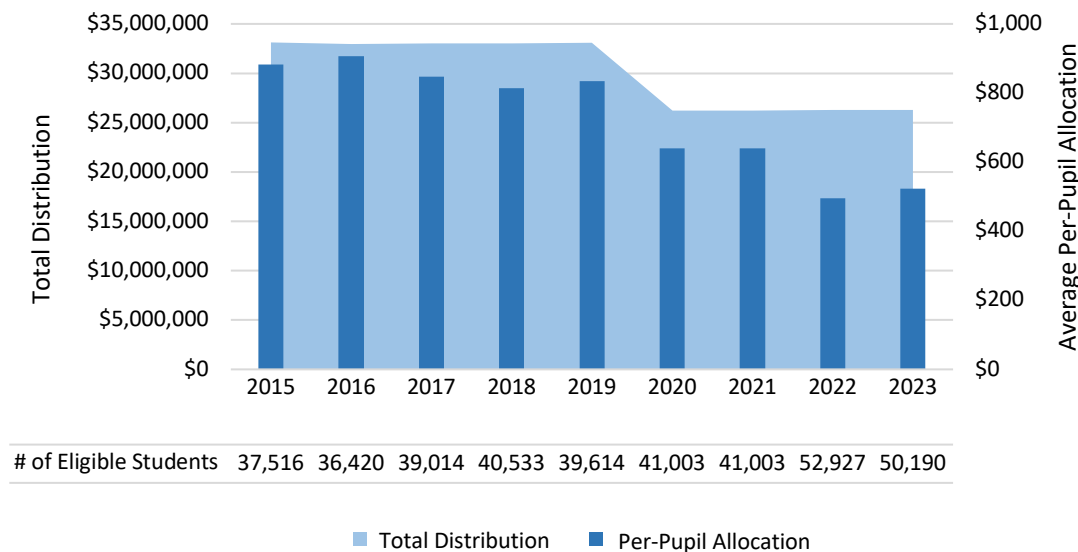
The total amount of READ Act per-pupil intervention funds provided to LEPs has decreased over time, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, while the number of eligible students increased from approximately 37,000 students in the 2014–2015 school year to 50,116 students in the 2022–2023 school year (Exhibit 18). Over time, “some of the READ intervention funds are redirected to the external program evaluation, state-provided teacher training, public



information campaign, and ELG program, thereby reducing the per-pupil distribution to districts” (CDE, 2023).¹⁴

Due to limitations of READ Act per-pupil funding, LEPs and schools used other funding streams and investments to implement READ Act requirements. These are outlined later in the chapter.

Exhibit 18. Change in READ Act Per-Pupil Funding Over Time



Note. READ = Reading to Ensure Academic Development. READ Act per-pupil funding in 2020–2021 was based on the number of eligible students from 2018–2019 as testing did not occur in 2019–2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Influence Over Use of READ Act Per-Pupil Funding

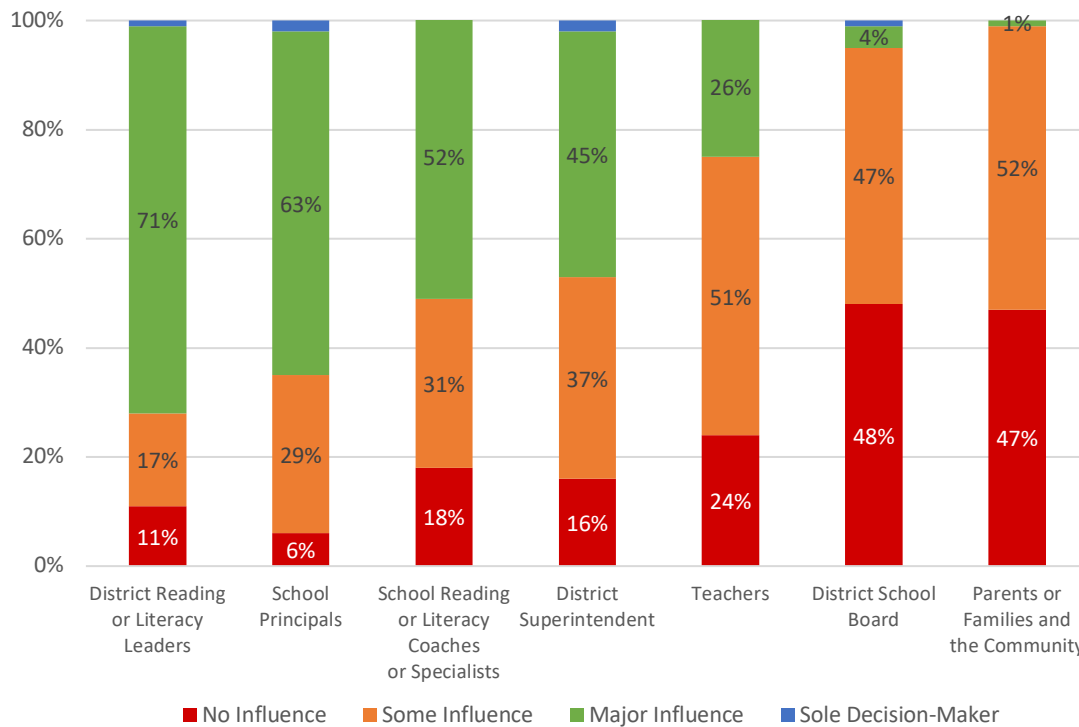
According to LEP inventory respondents, making decisions about how READ Act per-pupil funding is spent is a collaborative process, with only 6% of district administrators reporting that any entity is the sole decision-maker in determining how these funds should be spent (Exhibit 19).

¹⁴ Colorado Department of Education. (2023, April 21). *READ budget submissions*. <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/read-budget-submissions>



Some district and school entities, however, were reported as having higher levels of influence over these decisions than others. District administrators reported that school principals and district reading or literacy leaders had the most influence when making decisions about per-pupil spending, with 94% and 89% of administrators reporting that principals and district literacy leaders, respectively, had at least some influence on these decisions. District superintendents, school reading or literacy coaches and specialists, and teachers were also generally reported as having at least some influence (84%, 82%, and 76%, respectively). However, almost a quarter of administrators reported that teachers had no influence over these spending decisions. Finally, district school boards, and parents or families and the community were reported as having the lowest levels of influence, with almost half of administrators reporting that these groups had no influence on per-pupil spending decisions.

Exhibit 19. District Administrators on Influence of Entities in Decisions About READ Act Per-Pupil Funding



Note. READ = Reading to Ensure Academic Development.



Principals and literacy coaches were also asked for their perspectives on the extent to which they had control over how READ Act per-pupil funds were spent in their school. Their opinions about their level of influence over these decisions differed markedly from opinions of district administrator respondents. While only 6% of district administrators reported that principals had no influence on decisions about READ Act per-pupil spending, over one-third of principals (34%) reported that they had no control over how these funds were spent in their school. In contrast, 11% of principals reported that they were the sole decision-maker, while only 2% of district administrators reported that principals were the sole decision-maker. Similarly, while less than one-fifth (18%) of district administrators reported that school-level literacy coaches had no influence over these spending decisions, over two-thirds (69%) of coaches reported having no input in these decisions.

Use and Success of READ Act Per-Pupil Funding

According to principal inventory respondents, per-pupil funding was spent on numerous resources to meet READ Act implementation requirements. READ Act funds were most frequently used for the salary of reading coaches and to purchase K–3 core, supplemental, or intervention instructional programs on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming¹⁵ (Exhibit 20), with about half of respondents reporting these uses. Principals also reported using funds to provide one-on-one or small group tutoring to students identified with SRDs (24%), purchase K–3 interim or diagnostic and summative assessments on the Advisory List of Assessments¹⁶ (22%), and purchase K–3 supplemental or intervention materials or programs not on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming (20%). Few principals reported using these funds for professional development

¹⁵ For more information on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming, see <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/advisorylistofinstructionalprogramming2020>.

¹⁶ For more information on the Advisory List of Assessments, see <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readact/resourcebank>.



purposes, and nine (9%) principals reported not being aware of how READ Act funds were spent in their school.

Exhibit 20. Use of READ Act Per-Pupil Funds According to School Principals

READ Act Funding Use	Percentage of Principal Responses (Frequency)
Purchase of K–3 core, supplemental, or intervention instructional programs on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming	46% (n = 46)
Purchase of K–3 supplemental or intervention materials or programs not on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming	20% (n = 20)
Purchase of K–3 interim or diagnostic and summative assessments on the Advisory List of Assessments	22% (n = 22)
Purchase of K–3 professional development programs on the Advisory List of Professional Development	12% (n = 12)
Purchase of K–3 professional development programs not on the Advisory List of Professional Development	3% (n = 3)
Covering part or all of the salary for (a) reading coach(es)	51% (n = 50)
Purchasing external consultant services to provide teacher professional development	6% (n = 6)
Providing one-on-one or small group tutoring to students with significant reading deficiencies	24% (n = 24)

Note. READ = Reading to Ensure Academic Development.

Site visit participants also reported multiples uses of READ Act funding. Educators from eight of the 10 sites reported spending READ Act funds on core, supplemental, and/or intervention instructional programs and materials. Funds were also frequently used for the salaries of reading interventionists or coaches. Site visit participants, however, placed more emphasis on using funding for tutoring services and professional development resources than did respondents to the principal inventory. Funding was also used by schools and LEPs to operate summer school literacy programs.¹⁷

In discussing the role of READ Act per-pupil funds in contributing to their school’s success around reading, site visit participants emphasized the

¹⁷ The evaluation intended to use READ Act Budget Submission data to more accurately report uses of READ Act funds, however, there were concerns regarding the reliability of the current data.

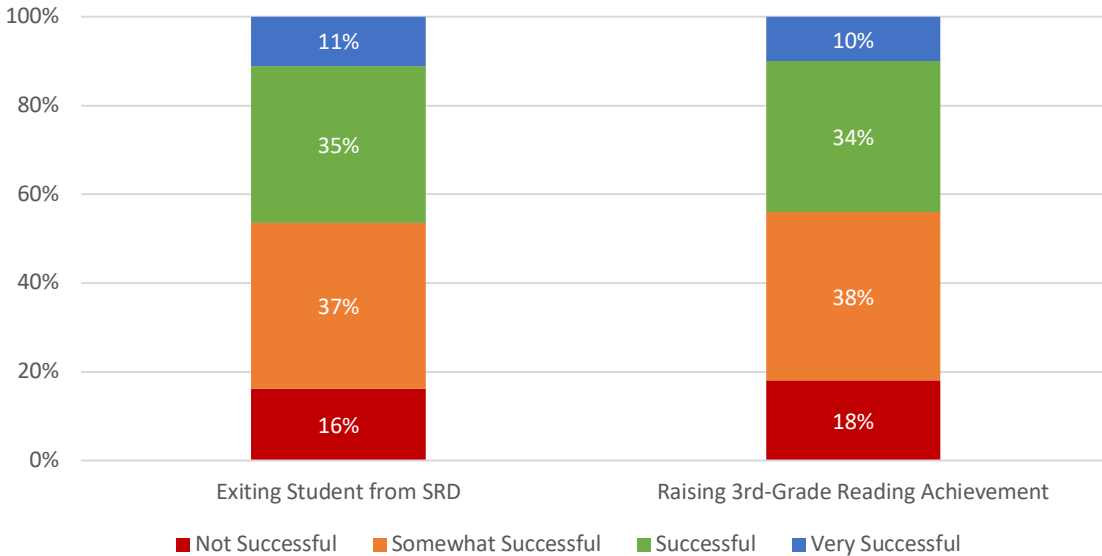


usefulness of hiring additional staff, purchasing core and/or supplemental instructional and intervention programs, and increasing teacher resources. Participants reported that hiring additional staff (e.g., reading interventionists or coaches), which decreased instructional group sizes and increased tutoring opportunities, was helpful in supporting reading instruction and serving and meeting the needs of students requiring reading support. They also noted that purchasing core and/or supplemental instructional and intervention programs and associated materials (e.g., Heggerty, Learning A–Z’s Raz-Plus, Lexia Core5) helped support reading instruction and helped teachers better assist students in targeting specific skills and reach students at all levels of performance. Finally, participants reported using READ Act funding to increase teacher professional learning resources to assist teachers in increasing knowledge, building a common language, and aligning K–3 reading instruction with the science of reading, using data for interventions, and increasing attention on improving skills of students identified as being below the 20th percentile in reading.

In the LEP inventory, district administrators also reported on the success of READ Act per-pupil funding in exiting students identified with SRDs off that status and in raising 3rd-grade reading achievement levels. District administrators provided similar responses in discussing the success of per-pupil funds in achieving these two READ Act goals (see Exhibit 21). Only about 10% of administrators reported that per-pupil funding was “very successful” in achieving these READ Act goals; about a third reported that the funding was “successful,” and slightly more reported that it was only “somewhat successful.” Administrators typically rated school grade-level teams, school professional learning communities, the mandated professional development for instructional staff (i.e., 45-hour requirement), and CDE-recommended or -approved instructional materials as being more successful in achieving these goals.



Exhibit 21. District Administrators on Success of READ Act Per-Pupil Funds



Note. READ = Reading to Ensure Academic Development; SRD = significant reading deficiency.

Challenges Associated with READ Act Per-Pupil Funding

Site visit participants cited a number of challenges in using READ Act per-pupil funds in their school. Some participants expressed that funding was insufficient to fully implement expectations of the READ Act. Some also reported that funding fluctuations (due to loss of funds when students exit from READ Plans) resulted in reduced staffing and difficulties in continuing to provide supplemental instructional programs to students previously on READ Plans.

Alongside these funding concerns, site visit participants also discussed the need for additional staffing (e.g., reading interventionists), additional approved supplemental instructional program options for addressing fluency and comprehension, as well as guidance and materials to monitor the progress of these skills, and additional resources to address the needs of ELs on READ Plans. Some participants also cited difficulties in addressing the needs of 4th- and 5th-grade students with reading challenges. They advocated for additional



guidance to help these groups and/or for the READ Act to be extended to higher grade levels.

Other Funding Streams or Investments for READ Act Purposes

Site visit participants reported using multiple funding streams to implement READ Act services to students, including COVID-19 relief funds, Early Literacy Assessment Tool funds, Comprehensive Literacy State Development funds, Title III funds, Mill Levy Override funds, and general school and LEP funds. This use of multiple funding sources was also reflected in the LEP inventory, with 57% of district administrators reporting that their LEP used funding related to the COVID-19 pandemic (CARES [Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security], ESSER [Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief], GEER [Governor's Emergency Education Relief], CRF [Coronavirus Relief Fund]) on literacy-related activities for students.

Site visit participants and district administrators reported that these additional funding streams or investments were typically used to purchase core instructional materials, assessments, and intervention programs and materials; hire additional literacy-related staff (e.g., reading coaches, specialists, or interventionists; instructional support staff; classroom aides); finance after-school programs, tutoring services, and/or summer school programs; and fund additional professional development.



7

Student Outcomes

- Overall, analysis of SRD status and CMAS proficiency suggests that there is a bounce back to pre-pandemic levels for students except those with SRDs who have multiple designations
- In the 2021–2022 school year, fewer students went from not being designated as having an SRD to having an SRD and nearly three times as many students when from being identified as having an SRD to no longer identified as having an SRD
- CMAS proficiency rates and reading subsection proficiency rates remain extremely low for students that have ever been identified with an SRD and even lower for students with an SRD who are also EL or have an IEP



Alignment Between State-Reported SRD Classifications and Interim Assessment SRD Classifications

The first step in identifying whether a student has an SRD is the use of an interim reading assessment approved by the Colorado State Board and the assessment-specific cut scores defined by the vendor.¹⁸ These results are typically used alongside results of a diagnostic assessment and other materials (e.g., classroom work, curriculum-based measures) in a body of evidence approach to finalize the SRD determination (see Chapter 4 for additional detail).

In line with findings in last year's report, while district staff, teachers, principals, and coaches report using a body of evidence approach to determine SRD determination, our analysis showed that state-reported SRD classification for students nearly always matched the SRD determination that students would have received based solely on their interim assessment score (see Chapter 4 for additional detail). Of students whose records show they have both a state-reported classification of having an SRD and an interim assessment score that indicates they have an SRD according to the assessment vendors' guidance (over 90% of the sample),¹⁹ only 0.5% have a state-reported SRD classification that is different from the classification determined solely by performance on the interim assessment. This rate was smaller following the return to in-person instruction in 2020–2021 (0.2%) than the rate prior to the assessment pause in 2019–2020 (0.6%). Among these differences in classifications, 83% occurred because students who were classified as not having an SRD (according to the state) actually scored below the SRD cut score on their respective interim assessment. In other words, a small number of students who were identified as

¹⁸ For information on the SRD determination process and other requirements of the READ Act, see <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readplans>.

¹⁹ Observations corresponding to Indicadores Dinámicos del Éxito en la Lectura (IDEL) and Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening in Spanish (PALS Español), and interim assessments that are not currently approved by Colorado, do not have an SRD classification (in the dataset used for the evaluation) that is defined solely by the cut scores on the interim assessment.



possibly having an SRD according to their interim assessment score were classified as not having an SRD by their school or LEP.

Alignment for students with IEPs and English Learners

Some student groups (i.e., ELs, students with disabilities, students with IEPs) were more likely than their peers to have a state-reported SRD designation that did not match designations provided by the interim assessment. For example, two-thirds of observations with different state and assessment SRD designations belonged to ELs, although the EL population made up less than 18% of the sample for the evaluation. Additionally, ELs who had different state and assessment SRD designations were more likely to be non-English proficient than ELs whose state-reported SRD designation matched their interim assessment designation. These discrepancies may be because the interim assessments used are not well suited to measuring the achievement levels and proficiency of students with a variety of learning styles and needs.

The following analysis uses the state-reported SRD classification, unless otherwise specified, as this classification is used for official READ Act purposes.

Changes in Students' SRD Statuses

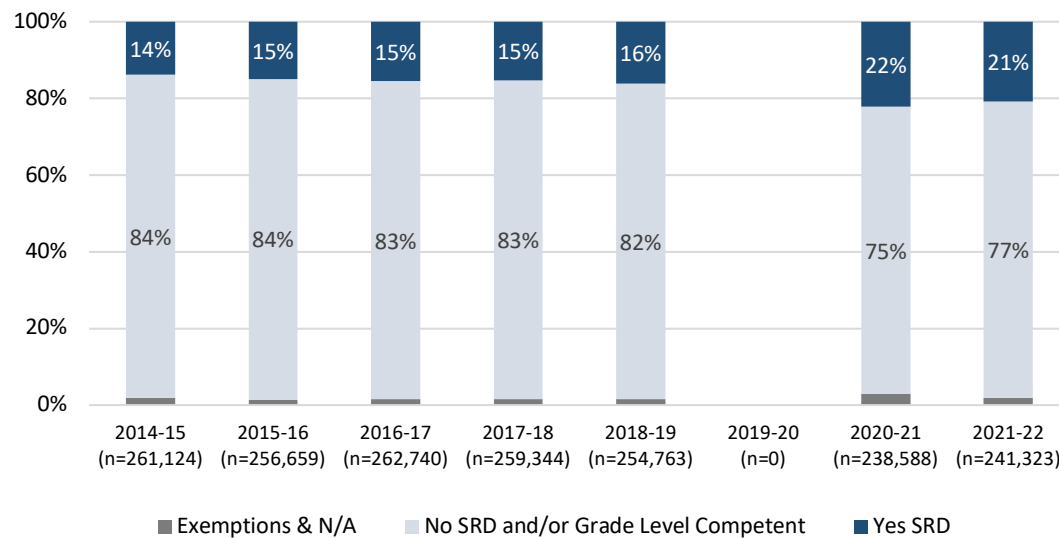
Students Assessed and Overall Trends

The total number of students assessed in 2022 rose from the dip experienced during 2021, when schools continued to grapple with the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools assessed nearly 3,000 more students in 2022 than in 2021. Although there was an increase, the 2022 total was still approximately 13,000 less than the total assessed in spring 2019 (testing was not reported during the 2019–2020 school year due to a statewide assessment pause during the COVID-19 pandemic). Additionally, while the total number of students identified with SRDs was lower during the 2021–2022 school year than during the historic high of the 2020–2021 school year, it has not returned to the average of previous school years. While the percentage of students identified



with SRDs in spring semesters had been holding at around 15% for the last several years (i.e., from 2015–2019), it jumped to 22% in the 2020–2021 school year and remained higher than usual at 21% during the 2021–2022 school year (Exhibit 22).

Exhibit 22. Statewide Student SRD Status by School Year



Note. SRD = significant reading deficiency.

Student Movement Between SRD Statuses

Looking at movement between SRD designations gives a more nuanced picture of student pathways. Students SRD statuses can be broadly categorized into a few categories: being designated as having an SRD, being designated as not having an SRD, or being exempt from SRD classification. Students move between these statuses year to year based on their classifications which are guided by their interim assessment scores during the Spring semester. Prior to the 2020–2021 academic year, around 12,000 to 13,000 students per year went from being designated as not having an SRD to being designated as having one in the following year (about 4.7% to 5% each year), while approximately 7,300 to 8,400 students went from being designated as having an SRD to no longer having one (about 2.9% to 3.3% each year). Over 14,000 students went from



having a designation of no SRD in the 2018–2019 school year to having one a designation of having an SRD in the 2020–2021 school year (5.9%), while only 4,000 students were moved from being designated as having an SRD to no longer having one (1.7%). That is, more students than usual were designated as having an SRD after being identified as not having one in the 2018–2019 academic year (5.9%), and fewer students were exited from SRD designation (1.7%). The trend reversed in 2021–2022—fewer students went from not being designated as having an SRD to being classified as having an SRD—4.7%, 1.2 percentage points lower than last year—while nearly three times as many students went from having an SRD status to no longer having an SRD status (1.7% (3,995 students) in 2020–2021 to 4.6% (11,112 students) in 2021–2022) (Exhibit 23).

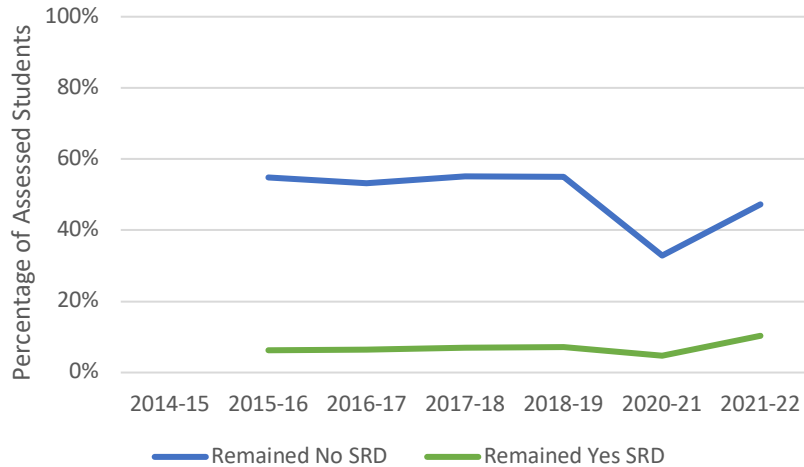
Exhibit 23. Assessed Students Moving to or from an SRD Designation Over Time

Percentage	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2020–2021	2021–2022
No SRD to Yes SRD	4.8%	5.0%	4.7%	5.0%	5.9%	4.7%
Yes SRD to No SRD	3.0%	3.0%	3.3%	2.9%	1.7%	4.6%
Counts						
No SRD to Yes SRD	12,201	13,071	12,221	12,638	14,098	11,453
Yes SRD to No SRD	7,623	7,819	8,447	7,335	3,995	11,112

Additionally, the percentage of students who remained designated as not having an SRD in 2020–2021 or 2021–2022, nearly reached prepandemic rates. From 2015–2016 through 2018–2019, between 53% and 55% of students remained designated as not having an SRD from year to year. During the 2020–2021 school year, that percentage fell to 33% as more students were designated as having an SRD during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the 2021–2022 school year, the percentage rose to 47% (Exhibit 24).



Exhibit 24. Percentage of Assessed Students Remaining Yes or No SRD Over Time



Note. SRD = significant reading deficiency.

Rates of movement between SRD designations differ by student identity. ELs, students with disabilities, and students with IEPs experienced higher rates of movement between SRD designations than their peers, that is, these students were more likely to go from being designated as not having an SRD to having an SRD in the following year and were also more likely to be exited from their designation of having an SRD to either not having an SRD or an exemption status. This finding was consistent across years (Exhibit 25).

Exhibit 25. Student Movement between Yes and No SRD Designations by Identity

	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2020–2021	2021–2022
All Students						
No SRD to Yes SRD	4.8%	5.0%	4.7%	5.0%	5.9%	4.7%
Yes SRD to No SRD	3.0%	3.0%	3.3%	2.9%	1.7%	4.6%
English Learners						
No SRD to Yes SRD	7.8%	7.6%	7.4%	7.5%	9.3%	6.3%
Yes SRD to No SRD	5.2%	5.3%	5.6%	4.7%	2.7%	7.1%
Students with IEPs						
No SRD to Yes SRD	9.0%	9.6%	8.8%	8.9%	10.7%	7.2%
Yes SRD to No SRD	5.3%	5.6%	6.0%	5.5%	3.0%	6.2%

Note. IEP = Individualized Education Program; SRD = significant reading deficiency.



Student Movement Between SRD Status by Race and Age

SRD designations and movement patterns vary by student race. A higher percentage of Black students are reclassified as having or not having an SRD each year than their peers (Exhibit 26). American Indian/Native Alaskan students and Hispanic students also experience higher rates of reclassification between statuses than their peers who are White, Asian, or two or more races (Exhibit 27). While being designated as SRD may increase the supports given to those students, a higher percentage of students of particular races moving between designations (disproportional to their percentage of enrollment) may indicate that supports are not equally targeted, effective, or consistent across students of different races.

Exhibit 26. Percentage of Assessed Students by Race Moving from Not Being Designated with an SRD to Being Designated with an SRD by Year

	2015– 2016	2016– 2017	2017– 2018	2018– 2019	2020– 2021	2021– 2022
Asian	2.6%	3.0%	2.9%	2.5%	3.0%	2.9%
American Indian/Native Alaskan	6.8%	7.5%	6.3%	8.5%	8.0%	6.8%
Black	6.0%	6.7%	5.8%	6.1%	7.5%	5.2%
Hispanic	7.0%	6.9%	6.7%	7.1%	8.6%	6.1%
Native Hawaiian	4.1%	2.9%	5.1%	4.2%	6.2%	5.6%
White	3.4%	3.7%	3.5%	3.7%	4.3%	4.0%
Two or More Races	3.6%	4.2%	3.9%	4.0%	4.7%	3.9%

Note. SRD = significant reading deficiency.

Exhibit 27. Percentage of Assessed Students by Race Moving from Being Designated with an SRD to Not Being Designated with an SRD by Year

	2015– 2016	2016– 2017	2017– 2018	2018– 2019	2020– 2021	2021– 2022
Asian	2.5%	2.6%	3.2%	2.9%	1.6%	3.6%
American Indian/Native Alaskan	4.2%	4.2%	3.6%	4.1%	1.7%	5.8%
Black	6.0%	6.7%	5.8%	6.1%	7.5%	5.2%
Hispanic	3.6%	3.9%	4.6%	3.9%	2.2%	6.5%
Native Hawaiian	2.6%	4.2%	2.0%	3.6%	1.8%	5.6%
White	2.1%	2.0%	2.4%	2.2%	1.3%	3.4%
Two or More Races	2.4%	2.5%	2.6%	2.5%	1.6%	3.5%



Note. SRD = significant reading deficiency.

Additionally, older students were more likely than younger students to continue to be classified as having an SRD in the following year. Of the kindergarten students who were classified as having an SRD, 31% were no longer classified as having an SRD at the end of 1st grade, however, only 24% of 2nd-grade students who were classified as having an SRD moved off of their SRD designation by the end of 3rd grade.

Student Movement Between READ Plan Statuses

During the Year 3 evaluation, patterns of student movement on and off of READ Plans was also examined. Under ideal implementation of the READ Act, all students designated as having an SRD are given a READ Plan which lays out supports they will receive in areas needed. Even if students are no longer designated as having an SRD, their READ Plan should remain with them until they are reading at grade level according to assessments. In practice, site visits revealed some confusion around READ Plan implementation, integration with other student plans such as IEPs, and READ Plans following students past the 3rd grade (See Chapter 4 for additional discussion).

Student READ Plan status is indicated in one of three ways: having a READ Plan, not having a READ Plan, or not eligible for a READ Plan (implying students have never been designated as having an SRD). So, while one would not expect the rate of students moving off of SRD status to track with the rate of students no longer having a READ Plan, one would expect the rate of students moving onto SRD status to track with the rate of students newly having a READ Plan. The data show that this was not the case—from 2015–2016 to 2021–2022, a lower proportion (between 2.5 and 4 percentage points) of students per year went from not having a READ Plan to having a READ Plan than students not being designated with an SRD to being designated with an SRD. Students who were at one point designated as having an SRD and exited and identified as no longer having an SRD who then were reidentified with an SRD in a later year



might explain part of this difference, as they would have continued to carry their READ Plan with them if they were not reading at grade level. Across all years, 14% of students who exited SRD status were redesignated with an SRD in a later year.²⁰

CMAS Proficiency and SRD Status

Students first take the CMAS assessment in the 3rd grade, the final year in which interim READ Act assessments are given. Since the goal of the READ Act is to identify struggling readers and provide them with the support they need to read proficiently by the end of 3rd grade, 3rd-grade CMAS scores provide one way to gauge the extent to which early literacy instruction and interventions have moved students towards 3rd-grade reading proficiency. Since the 2014–2015 school year, fewer than 4.5% of students per year who had ever been identified as having an SRD achieved proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam in the 3rd grade (i.e., met or exceeded expectations).

In Year 2 of the evaluation, students who had at any point in K–3 been identified with an SRD had very different success rates on the CMAS ELA exam than their peers who had never been identified with an SRD—more than half of students who had never been identified with an SRD met or exceeded proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam in 3rd grade, compared with less than 5% of students who had ever been identified with an SRD. That trend continued in the 2021–2022 school year, with only 4.1% of students who had ever been identified with an SRD reaching proficiency (Exhibit 28). However, among students who had never been identified with an SRD, 55.2% reached proficiency on the 3rd-grade CMAS ELA exam, the highest rate observed during the READ Act data collection period (2014–2015 to present).

It is worth noting that the number of assessed students remains depressed from the 2018–2019 school year, although the composition of

²⁰ Note that this analysis only includes students who have recorded READ Act data following their first reclassification to not having an SRD (n = 46,138).



identities of students assessed remains comparable to previous years (race and ethnicity, English-language proficiency status, disability status, etc.). Additionally, schools that received ELGs were examined to see if there were differences in CMAS proficiency rates. Proficiency rates of students who have ever or never been designated as having an SRD were comparable at sites that had ever received an ELG to sites that had not.

Exhibit 28. Statewide 3rd-Grade English Language Arts CMAS Proficiency by SRD Status

SRD Status	Rating	2014–2015	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2020–2021	2021–2022
Ever SRD	Did not yet meet, partially met, or approached expectations	99.3%	98.7%	97.4%	96.4%	95.6%	96.0%	95.9%
	Met or exceeded expectations	0.7%	1.3%	2.6%	3.6%	4.4%	4.0%	4.1%
Never SRD	Did not yet meet, partially met, or approached expectations	55.0%	54.7%	47.9%	47.2%	45.9%	48.3%	44.8%
	Met or exceeded expectations	45.0%	45.3%	52.1%	52.8%	54.1%	51.7%	55.2%

Note. CMAS = Colorado Measures of Academic Success; SRD = significant reading deficiency.

CMAS Reading Sub score

This year, the Reading subscore of the CMAS ELA exam was examined in addition to the overall composite score. The findings are similar to those when examining the overall score—students who were ever designated as having an SRD were unlikely to meet or exceed expectations on the CMAS ELA exam reading subsection. Students who had never been designated as having an SRD met or exceeded expectations at a rate of between 51.3% and 55.8% over the same period (Exhibit 29).



Exhibit 29. Statewide 3rd-Grade English Language Arts CMAS Reading Subscore Proficiency by SRD Status

		2017– 2018	2018– 2019	2020– 2021	2021– 2022
Ever SRD	Did Not Meet Expectations	95.8%	94.8%	95.8%	95.4%
	Met or Exceeded Expectations	4.2%	5.2%	4.2%	4.6%
Never SRD	Did Not Meet Expectations	47.4%	45.6%	48.7%	44.2%
	Met or Exceeded Expectations	52.6%	54.4%	51.3%	55.8%

Note. SRD = significant reading deficiency.

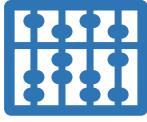
CMAS and SRD for students with IEPs and ELs

As in Year 2, students with IEPs or ELs who were also identified as having an SRD reached proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam at lower rates than their general education peers who had been identified with SRDs. Only 1.3% of students designated as SRD who also had IEPs demonstrated proficiency. Students with IEPs who are not designated as having an SRD had different outcomes, with 34.3% reaching proficiency which is in line with previous years. 2.5% of students designated with SRDs who are also learning English reached proficiency. In contrast, 34.3% of students learning English who are not designated as having an SRD reached proficiency which is in line with the 2018–2019 rate. Only 0.5% of students with an IEP, EL designation, and SRD designation reach proficiency, compared with 16.4% of their peers who are not identified with an SRD. This suggests that students with dual identifications continue to be underserved by the READ Act on their journey to reading English at grade level by the end of the 3rd grade.

Alongside these findings that certain characteristics significantly affect the likelihood of being proficient on CMAS, the grade level in which a student is first identified as having an SRD also effects proficiency rates in 3rd grade. After controlling for EL status, IEP status, and race and ethnicity, students first identified with SRDs in 1st grade were about 2 times more likely than students identified with SRDs in kindergarten to not meet proficiency expectations on



CMAS. Similarly, students who first received an SRD designation in 2nd grade were 3.5 times more likely to not meet proficiency standards compared with students identified with SRDs in kindergarten—students first identified in 3rd grade were 6 times more likely. These results emphasize the importance of early identification and the necessity for early intervention to improve students' chances of meeting proficiency standards at the end of 3rd grade.



8

Conclusions

- Reversing trends from the pandemic, fewer students were identified as having an SRD and more students exited from SRD status than in the previous year
- There are continued challenges for students ever identified as having a SRD achieving proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam in third grade, particularly for those students with multiple identifications
- The requirement for evidence-based reading was perceived as highly impactful, promoting collaboration, a common language, and instruction grounded in the science of reading
- Districts and schools who received ELGs reported strong, positive support for the grants



With 3 years of evaluation data collected, the evaluation team is framing its conclusions to align with each of the four legislative priorities, including recommendations for CDE to best support further improvement in READ Act implementation.

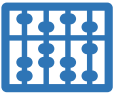
1) Help State Policymakers and District Leaders Understand Impacts of READ Act Funding and Support on Students, Families, Schools, and Districts

Postpandemic Recovery

Reversing trends from the pandemic, during the 2021–2022 school year fewer students were identified as having an SRD and more students exited from SRD status than in the previous year. In 2021–2022, 4.7% of students were newly identified as having an SRD. This is 1.2 percentage points lower than in the previous year. In addition, nearly three times as many students were exited from SRD status compared with the previous year (1.7% of K–3 students in 2020–2021 to 4.6% K–3 students in 2021–2022).

Additionally, the percentage of students who remained designated as not having an SRD in 2020–2021 or 2021–2022 nearly reset to prepandemic rates. From 2015–2016 through 2018–2019, between 53% and 55% of students remained designated as not having an SRD from year to year. During the 2020–2021 school year, that percentage fell to 33% as more students were designated as having an SRD during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the 2021–2022 school year, the percentage rose to 47%.

Unfortunately, in line with findings from the previous 2 years, **only 4.1% of students who had ever been identified with an SRD reached proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam in 3rd grade in the 2021–2022 school year** compared with 55.2% of students who had never been identified with an SRD reaching proficiency on the 3rd-grade CMAS ELA exam, the highest rate observed during the READ Act data collection period (2014–2015 to present). The findings when



analyzing the Reading subscore of the CMAS ELA were similar to those when examining the overall score—students who were ever designated as having an SRD were unlikely to meet or exceed expectations on the CMAS ELA exam reading subsection.

Continued Challenges for Students With Multiple Identifications

In line with findings from the previous 2 years, *students with IEPs or ELs who were also identified as having an SRD reached proficiency on the CMAS ELA exam at lower rates than their general education peers who had been identified with SRDs*. Less than 1% of students designated as having an SRD who also had IEPs demonstrated proficiency (.3%). Students with IEPs who were not designated as having an SRD had different outcomes, with 27% reaching proficiency, which is in line with previous years.

A similar pattern exists for ELs. Less than 1% of students designated with SRDs who are also ELs reached proficiency (.6%). In contrast, 29% of ELs who are not designated as having an SRD reached proficiency, which is in line with the 2018–2019 rate. This suggests that students with dual identifications continue to be underserved by the READ Act on their journey to reading English at grade level by the end of 3rd grade. The evaluation of READ Act materials identified weaknesses in supports provided for ELs and students with IEPs.²¹

These challenges are likely related to continued challenges in serving students with multiple identifications identified by district- and school-based staff. District administrators reported less clarity about supporting non–general education students under the READ Act, specifically students with disabilities and ELs. In particular, exiting students with disabilities and ELs from SRD status, identifying which of their plans (READ Plan, IEP, etc.) should act as primary guidance, and understanding how to support students with multiple identifications (SRD and EL, etc.) were areas of confusion. A sizeable minority of teachers also reporting feeling unprepared to support students with IEPs under the READ Act.

²¹ See <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readactevaluationmaterialsummary>.



The 45-Hour Professional Development Requirement Was Impactful on Teacher Practice

By May 2023, some 13,218 teachers had completed a READ Act–required evidence-based training in teaching reading and had passed the end-of-course assessment. ***Educator role groups showed high rates of perceived usefulness, applicability, and quality of the training program, according to this year’s teacher, coach, and principal inventories. Site visit schools uniformly reported seeing positive impacts on teacher practice resulting from the training requirement.*** Perceived impacts showed up in several ways. First, schools reported greater teacher knowledge of evidence-based practices related to the five components of reading. Second, schools reported positive shifts in teachers’ instructional approaches more aligned with evidence-based practices taught in the trainings. In particular, teachers paid more explicit and systematic attention to teaching phonics and phonemic awareness. Third, schools reported that teachers were more effective at supporting the needs of different students. Site visit schools noted that teachers had improved their ability to identify student needs, design lessons and differentiate instruction according to those needs, and select materials targeted to meet needs in an engaging manner. Ongoing coaching from a literacy specialist and dedicated time to participate in professional learning communities with peers were cited as the most effective structures for supporting implementation of new practices learned in the training. While all site visit schools reported some type of impact on teachers, a sizeable number of schools also noted evidence of improved student learning as a result of the training.

This kind of pattern would not be surprising in the context of adopting a whole-school instructional reform such as the science of reading approach. Typically, shifts in student learning are first preceded by shifts in teacher practice, which in turn often require shifts in teacher knowledge, beliefs, and mindsets. In



this sense, the findings related to professional development are consistent with expected patterns and will be a focus of the evaluation moving forward.

2) Learn and Share Successes and Best Practices Across Districts and Schools

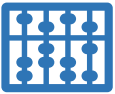
Consistent Evidence Of Intentional District-Wide Alignment of Reading Approaches, Instructional Materials, and Supports Aligned With the Science of Reading

Building on findings from the first 2 years of the evaluation, there was consistent evidence of widespread implementation of reading instruction aligned with READ Act requirements that is focused on the five foundational reading skills. The majority of teachers responding to the inventory reported daily instruction in each of these foundational skills. Site visit participants also emphasized the importance of data-driven instruction and targeted interventions based on student needs and frequent monitoring of progress. This included providing quality core instruction for all students and supporting students identified with SRDs with supplemental and intervention programming aligned with specific areas for skill development as specified in their READ Plan.

Strong, Positive Support for ELGs

Overall, school and district leaders in the site visits gave consistently strong, positive support for ELGs. These leaders indicated that the grants led directly to improved K–3 teacher instructional practices and improved student performance on literacy assessments. School and district leaders reported that ELG funding produced direct, positive changes in student reading performance that would not have happened without the grants. These leaders often stated that student performance improvements happened very rapidly, even after just 1 year of ELG implementation.

Bringing in an external literacy expert on a monthly basis to work with teachers was typically identified by school and district leaders as the single most impactful element of ELG-funded activities. Such external experts were highly



valued because they brought fresh perspectives and a high degree of credibility into schools. They also directly coached teachers, observed and modeled instruction, and leveraged extensive outside knowledge to help schools improve instruction. These outside consultants were routinely identified as the driving force behind needed changes to instructional practices and subsequent successes in raising student reading performance, which is consistent with findings about coaching and literature on the importance of job-embedded professional learning.²²

Adoption and Implementation of Evidence-Based Instructional Materials

The main successes reported by district administrators and staff at site visit schools were centered on the adoption and implementation of evidence-based instructional materials and the usefulness of the Advisory List, both of which resulted in student engagement and learning. School staff reported that these evidence-based programs aligned with the science of reading helped students develop foundational skills and led to student engagement, viewed as a key mediator of growth in reading proficiency. The usefulness of the Advisory List was viewed as another success. Site visit participants reported that the Advisory List promoted the adoption of evidence-based programs aligned with the science of reading and that guidance from CDE was helpful for selecting programs and understanding the purpose behind the READ Act. Site visit participants reported that the adoption of these evidence-based programs from the Advisory List supported the development of foundational skills and fostered student engagement.

Evidence-Based Training in Teaching Reading Promoted Collaboration and a Common Language

Site visit schools noted the benefit of teachers going through the training at the same time, as it gave them an opportunity to support each other and

²² See <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readactevaluationmaterialsummary>.



promoted collaboration within the school, especially if the administration provided dedicated time for a professional learning community or similar structure to support continued professional learning. The CDE training, in particular, provided a “common language” around the science of reading that helped school teams achieve consistent understanding of instructional expectations. It also facilitated dialogue within the school about approaches to reading, encouraging a collaborative culture to flourish. Providing coaches with the opportunity to collaborate with each other was also cited as a successful support structure. According to one school, literacy interventionists participated in a monthly district meeting to network with interventionists at other schools, share best practices, review their data, and craft goals.

Body of Evidence Approach Helpful for Designating Students and Pinpointing Specific Areas of Literacy Learning Challenges

Four of the 10 site visit schools reported that using a body of evidence was helpful for designating students as having an SRD and pinpointing specific areas of need to personalize READ Plans. Four schools also emphasized the success of district guidance and support for identifying and supporting students identified with SRDs as well as alignment across grade levels which promoted collaboration and consistency. Additional areas of success cited by schools included continuous progress monitoring and opportunities to identify and celebrate student growth.

3) Inform Improvements to the READ Act by Understanding How Funds Were Used

According to principal inventory respondents, per-pupil funding was spent on numerous resources to meet READ Act implementation requirements. READ Act funds were most frequently used for the salary of reading coaches and to purchase K–3 core, supplemental, or intervention instructional programs on the



Advisory List of Instructional Programming²³ (Exhibit 30), with about half of respondents reporting these uses. Principals also reported using funds to provide one-on-one or small group tutoring to students identified with SRDs (24%), purchase K–3 interim or diagnostic and summative assessments on the Advisory List of Assessments²⁴ (22%), and purchase K–3 supplemental or intervention materials or programs not on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming (20%). Few principals reported using these funds for professional development purposes, and nine (9%) principals reported not being aware of how READ Act funds were spent in their school.

Exhibit 30. Use of READ Act Per-Pupil Funds According to School Principals

READ Act Funding Use	Percentage of Principal Responses (Frequency)
Purchase of K–3 core, supplemental, or intervention instructional programs on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming	46% (n = 46)
Purchase of K–3 supplemental or intervention materials or programs not on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming	20% (n = 20)
Purchase of K–3 interim or diagnostic and summative assessments on the Advisory List of Assessments	22% (n = 22)
Purchase of K–3 professional development programs on the Advisory List of Professional Development	12% (n = 12)
Purchase of K–3 professional development programs not on the Advisory List of Professional Development	3% (n = 3)
Covering part or all of the salary for (a) reading coach(es)	51% (n = 50)
Purchasing external consultant services to provide teacher professional development	6% (n = 6)
Providing one-on-one or small group tutoring to students with significant reading deficiencies	24% (n = 24)

Note. READ = Reading to Ensure Academic Development.

In the LEP inventory, district administrators also reported on the success of READ Act per-pupil funding in exiting students identified with SRDs off that status and in raising 3rd-grade reading achievement levels. District

²³ For more information on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming, see <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/advisorylistofinstructionalprogramming2020>.

²⁴ For more information on the Advisory List of Assessments, see <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readact/resourcebank>.



administrators provided similar responses in discussing the success of per-pupil funds in achieving these two READ Act goals. Only about 10% of administrators reported that per-pupil funding was “very successful” in achieving these READ Act goals; about a third reported that the funding was “successful,” and slightly more reported that it was only “somewhat successful.”

4) Get Direct Feedback From School and District Leaders About How CDE Can Best Support Further Improvement in READ Act Implementation

In the final legislative priority, the evaluation is tasked with identifying actionable recommendations that can help CDE better support districts and schools:

Recommendation 1: CDE and the external evaluation should focus attention on persistently low rates of proficiency and explore the gap between students who are not designated as having an SRD (either through exiting SRD status or whose interim assessment scores are above the threshold for SRD) but do not reach proficiency on the CMAS ELA assessment. Despite a return to prepandemic rates of SRD identification and exit from SRD status, proficiency rates on the 3rd grade CMAS ELA exam, a key goal for the READ Act, remain stubbornly low, especially for students who have ever been identified as having an SRD (4.1.% in 2021-22 school year).

Recommendation 2: CDE should identify additional resources and strategies to better serve students with multiple designations. For example, additional professional learning that focuses on teaching reading to ELs and students with IEPs and specific recommendations and guidance for areas of confusion (primary guidance, exiting students with multiple designation). Third grade proficiency rates on the CMAS ELA were the lowest for students with multiple identifications. Less than 1% of students designated as having an SRD who also had IEPs and 2.5% of students identified as having an SRD who were learning English demonstrated proficiency on the 3rd grade CMAS



ELA exam. These rates are likely related to continued challenges identified by district- and school-based staff serving these students under the READ Act.

Recommendation 3: CDE should continue to support districts and schools to provide ongoing, job-embedded coaching to sustain implementation of new teacher learning such that it translates into meaningful improvements in student outcomes. There was widespread agreement among principals, coaches, and teachers that the requirement for evidence-based training in teaching reading was highly impactful, resulting in greater knowledge of evidence-based practices, positive shifts in instructional practice, and increased effectiveness at supporting the needs of different students. In line with research, site visit schools cited ongoing coaching from a literacy specialist and dedicated time to participate in professional learning with peers as highly effective structures for supporting and sustaining these changes.

Recommendation 4: CDE could consider providing periodic grant funds to support ongoing visits from external literacy consultants for schools that have successfully completed their ELGs to help sustain their impact and combat staff turnover. In addition, CDE could consider asking districts and schools to outline their plans and strategies for sustaining these positions past the life of the grant. Districts and schools who received ELGs gave consistently strong, positive supports for the grants and reported improved instructional practices and student performance as a result of the funding. External literacy consultants were viewed as critical to those improvements and the lack of continued funding for these experts was cited as a key barrier to sustain the impact of the grants, especially given staff turnover.



Appendices

- **Appendix 1: Site Visit Selection**
- **Appendix 2: Data Sources**
- **Appendix 3: Additional Student Outcomes and Reading Approach Exhibits**
- **Appendix 4: Protocols**



Appendix 1: Site Visit Selection

Based on findings from the initial 2 years of the evaluation and goals of the READ Act (helping students with SRDs achieve proficiency at 3rd grade), site visit selection in Year 3 shifted its focus to identify schools (and their LEPs) who have relatively high rates of students who have ever been labeled SRD who partially meet, meet, or exceed expectations on the 3rd-grade CMAS ELA exam. The evaluation team selected sites to understand what, if any, commonalities exist among sites that have higher rates of students scoring just below, at, or above proficiency on the CMAS ELA.

To select schools for this year’s site visits, the evaluation team created a dataset of school- and LEP-contextual data from publicly available CDE and U.S. Department of Education sources combined with CDE-provided funding information about ELGs. Evaluation team analysts first determined which schools and LEPs were eligible for site visits. While all schools that had received ELGs (either as part of a cohort or as a professional development grant) or per-pupil funds through their LEPs were eligible, the analysts first eliminated schools or LEPs that had participated in site visits during Years 1 and 2 from the potential pool to reduce their administrative burden. In the case of particularly large LEPs, such as Denver Public Schools, this was not always possible. Next, analysts sorted schools by the percentage of students who had ever been designated as having an SRD who scored in the bands of “Partially Meets,” “Meets,” or “Exceeds Expectations” on the CMAS ELA exam during the 2020–2021 school year (or, for ELG sites, within the last 3 school years).²⁵

While a representative sample of sites was not the intention of the site visits during this year, a limited set of school-level characteristics were examined

²⁵ Bands were originally limited to “Meets” or “Exceeds Expectations” but expanded to include “Partially Meets” to have enough schools for the sample.



alongside the percentage of scorers to encourage a balanced set of site visit schools. Additional school-level characteristics in the analyses included

- ELG types (for representation from all cohorts and professional development grant years, with an emphasis on more recent years and cohorts);
- Colorado regions (for a diversity of regions); and
- urbanicity (for the representation of cities, suburbs, towns, and rural areas),

Analysts used the dataset to choose school sites using the procedures and rules of thumb that follow. The process is rooted in data but also relies on evaluation team analysts' judgment as well as practical considerations including geographic location because this year's LEP visits were in person. Because of the timing of the site visits occurring during winter, there were some limitations on geographies accessible to the staff performing the site visits. Additionally, some schools or districts initially selected were unable to participate in the site visits due to timing, staff shortages, and so on and were replaced with the next-best available school choice. Other limitations and considerations taken into site selection are discussed below. If another set of analysts were using the same data and followed the same procedure, the lists would be expected to be similarly composed but not necessarily include the exact same schools.

LEP Procedure:

- Ensure the district had not yet received a site visit.
- Sort LEPs that have at least 15 Ever SRD students meeting one of the three proficiency categories in the 2020–2021 school year.
- Within an eligible LEP, look for the school with the highest percentage of Ever SRD students meeting one of the three proficiency categories of the eligible schools in the district that also has
 - at least five students, preferably more, that meet the parameter in a given year,



- comparable percentages of movement, and
- comparable number of students moving in other years of data.

ELG Procedure:

- Ensure the school had not yet received a site visit.
- Sort ELG schools that have about five, preferably more, Ever SRD students meeting one of the three proficiency categories in the last 3 years and examine the
 - percentage of students meeting the parameter, and
 - percentage and number of students meeting the parameter in recent years.

Analysts selected 21 sites to visit: 11 ELG sites and 10 LEP sites. If a site was unable to participate, analysts selected an alternative site with a similar rate of student movement to proficiency and, if possible, school characteristics. This was not always possible, particularly when choosing ELG sites. There are a limited number of ELG sites due to the nature of the grant. In addition, several sites that met the selection parameters had already been visited. Lastly, there are a limited number of schools who received an ELG that met the parameter of moving at least five students in a given year who had ever been designated as having an SRD who scored in the bands of “Partially Meets,” “Meets,” or “Exceeds Expectations” on the CMAS ELA exam in the 3rd grade. After discussions with CDE, LEPs, and school sites, three ELG sites were selected by CDE based on their perceptions of successful READ Act implementation and related student outcomes; one ELG site was selected to explore its dual participation in the ELG and Structured Literacy programs.



Appendix 2: Data Sources

Available Data

The evaluation drew from a wide range of data sources, including

- extant student-, school-, and LEP-level data from CDE and publicly available datasets;¹
- inventories of LEP staff and principals, reading coaches, and teachers at schools that received READ Act funding and participated in READ Act activities; and
- site visits with a sample of schools receiving ELGs and LEPs that received READ Act funding, with a focus on schools and LEPs that were successful (relative to others in the state) in helping students that were ever identified as having an SRD to score in the top three proficiency bands of the 3rd grade CMAS ELA exam.

The following sections describe these data sources and detail data processing procedures and data issues that arose and decisions that were made to resolve these issues.

Extant Data

The evaluation relied on a variety of student-, school-, and LEP-level extant data obtained directly from CDE and from publicly available resources, including CDE's Education Statistics page and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). These data provided information regarding K–8 students' performance on READ Act interim assessments and state-level assessments, demographic characteristics of K–12 students, READ Act literacy program data, READ Act budget information, ELG financial data, and school- and LEP-level contextual data.



Student-Level Data

READ Act Collection

CDE requires districts annually to report information regarding the prevalence of SRD classifications among K–3 students, through their READ Act collection, to determine the per-pupil funding for districts. The READ Act data available for the evaluation currently span from 2013–2014 through 2021–2022 (with the exception of 2019–2020, due to the statewide assessment pause during the COVID-19 pandemic). Due to data irregularities in the 2013–2014 school year (i.e., the first year of data collection for the READ Act) and discussions with CDE, the first year of data used for the analysis is from the 2014–2015 school year.

Through this collection, CDE collects, for each student, the name of the READ Act–administered interim assessment, along with the student’s score and date of administration, SRD and READ Plan designations (including exemption status), intervention supports, retention information, and demographic data (i.e., gender, race/ethnicity, free and reduced-price lunch status, special education status, EL status, and gifted status). These data are reported for all K–3 students enrolled in each district at the time of data submission. READ Plan designation and demographic information is also provided for 4th–12th-grade students who exited 3rd grade and remain on a READ Plan.²⁶ Analysts created additional variables to aid analysis, for example, indicators of student movement between LEPs and schools and more granular categorizations of how students transition between SRD statuses.

The READ Act data used for the evaluation consisted of 1,774,541 K–3 observations across 7 years and 250,641 4th–12th-grade observations across 5 years. The 4th–12th-grade observations for the 2014–2015 and 2015–2016 school years were not included due to a large percentage of grade

²⁶ Approximately 23% of the 4th–12th-grade students provided in the READ Act file were never classified as having an SRD in K–3 (according to the data provided for the evaluation), and about 8% were never given a READ Plan in K–3.



misclassifications. Over 90% of K–3 student observations are recorded as taking a READ Act interim assessment that is currently approved by the state. Some analyses for the evaluation are restricted to students taking these currently approved assessments.²⁷ These interim assessments include the following:

- aimswebPlus (English and Spanish)
- Acadience Reading
- Indicadores Dinámicos del Éxito en la Lectura (IDEL)
- FastBridge
- i-Ready
- ISIP (Reading and Lectura Temprana)
- PALS (English and Spanish)
- Star Early Learning

State-Level Assessment Data

To evaluate student growth and expand the understanding of how proficiency on READ Act interim assessments align with state-level educational outcomes, WestEd requested additional state-level assessment data from CDE, in particular CMAS scores and their alternatives (which included the Colorado Spanish Language Arts [CSLA] assessment for eligible ELs²⁸ and the Colorado Alternate Assessment [CoAlt] for students with significant cognitive disabilities). The CMAS and CoAlt data available for the evaluation currently span from 2014–2015 through 2021–2022 (with the exception of 2019–2020) for 3rd through 8th grades, and the CSLA data available currently span from 2015–2016 through 2021–2022 for 3rd and 4th grades.

As there are 10 different READ Act interim assessments that K–3 students can take, the CMAS, CSLA, and CoAlt data provide the only consistent measure of academic success that is delivered statewide. Each year, CDE provides

²⁷ The list of currently approved READ Act interim assessments can be found at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readinterimassessments>.

²⁸ The eligibility criteria for the CSLA assessment can be found at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/assessment/csla>.



CMAS ELA and math composite scores, proficiency levels, and reading scale scores; CSLA composite scores, proficiency levels, and reading scale scores; and CoAlt ELA and math proficiency levels. The reading scale scores for CMAS and CSLA are available beginning in the 2017–2018 school year.

Demographic Data

CDE collects student demographic information in two different collections (i.e., an October collection and Student End-of-Year [SEOY] collection). The data available for the evaluation span from the 2014–2015 through 2021–2022 school years and include K–12 students in the October collection and K–8 students in the SEOY collection. These data have been used to facilitate analyses, including comparisons of student performance over time across a variety of peer and identity groups that are based on the following demographic characteristics: gender, race/ethnicity, EL status, free and reduced-price lunch status, IEP status, Section 504 handicapped status, gifted status, migrant status, homeless status, language proficiency, language background, disability type, and school Title I status. For the K–3 data (which are used for the primary analyses for the evaluation), analysts elected to use SEOY demographic data as suggested by CDE. October demographic data were used when SEOY demographic data were unavailable for a particular student or variable. Due to the shift in data source, some results may be slightly different from results in previous years, especially those pertaining to the identification of a student (i.e., EL status, IEP status).

Student-level datasets (i.e., READ Act data, state-level assessment data, and demographic data) were merged together using the masked student identifier that uniquely identifies each student across the state, and other identifiers such as grade level, school code, and district code, to create a single student-level longitudinal file describing demographic characteristics and academic performance of each student in each year available. The K–3 and 4th–12th-grade data were maintained in separate datasets as the evaluation focused primarily on the earlier grade levels.



School and LEP-Level Data

Literacy Program

Following the legislative update to the READ Act in 2019, CDE requires LEPs to report the READ Act–administered interim and diagnostic assessments in use in the LEP, along with their core, supplemental, and intervention instructional literacy programs for K–3 for each school in their district. Additionally, LEPs using READ Act and/or ELG funding for teacher professional development are required to provide information on how their professional development plan aligns with scientific and evidence-based literacy instruction.²⁹ These data are currently available for the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 school years; the instructional literacy program data are also available for the 2022–2023 school year. These data will be discussed in future reports as it was not provided to the evaluation team at the time of analysis.

READ Act Budget Data

CDE requires LEPs to submit their budget and a narrative explanation about the use of the READ Act funding received from the state. In the submission, LEPs must select from a list of “allowable activities” to indicate the ways in which they plan to use READ Act funds in the upcoming budget year (e.g., purchasing tutoring services, providing professional development programming to support educators in teaching reading) and provide a brief description of their plan to implement each selected activity. Finally, LEPs must submit a budget request that provides an expected cost per activity that they plan to conduct using READ Act funds. The READ Act budget data are available for the 2020–2021 and 2021–2022 school years; however, the 2020–2021 budget data will not be used for the evaluation due to data quality issues identified by CDE.

²⁹ Additional information about literacy program data and reporting requirements can be found at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/readdatapipeline#literacyandassessment>.



ELG Data

The ELG program was established in 2012 to provide funds to schools to support their efforts to improve student literacy. Grants may be awarded to an applying LEP on a district-wide basis or to individual schools of the school district. Also, an LEP may apply individually or as part of a group of LEPs. The program consists of 1) the Comprehensive ELG program which provides funds to help insert essential components of reading instruction into all elements of K–3 teaching and 2) the ELG Annual Professional Development program which provides funds intended for early literacy professional development of elementary educators.

To date, there have been six cohorts of Comprehensive ELG grantees, with over \$30 million awarded in total across the lifespans of the first four cohorts (i.e., cohorts that completed the grant). As of 2018, the grant follows a 4-year cycle, with grantees having the opportunity to apply for an additional 1-year Sustainability Grant. The majority of the Comprehensive ELG data were obtained directly from CDE, with the remainder coming from CDE’s website on these programs.³⁰ In general, data include the cohort of the school, an indicator of whether the school was part of a group (or not) during the ELG application process, school-level ELG funding (by year) for schools that were not part of a group, the total amount of Comprehensive ELG funding for a school or group of schools, and an indicator of whether the school received the additional sustainability funding.

In 2018, the revised READ Act also authorized the ELG Professional Development program. To date, the Professional Development Program grants have been awarded four times (i.e., once per year from the 2019–2020 school year through the 2022–2023 school year). As with Comprehensive ELG data, the majority of ELG Professional Development data were obtained directly from

³⁰ The publicly available Comprehensive ELG data can be found here: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/comprehensiveelg>



CDE, with the remainder coming from CDE’s website on these programs.³¹ In general, data include an indicator of whether the school received the ELG Professional Development grant, an indicator of whether the school was part of a group (or not) during the ELG application process, and ELG Professional Development funding amounts.

Publicly Available Contextual data

Publicly available school- and LEP-level data for the 2014–2015 through 2021–2022 school years were retrieved from CDE’s Education Statistics website and select federal data sources, to provide contextual data about the sample of students used in analysis. Overall, data relate to the following and were retrieved from CDE’s website: grade-level, demographic, and instructional program enrollment; free and reduced-price lunch eligibility; mobility rates; LEP setting, rural-small rural designation, and region; and READ Act funding, per-pupil funding, and locale, state, and federal funding. School-level locale was retrieved from the NCES publicly available resources.

Student-level data discussed previously were merged with ELG program data and publicly available school and LEP contextual data using school and district codes to create two longitudinal datasets (one for K–3 students and one for 4th–12th-grade students). The K–3 file was provided to CDE, along with an accompanying codebook with a description of each variable and its associated values/codes. The 4th–12th-grade dataset does not currently include CMAS, CoAlt, and CSLA scores as additional identification data were needed to match 4th–8th-grade state assessment data with READ Act and demographic data.

Issues in Merging Student Data

Three student-level datasets were used to create the primary K–3 longitudinal file used for the evaluation: 1) READ Act dataset; 2) CMAS, CSLA, and CoAlt state assessment dataset; and 3) demographic dataset. In merging

³¹ The publicly available ELG Professional Development data can be found at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/elgprofessionaldevelopment>.



these datasets, analysts attempted to use student ID, grade level, school code, and district code, to ensure that the correct students were merged across each file. This method was also useful as some students had multiple observations within the demographic file due to switching schools and/or districts during the school year. As documented below, some data issues arose in cleaning and merging the three student-level files for the 2021–2022 school year. Once the 2021–2022 data was finalized, data were appended to the Year 2 evaluation dataset which contained the information for previous years of the evaluation (i.e., 2014–2015 through 2020–2021).

In merging the 2021–2022 CMAS, CSLA, and CoAlt state assessment data with the 2021–2022 READ Act data, about 3.5% of 3rd-grade students in the CMAS, CSLA, and CoAlt file did not match with a corresponding observation in the READ Act file. Given that the focus of the evaluation is on READ Act data, these students were not included in the analysis or dataset. Additionally, about 0.5% of 3rd grade students in the READ Act file did not have a corresponding CMAS, CSLA, or CoAlt score during the school year. Once the READ Act and state assessment data were combined, demographic data were merged to provide additional characteristics of students. Approximately 99.6% of students in the 2021–2022 assessment file had a corresponding match in the student end-of-year demographic file or October demographic file.

After the three student-level datasets were merged together and appended with the Year 2 evaluation file, analysts compared common variables across the datasets to examine whether there were further data issues. Most notably, there were 114 students across all 7 years of the evaluation that had a grade level in the READ Act file that was different from the grade level stated in the demographic file. Given the focus on individual grade levels, the evaluation team elected to drop these observations following discussions with CDE. Additionally, 10 students were observed as moving from a higher grade level in one school year to a lower grade level in the following school year. These



students were also dropped from the evaluation as there were concerns that different students may have been assigned the same student state ID.

The final Year 3 working data file for K–3 students contained 1,774,541 student-level observations, with each student observation containing assessment data, demographic information, and contextual information about the LEP and school they attended in a given year. The final 4th–12th-grade dataset contained 250,641 student-level observations and was cleaned in a similar manner; however, these data did not contain CMAS, CSLA, and CoAlt scores due to the unavailability (at the time of reporting) of new student IDs for 4th–12th grades (Exhibit A-1).

Exhibit A-1. Data Elements and Sources

Data source(s)	Enrollment ^a	Race/Ethnicity Distribution ^b	Other Enrollment of Interest ^c	Mobility Rate ^d	READ Act Funding	Grade-Level Distribution of Sample	Race/Ethnicity Distribution of Sample	Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Status of Sample	Other Student Demographics	Interim Assessment Usage	Interim Assessment Scores	READ Act Interventions	Student Movement Between SRD Designations	CMAS, CSLA, and CoAlt Scores and SRD Status
Publicly Available LEP- and School-Level Pupil Membership Data ^e	X	X	X	X										
Demographic Data, Provided by CDE						X	X	X	X					
READ Act Significant Reading Deficiency and READ Plan Data, Provided by CDE						X				X	X	X	X	X
CMAS, CSLA, and CoAlt Assessment Data, Provided by CDE						X								X
READ Act (Per-Pupil and ELG) Funding Data, Provided by CDE					X									



Publicly Available ELG Data ^f					X										
Publicly Available CDE District Revenue ^g					X										

^a Membership by district/school and grade level (2015–2022)
^b Membership by district, race/ethnicity, and gender (for LEPs) or membership by school, race/ethnicity, gender, and grade (2015–2022)
^c Membership by district/school and instructional program; membership by district/school and free or reduced-price lunch eligibility (2015–2022)
^d District/school mobility rates by instructional program service type (2015–2022)
^e These data for previous years are available at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdereval/rvprioryearpmdata>
^f Data are available at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/coloradoliteracy/comprehensiveelg>
^g Data are available at <https://www.cde.state.co.us/cdefinance/revexp>. Annual revenue for the 2021–2022 school year was not available at the time these reports were published.
Note. CDE = Colorado Department of Education; CMAS = Colorado Measures of Academic Success; CoALT = Colorado Alternative Assessment; CSLA = Colorado Spanish Language Arts; ELG = Early Literacy Grant; LEP = Local Education Provider; READ = Reading to Ensure Academic Development; SRD = significant reading deficiency.

LEP, Principal, Coach, and Teacher Inventories

LEP Inventory

The LEP Inventory issued in Year 3 focused on READ Act implementation during the 2022–2023 school year. The primary topic areas inventoried were levels of influence that different district and school staff had in decisions about READ Act per-pupil spending, methods to identify students with SRDs, growth to standard, development and implementation of READ Plans, overall district and state guidance, identifying and supporting students with an SRD after 3rd grade, the organization and provision of READ Act-specific instructional programs and assessments, LEPs’ approaches to literacy, supporting students with multiple identifications, and training for teaching reading.

The inventory was administered from January 23 to April 28. In total, 96 district administrators completed the LEP inventory and had their responses used for the evaluation. The LEP inventory respondents were relatively representative of the overall LEP population in Colorado in terms of their geographic characteristics (i.e., rural designation status, region, and setting; Exhibit A-2).



Exhibit A-2. Geographic Characteristics of LEP Inventory Respondents

Geographic Characteristic	Frequency (%) Among All LEPs in Colorado	Frequency (%) Among LEP Inventory Respondents
Rural Designation^a		
Rural	27.2% (n = 40)	33.3% (n = 25)
Small Rural	72.8% (n = 107)	66.7% (n = 50)
Region^b		
Northwest	11.1% (n = 22)	10.4% (n = 10)
Southwest	12.6% (n = 25)	11.5% (n = 11)
Northeast	17.1% (n = 34)	21.9% (n = 21)
Pikes Peak	15.1% (n = 30)	13.5% (n = 13)
West Central	7.0% (n = 14)	6.3% (n = 6)
North Central	10.6% (n = 21)	10.4% (n = 10)
Southeast	15.6% (n = 31)	14.6% (n = 14)
Metro	11.1% (n = 22)	11.5% (n = 11)
Setting		
Remote	42.8% (n = 86)	38.5% (n = 37)
Outlying Town	24.4% (n = 49)	31.3% (n = 30)
Urban-Suburban	8.5% (n = 17)	11.5% (n = 11)
Denver Metro	7.5% (n = 15)	9.4% (n = 9)
Outlying City	6.5% (n = 13)	9.4% (n = 9)
Colorado BOCES	10.0% (n = 20)	0% (n = 0)

^a Rural designation only pertains to standard school districts (i.e., not including BOCES, Charter School Institute, or Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind).

^b Region does not include Charter School Institute.

Note. BOCES = Boards of Cooperative Educational Services; LEP = Local Education Provider.

Principal, Coach, and Teacher Inventory

WestEd also inventoried principals, K–3 reading coaches, and K–3 reading teachers for the Year 3 evaluation. Primary topic areas inventoried were staff’s educational and professional backgrounds; perceived levels of influence in decisions about READ Act per-pupil spending; use of READ Act funds; use of different types of data and documentation to inform K–3 reading strategies; coaching and reading activities; methods to identify and exit students with SRDs



(including students with multiple identifications); the development, implementation, and integration of READ Plans; available support for coaches and teachers (including use of core, supplemental, and intervention curricula); overall district and state guidance; identifying and supporting students with an SRD after 3rd grade; professional development; and the 45-hour teacher training requirement. Inventories were administered from February 6 to April 28. In total, 108 principals (from 94 schools), 83 reading coaches (from 58 schools), and 289 teachers (from 87 schools), completed their respective inventory and had their responses used for the evaluation. School staff respondents were relatively representative of the overall school population in Colorado in terms of school locale (Exhibit A-3), with school respondents most likely to come from city schools and suburban schools. However, the distribution of LEPs of these school respondents differed from the overall state, with school respondents more likely to come from rural districts (rather than small rural districts) and LEPs in the Denver metro area.

Exhibit A-3. Geographic Characteristics of School Inventory Respondents

Geographic Characteristic	Frequency (%) Among All Schools in Colorado ^a	Frequency (%) Among School Inventory Respondents
School Locale		
City: Large	22.3% (n = 432)	24.7% (n = 23)
City: Mid	10.9% (n = 211)	5.4% (n = 5)
City: Small	2.9% (n = 56)	8.6% (n = 8)
Suburb: Large	23.4% (n = 454)	21.5% (n = 20)
Suburb: Mid	2.6% (n = 51)	4.3% (n = 4)
Suburb: Small	2.5% (n = 48)	2.2% (n = 2)
Town: Fringe	1.9% (n = 37)	3.2% (n = 3)
Town: Distant	1.9% (n = 37)	3.2% (n = 3)
Town: Remote	7.4% (n = 144)	11.8% (n = 11)
Rural: Fringe	8.5% (n = 165)	6.5% (n = 6)
Rural: Distant	5.9% (n = 114)	0% (n = 0)
Rural: Remote	9.9% (n = 191)	8.6% (n = 8)
Rural Designation		
Rural	27.4% (n = 40)	75.9% (n = 22)
Small Rural	72.6% (n = 106)	24.1% (n = 7)



Geographic Characteristic	Frequency (%) Among All Schools in Colorado ^a	Frequency (%) Among School Inventory Respondents
Region^b		
Northwest	10.5% (n = 19)	12.9% (n = 12)
Southwest	12.2% (n = 22)	1.1% (n = 1)
Northeast	17.7% (n = 32)	2.2% (n = 2)
Pikes Peak	15.5% (n = 28)	9.7% (n = 9)
West Central	7.2% (n = 13)	10.8% (n = 10)
North Central	11.1% (n = 20)	11.8% (n = 11)
Southeast	15.5% (n = 28)	4.3% (n = 4)
Metro	10.5% (n = 19)	47.3% (n = 44)
Setting		
Remote	47.3% (n = 86)	6.5% (n = 6)
Outlying Town	26.9% (n = 49)	14.0% (n = 13)
Urban-Suburban	9.3% (n = 17)	20.4% (n = 19)
Denver Metro	8.2% (n = 15)	48.4% (n = 45)
Outlying City	7.1% (n = 13)	10.8 (n = 10)
Colorado BOCES	1.1% (n = 2)	0% (n = 0)

Note. BOCES = Boards of Cooperative Educational Services. Geographic data from the 2021–2022 school year was used as school locale was not available on the National Center for Education Statistics website for the 2022–2023 school year (at the time of reporting). The values in Column 2 pertaining to district characteristics (i.e., rural designation, region, and setting) may differ from the exhibit containing geographic characteristics of LEPs if there was no school corresponding to an LEP in the publicly available data. b Schools associated with the Charter School Institute are not associated with a region.

Parent Inventory

WestEd also inventoried parents of K–3 students for the Year 3 evaluation. Primary topic areas inventoried were child’s EL, disability, and IEP status; sufficiency of EL and IEP resources; overall understanding of the Colorado READ Act and SRD designations; the child’s SRD status; notification method of child’s SRD designation; involvement with SRD identification process; knowledge about services available to students classified as having an SRD; child’s READ Plan status; involvement with developing, reviewing, and approving a READ Plan; involvement with progress monitoring; implementing READ Plan activities at home; exiting the child from a READ Plan; comfort with implementing READ Plan activities at home; availability of school supports to implement READ



Plan activities at home; and improvement of reading skills due to the child's READ Plan.

The inventory was administered from March 23 to April 28. In total, 284 parents completed the inventory. However, only parents who reported that their child was identified as having an SRD at some point during their schooling (n = 109) and/or reported that their child was provided with a READ Plan (n = 180) are included in the report.

Site visits

LEP Site Visits

From January to March 2023, evaluation team members conducted on-site visits at 10 schools that received READ Act per-pupil funding (see Appendix 1: Site Visit Selection Criteria for a full discussion of the selection process and Exhibit A-4 for the list of schools). Prior to each site visit, district and school staff members were asked to provide artifacts such as sample redacted READ Plans that could provide additional context regarding READ Act implementation. They were also asked to identify district and school staff who could answer questions about the use of READ Act and ELG per-pupil funds and READ Act implementation. During the on-site visit, evaluation staff toured schools during reading blocks to observe staffing, approach to reading, and READ Plan implementation. They also conducted interviews and focus groups with school staff to obtain information about the K–3 reading approach, use of READ Act funds, identification of students under the READ Act, READ Plan development and implementation, and training for teaching reading during the 2021–2022 school year (see Appendix 4 for site visit protocol).

Upon completion of the site visits, evaluation team members analyzed the input received in each of these three topic areas and produced a summary report for each school/LEP. These summary reports were then used to identify common themes that surfaced across the 10 sites, identify lessons learned, and help state leaders understand READ Act implementation.



Exhibit A-4. Site Visit Local Education Providers and Schools

Local Education Provider	School
Lewis- Palmer 38	Prairie Winds Elementary School
Academy 20	Douglass Valley Elementary
Windsor RE-4	Range View Ridge Elementary
Douglas County RE-1	Soaring Hawk Elementary
Cherry Creek 5	Red Hawk Ridge Elementary
Boulder Valley RE-2	Alicia Sanchez International School
School District 27J	West Ridge Elementary School
Poudre R-1	Lopez Elementary School
Adams 12 Five Star School	Glacier Peak Elementary School
Weld RE-8	William Butler Elementary School

ELG Site Visits

The evaluation team conducted virtual site visits to gather data and information about how schools and districts across Colorado used their ELGs. From February to April 2023, the evaluation team conducted virtual site visits at 11 ELG districts (Exhibit A-5). In addition to criteria described in Appendix 1, these districts were selected to represent a variety of locales across the state, including urban, suburban, rural, and mountain communities. Selected districts also were drawn from across the six ELG funding cohorts that have taken place over time, with some districts having already completed their multiyear ELGs, while others had recently started or were in the midst of implementing grant activities. This mix of districts allowed the evaluation team to hear from educators and school and district leaders that represented a variety of settings and perspectives.

Site visits were conducted virtually, typically in 90-minute interviews that included school- and/or district-level leaders as well as teachers. Evaluation team members reviewed data from CDE regarding the amounts and timing of ELG funding received at each site. A common interview protocol was used to ensure consistent data gathering across the 11 sites (Exhibit A-5). The protocol covered three main topics on ELG experiences: background on the ELG application



process, how ELG funds were deployed, and successes and challenges with ELG implementation.

Upon completion of the site visits, evaluation team members analyzed the input received in each of these three topic areas and produced a summary report for each school/LEP. These summary reports were then used to identify common themes that surfaced across the 11 sites, identify lessons learned, and help state leaders understand ELG implementation.

Exhibit A-5. Early Literacy Grant Site Visit Schools and Local Education Providers

Local Education Provider	Early Literacy Grant School
Pueblo City 60	Bessemer Elementary School
Dolores RE-4A	Dolores Elementary School
Englewood 1	Clayton Elementary School
Canon City Re-1	Canon Exploratory School
Meeker RE-1	Meeker Elementary School
Sangre De Cristo	Sangre De Cristo Elementary School
Westminister	Sherrelwood Elementary School
Harrison	Centennial Elementary School
Steamboat Spring RE-2	Soda Creek Elementary School
South Conejos	Guadalupe Elementary School
Moffat RE-1	Sunset Elementary School



Appendix 3: Additional Student Outcome and Reading Approach Exhibits

Student Outcomes

Exhibit A-6. Limited English Proficient and Non-English Proficient Students' 3rd-Grade English Language Arts CMAS Proficiency by SRD Status

SRD Status	Rating	2014–2015	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2020–2021	2021–2022
Ever SRD	Did not yet meet, partially met, or approached expectations	99.7%	99.2%	98.2%	97.7%	97.5%	97.6%	97.5%
	Met or exceeded expectations	0.3%	0.8%	1.8%	2.3%	2.5%	2.4%	2.5%
Never SRD	Did not yet meet, partially met, or approached expectations	75.0%	73.3%	66.8%	66.9%	65.4%	71.3%	65.7%
	Met or exceeded expectations	25%	26.7%	33.2%	33.1%	34.6%	28.7%	34.3%

Note. CMAS = Colorado Measures of Academic Success; SRD = significant reading deficiency.

Exhibit A-7. Students with IEPs' 3rd-Grade English Language Arts CMAS Proficiency by SRD Status

SRD Status	Rating	2014–2015	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2020–2021	2021–2022
Ever SRD	Did not yet meet, partially met, or approached expectations	99.8%	99.6%	99%	98.9%	98.3%	98.6%	98.7%
	Met or exceeded expectations	0.2%	0.4%	1.0%	1.1%	1.7%	1.4%	1.3%
Never SRD	Did not yet meet, partially met, or approached expectations	81.6%	78.9%	73.5%	69.2%	66.5%	67.1%	65.7%



SRD Status	Rating	2014–2015	2015–2016	2016–2017	2017–2018	2018–2019	2020–2021	2021–2022
	Met or exceeded expectations	18.4%	21.1%	26.5%	30.8%	33.5%	32.9%	34.3%

Note. CMAS = Colorado Measures of Academic Success; IEP = Individualized Education Program; SRD = significant reading deficiency.

Reading Approach

Exhibit A-8. Site Visit Schools Reading Approach

School	Reading Block	Intervention
1	60 minutes Mini lessons, guided reading, and interactive read-alouds.	40 minutes four times a week Focused attention on skills, with students grouped according to skill needs. Interventionists and classroom teachers, including special education teachers, delivered interventions in small groups.
2	90 minutes Whole group mini lesson (15–20 minutes), shared reading, and interactive read-alouds, then differentiated instruction.	30 minutes daily The reading interventionist met with small groups of students with targeted needs for 30 minutes per day outside of the classroom.
3	145 minutes, kindergarten 120 minutes, 3rd grade On average students received 45–60 minutes of daily reading instruction. Primarily through whole group instruction, with students engaging in independent practice as well as small group instruction based on their skill needs. Reading groups were fluid, meaning that students moved in and out of groups based on their progress in skill acquisition.	The classroom teacher was responsible for the needs of all students. In some cases, paraprofessionals provided additional support. These services were provided within the classroom.
4	2 hours daily Mini lessons, whole group instruction, small group instruction based on need, and individual conferences. Teachers provided instruction in a whole group lesson for about 15–20 minutes, then differentiated instruction.	The rest of the instructional time was dedicated to differentiated instruction within the classroom, while some students received targeted instruction in areas of need. These small group targeted instruction sessions involved special services staff and included students with Individualized Education Programs. After small group instruction time, students returned to the classroom for whole group reflection.



School	Reading Block	Intervention
5	<p>The day-to-day schedule for reading included whole group time, small group time, and intervention time.</p>	<p>In kindergarten and 1st grade, paraprofessionals implemented an all-grade intervention for 10 minutes a day. They targeted these interventions to the needs of students.</p> <p>In 2nd–5th grade, students participated in interventions with instructional paraprofessionals. Teachers aligned these interventions with students’ needs. Small group interventions also occurred in classrooms, led by a teacher or paraprofessional.</p>
6	<p>In kindergarten, students spent 70 of 105 minutes of the literacy block in small groups. First-grade students spent 90 of 135 minutes in small group instruction, while 2nd- and 3rd-grade students spent 65 of 105 minutes in small groups.</p> <p>Daily whole group instruction and daily small group time, during which students received a second dose of instruction targeted to their reading needs. Small group instruction time occurred within each classroom with the classroom teacher and instructional paraprofessional. The interventionist also worked individually for an additional 10 minutes with students who were not making progress.</p> <p>Teachers delivered instructional programs primarily in small groups.</p>	<p>During the daily block of What I Need (WIN) time, teachers, instructional paraprofessionals, and the interventionist provided instruction in small groups aligned with students’ skill needs. Teachers at each grade level worked with the instructional coach or interventionist to form WIN groups based on analysis of data. As a result, some students traveled to other classrooms during WIN time to work with other students who had the same needs.</p>
7	<p>The school schedule included three blocks focused on literacy. During the 30-minute literacy block, literacy teachers worked with the class in a whole group or had students work in small groups on reading skills.</p> <p>A second 30-minute block was designated for providing supplemental instructional programming, with grade-level teachers and literacy aides providing programming for small groups to reinforce or extend a previously taught skill or concept. Small groups were based on student reading needs as determined by progress monitoring and individual student testing.</p>	<p>The schedule included 30 minutes of intervention time during which interventionists provided intervention instructional programming for students needing more intensive assistance. Teachers grouped students by need for intervention time. Teachers and literacy aides provided additional supplemental instructional programming to students not involved in intervention instructional programming during the intervention time.</p>



School	Reading Block	Intervention
8	Core instructional program during a 60-minute instruction block on the master schedule. This time included whole group explicit instruction using HMH Into Reading and individualized and small group instruction, as directed by classroom teachers. An additional 30 minutes was spent on explicit phonics instruction using the supplemental instructional program Foundations.	Both teachers and interventionists administered intervention programs.
9	Daily 45-minute blocks of WIN time for K–5, core reading instruction, and both supplemental and intervention reading time. Students accessed whole group, small group, and independent work within the literacy block. Teachers provided differentiated instruction in small groups. Staff provided one-on-one intervention outside of classroom activities both within and outside the classroom.	Daily 45-minute blocks of WIN time for K–5, core reading instruction, and both supplemental and intervention reading time. Students accessed whole group, small group, and independent work within the literacy block. Teachers provided differentiated instruction in small groups. Staff provided one-on-one intervention outside of classroom activities both within and outside the classroom.
10	45-minute reading block for core reading instruction that classroom teachers conducted.	Grade-level teachers, reading interventionists, and paraprofessionals supported students with supplemental and intervention programs in small groups for 45 minutes. To address phonics and phonemic awareness skill gaps, teachers implemented an additional 20–30-minute instruction block in K–3 using Orton-Gillingham – Institute for Multi-Sensory Education.



Exhibit A-9. Instructional Programs Used by Site Visit Schools

School	Core	Supplemental	Intervention	4th–5th Grade	Other
1	Fountas & Pinnell ^a In process of adopting HMH Into Reading	Fundations (Wilson Language Training) to help with phonics i-Ready (Curriculum Associates) Raz-Plus (Learning A–Z) for text reading fluency	i-Ready, Fundations, and Orton-Gillingham – Institute for Multi-Sensory Education (IMSE) Lexia for special education students	The school used the same instructional programming for 4th and 5th grades as it did for K–3 except for Fundations. Instead of Fundations, the school used Really Great Reading’s HD Word. One of the district’s criteria for selecting a new core instructional program was that it extends to 5th grade.	The school did not use other K–3 reading materials outside of those on the Advisory List.
2	Benchmark Workshop	K–1: Bridge the Gap (Heggerty) ^a K–3: Orton-Gillingham – IMSE, MobyMax ^a 1st grade: Boost Reading (Amplify) 2nd grade: CR Success Learning 3rd grade: Reading Plus	K–2: Blast (Really Great Reading) K–3: Orton-Gillingham IMSE 3rd grade: HD Word (Really Great Reading)	The school used the same core instructional program (Benchmark Workshop) for 4th–5th grades as for K–3. The school also used Reading Plus and MobyMax as supplemental instructional programs for 4th–5th grades.	The school did not use other K–3 reading materials outside of those on the Advisory List.
3	Benchmark Advance	K–2: Bridge the Gap	Blast Bridge the Gap HD Word Yoshimoto Orton-Gillingham	The 4th- and 5th-grade core, supplemental, and intervention programs were the same as for K–3.	The school did not use other K–3 reading materials outside of those on the Advisory List.
4	Benchmark Workshop	Fundations	Benchmark Phonics Intervention	The school used Benchmark Workshop for core instruction in 4th and 5th grades and	The school used the following reading materials in addition to instructional programs:



School	Core	Supplemental	Intervention	4th–5th Grade	Other
		Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum (Literacy Resources) i-Ready MyPath (Curriculum Associates)	(Benchmark Education) i-Ready instructional lessons Yoshimoto Orton-Gillingham	Benchmark Advance for core instruction in 6th grade.	The Teaching Reading Sourcebook (CORE Learning) Structured Literacy Interventions (Louise Spear-Swerling) Keys to Beginning Reading (Joan Sedita, on the Advisory List) Speech to Print: Language Essentials for Teaching Reading (Louisa Moats and Susan Brady)
5	K–2: SuperKids for 3rd grade: ReadyGEN ^b	K–2: Core5 Reading (Lexia), Delivering SMARTER Intervention (Ascend Learning; 1st grade only), Heggerty, Imagine Language & Literacy (Imagine Learning) 3rd grade: Core5 Reading, Imagine Language & Literacy	K–2: Delivering Smarter Intervention(1 st grade only), Core5 Reading, Imagine Language & Literacy, Heggerty 3rd grade: ReadyUp! (ReadyGEN) ^a	The school used ReadyGEN for the 4th- and 5th-grade core curriculum and Imagine Language & Literacy for intervention programming.	The school selected other materials by considering state reading standards, assessment data, and knowledge of the science of reading. Three teachers were trained in Orton-Gillingham programs, so they incorporated Orton-Gillingham materials into teaching. The school used additional materials for reading comprehension, authentic literature from existing books in addition to decodable books for 2nd grade, and vocabulary strategies for kindergarten.
6	Reach for Reading (Cengage) ^c	Heggerty Phonemic Awareness Curriculum in K–2.	K–3: Reach into Phonics Foundations (Cengage)	The school reported using 95 Percent Group programs for students who needed to work on	The school reported using Orton-Gillingham IMSE materials on a limited basis



School	Core	Supplemental	Intervention	4th–5th Grade	Other
		The district provided Heggerty to all schools. Teachers also used Raz-Plus as a supplemental program, primarily as a resource for decodable texts.	1st and 2nd grades: Screener for Intervention, Phonological Awareness Lessons Deluxe Package (95 Percent Group), Core5 Reading 3rd grade and 1st–3rd grades for students with disabilities: Teaching Blending, Phonological Awareness Screener for Intervention, Phonics Chip Kit, Phonics Lesson Library, Multisyllable Routine Cards	multisyllabic word lessons or targeted phonics instruction. Some students used Read Live (Read Naturally) (on the Advisory List) for its fluency component. All 4th-grade students in intervention programs who had Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Reading to Ensure Academic Development (READ) Plans continued to read at a 1st- or 2nd-grade level. All 5th grade students in intervention programs who had IEPs and READ Plans continued to read at a 2nd-, 3rd-, or 4th-grade level. The school reported strong growth from using intervention programs for these students.	because only two teachers were trained on and had access to the program. Orton-Gillingham IMSE was on the Advisory List.
7	HMH Into Reading	K–1: Heggerty Phonemic Awareness, Raz-Plus, Core5 Reading 2nd–3rd grades: Foundations, Raz-Plus, Core5 Reading The school reported using HMH Into Reading and Core5 Reading as	Wilson Reading Systems in special education as an intervention program. Interventionists used Really Great Reading as an intervention program with all students on READ Plans. Teachers used Foundations as supplemental instructional	The school used the same instructional programming for core, supplemental, and intervention in 4th and 5th grades as in K–3.	The school did not use other K–3 reading materials outside of those on the Advisory List with the exception of National Geographic materials (Reach and/or Inside the USA) as supplemental instructional programming for English learners.



School	Core	Supplemental	Intervention	4th–5th Grade	Other
		supplemental programming to address fluency and comprehension.	programming with all students during small group instruction that occurred in Tier 2 time. The school reported that teachers and interventionists used Core5 Reading as an intervention program.		
8	HMH Into Reading	Yoshimoto Orton-Gillingham training as both a supplemental and intervention program	Foundations Yoshimoto Orton-Gillingham training as both a supplemental and intervention program	The school started implementing HMH Into Reading as the core instructional program for 4th–5th grades in 2022–2023, with a plan for full implementation in 2023–2024.	The school did not use other reading materials outside of those on the Advisory List.. Teachers created skills- or standards-based lessons for students when they were not using Foundations or Orton-Gillingham for intervention support.
9	K–2: SuperKids 3rd grade: Wonders	Kindergarten; 1st–3rd grades, if needed: mCLASS Amplify Reading Edition K–1 and 2nd–3rd grade students with READ Plans or multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) Reading Plans: Lexia Core5 Reading K–2: Heggerty Phonemic Awareness	1st–3rd grades: Teaching Blending, Phonics Chip Kit, Phonics Lesson Library, Vocabulary Surge Level A & B (all 95 Percent Group) K–1 and 2nd–3rd grade students with READ Plans or MTSS Reading Plans: Core5 Reading Kindergarten; 1st–3rd grades if needed:	The school used Wonders as the core instructional program in 4th and 5th grades. The school reported that it was eligible to select a new reading curriculum for the 2023–2024 school year pending a list of curricula approved by the district. The school used i-READY as a supplemental and intervention program, mCLASS Amplify Reading Edition as a supplemental program when needed, and Take Flight as an intervention program in 4th–5th	K–2: SuperKids 3rd grade: Wonders



School	Core	Supplemental	Intervention	4th–5th Grade	Other
		<p>1st–3rd grades: i-READY</p> <p>2nd–3rd grades: Take Flight (Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children)</p> <p>3rd grade: Systematic Instruction in Phonological Awareness, Phonics, and Sight Words (SIPSS) (Center for the Collaborative Classroom); Teaching Blending, Phonics Chip Kit, Phonics Lesson Library, Vocabulary Surge Level A & B (all 95 Percent Group); all 3rd-grade students worked on morphology components of lessons and some accessed full lessons for intervention</p>	<p>mCLASS Amplify Reading Edition</p> <p>2nd–3rd grades: Take Flight (Texas Scottish Rite Hospital for Children)</p> <p>3rd grade: SIPPS; all 3rd-grade students worked on morphology components of lessons and some accessed full lessons for intervention</p>	<p>grades. The school used Teaching Blending, Phonics Chip Kit, Phonics Lesson Library, and Vocabulary Surge Level A & B as supplemental and intervention programs in 4th–5th grades.</p>	
10	ReadyGEN ^b	<p>Kindergarten: Heggerty Phonemic Awareness</p> <p>K–3: i-Ready, Orton-Gillingham IMSE</p>	<p>K–2: Heggerty Phonemic Awareness^d</p> <p>K–3: i-Ready, Orton-Gillingham IMSE,</p>	<p>Instructional programming for core, supplemental, and intervention programs for 4th and 5th grades were the same as for K–3.</p>	<p>The school used the Sounds and Letters for Readers and Spellers (Sopris West) as an additional supplemental and intervention program because</p>



School	Core	Supplemental	Intervention	4th–5th Grade	Other
			Phonics for Reading (Curriculum Associates) 3rd grade: Heggerty Bridge the Gap ^a		the program was sequential and explicit in how it helped students develop skills, which the school found worked well with many of its students. This program was not on the Advisory List. The school selected the program based on an analysis of student needs. The school used the Sounds and Letters program in conjunction with programs on the Advisory List.

^a Not on approved list

^b The program was not on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming. Elementary School 5 used ReadyGEN for 3rd grade. District X adopted ReadyGEN for all schools in 2019. The school reported that they depend on the district’s process and cycle of adoption for new reading programs. The district had not communicated to the school a timeline for adoption of a new core instructional program at the time of the site visit

^c The program was on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming as a supplemental approved program for vocabulary and comprehension, but is the core program for the school

^d The program was on the Advisory List of Instructional Programming as a supplemental approved program, but is an intervention program for the school



Appendix 4: Protocols

See attachments.